



**PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE EXTENSION OF THE MAJOR TRANS-EUROPEAN
TRANSPORT AXES TO THE NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES AND REGIONS**

**POSITION OF THE CHAIRMAN
OF CORRIDOR V AND VIII**

- 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?*

Integration of Pan-European Transport Corridors into the five main transport axes as proposed in the HLG report seems to be an efficient solution to further promote territorial cohesion within and outside the current EU borders **bearing in mind that in the meantime the question of coordination and bureaucracy should be carefully dealt with** in order to avoid the burden of a complicated administrative structure slowing down the implementation of the HLG strategy.

We should bear in mind that for the development of other sectoral policies there is always a clear need for programmes and strategies as well as a specific EU regulations (i.e., ERDF-EC Regulation 1260/99, PHARE-EC Regulation 1266/99, ISPA-EC Regulation 1267/99, CARDS-EC Regulation 2666/00, TACIS and future ERDF, IPA and ENPI instruments-EC draft Regulations 492/04, 495/04, 627/04, 628/04) supporting the implementation of these policies, which **clearly identify the managing, evaluating, implementing and monitoring bodies of these strategies that are usually financially supported by using the funds made available by these instruments.**

In the new structure proposed by HLG, the **Corridors** concept is replaced by a new “business unit”, the **Axes**, which is closer to the concept of a network, composed – inter alia – by the Corridors.



The effective function of the new structure depends on the good function of its “backbone network”, which are the Helsinki Corridors, and on the expertise gained by the countries in working closely with each other and with the European Commission in the existing Corridors schemes. **Therefore, it will be of a major importance to keep the Corridors mechanisms alive, although incorporated into broader mechanisms and structures, taking into consideration the work already done by the Steering Committees and Technical Secretariats.**

In the new mechanism based on the priority axes proposed by the HLG, under a more binding document, the eventual Steering Committee of each Axis could be supported by an extended Technical Secretariat (created by the integration of existing Technical Secretariats and newly formed technical units, wherever this is possible and necessary).

A possible managing structure for the five main transport axes proposed in the HLG report could be as follows:

- a) **Steering Committee (SC)**; coordinating body composed of representatives of the authorised Ministries of the countries participating in the priority Axis and Corridors and the European Commission, responsible for the implementation of the Binding Document.
- b) **Technical Secretariats (TS)**; administrative and technical unit, **co-financed by the European Commission and the participating countries**, responsible for (i) the administrative and secretarial support of the Steering Committee; (ii) the coordination of the activities to implement the approved by the Steering Committee Action Plan of the priority Axis and Corridor.

The TS should be co-financed mainly by the European Commission and also with the annual contribution of the participating countries secured by the national budgets. Donations and other contributions for ad-hoc activities are also possible, which shall not be considered as part of the mandated budget contribution of the



participants. The TS could be also integrated within the Government Structures of participating countries.

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?

Regarding the “better organisation” a possible solution could be to hold **regular meetings of the Secretariats considering that they play an important facilitators’ role.** Another efficient tool is that of the questionnaires’ **to be prepared with the assistance of Technical Secretariats.**

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?

Multiannual Financial Action Plans should be prepared by European Commission with the involvement of the Axis and Corridors’ Member States coordinated by the Steering Committees with the support of the Technical Secretariats. The main objective of these multiannual financial action plans should be the clear identification of priority projects to be financed on the track of the given axis and the allocation of the corresponding budget necessary for the implementation of the identified project and for the management of the multilateral bodies (SCs and TSs). Allocation of different financing options and various financial modalities (national / EU / other IFI’s) could efficiently contribute to the acceleration of the implementation.



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?

The existing structures of the Corridors are regulated by Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), documents of good will for cooperation among the interested parties, which do **not constitute adequately binding documents**.

In the new structure the Steering Committee shall coordinate the joint work as far as possible under the documents having a more strict binding character, under which apart from the role and responsibilities of SC and TS their rights and duties should be also emphasised and specified.

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 could provide an adequate framework to binding agreements to be signed in case of different axes, but we have to be aware that it takes a very long time to reach the agreement of Member States on such an instrument.

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