

## Europe

"Some 12,000 public transport operators serve more than 100 million passengers in the countries of the European Union on a daily basis. As well as being a major social and economic activity, public transport is also of strategic and political interest to governments at all levels. It must in principle be able to compete with private mobility options, such as cars, motor bikes, bikes and even walking. A prerequisite is that public transport must retain or even increase its market share in the transportation of people by making the 'product' more attractive, reliable, safe and efficient."

**Ref: European Local Transport Information Service [www.eltis.org](http://www.eltis.org)**

"In Bristol, UK, freight distribution has been improved by means of a commercial vehicle driver's route atlas and an urban freight consolidation scheme. The scheme, involving over 50 retailers, has reduced vehicle movements by 70% and has saved over 100 000 'lorry kilometres'." **Ref: Towards A New Culture for Urban Mobility, <http://ec.europa.eu/transport>**

Serfaus, a municipality in the district of Landeck in Tyrol, Austria (population 1,091 in 2001) is best known for its tiny subway system. The Dorfbahn Serfaus (literally 'Serfaus Village Railway') is an unusual underground air cushion funicular transit system. The train can carry 270 people, and travels at a speed of 40 km/h. With four stations and a length of 1280 m it allows for a complete ban of cars within the town thus maintaining the village's attractiveness to tourists.

**Ref: Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serfaus>**

## Bikes on PT (Victoria)

A prototype bike cage will be installed at Eltham Station in April [and there will be] up to 20 bicycle cages for stations throughout metropolitan Melbourne and at key regional hubs, providing around 400 secure new bike spaces for public transport users. Bikes will be allowed on all Connex services, provided they are stored in the area inside the last door of the last carriage to minimise discomfort to other passengers. In addition, bikes will be allowed on all V/Line services. For the first time, from April, tram and bus users will also be allowed to take folding bikes on all services, provided they are folded and contained within a carry bag.

**Ref: Ministerial Media Release 15/2/08**



"Another great idea!"

## Melbourne

"Inner-Melbourne residents are turning to public transport, while those on the city's outer fringes become even more dependent on cars, new figures show. Analysis of data released late last year in the Australian Bureau of Statistics' annual Census of Motor Vehicles shows that there are 500,000 more private cars on Victoria's roads than 10 years ago. Of these, about 350,000 were bought by Melbourne residents and two-thirds were bought in Melbourne's 12 outer-fringe municipalities. Households with three or more cars increased rapidly on the fringes, whereas in inner Melbourne three-car households either shrunk or grew slightly.... There has also been a boom in patronage of the metropolitan rail system in the past two years. It rose by more than 20%. But public transport ticket sales figures, obtained under freedom of information by Greens MP Greg Barber, show the big increase in public transport use has been in Zone 1, and in Zone 2 areas well served by trains and trams. 'We are not giving outer-suburbanites the opportunity to ditch their cars that inner-city people and those in the outer suburbs that live near trains stations have,' Mr Barber said." **Ref: Clay Lucas, The Age, 14/1/08**

"We need a broad set of enlightened transport policies, such as CBD congestion fees, improved bike lane systems, trains that can carry more bicycles and passengers, car-pooling schemes, taxes on second and third cars, and more park'n'ride facilities."

**Ref: Rory Manchee, The Sunday Age, 20/1/08**

## Congestion Charge

"In 2005, [now Victorian Premier John] Brumby cited a Committee for Melbourne report, published that year, in which it was said the cost of congestion to the city would hit \$8 billion by 2015. ... Last month Mr Brumby met transport and business chiefs to try to identify short and medium-term answers to this city's gridlock. The meeting occurred in the shadow of the debate over the channel deepening of Port Phillip Bay and the consequential increase in

container road freight. Mr [Tim] Fischer, who chaired a committee that reviewed Victoria's rural rail freight, warned recently of a road nightmare from trucks transporting sea containers. The Premier may have good, valid and sustainable reasons for not considering a congestion tax. The least he could do is let the public know them."

**Ref: The Age 5/2/08**

### Counterpoint (1)

What are the pro-car arguments? Here are some extracts from an article entitled '**Greens wage war against the car**': *"What is it about cars that cause our social engineers, would-planners [sic] and environmentalists such anguish? After all, the car has been a great liberator for the masses, giving them the kind of freedom that was once the exclusive preserve of the wealthier classes.... Furthermore, it is forgotten what a great boon the car has been to urban environment."*

*"The only people who reluctantly move to the suburbs are those who have been priced out of the urban market .... A great many also move to the suburbs because they like the space and the relative quiet, which is why I moved. And it is 'privatised automobility' that made my move possible, thank God. I, and my neighbours, enjoy the comparative quiet, the wide neat avenues and the quiet walks, especially in the evening."*

*"What about congestion? This is a peculiar one considering that it is motorists that usually bear its costs. That they choose to do so indicates that the costs are outweighed by the benefits of driving. It is also peculiar from another angle. One reason we have congestion is because parts of the road system are inadequate to the task of carrying a large number of vehicles simultaneously. Seeing that the roads are owned by the state, I think it is a bit rich to blame their shortcomings on motorists."*

*"I do not know a single person who bought a car in response to any road building program. It's the growth in cars that raises the demand for more and better roads, just as it raises the demand for oil. Australian motorists fully pay for their roads."*

**Ref: Gerard Jackson, Economics Editor, BrooksNews' Bulletin, 3/9/07**

<http://www.brookesnews.com/071009cars.html>

**Comment:** Ah yes, build more roads, that proven remedy for solving congestion! Gerard likes to enjoy quiet evening walks in neat avenues but does he ever drive through other neighbourhoods adversely affecting the amenity of others? Do Australian motorists fully pay for their roads?

### And Also ...

*"Bendigo also has a tram route, but this is more of a tourist trap than a practical transport option."*

**Ref: Backpackers Ultimate Guide,**

[www.bugaustralia.com/destinations/au-vicgold.html](http://www.bugaustralia.com/destinations/au-vicgold.html)

### Sustainable Transport

Saving the environment is a high priority for many people and there is a growing awareness of the impact transport emissions has on our climate. The majority of people asked in travel and trip surveys indicate they would prefer to walk, cycle or catch public transport more than they do. Yet the majority of Victorians are forced to use a private car for most of their trips.

Being forced to rely on private vehicle transport is not just bad for the environment, but it also poses very real health, economic and security threats. Livelihoods and services that rely completely on private, fossil fuel vehicles will become increasingly unviable as oil production peaks and carbon emissions trading expands. For example, the embedded transport component of food would affect the supply of many of our weekly food items in the case of a sudden increase in fuel costs. Being forced to use a car for most trips is putting the health of Victorians, especially children, at significant risk.

**Thanks to Robyn Evans for this item**

### Counterpoint (2)

Here's another extract from '**Greens wage war against the car**' by Gerard Jackson:

*"Before the car there was the horse. Great cities like London, New York and Paris suffered appalling pollution from horse transport. Streets were polluted by masses of dung and urine which fouled the air and contaminated the waters. (A horse produces about 20 kilos of dung per day so imagine the pollution problem, all too real before the car that tens of thousands of horses could cause in a city.) Moreover, disposing of dead horses was no easy matter and a considerable health problem. In the 1890s New York City had to dispose of about 15,000 dead horses a year, when they could be found. But now it is the car that has become the arch-villain, a technological plague posing a grave threat to the environment."*

There's organic and inorganic pollution. Anyway, this little innovation should cut waste by two-thirds:



Picture: <http://www.iibjab.com/view/15636>