

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION  
QUESTIONS TO THE STAKEHOLDERS**

**Please send your replies by 31 March 2005**

- by e-mail to [TREN-TENT-extension@cec.eu.int](mailto:TREN-TENT-extension@cec.eu.int)
- by postal address :

European Commission  
Directorate General for Energy and Transport  
Unit B2 – Trans-European Network policies  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

The Commission reserves the possibility to make all comments public, unless the person submitting the comments expressly indicates otherwise. Contributions will be accessible on the website

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/ten/transport/2005\\_03\\_31\\_tent\\_consultation/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/ten/transport/2005_03_31_tent_consultation/index_en.htm)

Answers provided by:

*Mag. Otto Schwetz*

*Chairman of Pan-European Corridor VII - Danube*

**Which are the major axes?**

1. What are the main transport axes, including motorways of the sea, connecting the European Union to the neighbouring countries or broader regions today?

The **ten Pan-European Corridors and Areas**, which were identified during the two Ministerial Conferences in Crete 1994 and in Helsinki 1997, can be definitely considered as the main European transport axes.

After the enlargement of the Union, many parts of these corridors (in some cases the whole corridor) can be considered as parts of the TEN, with reduced importance regarding their connection role towards third countries.

Some of the corridors have attracted special international attention during the last years, and thus, it can be said that their performance affects international trade and/or strategic vision in a particular manner. In this sense, corridors II, III, IV, V, VII, (certain parts of) IX and X can be considered as the main transport axes connecting the Union to the neighbouring countries.

Motorways of the Sea<sup>1</sup> have a huge potential, but still, their development is mostly depended on the market; the countries involved must take the necessary measures

---

<sup>1</sup> As defined in the TEN revision (Decision 884/2004/EC amending Decision 1692/96/EC on the Community guidelines for the development of trans-European network)

to synchronise their actions –in the framework set by the EU- for better results, and in order to trigger all the possible synergy effects.

Regional initiatives (like SEETO for western Balkans), fresh actions towards the wider space around Europe (High Level Group II) and “traditional, old” efforts like TRACECA<sup>2</sup> have their own special significance.

The corridors’ approach is still the main tool for transport planning out of the Union. Alternative options like PETrAs have lost much of their potential.

The **Euro-Mediterranean Regional Transport** project may have important results for the definition of key transport routes in the Mediterranean basin. This project was launched under the MEDA programme in 2003. The aim is to set up a basis for a transport action plan, a future integrated regional transport system in the Mediterranean region and its interconnection with the TENs.

(**Turkey is** in the process of preparing a transport infrastructure needs assessment).

Inside the Union, the corridors’ approach is of less importance. On the contrary, it is the network’s approach that gains more and more significance.

## 2. What will these axes be with a time horizon of 2020?

Undoubtedly the main transport axes of today will form the basis for any future development, as they practically follow the traditional routes that trade has followed over the decades (or even centuries). The political and economic conditions will determine the progress of the infrastructure development along those axes, which is necessary for the smooth and efficient transportation of goods and people. Taking into consideration the enormous needs for infrastructure works along the existing axes, it is difficult to foresee the development of new axes within the next 15 years. The pan-European Corridors still have significant needs while at the same time Turkey, the Mediterranean region and the TRACECA corridor constitute great challenges in terms of infrastructure and institutional developments

## 3. What is the balance between the different transport modes?

Despite the efforts of the European Commission for shifting the balance between modes and promoting intermodal transport, road is still by far the dominant transportation mode. In other words there is no balance between the modes despite the advantages of railways, short sea shipping and inland waterways, mainly

---

<sup>2</sup> The **Traceca** transport corridor connecting Europe through the Caucasus to Central Asia, has been developed since 1991 and plays an important role for the continued development of these regions.

because these modes do not provide door-to-door service with the easiness and speed that road vehicles do.

4. What are the current traffic volumes, both passenger and freight, on the proposed axes?

NA

5. What is the amount and share of international traffic to/from the Union or between the neighbouring regions?

NA

6. How will these traffic volumes develop by 2020?

Recent studies forecast that rapid growth in trade and freight transport will continue. By 2020, the volume of inter-regional land freight traffic is expected to grow by more than 100% for traffic between the EU and its neighbours and passenger air transport is also forecast to grow rapidly. Without good transport connections with the neighbouring countries, the growth of trade and economy, sustainable environmental and balanced social development will not be fostered, which would be to the detriment of both the EU and its neighbours. The improvement of transport connections has thus become a timely issue of utmost importance to ensure stable economic development.

The White Paper on European Transport Policy for 2010: COM (2001) 370: Time to decide gives many details on this subject.

7. Are there particularly environmentally sensitive areas that must be taken into account when identifying major axes?

Yes, but details can be only given through detailed studies.

Nevertheless, environment should be a key issue in the process of the development of any transport corridor.

### **Which investments and how?**

1. Which are the most pressing congestion, traffic safety or geographical bottlenecks on the major axes that could justify investments?

Serious infrastructure investments are required in many sections along the main transport axes. Experience has shown that the countries alone, especially the most recent EU members and those who are outside the EU borders, are not in the position to develop the necessary infrastructure at a pace acceptable for the EU countries. In the process of identifying priorities, the elimination of bottlenecks<sup>3</sup> must be the main criterion for any investment justification.

---

<sup>3</sup> Closely linked to congestion

## 2. What kind of improvements (rehabilitation, new construction) to the infrastructure would be needed to remove the bottlenecks?

It depends on the case.

However, it can be said that in the most cases upgrading of the existing infrastructure is a very efficient measure to remove bottlenecks<sup>4</sup>.

New construction of transport infrastructure is a very expensive way to remove bottlenecks; in general, this should be the last solution if all other options have failed to solve the problem.

## 3. What is the time horizon for the realisation of such a project?

It depends on the case.

It is important to mention that removal of bottlenecks require a **network study**, as in many cases, removal of bottlenecks in one part of the network can create other bottlenecks in other parts of the network.

The time horizon for realization of any project should be the task of detailed studies, which will define priorities.

Main criteria to define priorities are the maturity of the project, its efficiency (economic and social) and the assessment of its impacts on the environment.

## 4. What would the economic, environmental and safety benefits of such project be?

It requires detailed studies.

However, it can be said that projects aiming at removal of bottlenecks are expected to have:

- Economic benefits: reduction of travel times, reduction of VOC (vehicle operation costs)
- Environmental benefits: reduction of congestion and thus, less atmospheric pollution
- Safety benefits: less congestion, better accidents records

## 5. Are there alternative technical or modal options to remove or alleviate the bottleneck?

There are always several alternatives in the studies of removing a bottleneck. For example, modal shift (more traffic on railways) can remove many road bottlenecks. Each case require detailed analysis, taking into considerations the costs and benefits of the various alternatives.

Technical options to remove bottlenecks can be the strengthening of interoperability (mainly in the railways), the use of better rolling stock, etc.

---

<sup>4</sup> In general, rehabilitation is meant as intervention WITHOUT increasing the capacity; on the contrary, upgrading means the interventions that DO INCREASE the capacity.

## 6. How can the project best be financed? What could be the role for private sector involvement and user charges?

Experience has shown that many parts of the transport axes can be attractive for private financing, or PPP schemes. In general, efficient PPP schemes can have very positive results for all parties involved. The state benefits the wider positive economic results (reduction of accidents, less traffic times, environmental benefits, etc.) while the private sector benefits the monetary revenues of the project (tolls, user charges, other side revenues, etc.).

Usually, an efficient PPP approach requires:

- Clear roles and clear division of the risks
- Detailed studies
- Long negotiations among the parts (investors, state, other actors)
- Publicity and agreement of local societies
- Good contracts

## How to ensure seamless and efficient use of the axes?

### 1. What are the main technical and administrative bottlenecks on the axes?

The main technical and administrative bottlenecks on the axes are the border crossings.

Lack of interoperability also causes serious bottlenecks, especially in modes with strict linkage between the various parts of the infrastructure (like rail).

### 2. Are there problems of interoperability when crossing borders or changing modes?

Many, especially in modes with strict linkage between the various parts of the infrastructure (like rail).

Changing modes is also a complex process with many technical problems in terms of interoperability between vehicles, infrastructure, equipment and loading units.

### 3. Is safety or security a major concern along an axis?

Both.

In the most cases, improvement of security requires operational measures and good follow up of the trip. If the necessary measures are taken, the positive results can be expected very fast.

Safety is a more difficult task, which many times require not only operational measures but serious investments as well. As a consequence, the process of improving safety records along an axis can be rather long.

Safety requires good coordination between all parts of a journey: infrastructure, rolling stock, equipment, operators, infrastructure managers, etc. The State has a very serious role to play, setting the necessary institutional and legislative framework, and taking care for the best operation of the system, including the training of the actors (drivers, police, etc.).

#### 4. What could be done to solve the bottlenecks today and with a time horizon of 2020?

Some of the main objectives that can be set to face the problem are:

- Clear identification of bottlenecks
- Concrete action plan
- Cooperation between all parts
- Network approach in all studies
- Effective prioritising of projects

#### 5. How can intermodal transport be facilitated?

In addition to improved physical transport networks, transport between the Union and its neighbours requires efficient, intermodal and interoperable transport systems. Efficient traffic management systems, ensuring safety and security as well as interoperability, are of particular relevance.

According to the conclusions of many relevant studies (mainly reference to INTERMODA Project: (Integrated Solutions for Intermodal Transport between the EU and the CEEC), the most important recommendations to promote intermodal transport and remove relevant bottlenecks are:

- Investments in modern standardised intermodal equipment
- Increase capacity of terminals
- Implementation of new handling procedures
- Consideration of intermodal transport in technical, operational and administrative procedures
- Harmonization of opening hours and operation in terminals
- Harmonization of loading units

Further recommendations:

- Improved border procedures for intermodal transport
- Introduction of European-wide transport tariffs

- Consideration of external costs for fair prices
- Measures towards concentration of intermodal rail transport on a limited number of international transport corridors
- Introduction of one-stop-shops for intermodal transport
- Overcome mental bottlenecks

Further information is available at the website: [www.intermoda.org](http://www.intermoda.org)

#### 6. What common market rules should be implemented to facilitate and speed up transport along an axis?

To ensure smooth international and transit traffic, it could be worthwhile to promote such logistic and regulatory requirements and practices, which are in use in EU destinations. These actions would include an increased sharing of best practices and common market rules in order to better manage today's complex transport flows and associated safety and security risks in view of protecting and promoting EU's interests and those of its partners. Such actions would consist e.g. of traffic management systems, including safety and security, handling equipment in ports and airports and other logistic terminals.

The role of the proper institutional, legislative and administrative framework is underlined.

#### 7. Which policies or administrative procedures should be better integrated?

International cooperation is a key prerequisite to handle problems with administrative procedures. The Union's policies and its "*acquis*" should be the framework for any administrative measure.

The problem is not which policies or administrative procedures should be integrated, but HOW the whole concrete framework of the Union will be better integrated in the European international transport.

#### 8. What could be the role of the private sector?

PPP schemes, by means of concessions, make it possible for States to limit their financial aid to what is necessary to make up the difference between what is profitable from the point of view of society and what is financially profitable.

In many cases, PPP schemes are extremely difficult and sometimes, the potential contribution of the private sector is limited in view of the risks and of the very long-term period of return.

However, there is a wide spectrum of possible investments that can be ideal for cooperation between public and private sector. It is important to underline that public-private partnerships must aim at promoting greater transparency of costs and at more effective management by the public authorities. The State must clarify its long-term policy (regulation, infrastructure charging) and to commit itself, contractually, to reduce the risks. A clear division of the risks between the public authorities and the private sector is essential.

The most important “task” of the private sector is to provide an effective management during the operation phase of the project, and to prove that it can properly assess and take the risks irrespectively of the users and the public.