

# PUBLIC TRANSPORT MOVES INTO THE FAST TRACK

The European transport industry is facing many serious challenges that must be addressed in the coming years. Our cities are dealing with a constant increase in population, passengers and freight. Congestion and pollution are having a detrimental effect on our way of life and our health, and many hours of our lives are wasted in traffic jams or trying to find a parking space. This is in addition to the fact that congestion of freight vehicles is causing an estimated loss of 1% of the EU's GDP per year. People continue to add to city congestion and pollution by using private cars when buses, trains and trams are easily available because they feel public transport is not safe enough, cheap enough, reliable enough or flexible enough.

## VERVE AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE

According to a recent opinion poll, 90% of Europeans think that the traffic situation in their area should be improved. The challenge for the EU over the next few years is to create a smarter and more dynamic transport system that people want to use. Encouraging people out of their cars and on to public transport is not an easy task, but a good starting point is to develop transport systems that are cheaper, safer, more flexible and more comfortable than cars.

Under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research (FP7) many research topics are now being undertaken to improve the quality of European urban transport and inject new dynamism into city transport systems. More attention is being given to transport alternatives in cities, such as cycle routes and park and ride systems. The latter particularly are being encouraged in as many city centres as possible as a positive way of reducing congestion and improving

transport connections in and out of cities. There is a need for more out of town parking areas and more graded pricing systems to encourage people to park outside cities. At the moment the potential to build new infrastructure for transport systems, such as car parks, is being hampered by lack of space in city centres. Research topics include how to better integrate transport systems by making vehicles more efficient and cost-effective, how to link different transport modes, and how to make them more welcoming to vulnerable passengers.

Other important issues are the better use of existing infrastructure in city centres through upgrading older transport stock and providing improved access to transport for all passengers – including elderly people and the disabled.

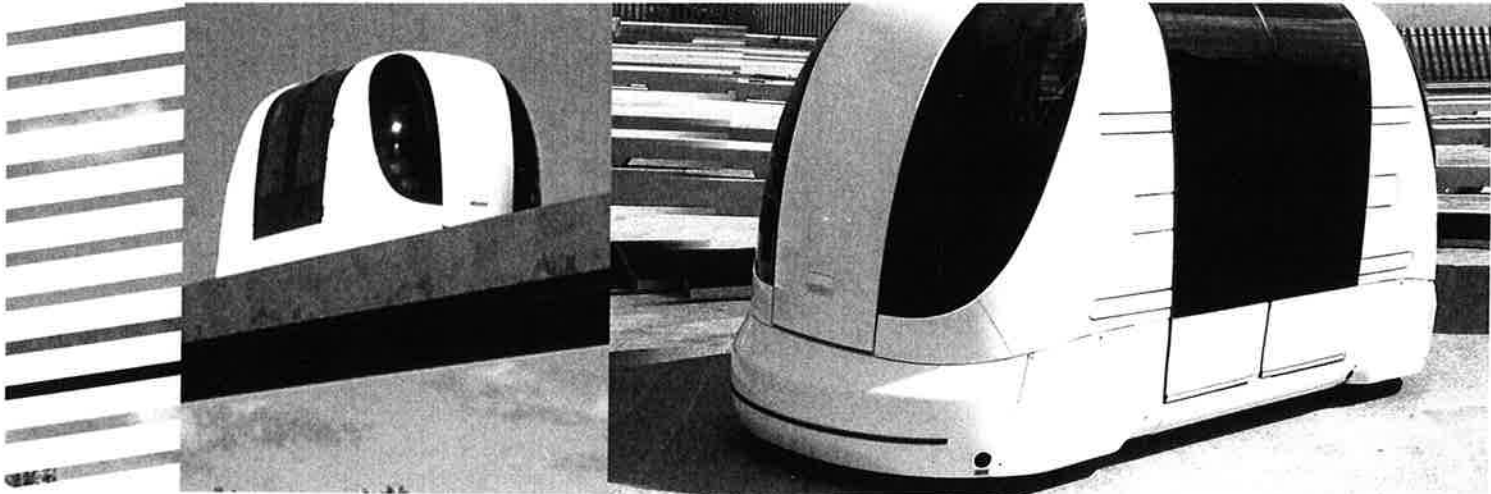
## DISCREET DELIVERIES

Research is being carried out on how movement of freight vehicles and goods can be improved to minimise the impact they make on residents, such as using hybrid electric technology for city buses. Focus is also being put on reducing energy consumption, emissions and

## CityMobil

### Testing personal electric travel pods

*CityMobil has EU funding of €40 million. Twenty-eight partners from 10 EU countries are researching ways to make better and smoother transport connections, such as the Heathrow Airport 'travel pods' – officially known as the ULtra Personal Rapid Transit system (PRT). This exciting new innovation offers personal transport with practically no waiting time to take passengers quickly and smoothly to their chosen destination. The driverless pods will carry up to four people and their luggage safely around the airport and can be called from a central control point in the airport. This will revolutionise the way passengers travel around airports, making it quick, convenient and with no long distances to walk!*



"One of CityMobil's personal transport 'travel pods'"

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noise. Better freight delivery systems are essential to keeping the European economy ahead of the global market. New technologies aim to produce efficient, safe and quiet transport vehicles to make nighttime transport and distribution of goods easy and discreet.

**KEEPING CITIZENS SAFE**

Safety and security are two top priorities of FP7 transport research. The most vulnerable members of society need special attention from transport providers. The elderly and disabled should be able to take full benefit of transport systems in EU countries and must feel safe using public transport. FP7 safety and security issues must be all-encompassing including passengers, pedestrians, motorcyclists, bicyclists, the elderly and the disabled. There are still too many road accidents in EU countries, mostly involving pedestrians

and cyclists. It is imperative therefore that new technologies are developed for safety and security including the design of vehicles that have built-in safety and security characteristics. New design constructions, such as updated traffic-speed monitoring equipment, are a top priority in EU transport research. These will provide a high standard of service to the public and will help to increase the level of passenger safety and confidence in transport systems.

Research is also being carried out into flexible safety measures for the transport of hazardous goods.

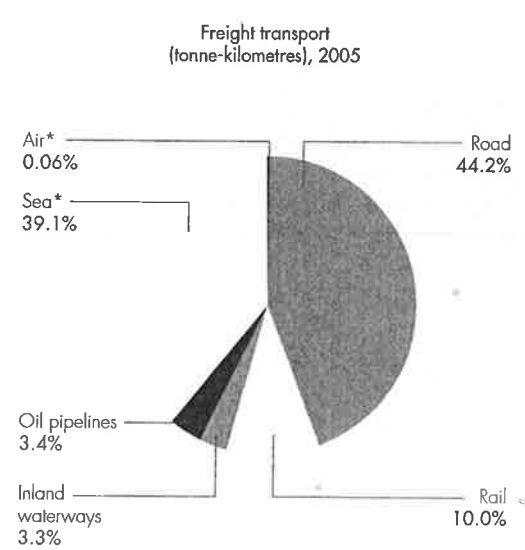
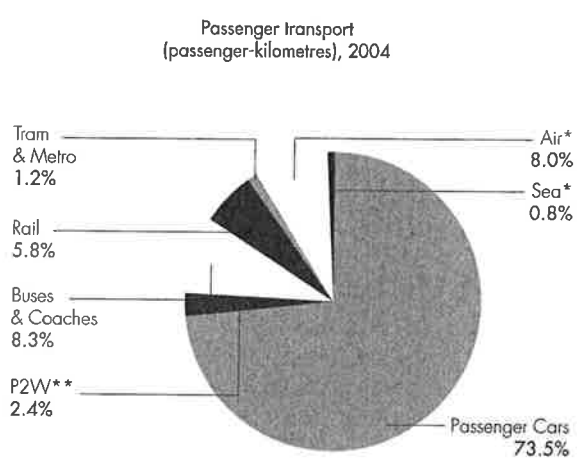
**STAYING AHEAD OF THE GAME**

In terms of economics, above all else the European transport industry must be competitive. The strengthening of the global competitiveness of the European

transport industry will result in the creation of new skills and job opportunities through research and development such as decreasing life cycle costs of different transport modes and advanced industrial processes including design, manufacturing, construction and maintenance. Research into innovative processes such as new production organisations and supply chains is also imperative. The role of SMEs in the innovation process and in the supply of systems and equipment is crucial, and will lead to an expansion of their role and an increase in job creation.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
**According to the latest statistics there is nearly one car to every two inhabitants in the EU-25.**  
*Source: Eurostat*

*Comparative modal shares of passenger and freight transport*



\*\*Air and sea: data only include intra-EU traffic and are estimates made by the Commission based on airport-to-airport data collected under Regulation (EC) 437/2003 and on port-to-port data collected under Council Directive 95/64/EC.  
 \*\*\*P2W\*: Powered two-wheelers.

Source: European Commission - DG Energy and Transport

