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TEN-T Public consultation on the extension of the major trans-European transport axes to the neighbouring countries and regions

QUESTIONS TO THE STAKEHOLDERS

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?*

In the evaluation of the major TEN-T axes it is fundamental to take into consideration the potential increase of intermodality inherent to the chosen axes. In particular, the development of the links between the rail infrastructures and the sea motorways is fundamental. This is true both with respect to the axes connecting destinations internal to the territory of the EU, and those connecting the EU territory with the neighbouring countries. In these respects appear major axes: A) the Genova-Rotterdam rail link, including the development of the intermodal platforms in the two ports: it has a major role to play with respect to the needed improvement of the freight and passengers links between the whole EU territory and the Nord African coasts. B) the V Corridor (Lione-Torino-Trieste- ….): it has also a major role to play in linking the enlarged territory of the Union with its neighbouring countries, both on the east borders and on the south borders through a major improvement of the rail infrastructures and the utilization of the Mediterranean ports (this would be particularly true if the link with the Genova -Rotterdam corridor should be correctly developed).

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

If the difficulties encountered until now in the advancement of the works will be overcome, the two indicated corridors could give a major contribution in absorbing the forecasted 70% increase in freight traffic and the 40% increase in passengers traffic due to the new dimension of the internal market. Furthermore, the rapid development of these corridors could contribute to improving further the sustainability of those increases in traffic.

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

The development of the different modes should give high priority to the development of intermodality, ensuring that rail acquires an increasing role, in particular for traditional rail for freight transport, and high speed rail for passengers transport.

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

It is difficult to quantify for Finmeccanica, it being a producer of trains and infrastructures components.

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

The quantification of the expected increases in traffic due to the enlargement is difficult both for freight and passengers; however we expect a notable increase. In order to give a satisfactory answer to such increases the TEN-T should ensure the reinforcement of the weak points of the different transport modes networks. In particular, the bottlenecks inherent to the different modes in the existing infrastructures should be tackled and resolved. Furthermore, the infrastructures of the new Member countries should be modernised having particular regard to the needed standardization with respect to the standards of the old member States infrastructures.

6. *How will these traffic volumes develop by 2020?*

We can expect a general increase of traffic volumes, even if a potential negligence or delay in updating the infrastructures and a low attention in improving international interoperability could have as a result a lower increase than expected, or even a decrease in the rail traffic to the advantage of road traffic.

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

Important bettering of the environmental conditions, concerning both noise and CO2 emissions, throughout the Italian peninsula and the northern Italy south-north and east-west axes could result from the development of the rail networks as well as from the establishment of efficient links between the rail infrastructures and the motorways of the see through improved intermodal platforms in the ports, and in particular in the Mediterranean ones. This would reduce the need of road transport both for freight and passengers, and therefore the congestion of highly congested road axes.

Which investments and how?

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

The major actions/investments needed to eliminate/diminish congestion and bottle necks, to better safety and environmental impact of transport appear to be:

A) greater integration between road and both rail and short see shipping. The complementarity's concept between these three modes of transport should be clarified and enhanced. For thus doing, investments aiming an improvement of efficiency and widening the utilization of logistic services are of major importance.

B) increased use of Intelligent Transport Systems, in order to improve :

- information exchanges;
- efficiencies of the modes (and therefore competitivity);
- safety of the infrastructures;
- quality of the services, both for passengers and freight;
- knowledge of the existing services, and therefore of there potential use.

C) Deeper integration and standardization of the telecommunication networks guiding and signalling rail services.

D) Increased use of the satellites systems for positioning, in particular EGNOS and Galileo.

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

To improve the seamless and efficient use of axes investments should concentrate on:

- increase in number, efficiency and modernization of the intermodal centers, in particular involving ports
- restructuring of new Member States rail infrastructures, having regard in particular to improve their interoperability with the existing Member States infrastructures (i.e. modernization of the signalling systems, by introducing the EU standard ERTMS)
- reorganization and modernization of the old Member states rail infrastructures, paying particular attention to improving the interoperability trough the borders
- increase the flow of information through the improved usage of technological means (modernized telecommunication systems, satellites, ITS, etc)

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

These investments and improvements should be realised in a very strict and short time frame, in order to avoid the risk that the new Member States will repeat the same mistakes already observed in the past years within the old Member States, such as the excessive shift of transport demand to the road, and the inefficient use of all existing infrastructures through an insufficient development of intermodal transport.

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

A real interconnection and efficient utilization of all available infrastructures, an improved and rationalized usage of all technological means applicable to modernised transport modes would have a strong economic impact in terms of efficient use of infrastructures and congestion costs cutting, an important environmental impact in terms of emissions diminution, both in gas and noise, as well as safety benefits.

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

To alleviate bottlenecks a stronger use of technology means and logistic instruments could help. However, investments in infrastructures (both for bettering old ones and constructing new ones) remain essential.

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

The projects suggested above imply important advantages, both environmental, social and economic, for the whole society, at national and European level. However, upgrading of existing infrastructures and building new infrastructures imply very often important costs beared by the economic subjects owning the infrastructures themselves. This means that the main advantages of the investments are only in small proportion advantageous for the investor, while they benefit the whole society. Following this consideration, it seems appropriate and needed a strong involvement of public authorities, both at EU and national level, in order to give the needed political and economical incentive to the subjects that will have to invest.
Furthermore, the availability of high technology services could be made on payment by the clients (consumers, enterprises, etc), and the amounts earned by setting the services could than be obligatorily invested in further upgrading of the services (i.e. internet usage on trains, freight follow up through satellite positioning, etc.)

How to ensure seamless and efficient use of the axes?

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

The most important bottleneck is the absence or scarcity of technical interoperability, which render very costly economically and in terms of time the seamless and efficient use of existing infrastructure. Furthermore, the scarcity of logistic infrastructures dedicated to facilitate and improve intermodality is an other factor impeding an efficient use of the existing networks. An improved usage of the satellite infrastructures already available, or becoming available in short time (EGNOS and Galileo), could be an instrument to eliminate or alleviate some of the technical bottlenecks, and to improve the efficient intermodal use of the infrastructures (i.e. by imbedding in the freights the telecommunication/satellite instruments which could allow a complete automation of the administrative work needed for the transfer of the goods between different member states). Furthermore, a major technical bottlenecks for rail is linked to the clients' tendency to ask for tailor made products, tendency which imply longer delivery time, higher costs and difficulties in creating and using all the advantages of really seamless infrastructures. Finally, a major improvement for freight transport by rail would be the creation of an EU dedicated infrastructure, since the needs of freight and passengers rail transport are very different, and they need different approaches and solutions.

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

Indeed problems of interoperability exist, both of technical and other nature (administrative, legal, etc.). A major issue concerns safety standards and rules: if the EU should be able to agree on a series of common technical standards for safety, adapted to all different circumstances, this would imply a major step forward in ensuring a safe, efficient and seamless use of existing infrastructures.

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

Safety and security shall be a major concern for all axes in the EU TEN-T, and all technical and technological means should be used to improve those features. In these fields a major rule making activity, the use of common and/or coordinated instruments for law enforcement and the activation of dedicated research programmes should be launched and financed at EU level, in order to avoid the risk of creating internal market obstacles through the introduction of non interoperable technical standards, and aiming to avoid duplication of costs.

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

Major investments in intermodal freight centres, incentives for logistic centres stimulating the use of intermodality both for passengers and freight, an important increase in information means both for passengers and freight clients through the usage of high tech solutions would help using in the most efficient way existing infrastructures, and therefore help even in the very short period to solve bottlenecks.

5. *How can intermodal transport be facilitated?*

Again, logistic, technology and efficient intermodal centres would really have the possibility to make the difference with regard to improving intermodality in Europe

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

A quick rule making action on standardisation for products and safety requirements would definitely facilitate the creation of a more efficient and seamless rail internal market. The same would be true for the adoption of rules rendering obligatory the use of common telecoms standards between rail, road and maritime transport for distributing information on freight, thus rendering the need to follow and control the freight easer to achieve. Finally, enhancing the use of satellite systems for connecting different transport mode would also be an important step forward towards the integration of the TEN-T.

7. *Which policies of administrative procedures should be better integrated?*

A lot of paper work due to administrative procedures could be substituted by data flows through electronical and telecommunication means using also the most advanced satellite technologies. A better integration of control policies between member States would also imply an important improvement in speeding up proceedings and in ensuring higher levels of safety and security of transport in Europe.

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

The private sector should be ready to respond quickly to all actions aiming a higher standardisation of products and new infrastructures, and an updating of the existing infrastructures. The private operators should also be ready to make available to the customers part of the lowering in costs that would derive from standardisation. However, for this to come true it would be necessary for the private sector to have at disposal a clear legal frame and clear and common specifications, inserted as instruments in a very outspoken and strong transport policy position at EU level.