EC consultation on the future trans-European transport network

INE contribution
15 September 2010

Q1-2-3 General principles, criteria, supplementary infrastructure measures and contribution to the "Europe 2020" strategic objectives

TEN-T policy does not just play a role, it is **one of the key instruments to reach the "Europe 2020" strategic objectives and beyond**: competitiveness, energy independence, resource efficiency and quality of life.

The main planning principles and criteria are mentioned but they **must be directly connected to the "Europe 2020" strategic objectives**, which has to be translated at the level of co-financing. That will determine their strength and effectiveness.

In logistics, frontrunners are experimenting with freight consolidation and collaborative solutions to save carbon and costs. Transport is shaped by infrastructure. The lifespan of any infrastructural development is usually much more than 10 years. Given the dramatic impact infrastructure development has on land use, currrent TEN-T planning must lay the foundations for Europe 2020 compatible transport solutions to become mainstream:

1. Seamless, demand-driven and cost-effective transport between gateways and economic centres (objective: competitiveness)
2. Energy-efficient and low-carbon transport (objective: low carbon energy security)
3. Optimising and interconnecting existing infrastructure to avoid sprawl and inefficient land take (objective: resource efficiency)
4. Clean, safe, accessible and free-flowing transport (objective: quality of life).

To illustrate with an example, the Maasvlakte II development of the port of Rotterdam aimed at objective 1, but will only materialize because objectives 2, 3 and 4 were also maximized. Infrastructure and non-infrastructure measures will lead to improvements within the modes and better interconnection among them. The final goal will be an example of multi-modal, sustainable and efficient infrastructure with the waterway transport share of container transport to 45% by 2035.

Integrating waterways more effectively into the transport network presents important advantages which fully correspond with the "Europe 2020" strategic objectives:

1. Waterways connect major ports and freight generation regions. The example of the Rhine river where more than 70% of all waterway traffic takes place shows how quality links and nodes make inland waterway transport cost-efficient and easy to use (objective: competitiveness).
2. Waterways transport is currently the transport mode with the most efficient energy use and lowest carbon emissions. Between 1990 and today, the sector has saved some 15% in fuel consumption. The current situation in the Netherlands, where waterway transport holds a modal share of 31% but only creates 5% of the greenhouse gas emissions (and this without any important clean technology improvement), clearly demonstrates that modal shift policy makes sense. Through energy efficiency improvement, a 30% further reduction in the short term is possible, if waterways are well maintained and better integrated into the logistics chains. Additionally, the first hybrid and non-conventional fuel vessels are now

INE | Inland Navigation Europe
Koning Albert II-laan 20 | office 6G65 | B-1000 Brussels
info@inlandnavigation.org | www.inlandnavigation.org

entering the market and they promise enormous reductions in carbon (objective: low-carbon energy security).

3. The inland waterway network is the only congestion-free land infrastructure with free capacity. It allows strong traffic growth at relatively low investment costs without further land take and sprawl. It is the ideal mode for freight consolidation which cuts carbon and costs. Waterway transport infrastructure investments also enable positive and effective synergies with other EU policies such as renewable energy generation, water management, protection of nature, regional development and climate change resilience measures (objective: resource efficiency).
4. Finally, inland waterway transport is the safest transport mode. The introduction of ultra-low sulphur fuel and ongoing investments in new engines, after treatment devices and non-conventional fuel concepts are reducing pollutant emissions by 90% and more (objective: quality of life).

If, despite only receiving 1.5% of TEN-T investment between 1995 and 2005, inland waterway transport has grown by 14.5%, further investment clearly offers good value for public money in times of cash strapped budgets.

Integrating waterways more effectively into the transport network is relatively easy. The main EU waterways form an existing natural core network linking seaports to the main centres of production and consumption. The ARA ports, Hamburg, Szczecin, Marseille, Venice and Constantza all have waterways linking to hinterland centres such as the Ruhr, Strasbourg, Basel, Paris, Berlin, Wroclaw, Lyon, Vienna, Budapest. The Rhine corridor is well used thanks to quality maintenance combined with sound and sustainable economic development. This example should be drawn on elsewhere in order to maintain market share and to generate new traffic on European waterways:

- implementation of the Rhine/Meuse-Main-Danube projects (PP18)
- improvement of the navigability on the Elbe, Odra, Northern German canal system, Sava and Po corridor
- implementation of the Seine-Scheldt project (PP30)
- start of the Saône-Moselle/Saône-Rhin project to optimally connect the Meditteranean region to the Moselle-Rhin-Ruhr area.

In this context, the TEN-T core network should pay particular attention to removing the main waterway bottlenecks and to fully integrating the main inland waterways in the core transport network via ports, transshipment nodes and ITS. In order to achieve coherence and European network effects, the following elements are essential:

- Bottleneck-free and quality infrastructure for all main waterways (class IV and higher) as well as those waterways located on the main nodes or that connect the main nodes of the core network and have a significant potential for modal shift. This will reduce negative external costs;
- Multi-modal and accessible sea and inland ports that provide quality and cost-effective access to waterway transport and hinterland connections as well as quality and cost-effective transshipment capacity.

The simple principle is co-modality: make improvements within the mode and enhance the connection to other modes. Improving the quality of the inland waterway network ensures the interconnection of major nodes with existing multi-modal and low-impact links which provide maximum benefits at low costs.

We emphasize the importance of a multi-modal network approach for the core

network. It will only work if the main planning principles and criteria don't have a purely modal stamp, but follow this co-modality principle. The multi-modality approach must be effectively applied to:

- Design
- Funding
- Assessments
- Project coordination.

Earmarking 65% of the funds and more for a single mode should be ended, as it completely contradicts the principle of co-modality. Additionally, design and assessment of projects must become truly multi-modal and a certified calculation of negative externalities must be a condition in order to avoid comparing apples and pears as is the case with the current wild growth of calculating methods. The current methodology of primarily designing and assessing projects within a modal framework by modal administrations has been a barrier to integration of transport modes and inland waterways in particular. It has led to parallel infrastructure development and a waste of scarce resources. The European Commission and the European coordinators should assist modal administrations with developing integrated, efficient, multi-modal green corridors, following the principle of co-modality rather than focusing on modes in isolation.

ITS can definitely enhance the efficient use of infrastructure and is the key to genuine network integration as long as it covers applications interconnecting the modes. Traffic and transport information systems contribute to more safety, and enable bundling of flows which are translated into energy savings and efficiency gains for business (internal costs) and society (external costs).
In order to achieve better network effects and support a better use of inland waterway transport, the following elements for River Information Services (RIS) are essential:

- Further development and full deployment of the RIS traffic management system
- Development of interfaces of RIS systems to transport and logistics management system (procedures, systems and software for the integration of inland waterway transport and inland ports in an e-freight concept)
- Development of procedures, systems and software for integration into an open co-modal traffic and transport information exchange platform on the basis of agreed data protection and data security measures.

To strengthen the contribution of low-carbon innovation, TEN-T policy should establish more result-oriented synergies with the EU energy strategy, especially from the infrastructure point of view with low carbon and renewable energy grid development to support clean and efficient fuelling of vehicles. Where renewable electricity provision is important for small vessels and cold ironing in ports, LNG, biofuels and hydrogen distribution will become increasingly important for medium and large inland vessels.

Q4-5-6 Sources, coordination and funding framework

The current situation is characterized by fragmentation, lack of cross-fertilisation and failure of delivery on objectives.

There should be one **coherent methodology and set of criteria, in line with the Europe 2020 objectives, for transport infrastructure across all EU funding and financing mechanisms.** This will ensure better coordination and delivery on objectives.
Secondly, **through combining the different EU sources as well as new resources** realized from, for example, the internalization of externalities, the overall budget and the **co-financing rate** can **be increased** for a combination of projects with real value for

the core network and the EU 2020 objectives. This could make it more appealing to submit projects with real EU added value.
Coordination should also then take place at the level of project submission with **one EU front office** in order to make participation more user-friendly and to allow an optimized combination of funding and financing instruments.

A European transport funding framework can only work if based on fair, transparent and efficient criteria to identify projects and combinations of projects which comply with the EU 2020 objectives and are multi-modal.

A single European transport funding framework should however not lead in any way to a new silo policy. Whereas most infrastructure projects only serve transport, inland waterway projects serve a wider range of users (water supply and water management, food and drought management, regional development, leisure and tourism, nature protection, innovative renewable energy production). **Cross-fertilisation and synergies with other EU policies should be encouraged to enhance these types of multi-disciplinary projects which go beyond transport and deliver an increased contribution to EU 2020 objectives. Moreover, the "user pays" principle should make combined funding and financing a logic choice.** Finally, environmental assessments should be streamlined into a transparent modular system (water framework directive, birds and habitat directive, EIA, SEA) to speed up procedures and cut administrative costs without compromising on quality.

Q7 New legal instruments and provisions

One single legal act presents the advantage of providing much needed clarity and coherence in TEN-T regulation. It also establishes a strong link between the policy criteria and financing. By fixing financial priorities in terms of objectives, the EU would put its money where its mouth is**. By only providing co-financing for projects which comply with the EU 20-20-20 targets and higher co-financing for those projects which deliver better results on sustainability, innovation and efficiency, the EU makes sure the EU 2020 objectives are achieved and provides an incentive to submit projects which will create real multi-modal green corridors.**

Finally, a clear reference to transport policy would hopefully contribute to more policy coherence in general. We can create beautiful infrastructure, but projects will become completely idle when counterproductive public and private policies (permits, tariffs, abuse of dominant positions, absence of a level playing field, etc.) remain in place.

Inland Navigation Europe (INE) is the European platform of national & regional waterway managers and promotion bureaux, established in 2000 with the support of the European Commission. INE sees major opportunities to contribute to long-term strategies for sustainable transportation by moving more goods by water in EU regions with accessible and navigable rivers and canals. INE is a neutral platform without commercial interests.