



Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and
Communications Sweden

European Commission
DG MOVE

Consultation on the future trans-European transport network policy

The transport sector's contribution to the "Europe 2020" strategic objectives

The Swedish Government welcomes a revision of the TEN-T guidelines. TEN-T has a very important role to play when we work towards our goal to create one effective and sustainable European transport system. Getting TEN-T right is vital to make sure we reach Europe's full growth potential.

The TEN-T policy review will be an essential part of the White Paper on the future of transport with a transport action programme until 2020. Actions in the field of transport infrastructure are closely linked to the completion of a Single Transport area and contributes to the targets of the EU 2020 Strategy. The discussions about the future transport policy and the TEN-T network fits well in the picture of an European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

To achieve this transport policy and TEN-T guidelines need a stronger focus on the needs of the users. For the individual citizen, this may be access to work, service and leisure activities. For the business sector, it may entail access to labour, customers and raw materials.

As pointed out in the *Commission staff working document: TEN-T Policy Review – background papers* TEN-t policy overall has focused disproportionately on passenger traffic to the detriment of freight transport. To make it possible for TEN-T to deliver one of its major goals, to facilitate the free movement of goods in an internal market perspective, future TEN-T policy need to give more attention to freight transport.

Cross border cooperation for European added value

TEN-T policy and funding need to support the implementation of European macro-regional strategies, such as the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. A stronger cooperation across borders creates European added value and contributes to reducing negative effects of the national borders. Macro-regional strategies are a new way to promote cross border cooperation. They have an important role to play in linking national growth initiatives and European endeavours thereby improving economic growth opportunities for all citizens and trade and industry alike. The priorities for transport and infrastructure in these strategies need to be considered in the planning of the future TEN-T core network.

The EU Baltic Sea Strategy has already played an important part for the cross border cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. It provides an opportunity to streamline the cooperation by taking stock of existing structures and focusing them towards the goals described in the Strategy's Action plan. Transport in the region is particularly important in terms of its significance for accessibility, economic growth and sustainable development. Improvement of internal and external transport links is a vital priority area within the Action Plan of the strategy.

The Baltic Transport Outlook study will provide a joint analysis on how to strengthen cross border cooperation on accessibility and infrastructure planning in the entire Baltic Sea Region. It will be an important basis for future joint planning of infrastructure in the region.

The Swedish Government supports the Commission's proposal to extend the European Coordinators' mandate to cover packages of infrastructure and operational measures on a corridor basis. To appoint a Coordinator for the Baltic Sea Region would be an important measure to further strengthen cross border cooperation in the region.

The Haparanda meeting of the Baltic Sea Transport Ministers in June 2010 stressed the fact that the Baltic Sea Region accounts for significant parts of Europe's natural resources and highlighted the importance of an integrated, sustainable, efficient and environmentally sound network of transport infrastructure in the Baltic Sea Region to bring these resources to a wider European and Global market.

The Baltic Sea countries have been working together to draw a proposal for core TEN-T network for the Baltic Sea region that reflects the priorities of the region. The meeting of the Nordic-Baltic Transport ministers in Lithuania in September 2010 will be discussing a joint proposal in order to contribute to the TEN-T revision process.

Supplementary infrastructure and policy measures for a future-oriented transport system

To meet the needs of accessibility for citizens and businesses not only investments in infrastructure is important. Harmonisation of technical standards, rules and taxes should be improved. If issues relating to harmonisation within the EU were solved, this would benefit the working of the internal market. A well-functioning transport system will not materialize unless the extent and pace of implementation of the different transport policy decisions can be increased at the national level. For this reason TEN-T policy need a close connection to other EU initiatives within the transport sector.

When creating a European core network it is necessary to adopt an integrated approach to work within the EU on TEN-T, Green Transport Corridors, Motorways of the Sea and the work on rail corridors for freight. Implementation of strategic measures such as Single Sky and ERTMS need to be prioritized.

It is also important to tackle administrative bottlenecks in the transport systems or incompatibility between different technical systems. Supporting actions that lead to simplification of administrative procedures which facilitate use of different modes of transport in transport chains is a way of increasing the efficiency of the transport system. Harmonisation of rules and standards along railway corridors should be implemented to facilitate crossing borders and removal of physical or technical barriers.

There are several additional measures that could be introduced on the future core network. A report from the Swedish agency Transport Analysis (*see Annex*) highlights a number of possible actions in the core network, such as for example the use of longer and heavier vehicles, improved maritime traffic management and navigation systems, common consignment notes (digital waybill) for different modes of transport, developed ITS for traffic management and more efficient freight and passenger transport, green approach landings at airports and developed infrastructure for new fuels and electrically powered vehicles along the green corridors.¹

One way to strengthen the contribution of supplementary infrastructure and policy measures is to demand that certain requirements in terms of implemented legislation or harmonized standards need to be met by a project in order to receive TEN-T funding. Another way to strengthen the incentives for innovation and sustainability in the transport system would be to grant projects with a strong environment or innovation profile a higher percentage of EU funding.

¹ Transport Analysis (2010): Actions for an efficient European transport policy, Report 2010:2, Stockholm

The methodology for TEN-T planning

The Swedish Government is positive to a new structure with one comprehensive network and one core network. The new core network will better contribute to the goal of one interlinked European transport system. The future core network should include the current priority projects and the trans-national axes, thus ensuring continuity. To fill the missing links between the priority projects and between priority projects and the trans-national axes connecting to third countries is an important objective for the core network.

The working document mentions a number of different criteria and principles to be taken into account when shaping the future core network. Most of these are relevant. However, when applying them to identify main nodes and links for the core network we must consider the special circumstances in the different parts of the EU. The core network cannot just be for the geographic core of Europe. The criteria need to acknowledge this and allow for different considerations depending on geographical and functional context.

Priorities varies between the regions of the EU. For example, important objectives for the Baltic Sea region includes accessibility and overcoming long transport distances, seamless connections to third countries, utilization of natural resources in the northern areas of EU and connections from these areas to European and international markets. The Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics provides a highly promising framework for jointly exploring what measures and projects need to be implemented to improve the infrastructure connecting the countries in the region and beyond.

The northern part of EU is a domestic source of raw materials. In the communication from the Commission *The raw materials initiative — meeting our critical needs for growth and jobs in Europe* (COM 2008(699)) the Commission defines the second pillar of a raw material strategy to “set the right framework conditions within the EU in order to foster sustainable supply of raw materials from European sources”. The second pillar aims for facilitating the exploitation of new resources, expansion and establishing of new mines, but for the efficient supply of minerals and forest products to the European market the transport infrastructure is crucial.

In a recent study commissioned by the Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications² the current development in the Barents region is analysed. Northern Europe accounts for a significant share of the EU’s production of raw materials, such as iron ore and forestry products. For instance, 88 % of the EU’s total output of iron ore is

² ÅF Infrastruktur (2010): Supply of raw materials, transport needs and economic potential in northern Europe

produced in the Barents region. Gold, silver, copper, chromium, nickel and aluminium are other metals that are extracted in significant amounts in the region. The forest resources of the Barents region are the source of an important share of the EU's total production of paper, timber and other forest-based products.

Transporting these transport intensive raw materials to the markets in the EU requires the existence of efficient and well functioning transport systems linking the region to continental Europe and the rest of the world. Already today the capacity at some of the railway lines and ports has reached the limits. There is a risk that inadequate transport infrastructure will be an impediment to realizing the full potential of raw material production in northern Europe and in the end inhibiting the development of European industry.

For this reason nodes and connections of strategic importance need to be included in the TEN-T core network. At the moment the proposed methodology is more focused on major cities and ports as main nodes in the network. Sweden strongly believes that it should be possible to also relate larger industrial areas of strategic economic importance to main nodes. These could encompass more than just the urban areas.

TEN-T core network in Sweden

Sweden has been working together with the other Baltic Sea countries to draw a proposal for core TEN-T network for the Baltic Sea region that reflects the priorities of the region. This joint proposal will be presented after the end of the consultation period. At this point Sweden would like to mention the parts of the core network proposal that are located in Sweden.

Based on the methodology proposed by the Commission and considering the circumstances outlined above the Swedish government would like to see the following to be included as main nodes in the future TEN-T core network:

- Stockholm, capital.
- Gothenburg, larger city and international gateway port for Sweden and the EU.
- Haparanda/Tornio, strategic main node, representing an important economic cluster area rich on natural resources in the north of EU with connections to four countries, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Russia, through the Northern axis and the Bothnian Corridor.
- Copenhagen/Malmö. Malmö to be considered being a part of the Copenhagen main node.

When shaping the new core network Sweden proposes that the following links should be included:

- Nordic Triangle railway/road axis. Current priority project, multimodal connections between Copenhagen, Stockholm, Helsinki and Oslo, and to continental Europe via the Fehmarn Belt-link.
- The link (railway and road) between Trelleborg and Malmö. It is a missing link that connects the Nordic Triangle with the Motorways of the Sea-port Trelleborg with connections to the future core network in Germany and Poland.
- Motorways of the sea. Motorways of the sea are important intermodal maritime-based logistics chains, linking the Baltic Sea Member States with Member States in Central and Western Europe.
- Another cornerstone to be included in the future core network are the trans-national axes. The northernmost part of the Northern Axis has a strategically important connection to the port of Narvik in Norway and represents a great potential for transnational freight transport to Russia and Asia. The Swedish parts of this transnational axis are essential for iron ore transports, from Kiruna/Gällivare to the port of Narvik, and to the ports in the Gulf of Bothnia and further south.
- The Bothnian Corridor (railway and road), at both the Swedish and Finnish side of the Gulf of Bothnia, connecting the northernmost branch of Northern Axis to the current Nordic Triangle. The Bothnian Corridor is essential to the industries in northern Sweden and Finland for reaching the European markets, but also for intermodal connections in East-West directions along the line.
- The E22, connecting the Nordic Triangle with the Motorways of the Sea-ports Karlshamn and Karlskrona with connections to Poland and Lithuania.

Funding of TEN-T

From Swedish point of view the main issue regarding TEN-T funding is that the EU budget should be modernized and used as efficiently as possible. The Swedish Government supports the Commission's view that funding available for TEN-T from different sources should be streamlined in order to better achieve the objectives set out in the guidelines. This includes TEN-T related financing from the Cohesion and Structural Funds whose contribution to accessibility and well functioning infrastructure is vital to achieve EU goals on regional development and cohesion. A funding strategy should aim at better coordinating the available sources of financing and concentrating available EU resources on projects of strategic importance and high European added value.

Especially projects aiming at facilitating easier cross border transport should be given priority. Macro-regional strategies are important for strengthening trans-national cooperation and their implementation need to be supported by TEN-T guidelines and funding.

The funding framework should not be restricted to supporting infrastructure investments only, but could also contribute to integrating other transport policy-related components, as outlined earlier, to promote the emergence of efficient, sustainable and integrated transport systems.

Since the implementation of TEN-T projects mainly relies on the funding from member states it is vital that there is a strong national commitment to investments in links to be included in the future core network. Ongoing projects or projects that has financial means reserved in national investment plans should be given priority over unfinanced or uncertain projects. Projects that are proceeding well should be stimulated and prioritized for funding in order to create incentive for progress. A greater flexibility in the funding system to support this might also be necessary.

User financing is also an important way to generate revenue for national infrastructure investments and at the same time internalise external costs caused by the transport system.

The Expert Group 5 discusses in its final report funding strategy and financing perspectives for the TEN-T. Some of their recommendations could be useful and some need further analysis. However, it should be clearly stated that there is a need for upholding sound accounting practices and statistical methods in times of financially difficult times for the EU countries. The suggestions by the group to treat public sector spending in infrastructure as “off-balance” or besides the general accounting rules should therefore be rejected. Only by following strict accounting rules can long-term financial stability and capital-market confidence be kept in the EU.

Yours sincerely



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Annex:
Transport Analysis (2010): Actions for an efficient European transport policy, Report 2010:2

