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**Federal Belgian Ministry of
Transport and Mobility viewpoint
on the consultation regarding future
TEN-T policy**

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Federal Belgian Ministry of Transport and Mobility viewpoint on the consultation regarding future TEN- T policy

1. Introduction

Belgium supports the third option, which makes it possible to maintain the “global network” and the establishment of a “core European network”, which would include the large European hubs (ports, airports, capitals, etc.) and the major routes that connect them. This support is conditioned by the setting up of a transitional phase and the guarantee of continued funding for existing projects.

2. Belgian viewpoint

2.1. General assessment

Belgium is specially attached to the development of new technology (ERTMS, STI, RIS), the optimisation of the main maritime and inland ports, airports, multi-modal platforms and freights corridors. Generally speaking, the principles and criteria mentioned in the document open to consultation, supports these points and thus are adequate and acceptable. However Belgium estimated that these criteria are still to be developed and outlined in detail, mainly in terms of applicability. It is important that the criteria provided take into account the characteristics of each Member State in terms of cohesion, network density, traffic volume, etc.

Given the occasionally antagonistic nature of certain criteria, such as environmental criteria versus cost criteria, or the traffic volume criteria versus the cohesion criteria, Belgium feels that the Commission should be more precise about the way in which the various criteria are to be weighted, by favouring for instance a fair balance between economic, social and

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environmental criteria with recourse to “greener” modes of transport such as navigable waterways or the railway.

Belgium is pleased by the transparency and the consultations already made in the process of TEN-T revision and hopes it will continue for the next stages of the revision.

2.2. Implementation

Belgium invites the Commission to extend the application of the Directive 2001/42/CE on the environmental impact assessment on the whole TEN-T core network.

2.3. Funding

The completion of ongoing projects and the development of future central and global networks entail a need to augment TEN-T funding.

With this in mind, Belgium is in favour of creating an integrated financial framework (comprising the TEN-T funds, the cohesion funds and the structural funds), which will make it possible to coordinate the EU’s transport-related financial instruments for investments in the domains of infrastructure, operations and innovation (Marco Polo, SESAR, technology deployment, etc.) alike. Particular attention will have to be paid when these various instruments will be coordinated with regard to the legal bases and the current objectives that differentiate them.

Within a “green corridor” view of multimodality and intermodality, facilitated funding for projects initiated by several modes of transport, or by several Member States, could be encouraged, particularly in the central network context. Finally, arrangements could be made to encourage public-private partnerships.

Due to the strict environmental regulations related to the green corridor, it might be appropriate, in first instance, to talk about intermodal corridors.

2.4. Legal and institutional framework

Belgium supports the merger of the TEN-T guidelines and financial regulations.

3. Belgian priorities as regards the review of the TEN-T guidelines

3.1. General principles

- sustainable mobility: this sustainable mobility primarily takes into account the negative effects of transport (CO₂, particles, noise, local air pollution, congestion, etc.), the cost of which is particularly high in densely populated areas like Belgium;
- interoperability (ERTMS);
- intelligent transport systems (RIS) and the taking into account of innovative technological developments;
- the development of European logistical platforms, multimodal hubs and intermodality/co-modality in general.

3.2. Belgian priority by mode:

3.2.1. Railway:

As far as railways are concerned, Belgium underlines the importance of the regulatory project for a competitive freight railway network, a tool that will make it possible provide the basics of the railway element for the “core network”.

The planning of the “core network” could be improved by increasing the current role of the European coordinators. In this respect Belgium envisages a conciliatory role for the coordinators of the existing ERTMS corridors.

Belgium recalls that, given its strategic situation and its role as a crossroads, the density of Belgian traffic and the limits of its network must be taken into consideration in managing the network. Consequently, the railways corridors to which it will adhere will be of mixed traffic.

3.2.2. Waterways

Belgium promotes the development of an ETR of effective interior navigable waterways so as to implement a sustainable multimodal transport system.

In this respect, it supports the development of co-modality and intermodality related to the creation of a European network of multimodal logistical hubs.

3.2.3. Maritime transport

Belgium wishes to include maritime ports in the priority network, including the ports' connections inland using sustainable modes of transport.

Given the significant economic role of the maritime sector in Belgium, Belgium is calling for port grouping to be taken into account, such as for maritime ports and intercontinental ports.