

JOINT ASECAP, ERF, IRU PRESS RELEASE

Where is the Mid-term Review of the EU Transport White Paper?

The industry associations ASECAP, ERF and IRU are deeply concerned that this policy review has not been published yet.

Brussels - The important players in the European road transport industry - motorway toll operators, infrastructure providers and road transport operators - ask the European Commission a pressing question. What has happened to the mid-term review of the EU's 2001 Transport White Paper? The industry associations ASECAP, ERF and IRU are deeply concerned that this policy review has still not materialised.

This delay is unaffordable. A profound reworking of the 2001 White Paper's core principles is needed to put the EU back on a competitive course towards an efficient and workable transport policy in line with the objectives of the Lisbon agenda. EU decision makers and industry urgently need a new framework and new practical strategies to achieve it.

The industry is confident that within the Commission, some breakthroughs have been made in this direction. The Commission's Transport Directorate has courageously faced up to some serious misconceptions in its existing policy framework. The concepts of forced modal shift from road to rail and the decoupling of transport from economic growth remain theories without practical application. These central pillars of the 2001 White Paper have been tested against the socio - economic realities of the last five years and their credibility has been seriously undermined. They should be replaced as soon as possible by strategies that do not discriminate against or prefer any single mode of transport over another; rather they should allow each mode to fulfil its capabilities. The goal must be to create fair and equal conditions under which each mode will be able to play its full role at the service of Europe's citizens and economy.

ASECAP, ERF and the IRU believe strongly in the need for a sustainable transport policy and they will continue to ensure this. They are convinced that regulators will finally provide a workable and realistic framework. Improvements in road infrastructure must also be prioritized as a means to achieve sustainable development in transport. For example, filling in the missing links in road infrastructure, the regulators will simultaneously strengthen the economy by reducing journey times, as well as decrease the CO2 emissions and accidents which are a direct result of congestion. Above all the mid-term review should explicitly recognise road transport as a net contributor to the economy and society.

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