



LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS SUSISIEKIMO MINISTERIJA
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

European Commission

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**RE: COMMENTS AND SUGESTIONS ON THE COMMISSION WORKING DOCUMENT
ON THE TEN-T POLICY REVISION**

Referring to the Commission's working document Consultation on the future Trans-European Transport Network policy, the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania is submitting the comments and suggestions on the ideas and questions concerning the future TEN-T policy guidelines.

Viceminister

Arūnas Štaras

Lithuanian contribution to the TEN-T consultation paper

Lithuania supports the development of TEN-T on two levels – comprehensive and core – therefore it is gratifying to know that the 3rd alternative of TEN-T development proposed in the Green Paper has received a clear support and approval. At present, Lithuania is actively preparing for the 2-level TEN-T network formation and the creation of the core network on the basis of the main transport nodes (potential nodes and new comprehensive network sections are being identified).

Lithuania is of the position that generally **the objectives of present TEN-T policy remain relevant and provide the basis for the solution of present and future problems**. Therefore, in the short-term perspective it is most important to concentrate on the identification of reasons hampering and interfering with the implementation of certain TEN-T transport policy objectives.

Methodology and planning:

We support the TEN-T core network planning methodology principles, according to which there should be defined the main transport nodes and their connecting transport links. However, while identifying these network components it is particularly important to regard the following:

- The continuity of present TEN-T policy. Transport infrastructure development on the EU level is a long-term process; therefore we consider that the sustainable development of EU transport policy can be reached only by ensuring the continuity of the most important TEN-T policy objectives together with the continuity of relevant projects. Provisions establishing that the core TEN-T network should be established on the basis of the existing priority projects are of particular importance to Lithuania.
- Present differences in transport infrastructure development, as well as other disparities between EU member states, which hamper territorial and social cohesion of the Union. The main aim of the core network is to improve mobility on the European level (European level effect), it means that this network will create connections within the whole Europe and will serve as the main link between different regions as well as remote provinces and the centre. In other words, to ensure the cohesion (territorial, social and economic) is the direct aim of the core network, which is now in the process of establishment.
- We should particularly emphasize that the obligation for the EU to seek for a greater economic, social and territorial cohesion through the TEN-T policy measures is fixed in the Lisbon Treaty (Article 170 of summary wording of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Unions). However, among nine TEN-T planning principles in all strategic levels outlined in the presented communiqué, the cohesion principle and obligation for better integration of peripheral and central regions is not distinguished.
- High need for flexibility in selecting main and intermediate nodes of the core network. It is especially important to take into account the multi-criteria analysis, and not to confine only to the criteria which could put into the advantage only the bigger nodes. Smaller nodes can also be important for the functioning of the whole network. Furthermore, it is important to regard not only the existing situation, but also the potential of nodes' development: i. e. the possibility to connect easily transport modes, extend to adjacent territories and to relevant non-infrastructure measures aimed at attraction of cargo flows, and other similar criteria.
- Sufficient connections with neighbouring EU countries. We consider that the development of TEN-T can not cease at the EU borders – the development of good mobility conditions for international freight and passenger flows requires interoperability of TEN-T network with transport networks of neighbouring countries. Therefore we support the consistency

and continuity of TEN-T policy regarding the extension of TEN-T to neighbouring countries. This policy encompasses the infrastructural, as well as non-infrastructural measures.

The importance of innovative infrastructure measures:

We support the provisions stipulating that the TEN-T policy should closely follow the technological innovations helping to reach the sustainable development and growth objectives outlined in the “Europe 2020” strategy.

ITS and other innovative infrastructure measures increase considerably the efficiency of transport activities. Therefore we consider that the future TEN-T policy should foresee methods and instruments to support the development of these measures. However, it should be noted that the development of ITS depends heavily on the level of development of relevant basic infrastructure (right now Lithuania has started the implementation of such an infrastructure development project in road transport) and technological innovations. Being aware of significant differences between different Member States in this field (such as underdeveloped infrastructure, different experience, non-interoperable ITS, etc.), we will support EU actions aiming at the solution of these problems, particularly in terms of EU financial aid for the development of innovative infrastructure measures and respective technologies, and consolidation of general EU norms of ITS implementation (specifications and standards).

We also support the objective to involve into the TEN-T policy the use of alternative fuels, particularly the development of subsidiary infrastructure related to this field (vehicles’ booting, gas filling, etc.).

Implementation and financing:

We admit the importance of streamlining of existing resources with the aim for more efficient implementation of TEN-T projects. However we wish to emphasize that EU financial support is the most important condition for a successful development of TEN-T.

- We welcome the EC initiative to involve private capital into the development of TEN-T projects, believing that such means enable a more rapid generation of finances necessary for investment. However it should be noted that innovative schemes of financing (such as public and private partnership, as well as other schemes intended for attraction of private capital) have a limited application area. Namely, they are successful only for concrete projects able to generate considerable financial return already in the nearest future. Although the importance of these means for the implementation of several single projects is undoubted, however they will hardly have more influence on the general scheme of development and financing of the whole TEN-T network.
- Alternative financing schemes, such as the application of ‘user pays’ and ‘polluter pays’ principles is also limited. These principles will make only an insignificant contribution to the infrastructure development in countries having vast territories and dispersed natural and demographic resources (such as Sweden, Finland), as well as in countries with low range of population (the Baltic States). In these cases it is difficult to generate considerable resources necessary to finance the infrastructure.
- Therefore we consider that new TEN-T financing rules should be flexible in order to attract private capital, apply innovative financing schemes and also reduce the EU financing scope

in cases when it is useful. However at the same time they should provide considerable EU financial support for projects the financing of which has no other serious alternatives. We consider that such a flexible financing policy of TEN-T development should be the best warrant for the interests of business, society and EU citizens.

- We consider that the European value of projects should be defined in relation with the TEN-T network and their importance regarding the objectives of the EU territorial and social cohesion. In more concrete terms, each project should aim not only for the individual benefit (revenues) within the framework of the project, but also for the warranting the coherence and efficiency of the TEN-T network, in terms of both core and comprehensive levels.