



AISCAT position paper on :

**EU consultation on High Level Group's
Report on the Extension
of Major Trans-European Transport Axis
to the Neighbouring Countries**

Rome, February 2006

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1. FOREWORD

The present document is the contribution of AISCAT – the Italian Association of Toll Motorways and Tunnels Operators – to the public consultation launched by the European Commission about Trans-European Networks, in particular concerning their development in order to improve transport connections between EU and neighbouring countries, following the presentation of the High Level Group's Report on the "Extension of Major trans-European Transport Axes to the Neighbouring Countries" in november 2005.

In sharing the objective of the European Commission about the need of setting-up a modern transport policy, that takes into account the new reality of the enlarged Europe, AISCAT confirms its full support in contributing in a concrete way to all open discussions, both on this occasion as well as in future occasions.

Well aware that the direction that has just been taken will be followed by a series of ongoing activities and that the present process will presumably last several years, AISCAT wishes to be present, in accordance to the Community's procedures, throughout the various steps that will be taken and provide its immediate availability for active participation in seminars and debates or further consultations that should be open on the subject.

This support comes with an experience in Italian toll motorways, as described later, that was precursory to PPP initiatives in Europe, if we consider that the first Italian toll motorway was opened in 1925. Accordingly, the PPP scheme, albeit in an early stage, had been developed several years before.

In so doing, it is AISCAT's intention to follow the guidelines set by the European Commission, Directorate General for Energy and Transport, which, in its Communication COM (2003) 132 fin., Part I, "Financial Instruments and more efficient Management Tools for development of Trans-European Transport network", states that " best practises need to be spread and existing regulatory framework needs to be updated in order to encourage PPP solutions, particularly for private investors".

2. AISCAT, ITS MEMBERS AND TOLL MOTORWAYS CONCESSIONS IN ITALY

2.1 AISCAT and its members

AISCAT – the Italian Association of Toll Motorways and Tunnels Operators – was established in 1966. Its objective is the collection and comparison of the experiences and common needs of its members, addressing all issues concerning the planning, construction and operating of motorways and tunnels.

AISCAT's attention has always focused on two key areas:

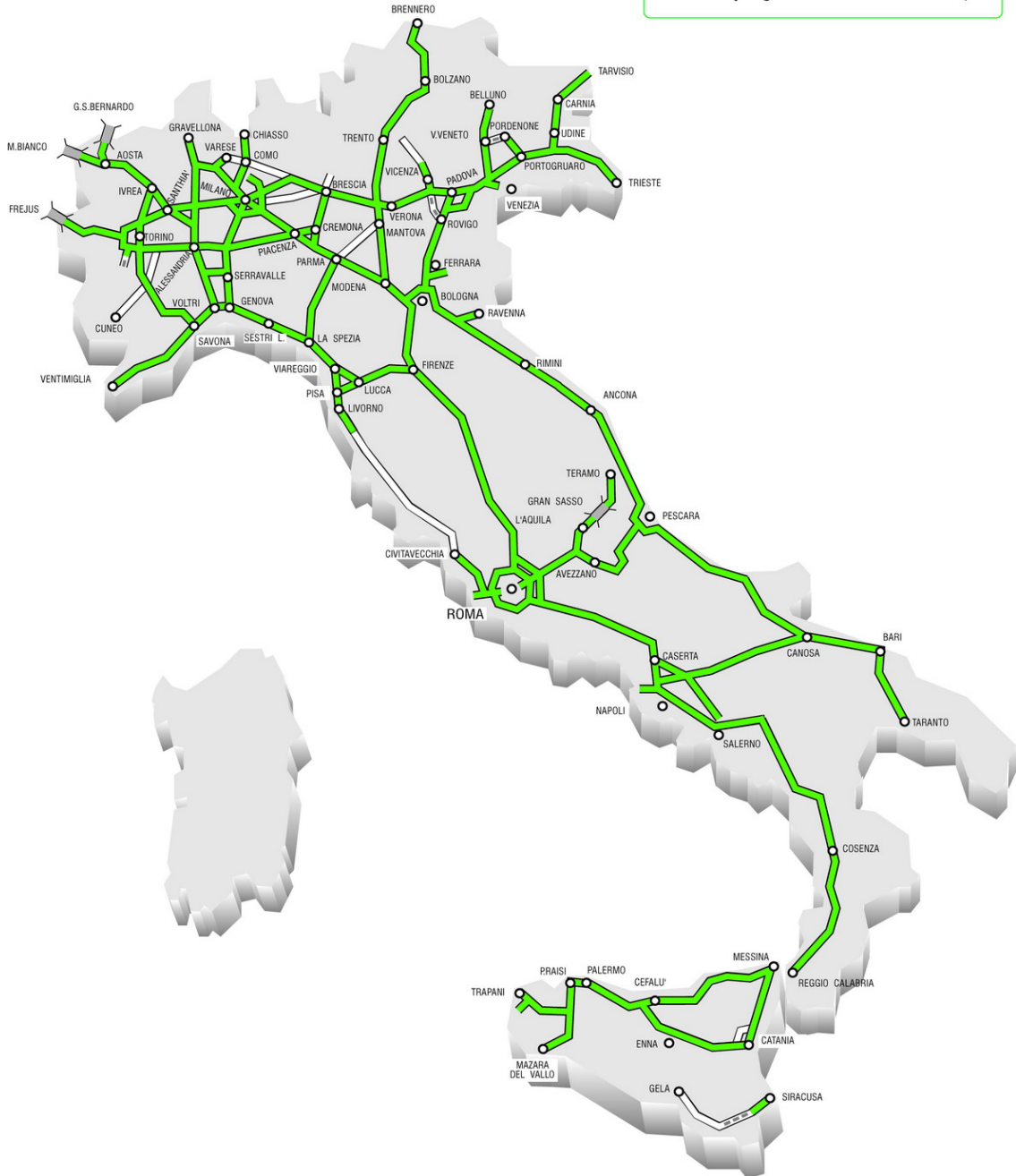
- The harmonisation of members' procedures and behaviour with respect to service operations, relationship with end users and relationship with Public Bodies: all in accordance with the nature of each independent decision making body.
- The promotion of shared positions with respect to the interest and needs of the sector and the subsequent presentation of these to all responsible bodies, both National and International.

The Association's members are companies, entities and consortia that own a concession for the construction and/or management of Italian toll motorways or tunnels; there are currently 23 members, representing approximately 5,600 kilometers of motorway network.


























Rete Autostradale Italiana al 31-12-2004

	in esercizio	Km 6.531,8
	in costruzione	Km 108,7
	in programma	Km 655,2



SOCIETA' CONCESSIONARIE
KM IN ESERCIZIO

	AUTOSTRADHE PER L'ITALIA	2.854,6
	ITALIANA TRAFORO MONTE BIANCO	5,8
	ITALIANA TRAFORO DEL GRAN SAN BERNARDO (S.I.TRA.S.B.)	12,8
	ITALIANA TRAFORO AUTOSTRADALE DEL FREJUS (S.I.T.A.F.)	82,5
	RACCORDO AUTOSTRADALE VALLE D'AOSTA (R.A.V.)	27,0
	AUTOSTRADHE VALDOSTANE (S.A.V.)	67,4
	AUTOSTRADA TORINO-IVREA-VALLE D'AOSTA (A.T.I.V.A.)	152,9
	AUTOSTRADA TORINO-ALESSANDRIA-PIACENZA (S.A.T.A.P.)	291,9
	AUTOSTRADA TORINO-SAVONA	130,9
	MILANO SERRAVALLE - MILANO TANGENZIALI	177,6
	AUTOSTRADHE CENTROPADANE	88,6
	AUTOSTRADA BRESCIA-VERONA-VICENZA-PADOVA	182,5
	AUTOSTRADA DEL BRENNERO	314,0
	AUTOVIE VENETE	180,3
	AUTOSTRADHE DI VENEZIA E PADOVA	41,8
	AUTOSTRADA DEI FIORI	113,3
	AUTOCAMIONALE DELLA CISA	101,0
	AUTOSTRADA LIGURE TOSCANA (S.A.L.T.)	154,9
	AUTOSTRADA TIRRENICA (S.A.T.)	36,6
	STRADA DEI PARCHI	281,4
	TANGENZIALE DI NAPOLI	20,2
	AUTOSTRADHE MERIDIONALI (S.A.M.)	51,6
	CONSORZIO PER LE AUTOSTRADHE SICILIANE	268,2

3. THE CONSULTATION AND ITS 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?

Although the question relates mainly to the planning policies of EU governing bodies, we consider it appropriate to submit the following considerations:

- firstly, any TENs extension should not modify the priorities previously indicated and agreed by the Van Miert HLG;
- secondly, it is important to remind that TENs axes have to be dealt with as multi-modal ones, since transport demand is so high that no transport mode alone can ever be capable to satisfy it. Therefore a strong co-operation amongst all transport modes should be foreseen and this constraint should be taken into account starting from the earliest planning phases, as the transport axes definition.

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?

- With respect to the **recommendations** made by the HLG, we agree with the idea of a general re-visitation of the main axes and priority projects in 2010 (to be then followed by fixed periodic re-visitations), as well as an interim re-visitation in 2008. Indeed, countries that are close to the EU, and specifically countries of Central Europe, have a rather fragmented infrastructural situation – certainly an heterogeneous one vis-à-vis the infrastructure of EU member states – and therefore any initiative in these European areas needs to be continuously monitored and regularly re-visited throughout the work process, its phases and the final results attained. In this respect we would agree with the HLG's approach, where priority projects are broken-down into two categories according to their feasibility and work progress in time.
- As for **horizontal measures** we believe that the exchange of best practices through the organisation of regional seminars (as proposed by the HLG, and with the participation of the European Commission and international financial institutions) would be effective, particularly so in terms of important issues such as public-private financing, infrastructure tolling systems and road safety. In this respect, the development of *twinning actions* with certain countries that are close to the EU would appear effective and AISCAT would be willing to provide its contribution through its know-how and many years' experience in the sector of

motorway concessions in order to foster such twinning actions.

With respect to horizontal measures aimed at the **simplification and facilitation of cross-border procedures**, AISCAT agrees with the HLG's general approach advocating for a progressive elimination of non-physical barriers to facilitate the communication between the authorities of different countries.

Within the context of simplifying trans-border procedures, AISCAT proposes the inclusion of **implementation of traffic management cross-border procedures** among the horizontal measures proposed by the HLG. This could be attained, for example, by way of euro-regional schemes that have proved effective, are co-financed by the European Commission, and have already been successfully used by certain EU regions to contribute to the improvement of traffic management in particularly critical areas of the EU (please refer, for example, to projects such as the ARTS, CENTRICO, SERTI, VIKING, CORVETTE etc.).

In terms of the horizontal measures made by the HLG with respect to road transport, AISCAT fully agrees with the measures aimed at improving **road safety** along the priority axes of international traffic flow, as evidenced by the HLG. AISCAT also agrees with the importance (recognised by the HLG) of annual works and the final conclusions of the road safety Conference held in Verona, providing for the organisation of annual meetings with the participation of representatives from the EU, EU Candidate Countries and Russia. Within this context, AISCAT also wishes to confirm its efforts, as a signatory of the European Road Safety Charter, to sustain a road safety culture and undertake all necessary measures for the improvement of road safety.

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?

We agree with the need, that has more than once been underlined by the GHN, to ensure a clear and transparent legislative and regulatory framework with respect to public tendering for the realisation (with specific reference to the current analysis) of large infrastructure works.

With respect to the HLG's proposal to further investigate the subject of **international cross-border PPP projects**, in consideration of the fact that no proper legislative framework currently exists on the subject matter, AISCAT agrees with the proposal and recommends it be included within the general analysis to be carried out vis-à-vis the Green Paper on PPP - which AISCAT actively participated in.

As to the possibility of creating an **Investment Fund** for the realisation of **principle axes of transport** evidenced in the GHN, and to be financed through a **infrastructure tariff system** based on the distance travelled, we do not wish to rule out the functionality of such a system, but it is an instrument that is not

currently known and the effectiveness of which is still to be tested. We do however believe, especially for the road transport sector, that the tolling system of motorways granted in concession has proved, both in Italy as well as in other European countries, to be the most effective and equitable system not only for financing, but also for the management, maintenance and improvement of infrastructure.

It would thus seem appropriate to fully exploit the potential of the concessionary system, whose effectiveness is fully proven, well known and favourably received by the financial markets, before experimenting systems whose implementation would require important legislative interventions and whose functionality is not tested.

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?

This item does not fall within AISCAT's areas of competence.

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?

This item does not fall within AISCAT's areas of competence.