

The SoNorA project seeks to contribute to the debate on the fundamental review of the TEN-T policy, as discussed in the *TEN-T: A Policy Review Green Paper*. On behalf of all project partners, the SoNorA project:

### Green Paper Principle

1. Welcomes the initiative of Green Paper on TEN-T update policy
2. Agrees with the Commission that, until now, most of the 30 TEN-T priority projects have not yet been realised according to the planned time schedule and, therefore, the identification and funding of such projects need to be revised.
3. Supports the Green Paper principle of the „Dual Layer: Comprehensive Network<sup>1</sup> and Core Network<sup>2</sup>“, in which the „core network“ consists of both a geographical pillar and a conceptual pillar. The core network should:
  - a. Be coherent, sustainable, energy efficient, and multimodal;
  - b. Link the principal transport infrastructure axes (consisting of priority axes and the transnational axes)<sup>3</sup> to a spatially balanced network;
  - c. Provide direct south-north connections between the Adriatic and Baltic seas in Central Europe;
  - d. Stresses the importance of defining this core network, in close conjunction with the Commission and the Member States.

### Existing Gaps to be Filled

4. Urges the Commission to update the current TEN-T policy to adequately address the Central European area, in particular with regards to the changes due to EU enlargement.
5. Underlines the importance of ensuring South North connections in Central Europe, in particular between the Adriatic and Baltic Seas, given the:
  - a. Underdevelopment of current transport sections;
  - b. Expected increase in transport volumes throughout Europe;
  - c. Overload of existing south-north corridors;
  - d. Necessity to ensure balanced spatial development and economic growth;

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<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive network is understood as a dense system which covers all member states and modes (example as the current TEN-T network). See [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/consultations/2009\\_04\\_30\\_ten\\_t\\_green\\_paper\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/consultations/2009_04_30_ten_t_green_paper_en.htm) for additional information

<sup>2</sup> Core network is understood as a selection of primary priority axes and projects of transnational importance, which form a high-level network (example, an integrated version of the current priority projects supporting a unified vision). This network is expected to consist of both a geographical pillar (pre-defined reference network) and a conceptual pillar (a selection process for future incorporation of projects into the network according to pre-defined objectives and criteria). See [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/consultations/2009\\_04\\_30\\_ten\\_t\\_green\\_paper\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/consultations/2009_04_30_ten_t_green_paper_en.htm) for additional information

<sup>3</sup> Please see [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/maps/doc/ten-t\\_pp\\_axes\\_projects\\_2005.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/maps/doc/ten-t_pp_axes_projects_2005.pdf) and COM (2007) 32 Final Communication from the Commission to the Council and European Parliament: *Extension of the major trans-European transport axes to the neighbouring countries - Guidelines for transport in Europe and Neighbouring Regions* for additional information on the component elements.

- e. Utility of connecting Baltic Sea Strategy with Mediterranean Union;
- f. Necessity to establish several viable and safe Baltic sea transport crossing options; and
- g. Increasing the importance of human and economic integration of Scandinavian countries with Central Europe, via “motorways of the sea”.

### **TEN-T Network Concept**

- 6. Underlines the importance of evaluating the current TEN-T priority projects so that only those projects, which have tangible commitment and are realisable in the medium term, are supported within the core network. Eventual immediate planned extensions, with the same characteristics, should also be considered for support.
- 7. Urges the definition of a “conceptual pillar”, which can effectively stimulate longer-term strategic transport investments of a transnational nature.
- 8. Emphasises the importance of selecting elements for the TEN-T core network, which ensure a credible and realisable medium term network. The TEN-T core network must:
  - a. Address the remaining key bottlenecks of transnational relevance, which create direct damages to the European economy;
  - b. Ensure connections to global markets by development of European transport axis, as well as connections between capital regions and other metropolitan areas;
  - c. Guarantee quality intermodal connections between ports and hinterland areas (in a balanced way between Adriatic and Baltic sea), raising global competitiveness of EU;
  - d. Support the integrated planning of transport and logistics services;
  - e. Provide opportunities for increasing the efficiency of existing infrastructure.
- 9. Underlines that several elements of EU transport policy should get a prominent role in defining the “core network”, including:
  - a. Sustainable energy efficient transport solutions for all modes (passenger transport, logistics, rail and road, motorways of the sea, inland waterways and major airports);
  - b. ERTMS, interoperability issues, etc.;
  - c. Intelligent transport systems for facilitating smoother and safer traffic management;
  - d. Global fight against climate changes.

## Institutional Framework

10. Recognises the crucial role of Member States in the decisions on the TEN-T network components, given their involvement in selection of, planning for and financing of transport infrastructure (including European cross-border coordination and cooperation).
11. Focuses on the importance of addressing the increased role of regions in the deployment of infrastructure of national and transnational relevance, and the consequent need to include regions in a bottom-up process of selection of TEN-T network components.
12. Stresses the problem of cross-border projects, which are not fully coordinated transnationally (i.e. national infrastructure plans do not reflect international agreements on infrastructure investment programmes). Therefore, strong cooperation mechanisms should be developed to support TEN-T policy, which encourage Member States to focus on cross-border projects and thus minimise the risk of un-harmonised implementation of cross/border projects (so as to avoid infrastructure sections which end at the border since the relevant neighbouring country did not complete the section according to original plans).
13. Supports a strengthened role of EU coordinators for the development of key transnational infrastructure project deployment.

## Selection criteria

14. Highlights the issue of Cost Benefit Analysis, as one of several important selection criteria for TEN-T core network. This tool is an important means to evaluate projects, but often in its traditional application, does not assess important and critical considerations on the value to Europe of specific developments.
15. Emphasises the importance of assessing „European Added Value“ in the selection of TEN-T core network components, such as the project's:
  - a. European/cross-border effects;
  - b. Sustainability (promoting multi-modality);
  - c. Economic growth and competitiveness according to the Lisbon Strategy (raising employment effects);
  - d. Cohesion (stimulating economic development and integrating countries in the European Union, social and territorial cohesion);
  - e. Accessibility (in general and with specific reference to regional accessibility), as a necessary precondition for European integration and political stability;
  - f. Spatially balanced network regarding - implementation of Territorial Agenda of the EU and ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observation Network) as well as INTERREG results.

16. Highlights the need of inclusion of external costs and benefits, as a selection criterion for the TEN-T core network (including air pollution, noise pollution, land, regional development, etc.).
17. Highlights the issue of Environmental Risk Analyses as an important criteria for the selection of the core network, including: the preference of specific transport modes, the location of the transport section which has the lowest environmental effect, qualitative assessments of spatial environmental risks and conflict areas.

### Finance

18. Requests the Commission to facilitate the availability and use of new, enlarged financial schemes (including further opportunities and incentives to combine EU funding programmes) for the necessary funding of the realization of TEN-T components in their countries.
19. Urges more coherence from the European Council between requests for TEN-T projects and decisions on TEN-T budgets.
20. Supports the revision of the annual programme of grants for the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) so that additional consideration is given to those projects which complement the priority projects.

#### SoNorA Project

SoNorA is a transnational cooperation project, financed within the Accessibility Priority of the CENTRAL EUROPE programme, which aims to help regions across Central Europe in developing accessibility in South North direction, between the Adriatic and Baltic seas, in terms of:

- Making the Sonora network real, through the support for the completion of transport infrastructure;
- Activating and improving multimodal freight logistics services;
- Developing a transnational action plans for future realisations;
- Supporting new regional development opportunities due to transport network improvements.

SoNorA involves 25 partners from 6 EU countries and 35 associated institutes from 9 EU countries.

For more information, please contact [logistica@regione.veneto.it](mailto:logistica@regione.veneto.it), [sonora@netspa.it](mailto:sonora@netspa.it), or [www.sonoraproject.eu](http://www.sonoraproject.eu).