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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE TRANS-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORK POLICY (COM 2010/212)

Response from the European Forum of Northern Sweden

The European Forum of Northern Sweden (EFNS) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the EC consultation on the future of TEN-T policy, having paid attention to the reports from the expert groups, taken account of the studies TEN-CONNECT, and TRANSvisions and other relevant material. EFNS pays special attention to relevant EU Policies and decisions such as EU2020 and the EU Baltic Sea Strategy and its action plan. We also welcome the recent agreement on the establishment of the Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics made in Zaragoza and the Haparanda declaration with expressions of shared views in the field of transport between the Ministers and High Level Representatives of Sweden, Iceland, Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Russia and China.

The European Forum of Northern Sweden (EFNS) is a network of politicians from the four northernmost counties in Sweden, representing almost 900 000 citizens and half the geographical area of Sweden. A group of 12 political rapporteurs manages the regular work of EFNS. EFNS continuously follow the EC processes especially in the fields of Cohesion policy, Transport policy, R&D and Innovation and Environmental and Energy policy.

The EFNS appreciate the open dialogue we are have had with EU commissioners, the European Parliament and EC officials in regular meetings both in Brussels and in Northern Sweden, especially on the issues of cohesion policy and transport policy.

This paper is organised into three sections:

- A. Summary of issues
- B. European added value from Northern Sweden
- C. Response to the consultation questions

A. Summary of issues

- Northern Sweden has a vast amount of natural resources such as forests and minerals and has a great potential for sustainable energy production. Adequate and relevant transport infrastructure is a necessity for transport of these resources to the European market, bringing added value to Europe
- When selecting nodes and links in the TEN-T core network there needs to be a relevant balance between different criteria in the methodology, such as cohesion policy, environmental concern, economic development and industrial growth potential in all parts of Europe.
- Freight and passenger transports may need to be treated differently due to different needs and specificities. The same criteria for choosing nodes and links may not be used.
- The boarder area of Haparanda/Tornio should be a strategic geographic node, connecting the northernmost branch of Northern Axis to the Nordic Triangle, through the Bothnian Corridor both at the Swedish and Finnish side, on the main criteria of very large volumes of freight to central Europe.

B. European added value from Northern Sweden

Northern Sweden is essential for the fulfilment of the goals in the EU2020 strategy what regards the growth, competitiveness and prosperity of the European Union. A large share of the natural resources needed for industrial production in other parts of Europe comes from northern Sweden and Finland. Also there is a huge potential for growth in the tourism industry in Northern Sweden, both in winter and summer tourism. For all these growth factors efficient transport systems and infrastructure are indispensable.

Sweden and Finland are among the world leaders in exports of wood and wooden products. The value of the Swedish wood export was in 2008 approx. € 12 billion and in Finland € 11 billion and 70-80 % of the production is exported to other EU member states. The share of the total employment in this industry sector is 10-12 %. In the EU, 10 % of the total consumption of paper and 20 % of processed wooden products come from Sweden.¹

The forest industry is essential also for energy production. Northern Sweden has vast resources for bio-mass production both for domestic use and export. but also the paper pulp industry is a great producer of heat and electricity. An example of new technologies in the sector is the world's first full scale pilot plant for production of Bio-DME, where renewable automotive fuel is made through the gasification of black liquor, in Piteå in Norrbotten.

¹ The Swedish Forest Industries - Facts and figures 2009, <http://www.forestindustries.se>

per year and will increase the production of iron ore by almost 40% to 37 Million tonnes per year. The large copper producer Boliden is planning to double its annual production in the Aitik mine from 18 million tonnes to 36 million tonnes per year.

New iron ore deposits have been found in the vicinity of Kaunisvaara (Pajala in Sweden and Kolari in Finland) with a volume of approximately 340 million tonnes. The new mines will generate at least 1500 jobs in this area and is planned to start in 2012 with a production of 2 million tonnes per year. Production is expected to increase to 5 million tonnes per year in 2014.³

Tourism is an important industry sector in northern Sweden, Norway and Finland, highly dependant on reliable transport systems. The tourism sector in Sweden creates European added value and in 2009 the turnover of tourism increased by 6 % to 24 Billion Euro.⁴ In the Barents Area the estimated total investments in tourism are about 1.5 billion Euros by the year 2015.⁵

Adequate and relevant transport infrastructure is a necessity for freight, commuting as well as for tourism. There is a risk that inadequate transport infrastructure will be an impediment to realising the full potential of raw material production in the Northern Europe and in the end inhibiting the development of European industry

The most essential infrastructure components, which already today handle huge freight volumes, are:

- The Bothnian corridor, at both the Swedish and Finnish side of the Gulf of Bothnia, connecting the northernmost branch of Northern Axis to the current Nordic Triangle. The Bothnian Corridor is essential the industries in northern Sweden and Finland for reaching the European markets but also for intermodal connection in East-West directions along the line (e.g. Wasa-Mo i Rana, Trondheim-Sundsvall). In addition to freight transport the Bothnian corridor facilitates environmental friendly commuting.
- The northernmost part of the Northern Axis with its connection to the port of Narvik in east and potential for transnational freight transport to Asia. Malmbanan and the Haparanda line as the Swedish parts of this transnational axis are essential for iron ore transports, from Kiruna/Gällivare to the ports of Narvik in Norway and the ports in the Gulf of Bothnia. The Northern axis will have increased importance for global trade to Asia and also to the US (the NEW corridor).
- The port clusters in the Gulf of Bothnia and intermodal hinterland connections to railways and roads, for the out shipment of heavy cargo such as iron ore, metals and wooden products and paper, to the European markets.

³ Swedish Transport Administration and Finnish transport agency 2010: Transport potential and development needs in the Bothnian Corridor Transport Network. <http://www.trafikverket.se/botniskakorridoren>

⁴ Tillväxtverket – Fakta om svensk turism 2009

⁵ ÅF Infrastruktur AB, May 2010, Supply of Raw Materials, Transport Needs and Economic Potential in Northern Europe

Since long, large infrastructure investments are being made in northern Sweden and Finland. Recently the new railway Bothnian Line was inaugurated and planning is underway for investments in increased capacity at several lines and new lines at both the Swedish and Finnish side. Improvement in several ports and hinterland connections are also being made.⁶

Haparanda/Tornio ought to be selected as a main node in the core network is motivated for the following reasons:

- Foreseen increases of the exploitation of natural resources in the near future, with added European value.
- It will be a strategic node in the Barents region connecting four countries, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Russia.
- Connection of Northern Axis with the current Nordic Triangle via the Bothnian Corridor at both the Swedish and Finnish side.

We also stress the importance of third country port nodes to be included in the core network, such as Trondheim and Narvik.



Figure 2: Existing and proposed railway core network corridors and main nodes.

⁶ Swedish Transport Administration and Finnish transport agency 2010: Transport potential and development needs in the Bothnian Corridor Transport Network.

C. Response to the questions

3. THE METHODOLOGY FOR TEN-T PLANNING

Are the principles and criteria for designing the core network, as set out above, adequate and practicable? What are their strengths and weaknesses, and what else could be taken into account?

Nodes and links

The proposed methodology and steps for identifying nodes, links and bottlenecks for designing the TEN-T Core Network seems reasonable, given that criteria for identifying nodes and links are balanced between different objectives as stated by EG 1, such as cohesion and internal market efficiency, but also regional growth potentials and environmental objectives.

Macro-regional strategies, such as the EU Baltic Sea Strategy constitutes an important political base for designing both the TEN-T Core network and the links to third countries. The Baltic Sea strategy has recently been decided by the European Council and the implementation has just started. Therefore it is obvious that the TEN-T is an instrument for its realisation, and vice versa.

The commission proposes that “The core network will be made up of nodes and links of the highest strategic and economic importance throughout the EU.” We agree on this but would like to stress that nodes of strategic and economic importance are more than urban areas. Cross-boarder passages, as we suggest Haparanda/Tornio between Sweden and Finland with closeness to Norway and Russia, should be such a strategic main node. This node should include the port cluster of Luleå, Kalix, Kemi and Oulu, and Luleå airport which has a great potential for flight cargo between Asia and the Barents region.

Given the importance of globalisation it is important to include the transnational axes and identify external nodes, as put forward by the EG 4. It is often forgotten the shortest distance from the Eastern US to Asia in fact is through the northernmost part of Europe. Therefore, we consider the northernmost branch of Northern Axis to be essential for freight transports US-Europe-Russia-Asia, with the port of Narvik as a MoS port.

Modes of transports

When identifying nodes and links, it is necessary to consider the different specificities for freight and passenger transports. Large cities are very often not the best nodes for *transit* freight transports due to congestion and environmental factors, even if they are obvious as passenger nodes.

We agree on the multimodality of the TEN-T Core Network but it is important to prioritize the most environmental modes of transport, which for heavy cargo are railways and sea transports. This should be considered in the conceptual pillar, as well as ITS development and green corridor concepts.

To what extent do the supplementary infrastructure measures contribute to the objectives of a future-oriented transport system, and are there ways to strengthen their contribution?

New technologies to support a climate and environmentally efficient transport system will have a significant impact on the results. We want to give special attention to:

- **Promotion of the Green Corridor initiative**
- **Optimize the use of existing infrastructure (ITS)**
- **Administrative bottlenecks**

Green corridor initiative

The Green corridor initiative aims at developing cross-border transport corridors from Northern EU to the continent to increase growth and competitiveness in EU, and contribute to a sustainable Europe. Climate and environmental effects should be reduced, while safety and efficiency increases.

A green corridor involves for instance sustainable logistical solutions, optimized use of transport modes, harmonized regulations, concentration of freight transport and innovative information systems. One proposed pilot corridor will be Narvik-Stockholm-Naples, including the Bothnian Corridor and parts of the Northern axis.

Optimize the use of existing infrastructure (with Intelligent Transport systems)

The demands for infrastructure improvements are extensive. Building new infrastructure require harsh economic priorities, especially within the railway sector. Regarding missing links it is unavoidable to build new infrastructure, but intelligent transport solutions can optimize logistics to use free capacity, and thereby create economic space for the really needed investments. The expansion of ERTMS should be stimulated within the core network to increase capacity and contribute to a seamless transport. The first railway line in Sweden to use ERTMS is the Bothnian line, starting in the fall of 2010.

Administrative bottlenecks

It is of great importance to eliminate not just physical bottlenecks, but also administrative bottlenecks to ensure functional connections especially in border crossings within EU and between EU and third country.

What specific role could TEN-T planning in general play in boosting the transport sector's contribution to the "Europe 2020" strategic objectives?

In our view, the strategy Europe 2020 should be what it claims to be, i.e. "A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth". This means that innovation, environmental concern and cohesion are key issues in the strategy. In the light of this, the growth potential of the vast natural resources in the northern Sweden and Finland, and in the rest of the Barents area are one of many resources

for the realization of the EU2020 strategy. In this strategy the transport issues, is from our perspective, related to all the three main priorities, i.e. smart growth, sustainable growth and inclusive growth. Of the seven flagship initiatives, the TEN-T planning in northern Europe is most related to (4) "Resource efficient Europe" and (5) "An industrial policy for the globalisation era". Industry, all over Europe, are dependant on efficient supply of metals, woods and other natural resources that either come from the internal market within EU or are imported from, sometimes unsecure, international markets. Efficient and sustainable transports, of these resources are essential for the employment, growth and prosperity, not only for the area of the origin but also for all industries and regions that are dependant of these resources for production of high-end goods.

In the recent report by Mario Monti, "A new strategy for the Internal Market" the importance of transports to the efficiency of the internal market is stressed. "Reaping the full benefits of a single market for goods depends on the existence of a seamless, flexible and efficient logistics and transport system. " ⁷ Besides the importance of removing physical bottlenecks in the TEN-T planning, the recommendations of Mario Monti could be included in the Conceptual pillar of the TEN-T Core Network.

4. TEN-T IMPLEMENTATION

In which way can the different sources of EU expenditure be better coordinated and/or combined in order to accelerate the delivery of TEN-T projects and policy objectives?

- We welcome the establishment of the secretariat for the Northern Dimension Transport and Logistics Partnership, hosted by the Nordic Investment bank in Helsinki. Their role in the planning and implementation of TEN-T and the Northern Axis in the Baltic Sea Region should be obvious.
- The commitment of member states needs to be stronger as pointed out in the Green Paper in 2009.
- Synchronization of TEN-T planning and national and regional infrastructure plans will be important. In these processes the financial planning and the use of different funding sources should also be included.
- We would like to stress the need for regions to be involved in the ongoing dialogue on the implementation of TEN-T.

How can an EU funding strategy coordinate and/or combine the different sources of EU and national funding and public and private financing?

- Coherent rules or recommendations would be needed on the use of structural funds and other EU funds for infrastructure investments, e.g. for hinterland connections and/or soft infrastructure investments.

⁷ Mario Monti, 9 May 2010, A NEW STRATEGY FOR THE SINGLE MARKET AT THE SERVICE OF EUROPE'S ECONOMY AND SOCIETY- Report to the President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso, part 2.5

- It is important to show the possibilities of combining different funding sources, such as structural funds, national funds, TEN-T funds, and private funding.
- The possibilities of combining private funding with structural funds, in a more creative way, needs to be further investigated. Most often private funds can not be used as match-funding leveraging the structural funds financing, at object level.
- Coherent policy and/or recommendations on the use of EIB and NIB funding, are needed, for creating as much added value as possible for the realisation of TEN-T.

Questions regarding the document should be addressed to Gustav Malmqvist, Mid Sweden Office/County Council of Västernorrland, gustav.y.malmqvist@lvn.se or Mårten Edberg, Region of Västerbotten, marten.edberg@regionvasterbotten.se

For the European Forum of Northern Sweden:

Harriet Classon

City Commissioner, Skellefteå
Main rapporteur for infrastructure

Robert Forsberg

Mayor, City of Kalix
Rapporteur for infrastructure

Benny Eriksson

Vice President
County Council of Västernorrland
Rapporteur for infrastructure

Thomas Andersson

County Councillor, Jämtland

Kent Ögren

President Norrbotten County Council

Britt Fäldt

City Commissioner, Piteå

Jens Nilsson

Member of European Parliament
Mayor, City of Östersund
Chair of EFNS Rapporteurs

Ewa-May Karlsson

Mayor, Vindeln Municipality
Vice chair of EFNS Rapporteurs

Glenn Nordlund

City Commissioner, Örnsköldsvik

Jonny Lundin

City Commissioner, Härnösand

Mona-Lisa Norrman

County Council Commissioner, Jämtland

Erik Bergkvist

President, Region of Västerbotten