

## The Vilnius Declaration

### Sustainable mobility for a sustainable society

The European Commission has clearly stated its ambitious vision to increase mobility while reducing emissions by 2050 in its 2011 Transport White Paper. Vice President Siim Kallas, responsible for transport said, *"Transport 2050 is a roadmap for a competitive transport sector that increases mobility and cuts emissions. We can and we must do both. [...] Competitive transport systems are vital for Europe's ability to compete in the world, for economic growth, job creation and for peoples' everyday quality of life."*

It is stated in the 2011 White Paper that a higher share of travel by collective transport, combined with minimum service obligations, will allow increasing the density and frequency of service, thereby generating a virtuous circle for public transport modes.

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), Lietuvos Geležinkeliai (Lithuanian Railways LG) and the Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (VGTU), as co-organisers of the conference on public service transport in Vilnius on 22 November 2011, wish to stress the importance of providing such services to European citizens. Public transport services must be readily available, safe and of high quality in order to help the EU cope with its environmental ambitions while taking into account the mobility needs of citizens.

CER, LG and VGTU believe that it is the social responsibility of the European Union and its Member States to make all endeavours to create and maintain fair and adequate conditions for the development of public service rail transport. The objective is to favour modal shift and to serve the commuting needs of citizens while alleviating congestion and other environmental flaws.

To this end, CER, LG, and VGTU call on EU Member States and Governments:

- To fully respect the rules and the spirit of EU law on services of general interest as laid down in article 14 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and more specifically on public rail transport services as laid down in regulation 1370/2007
- To recognise the need and the obligation for railway undertakings operating public passenger rail transport services to be adequately compensated for the costs of these services in so far as they are not covered by revenues from ticket sales
- To fully translate the increasingly important socio-economic and political advantages and priorities into concrete investment plans for urban, suburban, and regional infrastructure developments in their countries.

In many EU Member States a real change in policy orientation is needed: growing mobility must go along with lower emissions. If this message is taken seriously it is clear that public rail passenger services have to play a much more important role, and that this must be supported by higher investments in operations and infrastructure, reflecting a decisive change of priorities in transport policy. These investments will create a new economic momentum thus contributing to a sustainable development of our countries.

This is the message of Vilnius!