

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



**NECL and Mid-Nordic Stakeholder response on**  
**“the report of the High Level Group on the extension of the main trans-European transport axes to the neighbouring countries and regions and the way forward”**

The Steering Committee of the North East Cargo Link (NECL) project and the Mid-Nordic region stakeholders for the Mid Nordic Transport Corridor (MNTC) welcomes the initiative “Public consultation on the report of the High Level Group on the extension of the main trans-European transport axes to the neighbouring countries and regions and the way forward” taken by the Commission. We also refer to earlier information sent for the consultation in advance of the report.

### **1. Identified main transport axes**

The five main transport axes highlighted in the High Level Group (HLG) report does indeed represent the main axes for international traffic. Prioritized transport axes for NECL and MNTC are Motorways of the Sea and Northern axis, why this response will be devoted to these priorities and not considerate the three others priorities.

#### *Motorways of the Sea*

We welcome the initiative of including and promoting Motorways of the Sea as a prioritized axes alongside geographical ones in the report. We support the identified harbors in the report, but stress the importance of including the ports of Trondheim fjord (Verdal, Skogn, Stjørådal, Trondheim, Orkanger) to be highlighted in the report as well see figure 2.

**Verdal** has a well-developed infrastructure with particular steel and bulk products as main freights (650 000 ton yearly) and is important port for traffic towards Europe. **Skogn** is an industrial harbor for the paper industry (658 000 ton yearly) with extensive investment plans. **Trondheim** has both passenger (2 million yearly) and freight (1,55 million tons yearly) and a well-developed infrastructure with a total dock of 5 000 meters. **Orkanger** is prioritized towards offshore-related freights and has a large potential. (Figure 2)

## *Northern Axes*

We do fully support the importance of the identified main routes of Northern Europe, namely 1) the multimodal connection Berlin - trans-Siberian, 2) the multimodal connection Finnish border - Moscow, 3) the Rail freight connection St Petersburg - trans-Siberian, 4) the multimodal connections from Baltic ports to Minsk/Moscow 5) the multimodal connection in Norway (Nordic Triangle) and 6) the multimodal connection St Petersburg – Narvik as shown in figure 1.

As a prolonging of the Mid Nordic Transport Corridor, it is very important that the connection from the Finnish border to Moscow is prioritized as well as the rail freight from St Petersburg to Trans-Siberian. We do though stress the importance of including the connection from Östersund to Trondheim as important connection in the report (St Petersburg – Vaasa/Kaskö – Sundsvall/Härnösand – Östersund – Trondheim) regarding neighboring countries connections. Even that the Corridor as a whole is not regarded as main priority for the nearest future, the national governments and investments institutes has identified the modes and different projects in the corridor as prioritized projects in the nearest future (figure 3).

## *Mid Nordic Transport Corridor*

It is though important to regard the extension of TEN-T out from the existing possible flows in EU. The Mid Nordic Transport Corridor (Figure 4) prolongs the above-mentioned actions through EU, via Finland and Sweden. Mid Nordic Corridor and NECL have a close cooperation with the Tran Siberian railway authorities that further will increase the volumes of freight in the Mid Nordic Region. The Mid Nordic Transport Corridor prolongs the USA/UK sea shipping through connection of the ports of Trondheim fjords, through cities of Östersund, Sundsvall/Härnösand and Vasa/Kaskö, with Russia, and especially St. Petersburg. Therefore it is internally important for us to further stress the importance of the intermodal priority from the Finish border to St Petersburg and the railway priority from St Petersburg to the Trans Siberian. We are although emerging that the Mid Nordic Transport Corridor is acknowledge as an important axes in general and that the ports of Trondheim fjords as well as the railway connection between Östersund and Trondheim (Meråkersbanan (No)) in particular.

As noticed in the high-level report of extension of TEN-T to neighboring countries, there is a considerable volume of international freights already today in the corridor (figure 5). With the intended investments and improvements in the region, there will be further development of the possibilities for freight volumes, especially with the growing markets in Asia and China in mind. The main part of the (international) goods transported in the region is of a great European value as it consists of paper and steel industry freight.

**We do therefore stress the importance to add the axes of St Petersburg via Finland and Sweden to Trondheim Fjord and in particular add the ports of Trondheim Fjord to prioritized harbors in the Motorways of the Sea ports perspective.**

## 2. Horizontal issues

As mentioned above, we fully supports the importance of further develop the concept of *Motorways of the Sea*. It is of essential importance that the shipping and harbor infrastructure is prioritized in the same way as other transport modes in order to change the transport perspective from road to rail and shipping. Motorways of the Sea play a crucial role regarding transport facilitation between the EU and the neighbouring regions. Even if it is essential to obtain sufficient critical mass by concentration of cargo flows, we have to bear in mind that the cargo needs to transport from and to the ports. For northern Sweden and the Mid Nordic Transport Corridor, this would mean that heavy and large amount of freight (forest, paper and steel) needs to be transported by road or rail to prioritized ports. Therefore, in order to be able to meet the White Paper on Transport we need to create sufficient infrastructure to limit the road usage and identify a limited number, but sufficient number of ports introduced in the Motorways of the Sea concept. This in general means that in many countries there is not enough with only one port or port system per country per sea area in order to promote the European transport policy. Once again we stress the importance of **adding the ports of Trondheim Fjord** to prioritized harbours for Motorways of the Sea ports.

We fully agree that the identified measures are important to further prioritize. Maritime safety, Galileo, interoperable rail systems, Inlands waterways, road safety, air management and security are all very important to develop and further prioritize in order to solve problems related to transport relationship between EU and neighboring countries. Anyway, none of these will be effective if we do not further focus the horizontal issue of removing non-physical barriers. The non-physical barriers, identified in the report, that are creating bottlenecks in the transport chain between the EU and the neighbouring countries should be the main horizontal priority in order to fully achieve the development of homogenous axes between EU and the neighbouring countries. We fully support and welcome the special attention that is given to activities intended to reduce unnecessary administrative regulations and obstacles hampering the flow of traffic between EU and neighbouring countries. This may only be achieved with a firm Private Public Partnership and networks including stakeholders in position of decisions regarding boarder crossings e.g. Therefore we stress the importance of the recognition of **Private Public Partnership** in this view as well.

## 3. Financing and implementation

We agree that the need to ensure good articulation and synchronisation of the new EU instruments in the planning and implementation phases so as to ensure the continuous and harmonious development of policies and extension of networks is of importance. We are also highlighting the importance of transport project priorities in different EU programmes in order to get transversal focus on the horizontal priorities mentioned in the report. We fully support the firmer cooperation of the European Commission, the EU Member states as well as the Banks in order to further focus their cooperation and financing actions. The private sector has an important role and NECL is an example how to combine private, public and EU funding in order to eliminate transport hindrances and promote freight flow.

#### **4. Coordination and implementation**

We fully agree that coordination of actions and investments along a transport axis is an important part of the process of improving the functioning of transport axis. In this view we also believe that in respond to the increasing role of cross-border investment projects it would be important to address the gap in the legal framework and come up with a common European framework. We do strongly believe that a memorandum of understanding or an international agreement would help to achieve the objectives of implementation and coordination of the recommended actions.

#### **5. International treaty**

We agree that it is obvious that there is a need to coordinate between different existing instruments and also to consider possibilities for improving the functioning of these instruments in order to ensure effective and timely implementation of transport axes. We believe that targeted cooperation frameworks, taking into account the existing cooperation modalities, political situation and trans-border traffic, may improve the implementation. We support the idea of an establishment of a secretariat per region to reflect upon integration between main transport routes.

#### **6. Further issues**

It is essential to focus the problem of increased transport volumes that will arose from the growing markets of Asia and Russia. In order to facilitate future transport, we need to prioritize the links of TEN-T and support the regional actions of corridors that will supply and may present an alternative route for main transport axes in Europe that already today facing congestion. The NECL project has initiated a cooperation with the Transsiberian railway authorities and we regard the Mid Nordic Transport Corridor as an alternative future axis and corridor that will help to solve transportation problems and volumes for future Europe – Asia trade.

Mr Christer TROSELIUS  
Project coordinator  
NECL project

Mr. Björn AMNOW  
WP leader Implementation  
NECL project

<http://www.necl.se> (Homepage)

<http://www.necl.se/inenglish.4.1961581faa8d908847fff2460.html> (English)

[Sample study on freight flows in Mid Nordic Transport Corridor](#) (English)

# Annexes

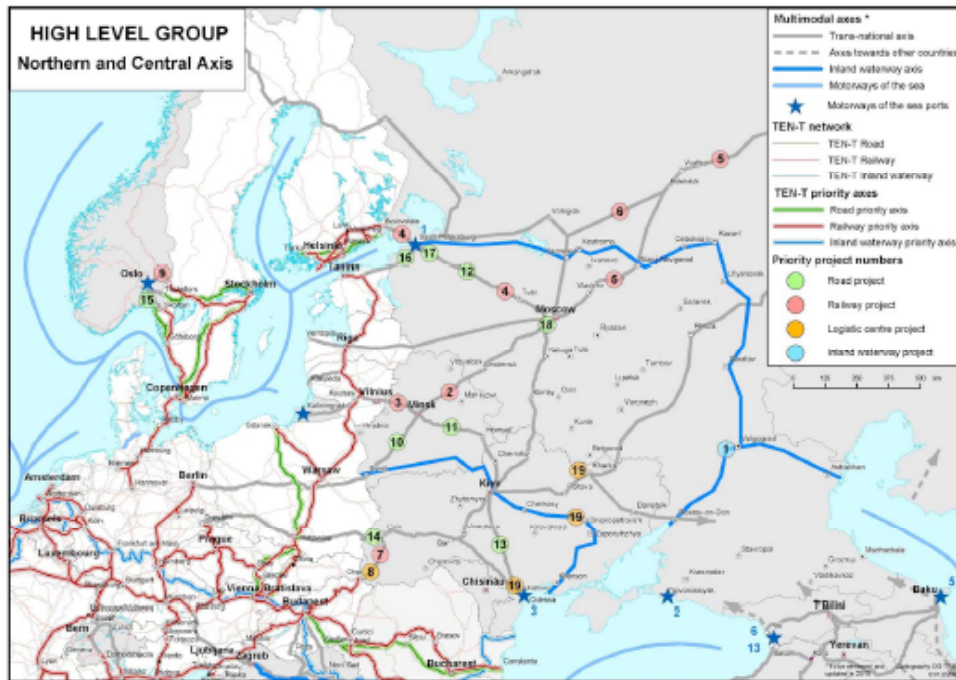


Figure 1 – Identified major Northern and Central transnational axis

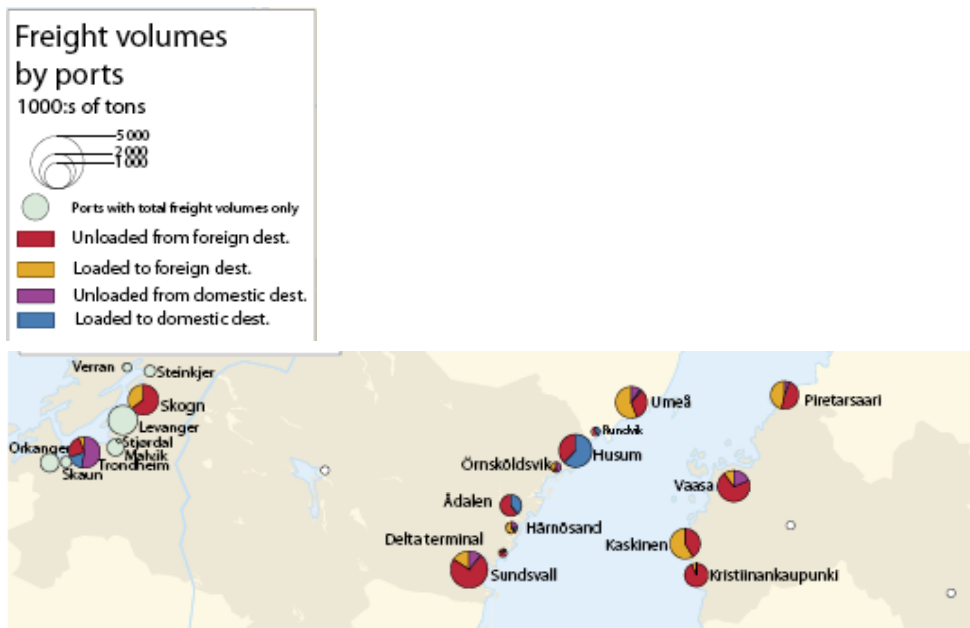
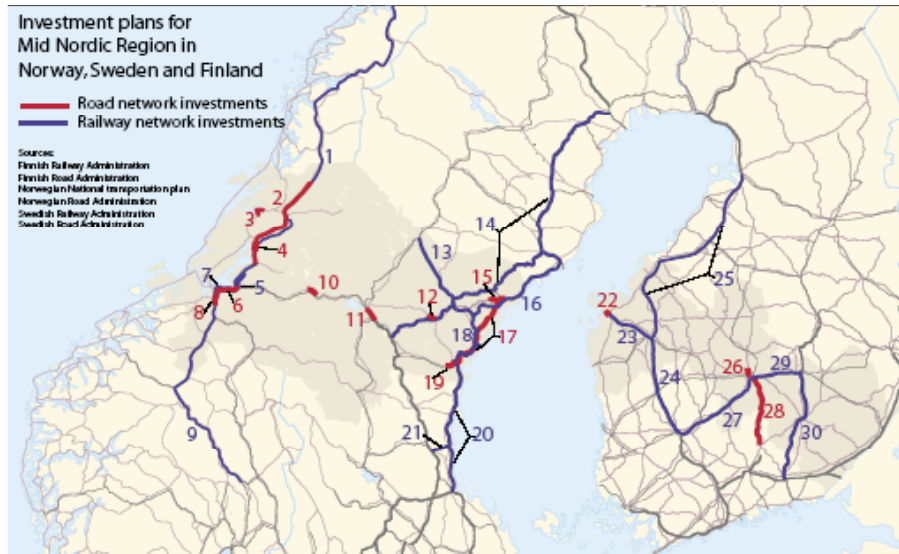


Figure 2 – Freight volumes by ports



**Explanation:**

1. Nordlandsbanan Tromsølin-Bodø. Effectiveness. Completed 2015, EUR 25 millions.
2. E6 Stalsjøen-Nordland. Capacity. Completed 2015, EUR 89 millions.
3. Rebuilding of national road 769 through Naaisnes coniar, new terminals and bridges. Completed 2006, EUR 40 millions.
4. Improved E6 through Stalsjøen gives improved trafficability and shorter travel times. Completed 2009, EUR 53 millions.
5. New railway tunnel north of Tromsølin will give shorter travel times. Completed 2015, EUR 52 millions.
6. The Tromsølin package. New E6 passage through Tromsølin will be partly completed in 2009, EUR 123 millions.
7. New freight terminal in Tromsølin. Completed 2009, EUR 46 millions.
8. Increased capacity and improved trafficability on E6 North and South of Melhus. Completed 2009, EUR 64 millions.
9. Dovrebanan. Increased capacity between Tromsølin-Hamar with new passing lanes. EUR 118 millions. Completed 2015.
10. Tunnel through Åre on E14. Stage 1 completed 2007, EUR 38 millions, stage 2 to be started after 2007, EUR 11 millions.
11. E14 Southeast of Osløstrend, building 2+1 road. Completed 2013, EUR 14,2 millions.
12. Rebuilding of road 87 west of Blegårdalen. Completed 2005, EUR 13 millions.
13. Foromo-Halling, rebuilding for increased capacity. Completed 2015, EUR 11 millions.
14. Stambanan through upper Nordland. Increased capacity and improved trafficability, new marsh yard in Umeå. Completed 2015, EUR 356 millions.
15. Improved trafficability of road 335 between the inland areas and Ormskoldsvik. Completed 2015, EUR 10 millions.
16. Bottelbanan, new railway Nyland-Umeå. Completed 2010, EUR 1480 millions.
17. E4 Sundsvall-Ormskoldsvik, rebuilding and 2+1 road. Completed, 2015, EUR 48 millions.
18. Adalbanan Sundsvall-Långsele, starting grading, new passages. Completed 2010, EUR 470 millions.
19. E14 in to Sundsvall, rebuilding and 2+1 road. Completed 2015, EUR 25 millions.
20. Osttustbanan Sundsvall-Gävle, increased capacity. Completed 2015, EUR 71 millions.
21. Söderhamn-Årjoberg. Increased capacity and heavier axle pressure. Completed 2015, EUR 33 millions.
22. New passage through Svantholms of national road 8. Increase the trafficability Vasa-Oulu. Completed 2008, EUR 25 millions.
23. Seinäjoki-Vaasa. Electrification. Completed 2014, EUR 13 millions.
24. Improved capacity and trafficability Tampere-Seinäjoki. EUR 15 million.
25. Increased capacity and trafficability Seinäjoki-Oulu. Completed 2014, EUR 400 millions.
26. Upgrading to highway Jyväskylä-Kiviniemi (national road 4). Completed 2016, EUR 16 millions.
27. Bus improvement Tampere-Jyväskylä. For increased capacity and heavier axle pressures. New traffic places built at Toivola and Lintuportti. Addition track is built at Saakola and Lahdenperä. Completed 2005, EUR 65 millions.
28. Bus improvement Jyväskylä-Uusikaupunki. Increased traffic with new bridges, better crossings, wider road and new passing lanes on this important north-south corridor. Completed 2008, EUR 55 millions.
29. Rebuilding Jyväskylä-Pielisjärvi for higher speed and faster transports. Completed 2013, EUR 150 millions.
30. Bus improvement Helsinki-Kouvola for higher capacity. New safety equipment and heavier axle pressures. Completed 2011, EUR 143 millions.

Figure 3 – Investment plans for the Mid Nordic Region



Figure 4 – Mid Nordic Transport Corridor

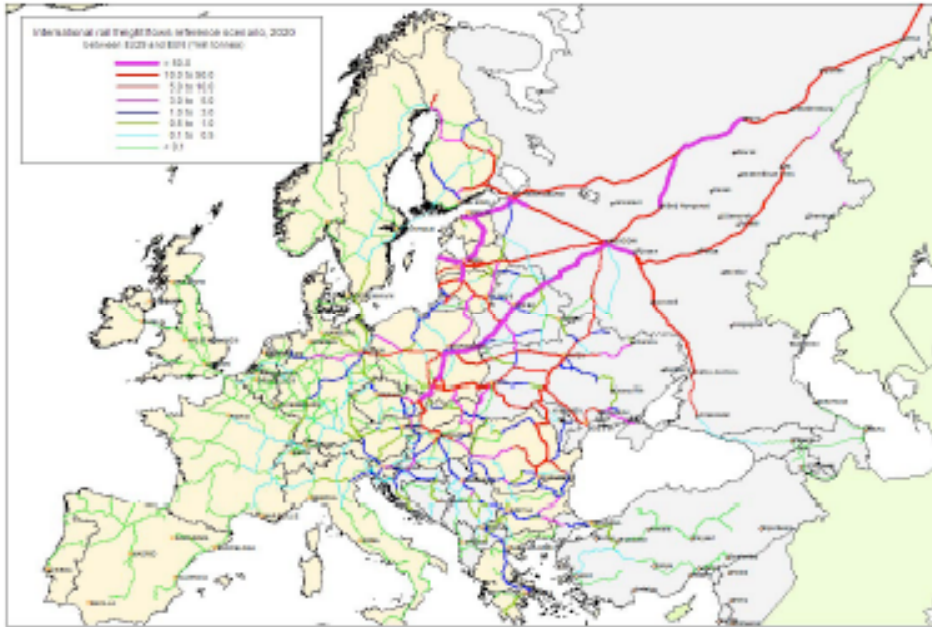


Figure 5 – International traffic volumes between EU and the North-eastern and South-eastern neighbouring countries