

THE JOINT VISEGRAD GROUP PROPOSALS ON THE TEN-T REVISION

Following the Council conclusions on the Commission Green Paper: "Towards a better integrated trans-European transport network" approved in June 2009, the Visegrad Countries are waiting for the Commission's proposal on the revision of TEN-T guidelines and the methodology aiming at the creation of a coherent transport network within the EU. The Visegrad Countries recommend during the Commission's preparatory works to take into consideration the different transport infrastructure levels within the EU. The Visegrad Countries emphasize the following issues:

- Since one of the main objectives of the EU is to reduce the development gap between regions, one of the main priorities of the EU transport policy has to be fostering the construction of transport infrastructure in the less developed areas. The achievement of the social and economic cohesion and facilitation of a single European Union market cannot be achieved without finishing the development of all the elements of the TEN-T network;
- In this context the Visegrad Countries would like to refer to aforesaid Council conclusions mentioning economic, social and territorial cohesion and access to the TEN-T as one of the important criteria for the planning of the TEN-T. Promotion of economic, social and territorial cohesion is also highlighted in the European Council conclusions on "Europe 2020 – a European Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth." In these conclusions the European Council also acknowledges that infrastructure could be one of the bottlenecks constraining growth at national and at EU level, emphasises the necessity to address these bottlenecks and stresses the importance of developing infrastructure in order to contribute to the success of the new strategy;
- In terms of the internal transport market and of the transport infrastructure the Visegrad Countries are of the view that the new transport policy, including the planning of the new transport network, should be designed in a way that takes into account the bottlenecks resulting from the differences between the levels of development of the infrastructure network of regions;
- The designation of the EU's TEN-T network and the EU's funding of infrastructure development are inseparable. Therefore the Visegrad Countries would like to emphasize again that, regardless of the results of the future revision of the TEN-T policy, EU financing has to remain available for the whole TEN-T network in order to take into account different starting positions and country specificities, aiming to set up an infrastructure development plan for all Member States, which promotes growth for all;
- The creation of networks based purely on economic efficiency would not bring expected results either in the case of the comprehensive TEN-T network, or of the core network. In order to avoid any imbalance in the network-structure the Visegrad countries would like to see the TEN-T network which can be linked with population density (a characteristic which provides normally balanced proportions). Transport oriented planning methods should be combined with geographically oriented planning which should ensure quality road and rail infrastructure connecting each NUTS III region;
- Insufficient accessibility could slow down the economic development of the whole European Union; therefore it has to be ensured that the future TEN-T network should be planned in a way that results in the disappearance of the missing links and provides geographically balanced access to the TEN-T network. For the economy of the areas which barely cooperate in the absence of transport links the emergence of transport infrastructure could bring a major impetus;

- Transport infrastructure in some of the European regions is still insufficiently developed. To improve the competitiveness of the sustainable modes of transport and so to avoid negative impacts of transport on the environment the Commission should during the revision of the TEN-T network also take into consideration the qualitative aspects beside the quantitative statistical data;
- The Visegrad Countries agree that the transport network should be interoperable and integrated. Intermodal terminals are playing a main role in implementing a principle of co-modality and in utilising the potential for traffic consolidation and optimization. The Visegrad Countries will therefore support the idea that specific intermodal terminals – meeting the predefined criteria – should become a part of the TEN-T network;
- In the opinion of the Visegrad Group the improvement of the safety of the transport infrastructure users is an important element of sustainable transport development and in this respect the infrastructure safety has a key role. Therefore the modernization and construction of missing links of basic infrastructure should constitute one of the future TEN-T policy priorities, crucial for improvement of transport safety;
- The Visegrad Countries based on the above mentioned recommendations elaborated a common proposal on the TEN-T revision that takes into consideration the existing transport infrastructure, the mutual bilateral agreements, the approved national development strategies (operational programmes) and the EU transport policy.

In order to draw the attention of the European Commission to the transnational characteristic of the transport projects as well as to highlight that they constitute elements of the coherent and integrated transport system, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia hereby present the joint Visegrad Group proposals on the TEN-T revision. The attached maps reflect the scale of convergence of interests of the V-4 countries with regards to future TEN-T development.

For the Ministry of Transport of
the Czech Republic

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For the Ministry of Transport,
Telecommunication and Energy of
the Republic of Hungary

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For the Ministry of Infrastructure of
the Republic of Poland

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For the Ministry of Transport,
Post and Telecommunication of
the Slovak Republic

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