

POSITION ON THE COMMISSION WORKING DOCUMENT: CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE TRANS-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORK

The Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications (MTITC) expresses its positive view concerning the general idea of the following document: **Commission Working Document: Consultation on the Future Trans-European Transport Network**. The development of the Trans-European Transport Network into two levels – **core network** consisting of axes and nodes of vital importance, covering a relatively close **comprehensive network**, is the most appropriate and applicable approach for planning. The methodology should lay down the practical framework that includes principles and criteria which should guarantee the adequate connection of all regions of the European Union. The transport infrastructure of the new Member States should be better integrated into TEN-T and we highly appreciate the EC intention to strengthen to contribution of TEN-T to the territorial cohesion.

In the same time, in order to achieve the Community's goals related to the decrease of the development differences between the regions, one of the major priorities of the EU transport policy, and TEN-T in particular, should be directed to the stimulation of the transport infrastructure construction in weakly developed regions as well as to the integration of the transport systems of the peripheral states.

Having in mind the abovementioned, the economic, social and territorial cohesion, and the access to TEN-T should be determined as some of the most important criteria related to the network planning. The achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion is underlined in the European Council Conclusions on the Document: „**Europe 2020: A Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth**“. The creation of networks based only on the economic efficiency should not lead to the expected results, either concerning the comprehensive network or the core one. Inadequate accessibility could impede the economic development of the whole EU. For that reason it is very important that future TEN-T should ensure the construction of the missing links and to provide a well-balanced access from a geographical point of view.

Bulgaria supports the idea concerning the establishment of interoperable and integrated transport network. The introducing of high technologies and transport information systems, as well as the co-modality principles, is a prerequisite for the development of modern and competitive European transport system. The efficient connection between TEN-T and the neighboring states and regions, is an essential element for the sustainable economic development and for the prosperity of the EU citizens. The safety of the transport infrastructure users is a compulsory condition in order to have a successful functioning transport system and for that reason we welcome the inclusion of safety and security as main principles in TEN-T planning at all strategic levels.

As far as it concerns the financing of the network, we agree that the elaboration of common European financial framework should have a key role in the TEN-T appliance process. The framework shall coordinate all possible financial sources – European funds, national investments, public-private partnership, etc. The framework should ensure fair, transparent and efficient criteria in order to identify projects depending on their “European added value”. Having in mind the great importance of the financing for the TEN-T sustainable development, we consider that EU financing should be available for the whole network and that's why new opportunities for financing should be considered.

In conclusion, MTITC welcomes the EC efforts related to the implementation of a consistent policy for the development of the EU transport system. We believe that the new network should be oriented to a greater extent to the needs of all Member States, and the **new** Member States in particular, which have many difficulties concerning their inadequate developed infrastructure.