

Statement of the Committee on Transport and Communications
2008/09:TU10

Review of the policy for a trans-European transport network (TEN-T)

Summary

In this statement the Committee addresses the Commission's Green Paper *TEN-T: A policy review*, COM(2009) 44.

In this statement the Committee emphasises that the European transport system is an important prerequisite for a functioning European market and for sustainable growth. The Committee furthermore asserts that the development of the transport infrastructure within the Community should be focussed on creating communications on the basis of the needs of travellers, companies and society which are also compatible with the EU's climate and energy package.

In the view of the Committee, TEN-T should constitute an inter-modal transport network which helps to facilitate more efficient interplay between transport modes. In the Committee's opinion, it is important that the European transport networks are developed into transport corridors capable of efficiently linking countries within the EU and neighbouring areas closer together.

The Committee further emphasises that the transport system must be more environmentally friendly and that funding must be invested in climate-smart solutions, such as support for developing more efficient freight transport which is sustainable in the long-term or for increasing the proportion of freight transported by rail and sea. The Committee considers that investments are also necessary to climate-proof the infrastructure in the face of impending climate change. In terms of new infrastructure projects, the Committee wishes to emphasise the importance of taking into account the problems which are expected to arise as a consequence of feared climate change as early as the planning phase. Of the possible solutions for the continued development of TEN-T identified by the Commission, the Committee backs the option in which the structure consists of a comprehensive network along with a core network and a geographically defined priority network. In the view of the Committee, such a linked network would help to create a cohesive transport system in which important ports, roads, railways, seaways and airports can be linked together into a cohesive, efficient and sustainable international transport network.

In its statement the Committee also reaffirms the importance in the future of incorporating into the prioritised initiatives within TEN-T both the Nordic Triangle, which links Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oslo and Helsinki by railway and road, and Motorways of the Sea, which seek to improve the efficiency of transport systems around the EU by developing port infrastructure and infrastructure in connection with ports from the land and the sea side. The Committee further asserts the need to prioritise the northern axis of the transport corridor linking the northern parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia, and the Bothnian corridor, i.e. the north-south transport corridor linking the Barents area in northern Sweden and Finland with the southern parts of these countries and on into Europe.

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The Committee's proposal for a decision by the Riksdag

The European Commission's Green Paper

TEN-T: A policy review

The Riksdag adds statement 2008/09:TU10 to the documents.

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On behalf of the Committee on Transport and Communications

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Outline of the issue

The issue and its preparation

On 10 February 2009 the chamber referred the European Commission's Green Paper *TEN-T: A policy review* (COM (2009) 44) to the Committee on Transport and Communications.

In the Green Paper, which was adopted on 4 February 2009, the Commission urges the parties concerned to submit opinions on the questions brought up in the document by 30 April 2009. The Commission intends to use the responses received in its work in drawing up proposals for the future TEN-T policy.

Previously during the Riksdag session the Committee has addressed certain transport policy questions with a bearing on the work of the EU in the report *Framtidens resor och transporter – infrastruktur för hållbar tillväxt* (Journeys and transport of the future – infrastructure for sustainable growth) (bet. 2008/09:TU2).

In spring 2008 the Committee also examined questions concerning the future policy of the EU regarding transport in the statement *Budgetreform för ett Europa i förändring* (Budget reform for a changing Europe) (yttr. 2007/08:TU1y).

In preparing this matter, the Committee held an information meeting on 19 March 2009 with a civil servant from the Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications (infrastructure unit) on the review of TEN-T.

In this connection it can be stated that a preparatory examination of the statement has taken place in the Committee on Transport and Communications' working group on EU issues.

Background

Legal basis

The legal basis for the trans-European networks (TEN) is Chapter XV of the EC Treaty. The networks cover three areas of activity, including the trans-European transport network (TEN-T). According to the Treaty, action by the Community shall aim at promoting the interconnection and interoperability of national networks as well as access to such networks within the framework of a system of open and competitive markets. In order to achieve these objectives, the Community is to establish guidelines and priorities for projects of common interest and draw up general rules for granting financial support from the Community.

Guidelines and other measures are adopted by the Council in accordance with the codecision procedure. In July 1996 the European Parliament and the Council adopted Decision No 1692/96/EC on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T). The guidelines have subsequently been reviewed on a few occasions, most recently in May 2004. The guidelines set out that the objectives of the trans-European transport network are to:

- ensure the sustainable mobility of persons and goods, while helping to achieve the Community's objectives, particularly in regard to the environment and competition
- offer users high-quality infrastructure on acceptable economic terms
- include all modes of transport, taking account of their comparative advantages
- allow the optimum use of existing capacities

- be, insofar as possible, interoperable within modes of transport and encourage intermodality between the different modes of transport
- be economically viable
- cover the whole territory of the EU
- be capable of connecting to the networks of the EFTA States, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean countries.

The guidelines make it clear that the trans-European network includes roads, railways, inland waterways, motorways of the sea, ports, airports and other connecting points between different transport networks. It also encompasses traffic management, positioning and navigation systems with the necessary technical installations and information and telecommunications systems to ensure harmonious operation of the network and efficient traffic management.

The guidelines state that the priorities of Community measures shall be the establishment of the connections needed to facilitate transport, optimising the efficiency of the existing infrastructure, coordinating the various parts of the network and integrating the environmental dimension in the transport network.

The original guidelines from 1996 identified 14 priority projects of common interest. In the most recent review of 2004 (Decision No 884/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1692/96/EC) the list of priority projects was extended, partly as a result of the expansion of the EU by 10 (and now 12) new Member States. Today, the European transport network covers 30 priority projects which must be completed by 2020 – see map below. The vast majority of these projects are still relevant. They include two which directly affect Sweden: the Nordic Triangle, which links Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oslo and Helsinki by rail and road, and Motorways of the Sea which seeks to make transport systems within Europe more efficient by developing port infrastructure, infrastructure connected to ports from the land and sea side, improvements in logistics and inter-modal solutions, icebreaking and traffic information systems, etc. The now completed Öresund bridge link is also included among the priority projects and received EUR 193 million in funding in 1995–2000. In this context it can be mentioned that Sweden will also be affected by the Fehmarn Bält bridge, which is one of the largest projects in the entire TEN network.

The 30 priority projects in TEN-T

In 2005 the Commission appointed European coordinators for nine of the priority projects, including Motorways of the Sea, with the aim of making it easier for Member States to implant them in a coordinated manner.

Sources of funding

Approximately EUR 400 billion has been invested in TEN-T so far. The funding comes from a number of sources. Besides national financing, a certain amount is co-financed by investments through various Community instruments such as the TEN-T budget, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund and loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB). These sources of funding all have their own specific eligibility criteria, objectives and financing conditions. Funding can be applied for from the TEN-T budget for studies and development projects. Studies can thereby be granted funding of up to 50% of the total costs, while cross-border development projects are eligible for a maximum of 30% and development projects within Member States a maximum of 20%. A limited number of projects, mainly in the airport, port and road sectors receive financing from the private sector. The Commission's most recent report on the implementation of the trans-

European transport network guidelines refers to the two-year period 2004–2005 (COM(2009) 5). This shows that national public funding accounted for by far the largest proportion of TEN-T investments; for the period studied, this proportion amounted to almost 78%, corresponding to approximately EUR 40 billion per year. This was followed by loans from the EIB at approximately 13.5%, the ERDF with approximately 3.8%, the Cohesion Fund with approximately 3% and the TEN-T budget with approximately 1.1 %.

In order to further facilitate and improve the efficiency of the implementation of TEN-T, the Commission decided in October 2006 to establish a Trans-European Transport Network Executive Agency (Commission Decision No 2007/60/EC). The tasks of this body include managing the Community funds earmarked for the trans-European transport network and taking responsibility for coordination between the other Community instruments.

The main content of the Green Paper

Introduction

The Commission states in the introduction that the EUR 400 billion invested so far in the trans-European transport network has helped to complete a large number of projects of common interest. National road and rail networks have become interconnected at many points and railways across borders are beginning to become interoperable. Community funding has concentrated on major high-speed rail projects, opening up a new generation of passenger traffic. Finance has been channelled under the Cohesion Fund into major projects connecting countries and regions with differing levels of development, thereby helping to reduce disparities. TEN-T policy has begun to provide responses to issues in the field of freight transport and has contributed towards the development of intelligent transport systems. However, it is clear that there is still a long way to go to implement the initial plans fully. The Commission attributes this partly to the intrinsic long-term nature of the projects and partly to delays in the completion of many projects.

The Commission judges that a fundamental review of TEN-T policy is required; the policy should reflect, more than it has so far, established European objectives – not only in the transport sector but also in the wider political, social economic, environmental and institutional context. The Commission is beginning its TEN-T review process with a Green paper, summarising its current reflections and inviting contributions before coming up with possible legislative and other proposals.

Current planning

The current TEN-T guidelines include two planning layers: a comprehensive network layer and a second layer of thirty priority projects.

The comprehensive network

The Green Paper states that the comprehensive network comprises altogether 95 700 km of road links, 106 000 km of rail links (including 32 000 km of high-speed links), 13 000 km of inland waterways, 411 airports and 404 sea ports. Most of these links and nodes already exist. However, almost 20 000 km of road links, over 20 000 km of railway links (overwhelmingly high-speed lines) and 600 km of inland waterway links remain to be built or substantially upgraded – at a cost of EUR 500 billion according to recent estimates from Member States.

The Commission considers that the current comprehensive network has been essential for fulfilling the “access function” referred to in the Treaty. Furthermore, according to the Commission, it has formed an important basis for the implementation of Community

legislation in the transport sector – e.g. rail interoperability. The Commission states, however that there is a discrepancy between the overall planning ambitions and the means of stimulating and monitoring implementation. The Commission states that the “planning” of this community network has essentially meant adding together significant parts of national networks for the different modes and connecting them at national borders. The Commission finds that the responsibility for completing the large numbers of projects concerned rests almost entirely with the Member States, whose investment decisions are essentially driven by national objectives. TEN-T network planning has not been driven by genuine European objectives. As the EU expands and networks become increasingly complex, according to the Commission the question of how national planning can be combined with a European level of planning that takes account of objectives outside each individual Member State’s perspective becomes more and more relevant. The Commission generally judges that the Community resources spent so far have barely enabled citizens and economic operators to “see any difference” – any European added value – as a result of Community action in relation to the comprehensive TEN-T as a whole. Investment efforts by Member States on their respective territories are mostly seen as national investment rather than as contributions to a Community objective.

The priority projects

By and large, the TEN-T priority projects cover major rail, road and inland waterway axes that traverse several Member States. These projects have been at the centre of Community efforts both financially and in terms of coordination. Although the Community financial resources available are still not sufficient to meet the needs of these projects in full, the Commission considers that action – directed towards more limited and commonly agreed objectives – has been far more effective and visible. The approaching completion of some of these projects, in the view of the Commission, provides a concrete illustration of the potential benefits of the TEN-T policy objectives set out in the Treaty.

Issues at stake for further TEN-T development

The Commission states that in reviewing TEN-T policy, the central question is how to shape the future multi-modal network and how to ensure timely completion. According to the Commission, this requires a sophisticated combination, at the different levels involved, of planning approaches, implementation capacities and know-how. While duly respecting Member States’ sovereign rights in projects concerning their territories, the increasing complexity, innovative nature and geographical scope of the tasks at stake also call for a strong Community role.

The Commission also emphasises that the future TEN-T policy must be sufficiently flexible to link transport policy and transport infrastructure development in the short, medium and long term.

The future of the comprehensive network

The Commission considers that if the comprehensive network layer of the TEN-T is to be retained, this would involve reviewing the methodology for updating and monitoring it, and reviewing the instruments needed for full and timely implementation, in which Member States would certainly have to assume more binding responsibility.

If the comprehensive network layer is abandoned, the Commission considers that special attention would have to be given to ensuring the network access function.

Priority network instead of priority projects?

The Commission floats the idea that the current method of priority projects could evolve towards a priority network approach. The Commission points out that priority projects reflect major traffic flows between a starting and an end point *without* taking account of their continuity. By moving to a priority network approach, the Commission considers that nodes (which are often the main source of congestion and other inefficiencies), ports and airports could be incorporated more systematically as entry points to the network, as could the main inter-modal connection points.

The Commission states that a priority network should build on common agreement on clear goals taking into account a number of factors, including major traffic flows within the Union and to other parts of the world, the cohesion objectives and environmental objectives. A priority network should ensure continuity of the current priority projects and build on them where justifiable. According to the Commission, the network should be truly multi-modal and fully interoperable. The Commission further states that all the major projects should be included in an intelligent transport system.

In the view of the Commission, a priority network should combine infrastructure measures of different scales – from large long-term projects to projects of smaller scope that can be implemented in the shorter term, and thereby enhance the effectiveness and visibility of Community action.

Introduction of a “conceptual pillar”?

By allowing the objectives and criteria laid down in the TEN-T -guidelines to guide operators in the development of projects of common interest, the Commission considers that a more transparent and objective project identification can be achieved. Furthermore, the Commission considers that a more flexible method can be attained which takes greater account of short, medium and long-term service needs. The method should initially aim mainly to optimise the use of existing infrastructure capacity, but also to reflect evolving infrastructure needs and growing demand in the longer run.

A TEN-T core network?

The Commission introduces the idea of introducing a TEN-T core network consisting of the above “priority network” combined with the above “conceptual pillar”, thus reflecting the need for flexibility and market orientation. The Commission states that a core network with clear European objectives and the highest priorities in the field of transport and other EU policies (Internal Market, Cohesion, Sustainable Development, etc.) could be the centrepiece of the Community’s efforts in relation to TEN-T policy.

Issues of particular relevance to future TEN-T development

The Commission identifies a number of specific issues which it considers should be duly addressed in future TEN-T planning.

Differing needs of passenger and freight traffic

The Commission points out that passenger and freight traffic present different characteristics, and therefore it may be justified to consider separate planning for these within the overall TEN-T policy. However, the Commission emphasises that nodes serving as transfer points between long-distance and urban traffic will need to be covered by the strategy.

Airports and ports as Europe’s connecting points to the world

The Commission highlights the steady growth in traffic in maritime ports through which the overwhelming proportion of the Community’s international trade passes. However, the Commission does point out that there are capacity problems in certain ports due to deficient

infrastructure and poor land access to them. The Commission further states that airports play a key role in passenger traffic and are expected to face significant capacity constraints in the coming years.

Waterborne transport in the EU

The Commission finds that the inland waterway networks have ample free capacity but that they cannot be used to their full capacity due to a number of bottlenecks and shortcomings. Regarding Motorways of the Sea, the Commission considers that their further development must be defined by laying down objectives, scope and criteria for public support.

Freight logistics

To enable freight logistics to exploit their growth potential to the full, the Commission states that TEN-T policy needs to ensure the right infrastructure basis in particular in terms of inter-modal terminals, rail, sea and river port capacity (including land access to sea ports), parking areas for commercial vehicles and intelligent transport systems as both infrastructure components and means of tracking and tracing goods.

Intelligent transport systems

The Commission considers that intelligent transport systems (ITS) are applicable to all modes of transport. Given the relatively low cost of ITS compared to the cost of hard infrastructure, the Commission judges that the return on investment is considerable, provided that deployment is rolled out all over Europe. It considers that ITS should clearly improve efficiency of operations, as well as safety, security and user comfort. The Commission points out that these effects will increase once EGNOS and Galileo become fully operational in 2009 and 2013 respectively.

Innovation

The Commission states that, as regards TEN-T development over the coming decades, questions arise as to how infrastructure will need to adapt to new generations of ITS and vehicles such as electric and hybrid vehicles.

Overall financing

The Commission reiterates that TEN-T is only credible if the planning option chosen and implementation capacity match.

The Commission states that TEN-T planning should allow as accurate as possible a cost estimate for the network as a whole. Implementation targets and cost estimates for the TEN-T guidelines, which usually have a timeframe of 15 to 20 years, could, in the view of the Commission, be split into short, medium and long-term perspectives. The Commission also finds that the implementation of TEN-T so far has been marked by enormous cost increases. However, the Commission considers that pro-active assistance by the Commission, in its coordinating role, could address the various problems and promote exchanges of best practice, thereby enhancing the soundness of estimates and facilitating project implementation.

Because of the wide range of different project types involved in TEN-T development, the Commission considers that different financing solutions are called for. With increasing market orientation in the transport sector and efforts towards infrastructure optimisation, the Commission states that a growing number of projects with full self-financing potential should now emerge. Furthermore, according to the Commission, implementation of Community legislation in relation to infrastructure charging and internalisation of external costs should give Member States additional opportunities to improve the management of available capacities and optimise the transport system, and to finance new infrastructure.

Regarding the implementation of TEN-T policy, the Commission emphasises that it is important in the future to streamline the allocation of grants and to link it to the European added value of projects so as to ensure the best value for Community money. Consequently, the Commission considers that all projects of common interest might therefore be subjected to a harmonised and commonly recognised cost-benefit analysis that establishes the European added value. This would allow grants from the Community budget to be allocated fairly and objectively. The Commission also cites the necessity of better coordinated management of all available budgetary resources.

The Commission makes clear that the core network, for Community funding purposes could be treated as a new kind of “European project” which should be seen as a whole rather than receiving fragmented support.

Non-financial instruments in support of TEN-T implementation

The Commission floats the idea of expanding the concept of European coordinators into a “corridor coordination approach” for all measures which include a core network. It is also stated that applying the Open Method of Coordination to TEN-T could help to establish a common working framework for the Commission, the TEN-T Executive Agency and the Member States, and provide a common knowledge base on the TEN-T network. It is also stated that more systematic and comprehensive information about TEN-T policy development overall is important to raising citizens’ awareness of its benefits.

Possible options for further TEN-T development

In summary the Commission judges that there are three options to enable further TEN-T development:

1. Maintaining the current dual layer structure with the comprehensive network and (unconnected) priority projects.
2. Reducing the TEN-T to a single layer (priority projects, possibly connected into a priority network).
3. Dual layer structure with the comprehensive network and a core network, comprising a (geographically defined) priority network and a conceptual pillar to help integrate the various transport policy and transport infrastructure aspects.

Questions

Based on the report in the Green Paper, the Commission sets out a number of questions on which the stakeholders concerned are urged to give their opinion:

- Should the Commission’s assessment of TEN-T development to date cover any other factors?
- What further arguments are there for or against maintaining the comprehensive network, and how could the respective disadvantages of each approach be overcome?
- Would this kind of priority network approach be better than the current priority projects approach? If not, why not, and what are the particular strengths of the latter? If so, what (further) benefits could it bring, and how should it be developed?
- Would this kind of flexible approach to identifying projects of common interest be appropriate for a policy that, traditionally, largely rests on Member States’ individual infrastructure investment decisions? What further advantages and disadvantages could it have? How could it best be reflected in planning at Community level?

- How can the different aspects outlined above be best taken into account within the overall concept of future TEN-T development? What further aspects should be taken into consideration?
- How can ITS, as a part of the TEN-T, enhance the functioning of the transport system? How can investment in Galileo and EGNOS be translated into efficiency gains and optimum balancing of transport demand? How can ITS contribute to the development of a multi-modal TEN-T?
- Do shifting borderlines between infrastructure and vehicles or between infrastructure provision and the way it is used call for the concept of a (infrastructure) projects of common interest to be widened? If so, how should this concept be defined?
- Would a core network be “feasible” at Community level? What would be its advantages and disadvantages? What methods should be applied for its conception?
- How can the financial needs of TEN-T as a whole – in the short, medium and long term – be established? What form of financing – public or private, Community or national – best suits what aspects of TEN-T development?
- What assistance can be given to Member States to help them fund and deliver projects under their responsibility? Should private sector involvement in infrastructure delivery be further encouraged? If so, how?
- Weaknesses and strengths of existing Community financial instruments. Are new instruments needed (including “innovative” instruments)? How could the combined use of funds from various Community resources be streamlined to support TEN-T implementation?
- How could existing non-financial instruments be improved and what new ones might be introduced?
- Which of the three options described above for further TEN-T development is the most suitable and why?

The Committee's examination

The explanatory memorandum

The explanatory memorandum from the Swedish Government Offices (2008/09:FPM103) gives the preliminary Swedish opinion on the questions addressed in the Green Paper. The Government finds, among other things, that TEN-T is an important instrument which supplements national investment in infrastructure with a more comprehensive and international perspective. The Government sets out four aspects which should be taken into account in continued work:

- *New transport flows.* There is every reason to increase preparedness for the continued fast growth of east-west trade flows.
- *Adapting to climate change and coordinating different transport modes.* A thorough reorganisation of energy systems, transport systems and other parts of the economy is necessary and will be implemented.
- *Economically effective transport.* Increased use of economic evaluations at EU level can lead to greater efficiency and better coordination of investments between countries concerned.
- *Supply of raw materials.* There is no alternative to expanding the infrastructure to reach the source of raw materials (forest, ore, etc.). European industry depends on an effective supply of raw materials in order to compete on the global market.

The Government supports the Commission's option 3 of a dual layer structure with a comprehensive network and a core network, comprising a geographically defined priority network and a conceptual pillar to help integrate the various transport policy and transport infrastructure aspects. The Government considers that this option has two particularly attractive features: replacing priority projects with an integrated network and the fact that there will still be a more comprehensive network in the future.

In the Government's view, the advantage of a core network is that it contributes towards a cohesive transport system in which important ports, roads, railways, seaways and airports can be linked together, unlike today's situation where the priority projects are largely unconnected. The Government furthermore judges that the existing TEN-T model, with one network at the bottom and a selection of priority projects, has offered advantages in terms of concentrating funding on the most prioritised stretches, while also making it possible to finance essential projects located outside these prioritised stretches.

However, the Government considers that the Commission's proposed concept of a "conceptual pillar" needs to be developed and explained in more exhaustive detail before an opinion can be reached on it. According to the Government, one important question is whether the conceptual pillar, and thereby the selection of projects, can encompass the four aspects identified above, which the Government considers to be important in ongoing work.

Principles of subsidiarity and proportionality

The Green Paper states that responsibility for implementing projects within TEN-T rests with the Member States. No direct changes in this area are proposed. However, there is an

argument that Member States should be given more binding responsibility for implementing TEN-T projects.

Opinion of the Committee

Introductory observations

The Committee on Transport and Communications welcomes the Commission's initiative for an open and extensive consultation on the review of TEN-T policy. The Committee initially wishes to emphasise that the European transport system is an important prerequisite for a functioning European market and for sustainable growth. TEN-T helps to stimulate and drive both increased economic integration and increased trade within the Union by linking infrastructure together. In the view of the Committee, TEN-T is also of major importance for the development of passenger traffic, and provides prerequisites for channelling future travel within the Community in a more climate-smart, energy-efficient and safe manner, in which railways are given a greater role. The development of the transport infrastructure within the Community should therefore be focussed on creating communications on the basis of the needs of travellers, companies and society which are also compatible with the EU's climate and energy package.

In order to create a full basis for decision-making, the Committee believes that comprehensive knowledge is required of experiences of TEN-T so far and of current and future challenges. An extensive consultation process would enable the review to culminate in a well-supported, appropriate and future-proofed strategy.

At the same time, the Committee finds that the Green Paper produced by the Commission, is less than clear in some respects; for example, the Committee considers that the term "conceptual pillar" should be developed and explained in more exhaustive detail before a final opinion on it can be reached. The Committee therefore welcomes additional initiatives to improve the consultation process and develop an infrastructure for sustainable future transport in Europe.

Planning the network

The Committee judges that for a majority of transport policy issues, coordinated initiatives from the Member States and initiatives across national borders are essential, particularly with regard to climate. The Committee considers that much remains to be done across national borders to ensure that freight train traffic through Europe is run more efficiently, more smoothly and at higher speeds in order to be able to provide a full alternative to lorry transport.

In the view of the Committee, TEN-T should be a cohesive, inter-modal transport network which facilitates more effective collaboration between traffic modes. In order to promote the continued development of a cohesive infrastructure, it is therefore necessary, in the view of the Committee, to preserve the existing structure with a comprehensive network.

Climate issues will be high on the political agenda for a long time to come, at the global level, in the EU and in Sweden. The transition to a society adapted to climate change and reduced emissions of greenhouse gases will be a necessary starting point for both national and international policy for the foreseeable future. The need firstly to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and secondly to implement necessary adaptations to a changed climate is particularly marked within the transport system. The transport sector must become more environmentally friendly and funding must be invested in climate-smart solutions, such as support for developing more efficient freight transport corridors which are sustainable in the long-term or for increasing the proportion of freight transported by rail and sea. This must be

clearly reflected in the future TEN-T policy. The investments should be made on the basis of a common strategy for reduced emissions and necessary climate adaptation. The transport system must offer citizens and businesses in every part of the Community, a climate-friendly and environmentally friendly transport policy which is economically efficient and sustainable in the long term.

In the view of the Committee, Europe needs alternative, integrated and effective means of transport which are both environmentally friendly and meet the needs of users. The Committee takes a positive view of the Commission's proposal to develop the current model of priority projects into a solution with a priority network, through which major international transport routes, inter-modal connecting points and other important nodes can be linked together and, where necessary, extended.

It is also important to achieve a design which enables greater flexibility over time and which creates better opportunities to optimise combinations of minor as well as major measures in relation to objectives and costs. The Committee therefore welcomes the increased flexibility which a solution with a conceptual pillar as outlined in the Commission's proposal would appear to offer. With the help of a clear conceptual pillar, which would form the basis for identifying projects, corridors, etc, the Committee further judges that open and objective project identification can be enhanced.

It is important that the European transport networks should be developed into transport corridors which can efficiently link the countries within the EU and neighbouring areas closer together. The Committee on Transport and Communications wishes to emphasise that an efficient freight transport system which is sustainable in the long term should be built on a number of central freight transport routes in which one or more modes of transport work together.

This would facilitate large capacity as well as high-quality transport. The Committee would also like to emphasise that co-operation between transport modes is important for achieving greater efficiency and lower transport costs as well as for reducing negative impact on the environment. The Committee also considers that strategic logistics nodes should be developed to promote inter-modal transport. In this context the Committee would particularly like to highlight the Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan (COM(2007) 607) presented by the Commission in October 2007 which proposed establishing green transport corridors to secure a competitive and sustainable freight transport system in Europe.

Regarding intelligent transport systems (ITS), the Committee shares the Commission's view of the broad areas of application and great potential of these systems. The Committee would particularly highlight the importance of ITS for effective and climate-smart transport solutions. Using IT in the transport system offers great opportunities to make transport more efficient, reduce logistics costs and reduce the burden on the environment. ITS also helps in adapting systems to the needs and wishes of users for seamless transport and smooth transitions between modes of transport, as well as helping to increase safety and reduce vulnerability in the transport system, especially regarding the transport of hazardous goods. The Committee judges that ITS must be taken into account to a greater extent in future TEN-T policy.

The Committee also wishes to highlight the need for initiatives to climate-proof infrastructure ahead of future climate change, e.g. to reduce vulnerability in the event of landslides, landslips, storms and flooding. It is clear from the recently concluded International Climate Change Congress in Copenhagen on 10–12 March this year that sea levels, for example, are expected to rise by between 50 cm and just over 1 metre during this century. Investments for greater robustness are therefore essential to adapt the transport infrastructure to a changed climate. This type of investment must, in the view of the Committee, be reflected in the future TEN-T policy. In terms of new infrastructure projects, the Committee

wishes to emphasise the importance of taking into account the problems which are expected to arise as a result of feared climate change as early as the planning phase.

Implementation phase

Even if investments in infrastructure projects are primarily a national matter, and in some cases a regional or local responsibility, the Committee considers that in certain circumstances funding at EU level is justified. The possibility of various partnership solutions should also be taken into account where appropriate and effective. The Committee considers in particular that Community support is justified for measures concerning cross-border initiatives and climate adaptation. In this context, the Committee wishes to highlight experiences from Sweden of creating public and industrial economic efficiency gains through innovative forms of procurement and contracts.

The Committee agrees with the Commission that the TEN-T policy is only credible if the chosen planning option and the implementation capacity match. In the light of the large number of priority projects which have still not been completed, the Committee considers that there may be grounds for limiting the number of new priority investments so as not to impair opportunities for financial support. In this context, the Committee wishes to emphasise how important it is that both the Nordic triangle and Motorways of the Sea should continue to be seen as priority initiatives in the future. The Committee further wishes to assert the need to prioritise the northern axis of the transport corridor which links the northern parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia, and the Bothnian corridor, i.e. the north-south transport corridor which links the Barents area in northern Sweden and Finland with the important Nordic Triangle in the southern parts of these countries and on into Europe.

The Committee also strongly wishes to emphasise the need for transparency and clarity. Clear and transparent boundaries within TEN-T are essential, and Community funding must be allocated on the basis of objective criteria. Allocating funds on vague or short-term political grounds risks compromising the benefits provided by this support.

The Committee welcomes greater focus on cost control for investment projects. Thorough calculations and risk assessments should be carried out at an early stage of the projects. The Committee also wishes to highlight the importance of monitoring and evaluating the investments made. Ongoing reporting of the extent to which the resources contribute to achieving the objectives laid down is important. Together with the thorough analysis requirement, this guarantees that Community funds will be used correctly and, not least, for correct purposes.

The development of the trans-European transport network

In the light of the comments set out above, the Committee on Transport and Communications judges that of the three possible options for the continued development of TEN-T identified by the Commission, option 3 with a structure consisting partly of a comprehensive network and partly of a core network, would appear initially to be the most appropriate for promoting the favourable development of the European transport network. One important advantage of such a linked network, in the view of the Committee, is that it would help to create a cohesive transport system where important ports, roads, railways, seaways and airports can be linked together into a cohesive, efficient and sustainable international transport network.

ANNEX

List of documents addressed

The European Commission's Green Paper *TENT: A policy review* (COM(2009) 44).