

Mr. George Scripcaru
Lord Mayor
Municipality of Braşov
Primăria Municipiului Braşov
8 Boulevard Eroilor
500007 Braşov, ROMANIA

Brussels, 7 September 2017

Dear Mr. Mayor,

Braşov is regarded as one of the best developed public transport networks in Romania. You enjoy centralised traffic planning system and dynamic passenger information on a number of stops. We are also pleased to see your forthcoming EBRD loan agreement to purchase new vehicles and improve the public transportation services. All in all, it is very good to observe that RATBV maintains strong mobility network in the city and it is good to see that the company will be expanding and improving the offering in order to respond to current mobility demand.

Yet, on behalf of the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) and its Trolleybus Committee, I would like to express our concerns with the latest information concerning the lack of funds for investing in and upgrading the trolleybus system.

We are concerned to observe that the possible EBRD loan request – which is for purchasing new vehicles – does not include any trolleybuses. As we understand, there is a maximum of 15 trolleybuses out of a 25 unit-strong fleet, which can be put into service at peak times in Braşov, yet the catenary and electricity supply network for trolleybuses has a capacity to run 130 vehicles simultaneously. As you know, public transport is used not only to reduce congestion, but also serves to improve air quality and improve energy and resource efficiency in the urban areas. That is why many European cities are moving to actually ban diesel vehicles in the medium term and heavily invest in electromobility. Furthermore, resource efficiency also means utilising the public assets as efficiently as possible – including the electricity grid for the current trolleybus network.

It is worth reminding that initiatives aiming at reducing the trolleybus system in some European cities are not in line with the current level of understanding of emerging urban mobility trends around Europe. Even though a number of cities worldwide decided to remove electric transport networks in the 1950s and 1960s, they were forced to restore these systems in the later period. One of the most important factors behind reopened, newly created or modernized trolleybus networks was their cost effectiveness and the reduced environmental impact of trolleybuses. If a plan concerning line closures and vehicle reduction becomes a reality, a city can expect a substantial increase in carbon footprint and car ownership as well as a higher congestion level, also based on a partial or temporary transfer from trolleybuses into diesel bus lines.

It is worth mentioning that UITP regards trolleybuses as an important element of the PTx2 Strategy of doubling the global market share of public transport trips by 2025. Nowadays, in a number of cities worldwide, trolleybuses serve as the city's "business card" and are the best green transport mode available. However, this demands both fleet modernization and infrastructure upgrading, but also the building of a positive image of public transport as an attractive, affordable and quality-driven mean of urban mobility.

In the case of Braşov, there are a number of EU Structural Funds, but also bank loans available that could be used to renew and upgrade the trolleybus infrastructure. Funding new bus purchases is just a partial solution, particularly in a city, where the trolleybus system has been successfully operating for some many decades. It is worth emphasizing that electric mobility has been recognized by the European Commission as the future of urban public transport (see the EU Directive 2009/33/EU on the promotion of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles). The trolleybus scheme fits perfectly into this picture.

Especially trolleybuses prove very often to be a flagship of sustainable mobility in many Eastern European cities, the best example of which is Gdynia, Szeged, Brno or Pilsen. However, this positive trend also involves better urban development strategies, new managerial culture, customer-driven approach and political commitment. All of these ensure that electric urban public transport can prevail as the fundament of green and sustainable urban mobility.

On behalf of the UITP and its Trolleybus Committee, I would be pleased to offer you our full support and assistance regarding the future of the public transport and trolleybus system in Braşov. We would be also pleased to have the opportunity to invite your company as a regular member of UITP and a member of the Trolleybus, Bus or Light Rail Committees, to name just a few of the most active working bodies. I believe that it is a good time for the new management team and Board of Directors of RATBV to start a close cooperation with UITP that does make a big difference to each and every of its members. We would be honored to support RATBV S.A. in the allocation process of the EU or EBRD funds for public transport modernization and development. Your beautiful, young and dynamic city deserves a cost-effective, green and sustainable transport solution that trolleybuses, electric buses and trams do offer. It is a ticket for a better future.

Looking forward to your hopefully positive reply, I remain

Yours sincerely,



Alain Flausch
UITP Secretary General