

PUBLIC CONSULTATION QUESTIONS TO THE STAKEHOLDERS

Please send your replies by 10 March 2006

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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.

Questions

1. Do the five main transport axes highlighted in the High Level Group (HLG) report, in your view, represent the main axes for international traffic and what you add/delete, if given the opportunity and why?
2. The HLG report outlines a number of measures, on so-called horizontal issues, are these the most important ones and do the recommendations made by the Group help to solve the problems?
3. Financing transport investments is a headache. How can the implementation of these axes and horizontal measures be best financed? What could be the role of the private sector and the user charges?
4. For the implementation and coordination of the recommended actions, the report calls for either a memorandum of understanding or an international agreement – do these help to achieve the objectives? If not, how would you ensure the implementation and coordination of the actions?
5. The Group has envisaged integrating the existing agreements and memoranda of understandings into a coherent framework. Should an international treaty be envisaged for this?

Answer from the European Freight and Logistics Leaders Forum (F&L)

1. Do the five main transport axes highlighted in the High Level Group (HLG) report, in your view, represent the main axes for international traffic and what you add/delete, if given the opportunity and why?

We certainly believe that the main European international traffic routes are contained in the five proposed axes. At the same time, all transport modes coordination and integration present a view for future infrastructures which takes sustainable development for Europe into account. We all hope this will bring enormous benefits to our continent when compared with the current situation.

Nevertheless, we miss in the whole report a more clear separation between passengers and freight transportation, especially in rail projects. Both traffics, which co-exist in the current transport infrastructure network, have clearly demonstrated to have very different operational and profitability drivers. As a result of the different needs, we believe that when we plan for the future, some distinction related to infrastructure between passenger and freight should be done.

Under our point of view, we need to go into much more detail when looking into the railway priority axes, defining specific actions separately for passengers and freight. In certain corridors, where mixed traffic is not sustainable in the long term, rail freight dedicated alternatives need to be considered.

2. The HLG report outlines a number of measures, on so-called horizontal issues, are these the most important ones and do the recommendations made by the Group help to solve the problems?

All identified measures indeed help to facilitate communications between different countries. With respect to the generic issues, we believe the High Level Group has identified the main problems in border control procedures, and has suggested specific actions to speed up the process. With respect to satellite radio navigation systems and security measures the HLG offers an orientation of what should be pursued and implemented at national level.

On top of these generic measures, the HLG has made a great effort in developing specific recommendations for the different transport modes. With respect to rail transportation it specifically recommends to develop/coordinate a single legal framework and to implement actions that facilitate interoperability.

Regarding rail transportation, its interoperability and the objective of facilitating communications between countries, we would like to suggest the HLG to supervise the evolution of national legislation as related to the sector. While at European level a great effort is being pursued to unify and simplify procedures, at domestic level protectionist measures are being defined and could be implemented in the future. For example, taking security reasons as an excuse, in rail driving legislation “domestic ghetto’s” are being developed, and very little is being done towards pan-

European licences, standard training, and homologation of studies between countries.

3. Financing transport investments is a headache. How can the implementation of these axes and horizontal measures be best financed? What could be the role of the private sector and the user charges?

To finance these infrastructure initiatives a combination of measures involving private and public funding will be required. Private funding could be involved through concessions, when a toll system can be implemented, while public funding returns will come through efficiency and productivity improvements together with reduction in environmental/congestion external costs.

4. For the implementation and coordination of the recommended actions, the report calls for either a memorandum of understanding or an international agreement – do these help to achieve the objectives? If not, how would you ensure the implementation and coordination of the actions?

Memoranda of understandings and international agreements are important measures to reinforce the achievement of the projects. Nevertheless, we believe that more serious penalties should be implemented for those member states that do not comply with their obligations.

More responsibility should be given at European level, not only for the design of the infrastructure system, but also for its development. Logistics is a trans-national issue, and should be treated as such. It is the whole European competitiveness which is at risk.

5. The Group has envisaged integrating the existing agreements and memoranda of understandings into a coherent framework. Should an international treaty be envisaged for this?

An international treaty may not be strictly necessary, but it will help to assign responsibilities, unify and align objectives, and will facilitate contribution from all members.