

Comments from Barcelona Port Authority on the European Commission document entitled "Consultation on the future trans-European transport network policy"

1. 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?

The design of the TEN-T must respond to present and future flows of freight and passengers. The principles and criteria for designing the core network must **correct the shortcomings of the current situation** rather than perpetuating them, improving the current distribution of flows which currently causes serious problems in terms of sustainability and efficiency.

The planning criteria of the basic TEN-T mentioned in this consultation document give priority to the existing system and the technical aspects (interconnectivity, interoperability, etc). For the design of a network of infrastructures providing service to companies and society, particular attention should be given to the basic economic and social aspects such as improving the competitive position of companies (lower transport costs) and reducing externalities (CO₂ emissions, congestion, etc).

The starting point of the basic criteria for the design of the TEN-T must be **to correct the existing distribution of flows**. This situation will not improve unless the following principles are addressed:

- The need to **correct current inequalities**:

As the Commission stated in the White Paper "European transport policy for 2010: time to decide" in 2001, the current European transport system is threatened with "apoplexy at the centre and paralysis at the extremities". This imbalance hinders the reduction in CO₂ emissions and increases the externalities caused by the inadequate distribution of flows. A well-balanced, **congestion-free** transport network would help foster cohesion in Europe and increase the efficiency of the transport network, which are basic principles of the TEN-T.

A **flexible** transport network is required to enhance European competitiveness. The transport network must offer alternatives, allowing users to choose between different modes. This would open the way to efficient European logistics, which are a mainstay of European

competitiveness in a globalised economy in which logistics costs are on the rise.

As the document states on page 5, the core network must link up the nodes "of the highest strategic and economic importance throughout the EU". Among these strategic and economic nodes, it is crucial to connect not only "East and West", as stated in the text, but also the nodes throughout the "**North - South**" axis. The strategic and economic importance of the North - South axis is beyond any doubt.

The Mediterranean axis improves the southern European transport network, attaching particular importance to rail transport of freight; it links the south of Europe with the centre and north; it is part of a planned polycentric network comprising major axes; and, according to the study, makes a significant contribution to the modal shift towards the railway and has a significant socioeconomic impact.

- The need to consider and respond to **future flows**:

The revision of the TEN-T must not be limited to analysing the current situation and to seeking to correct current problems, taking for granted the current distribution of transport flows. The revision of the TEN-T is future-oriented and must therefore be based on **future demand for traffic**. It makes no sense to create a network of infrastructures that do not serve traffic demand in the medium and long term.

In this light, it is necessary to consider the development of the Europe-Asia and Europe-North Africa routes. Forecasts indicate that Europe-Far East traffic will continue to grow. Furthermore, analyses of possible future **alternatives** to current routes (via the Arctic or the widened Panama Canal) indicate that neither route is a viable alternative, because of the distance and difficult navigability. Therefore, the **Europe-Far East** route via the Mediterranean is the only viable option for these flows, and if its distribution is not rationalised, CO₂ emissions and system inefficiencies can only get worse.

Forecasts point to an increase in trade flows between **Europe and North Africa** due to the growth of the countries involved, coupled with the relocation of European companies. The Mediterranean will become a major logistics pole and the centre of a market of more than 750 million inhabitants and 42 countries. It would make no sense for these flows to have to enter or leave Europe through the northern ports.

- The need to **simplify and rationalise flows**:

The Asia-Europe maritime route is currently the main route for Europe's external maritime trade. However, the European logistics-port map is based on the situation in the 19th and 20th centuries, when the main route was across the Atlantic and for which the northern European ports are very well-placed geographically speaking. Today, the transatlantic route represents approximately one third of that of the Europe-Far East route and the geographical location of the northern ports is no longer efficient. Despite this, the northern ports continue to channel around 75% of these flows. The fact that these flows are not distributed in the most **rational** way possible entails a high environmental cost and in terms of efficiency.

The analyses made by the Port of Barcelona using the Simport model, based on European CORINAIR and LIPASTO indicators, show that the increase of CO2 emissions could be cut by between **49% and 53% by 2020** if the Mediterranean were to become a genuine alternative for the entry of flows of goods from the Far East. For this to happen, the Commission must implement measures to foster this re-balance, for instance **internalising external costs** such as environmental costs, etc).

Furthermore, it should be noted that the design of the core network must provide simple, rational solutions to the problems. Basing this future design on a large number of principles and criteria leads to dispersion and reduces the relative importance of the really important ones. It is therefore necessary to simplify them and **focus** on a small number of key issues. In our view, the Commission's consultation document should include a smaller number of principles and criteria, which are overly technical, reduce the level of detail and focus on a set of clear criteria to beat a path towards the rationalisation of economic and environmental costs.

The design of the core network should therefore be based on the following criteria:

- **Rationalising the distribution of present and future global flows of goods.**
- **Linking the main strategic and economic nodes.** The inclusion of the **Mediterranean** axis within the core network must be a priority because of its essential role in distributing goods in Europe and North Africa.
- **Reducing transport costs and internalising external costs.** The competitiveness of European companies depends to a large extent on logistics costs and the design of the core network must be aimed at ensuring this competitive edge. Furthermore, decarbonisation measures (internalisation of environmental costs, etc) are a key instrument for rationalising goods flows and reducing the effects of climate change.

2. 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?

On page nine of the consultation document it states that "ITS should enhance the efficient use of infrastructure". As we see it, under no circumstances should this concept mean that the use of ITS should contribute to perpetuating the inefficiencies and imbalances of current infrastructures.

Technology should be a tool for improving the working of a rational and well-balanced system.

In parallel, ITS should be used to simplify the bureaucratic aspects that are inherent to freight transport, particularly in modal shifts.

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

The "Europe 2020" strategic objectives include building a "Resource efficient Europe". To help achieve this aim, the TEN-T network must contribute to rationalising the distribution of flows, support the shift towards an environmentally sustainable economy (low emissions, no congestion, etc) and promote the modernisation of the transport sector.

Furthermore, the objective of "An industrial policy for the globalisation era" set out in "Europe 2020" must be founded on a series of globally competitive companies. To this end, transport infrastructures must help to bring down logistics expenses by cutting travelling distances and transport costs.