



The Eurocouncil of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile
European Bureau

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Should this contribution be published anonymously: NO

**FIA CONTRIBUTION TO THE
CONSULTATION IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBLE DESIGNATION OF 2012 AS EUROPEAN YEAR FOR
ACTIVE AGEING AND INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

Name	European Bureau from The Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) ID number at the EC Register: 95060931779-32
Organisation	The Eurocouncil of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the leading European motoring and touring organisation, represents 35 million mobile consumers who daily make their way by car, motorcycle, bicycle, public transport and on foot. We bring together 71 national motoring and touring organisations in 47 European countries. Europe's motoring and touring organisations have as their highest priority to make mobility more sustainable, i.e. more reliable, cleaner and safer while keeping it affordable for all.
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FIA Eurocouncil's overarching goal is to ensure that mobility for all remains a reality in Europe's ever changing social structure. Mobility actively contributes to European social, economic and environmental welfare. EU citizens should benefit from a transport system whose design and management correspond to their needs, whilst taking into account the social, economic and environmental challenges society faces.

The balance of different age groups within the EU population is reflecting the current demographical trends. The fact that we live longer and healthier lives brings about a number of challenges and opportunities. These changes will lead to a significant increase in older citizens, who enjoyed the benefits of daily mobility all of their adult lives. In order to continue leading an active and socially integrated life, they will make the best possible use of all personal mobility options (on foot, bicycle, public transports & car) in their old age.

In our vision, the transport offer of the future encompasses all different transport modes, which need to be combined to allow an efficient door-to-door mobility. Ultimately, what is good for older citizens is good for all of us and we firmly believe that citizens would indistinctly benefit from the development of an efficient transport offer. Each mode of transport presents some of the strengths needed to allow older citizens to fully participate in tomorrow's society.

2. Threats and opportunities of ageing in relation to intergenerational solidarity

Mobility is one of the most important pre-conditions to intergenerational solidarity as it will enable all citizens to remain independent and active in their local communities. Notwithstanding the mode of transport, older citizens have a right to safe and efficient mobility.

Individual and collective transports offer different services and fulfil different needs. They do not represent competing means of achieving the very same goal, as too often assumed. The best approach to tackling the challenges of an ageing society is to support a balanced use of all means of transports. Personal car mobility is broadly used in the European Union and this preference seems likely to be reflected in all age groups. Car mobility is a practical and efficient way to carry on door to door journeys. Public transport already accounts for a significant share of short urban trips or long distances trips and should be further promoted. Public transport can and should provide a real alternative to car mobility to as many users as possible. Finally, the potential of cycling and walking should not be neglected, as it represents a perfectly viable, healthy and environment-friendly mode of transport for proximity trips.

Several mobility **challenges** linked to ageing society will have to be addressed, in order to enhance intergenerational solidarity.

The European Union needs to:

1. **Recognise and act on the fact** that the demand for individual mobility will continue to rise as different groups of active seniors emerge (more social, cultural and sport activities; different ways of travelling...).
2. **Recognise that car use will be the first travel mode for older people**, both as drivers and passengers. Car mobility will enable the seniors to continue leading the relatively independent and active lives they are used to. Car journeys remain key vectors of societal interactions.



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3. Recognise the importance of **adapting public transport to the specific needs of elderly citizens**. Public transport must offer an appropriate, user-friendly, safe and efficient door-to-door service.
4. **Support the definition and implementation of appropriate policies and actions to help elderly citizens continue to be mobile**, thus contributing to the general social well-being of all. This includes measures for pedestrians and cyclists such as construction of separate bicycle lanes, provision of safe crossing infrastructures...

Provided that the challenges outlined above are correctly addressed, the quality of life of ageing people will be greatly enhanced by their maintained mobility. They will benefit – along with society as a whole – from the possibilities of: leading a relatively independent socially active life and staying in touch with their friends and relatives, satisfying their basic needs (shopping, health care, banking). The opportunities linked to safeguarding mobility for senior citizens will also naturally increase interactions between generations and benefit all citizens.

3. Policy measures required to avert such threats or exploit the opportunities and hence promote intergenerational solidarity

A number of policy measures will be required so as to ensure that the specific needs of older mobile consumers are accounted for.

1. Well designed and maintained infrastructure: Increased investments in local and regional road infrastructures – broadly used by older drivers – would be beneficial for all drivers (protected signalized left turn lanes, better lighting and signage, change in timing of red lights, etc). Special attention should be paid to pedestrians' crossings and bicycle footpaths in order to increase the protection of all vulnerable road users.

2. Simplification of traffic rules and signs: Road users in general would benefit from a **simplification of participation in traffic**. The policy measures required in that regard aim at improving traffic flow (lower speed level and less variation in speeds) and reducing in the complexity of traffic conditions. Homogenised and better readable traffic signs would further improve road safety for all.

3. Support for the development and deployment of driver assistance systems, such as vision enhancement systems, collision avoidance system, parking assistance, route guidance system and telematics. The use of these recently developed systems would ease driving for all drivers and in particular for elderly drivers, thus contributing to increasing road safety.

4. Implementation of life-long learning and assessment: All drivers would benefit from **periodic training assessing (and potentially improving) their driving skills** and attitudes. Periodic voluntary assessments and training would show older drivers where particular weaknesses have developed and improve both their confidence and ability to be safe drivers. These measures would be beneficial for all drivers and there is no need to single out the older drivers.

Older drivers need the support of family, friends and health professionals to help them with the decision to stop driving when time has come and to explore ways to manage life without a car.



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We believe that **seniors should be given advice and should be prepared for the time when they are no longer capable to drive a car**. Reference persons (for example their doctor or another person of their confidence) should provide them with information on transport alternatives available and their advantages in terms of safety, more relaxed travelling etc...

5. Provision of appropriate **public transport services** as a complement and alternative to the car: Offers for efficient mobility for older people must be provided both in urban and in rural areas. Public transport should become more user friendly and offer longer operation schedules, sufficient seating capacity, increased care from staff (especially drivers) for seniors' needs, adapted design of interchanges...

The above are just some of the issues to be understood and acted on. There has been much research on the mobility needs of elderly citizens over the past twenty years. Instead of further research, pragmatic policies and programmes to help elderly citizens to remain safely mobile are needed.

4. Role of the EU in promoting the right policy responses

One of the priorities of EU policy is to improve cross-border mobility of European citizens. While elderly citizens benefit from specific supportive initiatives in their home country, the EU should ensure that they also can benefit from those initiatives when travelling in a foreign EU Member State.

A good example of an action with high European added value is the harmonisation of the Parking Card for people with disabilities. The EU "Blue Badge" model helps disabled people (and so disabled elderly citizens) to travel across member state borders in the knowledge that their Blue Badge will be recognised by other EU member states. This has been an enormous step forward in facilitating the free movement of people with disabilities within the EU.

FIA supports the EU involvement in facilitating personal mobility for disabled drivers: Whilst specifically addressing the needs of drivers with disabilities, a number of measures adopted in this context could also support older people's access to mobility.

5. Topics and activities for a European Year

The ageing of the population will lead to many new opportunities and challenges. Our common goal should be to enable older people to go on playing an active role in their communities.

Older people will want to, be expected to or even need to continue working well beyond retirement age and will seek to retain their independent mobility. Many retired people will also want to enjoy leisure through participating in recreation and tourism activities, which they will afford after a lifetime of work. Their children will want their parents to enjoy active lives for many years, and helping them do so will bring with it greater cohesion of families and intergenerational support, particularly as people migrate around the Community and ageing parents become separated from their children and grandchildren. Personal mobility contributes to shaping the lives of older people and their interactions with society, friends and relatives, as drivers, pedestrians or passengers of cars and public transport.



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In our view, **ways to efficiently safeguard social participation and interaction through personal mobility should be addressed** in depth during the European Year.

6. Your organisation's contribution to the European Year

FIA member clubs are in all EU member states and have a high interest in the mobility of all drivers, including that of older and disabled people. During the European Year, the clubs would disseminate the key outputs of the Year to their members through their magazines and lobby their states to promote the mobility interests of older and disabled people.

As maintained access to mobility will be one of the dominant issues facing older people in the coming years, the FIA and its European member clubs should work alongside the European Commission and representatives of member states during the planning and during the course of the Year. Individual FIA member clubs will appreciate to discuss with their Governments how that cooperation can be taken forward and what contributions in the field of mobility each would be willing to make. Equally the FIA European Bureau will be happy to discuss with the European Commission which concrete contributions can be brought in this area so that the Year and its related actions encounter the expected success. FIA European Bureau would also make the expertise of its clubs available, when necessary.

7. What would your organisation require to play a major part in a European Year?

See question 6-

FIA European Bureau, as at 04/08/2009