

Since the SoNorA project gathers 25 stakeholders from 6 countries all over the Central Europe its consortium has a broad overview and experiences with transport policy and its implementation at national level. This is why the SoNorA project seeks to contribute to the debate on the Commission´s Communication "A sustainable future for transport: Towards an integrated, technology-led and user".

On behalf of all project partners, the SoNorA project:

### **Trends and Objectives of Transport Policy**

1. Agrees that the transport is an essential element of the European economic, social and spatial cohesion as well as of the mobility of EU citizens with a crucial impact on all involved parties of global product chain; European policy is strongly needed which clearly sets tangible goals as a framework for its further development.
2. Appreciates the progress that has been made at the level of TEN-T Policy (as a basic presumption for infrastructure development) nevertheless its modification is highly necessary – (see SoNorA Position Paper on Green Paper "TEN-T Policy Review for more information).
3. Understands that the transport sector currently depends mainly on fossil fuels and other non-renewable resources; effective tools to reduce these impacts on the environment are definitely if we are to create a sustainable transport system.
4. Draws attention to the issues of future migration and of the future ageing of society, which could result into significant changes to the movement of goods and people.
5. Stresses the importance of EU territorial cooperation and integration with neighbouring regions because of liberalisation of markets and the globalisation of world market in general.
6. Supports the initiatives of Pan-European Transport Corridors along with the initiative of International Rail Corridors for Competitive Freight.

### **Future objectives**

7. Highlights the fact that permanent improvements in the quality of transport system are needed; which will require both quality infrastructure as well as a fertile context for the smooth functioning of transport services globally (i.g. improvement of logistics services, increase of involvement of maritime and inland waterway sector in the global economy chain, implementation of innovative technologies such as intelligent transport systems, ERTMS etc.).

8. Underlines the importance of the perception of infrastructure as a set of several components (network, vehicles, equipment) creating the system, hence requiring effective and optimal combined functioning of all these elements.
9. Stresses the fact that one of the mechanisms on how to create a well balanced transport system with regards to the environment is based upon creating a level playing field between modes, where equivalently calculated prices reflect all the relevant costs for a mode; if these prices are equivalently calculated more environmentally objective choices can be expected by the customer.
10. Recognises the importance of ensuring that network effects are assessed and valorised, so as to develop a truly EU network.
11. Emphasises the importance of land-use planning issues; authorities responsible for transport planning must take into account future visions and trends (including globalisation and migration), so as to guarantee a rational and well-balanced transport network (including connection to the sea).
12. Underlines the importance of seamless accessibility to transport for all (respecting the estimated travel needs of the population).

### **Policy instruments**

13. Recognises several elements with a crucial impact on the smooth functioning of the transport system in general; these elements must be specifically addressed in future EU transport policy:
  - a. Interoperability of the network – to be guaranteed by the application of standards (TSI implementation).
  - b. Interconnections of nodes for sustainable energy efficient transport solutions for all modes (rail, maritime, inland waterways, road, and airports) for passenger and freight transport (including logistics).
  - c. Avoiding congestion and removing key bottlenecks of transnational relevance, which create direct damages to the European economy.
  - d. Maritime sector to be more involved in the overall EU transport balance – so as to guarantee quality intermodal connections between ports and hinterland areas, raising global competitiveness of EU. This hinterland connectivity, while generally important, is even more critical in Central Europe, connecting in a balanced way the Adriatic and Baltic seas.
  - e. The relevance of the Co-Modality promotion centres, as defined by the report of Mr. Luis Valente De Oliveira, to support the marketing of the co-modal logistics chain.

14. Underlines the importance of the future development of the TEN-T network for European prosperity; the important revision of TEN-T policy currently being conducted should ensure the following aspects in order to best facilitate the network development in the future:
  - a. Selection criteria for the TEN-T network should be revised so as to attribute greater importance to cohesion and accessibility benefits, cross border effects, sustainability, multi-modality, assessment of external costs and benefits and environmental risk analyses of investments,<sup>1</sup>
  - b. The institutional framework which selects and implements the TEN-T network components should be strengthened so as to ensure:
    - the relevance of the role of the EU Commission in achieving the objectives set by the EC Treaty in Article 154,
    - crucial role of Member States in the decisions on the TEN-T network components,
    - increased role of regions in the deployment of infrastructure of national and transnational relevance,
    - development of strong cooperation mechanisms which encourage Member States to prioritise cross-border projects in order to minimise the risk of un-harmonised implementation of cross/border projects (such as when national infrastructure plans do not reflect international agreements on infrastructure investment programmes).
  - c. The improvement of South-North connections as a consequence of EU extensions in last decade
  - d. Supports the development of the South East Europe Core Regional Network as a precursor of the TEN-T and the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans, in particular to ensure that the TEN-T network also responds to the market and passenger flows outside the EU.
15. With regards to financing issue, requests that the Commission develops and facilitates the use of new, enlarged financial schemes (including further opportunities and incentives to combine EU funding programmes) so as to provide greater funding possibilities for the realization of investments, which are expected to subsequently stimulate the employment of additional private funds in the transport sector.

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<sup>1</sup> More detailed information on [www.sonoraproject.eu](http://www.sonoraproject.eu)

### **SoNorA Project**

SoNorA is a transnational cooperation project, financed within the Accessibility Priority of the CENTRAL EUROPE programme, which aims to help regions across Central Europe in developing accessibility in South North direction, between the Adriatic and Baltic seas, in terms of:

- Making the Sonora network real, through the support for the completion of transport infrastructure;
- Activating and improving multimodal freight logistics services;
- Developing a transnational action plans for future realisations;
- Supporting new regional development opportunities due to transport network improvements.

SoNorA involves 25 partners from 6 EU countries and 35 associated institutes from 9 EU countries. For more information, please contact [logistica@regione.veneto.it](mailto:logistica@regione.veneto.it), [sonora@netspa.it](mailto:sonora@netspa.it), or [www.sonoraproject.eu](http://www.sonoraproject.eu).