



Newsletter

January – February 2021

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Portuguese Presidency of the Council

On 1 January 2021, Portugal took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the next six months. Under the motto "Time to deliver: a fair, green and digital recovery", Portugal takes on this presidency with three self-defined priorities: (a) to promote a recovery that benefits from climate and digital transformation; (b) to drive the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights as a distinctive element to ensure a fair and inclusive climate and digital transition; and (c) to strengthen Europe's autonomy while remaining open to the world, taking a leading role in climate action and promoting a digital transformation at the service of the people.

However, as in any relevant sector, the priority of the transport and mobility sector will be the fight against and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, Portugal stresses that priority will be given to those initiatives that help passengers, workers and businesses in the sector to recover from the effects of COVID-19 and that help to restore the movement of goods, services and people. The aim is to ensure that measures to support recovery also contribute to the modernisation and sustainability of the sector.

In addition to these emergency measures, the focus will be on initiatives that contribute to a structural strengthening of the Union's transport system. A clear focus will be on rail. In March, Portugal plans to launch the European Year of Rail in Lisbon to further discuss measures that will enable rail infrastructure to contribute to decarbonisation, modernisation and safety of transport. In addition to promoting the attractiveness of rail for the transport of people and goods, intermodality with maritime transport will be promoted through commercial ports and better provision of services and information.

As far as the trans-European transport network is concerned, the completion of the core network by 2030 and densification within the Union will be pursued, in particular by increasing capacity in peripheral regions and improving access to the

outermost regions. Together with the European Commission, the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) 2021 Days will be hosted in Lisbon in June.

On the subject of mobility data, the Portuguese Presidency has so far only highlighted that trust in transport services depends, among other things, on adequate protection of users' data.

Further Links:

- [Programme of the Council Presidency](#)

EPRS: Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy

On 20 January 2021, the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) published a briefing on the European Commission's Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy. The document outlines the strategy, explains the reactions of some stakeholders and gives an outlook on the next steps. On 9 December 2020, the Commission presented the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, which sets out the planned steps to transform the EU transport system in line with the ambitions of the European Green Deal and the objectives of the EU Digital Strategy. The mobility strategy is complemented by an action plan listing 82 initiatives in ten key fields of action ("flagships") with concrete measures to be adopted over the next four years. The Commission has therefore proposed a strategy that outlines how it intends to transform the EU transport sector and bring it in line with the European Green Deal by making it green, digital and resilient. By 2050, the Commission expects almost all cars, vans, buses and new trucks in the EU to be zero-emission, rail freight to double and high-speed transport to triple, while the multimodal Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) should be fully operational, ensuring high-speed connections. The Commission aims to achieve this by strengthening existing rules, proposing new legislation and providing support measures and guidance.

In road transport, the Commission wants to further tighten CO2 emission standards for cars

and vans as well as for trucks and buses. It intends to propose stricter air pollutant emission standards (Euro 7) for internal combustion engine vehicles, but without setting an end date for the sale of internal combustion engine cars in Europe. It intends to revise the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive and promote the availability of electricity and hydrogen by setting up more charging stations for vehicles. Measures to boost demand for zero-emission vehicles include not only carbon pricing, taxation, road pricing and changes to rules on weights and dimensions, but also measures to support the introduction of these vehicles into corporate and urban fleets.

While transport stakeholders have welcomed parts of the strategy as steps in the right direction, concerns have been raised about the high ambitions of the text and the lack of concrete elements. European car manufacturers (ACEA) warned that the target of having 30 million zero-emission cars on EU roads by 2030 is far from today's reality and is not accompanied by the ambition to build sufficient charging infrastructure. The road transport industry (IRU) warned that the strategy, based on an approach that only measures tailpipe emissions, will not achieve carbon neutrality. It also risks destroying bus transport, which they see as by far the greenest and most inclusive form of transport. In their view, the policy must be based on the well-to-wheel principle and all fuel alternatives to diesel will be needed in the coming decades.

The Commission is due to start proposing the planned measures in 2021. It remains to be seen to what extent, with what changes and how quickly they will be adopted and then implemented by EU member states and shape the transport transformation for years to come.

Further Links:

- [EPRS Briefing](#)
- [EAC: With alternative propulsion systems across Europe](#)

Study: Fleet electrification

According to a new study by industry group Eurelectric and Ernst & Young (EY), electrification of public and private fleets would save around half of all road transport emissions in Europe. This would be a major boost to the EU's climate goal and revolutionise clean mobility in Europe. Road transport is responsible for almost a quarter of Europe's total greenhouse gas emissions. If these are reduced by 10 percent per year, Europe has a very good chance of meeting its 2030 target and paving the way for a 90 percent reduction in transport-related greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. E-mobility, fuelled by carbon neutral and renewable energy, can be the key. Customers, whether private or corporate, can begin to understand the value of an e-vehicle over an internal combustion engine vehicle. However, there are certain requirements that need to be met:

Car manufacturers need to ramp up production of e-vehicles, reduce purchase costs and improve vehicle availability, choice and range. The European Commission calls for at least 30 million zero-emission cars and 80,000 zero-emission trucks to be in operation by 2030. To incentivise investment in infrastructure for plug-in vehicles to become mainstream, standards are needed for both hardware (plugs and cables) and communication software. Common standards for charging solutions will further enhance the driving experience and eliminate the need for an assortment of cables and adapters. Another point raised by the group is fleet prioritisation. Prioritising the fleet segment will ensure the greatest and fastest overall impact. Fleets account for 20 percent of all vehicles in Europe but travel disproportionately more kilometers and emit disproportionately more carbon dioxide. The lessons learned from fleets and the resulting value are transferable to other segments that are undergoing change.

A supporting ecosystem will grow in parallel with the introduction of electric vehicles. The Group expects it to unlock significant commercial value for early movers who participate in e-mobility

and actively facilitate customers' transition to electric vehicles. Digitalisation is even more important as it is becoming an indispensable driver for modernising the entire system to make it seamless and more efficient, while further reducing emissions. Finally, the group calls for an acceleration of the transition. The faster e-mobility takes hold, the sooner we can exploit the synergies between the energy and transport sectors. The greater the environmental and societal value we unlock, the more likely we are to achieve our long-term decarbonisation goals.

Further Links:

- [Eurelectric & EY: Accelerating fleet](#)

COVID-19 and Individual Mobility

As recently as December last year, the European consumer protection organisation BEUC published a "snapshot study" which, with the help of a survey in eleven European countries (11,273 consumers), compared mobility habits before COVID-19 with those in October 2020. The study shows that people in the countries expect to prefer individual means of transport (bicycle, car) and more local travel after the pandemic.

A change in mobility habits is most pronounced for public transport, where there is a significant decrease (10 percentage points) in weekly use. Public transport (68 percent) and long-distance buses/coach stations (67 percent) score highest in terms of uncertainty about COVID-19 contamination. They are followed by trains/train stations and flights/airports (61 percent each).

Two recently published studies by the consulting firm Capgemini also show this trend towards individual mobility. According to a survey of almost 11,000 consumers, 87 percent of consumers worldwide prefer to use a private vehicle to travel safely. At the beginning of the pandemic, the figure was 57 percent. In a direct comparison with public alternatives, around 78 percent of respondents also answered that they prefer their own vehicle to public transport. 72 percent said that they appreciate having access to

their own vehicle at all times more than before the pandemic. This is also reflected in car purchases. Since April, the share of respondents in Germany who would like to buy their own car in the next 12 months has risen from 35 to 46 percent.

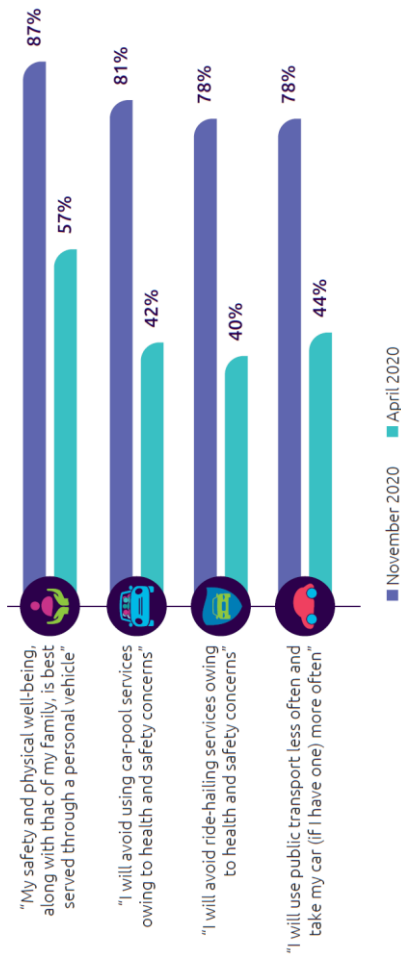
Local and long-distance public transport was reduced and suspended in many places in the wake of the pandemic, on top of that it is also considered to be risky due to the inevitably higher density of people. "What remains is the individual private transport, that is, the recourse to the car, motorcycle, bicycle or walking," stated EAC President Bernd Opolka in April clearly emphasizing, "Individual mobility is today more crucial than ever before. For the absolutely required mobility, such as for the journey to work, grocery shopping or seeing a doctor, there is often times no other alternative for your own car that is equally suitable and useful. You are on your own and can reduce the relatively manageable risk of infection, such as when charging or refueling, to a minimum by observing the known hygiene regulations."

However, it remains to be seen to what extent this trend will continue after the pandemic. There is no question that private transport will play a significant role. However, the future of the private car will also depend on the speed of the introduction of alternative drives, because climate goals and individual transport are only compatible if combustion engines disappear in the medium term. Especially in urban regions, local public transport must also be pushed harder than ever. Intermodality is indispensable in inner cities that are already completely congested and polluted.

Further Links:

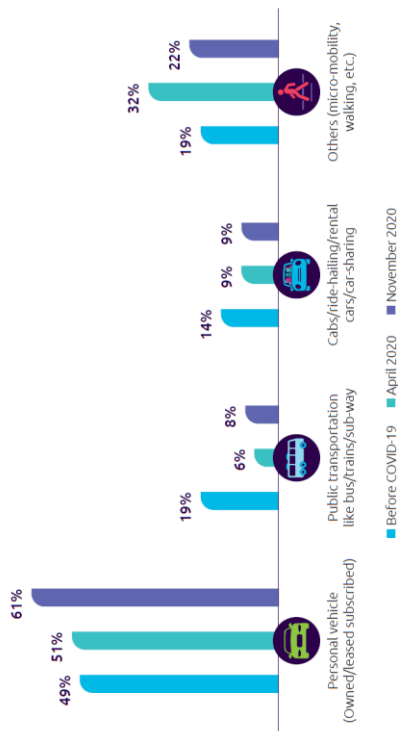
- [EAC Press Release: Mobility during the pandemic: individual, flexible and less risky when driving in the car](#)
- [BEUC: Mobility habits following COVID-19](#)
- [Capgemini: COVID-19 and the automotive consumer](#)
- [Capgemini: Shifting Gears](#)

Consumers' mobility preferences



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Consumer Behavior Survey, October 27–November 5, 2020, N=10,094 consumers

What is your most used mode of transportation before COVID-19 and currently?
(A comparison of personal and shared/public transport)



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Consumer Behavior Survey, October 27–November 5, 2020, N=10,094 consumers. Micro-mobility includes e-bikes, cycles, e-scooters, etc..

Meeting Dates

Council

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council 03/06/2021

Competitiveness Council 25/02/2021

Council of Justice and Home Affairs 11/03/2021

Council of Environment 18/03/2021

Plenary 08-11/03/2021 (Agenda)

Committees

Environment (ENVI) 24-25/02/2021 (Agenda, tba)

Internal Market / Consumer (IMCO) 22-23/02/2021 (Agenda, tba)

Justice & Home Affairs (LIBE) 24/02/2021 (Agenda, tba)

Transport (TRAN) 24-25/02/2021 (Agenda, tba)

EAC (internal)

(Hybrid) General Assembly in Berlin 23/03/2021