

Kapsch TrafficCom answers to the
Consultation on the future of the trans-European Transport
Network Policy

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Kapsch TrafficCom

Kapsch TrafficCom is a supplier of innovative traffic telematics solutions. The company develops and delivers primarily electronic toll collection systems and offers the technical and commercial operation of these systems. Further Kapsch TrafficCom offers traffic ITS applications, covering traffic management solutions such as traffic safety and control, management of parking space and electronic access. Its products cover DSRC, GNSS, video or laser scan applications to name a few.

Experience counts! Kapsch TrafficCom has wide ranging and global experience with ITS and tolling solutions: Kapsch TrafficCom equips the national truck tolling system to Austria, the world's first nationwide fully electronic multi-lane free-flow tolling system based on CEN-compliant DSRC technology; the technical installation as well as the technical and commercial operation of the truck tolling system in the Czech Republic, a national multi-lane free-flow tolling system; as well as intelligent parking solutions in countries such as Australia, Brazil, Chile, Norway, Portugal or Spain.

Kapsch systems implement the Eurovignette

The Kapsch road tolling systems in Austria and the Czech Republic are electronic solutions that implement the Eurovignette directive. Kapsch TrafficCom produces the technical solutions to implement the user pays principle.

Kapsch as a provider to the TEN-T

Kapsch TrafficCom provides the single lane electronic toll collection on the TEN-T priority project Öresund Bridge between Sweden and Denmark, the first fully interoperable toll collection system between two countries in Europe.

Introduction

In this paper Kapsch TrafficCom answers the questions posed by the European Commission. The answers refer to the road sector.

Kapsch TrafficCom believes that the principles guiding the definition of the TEN-T comprehensive and core networks are steps in the right direction. Same counts for the extension of the legal basis to cover the common transport policy. A clear level of service has to be defined for the core network. Further funding instruments need to be adapted to EU priorities. The current set-up of the Structural and Cohesion Funds does not encourage the achievement of EU priorities.

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?

De-carbonisation

The TEN-T network policy has to contribute to the EU wider goals, as defined in the “Europe 2020 Strategy”, the de-carbonisation of the economy has to play a key role. The Treaty of Lisbon refers to the “Polluter Pays” principle (TFEU, Article 191 (2)). The European Environmental Agency’s TERM 2009 tracking report “Towards a resource efficient transport system” makes the case for a policy mix to achieve the EU 2020 goals. A central piece in this policy mix are pricing and traffic management.

Interoperability

The TEN-T is to provide a smooth level of services with clearly defined services for the comprehensive and the core networks. Key to the services will be their EU wide interoperability. Here the ITS Directive for ITS applications and the Interoperability Directive have to be taken into account.

Safety and security of transport infrastructure

Safety and security are key services that the TEN-T ought to deliver, they are also fields that lend themselves to the application of ITS. Safety and security also offer the European Union the opportunity to move swiftly on the introduction of ITS. Here ITS applications can easily be established using tolling systems as the infrastructure backbone. Here reliable ITS services could be established swiftly, whilst at the same time proving the benefit of ITS to road users.

Application of ITS

ITS can be a cost efficient solution to transport problems. If ITS is to be speedily introduced the European Commission ought to explore the opportunities for swift deployment by establishing it on the toll systems that in several countries already exist. Here the European Commission should consider dedicating parts of its Framework Programme for research and Technological Development to demonstrate the viability of such systems and explore the potential for new ITS applications.

ITS ought to receive further attention from the Structural and Cohesion Funds.

Minimisation of investment, maintenance and operational costs

Road tolling systems offer the chance to recover the cost for infrastructure construction, as well as maintenance. Depending on their design road tolling systems also offer the opportunity to manage traffic, internalise external costs and can be easily extended to facilitate the swift introduction of ITS.

The European Commission ought to set incentives for the introduction of such systems, should EU member States require them, through the Structural and Cohesion Funds.

Demand & demand measurement

A criterion to be added ought to be the measurement of freight transport.

The TEN-T core network ought to follow demand. Traffic volume has to play a key role when selecting infrastructure for the core network. In order to gauge the economic importance of a section of network and its security importance freight transport statistics ought to also consider the value of the goods transported, rather than exclusively its weight. Considering weight only may result in distorting the economic importance of infrastructure.

A demand measurement criterion ought to be introduced into the analysis of the TEN-T network and certain benchmarks defined that have to be met by the TEN-T Core Network.

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?

Supplementary infrastructure can play a major role achieving the goals of the “Europe 2020” strategy, if defined and used right. Concerning the definition the TEN-T ought to follow the philosophy of the “Future of Transport” communication, which stresses the importance of smart pricing. Here prices ought to reward the use of clean vehicles. Road user charging systems should not be excluded from the definition of supplementary infrastructure and firmly embedded in the conceptual pillar of the TEN-T. Sustainability (environmental, economic and financial) has to be a key criterion for the identification of supplementary measures. The supplementary infrastructure has to meet the EU’s privacy requirements. Here it has to be stressed that the EU’s data protection principles (purpose, proportionality and legitimacy of processing, limits on storage time, security and confidentiality, respect for the rights of the individual and control by an independent authority) need to be strictly adhered. These principles ought to be kept and the European Commission ought to resist the temptation fragmenting its data-protection legislation by sector specific data-protection legislation or technologically prescriptive legislation.

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

Transport is a major contributor to the EU's CO₂ output. Hence TEN-T planning is closely linked to the EU's strategic 2020 objectives. Road transport plays a key role for the EU's CO₂ performance. The EU ought to fully utilise its Structural and Cohesion Funds to give its Members the incentive to start de-carbonising the economy.

De-carbonisation

Contribution to de-carbonisation: the EU has to encourage EU Member States to contribute to the de-carbonisation of transport. The implementation of the polluter pays principle for HGV lies within the realm of the EU, for other traffic in the field of the EU Member States. The EU should encourage the implementation of the Eurovignette through the Structural and Cohesion Funds.

Further EU Member States ought to be encouraged to cover all traffic if it wants to de-carbonise transport.

Industrial policy for the globalisation era

The TEN-T also underpin the EU's internal market and hence are key to the EU's competitiveness in the global market. Hence the importance of the even service level and interoperability.

The services offered on the TEN-T have to be interoperable and should be perceived by the user as the same throughout the network, no matter in which country the service is delivered or which technology is used.

Specifications to that end have to be drafted in a manner that they are genuinely technologically neutral to allow suppliers the freedom to offer the most appropriate and cost efficient solution.

Funding**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?****Harmonising appraisal methods**

The central funding instrument to support the EU Member States in the creation of a efficient TEN-T network are the Structural and Cohesion Funds.

The coordination between the Regulations that govern the Structural and Cohesion Fund and the goals of the Treaty of Lisbon and the EU's 2020 strategy needs to be improved.

The current set-up of the Structural and Cohesion Funds does not encourage investment in ITS applications or the user pays principle.

The Future of Transport Communication already hints at the harmonisation of project appraisal methods. Whilst transport policy makers argue that roads yield their maximum socio-economic benefit when users pay for the external costs they cause, the project appraisal mechanisms used for Structural and Cohesion Funds aim to maximise the use of the infrastructure per se and hence do not favour any type of user pays solution. The appraisal mechanisms need to be brought into line with the objectives of Common Transport Policy, Europe's Strategic 2020 objectives and the Treaty of Lisbon. If the EU is serious about de-carbonisation, managing traffic and implementing the user pays principle, the analytical framework for investment has to reflect the value of the environment and well maintained infrastructure.

Appraisal mechanisms

The current "Guide to Cost-benefit Analysis of Investment Projects" recommends appraisal methodologies that clearly set a case against the internalisation of external costs.

The guide argues that a tolled road does not offer the socio-economic returns of non-tolled roads.

The European Commission needs to apply uniform appraisal mechanisms across all modes that are in line with its strategic goals.

General Provisions - Article 55

The current general provisions on the Structural and Cohesion Funds (EC 1083/2006) lay out the rules for revenue generating projects (Article 55). The definition of an income generating project is unclear. The Article is ambiguous concerning infrastructure upgrades or the installation of a tolling system or ITS, since it is not clear how the value of the upgrade would be related overall value of the project.

A road tolling system has to be considered part and parcel of road infrastructure, hence should be calculated into the value of the road infrastructure to be tolled. The same should also count for ITS roadside infrastructure, it also has to be considered part of the infrastructure and calculated as such.

If the European Commission intends to encourage smart pricing and finding the resources for sustainable transport it should also consider changing Annex III of the Eurovignette. Here payment systems are classified as part of the operating, management and tolling costs (Annex III, pt 3). The construction of the tolling system ought to be considered part of the infrastructure costs.

Would the setting up of a European funding framework adequately address the implementation gap in the completion of TEN-T projects and policy objectives?

A European funding framework could be useful towards furthering the TEN-T. For this appraisal methods would need to be further harmonised and the appraisal

methods of the Structural and Cohesion Funds brought into line with the EU's transport policy and its Europe 2020 objectives.

The Legal and Institutional Framework of the TEN-T Policy Review

In which way can the TEN-T policy benefit from the new legal instruments and provisions as set out above?

Kapsch welcomes the combination of the TEN-T Guidelines and the TEN "Financial Regulation" and the extension of the legal basis to cover the Common Transport Policy.

The common transport policy has a clear focus on the user pays principle, as well as the use technology. To promote both of these the new legal framework for the TEN-T ought to set incentives for EU Member States to upgrade their infrastructure to use technology based solutions to implement the polluter pays principle. Such measures have to become fundable from the TEN-T budget. The new legal framework needs to set clear rules that give certainty to applicants. This further strengthens the case to align the funding rules for the Structural and Cohesion Funds with the ideas of the common transport policy.

The ideas of the "comprehensive network", the "core network" and the "conceptual pillar" need to be embedded into the new legal framework for the TEN-T. This framework has to recognise the importance of infrastructure upgrades and make their funding possible and financing rules made clear, as proposed above.