



METREX response

Consultation on the European Commission
Green Paper of February 2009
on the TEN-T Review

METREX
125 West Regent Street
GLASGOW G2 2SA
Scotland UK
T. +44 (0) 1292 317074
F. +44 (0) 1292 317074
secretariat@eurometrex.org
<http://www.eurometrex.org>

European Commission 2009 Review of TEN-T programme

Preamble

The Green Paper raises 12 specific questions for consultation and presents three options for the future form and content of the TEN-T programme (see Appendix 1). The terminology used to describe these options is not as clear and accessible as it might be. However, in essence they amount to the following.

- 1 A comprehensive transportation network (95.7k km of road links, 106k km of railway links (32k km of high speed links), 13k km of inland waterways, 411 airports and 404 sea ports) requiring €500bn of further expenditure and unconnected priority projects (currently 30).
- 2 Reducing the TEN-T programme to priority projects, possibly connected to a priority network.
- 3 A comprehensive network and, within this, a core network comprising a priority network and a process (sector-related policy objectives and criteria) through which to develop "projects of common interest".

Concepts

Overarching ideas

- Visions not divisions of territory
- Divisions are valid as tools
- Different levels and different sectors share one unique territory

Visions in time

- Long term plans (global visions without priorities)
- Medium term programmes (defined priorities)
- Short-term projects (ready to implement)

Visions in space

- Area (municipalities, counties, sub regions (urban or metropolitan), region, state, continent)
- Sectoral networks (not attached to boundaries)

Global vision always as a reference - from the telescope to the microscope

Political vision - territorial organisation (competences and resources distributed at different levels of agreement within the principle of subsidiarity)

Basic territorial rights regardless of centre of periphery, coast or inland, plain or mountain

Subsidiarity

The concept of subsidiarity is the key EU philosophy for relating the different levels of government. It means that each level, European, national, regional and urban, is obliged to address the key issues that can only be dealt with effectively at that level. In this way each provides a reasoned policy context for action at the level below and an input into action at the level above.

The problem at the European level is that the EU is structured in policy silos (of which transportation is one) and that there is no mechanism for the creation of an overall and integrated EU strategic view. For example, it might be expected that territorial cohesion (and spatial planning) would be strongly related to transportation, energy and environmental policy within an overall vision and framework for the future development of the territory of the EU. Such an integrated approach is normal at the city region level. This is one of the major problems for the current TEN-T review.

An integrated spatial vision/framework for Europe

Transportation flows are generated in large part from within and between Europe's major urban areas. The shortcomings of the so called "predict and provide" approach to transportation provision have been well recognised and replaced by a policy led approach which sees connectivity as a means through which to achieve the wider goals of social cohesion and economic competitiveness. Transportation demand can be influenced by wider trans national European and more local regional and urban economic, social and environmental policies.

For example, territorial cohesion, as a concept, assumes a reduction in socio-economic disparities across the EU and connectivity has a major role to play in achieving this. The European spatial observation network (ESPON) has carried out and published research into the strengths and weaknesses of Europe's 100+ recognised major urban areas. Improved European connectivity within and between well established and recognised urban clusters and corridors has a key role to play in the development of a Europe that is better balanced and more cohesive. This is one of the key policy approaches that should drive a future TEN-T programme.

It is disappointing that the recent Green Papers on Territorial Cohesion and the TEN-T programme should have been produced so close together in time and yet, apparently, with so little coordination and integration between them. It is also disappointing that neither Green Paper takes the opportunity to present a vision of what better might look like in European territorial terms. Neither takes the opportunity to use imaginative graphics or modern means of visual communication. Both rely on the written word to describe their planning approaches.

To those working at the regional and city region level this is a sadly limited approach. The EU should look to colleagues in countries such as the Netherlands and Germany, which have both produced national Spatial Visions, integrating territorial, transportation and environmental considerations using a much fuller range of visual communication techniques. One effective graphic is worth a thousand words and also demands the discipline of clarity of thought to be effective.

The PolyMETREXplus project, under the Interreg IIIC programme and led by the Generalitat de Catalunya, was an attempt by a 20 European metropolitan areas to scope and illustrate the potential for a European spatial vision and framework as a contribution to the debate on territorial cohesion. The PolyMETREXplus project emphasised the need for North/South, East/West and peripheral connectivity to be improved to counter the current radial emphasis to the London/Paris/Rhine/Ruhr European core area. This would help to facilitate greater inter action between clusters and corridors of urban areas outside the core and promote the better territorial balance and cohesion being sought by the EU.

Energy, transportation and climate change

The EU is currently considering a trans national approach to the integration of the sources of renewable energy within and adjoining its territory. For example, the connection of northerly and easterly wind and coastal wave and tidal resources with southern solar resources by a new high voltage direct current (HVDC) grid network.

The decarbonising of the EU's energy supply in this way needs to be reflected and related to the decarbonising of EU modes of transportation. Investment in renewable energy for transport is more important than investment in transportation infrastructure as such, given the imperatives of climate change. It might be expected that energy and transportation policy within the EU would be closely integrated in this way. For example, there will be a need for infrastructure to supply the new generation of electric/hybrid cars and goods vehicles and to pilot and promote the use of hydrogen.

Integrated European transportation network

A TEN-T network is urgently needed as a structural component for the organisation of the territory of the EU. METREX colleagues in Catalunya have long experience in the formulation of a basic European strategic roads network. Catalunya, through the Pyrenaic Regions Conference (made proposal as far back as 1982. Since then this view has been able to be refined through the use of three tools.

- 1 Simulated relief maps
- 2 Night satellite photography
- 3 Average Daily Traffic maps (ADT) at a continental scale.

ADT have been made in Catalunya every 5 years from 1985 to 2005 with the support of the European Commission (1990) and the Economic Commission for Europe from the United Nations (from 1995 to 2005).

With these tools and traffic maps at higher scales (Barcelona since 1965 and Catalunya since 1975) it has been possible to put together a sequence of progressive network maps, from Roman Barcelona to a proposal for a minimum network of strategic roads at the European scale (see Appendix 7 from "*PolyMETREXplus Framework. Polycentricity and better European territorial balance*" or the complete proposal in PolyMETREXplus Discussion Note 12A (see the METREX web site at www.eurometrex.org).

The parallel studies from Richard Florida (USA) are interesting because they corroborate the benefit of the simulated relief maps and satellite tools, although without the benefit of the ADT traffic maps.

Historically only two basic strategic road networks have been undertaken at the continental scale. Firstly, the roadways of the Roman Empire (used for centuries) and the highway network of the USA, driven by President Eisenhower in the 1950's. Both are examples of the high level of territorial cohesion and global development that can be facilitated by a coherent strategic road network.

Response by METREX to the three TEN-T options in the Green Paper

Having regard to these considerations METREX would advocate the following approach to the review of the TEN-T programme.

- 1 EU transportation policy and programmes should be set within a wider and integrated vision for the future planning and development of the territory of the EU. This should be produced jointly by the Regional Policy, Employment and Social Affairs, Transport, Energy and Environment Directorates.
- 2 The vision might usefully draw on the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of Europe's major metropolitan areas carried out by ESPON and reflect the need to achieve a better urban balance across the territory of the EU.

- 3 Within this context, the EU transport strategy should include an overall TEN-T programme and related priority projects. The strategy should be to support cohesion and competitiveness, as portrayed in the overall EU vision, and the programme should set out the projects of European significance that will be supported in the short, medium and longer term.
- 4 The future TEN-T programme needs to emphasise North/South, East/West and peripheral connectivity to counter the current radial emphasis to the London/Paris/Rhine/Ruhr European core area. This would help to facilitate greater interaction between clusters and corridors of urban areas outside the core and promote the better territorial balance and cohesion being sought by the EU.
- 5 Transport is one of the primary sources of EU greenhouse gas emissions. EU transport in the future will have to be based on electricity and hydrogen as primary fuels. The infrastructure to support this shift for road, rail, maritime and aviation transport needs to be a major part of future TENT-T programmes and projects.
- 6 There is a need for an integrated strategic European road transportation network as a structural component for the organisation of the European territory.

Position paper

The *Planungsverband Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main* (Frankfurt/Rhine-Main Conurbation Planning Association) is the office of the polycentric Frankfurt/Rhine-Main metropolitan region (for information on the metropolitan region: http://www.planungsverband.de/media/custom/1169_819_1.PDF and <http://www.planungsverband.de> -> Region -> Metropolregion).

As the authority responsible for the regional land use plan for the eponymous conurbation, the *Planungsverband* stresses the necessity for closely integrating the transport infrastructure with the space for development and open space. This aspect is not adequately addressed in the draft TEN-T Green Paper and must be looked at in greater depth. It is indispensable that correlations with regional planning and development be analysed and the content of the TEN-T Green Paper co-ordinated with the “Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion – Turning Territorial Diversity into Strength”.

Changes to the initial situation of the Trans-European Transport Network

In the view of the *Planungsverband*, the circumstances below illustrate the necessity of this integration and a revision of the Trans-European Transport Network:

- The demographic shift with a foreseeable shrinking of the population in many European countries. According to the Spatial Planning Report for Germany (Raumordnungsbericht)¹ many conurbations will continue to grow until 2020. At the same time, some areas will experience considerable reductions in population.
- Employment development: the Spatial Planning Report likewise assumes various employment trends; these do not necessarily correlate with the population development.
- Land Development: the future management of development space is connected with employment and population development. All the same, the Spatial Planning Report shows strong growth in development and traffic in areas that will stagnate in the future.
- A shortage of financial resources makes it impossible to implement every Trans-European Transport Network measure mentioned so far (TEN-T, EN, p. 12 f)
- Climate change: the EU Commission's White Paper of 2001² refers to the need to limit CO₂ emissions in the transport sector, 84% of which is produced by road traffic, in the face of uninterrupted growth. This is essential not only in environmental terms but also from an economic viewpoint.
- Decoupling economic growth and transport demand: the EU White Paper of 2001 regards it as a high-priority objective to enable economic growth without an increase in transport, and states a few steps towards this.

Developing a priority network

These circumstances are not sufficiently dealt with in the Green Paper. In the opinion of the *Planungsverband*, they must determine action in the future shaping of the Trans-European Transport Network whilst considering demand structures.

The consequence of this is a strengthening of the conurbations that are expected to grow with a corresponding development of high-capacity corridors linking these conurbations and priority for rail as the backbone. The Green Paper's aim of treating priority networks incorporating nodes based on a multimodal approach is highly

¹ Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (now the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development, BBSR) (2005) Spatial Planning Report 2005, Reports vol. 21, Bonn

² The European Commission (2001) The European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to Decide, Luxembourg

welcomed (TEN-T, EN, p. 8 ff). This must not be detached from correlations with built-up areas and open space or from the circumstances described above.

Decoupling economic growth from transport demand entails firstly reducing distances in daily transport and secondly shifting journeys from motorised individual transport to public transport with a structure geared to rail, occasionally to bicycle transport as well.

With extra mitigation measures required in the priority road network, the focus has to be on scrutinising traffic management measures using intelligent transport systems before developing infrastructure. In the scenario of the circumstances mentioned above, road-related measures in the Trans-European Transport Network of peripheral and shrinking regions must no longer be given priority or their importance for the objective of competitiveness and cohesion studied on a pan-European level.

The key role of freight transport

The economic growth hoped for will cause an increase in the volume of freight movement. This potential ought to be steered more and more to rail transport. In this way rail transport, which has been neglected for over 50 years – as detailed in the White Paper of 2001 -, should undergo a renaissance. The increase in rail freight transport, which has been observed in Germany for a good ten years, is a key indicator of the modal-shift potential of the rail system. This is in no small measure due to the private rail transport companies that have been operating since the railway market opened.

In terms of freight transport, the following ought to be considered in defining the Trans-European Networks:

- Organising maritime ports with the aim of optimising the flows of goods from overseas. To what extent can Mediterranean ports such as Genoa, Marseilles or Lisbon take over transport hitherto oriented towards North Sea ports? This saves circuitous routes and takes the pressure of unnecessary through-traffic off main axes like the Rhine corridor
- Promoting a cross-border, uninterrupted rail market
- Encouraging interoperability, for instance by organisational and financial support for the smooth implementation of ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System)
- Intermodal transport: extending transshipment facilities to boost combined transport, co-operation with ports and airports
- Taking into consideration the potential of a closely meshed network of rail sidings to improve single-wagon transport that is reliant on them. This could be achieved by gearing financial support instruments towards the network effect of rail siding traffic.
- Taking freight transport logistics into account: there is often a lack of know-how in rail freight transport. Logistical processes and infrastructures are therefore often road-oriented.
- The “bottom-up” approach referred to in the Green Paper to back co-ordinated courses of action in developing rail freight transport corridors is welcomed and seen as an important innovative addition to exercising the principle of subsidiarity in European politics (TEN-T, EN, p. 14 f).

Options for the future TEN-T development (TEN-T, EN, p. 16, chap. 4)

Given the scenario of limited financial resources and the circumstances stated at the beginning, the future shaping of European transport policy must first focus on a priority network of key rail corridors to connect the large and still-expanding metropolitan

regions. Concentrating solely on high-speed transport is inadvisable, given the network effect of the supply side. The example of TGV-Est (Paris-Saarbrücken-Mannheim-Frankfurt am Main) illustrates the necessity for incorporation of the transport axis in the spatial context allowing for the spatial circumstances. The requisite network connections must be secured to ensure long-distance, freight and regional transport.