



28 April 2015

Europaforum Northern Sweden view in response to the open consultation on "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system"

On March 10, 2015 the European Commission opened a consultation aiming to collect views on the 2011 White Paper on Transport: "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system".

Stakeholders are invited to assess the progress in implementation of the White Paper and to identify key challenges for transport policy, and to provide any suggestion for refocusing the strategy in the next year.

Background

In 2011 the European Commission adopted the Transport White Paper defining a long-term strategy that would help the EU transport system achieve the overall goal of the Common Transport Policy, i.e. to provide current and future generations with access to safe, secure, reliable and affordable mobility resources. To address the challenges faced by the transport sector at that time the White paper identified 3 specific objectives:

1. A drastic decrease in the oil dependency ratio of transport-related activities by 2050
2. Limiting the growth of congestion.
3. A reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that is consistent with the overall target for the EU of reducing emissions by 80% by 2050 compared to 1990. Transport-related emissions of CO₂ should be reduced by around 60% by 2050 compared to 1990.

In order to achieve these objectives, 4 broad areas of intervention were set:

1. Internal market - elimination of the remaining internal market barriers
2. Innovation - acceleration of the deployment of new vehicle and fuel technologies, and of IT solutions for traffic management;
3. Infrastructure - creation of a 'core' TEN-T network as a backbone of a truly multimodal European network and finding new sources of and mechanisms for funding, including greater recourse to user pay and polluter pays principles;
4. International - continuation of the efforts to open international market, promote European technical standards and defend with one voice EU global business in maritime and aviation.



Europaforum Northern Sweden - Views

On the midterm assessment on the implementation of the White Paper, Europaforum Northern Sweden will in this paper pay attention to the area of intervention "Infrastructure - creation of a 'core' TEN-T network as a backbone of a truly multimodal European network and finding new sources of and mechanisms for funding", as well as to the funding of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

Europaforum Northern Sweden would like to express the following:

- We realize that there is a risk that the TEN-T Core Network may not be accomplished in its entirety at 2030 if the Other Parts of the Core Network are not involved in the system planning conducted at EU-level. A clarification on the status of the Other Parts of the Core Network is needed for the TEN-T structure for system planning.
- We share the adopted opinion by the Transport committee of the European Parliament proposing that there will be no direct cuts from the budget of CEF Transport.

1. Assessment of the implementation of the TEN-T

The Core Network in Northern Sweden

Our region in Northern Sweden is located in the middle of the new global crossroads east-westbound and north-southbound with major infrastructure challenges and opportunities. Our region has a long tradition of mining and forestry activities. The rich minerals and metals deposits have played an important role in the economic and social development. The region contributes to 90% of the production of iron ore in the EU and also provides other valuable minerals and metals e.g. copper and gold as well as forestry raw materials for the production of e.g. pulp, paper and sawn timber and biomass. The accessibility to the EU core markets for raw materials in Northern Sweden require functional rail and maritime connections.

The Port of Luleå, which is a Core Port of the TEN-T, comprises an important node to connect the infrastructures of the TEN-T. The Bothnian Corridor¹, on both sides of the Bothnian Gulf, in Sweden and Finland, is part of the Core Network of the TEN-T.

¹ The Bothnian Corridor, part of the TEN-T core network, is comprised of several railway sections pre-identified in Annex B of the Connecting Europe Facility.



The Bothnian Corridor connects the northern part of the Northern Axis² with the Scandinavian-Mediterranean Corridor and the North Sea-Baltic Corridor. The transnational axis the Northern Axis connects the EU with Norway and Finland and beyond. The corridors create an important fundamental structure for the European transport system for the transport of crucial raw materials and other refined products to the European market.

We are satisfied that the main sections of the transport infrastructure in our region are included in Other Sections of the Core Network as identified in Annex B of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), the financial instrument that will co-fund TEN-T projects during the program period 2014-2020.

Experience on the implementation of the TEN-T

We realize 1.5 years into the implementation of the TEN-T that focus on the implementation of the Core Network has been put on the 9 Core Network Corridors. A series of Corridor Forums for infrastructure planning were carried out in 2014. However the Other Parts of the Core Network adjacent to and directly connecting to the Core Corridors were excluded from the exercises conducted in the corridor forums including preparatory meetings and other working group constellations. This left the Other Parts of the Core Network without EU-support to plan the system, to identify priorities and to negotiate with Member States in order to accelerate investment decisions and implementation.

Identification of challenges

We realize that there is a risk that the TEN-T Core network may not be accomplished in its entirety at 2030 if the Other Parts of the Core Network are not involved in the system planning conducted at EU-level. We see that there is a need for further development of the structure for system planning of the TEN-T that will ensure the involvement of the Other Parts of the Core Network (i.e. Core Network Regions) in forum planning activities at EU-level. This will enable a real inclusive planning structure and would better mirror the needs that exist today in the entire Core Network and would for the region of Europaforum Northern Sweden provide EU-support to:

- Examine how to link the prioritized transport system in the adjacent area to the Core Network Corridors i.e. the Scandinavian-Mediterranean.
- Contribute as a catalyst to increase the harmonization between the transport planning in the Northern parts of the EU and with third countries.

² The Northern Axis is one of the five Trans-European TEN-T transport axes, connecting the northern EU with Norway and the ice-free harbor of Narvik in the west to Finland in the east and beyond; the short-cut to Asia.



Our region has a transport system that needs to be developed, in both north-southbound and east-westbound directions. The challenge today is to secure connectivity to and from this system. We propose that a Coordinator is appointed for regions of the Other Parts of the Core Network. A Coordinator would contribute to a process on how to develop the interaction within our region with a special focus east-westbound transnational corridor the Northern Axis and north-southbound on the Bothnian Corridor.

The Coordinator would take into consideration the large volumes of goods that feed into the transport system, in specific the railways systems, and that have a huge impact on the Scandinavian-Mediterranean Corridor. The EU would be engaged in linking our region to the entire system. The Coordinator would bring about an added value for our region since we will obtain an increased harmonization of the national transport plans as regards the content and the timeline. This will constitute a basis for future discussion on the revision of the next TEN-T and the CEF.

2. Funding of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)

We welcome the priority of the European Commission to boost jobs, growth and investments and the proposal for European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) to offer guarantees for projects with high grade of risk. We agree that the focus of the additional investments should be in transport infrastructure and we would like to emphasize the needs in classic infrastructure projects.

We however share the opinion adopted by the Transport Committee of the European Parliament in April 2015 proposing that there will be no direct cuts from the budget of CEF Transport and that alternative funding sources for the EFSI should be found. Funds from the CEF Transport should only be used as a last resort.

A direct cut in the CEF Transport as proposed by the European Commission would jeopardize the implementation of the TEN-T. In the first call for proposals for CEF Transport, EUR 12.2 billion was launched for projects. The proposed reduction of CEF Transport would leave the CEF Transport with less funds that will be far from sufficient to cover the investment needs in the transport sector which already suffers from the lack of investment.



Adopted by Europaforum Northern Sweden, 28/04/2015

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Europaforum Northern Sweden

– The four north counties co-operate to influence politics at an EU level

Europaforum Northern Sweden is an arena for politicians at a local, regional, national and European level. The activities carried out aim to strengthen the possibilities of the regional political level to participate in the framing of the future European policy. The purpose is to:

- Increase knowledge and awareness of European politics amongst the political organisations.
- Influence the areas of the European politics which affect Northern Sweden.
- Integrate the European politics with the local political agenda at a local and a regional level.
- Bring issues concerning Europe closer to the citizens of Northern Sweden.