

Brussels, 21 January 2009

Vice President Tajani : EU action needed to promote sustainable urban mobility

Vice President Antonio Tajani announced today the action plan at EU level to tackle the chronic problems created by transport in Europe's towns and cities. Speaking at the CIVITAS II Final Conference, held in Toulouse from 21-23 January 2009, he noted that for Europe to meet its commitments on climate change, energy security and environmental pollution, all actors at EU level, cities, Member States and the EU, need to work together to find solutions to the congestion and environmental problems that plague our cities.

The Vice President cited CIVITAS II as a good example of how the EU could support cities with funding aimed at illustrating innovative technologies and policy measures for promoting clean vehicles, public transport and other more sustainable modes such as walking and cycling. Over 70% of the Europe's citizens live in towns and cities. 85% of Europe's GDP is generated in cities. Some 40% of Europe's CO2 emissions from road transport and 70% of other pollutants are due to urban traffic.

Vice President Tajani in charge of transport said: *"Today Europe is facing serious economic recession – we must turn this into an opportunity. We must invest in innovative new policies and technologies to make our cities work better – that means reducing congestion, promoting public transport as well as healthy modes of transport such as cycling and walking. We will launch a series of concrete actions this year. They follow an integrated approach on sustainable urban mobility. We want to work in partnership with the cities and national governments to achieve this"*

Vice President Tajani emphasised his strong commitment to the adoption of a comprehensive Action Plan following extensive consultation on the Green Paper "Towards a new culture for urban mobility", which the Commission published in 2007. He outlined in more detail the actions that will be launched by the Commission during 2009. These will include actions to assist public authorities with the implementation of a new Directive for promoting clean and energy-efficient vehicles, as well as funding support for pilot projects and studies on various aspects of sustainable urban mobility.

Some 300 politicians and experts from over 20 countries gathered in Toulouse to discuss the findings of the 50M€ European Commission funded CIVITAS II programme. CIVITAS II is the second of three phases of CIVITAS which is benefiting from a total of 180M€ support from the Commission. The CIVITAS Forum is a network of politicians and transport experts from over 130 cities in nearly 30 European countries.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.civitas-initiative.org/main.phtml?lan=en>