

Signature in Vienna during the 58th UITP World Congress

VERONA: THE INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Thanks to the agreement signed between VeronaFiere, UITP and ASSTRA, operators and industry will be provided, every two years, with a permanent forum in order to analyse transport needs in medium-small cities and regional areas. According to Asstra, public transport is moving forwards in major cities but falling behind in smaller centres: cars by now cover less than 60% of motorised urban transfers in large cities, while in cities with less than 100 thousand inhabitants the penetration rate even in 2008 was in excess of 90%, despite the overall re-dimensioning of the role of cars in urban mobility. The President of VeronaFiere Ettore Riello said: "We are the international reference event for public and private transport". The President of Asstra Marcello Panettoni added: "We are proud that our association has helped bring the forum to Verona".

Vienna, 9 June 2009. The agreement between UITP (International Public Transport Union), ASSTRA (Italian Association of Local Public Transport Companies) and VeronaFiere was signed in Vienna today that will organize during "Bus & Bus Mobility Business", scheduled next 18-21 November at the Verona exhibition centre, an international platform for study and updates of mobility in medium-small cities and low-population suburban areas.

The agreement - officially presented last November in Palazzo Barbieri, the Town Hall of Verona - was signed today in Vienna during the 58th UITP World Congress attended by the leading international experts in the sector. The document was signed by the President of Uitp **Roberto Cavalieri** and Director **Hans Rat**, the President of Asstra **Marcello Panettoni** and the President of VeronaFiere **Ettore Riello**.

The meeting also explained the contents of the "*Regional Transport Days*" - the permanent forum supported by the three parties to the Agreement that will involve more than 400 delegates from all over the world and will be held every two years.

The Verona forum will encourage study of the specific needs of public transport in medium-small cities, with special attention on the vehicles - including innovative systems - used in urban and extra-urban services, as well to assess opportunities for development supporting city and local tourism services through, for example, public-private partnerships and the use of secondary railway lines.

The Isfort-Asstra 2009 Report on urban mobility indicates that the urban public transport sector in overall terms is especially driven by metropolitan areas, while in smaller, provincial centres, public transport has dropped to minimal figures, with a market share systematically **less than 5%**. In fact, progress in public transport in 2008 especially involved large cities, where the incidence as regards transfers improved to **29.3% compared to 27.7%** in the previous year, while the result in small centres is only **4%** of motorised transfers (3.9% in 2007). The trend for public transport in smaller centres in 2000-2008 clearly highlights the crisis afflicting the sector at least since 2005 (5.4%), since in the three-year period 2002-2004 the share held steady at around 8-9%. On the contrary, the trend for cars highlights very distinct differences in modal quotas; in large cities, "**private cars**" by now account for less

than 60% of motorised urban transfers, while in centres with less than 100 thousand inhabitants the penetration rate **even in 2008 was in excess of 90%**, despite the overall re-dimensioning of the role of cars in urban mobility.

"This initiative," said **Riello**, "further consolidates the role of Bus&Bus Mobility Business as the reference event on an international scale in the public transport field, at the same time as valorising the importance of Verona as a strategic landmark for the private sector and logistics, mobility and road safety, as well as the strategic crossroads of the European 1 and 5 corridors. We must also thank Uitp and Asstra for their attention as regards the exhibition and the city."

"Medium-sized cities are the heart of Italian and even European excellence," said **Panettoni**. "A heart at very high risk of infarction unless rapid, effective and courageous solutions as found as soon as possible for the mobility crisis significantly diminishing and threatening the quality of life in these urban centres afflicted by traffic. This is why we are delighted and proud that our national association has helped bring to Verona - an excellent example of the Italian urban dimension and in particular its Exhibition Centre - the international forum that Uitp dedicates entirely to this specific type of transport. A forum that will be able to provide extremely high level responses."

Not the least thanks to the announcement in recent months of the signature of the agreement protocol between VeronaFiere and the two trade associations, enrolments are in full swing for the exhibition in November, together with programming of an impressive calendar of training and informative events of common interest to visitors and exhibitors.

VeronaFiere



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