

Move it! The European Economic and Social Committee's urban mobility days

The Section for "Transport, Energy, Infrastructure and the Information Society" (TEN) of the European Economic Social Committee (EESC) is organising a large-scale public event on the theme of urban mobility. This event is intended to be interactive, fun and educational in order to achieve the maximum possible participation by the general public. It will be spread over four days and will take place on Place Flagey, a popular public area, which is also symbolic of the changes going on in terms of organisation of space in Brussels.

The four-day event will centre on an exhibition space set up by architect Luc Schuiten, with driverless, automated cars that visitors will be able to try out.

The focus will not only be on emerging technologies, but also on how to reduce the need to use forms of public transport which are heavily dependent on fossil fuels.

Urban and peri-urban mobility now poses a social, economic and environmental challenge. Urban and peri-urban transport often causes pollution, is inefficient and costly. This situation is very likely to continue unless current policies are changed. The European Commission published an urban mobility action plan at the end of 2009.

The EESC's opinion on this action plan is currently being consulted. In giving its opinion, the Committee will certainly wish to go much further than the Commission in terms of the measures to be adopted to prevent urban paralysis. This event in September will provide the opportunity to demand more action from the EU executive, by spotlighting a large number of the promising developments carried out in several European cities, including Brussels.

The way in which we move around cities and their environs will have to change considerably if we intend to achieve the 20/20/20 objectives featuring in the EU measures on climate and energy. Ordinary citizens must be involved in developing the emerging mobility models so that their needs are taken into account and the solutions implemented meet with the broadest possible public consent.

Solutions must not only involve technology, but also social and cultural aspects. They should not be imposed on citizens or restrict their daily comfort, but rather enable them to fulfil their social and professional aspirations.

The event will highlight a strong social demand for radically improving urban and peri-urban mobility models so that they are more in tune with the aspirations of all the stakeholders concerned.

This event is mainly aimed at city dwellers and commuters, as well as at children, young people and families in general.

The Committee wants to engage directly with citizens and raise their awareness of mobility issues and existing solutions. It wishes more specifically to involve children in the event through play and educational activities (games, quizzes, competitions etc.).

The EESC wants to organise the event with a large number of partners: European institutions (particularly the European Parliament and European Commission), socio-economic partners (industry, workers, consultants, NGOs, associations of relevant stakeholders etc.) and the Brussels municipal authorities.

- 09.00 - 19.00 on 19/09/10

- 10.00 - 18.00 on 20-22/09/10