



City of
Gothenburg

**RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE TRANS-
EUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORK POLICY**

GOTHENBURG – A VITAL NODE IN THE NORDIC TRIANGLE

Gothenburg – a Vital Node in the Nordic Triangle

The review of the TEN-T programme is of high importance for the City of Gothenburg. The City has closely followed the process during the last years. The described proposals in the consultation working document COM (2010) 212 Final is generally welcomed by the City and regarded as a positive development compared to the present TEN-T programme.

The City welcomes a shift towards a network based approach to transport routes in Europe. This reflects the reality of transport flows in a better way and opens up for a holistic perspective to transport. TEN-T should be focused on creating added value to national transport policy. The proposed core network should be complementary to the comprehensive network and focus on improving cross-border and interregional transport of people and goods. In this respect, cities such as Gothenburg are important.

Although being a medium sized city in terms of population in a European perspective, Gothenburg has today a dominant position in terms of transport of goods in northern Europe. The city is an important transport and logistic hub in the middle of the 600 km long stretch from Oslo-Gothenburg-Öresund, where 8 million people live today. 50% of the industrial capacity in Scandinavia is found within a radius of 300 km from Gothenburg. The importance of an efficient transport network is crucial for the future development. This aspect must not be underestimated in the TEN-T review since efficient and sustainable transport of goods (to and from Gothenburg) is vital not only for Gothenburg and western Sweden, but the whole Nordic and Baltic Sea Region (BSR). It is therefore essential that a gateway such as Gothenburg retains special attention in the planned core network.

The Port of Gothenburg – The Gate to Northern Europe

A large part of the international traffic at the Nordic Triangle merge in the transport system in Gothenburg on their way to/from the port. The importance of the Port of Gothenburg for the Nordic and Baltic Sea Region can therefore not be underestimated. A modern multimodal hub like the Gothenburg area demands good connections to rail and roads that are not congested in order to serve and handle traffic into/from the main transport systems of Sweden and Norway.

In order to fully implement the Nordic Triangle it is necessary to improve the transport flows through Gothenburg. Improvement of intermodal transport must be prioritised, both in order to remove bottleneck effects, but also to ensure a sustainable and robust system. Transport of goods and persons by rail is obviously of great importance and should still be central to TEN-T.

A Fair System for Prioritising TEN-T Projects

The City agrees with the proposal to create a fair and objective system for prioritising TEN-T projects. The prioritisations should be based on the potential of creating synergies with national investments, and improving cross-border or interregional transport. In this respect, investments in the periphery of Europe, such as the Nordic

Region, is probably of greater importance and should be recognised as especially important to Europe.

Financing

In general, the City of Gothenburg welcomes the proposal of creating a better overview and synergies between different funding sources of the European Union. Coordinated and complementary funding instruments are probably the best way to create leverage of EU funding.

The City of Gothenburg believes that the EU contribution to TEN-T projects must be increased, in order to improve the possibilities for realisation of the investments. However, having a significantly smaller budget, than national transport policy and EU structural funds budgets, the TEN-T should be regarded as complementary and should focus on cross-border and interregional transport throughout the entire EU. Compensatory investments in infrastructure should not be included in the TEN-T programme. They should instead be funded by national budgets or the structural funds.

The consultation document mentions the importance of providing guidance to national funding of TEN-T projects. In this respect, congestion charging should be seen as a vital source of co-funding. In order to make the most of TEN-T and create “value for money”, different levels of EU co-funding could be considered. A higher level of EU co-funding could for example be considered for interregional and cross-border transport projects with high potential for increasing efficient and sustainable transport in Europe.

Implementation of TEN-T - Specific challenges for the City of Gothenburg

The Port of Gothenburg is a TEN-T A port and the largest harbour in Scandinavia. It handles more than 40 Mtons of goods representing, among other flows, 25% of Swedish foreign trade, Norwegian import and export volumes and transshipment volumes to the BSR. Equipped with three Super-post panamax cranes and the necessary depth in fairways the Port of Gothenburg is the only Swedish port with the capability to handle direct Calling Ocean going container vessels. In 2009 the Port of Gothenburg handled 819 000 TEU out of which close to 50% were transported to/from the Swedish and Norwegian hinterland by rail. Rail hinterland transit is conducted in the RAILPORT system where the port, in cooperation with shipping lines, rail operators and inland terminals, offers 27 daily rail shuttles to 24 destinations in Sweden and Norway. Rail volumes have tripled since 2001 and in 2009, 51 000 tons of CO₂ was saved by replacing road transport with rail. The RAILPORT concept was mentioned as a successful means of port hinterland transport by the Motorways of the Sea co-ordinator Prof L Valente de Oliveira in his annual review of 2009. When there is a modal shift from road to rail, carbon footprint will be reduced. Efficient rail transports in and around Gothenburg is therefore important for the TEN-T transport network and the Nordic triangle.

To be able to develop the public transport, in a sustainable way, it is necessary to reach an enlargement of the region. In recent years, this development has stopped due to

insufficient development of the transport infrastructure. Traveling with public transport in the Gothenburg region is estimated to double from 20% to 40% within 20 years.

The Gothenburg region, is actively working on reducing travels by car and to increase the share of public transport. For the regional and long-way journeys, an improvement of the rail traffic is the most sustainable solution. A key project in this respect is the Western link – a planned railway tunnel beneath central Gothenburg that enables trains to go directly to other destinations than Gothenburg Central Station. This pass-by opportunity is not available today, leading to congestion of both passenger and goods transports;

Bottlenecks make systems vulnerable and where realistic alternatives do not exist, it is important that plans are made to solve them. The city is split in the middle by a river (Göta älv) with few crossings. Bottlenecks are obvious and need to be removed. Such a bottleneck is apparent in Gothenburg where the railway to the port is depending on a one track bridge (the Marieholm bridge). The railway to the port is one of Sweden's most important railway links and makes it possible for the goods transportation from all of Scandinavia to reach the port area of Gothenburg. The almost 10 km long railway line is today single tracks and the standard is too low to meet the future demands and expansion of rail transportation.

The rail infrastructure connecting the Oslo region with the Gothenburg region is vital for the development of a sustainable rail transportation regarding the large amount of goods to and from the port of Gothenburg, but also passengers. The railway line is today partly single tracks, and needs improvement to double tracks in order to meet future needs. An Interreg cross border project is formed to focus on improved railway transportation in the Oslo-Gothenburg-Öresund region (COINCO). The primary cross border link which needs improvement, called "the missing link", has a potential to increase today's volumes of about 1 million tonnes up to approximately 11 million tonnes in 2020 and today's 0.15 million passengers/year to approximately 1 million passengers/year in 2020. The line starts in Halden, Norway and ends in Trollhättan, Sweden. The project also looks at the possibilities for future plans regarding a high-speed railway system from Oslo-Gothenburg-Öresund region.

The rail infrastructure in the Gothenburg region and the track between Gothenburg and Stockholm has reached its capacity limit, with frequent disturbances and delays as a consequence. Future plans for establishing a high speed railway system (Götalandsbanan) from Stockholm to Gothenburg would relieve the existing railway network and decrease the vulnerability of freight transport.

A link between the E6 and the E45 (the Marieholm tunnel) would also increase the efficiency of the transport system for both goods and personal transport, and reduce vulnerability of the road network in Gothenburg. The Marieholm tunnel will play an important role in long-distance international traffic, which is frequent on the E6 going from south to north through the city.

The elimination of these bottlenecks will help heavy vehicles, and other traffic, bypassing the main centre of Gothenburg. Such investments must be prioritised in the new TEN-T programme since it has positive effects not only for transport in the Gothenburg region, but for the whole Nordic Triangle.