

20 July 2000

NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE

European PRoGR€SS on Road User Charging

Eight cities across Europe have accepted the road user charging challenge in a project, funded by the European Commission, which was launched recently in Bristol.

Rome, Trondheim, Edinburgh, Copenhagen, Genoa, Gothenburg and Helsinki together with the Project Co-ordinator, Bristol, will spend the next four years developing and implementing a range of road pricing concepts and technologies. The partners will work closely with a number of key groups, namely transport authorities, public transport operators and research institutes and consultancies, in their aim to develop and assess the political, economic and social framework required for implementing urban transport pricing. Their approach will be firmly practical as they explore issues that have tended in the past to be neglected by researchers. These include the social acceptance of road user charging schemes, as well as their effectiveness in achieving environmental and revenue raising objectives.

A number of the test sites will look specifically at aligning road pricing tariff structures and payment methods with those of public transport and parking in a bid to achieve a more realistic distribution of external (environmental and social) costs. Other sites will concentrate on developing and trialling linked systems for payment of tolls, public transport fares, parking costs and other local goods and services.

Over the course of the four years, the project aims to develop good practice in electronic road pricing equipment and concepts. These will be presented as a series of guidelines and recommendations on implementing and exploiting transport pricing systems aimed at policy makers and project officers at all levels (local, national and European government). More widely, the project will support the development of a common policy on pricing schemes throughout Europe.

The developments within each of the cities will be closely monitored and evaluated by a team of European experts as part of their role in the European Transport Pricing Initiative (CUPID). As the official thematic network for PRoGR€SS, the Initiative will highlight urban transport pricing policy issues as they are being addressed by local authorities and national governments across Europe. It has a key role to play in disseminating information and feedback from the PRoGR€SS cities and adding to the road user charging debate both within Europe and further afield. The partners providing their expertise on this project are TTR Ltd (UK), ITS (UK), TUD (Germany), ISIS (Italy), TIS (Portugal), and SINTEF (Norway).

Commenting on the opportunities offered by PRoGR€SS and its thematic network, Councillor Helen Holland, Executive Member for the Environment, Transport and Leisure at Bristol City Council, said: “The key to success in this field is to explore public opinion and to design schemes which will serve the needs of business and residents. The public need to see the benefits in real terms – better public transport and a cleaner, safer environment. We welcome the involvement of PRoGR€SS as it is taking very positive steps to tackle these issues.”

Regular updates on these projects can be accessed via www.transport-pricing.net, along with a range of other information.

~ ends ~

Notes to Editors:

1. For further details please contact:

Jo Baker at TTR, tel: +44 1543 416416, fax: +44 1543 416683, email: ttr@compuserve.com

Melanie Alexander at Bristol City Council, tel: +44 117 903 6706, fax: +44 117 903 6540, email: melanie_alexander@bristol-city.gov.uk

2. Many cities are concerned about the increase in private car traffic and the associated negative impacts on the urban environment (e.g. congestion, accidents and poor air quality). In order to reverse this trend and promote more sustainable mobility in cities, national and European policies are being driven forward on two fronts:

- ◆ management of the demand for private car use, through traffic management strategies
- ◆ development of alternative mobility services, e.g. inter-modal public transport, car sharing, information systems, etc.

Road user charging can play a significant role in both of these policy directions. Two European Commission documents, the Communication ‘Developing the Citizen’s Network’ and the White Paper ‘Fair Payment for Infrastructure Use’, supported by existing research, outline the potential of road pricing as a demand management tool.

CUPID, the European Transport Pricing Initiative is a European funded thematic network on urban road pricing issues and key to the dissemination activities of PRoGR€SS. PRoGR€SS is a cluster of 8 European cities involved in trialling road user charging systems and technologies. Both projects run from 2000 to 2004.

3. **PRoGR€SS (Pricing ROad Use for Greater Responsibility, Efficiency and Sustainability in Citi€S)** has been developed under the Fifth Framework Programme of the European Commission. It was launched in Bristol on May 22 to 23 and aims: “to demonstrate and evaluate the effectiveness and acceptance of integrated urban transport pricing schemes to achieve transport goals and raise revenue.”

The project centres on eight demonstration sites: Bristol, Rome, Trondheim, Edinburgh, Copenhagen, Genoa, Gothenburg and Helsinki. Across these sites a number of road pricing concepts and technologies are being developed and demonstrated. In addition, to support the marginal cost pricing concept, a number of sites will be looking to integrate road pricing tariff structures and payment methods with those of public transport and parking.

Working together, the project partners aim to:

- Provide political support for each other, helping to achieve local acceptance of new pricing schemes
- Contribute to the development of common standards in electronic road pricing equipment and concepts
- Develop added-value through the integration of other mobility services with the electronic road pricing systems
- Contribute to the standardisation of electronic payment systems allowing common payment of tolls, public transport fares, parking costs and other local goods and services
- Contribute to recommendations and guidelines that can be used to help other cities PRoGR€SS their own pricing schemes.
- Support the development of a common policy on pricing schemes throughout Europe

The results and experience of the PROGR€SS project will be widely disseminated, through existing links with a number of city networks including POLIS, EUROCITIES, CAR FREE CITIES, EUROPRICE and the project’s thematic network, CUPID, the **European Transport Pricing Initiative**.

4. CUPID, the **European Transport Pricing Initiative** is a thematic network for urban road pricing, including PROGR€SS, funded by the European Commission. A partnership of 6 expert organisations in European countries are working together to achieve the project aims which are: “to provide co-ordination, state of the art intelligence, assessment and exploitation to a set of linked urban transport pricing demonstrations to determine how schemes can be successfully implemented in European cities.”