

**Speech of Matthew Baldwin, European Road Safety Coordinator,
to the 2018 Annual Polis Conference in Manchester, – 22
November 2018**

Ladies and gentlemen, thanks a lot for inviting me to say some opening words.

It's a real honour, and a real opportunity for me as it comes just as I start out in a new role as European Coordinator for Road Safety and linked aspects of Sustainable, especially Urban, Mobility. I want to use this rather unconventional role to try to do a bit more than the usual Brussels sausage making – though we make great sausages. To be a resource to Member States as we wrestle together not just with conventional road safety challenges –such as 25 000 deaths– but a host of new mobility challenges.

And I want to be a resource for cities and metropolitan authorities too, but just as vital to me is how I can plug into what is a vital source of policy making, vision and energy that flows from Europe's great cities. Europe's cities are not just the cradle of Western civilisation but are of course where most of the future economic, social and environmental transformations are going to take place.

There's something going on.

60% of people live in cities, where 80% of the jobs are. If you look at things like Brexit referendum, the US midterms, the Bavarian regional elections, there is something of an urban / rural division. That's a split which could have big ramifications, but way beyond my pay grade. My point is that cities have the chance, perhaps even the responsibility, to be right at the core of lots of new initiatives, some of them with particular reference to specifically urban issues, some of them with much broader societal relevance.

And mobility is going to be absolutely central to this. For example, please take a look at the recent Graz Declaration, adopted at the Informal transport council a few weeks ago, which talks about a new era of clean, safe and affordable mobility, with modal shift and - specifically - ambitious sustainable urban mobility right at the heart of it, including promoting and promoting active mobility.

There also seems to be quite a lot of support from the citizens of Europe's cities for some quite radical policies to deliver clean, green,

safe, digital, indeed transformative mobility. I don't want to be blithe, or cute, but time for a new acronym - I suggest YIMBYABIO, and it's not one of those aching trendy and expensive ethnic health food stores. It stands for: Yes, in my back yard, and bring it on!

But while it's an exciting time, and while there's a ton of stuff going on that doesn't need or want the blessing or approval of European or indeed national authorities, we also –boringly– need policy coherence. Particularly in mobility policy, we must not look to reinvent the wheel. We need to share experiences and learn from our setbacks. Pascal Smet told me yesterday that one of his most popular presentations was: "How not to pedestrianize a street".

In short, if something like POLIS did not already exist we would need to invent you. It's a great forum, and we should use these two days to the full, look at what's going on in relation to connected and automated mobility, new mobility services, active and multimodal mobility, decarbonisation, air quality, safety, the whole lot.

But if I may, I do urge POLIS to be radical as it is a crucial moment for cities in relation to urban mobility.

There's a ton of exciting and important ideas flowing from well-funded projects. But please don't sit back and assume that they will smoothly translate into effective policy making at the national or the European level.

Let's take the negotiations for the next financial framework. If you want to see a PPP or a Joint Undertaking on connected and automated mobility, you're going to have to push for it. Ditto if you want to keep the focus in CEF on multimodality, digitalisation, and road safety. If you want to see serious money going into mobility in HorizonEurope, your transport ministers, your research ministers, your finance ministers and your European Parliamentary representatives need to hear from you. Our proposals are on the table. We have great feedback from you in different forums, you say you like them. So write the letters, look for the meetings, help us make the case. Maybe the letters ARE going in, in which case my challenge to you is

pointless, but we all have to make the case for mobility and funding of it.

You also need to be radical when it comes to new policy directions, and ensure the urban angle gets full weight and the necessary prominence. When the European and national authorities are establishing the framework conditions, we need to hear directly from you as to whether we have got it right. Just to take clean bus procurement: are the rules sufficiently realistic to what cities need? Or too constraining? Are they sufficiently ambitious for example to allow cities to reduce the number of diesel buses? Do they take sufficient account of city specificities?

Yes, it's up to the European institutions to get the big questions right, to preserve and enhance the Single Market on issues such as this great European concept of interoperability. But we need to hear your voice, loud and clear, both through POLIS and of course individually. And please use opportunities such as the revision of the SUMP guidelines, SUMP 2.0, covering a whole host of topics, to make sure we get it

right. I say “we” but in reality these new guidelines are very much a bottom up exercise engaging a lot of different people in the community. If we get them right, they will be useful for you, typically the larger cities, but perhaps even more useful for smaller cities without the resources to stay in touch with them latest and best practices.

And finally if I may I would like to touch in one more area in particular where I urge you to be radical, and say a few words on road safety, the core of my new responsibilities, and on the partnership I would like to establish with you to carry this forward. You probably know much of the story, so I will skate rapidly over it. EUROPE wide, we have brought road deaths down to 25T, and seen from a global perspective, this is a great success. We have 1.3million deaths a year globally...only in the strange world of Road Safety can 25,000 be called a great success. We have now brought forward plans for a strategic action plan, including a 50% cut in road deaths and serious injuries (for 1st time) to take us a big step closer to the agreed long term target of Vision Zero by 2050.

There are couple of things to note there from an urban perspective. Roughly 40% of deaths are occurring in Europe's towns and cities - roughly 10 000 a year - and risk is that this figure is going to rise proportionately in coming years. Why? Because of the negative trends in relation to vulnerable road users - three quarters of deaths in urban areas are occurring to pedestrians, cyclists and motor cyclists.

So it goes without saying that we hope that Road Safety continues to be a very prominent part of urban mobility plans -indeed it is shaping to be big part of SUMP 2.0 - and it also fits very well with an overall holistic approach with stronger public transport, active mobility policies, logistics, pedestrianisation, and of course anti-congestion, emissions reductions and air quality.

But here once again, you can be radical. I am very proud of what we are doing at the European level, and we are working very effectively with member states and the European Parliament for example to make improvements to how we manage road infrastructure in terms of safety management. We have also put on the table another big

package of improvements to vehicle safety, both of which I hope will succeed in becoming law before the European Parliament elections in May.

But you don't have to wait for us. Just take speed, which is a crucial part of the Safe System, measures which we know are effective. We need safer infra, we need better cars, but we also need to slow down. Speed is a very interesting political topic of course, and not one where the EU comes in with draconian rules. What is very striking to me is that while opposing speed measures can become a big populist measure- apparently offending the rights of motorists - talking about speed in local communities, especially in cities, can be tremendously empowering in the other direction. We know that a pedestrian or a cyclist hit by a car at 50 kph or 30 mph has only a 10 % chance of survival, while survival rates rise to 90% if that speed falls to 30 kph or 20 mph. But it is not just about safety - then whole quality of life in cities improves with slower speed.

Technology will soon start to come to the rescue in the form of the Intelligent Speed Assistance proposals we have made last May and

which we hope will soon become law but are really the start of what technology can do to reduce speed. There is some opposition, I am sad to say, from car makers and others, and I hope we can overcome this and get it agreed.

But in the meantime, do not wait! We'll have a signing ceremony in just a moment on ISA under the European Innovation Partnership to encourage not just implementation of the proposals, but early implementation by authorities and fleet managers i.e. in procurement. We are in fact also looking at ways of financially supporting such actions.

And even more immediately, you can also ride the wave of cities introducing default lower speed limits of 30kph in Europe's cities. My own city of Brussels is starting to be transformed by lower speed as well as a host of other exciting measures pioneered by Pascal Smet. And yes I am only saying that because he is here.

To conclude, let me just say this. Your role is ever more important, you are doing more and more to promote safer, cleaner urban mobility across Europe. We would like to do much more with you. Subsidiarity has perhaps in the past limited us from doing as much as we might instinctively want to do in terms of classical legislation etc. But we should not, we must not, allow that to limit the extent of our partnership in lots and lots of other ways. I think the whole SUMP process, CIVITAS, the European Innovation Partnership; all show that in lots of different ways.

Whether it is in urban air mobility, new ideas for the energy-transport nexus such as vehicle to grid supply, whether it is in road safety: let's do more, much more, together.