

Dear Representatives of European Commission

The Interregional Steering Committee as a part of the Interregional Agreement on establishing the Central European Transport Corridor (CETC-ROUTE65) discussed (in Somolenice on 28-29<sup>th</sup> of April 2009) the document entitled Green Paper "TEN-T : A policy review – Towards a better integrated trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy"

Economic development and striving for social & economic and territorial cohesion constitute some of the most significant tasks of the European community. The principles facilitating the achievement of the aforementioned goals include the bottom-up principle. And it is the bottom-up initiative that constituted the basis for the establishment of the Interregional Agreement for the formation of the Central European Transport Corridor (CETC-ROUTE65), the signatories of which are currently: the Skania Region (SE), the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodship (PL), the Dolnośląskie Voivodship (PL), the Lubuskie Voivodship (PL), the Hradec Kralove Region (CZ), the Bratislava Region (SK), the Trnava Region (SK), the Vas, Zala, Győr - Moson -Sopron Counties representing the Western Transdanubia (HU) and the Varaždin County (HR). We think that opinion of 12 regional governments of Central Europe will be important input in the future vision of the transport system of European Union.

After having studied current conditions and trends, future scenarios and impacts of possible actions, and discussed the lessons learned in several meetings, the **Initiative Partners draw the following conclusions.**

"In order to meet the challenges associated with sustainable development and growing demand for transport services, the transport system needs to be optimized, both in terms of spatial planning and modes of transport. This is necessary to counteract the uneven development of different transport modes, congestion on main transport routes and the adverse effects on the environment and human health. This system needs to be more harmonized and integrated at the European, national and regional level. It is necessary to aim towards creation of a synergetic system of transport in Europe, which should minimize the undesired effects of transport congestion, which is becoming one of the main reasons for the emergence of barriers to the smooth movement of cargo and people.

Central Europe is one of the most dynamically developing regions in the world. Effective and sustainable solutions for transport are a prerequisite and an instrument for promotion of sustainable development. Transport of goods increases along with trade and economic growth. The CETC-ROUTE65 Initiative partners are aware of the possibility of improving the existing capacity, increasing the availability of services and upgrading the infrastructure. These activities will bring mutual benefits to private and public sectors. Improving conditions on cross-border connections, with the help of harmonized, streamlined and new communication services in ports in conjunction with national transport corridors, will promote intermodal transport and global trade, using a combination of rail, road, inland waterway, air and short-range maritime transport. Changes will result in more efficient provision of transport services for the industry. They will also increase the accessibility of the CETC-ROUTE65 region and will contribute to greater social and economic cohesion in the area.

After analyzing the current circumstances and trends, identifying future scenarios and impacts, as well as discussion about the collected experiences, the partners of the Central European Transport Corridor Initiative have drawn the conclusions presented below, applicable to the Green Paper now being put together.

1. We agree with the claim that implementation and financing of the network based on 30 priority projects has not brought the expected results and did not satisfy the needs of EU in the transport field, therefore, the project selection process and funding schemes should be revised. The selection criteria for evaluation of projects in the network, instruments and ways to support their financing should all be very carefully considered. Perhaps, a solution to the congested roads of Western Europe would be to modernize and develop roads in the eastern part of the EU, instead of expanding the existing motorways or railway lines. This seems to be the most appropriate solution due to socio-economic, environmental, cohesion and, above all, climatic reasons.
2. We support the approach presented in the Green Paper, based on the construction of dual layer structure with the comprehensive network and a core network, comprising a – geographically defined – priority network and a conceptual pillar. The core network should be: consistent, effective, economical and sustainable. At the same time, we stress the need for flexible and clear rules for defining the core network elements so they take into account the diverse opportunities and needs of Member States which are at different stages of development.
3. We hope that in the new TEN-T policy currently being developed, we will be able to find the space and understanding for construction and development of priority connections from Central Europe's point of view of, including the **Central European Transport Corridor / CETC-ROUTE65**, which is essential for efficient connections on the north - south axis and is the most logical alternative to the increasingly more congested routes of Western Europe.
4. We stress the need for a new TEN-T policy, one that is adequate to the situation and needs of the region of Central Europe, particularly in relation to the increased challenges addressed to this part of EU in the context of its enlargement.
5. The Commission points out the need for truly intermodal solutions to such problems as congestion, increasing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, infrastructural and organizational shortfalls. In regard to this statement, we stress the importance of constant emphasis on environmental awareness, and also believe that in order to build "truly intermodal" solutions it is necessary to reach a full consensus among all participants of the logistics chain and gain support from regional, national and European authorities.
6. We agree with the assessment of TEN-T development, carried out by the Commission, and stress the need for further evaluation of the effectiveness of the network in relation to the fulfilment of cohesion expectations and equal opportunities. We are concerned that the "new"

member states have neither sufficiently strengthened their position, nor eliminated the significant developmental differences, which still separate them from western countries.

Keeping in mind the fact that TEN-T policy will only be credible if the development plans correspond to implementation capabilities, we would like to bring to Commission's attention the possibility of minimalist approach from member states. While stressing the obligation of countries to complete their investment in the network, one should at the same time ensure appropriate measures / methods of stimulation and support (e.g. advice) so that countries do not adopt a strictly cost-effective approach by selecting bare commercial minimum for the network and abandon the development approach. Experience shows that financial shortcomings are compensated primarily by resignation from development projects. We are convinced that due to the high costs of projects currently being undertaken e.g. due to difficult geological conditions or problems with public acceptance, an alternative solution should be adopted by selecting favourable logistic nodes and different transportation routes. The Central European Transport Corridor is thus an appropriate pro-development proposal. Moreover, the CETC-ROUTE65 Corridor is an example of bottom-up approach and a result of a genuine need for territorial cohesion and sustainable development and therefore has the support of 12 regional governments of Central Europe."

Yours sincerely,

CETC Interregional Steering Committee Members

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# CETC - ROUTE65

**A Partnership for Central European Transport Corridor**



## **C E T C I n i t i a t i v e**

On 6th of April 2004, the Agreement for Establishing the Central European Transport Corridor (CETC) was signed in Szczecin (Poland). International road E65 is the axis of the Central European Transport Corridor. The road begins in Malmö, Sweden, and ends in Chaniá, Crete, Greece. Additionally, the axis consists of the Oder waterway, Oder – Danube canal and several railway lines. The transport route in the Corridor leads to the Adriatic Sea, to Italian regions of Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia connecting Adriatic ports such as Venezia, Trieste, Koper and Rijeka. The route of the Corridor is planned to connect also the Black Sea and Port of Constanta using the connection from Bratislava Region to the IVth Pan-European Corridor. The CETC-ROUTE65 plays the role of a vertical link between three East-West transport axes: Via Hanseatica, Via Baltica, 3rd Pan-European Transport Corridor, and connects South Skåne with Central and Southern Europe.

To ensure cooperation and coordination of activities between the Parties of Agreement, the Transregional Steering Committee has been established. Heads of Member Regions serve alternately as Chairmen of the Steering Committee.

## **G r e e n C o r r i d o r**

The ambition of CETC Initiative partners is to support sustainable transport solution and a conscious approach by solving problems with a special regard to the environment and support the conclusion of developing the Central European Transport Corridor as a Green Corridor. Through international cooperation, we want to develop and work towards a more efficient, safe and environmental-friendly

handling of the increasing amount of goods being transported along the North-South axis.

### **Premises of the Initiative**

- Accession of Central and Eastern Europe states into the European Union.
- Expected dynamic economic growth of the Baltic Region states.
- Beneficial conditions for the development of multimodal transport and establishment of a balanced transport system.
- The need to balance the East-West communication systems with north-south connections.
- The need to boost economic development of the area situated along the Oder River and further to the south.

### **Aims and assumptions of the CETC Initiative**

#### **Programme**

- Stimulation of economic growth in a regional and local aspect; providing a sustainable development of regions in the CETC area.
- Strengthening the spatial and social competitiveness of the CETC area in comparison to the neighbouring areas.
- Development of interregional cooperation in the scope of higher education, development planning and promotion of regions and regional initiatives.
- Promotion and development of intermodal sea-land and land transport connections.
- Modernization of transport infrastructure; promotion of more environment-friendly rail transport.
- Development of sea and land tourism.

### **CETC - ROUTE 65 – coverage area**

