

European Commission Working Document
Consultation on the Future-Trans-European Transport Network Policy
Submission from Transport for London

Introduction

Transport for London (TfL) is the integrated statutory body responsible for London's transport system. It came into existence in July 2000 as a result of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. It is a functional body of the Greater London Authority and reports to the Mayor of London. TfL's role is to implement the Mayor's Transport Strategy and to manage the transport operations for which the Mayor is responsible. The Act merged 14 predecessor entities into a single organisation able to take a holistic view of London's transport needs. London Underground became part of TfL in 2003.

TfL manages London's buses, trams, Underground services, the Docklands Light Railway, London Overground suburban train services, supports commuter river services, licenses London's black cabs and mini cabs, is responsible for London's strategic highways including all of London's traffic signals, and promotes cycling and walking initiatives such as the Barclays Cycle Hire and Cycle Superhighways schemes and Legible London.

TfL welcomes the opportunity to comment on the review of TEN-T policy and proposals to enhance its environmental sustainability. TfL also supports the aim of ensuring TEN-Ts become more responsive to the needs of the Single Market and support the Europe 2020 strategy.

Are the principles and criteria for designing the core network adequate and practicable? What are their strengths and weaknesses, and what else could be taken into account?

TfL considers that the principles and criteria around designing the core network are generally adequate and practicable. However, TfL believes that investment in cross-border and international services provides a significant opportunity to develop trips within member states that make a significant contribution to the EU economy, as well as meeting many of the principles and criteria associated with the core network. This would also help encourage a genuinely integrated transport system. The consultation document talks of a requirement to support "door to door" trips suggesting local transport networks should be within the scope of the core network. TfL supports such a development.

TEN-T policy must be fully integrated with strategies for combating climate change and promoting growth and jobs, taking into account the role of cities given that over 70% of EU citizens live in urban areas where 85% of the EU's GDP is generated¹. Urban areas face particular challenges of CO₂ and other pollutant emissions arising from road transport. With most trips on TEN-Ts

¹ Action Plan on Urban Mobility, COM(2009) 490 final

beginning and ending in these areas, the “final mile” and interconnections between different transport modes must be considered within the overall TEN-T policy framework and integrated from the outset. TEN-T policy must take a holistic approach to infrastructure planning.

London is a good example of a city which forms a key node in the TEN-T network with extensive links to other member states and the EU’s international trading partners. London makes an important contribution to the EU economy and the Single Market accounting for between three and four per cent of EU GDP and one and a half per cent of its population². As such, it is important London’s local transport system functions efficiently to prevent it from becoming an EU bottleneck that acts as a constraint on the Union’s broader economic performance.

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?

Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) have an important supplementary role in infrastructure as TEN-T policy looks to the future. As standards are identified and progress is made towards interoperability in ITS systems, a sensible policy on the treatment of pre-existing ITS implementations will be essential to avoid wasteful expenditure. Equally cities should be fully involved in the development of new standards to ensure the ‘final mile’ is fully integrated. TfL therefore welcomes the Commission’s intention to establish an Urban ITS Platform as part of the ITS and urban mobility action plans.

What specific role could TEN-T planning in general play in boosting the transport sector’s contribution to the “Europe 2020” strategic objectives?

TfL believes substantial reductions in transport-related CO₂ emissions can be achieved through the mass market introduction of existing low-carbon technologies, particularly for road and rail. Technological hurdles to the decarbonisation of aviation and waterborne transport remain more challenging but the issue remains of relevance to cities where airports or waterways are close by. The question of the overall carbon footprint of airports must also be addressed.

To achieve substantial CO₂ reductions, incentives must be in place to encourage the take-up of low-carbon vehicles, with discouragement for higher CO₂-emitting vehicles. For rail in particular priority should be given to the electrification of all core and comprehensive networks including feeder routes into cities. London is a good example of a city with an extensive rail network that is largely electrified providing low carbon mass transit in an efficient manner. However, the network is

² Eurostat 2007

under considerable strain at peak times and there is a clear need for further investment in capacity to ensure the existing network continues to function effectively. Both TfL and the UK's national government have recognised this requirement in recent investment plans but in times of fiscal restraint TfL needs to seek other partners to ensure investment proceeds. TfL would therefore welcome the opportunity to work with the EU and the UK government to leverage EU funds and European Investment Bank (EIB) facilities to help deliver transport improvements in the London area.

Whilst TfL recognises the current TEN-T consultation is about policy rather than specific projects, a practical example of where TEN-T policy would make a positive contribution to Europe 2020 goals is electrification of the Gospel Oak – Barking railway line in north London. Electrification would meet a key Europe 2020 goal of decarbonising the transport network, alleviate a bottleneck in a main node that would otherwise exist for electrically hauled freight trains (enabling better network performance), as well as contributing to the ongoing reduction of investment and operational costs as electric trains are cheaper to purchase and operate than their diesel counterparts. Rail routes like Gospel Oak – Barking are significant in a European context because of the international freight flows that can and do use the route to travel from the port of Tilbury (and Shellhaven when constructed) to the West Midlands, North West and Scotland using the West Coast Main Line which forms part of the TEN-T.

TEN-T policy should fully recognise the significance of international maritime routes to member states and their integration with overland links with other countries bordering the EU. These maritime links carry goods that are critical to the functioning of the EU economy. In a similar way other projects which deliver enhanced capacity such as rail freight, an example being the Felixstowe – Nuneaton Upgrade, will also help to relieve capacity constraints on intensively used rail routes in urban areas, as well as ensuring the efficient transit of international freight.

In which way can the different sources of EU expenditure be better coordinated and/or combined in order to accelerate the delivery of TEN-T projects and policy objectives?

TfL supports greater coordination of policy at a European level in particular as concerns transport, environment, energy and climate change policies. Greater integration between EU, national and local policy aims should also be encouraged. TfL accepts where projects make use of funding from the EU and the EIB then the projects concerned must be compliant with EU policy objectives.

How can an EU funding strategy coordinate and/or combine the different sources of EU and national funding and public and private financing

CIVITAS has been an important contributor to the development of best practice in integrated, sustainable urban transport strategies which feed into the TEN-Ts, both directly and indirectly. TfL would support the removal of the restriction on large cities participating in CIVITAS so that successor funding programmes are open to all cities.

TfL remains a committed partner in EU research projects furthering the development of innovative solutions to urban mobility. As already mentioned in this submission, urban mobility is inextricably linked to the TEN-Ts. As policy on the latter is refined, the next Framework Programme for Research provides an opportunity to re-orientate research policy to one where projects have a much higher visibility amongst citizens. There needs to be greater emphasis on large scale demonstration projects in order to give innovative projects priority, particularly those decarbonising transport.

Would the setting up of a European funding framework adequately address the implementation gap in the completion of TEN-T projects and policy objectives

TfL supports a European funding stream to assist the implementation of TEN-Ts. Although TfL recognises there is significant pressure on EU resources, better progress to Europe 2020 goals could be achieved through: a reallocation of existing sources including an urban element to TEN-T; a greater focus on demonstration projects in Framework Programmes; acknowledgement in other funding streams of the contribution of innovative urban mobility policies to economic development and climate change/energy/environment objectives; greater scope for the EIB to lend to the fullest range of projects and the establishment of a dedicated urban mobility funding line.

TfL believes the establishment of a dedicated urban mobility fund would bridge important gaps in existing EU funding streams available to urban mobility projects. Whilst it is important urban mobility projects can continue to draw on a range of EU funding programmes, a dedicated fund would meet key Europe 2020 goals of sustainable and inclusive growth and provide the missing link in projects such as:

- Rail lines and additional stations to link disadvantaged areas with the existing network to improve social cohesion
- Specific links such as river crossings to provide better connectivity and eliminate bottlenecks
- Improvements to stations and the surrounding streetscape to allow disadvantaged areas to benefit fully from new links and improve territorial cohesion – with pressure on traditional sources of funding, monies

- originally earmarked for urban realm improvements are vulnerable to cutbacks
- Sustainable mobility like walking and cycling which tend to be forgotten in traditional, large project funding (as noted earlier in this submission CIVITAS is currently not available for all cities)

In which way can the TEN-T policy benefit from the new legal instruments and provisions as set out above?

TfL welcomes the support given to cities by the EIB for transport investment. Further development of EIB funding for rolling stock leasing and equity / mezzanine financing, not just senior debt, would be important additions to the EIB's portfolio. Similarly cities like London would benefit from a willingness by the EIB to fund smaller projects, rather than those costing hundreds of millions as at present.

Conclusion

In reviewing TEN-T policy and aligning it with Europe 2020, priority must be given to tackling climate change and promoting growth and jobs. Many of the challenges facing Europe cannot be addressed without action by city and regional authorities. TEN-T policy must reflect their importance by fully integrating the urban elements of citizens' trips. Cities must be fully involved in this process. The emerging TEN-T framework must facilitate the development of new approaches and solutions and be flexible enough to cope with the great diversity of the EU's transport system.



Peter Hendy
Commissioner, Transport for London

6 September 2010

