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DG TREN

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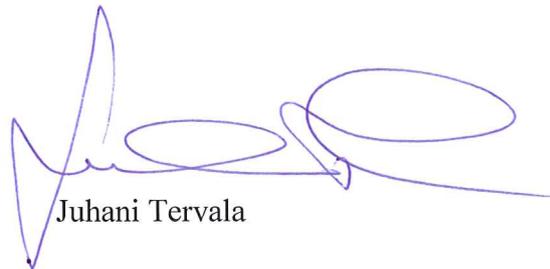
Title Green paper, COM(2009) 44 Final, Consultation on the issues

The European Commission has started the preparation of the revision of the TEN-guidelines. The Commission has published a Green Paper on 4.2.2009, in which it seeks answers for the foundation of the future Trans-European transport network.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications in Finland has been discussing with stakeholders to reach a common understanding regarding the Green Paper. Statements on the Green Paper were requested from the transport administrations and the Regional Councils as well as from the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Finance.

Please find attached Finland's comments and opinions on the Green Paper, which were approved by the Finnish Government in the Government session on 6.5.2009.

Director-General



Juhani Tervala

Copy: Minister Anu Vehviläinen
Members of EU ministerial group
Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Transport and Communications Harri Pursiainen
Members of LPO steering group

TRANS-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORK

- OPINION OF FINLAND ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEN-T NETWORK

Item: The European Commission has started the preparation of the revision of the TEN-guidelines. The Commission has published a Green Paper on 4.2.2009, in which it seeks answers for the foundation of the future development of the Trans-European transport network.

Opinion of Finland: The most essential question of the Green paper concerns the possible options for further development of the Trans-European transport network. The Commission considers three options for further development of the TEN-T network:

- Option 1 is based on the existing situation consisting of the comprehensive TEN-T network and priority projects in every Member State (priority projects in Finland include the Nordic Triangle, the Motorway of the Baltic Sea and Rail Baltica).
- Option 2 has a single layer structure consisting of the priority projects in current forms which are possibly connected into a priority network. In practice, this means that other parts of the national network would not have a TEN-status any more.
- Option 3 has a dual layer structure consisting of the comprehensive network and core network, which comprises of a geographically defined priority network and so-called transport system projects.

Regarding the alternative options presented by the EU Commission, the opinion of Finland is best supported by option 3 with certain clarifications. According to the opinion of Finland, the identification principles of the priority network should be specified and the content of transport system projects should be clarified.

Transport system projects should include themes, such as intelligent transport solutions, traffic management systems (railway transport, sea transport), monitoring and management of cargo shipments as well as border crossing formalities. Moreover, it is important that icebreaking will be considered as part of infrastructure, which will promote efficient sea transport solutions in the northern areas also in the future and which should be considered in the revision of the TEN-guidelines.

The arguments behind priority projects and the priority network approach should clearly consider the special circumstances in Finland and connections to third countries. The prioritization of the transport network within Finland should be based on national decision-making, as the member states are still mostly responsible for the development and financing of the network.

The existing priority projects (Nordic Triangle, Motorway of the Baltic Sea and Rail Baltica) should be completed as part of the future priority network. Together with Sweden, Finland has made a proposal for including a new project called the "Northern Arc" in the future priority network. In the first phase, the "Bothnian Corridor" would serve as the Finnish part of the "Northern Arc"-connection. In the second phase, the "Northern Arc"-connection in Finland could be extended to include the improvement of transport connections to Murmansk.

TRANS-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORK

- OPINION OF FINLAND ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEN-T NETWORK

Existing TEN-T network and financial support received in Finland for the development of the TEN-T network

The TEN-networks of the EU are regulated by the guideline decision and the financial regulation approved by the EU Council and Parliament. The guideline decision defines projects to be financed (scope, goals, priorities and general guidelines). The Council Regulation defines the methods of financing. Concrete decisions on financial support are made by the Commission and the TEN financial committee (multi-annual and annual decisions).

The existing guideline decision was made in the year 1996. The first revision of the decision was made in the year 2004, and in this context the Commission was put under obligation to make proposals on necessary revisions in the year 2010. The appendix of the guideline decision includes a list of 30 priority projects which are preferred in the allocation of EU financing (Appendix 1, Figure 1). The list is based on the report by the High Level Group lead by former Commissioner for Transport Karel van Miert. The existing priority projects in Finland include the Nordic Triangle, the Motorway of the Baltic Sea and Rail Baltica.

The High Level Group lead by Former Commission Vice President Ms. Loyola de Palacio made a decision in the year 2005 on the extension of the major trans-European transport axes to neighbouring countries and regions. These connections in Finland are part of the "Northern Axis" -connection (Appendix 1, Figure 2).

The latest decision on the national TEN-T network in Finland is from the year 2004 (Decision No 884/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004). The Trans-European transport network in Finland is presented in Figure 3 in Appendix 1

During the years 1995–2008, Finland has received a total of 254,2 million euros of TEN-support from the European Commission for transport investments in the TEN-T network. The average approved amount of TEN-support has been about 15 million euros per year or about 5–10 % of the total cost of investment project. When compared to the Gross National Product of the EU countries, Finland has succeeded well in receiving TEN-support so far.

The Nordic Triangle is priority project in Finland defined by the Commission, and a major share (70 %) of TEN-support in Finland has been received for road and railway projects within the Nordic Triangle. In addition, TEN-support has been allocated to railway projects in the other part of the TEN-T network. Recently, financial support from the Commission has primarily been allocated to railway projects.

It will probably be even more difficult to receive financial support for investment projects in Finland in the future. Thus, Finland should probably focus on promoting transport system projects and their financing in the future.

Consultation process

The European Commission has started the preparation of the revision of the TEN-guidelines. The Commission has published a Green Paper on 4.2.2009, in which it seeks answers for the foundation of the future development of the Trans-European transport network. The content of the Green Paper will be analyzed with the Member States during the year 2009 and a proposal for the revised guideline and financial regulation will be published by the Commission in the year 2010.

Challenges and development of the Trans-European transport network

The fundamental objectives set for the development of the Trans-European transport network have not been fully achieved mainly due to the long-term nature and considerable delays in the completion of the projects. The most essential question of the Green paper concerns the possible options for further development of the Trans-European transport network. The Commission considers three options for further development of the TEN-T network:

Option 1 is based on the existing situation consisting of the comprehensive TEN-T network and priority projects in every Member State (priority projects in Finland include the Nordic Triangle, the Motorway of the Baltic Sea and Rail Baltica).

Option 2 has a single layer structure consisting of the priority projects in current forms which are possibly connected into a priority network. In practice, this means that other parts of the national network would not have a TEN-status any more.

Option 3 has a dual layer structure consisting of the comprehensive network and core network, which comprises of a geographically defined priority network and so-called transport system projects.

Opinion of Finland

The EU Commission has presented three alternative options for further development of the TEN-T transport network. The opinion of Finland is best supported by **option 3** with certain clarifications. These clarifications concern the identification principles of the priority network and clarification of transport system projects. The presentation of the concept of transport system projects, which are included in option 3, is not easily understood in the Green paper. The basis and content of transport system projects should be elaborated.

Transport system projects should include themes, such as intelligent transport solutions, traffic management systems (railway transport, sea transport), monitoring and management of cargo shipments as well as border crossing formalities. The control and management of travel and transport chains, which provide benefits to all actors, have a significant role in the development horizontal measures. Moreover, it is important that icebreaking will be considered as part of infrastructure, which will promote efficient sea transport solutions in the northern areas also in the future and which should be considered in the revision of the TEN-guidelines.

The goal is to introduce flexibility and future orientation to transport network development through transport system projects, which may otherwise have a minor role in

infrastructure decisions of the Member States. Many challenges imposed on the operating environment (mitigation of climate change/reduction of green house gas emissions, dispersal of community structure etc.) provide a reason to re-evaluate the familiar development strategy based on transport infrastructure investments.

For example, intelligent transport systems provide potential alternatives to massive infrastructure investments for responding to the growth in traffic demand. They also provide new opportunities for the prevention of climate change. Furthermore, rapid technological development provides possibilities to develop new types of services as well as influence and manage traffic demand (for example through transport pricing). Encouragement to new innovations aims at continuously developing modern, more influential and more economical measures to meet the challenges of transport system.

Option 3 also includes the comprehensive network which considers best the exceptional circumstances and special requirements for developing transport connections in Finland. These include accessibility to different parts of the country, accessibility to common markets and connections to third countries. Furthermore, the strong dependency of Finland on foreign trade based on sea transport creates challenges to the development of transport infrastructure and logistics system. The goals of Finland, which are related to developing transport connections to remote and peripheral areas as well as improving territorial and social cohesion, are also relevant and should be considered in the revision of the TEN-T guidelines.

However, the identification principles of the European-wide priority network should be revised. Priority network approach may excessively focus on solving transport problems in geographically defined core areas, while the other objectives behind the European-wide transport network can easily be ignored. This includes a risk for Finland that main part of the Finnish transport system is excluded from the priority network and financial support. Furthermore, the selection and designation of connecting points (for example ports) included in the priority network would be both difficult and questionable.

The arguments behind priority projects and the priority network approach should clearly consider the special circumstances in Finland and primary goals of projects. This will also emphasize the significance of the existing priority projects in Finland, the Nordic Triangle, the Motorway of the Baltic Sea and Rail Baltica, and these projects should be completed as part of the future priority network. Furthermore, it would be worthwhile from the viewpoint of Finland to define the goals, extent and qualifications of, for example, the concept of the Motorways of the Sea for further development of this concept.

The priority network should also supplement the existing networks and secure the development of European-wide transport corridors which also extend out to the northern areas of the EU. The prioritization of the transport network within Finland should be based on national decision-making, as the member states are still mostly responsible for the development and financing of the network. Together with Sweden, Finland has made a proposal for including a new project called the "Northern Arc" in the future priority network. In the first phase, the "Bothnian Corridor" would serve as the Finnish part of the "Northern Arc"-connection. In the second phase, the "Northern Arc"-connection in Finland could be extended to include the improvement of transport connections to Murmansk (Appendix 1, Figure 4).

Appendix 1.

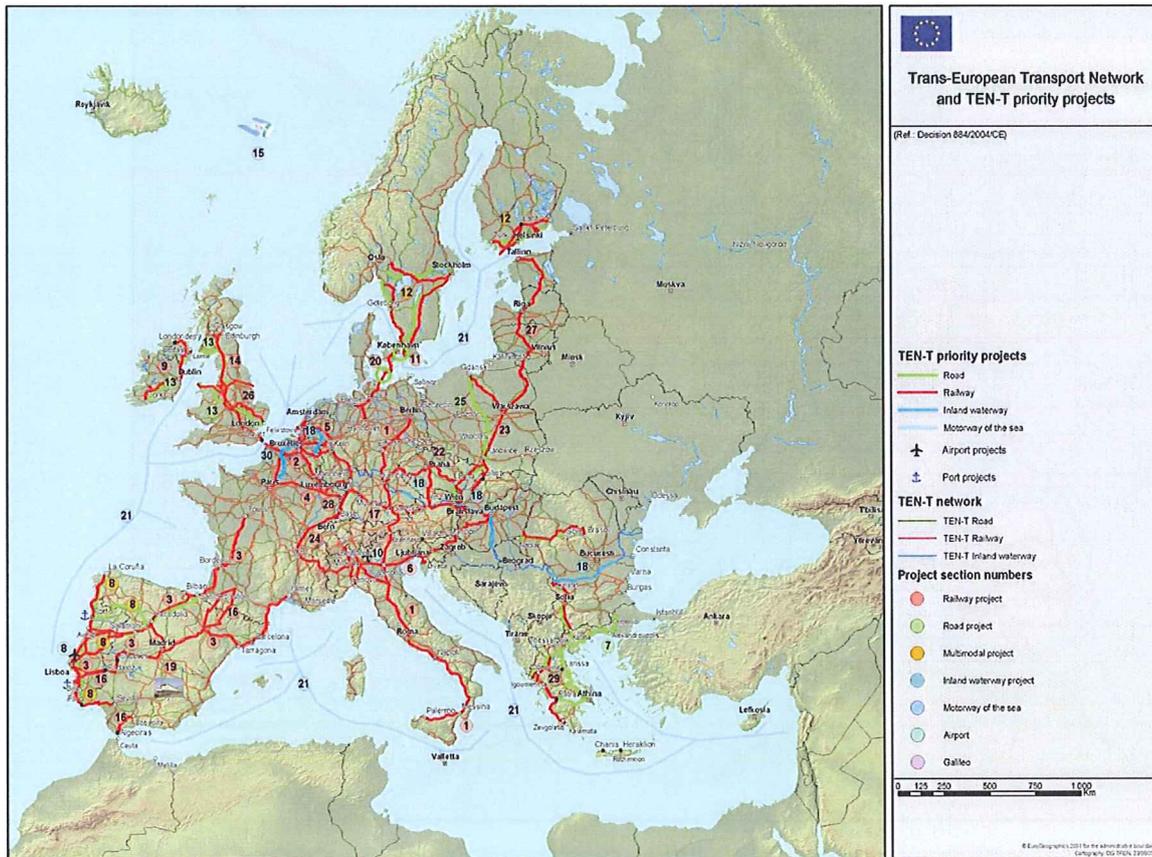


Figure 1. The existing TEN-T priority projects.

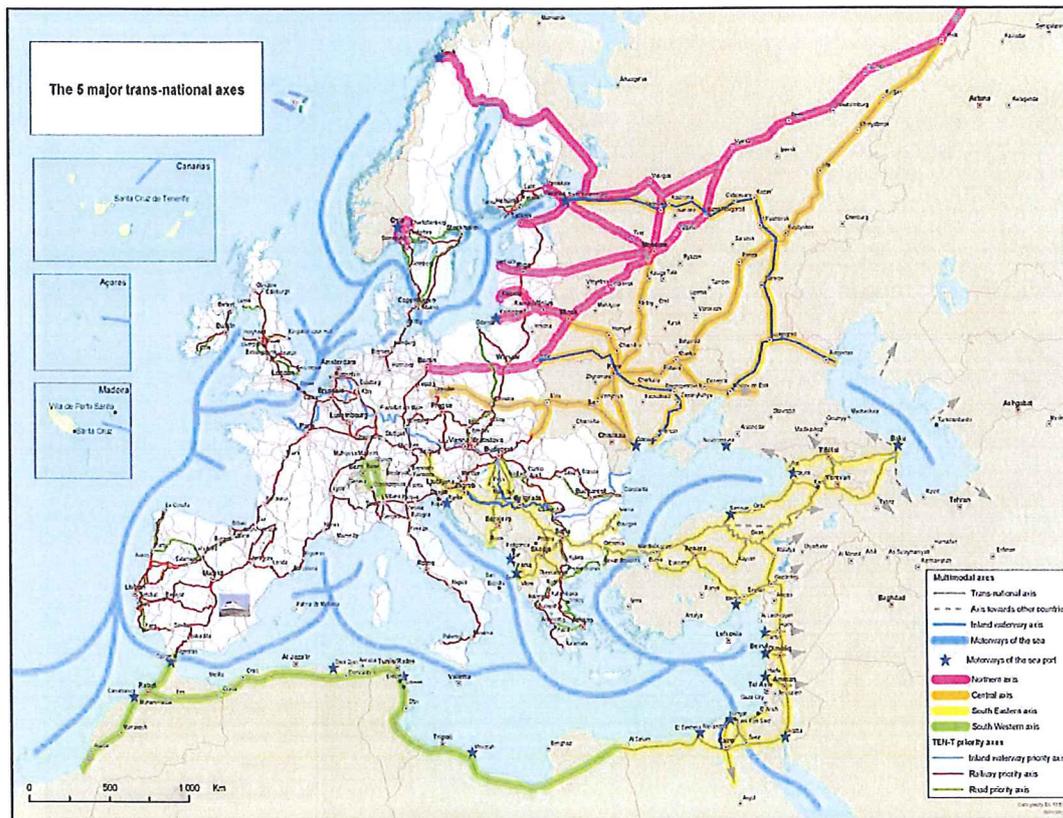


Figure 2. Major trans-national axes to the neighbouring countries of the EU.

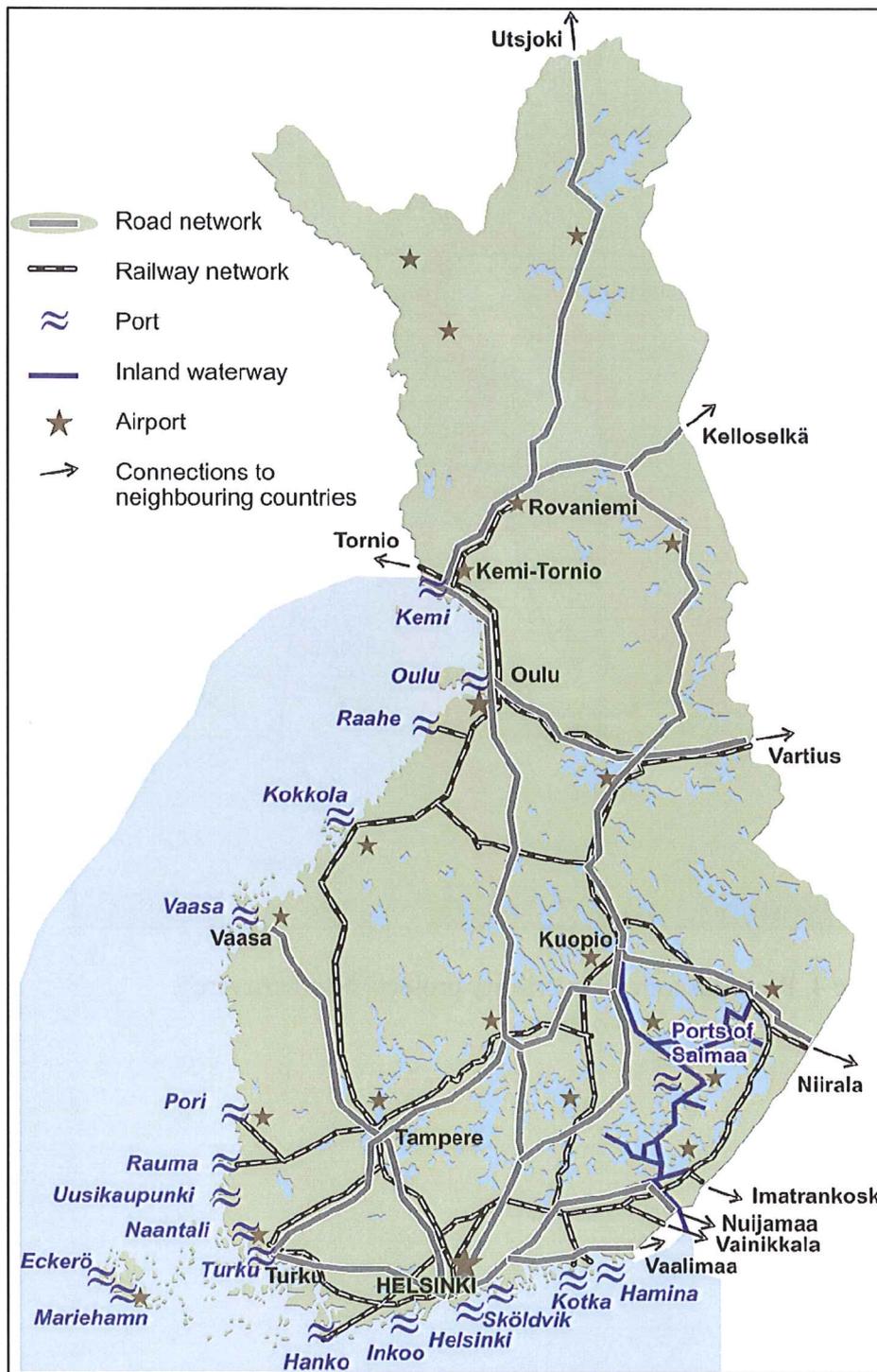


Figure 3. The existing TEN-T network in Finland.

