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***Raising citizens awareness and appreciation
of EU research on sustainable transport in the urban environment***



Following the Brussels Conference launch of June 2008, the Move Together project organised a

citizens' conference process in the city of Rome, engaging a panel of 25 citizens living in the 19 municipal districts of the city and in 6 municipalities of the surrounding urban area in a participatory process. The 25 participants represent lay people, not scientific experts and/or decision makers, and they have been recruited to formulate their view on research and demonstration projects implemented in the city of Rome with the help of EU funding. The Citizens' Conference process included a sequence of two workshops with the citizens' panel, moderated by the project leading partner ISIS and hosted by the Municipality of Rome (26 - 27 September) and AICCRE (25 - 26 October). During the workshops, the citizens had the opportunity to be briefed on EU research on sustainable urban transport, and become acquainted with the EU projects on the same issues implemented in the Rome urban area and its surroundings.

A final Conference with local policy makers was then held in Rome on **27 November 2008** at the *Musei Capitolini*, hosted by the Municipality of

Rome. The group of citizens presented the result of their commitment, the ***Citizens' declaration toward a new culture for Urban Mobility in Rome***, developed as a result of the two workshops.



The Conference has been successful under many aspects; to start with, there was the opportunity to hold a debate on the concrete needs and expectations between lay citizens, which are the everyday users of urban transport, and the representatives of the Municipality of Rome, such as Councillor Mr. Sergio Marchi, who claimed that the citizens' suggestions would be taken in account by the VII Department of the Rome Municipality and the Commission while designing the next Strategic Plan for Sustainable Mobility. His opinion was shared by Mr. Alessandro D'Armini, Director of the VII Department of the Rome Municipality, who stated the need to approach

mobility in a different way, with a more pro-active involvement of the citizens.



Rome – picture taken by a citizen participating to the panel of the local Conference

In their Declaration, Citizens have addressed a number of recommendations for a 'sustainable behaviour' to citizens and local governments. On the Citizens' side, it was stressed the importance of the individual choice that, if shared, it becomes a collective one: *'each of us, becoming more aware and **responsible citizens**, must contribute to improving, together with cooperative politicians, the quality of life in the urban environment'.... 'we will have **freedom of mobility** in the city only when, having raised and achieved a new culture of mobility, we will be able to contribute to the implementation of a better and more lasting quality of life for everyone'.*

Citizens have expressed as a main recommendation to local governments of the roman area to *give continuity to EU research programs because EU projects are a funding opportunity, considering the decreasing availability of public resources.* Other key topics stressed by the citizens are: to develop urban and interurban mobility strategy based on intermodality, make urban transport more accessible and competitive compared to private cars, use of IT to inform citizens, strengthening of road safety and a collaboration between citizens and local

administration. These are all matters which goes beyond the different political positions, as traffic is a collective problem and only by **moving together** it's possible to reach concrete results.

The Citizens' Declaration also includes some fundamental passages regarding the EU Citizens' Statement: *We share the sentiment of the "European Citizens' Statement" about the drastic reduction of time, space and health in the urban environment, and therefore an absolute need to achieve a public transport system that is more modern, accessible, reliable and integrated. We believe also that a **radical change in lifestyle**, and the social and environmental principles of each citizen is extremely necessary, to allow her/him to contribute first-hand, with more responsible daily mobility choices, to build a new culture of urban sustainable mobility.*



Rome – picture taken by a citizen participating to the panel of the local Conference

An open discussion followed with the intervention of Associations, the Province of Rome, Representatives of Municipal Districts, the University of Rome 'La Sapienza' and Federmobilità. The Vice-President and Transport Commissioner of the European Union Mr. Antonio Tajani closed the Conference by saying that he was impressed with the involvement of Roman citizens and their declaration.



Rome – picture taken by a citizen participating to the panel of the local Conference

This will be considered in the context of the discussions that the EU Commission is doing to promote the Action Plan following the Green Paper *Towards a new culture for Urban Mobility*, as, in spite of the reservations on subsidiarity, it's important for the EU to foster citizens' participation at local and European level.

The MOVE TOGETHER citizens declarations produced by the EU 27 citizens panel (already presented at the Launching Conference in Brussels on June 2008) and by the Rome citizens panel are available on the project web-site www.move-together.net.

Next Steps!

'BETTER MOBILITY: Move Together towards a New Mobility Culture' is the **Exhibition** produced by the Move Together team in order to communicate the key messages stemming from the

work of these citizens' panels to the general public in Europe.

The Exhibition will take place in five EU Countries, starting from June 2009 in Vienna. After Vienna, the Exhibition will take place in Rome, Budapest, Nice and Brussels, together with the Move Together final Conference.

<p>Wien (Austria) Opening 9 June 2009</p> <p>Rome (Italy) September 2009 (during the European Mobility Week)</p> <p>Budapest (Hungary) October 2009</p> <p>Nice (France) 25-27 November 2009</p> <p>Brussels (Belgium) first week of December 2009</p>

Call for tender! A tendering process to host a 'light version' of the Move Together Exhibition will be launched during the first week of March 2009 for the EU Countries who are not already hosting the former exhibition. This exhibition will take place **during the Mobility Week of 16-22 September 2009**. (for more information, please contact: f.battisti@aiccre.it)

