



PRESS RELEASE - 28 June 2013 - BRUSSELS

Cities seek flexibility in clean power package

Europe's city leaders want a more flexible Clean Power for Transport Package. The European Commission's plans will require cities to install clean power infrastructure such as electric vehicle charging points. But city mayors are concerned that such measures could increase congestion. Nor should they undermine efforts to increase the use of public transport, cycling or walking. Cities must be able to decide for themselves on the number and location of charging stations.

EUROCITIES Secretary-General Paul Bevan said:

“Europe's mayors are fully committed to greening city transport. The health and quality of life of our citizens depends on it. But there is no need for the EU to set detailed targets for alternative fuels infrastructure. City governments themselves should decide on how many charging stations and where they should be located.”

Space is scarce in city centres. Providing extensive charging or fuelling facilities might not be necessary or appropriate. City authorities may prefer to use public space in city centres for public transport, bicycle lanes and walking facilities. Public charging or refuelling stations are best located on the outskirts of the city, where car drivers can then switch to more sustainable modes of transport, or at home.

The Commission insists that its plans would not require extra public funding. It states that the mobilisation of private investment and use of EU funds, such as TEN-T, would be sufficient. But public spending would be necessary in cases of market failure. Cities should not be expected to shoulder this financial burden at a time when local government budgets are being cut.

EUROCITIES also wants a continued tightening of EU legislation on vehicle emissions. Effective test methods need to be put in place that more accurately reflect real world CO2 and pollutant emissions from vehicles. The EU should also consider emissions along the entire supply chain to ensure alternative fuels are truly sustainable.

Paul Bevan added:

“A more holistic approach to vehicle emissions is necessary. That means tests that better match real-world emission performance. It also means taking emissions from the production of alternative fuels into consideration. Alternative power is not sustainable unless it is from renewable sources.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

- EUROCITIES position paper on the Clean Power for Transport Package: <http://bit.ly/10g1hnl>
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