

**ANSWERS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE**  
**Rovana PLUMB**  
**Commissioner-designate for Transport**

**1) General competence, European commitment and personal independence**

**What aspects of your personal qualifications and experience are particularly relevant for becoming Commissioner and promoting the European general interest, particularly in the area you would be responsible for? What motivates you? How will you contribute to putting forward the strategic agenda of the Commission? How will you implement gender mainstreaming and integrate a gender perspective into all policy areas of your portfolio? What guarantees of independence are you able to give the European Parliament, and how would you make sure that any past, current or future activities you carry out could not cast doubt on the performance of your duties within the Commission?**

Building a strong, united and inclusive Europe, with no divisions between North and South, West and East, with a strong focus on social equality and fairness and a deep belief that in unity lies strength, this is what motivates me. This is what motivated me throughout all the years working for the integration of my country in the European family and promoting the general interest of the European Union.

This is what motivated me to work intensely during the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in the general interest of the Union, in order to advance the legislative work on mobility, to ensure continuity in the area of transport in the context of the United Kingdom's departure and to ensure the necessary financing resources through the Connecting Europe Facility.

As a politician who served several times in ministerial positions, I fully understand the responsibility that comes with public office, responsibility, which is directly linked with the right of citizens to benefit from quality service, both at national and European level. Transport represents an essential service for our citizens, and for our Union. It supports the freedom of movement of people, goods and services and makes a key contribution to cohesion across the continent. I stand ready to use my professional experience to advance the objectives of our European Union and to steer the delivery of transport's contribution to the priorities set out in President-elect Ursula von der Leyen's Political Guidelines and in the Mission Letter I received on 10 September.

As a Minister of Environment, I launched Romania's first ever national strategy to fight against climate change. As a Minister for European funds, I managed the implementation of cohesion policy, including the financing of infrastructure to ensure connectivity. As a Minister of Labour, Family and Social Protection, I had the responsibility to ensure an appropriate framework for the security and safety of workers, including in the transport

sector. And my first decision in this capacity was to set up a national agency for equal opportunities between men and women. As Chair of the National Authority for Consumer Protection, I was directly involved in the protection of the rights of our citizens. And as a Member of the national Parliament and the European Parliament, I have always fought for the rights of citizens as it is our responsibility as politicians to always be at the service of citizens.

In her Political Guidelines, President-elect Ursula von der Leyen stated that 'Europe must lead the transition to a healthy planet and a new digital world. But it can only do so by bringing people together and upgrading our unique social market economy to fit today's new ambitions.' I share this vision and I am wholeheartedly committed to working towards achieving it.

As a former Minister of Environment and Climate Change and as a Member of the Environment Committee of the European Parliament, I am fully aware of the urgency we face in addressing climate change and the need to protect our environment from air, water and noise pollution. I am proud of the Commission's long-term vision for Europe to become the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050. We need decisive action and transport must especially play its part, given that it accounts for as much as a quarter of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions.

Actions in the area of transport will therefore be a key component of the European Green Deal. Carbon emissions must have a price. If appointed Commissioner and in line with the Political Guidelines, I will work on extending the Emission Trading System to cover maritime transport and on reducing free allowances for airlines over time. I will also contribute to revising the rules on energy taxation to align it with our climate ambitions. Incentives to shift towards greener transport modes will only work if there are attractive alternatives. I will therefore support sustainable and smart mobility.

In order to effectively address environmental challenges and accelerate the transition to the circular economy, we must also make full use of innovative clean and digital technologies in the transport sector. Digitalisation and automation offer huge opportunities, both in terms of increasing transport efficiency and reducing congestion, which means less emissions, and in terms of improving the safety and quality of transport services. Fostering the development and uptake of sustainable alternative fuels will also be a key element in reducing emissions from transport, notably in aviation. If I am confirmed as Commissioner, I will put forward a comprehensive strategy for sustainable and smart mobility.

At the same time, we must not forget that transport is about bringing people together. The opportunity to move freely and to connect with people from other parts of Europe and the world lies at the heart of the European Union. We need to ensure that transport remains affordable, reliable and accessible, including for those on a low income or living in remote areas. No one should be left behind. That, too, is a question of fairness. I will therefore work towards completing the Trans-European Transport Network, contributing to the modernisation of transport infrastructure and ensuring a functioning internal market for transport, in which passengers' rights are respected and their safety and security protected. Our transport links should not stop at the border. Coming from one of the newer Member States of the European Union, I know how important the partnership with the EU is for countries in the Western Balkans and I will work on improving our links with this region, as well as in our neighbourhood.

Transport is an important economic sector, which directly employs 11 million people and where many EU companies occupy a leadership position worldwide. I will therefore contribute to this Commission's industry strategy and pay attention to fair labour conditions. The latter is also important in our efforts to attain gender equality. President-elect von der Leyen has put gender equality high on her agenda and committed to lead by example by forming a fully gender-balanced College. I intend to apply the same principle to my team. I also believe that strengthened application of gender mainstreaming in policy-making makes better use of resources, makes policy more efficient, supports sustainable development and creates fairer societies. This is very pertinent to my portfolio as women are vastly under-represented in transport. But gender equality is not only about the number of women employed in the transport sector. It is also about equal access to transport facilities, which, in turn, ensures equality on the labour market, health services, education and social services. I will work passionately to mainstream gender balance in the transport sector throughout the Union.

We also need to work on attracting young people into transport professions. Ensuring fair labour conditions will enhance the attractiveness of the sector.

I commit to comply without fail, as soon as I am appointed, with the Treaty obligations on independence, transparency, impartiality and availability, as defined in Article 17(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

If I am confirmed as Commissioner, I will fully respect the letter and spirit of the Treaty, in particular the obligation to act in the European interest and without taking any instructions. I will also honour the Code of Conduct of Members of the European Commission and its provisions on conflicts of interest. My Declaration of Interests is complete and accessible to the public, and I will update it rapidly should any change be required.

As a Member of the European Parliament, I have met all obligations towards the institution, including by submitting and updating all declarations of financial interests as required. I also fully respected the letter and spirit of the EU Treaties and the obligation to act in the European interest.

## **2) Management of the portfolio and cooperation with the European Parliament**

**How would you assess your role as a Member of the College of Commissioners? In what respect would you consider yourself responsible and accountable to the Parliament for your actions and for those of your departments? What specific commitments are you prepared to make in terms of enhanced transparency, increased cooperation and effective follow-up to Parliament's positions and requests for legislative initiatives? In relation to planned initiatives or ongoing procedures, are you ready to provide Parliament with information and documents on an equal footing with the Council?**

If confirmed as Commissioner, I will take full political responsibility for the activities in my area of competence, as set out in the Mission Letter sent to me on 10 September. I attach great importance to the principle of collegiality and will collaborate fully with other Members of the College. I will closely involve my colleagues in the development and implementation of policy initiatives.

As a former and present Member of the European Parliament, I know how important a close engagement with the European Parliament is.

This is of paramount importance to me. I will work with Parliament and relevant committees at all stages of both the policy-making process and the political dialogue.

Effective inter-institutional cooperation is essential for the EU's institutional system to work, and for the efficiency and legitimacy of EU decision-making system. It relies on certain guiding principles that I am fully committed to follow. These include openness, mutual trust, efficiency, and regular exchange of information. President-elect von der Leyen's Political Guidelines and Mission letters fully reflect these principles, and stress the intention to reinforce the special relationship between the European Parliament and the Commission. If confirmed as Commissioner, I will work towards this objective, and in doing so I will fully respect the provisions of the 2010 Framework Agreement and the 2016 Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making. I will manage my interactions with Parliament in an open, transparent and constructive way, to build that relationship of mutual trust.

In line with President-elect von der Leyen's Political Guidelines, I will make myself available to take part in all relevant committee meetings and trilogue discussions. I will ensure that parliamentary committees are involved in any major developments under my responsibility. At the same time, I am fully aware of the importance of equal treatment of the Parliament and the Council. This is a must for a Commissioner who is, as a Member of the College, accountable to directly elected Members of the European Parliament.

I also commit to basing the relations with the Commission service under my responsibility on the principles of loyalty, trust, transparency, a two-way flow of information, and mutual assistance. Specifically, I will ensure a regular flow of information with the Chair of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) but also with the Chair of Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) and other committees where relevant. I will also directly communicate with committee members, and ensure that I am available for bilateral meetings. I will also ensure that the European Parliament is regularly briefed, notably before major events and at key stages of international negotiations in areas under my responsibility.

, I will ensure the questions from Members of the European Parliament to the Commission that come under my responsibility are responded to swiftly and accurately. I will appear before the European Parliament's plenary and/or committees whenever called to answer a question or provide any particular response.

President-elect von der Leyen's Political Guidelines stress that in order to regain citizens' faith in the Union, our institutions should be open and beyond reproach on transparency issues. Citizens should know what positions the Commission defends in the legislative process. Strengthening interinstitutional cooperation by promoting legitimacy and accountability will boost the EU's efficiency and good governance.

I am therefore fully committed to implementing the wide-ranging provisions on transparency and the flow of information in the Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the Commission and the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making.

My mission is also to continue efforts to inform citizens. In addition, policy proposals under my responsibility will be based on proper consultations of experts and the public, in line with Better Regulation principles.

President-elect von der Leyen supports a right of initiative for the European Parliament. She committed that her Commission will follow-up on Parliamentary resolutions adopted by a majority of its members with a legislative act, in full respect of proportionality, subsidiarity and better law-making principles. I fully subscribe to this objective.

As part of the next College's commitment to a deepened partnership with the European Parliament, I will work hand in hand with Parliament at every stage in debating resolutions under Article 225 TFEU. I commit to work closely with the relevant parliamentary Committees, and be active and present during the preparation of Article 225 TFEU resolutions. I strongly believe that this will improve dialogue, foster confidence and a sense of working together towards a common goal.

The Commission will respond to Parliament's resolutions within three months after their adoption, in accordance with the Framework Agreement. The Commission will ensure political oversight over the process.

Further to my statement above about ensuring that parliamentary committees are involved in any major developments under my responsibility at the same time as and on an equal footing with the Council, I am fully aware that the provision of information and documents is an essential aspect of deepening the partnership between the European Parliament and the Commission. I therefore commit to fully implement the relevant provisions of the Framework Agreement between the two institutions, and of the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making.

#### Questions from the Committee on Transport and Tourism:

**3. What is your vision for optimised transport systems of persons and goods in the first quarter of the XXIst century, taking into account the main challenges of digitalisation, decarbonisation, competitiveness, safety, climate change, environmental protection, social welfare, working conditions and equal opportunities, including improved rights and protection for transport workers (in particular for women and youth) and technological changes, (autonomous vehicles, use of artificial intelligence), and which approach and concrete steps do you envisage to provide for sustainable, affordable, multimodal and reliable transport systems?**

The transport sector will have an important contribution to make in harnessing the potential of the twin climate and digital transitions. My vision for an optimised transport system is one that combines sustainability, a contribution to decarbonisation and a reduction in pollution. I want an optimised transport system that is also safe, smart, affordable and accessible. The transport system must be modernised to tackle capacity constraints and ageing infrastructure. To make this vision a reality means investing in transport networks and exploiting digital innovation. Innovation must be accompanied by training in relevant skills. Fair working conditions will be key in ensuring the sector is able to attract young women and men into transport professions.

One of my first tasks to make this vision a reality will be to put forward a comprehensive strategy for sustainable and smart mobility, which ensures that transport remains also affordable so that nobody is left behind. This will involve combining all the tools available at EU level into coherent and effective measures. It means adapting the regulatory framework when needed, leveraging and channelling the funds available, and making full use of other enablers such as research and innovation, to create the right incentives for making optimal use of the transport system, stimulating investments, reducing transport's environmental footprint, and harnessing new technologies and innovation. All of this needs close cooperation with my colleagues in the College.

Transport touches the daily life of every European. By increasing connectivity for its citizens and businesses, the EU supports the freedom of movement of people, goods and services and makes a key contribution to cohesion across the continent. Transport accounts for around 5% of EU gross domestic product and directly employs about 11 million people. I will be honoured to take responsibility for this crucial sector and ensure that transport contributes to the ambitious goals of the next mandate. Critical developments currently influence the transport sector: Demand for transport continues to rise. Estimates suggest increases in European passenger and inland freight transport of 35% and 53% respectively over 2015-2050. Congestion and capacity shortage is increasingly a problem. In 2017, at least 25% of EU greenhouse gas emissions came from transport. It is the only economic sector with higher emissions today than in 1990 and emissions are currently growing, despite the mitigation efforts already undertaken.

Transport must therefore contribute more decisively to the EU's emissions reduction efforts to achieve the vision set out in the Political Guidelines of the President-elect. Based on the analysis underlying the Communication 'A Clean Planet for All', to reach the objective of a climate-neutral economy by 2050, a reduction of about 90% in transport CO<sub>2</sub> emissions must be achieved.

Reconciling the goal of significantly reducing the transport sector's environmental footprint with ensuring connectivity and affordability and that this key sector of the economy can continue to flourish, is an enormous challenge. I will ensure, together with Executive Vice-President-designate Timmermans, that transport plays a central role in the 'European Green Deal'. Sustainability is the only way to go for transport and we need to put in place measures of unprecedented ambition across all transport modes. We need to act on two fronts: facilitate the deployment of transport alternatives and technologies that are more sustainable, and introduce a pricing system that gives the right incentives to use, operate and invest in those alternatives, while facilitating multimodality. Implementation of the user pays and polluter pays principles will play a key role in this.

I will work to extend the Emissions Trading System to the maritime sector, while supporting cleaner technologies with investment in infrastructure. We will also work on reviewing the Emissions Trading System in the light of international developments at the International Civil Aviation Organisation, including reducing free emission trading allowances for aviation over time. Since aviation and shipping are global industries, I will act in relevant international fora to ensure that the EU continues to play a leading role in driving for greater progress and ambition in cooperation with our international partners.

. I will also focus on increasing the uptake of sustainable and alternative fuels for road, maritime, inland waterways and air transport. In this context, it will be necessary to leverage public and private funds and complete alternative fuel connectivity for all transport modes,

including increased electrification at airports and seaports. I will also work, together with colleagues, to set the right price incentives for alternative fuels across all modes and to incentivise the uptake of alternative-fuelled vehicles. This will require coordination of financial resources and the right enabling policy framework.

I will strive for a European transport sector that is smart, as well as sustainable. Smart traffic management will be key in addressing capacity constraints in all modes, making transport more efficient and thus reducing emissions, as well as making it safer.

Digitalisation offers many new opportunities, such as connected and automated mobility, the collaborative economy, mobility as a service, which must be exploited to improve the accessibility and affordability of mobility for citizens. These need to be harnessed and framed in the appropriate policy and legal frameworks.

To ensure a fair and functioning internal market for transport and optimise the European transport system, we must complete the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) core corridors by 2030, while making sure that our infrastructure is fit for digital and sustainability challenges, including consumer friendly interoperable services. Where there are suitable alternatives, we must make more and better use of generally more sustainable modes such as rail and inland waterways. We must also make the most of dual-use infrastructure projects to improve military mobility [see question 3]. I will also work towards facilitating public and private investment in the interest of upgrading and modernising Europe's transport infrastructure through the new Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), InvestEU, and other instruments, including those supporting research (Horizon Europe) and territorial cohesion.

It is of paramount importance that transport remains safe and secure for its users and workers and that we never lower the guard in this area, but rather continuously strive to progress in these areas.

We need to ensure the highest possible safety standards across the transport policy area. 25,000 deaths on EU roads every year is unacceptable. We must deliver our Strategic Action Plan on Road Safety and our ambitious interim target – a 50% reduction in fatalities and injuries by 2030, through measures addressing all parts of the system (infrastructure, vehicles, behaviour). Automated mobility involving drones will also require new systems to protect our commendable aviation safety record. We must also respond in a cost-effective and proportionate manner to rapidly evolving security threats. In cooperation with Member States, international bodies and stakeholders, I will work closely with the Commissioner responsible to address new risk areas such as cybersecurity.

Transport should remain affordable, reliable and accessible, notably for those living in remote areas and those living on low income. Addressing citizens' concerns about rising fuel costs and ticket prices is fundamental. I commit to furthering passenger rights across all modes, including for people with reduced mobility. I will pay close attention to the social conditions of the transport labour force and the potential negative impacts of current changes in the sector, and will engage in regular dialogue with the social partners.

Finally, I will strive to strengthen cooperation with key international partners, to promote high EU standards internationally, to support EU industry's access to foreign markets on a level playing field, to enforce existing agreements and improve connectivity, in particular with our neighbourhood. I will pay particular attention to transport cooperation with / in the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership and the Mediterranean neighbourhood by extending in the

context of TEN-T. With major global trading partners and competitors (US, China and Japan), we must strengthen relations across all modes and maintain close cooperation with global growth centres (such as ASEAN) and strategic partners (e.g. US, China, Japan, Republic of Korea).

**4. What are your commitments at international level, to ensure a level-playing field between transport companies, guaranteeing fair competition and the respect of social rights, in particular in a context of fierce competition with third countries providing potentially illegal subsidies, as well as between transport modes, the continuation of the NAIADES programme, regarding internalisation of external costs, taxation, trading schemes and other measures, in order to ensure that the “user pays” and “polluter pays” principles are implemented equally and result in achieving the targets of the Paris agreement, and to promote and strengthen the cleanest mode of transport, in those areas of the EU where transport by road remains the predominant mode for both passengers and freight?**

A level playing field in transport, whether between us and our international partners or between modes, is crucial if the sector is to operate and develop sustainably. Our safety, social, economic and environmental rules and standards ensure the sector’s safe, fair and efficient functioning. We should continue to improve them and will work with third countries via bilateral and multilateral cooperation to safeguard and promote them globally, while ensuring that European transport companies are not disadvantaged vis-à-vis their foreign competitors.

To this end, I will work closely with our international partners in fora such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) or in the framework of bilateral agreements to pursue market access, tackle discrimination and barriers and promote EU safety, social and environmental standards, in line with what was achieved in the context of the recent agreements with Singapore and Japan and continuing negotiations with Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand. I will also work with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). This work is highly important when it comes to promoting European leadership in setting standards and targets on the environment, safety, security, training and labour standards, and modernisation of traffic management.

I will continue to pursue Comprehensive Air Transport Agreements that promote European standards all over the world. I also want to use the external aviation policy to open new opportunities and improve market access for the European aviation industry and for the European aeronautical industry in particular.

I will also engage with China, a key partner, through the EU-China Connectivity Platform to work towards reciprocity, transparency, openness and a level playing field in transport infrastructure development.

While transport allows EU citizens to move freely and EU businesses to grow, it also represents a significant expenditure in Europeans’ household budgets, is responsible for substantial environmental damage and causes congestion and accidents. A recent independent study commissioned by the Commission on the internalisation of transport’s external costs showed that transport prices do not fully reflect costs to society. This can distort the market. We must ensure that the transition to sustainable mobility is fair for all. Where these matters fall within EU competence, we should tackle them robustly.

In close collaboration with my Commission colleagues responsible, I will look at how best to incentivise the move towards sustainability through the revision of the EU Emission Trading System and the Energy Taxation Directive [to align it with our climate ambitions and bring an end to fossil fuel subsidies. Further measures towards the implementation of the user pays and polluter pays principles will be considered as part of the comprehensive strategy for sustainable and smart mobility.

In addition, as part of the European Green Deal, I propose to work on complementary initiatives to make the transport system more sustainable, including for freight. I will support general rail transport, as rail has an essential role for commuters and freight alike. Rail also has advantage over longer distances; high-speed trains offer services on popular routes between major cities and can offer alternatives to other modes such as air transport. We need, among others, to develop further rail freight corridors, improve the performance of rail and inland waterway freight and ensure better hinterland connections for ports. This will include actions to enable multimodality through digitalisation, better traffic management and infrastructure investment. For rail to play its full part, we need open and competitive rail transport markets. To that end, I am resolved to work towards the single European rail area without borders in the EU becoming even more a reality, and that the recently adopted 4th Railway Package, including the principle of competitive award of public service contracts, is fully enforced. National technical rules for trains still prevail and more harmonisation and capacity management across borders, starting with freight trains, is key in my view. I will aim for seamless rail services and robust mobility links to other modes through enhanced digitalisation.

In maritime transport, we will continue on the experience of the Single Window and of the digitalisation of paperwork, in order to reduce inefficiencies and further improve the integration of the sector within the logistic chain.

**5. In order to complete the Single European Transport Area, while taking into account the important delays and persisting large divergences in terms of transport infrastructure across the Union, and to provide for safe, intermodal, innovative transport infrastructures with adequate capacity throughout the EU, covering also peripheral and insular regions, with the aim of good interconnectivity for all, what are your priorities for the further development and completion of the Trans-European Transport Network, including between Central and East European regions also in relation to digitalisation, alternative fuels, safety and security, and what is your approach to unblocking pending legislative proposals and/or boosting the necessary investments across the whole of the EU at all levels, including for the sustainable development of sea ports, completion of the Single European Sky and rail cross-border sections to improve longer-distance passenger traffic?**

I will work towards achieving a genuine single European transport area which is sustainable, smart and fair. I will also focus on completing the TEN-T and missing infrastructure links as swiftly as possible.

Transport is the backbone of the EU single market. It unites us by helping people, services and goods move freely within our Union and connecting people from different regions and countries. The Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) also ensures economic, social and territorial cohesion and strengthens EU global competitiveness. It can also play a security role by enabling troop mobility and the movement of military assets.

The Commission is currently evaluating the TEN-T framework. In May 2020 at the TEN-T Days, I will present the main evaluation findings. Especially in the context of the TEN-T review, I will also pay particular attention to urban hubs as the origin and destination of transport flows. I know the importance of full geographical accessibility across the EU and the related, critical role of the comprehensive TEN-T network. That is why I will work towards greater connectivity within Europe, between the periphery and the centre, between nations and regions, between east and west, north and south and in rural and remote areas. Key infrastructure projects, such as Rail Baltica or projects on the Rhine-Danube Corridor, illustrate EU value-added. Their successful implementation is essential if we are to make connectivity a reality. We must therefore address outstanding delays and any political tensions associated with the completion of key cross-border infrastructure projects. In this context, I note too that regional and local airports play a crucial role in connecting peripheral and remote regions and in regional economic development. The high speed rail network is far from complete. Continued public support for infrastructure investment is essential although not sufficient.

Making the TEN-T Network able to meet the challenge will not be possible without financial resources. We must foster public and private investment in upgrading and modernising Europe's transport infrastructure. The renewed Connecting Europe Facility, InvestEU and other instruments such as those supporting research and territorial cohesion should help in attaining this objective. When investing, we need to keep our climate goals in mind. For the overall Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027, the Commission has a proposed target of 25% climate expenditure. However, I was happy to see that, in their recent agreement, the co-legislators kept the 60% target for the CEF programme (as proposed by the Commission). The future agreement on the next, long-term EU budget will define how we tackle growth, reduce congestion, address safety and decarbonisation in transport for the next generations. I will thus engage with my colleagues, the European Parliament and the Council in the negotiations.

. As a former MEP, I understand the importance of all voices being heard early. I will thus rely on very close cooperation with the Parliament. I look forward to regular exchanges with the TRAN Committee (and others such as ENVI, EMPL, ITRE).

**6. What concrete initiatives do you intend to take to increase sustainable mobility in the urban areas of the Union while respecting the principle of subsidiarity, improving air quality, combatting climate change, reducing the antagonism between cities and peri-urban regions, guaranteeing social inclusion, and at the same time allowing a mobility without barriers including adaptation of the built in environment in the European Union and decreasing the diversity of restriction schemes in the Union? In this context, would you see cross-border night trains as a contribution to sustainable longer-distance passenger traffic in Europe and would you take any actions to support them?**

European cities are home to 72% of the EU population and generate over 85% of EU GDP. They increasingly face mobility and transport challenges that relate mostly to conventionally-fuelled private cars, in particular issues of congestion, air pollution, CO2 emissions, noise and road accidents. In 2017, 37% of road fatalities happened in urban areas. These negative externalities mean huge economic and environmental costs. Urban congestion related to passenger cars means efficiency losses estimated at over €110 billion annually. Urban transport is responsible for about 23% of EU greenhouse gas emissions from transport.

It is time to rethink urban mobility. Together, in full respect of the principle of subsidiarity, we can realise tangible benefits, including cleaner air, reduced noise, less congestion and a safer and more citizen-friendly urban environment. I welcome the additional focus on climate-neutral, smart cities in Horizon Europe. I will work to see mobility fully integrated into the different Horizon Europe ‘missions’. I will promote cooperation at EU, national and local levels in support of cities as they transition to more sustainable urban mobility. In some countries, there are already many good examples of how ‘Mobility as a Service’ can be developed. These provide useful ideas on the way forward throughout the EU.

To guarantee affordable and accessible mobility and help reduce pollution and congestion, I want to help make collective transport more attractive. This is a question of availability, reliability but also of how easy it is to plan and book a journey. Therefore, ticketing integrating various modes can play a key role in providing alternatives for users of private cars. As part of the future comprehensive strategy, we need to also look at the EU framework for urban mobility that is driven by citizens’ needs. Alternatives to private cars must be both available and affordable. While promoting active transport modes (walking, cycling) and the use of public transport, we also need to take account of the rapid development of new (shared, digital) mobility devices, such as e-bikes and e-scooters, and new urban mobility services. With this comes also a growing need for safe and accessible green urban public spaces, including better conditions for pedestrians and people with reduced mobility. We must make sure we take advantage of opportunities provided by the collaborative economy and modern technologies. Ride-sharing, ride-hailing, local transport on demand and other forms of transport sharing, which help complement public transport and address the urban traffic saturation. At the same time, we need to respond to questions and challenges these new services raise: from their role in urban mobility planning, the use of public space, safety, maintenance, liability to social conditions, to name just a few. The current evaluation of the existing Urban Mobility Package will feed into this reflection. One aspect is the need to develop an efficient, digitally-based system [U-space] that keeps drone operations safe, secure, sustainable and respects privacy constraints, particularly in urban areas.

The roll-out of clean mobility, including clean vehicles and alternative fuels infrastructure, such as recharging points in urban areas, should also be a priority, as set out in my previous answers. It is also important that we advance the electrification of ports, both in their own operations and in support to serviced ships. It is crucial to set the right incentives for urban and rural areas are in place. It is important that Member States fully comply with the new Clean Vehicles Directive. Not least, this ensures best use of public money. We should not forget either that the transport sector remains the largest contributor to NO<sub>x</sub> emissions (48% of total EU NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in 2016). As regards nitrogen dioxide in particular, we need to help Member States – and within these, more than 130 cities – comply with European air quality standards.

While making our transport sector more sustainable and smart, we also need to make sure it is fair and affordable. Nobody should be left behind. Addressing the connectivity gap with outlying urban and rural areas will require action on a number of levels. The sustainable urban mobility plan (SUMP) is a useful tool that can be deployed also beyond physical city boundaries.

Further, there is renewed interest in night trains. I will discuss with the sector how to support the operation of night trains, starting with the availability of rolling stock and rail-road links. The current legal framework for Public Service Obligations (PSO) in land transport applies to all public passenger transport services by rail, without excluding international night train

services. The competent national authorities would need to assess the applicable requirements and, where relevant, may procure the services in accordance with this framework.

**7. What concrete steps, including, for example, the use of modern traffic management technologies and integrated ticketing, will you take to develop a reliable, timely and seamless multimodal transport environment to facilitate the mobility of citizens, with special attention to persons with reduced mobility and persons with special needs, and which ensure that the rights of all passengers are guaranteed and improve the quality of rail passenger transport?**

I am convinced that multimodality is a means to achieve seamless, sustainable and secure connectivity and make better use of our existing infrastructure. To promote sustainable and smart mobility, we need action both within and across modes, including research to develop and test new ideas and technologies. Deploying emerging digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and blockchain in transport should be a priority while addressing the human and ethical implications, including safety, cybersecurity and privacy.

The Horizon Europe agenda for research and innovation should help support the sector for two major changes: (i) future zero-emission operations with fully digitalised, competitive services for all citizens and businesses, and (ii) cooperative, connected and automated mobility (CCAM). Further research can help overcome technological challenges and test new, integrated solutions.

More efforts will be required to support a common and inter-operable data layer for freight multi-modality and to scale up Mobility as a Service.

Smarter and more efficient traffic management is also key to overcoming capacity shortages in all modes and to reducing transport's environmental footprint. As regards air traffic management, completing the Single European Sky is a priority. It is essential both to improve citizens' air connectivity and to reduce the GHG emissions from aviation. I am committed to rapid action in favour of modern, efficient, cleaner aviation and seamless air traffic management in Europe. During its first years of operation, Shift2Rail advanced rail research considerably, and it should now continue in particular on European Rail Traffic Management (ERTMS), automation and freight transport. In the maritime sector, I will further develop the Union Maritime Information and Exchange System to provide state of the art maritime surveillance on maritime safety, security and environmental protection. Given the gradual introduction of autonomous shipping, with these ships sailing on EU ports simultaneously with conventionally manned vessels, this may also involve a more developed and tailored approach to monitoring vessel traffic.

For both passengers and freight, multimodal transport is often a more sustainable form of mobility than road only. To maximise the benefits of combined transport, we need fewer administrative hurdles and more transshipment facilities, especially in peripheral regions. Without the correct pricing of externalities [cf. question 2], adequate infrastructure and digital information, alternatives to road-only transport will not materialise. I will work to fill these gaps.

If we want passengers to ‘travel multimodal’, they also need to feel adequately protected. Despite substantial progress on this in the last 15 years, challenges remain in terms of ensuring that European passengers, including those with disabilities and reduced mobility, are protected against disruption in all phases of their journey. I first want to ensure that the existing passenger rights legislation works; I will then consider what action is needed for multimodal journeys, as the market develops.

To support these developments, the Commission proposal for the new Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Regulation foresees greater emphasis on rail and waterborne transport, on digitalisation and the use of alternative fuels. The total proposed allocation would be over EUR 30 billion. I believe inter-modal infrastructure development should receive appropriate priority in Member States’ national plans as relevant, in the context of the programmes available within the next Multiannual Financial Framework period of 2021-2027. Stronger cooperation between public and private actors is also needed, starting with joint efforts in research and innovation, including public-private partnerships. I will do this by building on the successes of the Joint Undertakings in transport, namely SESAR and Shift2Rail and by developing a new partnership for Cooperative, Connected and Automated Mobility.

Furthermore, the evolution of security threats (including cybersecurity risks) in parallel with traffic growth makes the maintenance of high levels of safety and security both necessary and increasingly complex. Only if we ‘get this right’ can we maintain the trust of our citizens and transport companies. There are particular challenges associated with digitalisation on which I propose to focus in close cooperation with my Commission colleagues. These include building up resilience to cyberattack, creating trustworthy systems to protect passenger data, and ensuring that data are available and shared, subject to appropriate safeguards, to develop new applications and integrate services.