

FS RESPONSE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION GREEN PAPER "TEN-T: A POLICY REVIEW"

General opinion

Ferrovie dello Stato welcomes the Commission Green Paper.

Transport infrastructure is essential to achieve the objectives of the Lisbon agenda on growth and jobs, to support the single market development, to reduce transport impact on environment and finally to shore up EU economy.

Consequently, the implementation of the existing unfinished TEN-T projects must be speeded up and the European Union together with the Member States should find ways to move the issue at the top of the political agenda and commit appropriate funds to have TEN-T realised. The TEN-T projects are European public goods which justify a strong financing through European funds.

Answers to the questions raised in the Green Paper

Q1: Should the Commission's assessment of TEN-T development to date cover any other factors?

Q2: What further arguments are there for or against maintaining the comprehensive network, and how could the respective disadvantages of each approach be overcome?

Q3: Would this kind of priority network approach be better than the current priority projects approach? If not, why not and what are the particular strengths of the latter? If so, what (further) benefits could it bring, and how should it be developed?

It is very difficult to assess the difference between a priority network and a core network. At any rate, Ferrovie dello Stato supports the definition of a core/priority network that incorporates the current Priority Projects.

The European Union should develop a Master Plan for an Integrated Transport Network – which can be reviewed every five years - linking together the current and future priority projects, the main ports and the main terminals for freight traffic, the main airports and the main cities for passenger traffic. Such a "core network" should comprehend all the current 30 priority projects – which must be completed –, their extension and, where necessary, a limited number of new projects to cover newly accessed countries, the main European ports and the main airports. As for the priority projects, airports and ports should be ranked and prioritised since the current comprehensive network of ports and airports is too wide and impossible to sustain, see annex. To this regard, the main 25 EU ports and airports, complemented by other infrastructures in special circumstances and for isolated countries, might be considered as first choice in the Priority/Core Network.



While the core network should represent the EU transport Master Plan, priority projects are needed as the tool to concretely realise such network, to allocate funds and undertake improvement works. Projects insisting on the core network should be ranked according their priority and EU funding should remain concentrated on the cross-border projects. Realization of projects should remain the core of EU activity.

Q4: Would this kind of flexible approach to identifying projects of common interest be appropriate for a policy that, traditionally, largely rests on Member States' individual infrastructure investment decisions? What further advantages and disadvantages could it have, and how could it best be reflected in planning at Community level?

In the draft of the future strategies for the European transport particular attention should also be given to the sustainable development. FS fully supports the development of "Green Corridor" as mentioned in the Green Paper. The European Union should promote all environment friendly modality such as railway, sea and inland waterways encouraging Member States to apply promoting legislation (i.e. implementation of Eurovignette Directive).

The approach to identifying the projects of common interest should be coherent with the Regulation on the Freight Network. The current 30 Priority Project should be maintained and completed.

Q5: How can the different aspects outlined above be best taken into account within the overall concept of future TEN-T development? What further aspects should be taken into consideration?

An integrated network or a co-modal approach is needed for both freight and passenger transport to maximize the benefits of each mode of transport. For instance, in the freight transport it must be envisaged a policy to link the trans-European corridors to the ports, the terminals and the major industrial sites.

In the passenger transport it should be encouraged the integration of the railway with the public transportation; the high speed lines should be linked to the international and intercontinental airports.

Q6: How can ITS, as a part of the TEN-T, enhance the functioning of the transport system? How can investment in Galileo and EGNOS be translated into efficiency gains and optimum balancing of transport demand? How can ITS contribute to the development of a multi-modal TEN-T? How can existing opportunities within the framework of TEN-T funding be strengthened in order to best support the implementation of the ERTMS European deployment plan during the next period of the financial perspectives?

As underlined in the Green Paper the priority network should be fully interoperable and fully equipped with ERTMS. The system has been projected especially for the development of the freight transport but in view of the liberalization of the international passenger transport – from January 2010 – the system should be implemented also in the international high speed lines.

It is important to concentrate European funds only on projects fully interoperable, for instance only freight and high speed rail projects foreseeing ERTMS installation.



The level of European funding should be increased and be able to sustain the 50% of the cost of the implementation of the priority network (and of the rail freight network) with ERTMS aiming at the equipment of EU rail priority network by 2020.

Q7: Do shifting borderlines between infrastructure and vehicles or between infrastructure provision and the way it is used call for the concept of an (infrastructure) project of common interest to be widened? If so, how should this concept be defined?

Q8: Would this kind of core network be "feasible" at Community level, and what would be its advantages and disadvantages? What methods should be applied for its conception?

Q9: How can the financial needs of TEN-T as a whole – in the short, medium and long term – be established? What form of financing – public or private, Community or national – best suits what aspects of TEN-T development?

In order to complete the priority projects the Community and Member States funding should be increased (the 2008 TEN-T progress report estimate in more than 120 billion of euro the investment to be financed in the next financial perspectives). FS supports also the Public Private Partnership which may mobilise more financial resources, introduce more efficiency and better control on the schedule of implementation works. Earmarking in the Eurovignette Directive may represent an important source of finance for the TEN-T. A better evaluation and emphasis of the sustainable transport modes requires financial support from the UE based on the actual, effective, and sizeable related environmental benefits.

Lack of commitment and coordination among Member States have been hampering TEN-T development. To this regard FS support the introduction of a European scoreboard to record year by year the state of implementation of the Priority Projects and the funds committed and disbursed by Member States and EU on each project. This tool aims at fine-tuning investments from EU and different member countries. For instance, the need for progress on the access routes cannot be underestimated: constructing a tunnel without upgrading the access routes does not make sense. However, the Eurotunnel experience shows the opposite, the new connection between the tunnel and London has been completed in 2008, more than 10 years after the tunnel.

Further, the scoreboard should provide information to the public on the progress of the projects and maintain pressure on authorities to advance as most priority projects require a very long term effort to be completed.

Q10: What assistance can be given to Member States to help them fund and deliver projects under their responsibility? Should private sector involvement in infrastructure delivery be further encouraged? If so, how?

Q11: What are the strengths and weaknesses of existing Community financial instruments, and are new ones needed (including "innovative" instruments)? How could the combined use of funds from various Community resources be streamlined to support TEN-T implementation?

An innovative financial resource could be the introduction of the possibility to issue "Project bond" with BEI guaranty of payment.



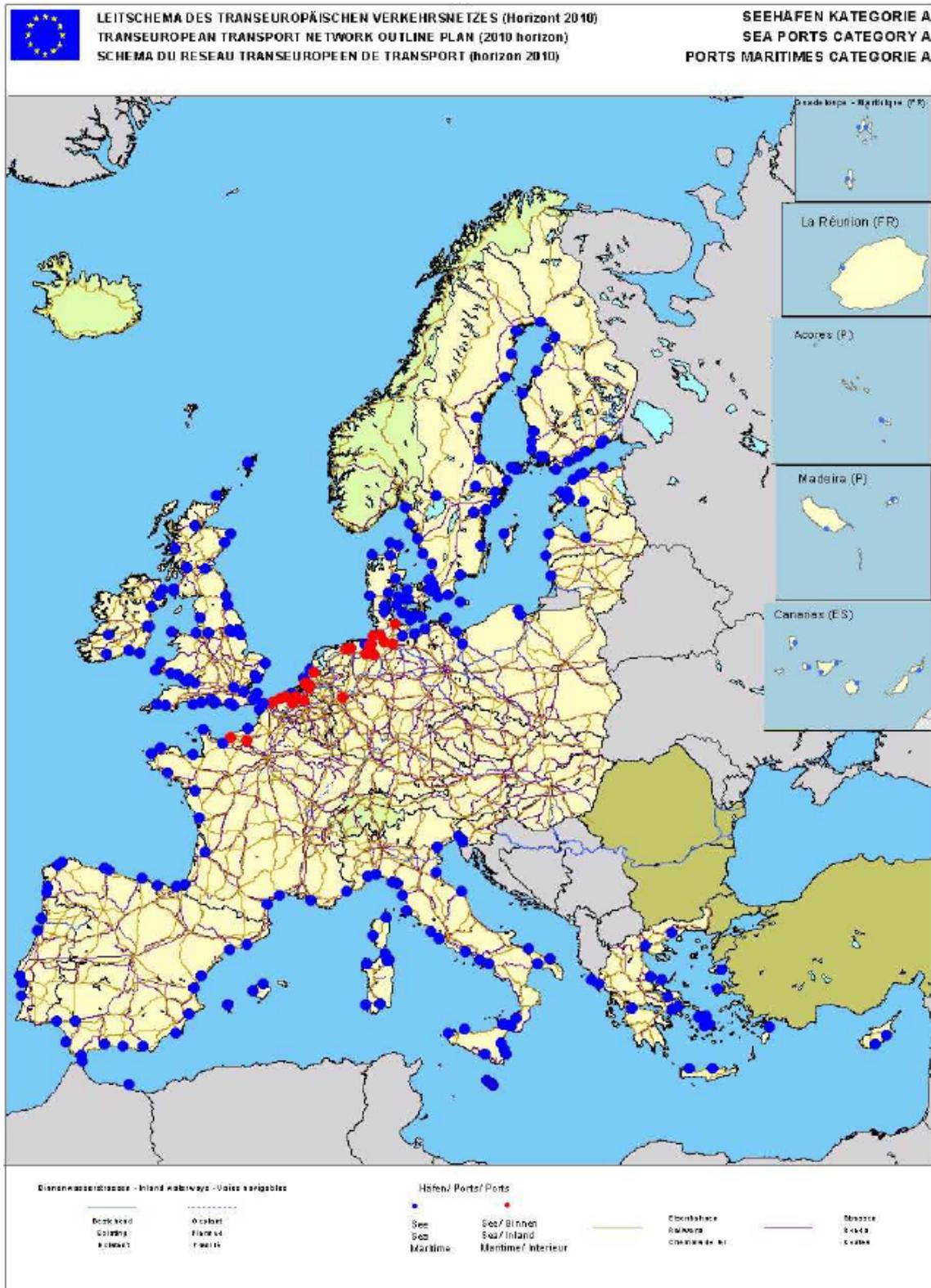
Q12: How could existing non-financial instruments be improved and what new ones might be introduced?

The European coordinators played a positive role in the implementation of the project and FS support the appointment of such figure for all priority projects with trans-European relevance.



Annex

Trans-European ports





Trans-European airports

