

Uber assembles international insights in policy board

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Uber on Wednesday introduced a newly formed policy board that includes a former vice president of the European Commission, as the ride-sharing service navigates regulatory roads around the world.

The new board, including former EU commission for competition Neelie Kroes, held its first meeting this week, Uber advisor David Plouffe said in a blog post.

"We had vibrant discussions about every aspect of our business and the unique challenges and opportunities Uber faces around the world," he said of the meeting.

"As ridesharing continues to grow, we look forward to the Board's candid advice and insights."

The board also includes former Peruvian prime minister Roberto Danino; Quality Council of India chairman Adil Zainulbhai; one-time Australian competition and consumer commission chairman Allan Fels; Gesner Oliveira, who served as president of the Brazilian Administrative Council for Economic Defense; and Saudi princess Reema bint Bandar Al Saud.

The board roster also includes former US secretary of transportation Ray LaHood and Melody Barnes, who was assistant to the president and director of the White House Domestic Policy Council from 2009 to 2012.

"For decades, transportation policy has played second fiddle to the likes of the economy, education and healthcare," Plouffe said.

"Yet transportation is key to all these areas of public policy."

Uber's business has boomed since it launched in San Francisco in 2011.

But the smartphone app has faced stiff resistance from traditional [taxi drivers](#) the world over, as well as bans in some places over safety concerns and questions over legal issues, including taxes.

Thousands of taxi drivers disrupted traffic across Portugal last month as they protested against Uber, which they accuse of illegally undercutting their business.

Licensed taxi drivers, who must undergo hundreds of hours of training in some countries, often complain that Uber drivers do not pay for permits or taxes.

Uber says it is not a transport company like taxi firms, and that it simply connects drivers with passengers.

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