

**ANSWERS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE**

Adina VĂLEAN

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?

The European Union is the greatest democratic endeavour ever built for the citizens and communities of this continent. The vision of the founding fathers has been advancing and guaranteeing our ideals of peace, prosperity and protection for over sixty years. I have put my trust and hope in Europe ever since I became active in public policy in 1997 and I have worked with you in this house for 12 years advancing the democratic aspirations of Europeans. I believe in an open, prosperous and inclusive Europe where no one is left behind and where no one feels left aside. Freedom and democracy are the pillars that structure any action I took and will take.

I joined the European Parliament in 2007 carrying the hopes and trust of my compatriots to reunite the European family, torn apart by fifty years of totalitarianism and the heavy iron curtain. I have felt your warmth and openness, and I have witnessed how Europe's heart started beating again with both its halves; the eastern and western one.

In a few days, I will be standing in front of you seeking your trust in the European Commission and its designated Transport Commissioner as partners for advancing policies aimed at reinforcing transport as a key enabler for European wellbeing, sustainability and economic development. Transport represents an essential service for our citizens. It notably supports the freedom of movement of people and goods and of other services and makes a key contribution to cohesion across the continent. Making our mobility sustainable is also key for the decarbonisation of our continent and for meeting our commitment to make our economy carbon-neutral by 2050. I fully support the Political Guidelines presented by the President-elect Ursula von der Leyen, and I commit to making transport one of the most successful enablers of that vision.

As a member of the European Parliament, I had the honour to serve as the Chairwoman of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) Committee. This experience was of paramount importance to me since it gave me the opportunity to support fellow colleagues working as rapporteurs in trilogues for the most ambitious package aimed at reducing our carbon footprint so far. The revision of the Emissions Trading System, including its extension to aviation, and the adoption of the Clean Energy package as a whole, were an extremely successful exercise for the European Parliament and the European Commission since they have worked together to put in place the most advanced decarbonisation architecture on this planet. I will use all knowledge gained in the ENVI Committee, as well as my full engagement to advance this path we set, by making ALL modes of transport real contributors to the decarbonisation of Europe.

After this year's European elections, I have returned to the Committee where I had served previously for ten years since 2007, the Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) Committee. The responsibilities of this chairmanship have allowed me to continue the efforts aimed at creating a new industrial future for Europe to become carbon neutral by 2050. This vision will require new value chains, business models and incentives, which will make our transition a global economic success. In the ITRE, we have had the opportunity to reinforce the budget for agencies, research and innovation programmes and Joint Undertakings, which included transport priorities in the 2020 budget. This budget must work as a bridge towards the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) in order to maintain a stable level in investments in the years to come. A sufficient budget for transport-related programmes like the Connecting Europe Facility is vital because they represent the backbone that supports the freedom of movement and the effective functioning of the internal market.

The Connecting Europe Facility represents alongside the end of roaming charges the most valuable results of my direct work in the European Parliament. During the last legislative term, I have worked alongside the colleagues rapporteurs from the Transport and Tourism (TRAN) Committee, and succeeded in putting in place the single most important instrument for investment in transport, energy and telecom networks which is now financing the completion of our core and comprehensive networks as well as the vital missing links which isolate our communities.

Transport must be sustainable, safe, smart, reliable and affordable. This is a significant challenge, but also a huge opportunity for the EU. Decarbonisation is a key priority for the new Commission and will be addressed by the forthcoming European Green Deal and the 2030/2050 climate objectives. Transport is currently responsible for almost one quarter of all EU emissions. To transition to a climate-neutral economy by 2050, according to scientific modelling, we need to reduce CO₂ emissions from transport by around 90%.

I will therefore work closely with Executive Vice-President designate Timmermans to make transport a central element of the European Green Deal. As an important contribution to this, I have been tasked by the President-elect in the Mission Letter she sent to me on 7 November, to put forward a comprehensive strategy for sustainable and smart mobility. In this context, I will be eager to take into account the input notably of the European Parliament. To be successful, the strategy will require broad political support. The challenge will be to ensure that transport takes ambitious steps towards decarbonisation and to maximise the benefits of sustainable and smart mobility for our citizens and businesses. Our objective is that Europe succeeds in its transition to a less polluting transport system. It will also be about placing Europe's transport system and standards at the forefront of new developments. To this end, a holistic approach is needed, mobilising all the tools at our disposal, with all stakeholders at all

levels playing their part, and covering the entire transport system: vehicles, fuels, infrastructure, regulations, technical standards and funding instruments.

We should start by **taking ambitious action to cut emissions from all transport modes**: road, air, maritime must all play their part. For example, in aviation, the absence of a Single European Sky means that our flights are unnecessarily longer and more polluting. The efficiencies that full implementation of the Single European Sky would bring could reduce emissions from aviation by at least 10%.

We need to use **price incentives and apply the “polluter pays” principle**. This is why I will work together with Executive Vice-President-designate Timmermans to reduce the free allocation of allowances to airlines under the Emissions Trading System, with the aim of phasing them out, and towards extending the Emission Trading System to maritime transport. These measures will contribute to achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal and will be as important as improving standards and technical requirements. Users and polluters should pay the costs, including the environmental costs, of their trips and we should use smart ways of charging for infrastructure use.

We should promote attractive, affordable, and more **sustainable alternatives**:

I will work towards the development of rail, especially freight and high-speed connections. I will develop an urban mobility policy that promotes clean public transport, cycling and walking. We should also complement the existing mobility offer by making full use of smart and collaborative solutions for local, on-demand passenger transport and micro-mobility. Micro-mobility is an area I will actively look into. This sector has a clear potential to reduce congestion. However, there are aspects which need to be further examined, including the safety record of the sector, its employment conditions as well as its environmental and greenhouse gas emission credentials. As policy-makers, we need to make sure that Europe can benefit from the potential of micro-mobility while containing potential negative effects. Accelerating the **uptake of sustainable fuels** across road, air, maritime and inland waterway transport will give the sector a real opportunity to make a giant leap forward towards decarbonisation and sustainability.

I will work on **completing and modernising our infrastructure network** to make transport safer, fairer, more reliable, more far-reaching, more connected across borders and modes, and more sustainable.

I will also want to ensure that our journey towards sustainability is an opportunity for all, that nobody is left behind. I am also deeply committed to fair labour conditions and to protecting passenger rights.

The European Green Deal and the new industrial strategy will need to work in tandem. I want to see EU industry thrive and deliver at a world-class level, through innovation, digitalisation and modernisation. Aviation and maritime transport, in particular, are global sectors, requiring action and leadership also at global level to be effective in protecting the environment.

If we get the balance right, which is my priority, citizens, the economy and the environment will all benefit.

I am personally highly committed to **gender equality** and I fully support the President-elect’s vision: I can assure you that my cabinet will have an appropriate balance in terms of gender, experience and geography.

The transport sector is one of the most-male dominated sectors. Bearing in mind that new challenges are best tackled with people of different skillsets and mind-sets, promoting diversity is essential in a sector which will undergo tremendous changes in the next few years and which already faces labour shortages. I will be pleased to drive forward the “Women in Transport-EU Platform for Change” and the network of diversity ambassadors. I will also actively contribute to the next European gender strategy. I will do this in partnership with the Commissioner-designate for Equality Helena Dalli, as well as the Vice-President-designate for Protecting the European Way of Life, Margaritas Schinas.

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 November 7. 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 functioning of the EU's institutional system, and for the efficiency and legitimacy of EU decision-making. 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 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 as co-legislators.

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 the 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. I will work closely with the European Parliament and Council for more transparency throughout the legislative process. Citizens should know who we, as institutions that serve them, meet and discuss with and what positions we defend 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.

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?

My vision is to achieve a European transport system that is sustainable, efficient, safe, smart, reliable and affordable!

Transport is a fundamental sector for the economy. It accounts for around 5% of EU GDP and directly employs about 11 million people. Transport addresses mobility needs of more than 500 million European people, and serves as a key enabler for the economy and the Internal Market, and the smooth functioning of international trade. Demand for transport continues to rise. Estimates suggest increases in European passenger and inland freight transport of 35% and 53% respectively over 2015-2050. This provides increased opportunities for connecting people and businesses across Europe. The challenge before us is, how can these opportunities be maintained and developed while making mobility fully sustainable? Today, transport accounts for around a quarter of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions. To transition to a climate-neutral economy by 2050, we need to reduce CO₂ emissions from transport by around 90%. This requires significant and ambitious efforts on all sides.

I am fully committed to reaching the EU's climate goals, whilst ensuring that this is done in a fair and acceptable way, not to the detriment of our citizens, businesses and regions.

One of my first tasks to make this vision a reality will be to work on a comprehensive strategy for sustainable and smart mobility, intended to ensure that transport also remains affordable so that nobody is left behind. This will involve combining all the tools available at EU level into even more coherent and effective measures [see Question 1 for details on the European Green Deal].

Achieving EU climate-neutrality by 2050 while remaining competitive, fair and affordable, means that transport must modernise, become more efficient, tackle capacity constraints and ageing infrastructure. It means investing in transport networks and exploiting digital innovation.

For this, we must secure adequate funding for transport from the next EU budget through instruments such as the Connecting Europe Facility, structural and cohesion funds, InvestEU and Horizon Europe.

We must also build on the opportunities of new technological and social developments, such as digitalisation of transport services, intelligent transport services, ride-sharing and mobility-as-a-service [see Question 7 for details on digitalisation].

Innovation must be accompanied by training and reconversion in relevant skills. Fair working conditions will be key in ensuring the sector is able to attract young women and men into transport professions. Promoting diversity, also in relation to gender, is essential in a sector which will undergo tremendous changes in the next few years and which already faces labour shortages.. It is important that the co-legislators come to a good result soon on the social and market access proposals of the mobility package.

Delivering sustainable mobility and climate neutrality can – and must – also be managed in a socially fair and economically efficient way. I am very much aware of the concerns expressed by citizens on the increased costs of fuel and ticket prices.

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?

Transport is **international** by nature. Broad and deep transport connectivity strengthens our economies and helps our societies to prosper for two reasons:

First, global competitiveness of our industry is key. I will help to promote open transport markets, especially with strategic partners and in fast-growing emerging economies, with free, fair and undistorted competition based on regulatory convergence, a level playing field and, sustainability.

We also need to connect with our neighbours and partners. To do this, I will work on the further extension and completion of the TEN-T network and towards promoting high-quality and rule-based international standards and transport agreements (notably in air transport). In particular, I want to be proactive in looking for the European interests in the fast developing EU Asia connections.

It is also essential that the voice of the EU be clearly heard and that Europe, acting together, plays a leading role in international organisations that develop transport standards and rules – in particular in the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), in the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

I will continue to pursue EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreements with third countries that open new opportunities for the European aviation industry, promote European standards and a level playing field and create a platform where we can work more closely with our partners on safety, security, environment or social issues.

On aviation safety, this will remain a priority, including in our international action, notably in a context of growing traffic and of the introduction of new entrants such as drones in the airspace. I will in particular pursue the work initiated last year with the revision of the aviation safety rules, which reinforced the role of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and introduced a system of pooling and sharing of resources between the Member States and EASA.

While transport is the backbone of the economy, it comes together with sizeable negative effects such as accidents, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and congestion. These **external costs** are estimated at around EUR 1000 billion annually in the EU. If we want to reach our climate targets, we need to apply the “polluter pays” principle.

I will contribute to the work on extending the Emission Trading System to the maritime sector and to reducing the free allocation of allowances for aviation over time, with the aim of phasing them out. Besides the EU’s own efforts in reducing emissions, we must push for ambitious measures in international organisations, notably in ICAO and IMO. Aviation and maritime transport are global sectors and therefore the global dimension must clearly be addressed when it comes to protecting the environment, but also to ensure we do not damage the competitiveness of our industry.

I will also support the Commissioner-designate for the Economy, Paolo Gentiloni, in reviewing the Energy Taxation Directive to ensure that it is in line with the EU’s climate ambitions, notably in respect of the treatment of aviation and maritime fuels.

Road transport is responsible for 20% of EU greenhouse gas emissions, and the largest share of air and noise pollution. Congestion costs can be monetised at almost 2% of GDP! We need to make use of road tolls to create incentives for greening vehicle fleets and making better use of the infrastructure. For road charging, I will push Member States to ensure that the negotiations on the so-called Eurovignette Directive dealing with road charging, can be completed quickly, with an ambitious outcome that is in line with our climate ambitions. It is also important that these revenues are invested in more sustainable alternatives to road transport.

Price incentives will only work if there are attractive alternatives: using **rail** transport instead of road for longer trips is a significant part of the solution for implementing our strategic long-term vision for a climate-neutral economy by 2050. Making better use of rail freight will help us address pollution and congestion on roads caused by the current predominantly diesel-fuelled heavy goods vehicles. Rail is also the safest mode of land transport. I will therefore work on developing favourable conditions for rail, in particular for rail freight and high-speed passenger services. I fully support the objective to make the rail sector more attractive by improving quality of service - that is reliability, connections with other modes, and bringing down costs.

Rail freight needs to improve its performance drastically to become more competitive. We also need to eliminate remaining barriers to crossing borders within the EU. This can only be achieved through a joint effort of the Commission, national authorities and the rail sector.

From a technological point of view, rail needs to modernise faster. Innovation and digitalisation must be better deployed without delay. The swift deployment of the signalling system ERTMS is a priority. We want trains and railway undertakings to operate in the EU without national borders. The legislation to achieve that is now in place and I will push Member States to implement it.

The customer experience must change. Buying train tickets – and travelling seamlessly with several operators - must be made easier. I expect the market to come up with solutions and access to data is a key challenge in this context. Further improving rail passenger rights will also help to make rail more attractive. I will be very attentive to this file, and good and swift conclusion would be important for improved rail passenger rights, especially, but not only, for persons with disabilities and with reduced mobility.

Inland waterways are the most CO₂ efficient transport mode with an important and untapped potential. I will therefore support inland waterway transport. To be sustainable, the sector will have to start greening the fleet and also reflect on the future impact of climate change on the dimensions of inland ships - smaller vessels will be less affected by low water levels.

The Commission is already working together with Member States to adapt to climate change, which causes more frequent dangerously high and low water levels. Integrated water management, which covers flood prevention, water quality protection, biodiversity and navigability, is essential. Various EU funds (CEF, Horizon Europe, Cohesion Funds, LIFE) may be used to support measures for decarbonisation and digitalisation of the sector and for improving water management and navigability.

For the Inland Waterway Transport sector, it is crucial to be part of the fundamental transformation that digitalisation and decarbonisation are bringing to transport and logistics and we need to increase the integration of inland waterway transport in the overall transport system. I look forward to working on making full use of the potential of this sustainable mode of transport and considering, for example, how to follow-up on the previous NAIADES 2 programme .

A smart mix of different modes (road, rail, inland waterways and short sea shipping) can create a sustainable alternative to road-only solutions, making better use of the available infrastructure and services, thus contributing to a strong, resilient and integrated transport system. Despite the advantages for society, **multimodal freight transport** remains more expensive and complex than road only transport. Digitalisation can help reduce the complexity, but we must also eliminate the cost gap and make sure that infrastructure for transshipment between road and rail or inland waterways is available. Not all regions of the EU are sufficiently equipped with this infrastructure.

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?

Our transport infrastructure is the backbone of the internal market, enabling the free circulation of goods, passengers, services and workers. I will work towards greater connectivity within Europe, between east and west, north and south and in rural and remote areas via our TEN-T policy. No region should be left behind.

Key infrastructure projects, such as projects on the Rhine-Danube Corridor, demonstrate the EU's added value. Their successful implementation is essential if we are to make connectivity a reality. We must therefore address remaining delays and any political tensions associated with the completion of key cross-border infrastructure projects.

In this context, regional and local airports also play a crucial role in connecting peripheral and remote regions and in regional economic development.

The high-speed rail network is still far from complete. Continued public support for infrastructure investment is essential although not sufficient.

I will also work to support connectivity between Europe and the rest of the world. Very important in this context is the further development of the TEN-T network in respect of partner countries, including those of the southern Mediterranean. I will be very attentive towards critical infrastructure investments by third countries, in close cooperation with my colleague, Executive Vice-President-designate Margrethe Vestager.

The Commission is currently evaluating the TEN-T framework. My aim will be to use the current review to promote an up-to-date, modernised TEN-T policy that will further deliver clean mobility, including the availability of alternative fuels infrastructure, promote better transport flows, and take advantage of the digital transformation opportunities. I will also look more closely at safety aspects where further improvements are necessary.

I also attach great importance to the pending Commission proposal on "Streamlining TEN-T". This initiative is important when it comes to meeting our 2030 target for completing the core TEN-T network. Once adopted by the co-legislators, the text will help to shorten the administrative delays of infrastructure projects. In this context, I welcome the ambitious position that has been taken by the European Parliament on this proposal and its determination to work towards rapid adoption.

A modernisation of the TEN-T Network 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 could contribute to this.

Military mobility and dual-use projects provide clear synergies and opportunities. A military mobility envelope under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) would be available to fund dual-use civilian-military transport infrastructure based on clear rules. This would allow the upgrading of our transport infrastructure at the same time as facilitating the swift movement and transportation of military forces and equipment, thus contributing to the protection of the Union and its citizens.

When investing, we need to keep our climate goals in mind. For the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027, the Commission proposed a target of 25% climate expenditure overall and specific targets per programmes. I was happy to see that, in their partial agreement under the Romanian Presidency, Parliament and Council agreed on a 60% target for the overall CEF programme. This puts transport in the forefront of climate change investments. The support of the European Parliament will be crucial to achieve a strong end-result in the negotiations.

I believe that **connected and automated mobility solutions** should be supported and harnessed to increase safety, capacity and sustainability of EU transport. For example, the European rail signalling system ERTMS can increase capacity by 50%, safety by 25% and reduce costs by 25%. I will also support the rollout of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS). They provide innovative services in road transport and traffic management. They enable users to be better informed and to make safer, more coordinated, and smarter use of transport networks.

Cooperative, Connected and Automated Mobility has the potential to fundamentally change road mobility. It could enable another quantum leap in road safety as automated vehicles are never distracted, tired or under influence and could coordinate all their actions [Cycling covered in Q6]. Safety is what maintains the people's trust in the transport sector. It is crucial for all modes of transport. There are more than 25,000 deaths on European roads per year – a busload per day. This is unacceptable. I intend to pursue the goal of zero deaths on EU roads by 2050 - "Vision Zero". What I can see today is that progress is stagnating and differences among EU Member States remain very high. We need to work on a holistic safe system approach: addressing vehicles, infrastructure and road users' behaviour, based on scientific principles, strong data and performance monitoring. Responsibility for road safety is shared between the EU and national, regional and local governments. Each of those actors needs to be ready to play its part in full.

The **Air Traffic Management system** in Europe as it operates today is approaching its capacity limits. Recent growth in air traffic is resulting in air traffic delays of a magnitude not seen for more than a decade, to the severe detriment and inconvenience of air passengers. But I should also underline that a more efficient air traffic management system and the Single European Sky are an essential part of the policy mix needed for reducing fuel consumption and aviation's emissions, which continue to grow and are of major concern. In addition, the landscape of European aviation has evolved considerably and new challenges are on the horizon, such as drones, cybersecurity, etc. The Single European Sky (SES) initiative was launched in 2004 with the goals of reducing the fragmentation of the airspace over Europe and of improving the performance of the European Air Traffic Management system in terms of safety, capacity, cost-efficiency and the environment. These elements remain as valid today as they were then. The SES has delivered safety and improvements in all of the desired areas. A lot has been achieved, but we need to do more – especially for the environment. I appreciate the dedicated support of the European Parliament for this file. Taking into account lessons learned in the last decade, the Airspace Architecture Study report and the recommendations of the Wise Persons group, I believe it is high time we take this file forward and make a real difference.

Transport security is essential for our citizens, for maintaining trust in the transport system, and underpins the European economy. Terrorist threats to transport remain high and are constantly evolving. Cyber security is becoming more and more critical. We must ensure that our legislation is fit-for-purpose and able to adapt to the evolving threats. At the same time, our actions must be risk-based and proportionate. This is why I favour balanced and efficient responses to existing and emerging security threats, at EU or Member States' level. We must aim to mitigate risk while maintaining travel convenience and the smooth flow of goods and passengers in airports.

Increasing the use of **sustainable alternative fuels** will make a significant contribution to the decarbonisation of transport. In the context of the European Green Deal, I will focus on accelerating the uptake of sustainable and alternative fuels for road, maritime, inland waterways and air transport through a number of measures:

Research and innovation will be key in ensuring the availability of adequate solutions. This will have to be matched by sufficient production capacity and sufficient availability of charging and refuelling infrastructure in Europe.

Recharging or refuelling alternative fuels vehicles should be as easy as refuelling vehicles with internal combustion engines – everywhere in the EU! We need a comprehensive network that is interoperable across borders, easy to access and affordable to use. It requires open, competitive markets. The Alternative fuels infrastructure Directive is currently being evaluated. I will pay particular attention to the outcome and consider action where relevant, bearing in mind the need for the Directive to fulfil its purpose in the years ahead.

I will concert actions leveraging public and private funds towards the deployment of significant increase in publicly accessible recharging or refuelling points for zero-emission vehicles (battery and hydrogen fuel cell) and complete alternative fuel connectivity for all transport modes, including increased electrification at airports and ports. This will also require the reinforcement of electricity grids.

I will also work, together with my Commission colleagues, to combine financial resources and the appropriate policy framework to set the right price incentives for alternative fuels across all modes and to incentivise the uptake of alternative fuels, infrastructure and vehicles.

Alternative fuels are essential to reduce emissions from ships. Today, the only widely available less polluting fuel is Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). It delivers a satisfactory solution to the upcoming challenges on air pollution but its CO₂ savings are limited. It can play a role in as far as it paves the way towards low emissions solutions. Our experience in the deployment of marine LNG for example, in which Europe is a leader, should be used in the development of actions concerning low- and zero-carbon fuels.

For rail, electrification remains an important objective. Today, in the EU, more than 80% of rail traffic is electrified. Where this is not an economic option, hybrid trains or hydrogen trains are emerging as alternatives.

[For more details on digitalisation see Question 7.]

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?

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 and 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 on sustainable and smart mobility, we should take a closer look at the EU framework and how it relates to urban mobility that should be driven by citizens' needs. Alternatives to private conventional 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. The current evaluation of the existing Urban Mobility Package will feed into this reflection. 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, workers' rights to name just a few. In full respect of the principle of subsidiarity, we may have to look at areas not yet covered by EU legislation.

There is no doubt that drones will come to our cities. We should embrace them as they will offer many new opportunities, but we must also ensure that we have an adequate framework in place for them. The new Basic Regulation on aviation safety was a huge step forward in this respect. We must develop an efficient, digitally-based system ("U-space") that keeps drone operations safe, secure, sustainable and respects privacy constraints, particularly in urban areas.

More and more European cities are introducing Urban Vehicle Access Regulations (UVARs) such as congestion charging zones, pedestrian zones or low-emission zones to pursue a variety of policy objectives ranging from better air quality and attractiveness of cities to infrastructure optimisation. Cities' efforts to reduce emissions should be supported. At the same time, it is important to help deal with the challenges for passenger and freight transport that the introduction of these different schemes may pose, and the Union may play a role here. As a first step, we need to use more digital tools to better inform citizens and businesses and ensure that alternative mobility solutions are in place.

Air pollution is responsible for 400.000 premature deaths in the EU every year. Road transport is a key contributor. The new carbon-dioxide emission performance standards for both light and heavy-duty vehicles, together with Real Driving Emissions Testing adopted under the Juncker Commission, are useful tools for reducing emissions and improving air quality. New rules for type-approval and emission testing, including for the Euro/EURO emission limit standards tackling non-CO₂ air pollutants (such as NO_x, particulate matter), will ensure that tests better reflect what vehicles actually emit on the road. At the same time, new public procurement rules under the Clean Vehicles Directive will boost the take-up of clean vehicles, particularly for urban buses.

The framework is in place; now we need to complete it, and drive the transition towards zero-emission mobility. To this end, a number of subjects needs to be explored, such as extending heavy-duty vehicles' CO₂ emission standards to cover buses, assessing life-cycle impacts of vehicles beyond tailpipe emissions, putting in place real-life monitoring of emissions, and creating the right conditions for a faster roll-out of low- and zero-emission vehicles.

Price signals are important. The road charging directive (Eurovignette) can play a key role in incentivising the use of greener vehicles and generally reflecting the pollution in road use prices. We have taken the first steps, but more action will be needed, to protect the climate, air quality in our cities and our citizens' health. Public transport is particularly relevant here. It is a priority to particularly support this sector, also for the transition to clean vehicle fleets.

Night trains can offer a way of making rail an attractive alternative to flights even on longer distances. The current legal framework for Public Service Obligations (PSO) in land transport is applicable also to international night train services: the competent national authorities would need to assess the applicable requirements and may procure services in accordance with this framework. I would like to discuss with the sector how we can better support the operation of night trains, for example through better availability of rolling stock and rail-road links.

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 want to support the transition from a supply-driven mobility system with fixed and separate timetables per mode to a demand driven system with multimodal solutions from door-to-door. On the freight side, too, sharing information on schedules, delays, traffic conditions, location of vehicles and cargo, availability of equipment and infrastructure, cargo destinations, etc. can be used to optimise freight operations, cut congestion and waiting times, avoid empty runs, and, ultimately, reduce fuel use and emissions.

Businesses have the natural tendency to keep information for themselves but are now starting to recognise the enormous value of sharing it. However, both businesses and citizens need a framework that offers guarantees of protection of sensitive data, standards for interoperability and common data models.

For freight, we are already putting in place two building blocks with respect to business to authority communications. The implementation of the European Maritime Single Window Environment and the adoption by the co-legislators of the Commission proposal on electronic Freight Transport Information not only will greatly reduce administrative costs for transport operators, but will also prepare the ground for data exchange between businesses.

In addition, I will also work to facilitate the development of connected and automated transport solutions that can increase safety, capacity and sustainability of EU transport. On the road transport side, I am very keen to seeing the development of safe and secure driver assistance mechanisms.

Increased automation could also reduce the need for private vehicle ownership and make it a lot easier to share vehicles and trips. Connected and autonomous mobility could become a much more personalised form of public transport, delivering last-mile services, seamlessly connected to mass public transport. This could in turn have a massive impact on land use, largely removing the need for parking space and drastically reducing the number of cars.

Many pilot projects are ongoing in Europe, within Member States and with the industry. Joint Undertakings are key partnerships through which the EU can support the deployment of clean and innovative technologies. We can learn quicker if our efforts are better aligned and coordinated. We need a common strategic research and innovation agenda to accelerate the developments of connected and automated mobility and make sure we tap into its full potential. That is why a platform of public and private actors has recently seen the day.

Similarly, the European rail signalling system ERTMS brings important benefits in terms of capacity, safety and costs and should be deployed swiftly.

[For more details on traffic management technologies see Question 5.]

Competitiveness is also a key factor: 11 million Europeans are working in transport products and services. Global competition is increasing. I want our industry to master and lead the global transformation towards clean, smart and user-focussed transport. I also want to help with unlocking the potential of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, block-chain, big data and drones. It is important to progress on digitalisation and to this end consider all levers such as standardisation, funding, greater cooperation between public and private stakeholders and, where necessary, relevant regulatory frameworks. We need to enable the emergence of new business cases.

Digitalisation, automation and electrification will transform the transport sector as well as the jobs that go with it. It is difficult to anticipate the exact impact of automation on jobs and skills, but all actors will need to play their part so that workers employed in traditional activities are not left behind. To get a better understanding of the ongoing transformation process, the Commission is already funding research projects and is engaging with the social partners. In addition to specific initiatives in each mode of transport, horizontal social aspects should remain in focus, for instance how to best organise up-skilling and training of workers. I will work very closely on these matters with the Commissioner-designate for Jobs, Nicolas Schmit, and the Vice-President-designate for an Economy that Works for People, Valdis Dombrovskis. If we properly consider social aspects during the transition towards automation, we can actively shape the future.

I am committed to contribute to the development of an adequate level of protection of passengers against any potential disruptions (long delays, cancellations and others).

I have noted that active inter-institutional discussions on the existing rail passenger rights proposal are underway and I look forward to working on these important issues. If we want people to travel more by train, they need to know that their rights will be protected.

We also need to further improve the current regime for air passenger rights. Many passengers are either not aware of these rights or find it difficult to claim them; air carriers consider the rules too burdensome and costly, and the enforcement is not consistent in the Member States. The Commission proposal from 2013 still needs to be discussed in the Council while the Parliament adopted its first reading in February 2014. I look forward to working on achieving these objectives, including having a thorough look at the protection of passengers in the case of airline insolvencies.

A sixth of passengers are now people with disabilities or reduced mobility- a growing trend, given our ageing population. I will strive for a better protection of this group of passengers throughout all modes of transport! They need our special support! In this context, we need to see whether the rules applicable in this area - the three Regulations dealing with Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM) traveling by air, by bus & coach and by maritime transport remain fit for purpose.