

Brussels, 29/10/2010
C/2010/7491

Dear Ms Kinberg,

The Commission would like to thank the Riksdag for its interest and the constructive comments on the Commission Working Document {COM (2010) 212} – Consultation on the Future Trans-European Transport Network Policy”.

Following the Green Paper "Towards a better integrated trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy" and supported by six expert groups, the Commission has developed a methodology for the planning of the core network according to European needs. Currently, this methodology is being fine-tuned taking into account the comments and suggestions resulting from the current public consultation.

Multimodal main nodes will be selected according to a geographical approach for the selection of, in combination with a procedure to align links according to relevant long-distance traffic flows. This will ensure that the objectives of efficient transport to enhance overall competitiveness and the internal market as well as of territorial cohesion will be met in a balanced way. Consequently, the core network will be a functional one, a strategic target network consisting of nodes and links already existing, under construction and planned, but not a set of infrastructure projects. It will further be connected to neighbouring and other third countries and with the rest of the world.

Furthermore, both the multimodal layout of the network and supplementary infrastructure measures, applying the most advanced technologies in a flexible way, will contribute to the important common goal of de-carbonisation and to enhancing the efficiency of the transport system, both for passengers and freight. This will include a close linkage of long-distance transport with regional and urban traffic and most of the other aspects addressed in the position of the Swedish Parliament. Besides, the impact assessment, which will accompany this planning procedure, will contribute to the optimisation of the network, according to the objectives laid down in the Treaty.

On this methodological basis, concrete planning steps can be carried out. To minimize investment needs and impacts on the environment, priority will be given to a better use of existing infrastructure, integration of modes and sustainable transport corridors for passengers and freight, on the basis of appropriate performance standards. Climate change

Ms Anna Kinberg Batra
Chairwoman
Committee on European Union Affairs
Sveriges Riksdag
SE – 100 12 STOCKHOLM

will be a topic of planning, by reducing on the one hand greenhouse gas emissions, on the other hand the vulnerability of infrastructure.

While TEN-T planning will ensure compliance with the strategic objectives of this policy field and back the various objectives of the common transport policy, TEN-T policy as a whole can only be effective if all the necessary instruments are made available to fully implement the projects concerned. This involves both non-financial and financial instruments, aimed at facilitating project implementation. It thus covers instruments such as coordination or sharing of best practices, instruments to stimulate public-private partnership solutions, EIB interventions or various Community grant sources. The most efficient coordination of the latter shall be given particular attention, notwithstanding the continuing vital role of Member States for timely implementation and financing of transport projects located on their territory.

In principle, the new Core Network planning methodology could confirm the existing TEN-T Priority Projects and, further to additional thorough analysis, define possible extensions of these axes or the inclusion of additional ones. However, it is premature to confirm any specific project. This equally applies to the Swedish proposal to include the "Bothnian Corridor" in the future Core Network, which is very interesting.

In order to include Member States in all steps of this procedure, it is also foreseen that during the planning period a number of bi- and multilateral meetings will ensure permanent coordination. Final decisions will be made only after a thorough evaluation of all contributions received during the current public consultation, i.e. in the months following 15 September 2010. Actually, it is foreseen to finalize the Commission Proposal for the new TEN-T Guidelines, to hand it over to the Parliament and the Council, in the first half of 2011.

I acknowledge the Riksdag's support to the main orientations for Future Trans-European Transport Network Policy and look forward to developing our policy dialogue further in the future.

Yours sincerely,

/-/ Maroš Šefčovič