Priority axis No 16 – Ongoing

Freight railway axis
Sines/Algeciras-Madrid-Paris

A high-capacity line, including a new trans-Pyrenean crossing, linking the Sines and Algeciras container terminal ports with the Spanish and French rail networks will significantly increase rail’s share of international freight on this crowded route, improving connections between southern and northern Europe.

What is the axis?

The project aims to develop a high-capacity freight railway axis linking the ports of Algeciras in southern Spain and Sines in south-western Portugal with the centre of the EU. The scheme involves the construction of a new high-capacity rail link across the Pyrenees, connecting the French and Spanish networks. The route, intended for freight, will be built to European gauge, facilitating inter-connection, and will include the construction of a long-distance tunnel. Several routes are under consideration.

Moreover, the twin-track freight line from Sines to Badajoz and twin-track passenger and freight line from Algeciras to Bobadilla will create a new link between southern Spain/Portugal and both Madrid and Lisbon. It complements existing rail, road, maritime and air routes in the western Iberian peninsula, and will link to the main Portuguese and Spanish sections of the trans-European transport network.

In the medium term, completion of the ‘high-speed south-western railway axis’ (see axis No 3) and improvements to the existing lines and terminals at Hendaye and Irún, as well as the development of short-sea shipping, will provide alternatives to road freight. However, in the long term, additional rail-freight capacity will be needed. The construction of this new line will enable rail to achieve a 30 % share of the land transport market in the Pyrenees – although still less than its share of 35–40 % across the Alps.

What is its current status?

Detailed studies are under way on the Sines–Badajoz and Algeciras–Bobadilla rail links, with works expected to start in 2006.

For the trans-Pyrenean link, initial studies and detailed cross-border surveys have been carried out by the neighbouring regions (Aragón, Aquitaine, Midi-Pyrénées) working together through the TCP (Traversée Centrale des Pyrénées) organisation.

The Spanish and French governments have been monitoring traffic flows through the Pyrenees, and the rail link is discussed at the regular summits regarding regional cooperation in the Pyrenees area.

A report on traffic forecasts will soon be completed, and this will be followed by a modelling exercise on prospective traffic flows. In addition, studies of how various routes would mesh with the existing networks will be carried out, before a short list of routes – each of which would then be evaluated for environmental impact – is drawn up.

What are its expected benefits?

The new Sines–Badajoz and Algeciras–Bobadilla lines are critical for the development of the ports of Sines and Algeciras and will foster traffic between Lisbon, Setúbal, Sines and Algeciras, and central Spain and the rest of Europe. Its construction to new higher speed standards, and using dual-gauge sleepers, will enable full interoperability in the future between the Portuguese and Spanish freight networks and the rest of the trans-European rail network. Directly and indirectly, the project will stimulate job creation in the regions concerned.

The new high-capacity rail link across the Pyrenees will complete a major European trade route linking Portugal and Spain with the rest of Europe. By 2001, annual freight traffic from the Iberian peninsula to the rest of Europe had reached 200 million tonnes. Of this, 53 % was carried by road and only 4 % by rail, with the remainder by short-sea shipping. Road traffic was growing at an astonishing rate of more than 10 % per year, with 18 000 heavy goods vehicles crossing the Pyrenees every day. By 2020, overall traffic flows are expected to more than double and road traffic to increase by 100 million tonnes, or 17 000 additional trucks crossing the Pyrenees every day, giving a total of over six million heavy vehicles per year more than today.
### TEN-T PRIORITY AXES AND PROJECTS 2005

#### Priority section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority section</th>
<th>Type of work/status</th>
<th>Distance (km)</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
<th>Total cost as of end 2004 (million EUR)</th>
<th>Investment up to 31.12.2004 (million EUR)</th>
<th>TEN-T contribution, including studies, up to 31.12.2004 (million EUR)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trans-Pyrenean rail link</td>
<td>New line (including long-distance tunnel)</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>2013–20</td>
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<td>New line</td>
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<td>Algeciras–Bobadilla rail link</td>
<td>New line</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td><strong>6 060</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Other priority axes

- **Rail**
  - in preparation
  - under construction
  - completed

- Motorway of the sea
- Road
- Rail