

Connecting Europe's Smart Mobility Strategy with Digital Europe ambitions

As mentioned in our [first analysis](#), the European Commission published a Communication last December which presented their strategy for a smart and sustainable mobility system in Europe as an important pillar for how to deliver a carbon neutral economy in Europe by 2050.

This strategy also provides a clear time table on what the Commission expects to be delivered by the different transport modes as soon as 2030.

It is positive to see how this strategy clearly helps to translate Europe' twin transitions towards climate neutrality and digital leadership into what this means for Europe's mobility ecosystem.

In this second contribution, we want to focus on the **smart mobility strategy** as proposed by the European Commission. The Commission referred to the COVID-19 pandemic which demonstrated the need for a well-functioning single market as well as for a coordinated European approach to transport activities as being essential to address the crisis.

We already see new initiatives being launched by the Commission to accelerate the transition to a digitally empowered Europe, especially the Communication done on March 9 to launch **Europe's Digital Decade**.

The Commission's strategy document of December 2020 started by setting already some clear deadlines to be reached to deliver a smarter mobility system in Europe :

By 2030, automated mobility should be deployed at large scale; seamless multimodal passenger transport should be facilitated by **integrated electronic ticketing** and **freight transport should be paperless**.

By 2050, a fully operational, multi-modal Trans-European Transport Network should be in place for smart transport with **high speed connectivity**.

The recently adopted **Communication on Europe's Digital Decade** has added a milestone to speed up secure, performant and sustainable digital infrastructures, which should help enable connected, cooperated and automated mobility systems by 2030. All populated areas should be covered by 5G.

Clearly the Commission wants to leverage digitalisation to make connected and automated multimodal mobility a reality: the idea is to allow consumers to travel across transport modes using one single ticket. Core to enable this will be to leverage ITS or **Intelligent Transport Systems**. There is currently an ITS directive in place which is up for revision: a new proposal is expected during the third quarter of 2021, to be based on the still to be launched impact assessment. It is clear from past experience that this will again lead to difficult discussions between all institutions.

The last delegated regulation, which was tabled by the Commission under the existing ITS directive, regulating connected intelligent transport systems to improve road safety by enabling vehicles to communicate with each other and with the infrastructure, was

rejected by the Council. The Commission wanted to rely on Wi-Fi-technology for short-range communications while the other institutions wanted cellular technologies included. This incident already demonstrates the urgent need for better dialogue among all relevant stakeholders in the future. This should also facilitate the alignment process between the institutions.

Exchange of data between transport modes will be a requirement to enable multimodality: exchange of data will also be a must to ensure an efficient traffic management system whereby vehicles and traffic authorities and infrastructure are connected and can exchange data.

CCAM or connected, cooperative and automated mobility will be at the core of the Commission's plans to create a fully integrated multi-modal mobility ecosystem, which should also enhance road safety; it will require also new proposals towards harmonisation of traffic rules and address liability for automated vehicles.

To help get there, the Commission wants to explore the creation of either a new agency or an existing body to support the deployment and management of ITS and sustainable connected and automated mobility across the European Union.

Smarter traffic management systems do not only apply to the road. The Commission names the roll out of the **European Rail Traffic Management System** (ERTMS) and the **Single European Sky** as priorities; this will require further efforts to develop train automation and air traffic management systems through joint undertakings. For maritime, the plan is to further develop **vessel traffic monitoring and information systems** (VTMIS).

CCAM will only be made a reality if Europe continues to innovate in this area by developing new technologies and services: funding instruments are in place like the Connected Europe Facility (CEF), the Cohesion Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and InvestEU to enable investment in disruptive solutions.

The Commission's strategy is making reference to some of the new technologies in place or underway which will require more attention, such as the deployment of drones and unmanned aircraft and the need to upgrade our digital infrastructure through **5G**. This should allow for higher levels of automation across different mobility applications.

Reference is made to the deployment of the 2016 5G Action Plan which had as an objective to launch 5G services in all EU member states by the end of 2020 at the latest, which would then be followed by a 'rapid build-up' to achieve uninterrupted 5G coverage in urban areas and along main transport paths by 2025. It is clear that these deadlines have not been met: partially due to the COVID-19 pandemic but also by the lack of spectrum assignments by member states.

Artificial Intelligence or AI will become key for transport automation across all modes, to be supported through testing and innovation programs to be funded under the Digital Europe programme. High-quality data will be a key factor in improving performance and building robust models for AI systems. The Commission wants to ensure legal clarity in AI-based applications, especially regarding data. Thus, the **proposed regulation on data governance** will help by boosting data sharing across sectors and Member States, while the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a major step towards building trust.

Following a consultation last year, the Commission will propose a horizontal regulatory proposal on AI, expected for April 2021. This proposal will aim to safeguard fundamental EU values and rights and user safety by obliging high-risk AI systems to meet mandatory

requirements related to their trustworthiness. For example, ensuring there is human oversight, and clear information on the capabilities and limitations of AI.

As mentioned before, **data** will become an important building block in this new ecosystem. For Europe, the Commission will propose actions to build a **European Common Mobility Data Space**: objective is to collect, connect and exchange data available to meet EU objectives from sustainability to multi-modality. This should be possible while being cyber safe and in compliance with data protection standards. This will require a clear regulatory framework which is currently being drafted: options should be ready for review and consultation with all stakeholders in the next months.

DG Grow of the European Commission plans to introduce a proposal on **access to vehicle data** during the 4th quarter of 2021, creating a framework which would allow for access to these data in a fair and safe way to other mobility service providers. This initiative will come on top of other data related legislative initiatives , which are being launched following the European Strategy for data issued in February 2020, such as the proposal for a Regulation on **European Data Governance**, introduced by DG Connect on November 25, 2020. The idea is to facilitate the creation of European data sharing systems in different policy domains, such as health and mobility.

Obviously, all these data sharing systems will have to be safe and secure which triggers the need for a robust cybersecurity system : this is managed through the **EU Cybersecurity Act** introducing an EU wide cybersecurity certification framework for ICT products, services and processes with an oversight by **ENISA**, the EU Agency for Cybersecurity. This will be completed by a revision of the Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems (**NIS 2**), which will also cover mobility systems. The data discussion will require a consistent approach across all DG's involved in the Commission: Grow, Connect and Move which is in itself already a challenging operation. At the same time, regulators are facing the brute reality that all these technologies are progressing fast, which should force regulators to rethink how to be leaner and faster to get the right regulatory framework in place without getting stuck in the processes and technical details.

While Europe is working on a clear policy & regulatory framework to enable smarter mobility systems across transport modes, similar activities are underway outside Europe, such as in the US, Japan and in China. There will be a need to harmonize some of these different regulations over time. In that respect, we should refer to the excellent work going on within the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) by the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations, who adopted on January 22 this year the **UN Regulation 155 on Cyber Security** and Cyber Security Management Systems, the first international regulation governing vehicle's cyber security.

As technologies travel across countries, there will be a need to explore a more consistent global approach to enable all these new technologies: this should help creating societies where access to mobility is accessible to all citizens while allowing economic operators to offer their new mobility services not only in but also outside Europe.

Erik JONNAERT

Former secretary general European Automotive Industry Association ACEA – now Special Advisor Transport & Mobility ,FIPRA consultants in public affairs

fipra.com | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#)