European Committee of the Regions

COTER-VI/039

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OPINION

Delivering on low-emission mobility

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

- points out that the move towards low and zero emission of particulate matter and NOx benefits the lives of Europe's citizens, especially in cities, where dense, highly polluting urban traffic worsens people's lives and health;
- notes that, in connection with the greening of motor vehicle use, (cargo) cycling for short journeys, as well as railway and green shipping, should be promoted
- recognises that there needs to be an interoperable solution for the provision of alternative fuels. While the CoR acknowledges that the legislation and regulations for achieving low-emission mobility should be open to all kinds of technology, each local and regional authority could strive to attain economies of scale, possibly by cooperating with neighbouring and cross-border regions;
- thinks that plans for low-emission mobility should go beyond end-of-pipe solutions and be aligned with increased production and distribution of green electricity and renewable fuels;
- points out that refuelling should be easy to use and interoperable across borders. This requires European action in order to create a single market.

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Rapporteur

Michiel Scheffer (NL/ALDE), Member of the Executive Council of the Province of Gelderland

References documents

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Delivering on low-emission mobility – A European Union that protects the planet, empowers its consumers and defends its industry and workers
COM (2017) 675 final

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 92/106/EEC on the establishment of common rules for certain types of combined transport of goods between Member States
COM(2017) 648 final and final/2

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1073/2009 on common rules for access to the international market for coach and bus services
COM(2017) 647 final

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2009/33/EU on the promotion of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles
COM(2017) 653 final

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Towards the broadest use of alternative fuels – an Action Plan on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure under Article 10(6) of Directive 2014/94/EU, including the assessment of national policy frameworks under Article 10(2) of Directive 2014/94/EU
COM(2017) 652 final and final/2

Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Delivering on low-emission mobility

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1073/2009 on common rules for access to the international market for coach and bus services
COM(2017) 647 – final

Amendment 1
Recital (3)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
An independent and impartial regulatory body should be designated in each Member State to ensure the proper functioning of the road passenger transport market. That body may also be responsible for other regulated sectors such as rail, energy or telecommunications.	***Either competent transport authorities or an*** independent and impartial regulatory body should be designated in each Member State to ensure the proper functioning of the road passenger transport market. That body may also be responsible for other regulated sectors such as rail, energy or telecommunications.

Reason
Under the EU Treaty, passenger transport is a service of general economic interest (SGEI). To impose an independent regulatory body may be disproportionate when the market is organised under (EC) Regulation No 1370/2007.

Amendment 2
Recital (4)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
Commercial regular service operations should not compromise the ***economic*** equilibrium of existing public service contracts. For this reason, the regulatory body should be able to carry out an objective ***economic*** analysis to ensure that this is the case.	Commercial regular service operations should not compromise the equilibrium of existing public service contracts. For this reason, the regulatory body should be able to carry out an objective analysis to ensure that this is the case. ***This analysis must take into account the relevant structural and geographical characteristics of the market and network concerned (size, demand characteristics, network complexity, technical and geographical isolation and the services covered by the contract) as well as whether the new service leads to an improvement in the quality of services or cost efficiency, or both, compared to the previously awarded public service contract.***

Reason
Public services like transportation should not only be judged on economic terms but in a wider sense that includes not only economically quantifiable criteria but also questions of quality, safety and territorial and social cohesion. The Committee of the Regions should use this report to provide guidance on certain aspects that need to be assessed.

Amendment 3

Recital (6)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
In order to ensure fair competition in the market, operators of regular services should be provided with access rights to terminals in the Union on fair, equitable, non-discriminatory and transparent terms. Appeals against decisions rejecting or limiting access should be lodged with the regulatory body.	In order to ensure fair competition in the market, operators of regular services should be provided with access rights to ***publicly-owned*** terminals in the Union on fair, equitable, non-discriminatory and transparent terms***. Nevertheless, territorial equilibrium and social cohesion must not be compromised thereby Public Service Operators should have priority access to guarantee the obligations established in the public service contract with the competent authorities***. Appeals against decisions rejecting or limiting access should be lodged with the regulatory body.

Reason
Access to terminals should be prioritised for Public Service Operators which must comply with obligations (frequencies, timetables, connections, services) established in their public service contracts with competent authorities.

Amendment 4

Recital (8)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
Authorisation for both national and international regular services should be subject to an authorisation procedure. Authorisation should be granted, unless there are specific grounds for refusal attributable to the applicant, or the service would compromise the ***economic*** equilibrium of a public service contract. ***A distance threshold should be introduced to ensure that commercial regular service operations do not compromise the economic equilibrium of existing public service contracts. In the case of routes already served by more than one public service contract, it should be possible to increase that threshold.***	Authorisation for both national and international regular services should be subject to an authorisation procedure. Authorisation should be granted, unless there are specific grounds for refusal attributable to the applicant, or the service would compromise the equilibrium of a public service contract. ***The equilibrium of a public service contract should take into account its economic viability but also the services offered to citizens in terms of connections, intermodal journey planning, quality, efficiency, suitability to the demand, safety and security. The provision of services should also comply with***

	environmental and social standards.

Reason
Public services like transportation should not only be judged on economic terms but in a wider sense that includes not only economically quantifiable criteria but also questions of quality, safety and territorial and social cohesion. The "equilibrium" of a public service contract should take into account its own economic viability but also the quality of service offered to citizens. Compliance with the same environmental and social standards is a prerequisite of fair competition.

Amendment 5

Recital (13)

Text proposed by the Commission	***CoR amendment***
Insofar as this Regulation harmonises the rules in national markets for regular coach and bus services and access to terminals, its objectives, namely the promotion of inter-urban mobility and the increase of the modal share of sustainable passenger transport modes, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States. Therefore, the Union may adopt measures, in line with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that Article, this Regulation does not go beyond what is necessary to achieve the objectives pursued.	

Reason
The questions of access to local terminals and regional public transport markets are closely linked to subsidiarity.

Amendment 6

Article 1, Point (2)

Text proposed by the Commission	***CoR amendment***
Article 2 is amended as follows:	Article 2 is amended as follows:
(…)	(…)
(c) the following points 9 to 11 are added:	(c) the following points 9 to 11 are added:
"9. 'terminal' means any facility ***with a minimum area of 600m2,*** which provides a parking place that is used by coaches and buses for the setting down or picking up of	"9. ***Subject to the definitions and requirements laid down in national legislation,*** 'terminal' means any ***publicly-owned*** facility which provides a parking place that is used by

passengers; (…)	coaches and buses for the setting down or picking up of passengers;

Reason
Member States should have a margin of appreciation. The reference to a minimum area of 600 m^2 should be deleted not to undermine terminals in small cities and rural areas with lower areas but whose function is essential to connect them with the main cities.

Amendment 7

Article 1, point (3)

Text proposed by the Commission	***CoR amendment***
the following Article 3a is inserted before Chapter II: "*Article 3a* Regulatory body 1. ***Each*** Member State shall designate a single national regulatory body for the road passenger transport sector. That body shall be an impartial authority which is, in organisational, functional, hierarchical and decision making terms, legally distinct and independent from any other public or private entity. ***It*** shall be independent from any competent authority involved in the award of a public service contract. The regulatory body may be responsible for other regulated sectors.	the following Article 3a is inserted before Chapter II: "*Article 3a* Regulatory body 1. ***Subject to their domestic services market organisation, each*** Member State shall designate a single national regulatory body for the road passenger transport sector. That body shall be ***either a competent transport authority or*** an impartial authority which is, in organisational, functional, hierarchical and decision making terms, legally distinct and independent from any other public or private entity. ***In the second case, it*** shall be independent from any competent authority involved in the award of a public service contract. The regulatory body may be responsible for other regulated sectors.

Reason
New commercial services should not undermine the fulfilment of a SGEI's mission and public service obligations. Member States should have flexibility to choose between an independent regulatory body or a competent transport authority that knows the socio-economic needs of users.

Amendment 8

Article 1, point (3)

Text proposed by the Commission	***CoR amendment***
the following Article 3a is inserted before	the following Article 3a is inserted before

Chapter II: "Article 3a Regulatory body (…) 3. The regulatory body shall perform the following tasks: (a) carry out ***economic*** analyses of whether a proposed new service would compromise the ***economic*** equilibrium of a public service contract; (b) collect and provide information on access to terminals; and (c) decide on appeals against decisions of terminal operators.	Chapter II: "Article 3a Regulatory body (…) 3. The regulatory body shall perform the following tasks: (a) carry out analyses of whether a proposed new service would compromise the equilibrium of a public service contract ***and would negatively impact on the quality of service provided to citizens taking into account i.a. questions of available connections, frequency, fares, intermodal journey planning or safety, as well as compliance with environmental and social standards in the provision of services;***; (b) collect and provide information on access to terminals; and (c) decide on appeals against decisions of terminal operators.

Reason
Compliance with the same environmental and social standards is a prerequisite of fair competition.

Amendment 9

Article 1, point (3)

Text proposed by the Commission	***CoR amendment***
the following Article 3a is inserted before Chapter II: "Article 3a Regulatory body (…) 3. The regulatory body shall perform the following tasks: (…) (b) collect and provide information on access to terminals; and (c) decide on appeals against decisions of terminal operators.	the following Article 3a is inserted before Chapter II: "Article 3a Regulatory body (…) 3. The regulatory body shall perform the following tasks: (…) (b) collect and provide information on ***access to terminals with an aim to ensure that*** access to ***the relevant*** terminals ***for service operators is granted under fair, equitable, non-discriminatory and transparent conditions***; and (c) decide on appeals against decisions of terminal operators.

Reason
Buses and coaches are one of the most accessible and most important modes of transport in the EU. It is therefore vital that passengers receive the best service possible and to that end fair and healthy competition is the best way to achieve that.

Amendment 10

Article 1, point (6)

Text proposed by the Commission	***CoR amendment***
the following Article 5a is inserted: "Article 5a Access to terminals (…) 2. Terminal operators shall endeavour to accommodate all requests for access in order to ensure optimum use of terminals. Requests for access may be refused ***only*** on the grounds of lack of capacity. ***Where a terminal operator refuses a request for access, it shall indicate any viable alternatives.***	the following Article 5a is inserted: "Article 5a Access to terminals (…) 2. Terminal operators shall endeavour to accommodate all requests for access in order to ensure optimum use of terminals ***and respect for public service obligations***. Requests for access may be refused on the grounds of lack of capacity ***or if the request would deteriorate the services available to the citizen in terms of access to connections, limiting connections, compromising safety and security or overall quality of services offered, or if necessary environmental standards are not met***; ***if such decision is taken by a terminal operator, it shall also communicate it to the regulatory authority***.

Reason
It is not the task of the terminal operator to conduct research of viable alternatives. Additionally, access to terminals should be linked to questions of quality of services to consumers and their safety and security. Plus, the right of access to terminals should not undermine the fulfilment of the public objectives, mission and public service obligations of a service of general economic interest (SGEI). Especially in urban areas with particulate pollution, a restriction based on environmental standards may be required.

Amendment 11

Article 1, point (9)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
Article 8 is replaced by the following: "Article 8 Authorisation procedure for the international carriage of passengers ***over a distance of less than 100 kilometres as the crow flies*** 1. Authorisations shall be issued in agreement with the competent authorities of all the Member States in whose territories passengers are picked up or set down ***and are carried over distances of less than 100 kilometres as the crow flies***. The authorising authority shall send a copy of the application, together with copies of any other relevant documentation, within two weeks of receipt of the application to such competent authorities with a request for their agreement. At the same time, the authorising authority shall forward those documents to the competent authorities of other Member States whose territories are crossed, for information. (…)	Article 8 is replaced by the following: "Article 8 Authorisation procedure for the international carriage of passengers 1. Authorisations shall be issued in agreement with the competent authorities of all the Member States in whose territories passengers are picked up or set down. The authorising authority shall send a copy of the application, together with copies of any other relevant documentation, within two weeks of receipt of the application to such competent authorities with a request for their agreement. At the same time, the authorising authority shall forward those documents to the competent authorities of other Member States whose territories are crossed, for information. (…)

Reason
Decision whether or not to accept transport services should not depend on the distance (100km as the crow flies) but rather on the impact the additional service would have on the existing service offered to citizens (be it a service of general public interest or commercial service). In addition, the regional differences (e.g. in terms of distance between cities and economic centres) cannot be generally measured for the whole of the EU.

Amendment 12

Article 1, point (10)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
the following Articles 8a to 8***d*** are inserted: "Article 8a ***Authorisation procedure for the international carriage of passengers over a distance of 100***	the following Articles 8a to 8***b*** are inserted: "Article 8a Decisions of authorising authorities

kilometres or more as the crow flies	1. Following the procedure laid down in Article 8, the authorising authority shall grant the authorisation, grant the authorisation with limitations or reject the application. The authorising authority shall inform all the competent authorities referred to in Article 8(1) of its decision.
1. The authorising authority shall take a decision on the application within two months of the date of submission of the application by the carrier.	2. Decisions rejecting an application or granting authorisation with limitations shall state the reasons on which they are based.
2. Authorisation shall be granted unless refusal can be justified on one or more of the grounds listed in points (a) to (c) of Article 8c(2).	Authorisation shall be granted unless rejection can be justified on one or more of the following grounds:
3. The authorising authority shall forward to the competent authorities of all Member States in whose territories passengers are picked up or set down, as well as to the competent authorities of Member States whose territories are crossed without passengers being picked up or set down, a copy of the application, together with copies of any other relevant documentation, and its assessment, for information.	(a) (…) (…) (d) a regulatory body establishes on the basis of an objective analysis that the service would compromise the equilibrium of a public service contract. Authorising authorities shall not reject an application solely on the grounds that the carrier offers lower prices than those offered by other road carriers or the fact that the link in question is already operated by other road carriers ***and if it can technically be demonstrated that these lower prices guarantee the provision of the service for the duration of the contract.***
Article 8b ***Authorisation procedure for national regular services***	(…)
1. The authorising authority shall take a decision on the application within two months of the date of submission of the application by the carrier. This may be extended to four months where an analysis is requested in accordance with Article 8c(2)(d).	Article 8***b*** Limitation of the right of access
2. Authorisations for national regular services shall be granted unless refusal can be justified on one or more of the grounds listed in points (a) to (c) of Article 8c(2) and, if the service is carrying passengers over a distance of less than 100 kilometres as the crow flies, Article 8c(2)(d).	1. Member States may limit the right of access to the international and national market for regular services if the service would compromise the equilibrium of a public service contract ***or in the case of service providers that have been penalised by the competent authorities for engaging in practices that run counter to the guarantees of the service***.
3. The distance referred to in paragraph 2 may be increased to 120 kilometres if the regular service to be introduced will serve a point of departure and a destination which are already served by more than one public service contract.	2. The competent authorities that awarded a public service contract or the public service operators performing the public service contract may request the regulatory body to

Article 8c Decisions of authorising authorities 1. Following the procedure laid down in Article***s*** 8***, 8a or 8b***, the authorising authority shall grant the authorisation, grant the authorisation with limitations or reject the application. The authorising authority shall inform all the competent authorities referred to in Article 8(1) of its decision. 2. Decisions rejecting an application or granting authorisation with limitations shall state the reasons on which they are based. Authorisation shall be granted unless rejection can be justified on one or more of the following grounds: (a) (…) (…) (d) a regulatory body establishes on the basis of an objective ***economic*** analysis that the service would compromise the ***economic*** equilibrium of a public service contract. Authorising authorities shall not reject an application solely on the grounds that the carrier offers lower prices than those offered by other road carriers or the fact that the link in question is already operated by other road carriers. (…) Article 8***d*** Limitation of the right of access 1. Member States may limit the right of access to the international and national market for regular services ***if the proposed regular service carries passengers over distances of less than 100 kilometres as the crow flies and*** if the service would compromise the ***economic*** equilibrium of a public service contract. 2. The competent authorities that awarded a public service contract or the public service operators performing the public service contract may request the regulatory body to carry out an analysis of whether the equilibrium of the public service contract would be compromised. The regulatory body shall examine the request and decide whether to carry out the analysis. It shall inform the interested parties of its decision. 3. Where the regulatory body carries out an analysis, it shall inform all interested parties of the results of that analysis and its conclusions within six weeks following receipt of all relevant information. The regulatory body may conclude that the authorisation is to be granted, is to be granted subject to conditions or is to be rejected. The conclusions of the regulatory body shall be binding on the authorising authorities. (…)	

carry out an analysis of whether the ***economic*** equilibrium of the public service contract would be compromised. The regulatory body shall examine the request and decide whether to carry out the ***economic*** analysis. It shall inform the interested parties of its decision. 3. Where the regulatory body carries out an ***economic*** analysis, it shall inform all interested parties of the results of that analysis and its conclusions within six weeks following receipt of all relevant information. The regulatory body may conclude that the authorisation is to be granted, is to be granted subject to conditions or is to be rejected. The conclusions of the regulatory body shall be binding on the authorising authorities. (…)	

Reason
Decision whether or not to accept transport services should not depend on the distance (100km as the crow flies) but rather on the impact the additional service would have on the existing service offered to citizens (be it a service of general public interest or commercial service). In addition, the regional differences (e.g. in terms of distance between cities and economic centres) cannot be generally measured for the whole of the EU. Article 8a: services offered at lower prices should not be immediately rejected if the viability of the service is guaranteed for the entire duration of the contract. Article 8b: a restriction should be introduced for service providers who have been penalised.

Amendment 13

Article 1, point (14)

Text proposed by the Commission	***CoR amendment***
Article 13 is deleted;	

Reason
Reintroduction of the relevant article is necessary to ensure that local excursions are considered as one single international transport service instead of as cabotage operations.

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 92/106/EEC on the establishment of common rules for certain types of combined transport of goods between Member States
COM(2017) 648 - final

Amendment 14
Recital 13

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
(13) (…) There should be on average at least one suitable transhipment terminal for combined transport located no further than 150 km from any shipment location in the Union.	(13) (…) There should be on average at least one suitable transhipment terminal for combined transport located no further than 150 km from any shipment location in the Union ***except in peripheral and outermost regions where geographical limitations make this either impossible or would make infrastructure investments cost excessive in relation to the Directive's objective of promoting a shift of freight transport from road to more environmentally friendly modes of transport***.

Reason
This requirement could be problematic for peripheral regions (areas with low population density and sparse rail and harbour networks) and could lead to terminals constructed where there is no economic need for such terminals.

Amendment 15
Article 1, point (5)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
(5) In Article 6 the following paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are added :	(5) In Article 6 the following paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are added :
"4. Where necessary for the achievement of the aim referred to in paragraph 9, Member States shall take the necessary measures to support investment in transhipment terminals as regards : (a) the construction and, where necessary, the expansion of combined transport such transhipment terminals; (b) the increase of operational efficiency in existing terminals.	"4. Where necessary for the achievement of the aim referred to in paragraph 9, Member States shall take the necessary measures to support investment in transhipment terminals as regards: (a) the construction and, where necessary, the expansion of combined transport such transhipment terminals; (b) the increase of operational efficiency in existing terminals.

Member States shall coordinate with neighbouring Member States and with the Commission and ensure that, when such measures are implemented, priority is given to ensuring a balanced and sufficient geographical distribution of suitable facilities in the Union, and notably on the TEN-T Core and Comprehensive networks, allowing that any location in the Union is not situated at a distance farther than 150 km from such terminal.	Member States shall coordinate with neighbouring Member States and with the Commission and ensure that, when such measures are implemented, priority is given to ensuring a balanced and sufficient geographical distribution of suitable facilities in the Union, and notably on the TEN-T Core and Comprehensive networks, allowing that any location in the Union is not situated at a distance farther than 150 km from such terminal ***except in peripheral and outermost regions where geographical limitations make this either impossible or would make infrastructure investments cost excessive in relation to the Directive's objective of promoting a shift of freight transport from road to more environmentally friendly modes of transport***.

Reason
See amendment 12

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2009/33/EU on the promotion of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles
COM (2017) 653 – final

Amendment 16
Add new recital after recital (16)

Text proposed by the Commission	***CoR amendment***
	The potential of reducing emissions via public procurement alone is limited and public transport only contributes a small share of the emissions originating from the transport sector. Member States should therefore be encouraged to regulate the purchase of clean vehicles by other fleet owners, such as taxi, car rental and ride-pooling companies.

Reason
Only a small share (8% of the transport emissions) stem from public transport; yet, the directive proposal mainly targets public transport vehicles. In order to balance this out and reach the objective of reducing emissions, other large fleets should be included in the directive.

Amendment 17

Add new recital after recital (19)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
	The coherence with previous Union legislation in the field of vehicles, renewable energy and alternative fuels, in particular Regulation 595/2009, Directive 2009/28/EC and Directive 2014/94/EU needs to be strengthened.

Reason
EU legislation must be consistent, coherent and govern in the same direction.

Amendment 18

Article 1, Point (2)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
Article 3 is replaced by the following: "Article 3 Scope This Directive shall ***apply*** to contracts for the purchase, lease, rent or hire-purchase of road transport vehicles by:	Article 3 is replaced by the following: "Article 3 Scope This Directive shall ***not have a retroactive effect on existing contracts but are only applied*** to ***new*** contracts for the purchase, lease, rent or hire-purchase of road transport vehicles by:

Reason
On-going contracts need to be protected and cannot be affected by new legislation.

Amendment 19

Article 1, Point (2)

Text proposed by the Commission	*CoR amendment*
Article 3 is replaced by the following: "Article 3 Scope This Directive shall apply to contracts for the purchase, lease, rent or hire-purchase of road transport vehicles by: (…)	Article 3 is replaced by the following: "Article 3 Scope This Directive shall apply to contracts for the purchase, lease, rent or hire-purchase of road transport vehicles by: (…) ***(d) other fleet owners, such as taxis, car-sharing***

	and ride-pooling companies if a Member State decides to set up mechanisms to regulate the purchase of clean vehicles for such fleet owners."

Reason
Only a small share (8% of the transport emissions) stem from public transport; yet, the directive proposal mainly targets public transport vehicles. In order to balance this out and reach the objective of reducing emissions, other large fleets should be included in the directive.

Amendment 20

Annex

Text proposed by the Commission	***CoR amendment***
*Table 5: Minimum target for the share of heavy-duty vehicles in accordance with table 3 in the total public procurement of heavy-duty vehicles at Member State level**	*Table 5: Minimum target for the share of heavy-duty vehicles in accordance with table 3 in the total public procurement of heavy-duty vehicles at Member State level**

Member State	Trucks		Buses	
	2025	2030	2025	2030

Member State	Trucks		Buses	
	(XXX X**- 2025***)***	***(2026 –*** 2030***)***	***(XXXX* *-***2025***)***	***(2026 –*** 2030***)***

***** 24 months following the date of entry into force in accordance with Article 2***

Reason
The target should be an average for new contracts over a period of years to allow flexibility for varying objects of procurement from year to year (city traffic, countryside traffic, etc.). (XXXX) should be the date 24 months following the date of entry into force in accordance with Article 2.

II. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Key messages

1. endorses the Commission's aim of strengthening Europe's ability to confront the challenge of climate change and improve the quality of life of its citizens, while at the same time maintaining and extending the competitive edge of our industries in creating jobs, generating sustainable economic growth and driving innovation in renewable energy technologies; supports the Commission's goal of becoming the world leader in innovation, digitisation and decarbonisation

and sees the transition to a low-carbon economy as both an opportunity and a challenge for EU industry;

2. underlines the importance of efficient, effective and sustainable transport systems for the economic competitiveness of cities and regions, as well as for the European Union's social, economic and territorial cohesion;

3. points out that mobility and transport are often a competence of local and regional authorities, who are in charge of designing and implementing mobility policies and of providing public transport in their area, although decisions to be taken at local level often relate to a framework set by national and EU policy;

4. recognises that transport is responsible for almost a fifth of total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Europe. It is the only sector in which GHG levels have not fallen compared with 1990 levels. Action is urgently needed to decarbonise the transport sector, although it should also be stressed that only a small proportion of the emissions are due to local public transport;

5. points out that the move towards low and zero emission of particulate matter and NOx benefits the lives of Europe's citizens, especially in cities, where dense, highly polluting urban traffic worsens people's lives and health;

6. points out that local public transport already constitutes an important measure towards decarbonisation and the promotion of e-mobility in cities. Many cities have well developed rail-based e-mobility in the form of metros, trams and trolleybuses. It is important to also take these measures – as well as a city or region's entire vehicle fleet – into account in the context of public procurement of clean road transport vehicles. Mentioning buses alone does not go far enough;

7. underlines the fact that any change in the transport system in terms of fuels to be used must take into account regional differences in traffic density and the distance between cities and other centres of economic interest. Discrimination in the form of higher costs for remote, peripheral or outermost locations to access the European network will further adversely affect territorial and social cohesion;

8. notes that, in connection with the greening of motor vehicle use, (cargo) cycling for short journeys (in line with "An EU Roadmap for Cycling" (2017/C 088/10), as well as railway and green shipping, should be promoted. This requires a network of intermodal nodes, for which adequate funding should be available, for example through the EFSI. Fast e-bikes (speed pedelecs) are a good alternative to the car, particularly in urban areas, and may lead to lower emissions, while physical activity is also good for public health. The use of the e-bike can be stimulated by creating sufficient fast cycle paths and charging points and through incentives;

9. spatial and urban planning can promote the use of clean forms of mobility. Clean mobility involves reducing NOx and particulate matter emissions at local level, and reducing CO_2 emissions globally. In urban planning, accessibility on foot, bicycle and public transport must be promoted, and accessibility for cars should be carefully considered. To improve urban air quality, (shared) electric cars and buses may contribute to a shift towards lower particulate

matter and NOx emission. This can be achieved by discouraging the use of polluting transport by closing off areas – for example, by setting up environmental zones – and at the same time by making the travel times for clean forms of mobility shorter than polluting ones;

10. recognises that there needs to be an interoperable solution for the provision of alternative fuels. While the CoR acknowledges that the legislation and regulations for achieving low-emission mobility should be open to all kinds of technology, each local and regional authority could strive to attain economies of scale, possibly by cooperating with neighbouring and cross-border regions;

11. welcomes the ambition of simplifying public procurement for clean vehicles, but struggles to see how the Commission's proposal, setting percentage-based targets per Member State for procuring clean vehicles, will be implemented in law and enforced. Local and regional authorities operate most forms of public transport in many Member States, and the State has no decision-making power over which vehicles local and regional authorities should buy, lease, hire or reach agreements on.

    As early adopters, local and regional authorities are key enablers of clean technology in transport. At the same time, it should be underlined that the infrastructure put in place for local public transport is usually not suitable for private cars and, therefore, that no immediate "spill-over" effects can be expected. The financing of the transition towards clean transport. needs to be guaranteed. Not enough funding has been made available by the European Union to finance these ambitious measures in local public transport networks, which generally run at a loss. The Commission is therefore requested to propose additional financing options beyond the use of financial instruments, which are, as a rule, unhelpful due to negative prospects of a return on investment;

12. draws attention to the "Platform for the Deployment of Clean Buses", which the European Commission launched at the CoR plenary in July 2017 and which received considerable support from local and regional authorities. In connection with this, regions, cities, transport authorities and manufacturers signed up to common principles for public procurement of clean, alternatively fuelled buses in order to speed up their deployment;

13. considers that the EU's governance measures to reduce the transport sector's climate impact should be based on climate benefits and sustainability from a lifecycle perspective and should also be technologically neutral;

14. believes that investment in low-emission public transport and public car fleets should be carried out in a way that encourages private and business cars owners to follow suit. This can be attained through synergies in the charging and hydrogen infrastructure. EU funds could be available to enable this;

15. thinks that plans for low-emission mobility should go beyond end-of-pipe solutions and be aligned with increased production and distribution of green electricity and renewable fuels;

16. notes that the development and production of batteries play a strategic role in the ongoing transition to clean mobility and clean energy systems. At the same time, there is no significant player in battery cells in Europe. The CoR therefore welcomes the European battery alliance, which helps European industries to become more independent and to increase the share along the electric vehicle production value chain. The CoR welcomes the European Commission's allocation of EUR 200 million directly to battery research and innovation under Horizon 2020, on top of the EUR 150 million already allocated;

17. points out that a broad uptake of electric vehicles will considerably increase the electricity demand on electricity networks. A balance needs to be struck between the need for mobility and recharging by developing intelligent recharging cycles at times when networks are not constrained and sufficient electricity is being generated. It is essential to integrate the decarbonisation of transport and energy supply, smart grids and innovative energy storage solutions. To that end, local distribution system operators (DSOs), which are responsible for the development/management of the electricity grid, need to be actively involved;

18. notes that the infrastructure for recharging and refuelling should be rolled out in line with local conditions and that use should be made of synergies with LRA, public vehicles and urban cargo services. This needs to be aligned with development of smart grids and buildings with batteries. It should be accessible to private cars and bicycles. Refuelling should be easy to use and interoperable across borders. This requires European action in order to create a single market;

19. believes that simplifying and standardising applications and tenders makes it unnecessary to provide financial customisation and easier to get funding from European funds and private financiers – for example, using new financing methods such as blending of grants with loans;

Delivering on low-emission mobility – A European Union that protects the planet, empowers its consumers and defends its industry and workers – COM (2017) 675

20. welcomes the fact that the Commission is increasing financial support to leverage public and private investment for the roll-out of alternative fuels infrastructure, with up to EUR 800 million being made available for this purpose. The CoR regrets that the funding and financial resources are often not sufficiently accessible for some LRAs and other important parties. Blending of funding – such as access to loans, for example through and with EFSI – should be promoted. Access to funding should be standardised and enabled through the issue of bonds;

21. notes that areas that are particularly vulnerable to pollution must be able to levy taxes on polluting transport. The income from this can be used to adopt sustainability measures. In cities, toll charges or parking fees can be used to pay for sustainable mobility – for example by investing in public transport or park-and-ride facilities;

22. recalls that the outermost regions suffer from traffic congestion in cities and along coastal strips, and difficult access to rural areas. However, these regions are developing projects to make transport cleaner and more sustainable, which can serve as examples of best practices for other regions of the EU and neighbouring countries;

Towards the broadest use of alternative fuels – an Action Plan on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure – non legislative document – COM(2017)652

23. welcomes the Action Plan for alternative fuels infrastructure as an important step towards decarbonising the road transport system; regrets, however, that most of the National Policy Frameworks (NPF) submitted to the Commission were not ambitious enough to arrive at an adequate goal for a transition towards clean and alternative fuels;

24. points out that many European cities and regions are frontrunners in the transition to low- and zero-emission mobility. It is also in cities that alternative fuels will have the highest impact in terms of reducing air and noise pollution. Regrettably, the latter is not covered at all by the Action Plan. A significant proportion of public procurement is undertaken by municipal and local authorities. It is therefore obvious that the uptake of alternative fuel vehicles depends heavily on local and regional authorities, mainly in cities and urban regions. Cities and regions with problems of congestion, air quality and noise should prioritise the transition to zero-emission of particulate matter and NOx – as should areas of natural or cultural heritage. When these are cross-border areas and corridors, planning should be encouraged at this level;

25. notes that the best possible integration into individual sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMPs) will be a key aspect. The main challenge cities face here is the space limitation, which means that alternative fuels infrastructure needs to be aligned with the existing infrastructure of other modes of transport. In the process of urban mobility planning, close cooperation with different public and private stakeholders will be key to ensuring a smooth roll-out of alternative fuels in cities;

26. highlights the fact that decisions taken by cities, ideally in collaboration with economic and other stakeholders, will fail to have a positive impact if consumers are not adequately involved. If the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure is not in line with consumer expectations and wishes, there is a risk of a low uptake. It is therefore also up to LRAs to influence user behaviour to encourage the broadest uptake of alternative fuels. It is of crucial importance that services using alternative fuels, such as public transport and other services, remain accessible and reliable;

27. points out that there are regional differences that influence the uptake of alternative fuels. For peripheral regions the current electromobility system might not be the preferred option, while it could be in urban regions. A quick start for European regions with substantial resources and more urgent air quality and noise issues may mean that – thanks to their scale, critical mass and lower prices – peripheral regions may benefit, after 2025, from proven technologies and lower costs;

28. points out that in cities, where electromobility might be seen as the preferred option, this needs to be aligned with energy distribution and the need for energy at certain peak hours. It is important here to have a buffer and for electricity to be stored on a large scale, for example in large batteries and hydrogen (fuel cells);

29. recalls, in the same context, that electromobility generally does not represent a suitable way of ensuring comprehensive public transport in rural areas. Buses' long charging times and limited range mean that, until appropriate technologies are developed, the option of resorting to low-emission propulsion (including plug-in hybrids) must be retained. At the same time, solutions for rural areas should be developed in the near future, which could be supported by means of pilot projects;

30. points out, with reference to the "Missing transport links in border regions" report (2017/C 207/05), that there is a huge potential in synergies from cross-border cooperation on the infrastructure development cost. It must be ensured in cross-border regions that the preferred technology of the two Member States is interoperable and developed to meet cross-border and not just domestic needs;

31. emphasises the importance of cities being able to also steer the uptake of vehicles with low emissions of particulate matter and NOx through urban access regulations. The introduction of environmental zones must be based on local assessments and decided on at local level. For the EU, it is a matter of providing the right conditions through a common framework for introducing environmental zones and highlighting this as a way of improving air quality. However, local and regional bodies must be allowed to decide for themselves on whether, and at which level, the zones should be introduced;

32. highlights the fact that financing cannot be done by LRAs alone and notes that the European Commission proposes a broad range of financing instruments but is rather conservative when it comes to the cost of the provision of alternative infrastructure deployment and potentially over-optimistic on the uptake of the financing through private funds in the first phase;

33. takes the view that concessions that aim to achieve zero emission should be incentivised through a being given a longer duration or an extension if intermediate and final objectives are met. It is also important that the possibilities for good takeover schemes are expanded. This ensures that parties can recover their investments faster;

34. believes that European financing is needed for public transport concessions to accelerate further scaling-up in the search for zero emissions. European funding must be used to stimulate innovation and cover investment, so that a larger part of the fleet can run emission-free at the start of the concession;

35. points out that, when designing and building new buildings in the future, charging points and pre-cabling will be provided;

36. calls for greater ambition with regard to the share of public accessible charging stations. (In the Action Plan each Member State should ensure the establishment of a minimum number of recharging points for electric vehicles by the end of 2020, at least 10% of which must be publicly accessible. Development of publicly accessible charging stations must reflect local and regional conditions and demand. It is estimated that in 2025, in Europe, 2 million publicly-accessible recharging points for electric vehicles would be needed, of which 70% are in urban areas. Priority should be given to the TEN-T core network corridors with a full backbone of

alternative fuels infrastructure by 2025. Equipping at least the urban nodes of the TEN-T core and comprehensive networks with enough publicly accessible (fast) recharging and refuelling points is expected to boost investor and consumer confidence. An international level playing field must be created with open protocols and interoperability, so that the e-driver can make international use of the charging infrastructure without blockages. Sufficient LNG filling points are also required for freight traffic and shipping. The Committee asks for an ambitious goal of 2000 LNG filling points in Europe according to local and regional needs;

37. points out that municipalities should be involved, in order to make sure that relevant plans and urban development considerations are included in the choice of locations for public accessible charging stations to ensure that chargers are positioned at the right places and that there will be no "over-placing of chargers", including in places that are unprofitable;

38. calls for greater ambition with regard to hydrogen refuelling points. One refuelling point per 300 km is far too little in densely populated areas. This should be made dependent on the number of inhabitants, with one refuelling point per 300 000 inhabitants;

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2009/33/EU on the promotion of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles – COM(2017) 653

39. welcomes the adaptation of the rules which encourages LRAs to procure clean vehicles. The Committee also welcomes the deletion of the "monetarisation" calculation and the inclusion of other forms of procurement. The Committee draws attention to the very narrow definition of clean vehicles, and maintains that this should be further revised so that local and regional authorities are able to exercise discretion and have genuine cost-effective and clean alternatives when procuring in different regions and for different transport needs;

40. highlights the fact that even if the proportion of publicly procured vehicles is low compared with the overall number of vehicles in a city, the positive example set by LRAs could impact in terms of market demand and have a positive impact on car manufacturers, which could in turn also stimulate private demand. The directive should only apply if it is expected that the outcome of the tender will be sufficiently beneficial;

41. deplores the heavy financial burden on public transport operators and thus local and regional authorities arising from the very high quota for the procurement of alternatively fuelled buses. Many cities and regions already have a largely electrified fleet in the form of trams, metros and trolleybuses, which is not taken into account. The whole vehicle fleet, and not just buses, should therefore be taken into account in relation to the procurement of "clean vehicles";

42. calls for a definition of clean vehicles on the basis of objectively measurable emissions and energy consumption under real driving conditions. This is the only way to achieve long-term planning certainty for public contracting authorities. In order to achieve zero emission vehicles, steps have to be taken in the transition. Zero emission is not yet feasible in all modalities such as freight transport and shipping. Biogas and biofuels are necessary as a transition fuel. Existing

systems can be maintained as long as the raw materials used are of local origin and are not imported. Biogas should be used for systems with a high thermal requirement;

43. welcomes the intention of having a close definition of clean light vehicles It is important to have common standards and clear definitions so that governments can properly assess, compare and check offers from parties. However, is of the view that the definition should include technology neutrality and that the climate impact must also be evaluated from a life-cycle perspective. Furthermore, transition fuels like biogas or other biofuels are necessary, especially for freight transport and shipping and must be taken into account;

44. welcomes, in respect to heavy-duty vehicles, the proposal's general technology-neutral approach, but at the same time highlights the fact that the list of "clean technologies" is per se a limitation on technological neutrality and excludes technologies such as synthetic biofuels or biogas. Biogas is an important transition fuel for heavy-duty vehicles. In some regions, especially in the Nordic countries, investment in such technologies, which are climate-friendly but not necessarily zero-emission at tail-pipe, could be compromised by these not being included in the list of allowed technologies. This could also be a subsidiarity concern. Other propulsion technologies, including completely fossil-free liquid and gaseous fuels such as HVO100 and biomethane, also offer great potential for clean mobility;

45. notes that there are currently different views on the timing of the application of the rules. Calls, in this context, for the calculation in the first and second periods to begin in 2025 and 2030 respectively and for the same targets to apply to all Member States;;

46. calls for long-term planning certainty and sufficient transitional periods for contracting authorities. In view of the infrastructure adaptations required in connection with new acquisitions, clarification is needed that the procurement rules will apply only to new contracts;

Proposal for a Regulation amending the rules for access to the international market for coach and bus services – (COM(2017)647)

47. highlights here the fact that buses are still less environmentally friendly than railways and that the main routes between cities and regions are covered by this mode of transport. Long-distance buses can be complementary to rail and can be attractive compared with private cars;

48. calls for long-term planning certainty and sufficient transitional periods for public transport operators and contracting authorities.;

49. thinks it important, when opening the market for international bus coaches, to ensure that the rules of the internal market and services of general economic interest are maintained, so as to ensure universal access and freedom of movement;

50. notes that the proposal gives the regulatory body the possibility of rejecting an application when an objective economic analysis shows the economic equilibrium of a public service contract to be compromised. CoR, nevertheless, believes that all bus services, public and private, are subject to the same requirements for low emissions.

Commercial regular service operations should not undermine the public service obligations of a service of general economic interest, whose analysis should not be limited to economic terms but in a wider sense. To prevent distortions of competition, private bus services must also meet the requirements for low emission;

Proposal for revision of the combined transport of goods Directive – (COM(2017)648)

51. welcomes this proposal's impact on the change of the transport system towards a more environmentally friendly one; points out that there are areas that can only be relieved by a modal shift from road to train , waterways and/or by electric trucks. Intermodal terminals are an important prerequisite in this. LRAs can introduce charging points and fuelling points that support both public and freight transport. It is essential to further promote financial support measures for the development of combined transport: aid both for investment in new terminals, with a cost-benefit analysis that reflects the externalities of transport, as well for investment in operations, at least in the early years, including recouping the necessary material resources.

Brussels, 5 July 2018

The President
of the European Committee of the Regions

Karl-Heinz Lambertz

The Secretary-General
of the European Committee of the Regions

Jiří Buriánek

III. PROCEDURE

Title	**Delivering on low-emission mobility**
Reference(s)	COM (2017) 675 final, COM (2017) 648 final and final/2, COM (2017) 647 final, COM (2017) 653 final COM (2017) 652 final and final/2
Legal basis	Article 307 TFEU
Procedural basis	Rule 41 a) of the CoR Rules of Procedure
Date of Council/EP referral/Date of Commission letter	– letters from the Commission: 24.10.2017 and 8.11.2017 – letters from the Council: 22.11.2017 and 4.12.2017 – letters from the Parliament: 30.11.2017 and 4.12.2017
Date of Bureau/President's decision	30 January 2018
Commission responsible	Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget (COTER)
Rapporteur	Michiel Scheffer (NL/ALDE), Member of the Executive Council of the Province of Gelderland
Analysis	6 March 2018
Discussed in commission	27 February 2018
Date adopted by commission	27 April 2018
Result of the vote in commission (majority, unanimity)	majority
Date adopted in plenary	5 July 2018
Previous Committee opinions	Opinion (CDR 18/2017) – "A European Strategy for Low-Emission Mobility" Opinion (CDR 1426/2015) – "Implementation of the 2011 white paper on transport" Opinion (CDR 1813/2016) – "A European Roadmap for Cycling"
Date of subsidiarity monitoring consultation	N/A