

Consultation on the future

Trans-European Transport Network policy

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Introduction to Airport Regions Conference

Airport Regions Conference (ARC) is the association of cities and regions across Europe with international airports situated within or near its territory.

A common concern in ARC is to balance the economic benefits generated by the airports against their environmental impact, notably the effect on the quality of life of residents. The ARC members cooperate at the European level to pursue common interests. ARC members discuss and formulate positions and other statements that reflect the views of cities and regions on aviation, regional development, transport and environment. Airport accessibility is one of the key issues for airport regions in Europe.

Cities and regions hosting an international airport have a major challenge in providing surface access and public transport to the airports. Airport regions have over the last decade met an increasing demand for airport accessibility. This is rapidly changing the regional structure of airport accessibility and needs to be addressed in a sustainable way. Recent ARC studies have highlighted the close links between aviation, surface access and the carbon footprint in airport regions. Intermodality in airport regions has also been given a special attention.

The consultation

The Commission's working document emphasises that the TEN-T policy should support integrated transport systems by promoting intermodal solutions where passengers and freight are the centre of attention. The TEN-T policy also emphasises the need to reduce the carbon footprint from the transport sector.

The new TEN-T policy proposes a dual layer approach, based on a core network on the European level and a comprehensive network on national level. The core network is supposed to include axes and nodes of vital importance to the European internal market and the cohesion in Europe. The comprehensive network is supposed to ensure accessibility to the core network. The comprehensive network should not only be multimodal for passengers and freight. It should link all EU regions in an adequate way. Key words in the future TEN-T policy is: *Multimodality, Interconnectivity, Interoperability, Sustainability*

ARC comments on the TEN-T consultation

The airports in Europe are by nature intermodal. Passengers and goods are almost always bound for other destinations by other modes of transport. The new approach announced in the



TEN-T consultation is therefore most welcome since aviation and intermodal connections at airports have not previously been properly addressed by the Commission.

ARC strongly supports the changed emphasis towards a sustainable approach with a focus on passengers and freight instead of the different modes of transport. The approach outlined in the TEN-T working document seems to be well in line with the ARC objective to promote “seamless journeys from door to door”.

Intermodality is the way forward

Air-Rail network

In ARC studies over the last decade it has become obvious that airports and airport regions are key intermodal point for European mobility in the 21st century. It will be even more so in the coming decades. The total number of air passengers in Europe is about 800 million per year and is supposed to almost double. From a sustainable development and CO2 perspective it will be even more important to efficiently link air travel to other modes of transport, notably air and rail.

The best way to address intermodality in a long term perspective is to link the airports to rail networks. Primarily the airport should be linked to the public transport system that serves the airport catchment area and secondly to the national rail network. Ideally the two systems are combined into an air-rail network.

Experiences made in European countries tell us that where High Speed Trains, HST, and airports are well connected in a convenient way for passengers the train may very well substitute for short haul flights.

ARC recommends the Commission to emphasise that TEN-T policy and planning should focus on air-rail intermodality.

Long haul and local travel must be interconnected

The TEN-T policy needs to include the regional transportation provision. In order to reduce the carbon footprint it is essential to efficiently link airports to the existing public network system. We know that in most circumstances the catchment area of an airport is to a very large extent served by the local and regional public transport system. This fact must be addressed and highlighted in the forthcoming revision of the TEN-T policies and funding.

When intermodality is the objective of the proposed TEN-T core network, the airports included in the core network must be efficiently linked to the local and regional transport system of the airport region.

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Governance

The TEN-T policy review indicates that a new systematic approach must be developed. A new approach must involve new layers of governance to be effective. The new approach includes all modes of transport, linking long distance travel with local transport. In that sense the TEN-T objectives address the competence of the local and regional authorities and service providers. These stakeholders, and not only the member states, need to be effectively involved in making a pan European Transport system efficient, functional and sustainable.

Cities and regions with important airports will without any doubt have an important role to play in implementing the new vision envisaged in the TEN-T consultation.

Interoperability

For passengers

Interoperability is not only a technical issue making technical systems work together. Interoperability from a passenger perspective should include integrated ticketing solutions that are efficient, reliable and legally binding. Integrated ticketing addresses both technical and legal challenges for all transport service providers and is a long term issue to address already today.

ARC believes integrated ticketing is an important building block in a TEN-T policy to make seamless journeys from door to door more easy and attractive.

For cargo

With the development of a dense HST network in Europe and the integration of airports with rail networks, new opportunities will arise to develop an integrated system for air freight distribution by rail. A couple of initiatives are under way in member states and should be encouraged. To make air-rail freight integration possible, important technical and administrative initiatives must be taken by the European Commission to make the rail and air cargo systems compatible in all countries. A European standard for air and rail cargo is likely to be needed.

A common technical and administrative standard would have an important impact and speed up air-rail cargo development substantially. That would be well in line with the overall objective of future transport policies in Europe.

The core network should be functional and dynamic

ARC is in favour of a core network in Europe that consists of the nodes that are most vital for the European economy and of strategic importance for the transport sector in the community. The nodes in the core network will to a very large extent be located in the airport regions that

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are members in the ARC. ARC members are hosting about 70 percent of all airports in Europe with more than 10 million passengers.

Major airports

With a growing importance for Europe to be globally competitive and with the continuous global deregulation of aviation markets, the core network must include all the important airports in Europe. According to the core network and a comprehensive network, all major airports must be regarded as intermodal key points in the network.

In its position paper “Intermodality in airport regions” ARC has stated that the airports and airport regions are the key modal points in Europe in the 21st century. This implies that a special attention from the level of the European Commission down to the local and regional governments is needed to provide the right conditions to exercise the specific role of these regions in European transport policy.

The TEN-T policy intention with a core network will over time have a clear impact on the conditions for local and regional policies.

Regional airports

Aviation is a key element in transport strategies in peripheral regions and islands in Europe. In peripheral regions with a low population density a wide catchment area is essential. By connecting regional airports to the national rail system there is a strong potential to increase the catchment area of these airports and to increase the passenger numbers to make air connections viable.

It is vital for peripheral regions and islands to be part of a core network for their accessibility to European regions and sustainable economic growth opportunities. Regional airports provide this link to the core network.

Determining the core network and identifying TEN-T planning objectives

The working document argues that identification of TEN-T plans should be based on criteria and standards that are sufficiently flexible to meet future policy developments.

The ARC believes the nodes in a core network should be defined in a functional and dynamic way. An example could be:

“the nodes in the core network should provide access to intermodal travel solutions for XX percent of international and European passengers and freight”.

This example depicts that a node in the core network has an integrated transport system. With the deregulation of the aviation markets and with new airline business models it can be expected that regions today not served by intercontinental flights may very well be so in coming years. Intermodal travel solutions in these regions will then become important, and hence part of the core network and integrated in the TEN-T planning.

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The example above is also dynamic by relating to a percentage of passengers in Europe rather than a fixed number. The number of travellers, especially travellers by air, is supposed to continue to grow in the coming decade and new airports may need to be included into the core network to provide intermodal solutions for XX percent of the passengers.

The main criteria for the TEN-T guidelines based on the discussion above would then be:

- ☞ **TEN-T projects should develop and implement intermodal travel solutions that make efficient and seamless journeys possible for XX percent of all international and interregional passengers and freight.**

Identification of the nodes of the core network

Based on a functional and dynamic criterion, like the one above, it could be discussed how to identify the nodes to be included in the core network. A starting point for that discussion may be to include;

- ☞ The first and second largest airports in all member states and/or airport systems in metropolitan regions.
- ☞ Airports in peripheral regions and islands.
- ☞ Airports with more than XX million passengers.
(The threshold of XX million passengers should be based on the target level, percentage of passengers, to be served by the core network.)

TEN-T policy deliverables on short, medium and long term

To address the intention in the TEN-T policy review, ARC believes that the TEN-T projects should not only address long term investments in infrastructure. To be effective the TEN-T investments should look at different time perspectives to address the challenges.

From our perspective it would be interesting if the Commission would look at TEN-T funding from:

- a. *What could be delivered in short time, within 5 years*
We believe this period will include investments and policies addressing mainly administrative and financial components to encourage intermodality and seamless journeys. This could be different types of regulation that emphasise intermodal solutions that may have an immediate effect on the carbon footprint, like airline tickets being valid for the first leg travelling from the airport by public transport, or on-line information on travel options with the lowest carbon footprint from door to door, harmonised traveller information systems etc.
- b. *What could be delivered in medium term, within 10 years*
This period includes technical and innovative developments, like European integrated ticketing standard. From the forwarder's industry there is already an integrated system in place to deliver goods from door to door within a specific time. Hence, a technical system is already in place. This technical system may well serve as a starting point to

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develop integrated ticketing for passengers. Another example would be a common standard for air-rail cargo. A third would be investments in rapid links, by current public transportation, between airports and existing main rail stations.

c. *What could be delivered in long term, after 10 years*

This period includes huge and expensive infrastructure investments that involves long term planning procedures, local stakeholders consultation, land use considerations, works etc. The most obvious example is bringing rail connections to airports which will be an essential element in a long term perspective.

The ARC underlines the importance to address all three time perspectives at the same time. Short and medium term investments are important building blocks, together with long term investments, to bring about an early start to a real change towards an integrated, efficient and sustainable transport sector in Europe.

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