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## Feedback from: ECTRI

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The European Conference of Transport Research Institutes (ECTRI) welcomes the Commission's effort to put forward a comprehensive strategy for sustainable and smart mobility. Unfortunately, EU's commitments to reduce GHG emissions from the transport sector in the past (e.g. White Papers on Transport in 1992 and 2001) have never reached their ambitious targets, and the EU is not on track to meet the targets set in the current 2011 Transport White Paper (a reduction of 20% below the 2008 GHG emission level in 2030 and a 60% reduction target in 2050 compared to 1990 level).

Now that the Green Deal is setting even more ambitious targets for the transport sector (a 90% GHG emission reduction by 2050), it is high time to explore alternative approaches, and the European transport research community is eager to contribute. As a complement to the technological and industrial focus of transport research activities within FP-9 (Horizon Europe), there is a need for strategic multidisciplinary research to review some of the key paradigms sustained for more than three decades and that have not been able to deliver the sustainable transport system envisaged in European policy documents:

- Transport as the backbone of European integration and the European single market. This paradigm has resulted in ever growing transport demand of people and goods, an increasing concentration of high-added value economic activities in a few European regions and growing economic disparities before them and regions lagging behind. The promises of a "polycentric and balanced spatial development in the EU", outlined in the 1999 European Spatial Development Perspective and governing regional development, TEN-T and other European policies with a territorial impact, have not materialized.

- Economic and social vulnerability. The COVID-19 crisis has shown that not all economic sectors are equally vulnerable: low-added value sectors and low-income workers seem disproportionately hit by the pandemic; and these economic activities and social groups are particularly dependent on transport services, and have little- if any- capacities to rely on digital technologies. The disruption of transport services hit these activities and people particularly hard, showing the equity unbalances of the current transport system.

ECTRI suggests to establish a robust multidisciplinary research agenda on transport, social cohesion and sustainable development, that can provide the Green Deal with the necessary knowledge basis to undertake a disruptive revision of these failed paradigms, and put the European transport policy on track towards sustainability. There is an urgent need to learnt from the past, undertake a better understanding of the current drivers of economic development in Europe and their incompatibility with the sustainable transport paradigm, and to identify how transport demand in Europe can be curbed down to sustainable levels while improving the economic competitiveness and social cohesion. ECTRI proposes to undertake a four-year research programme in this area, mobilizing the European research community and providing decision-makers with a sound basis for engaging the substantial reforms needed to achieve the Green Deal targets.

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