

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR THE TRANS-
EUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORK**

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Introduction

1. The entry into force of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) on 1 November 1993 constitutes a new basis for Community action on transport infrastructures. The provisions concerning trans-European networks provide a new formal framework and give a clearer definition of the aims, prospects and limitations of Community involvement in this field.

According to Title XII of the TEU, the Community shall contribute to the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy infrastructures. In order to achieve this, the Community shall establish a series of guidelines covering the objectives, priorities and broad lines of measures envisaged in the sphere of trans-European networks; these guidelines shall identify projects of common interest (Article 129c, paragraph 1, first indent).

2. The Commission has already begun work to this end in the transport infrastructures sector. In December 1990 the Council of Ministers of Transport welcomed¹ a proposal from the Commission on the European high-speed rail network². Very recently, on 29 October 1993, it adopted, on the proposal of the Commission³, three Council Decisions on trans-European combined transport, road and inland waterway networks⁴. Although the three Decisions were taken on the basis of Article 75 EEC and apply for a limited period only, they nevertheless provide some of the reference documentation and guidelines needed for formulating an integrated approach to Community transport.

As announced in its 1993 work programme, the Commission is to submit to the other institutions, for information, a brief progress report on trans-European transport networks, including in particular a summary of the report of the working party on the

¹ Council Resolution of 17 December 1990, OJ No C 33/1, 8.2.1991

² SEC(90) 2402

³ COM(92) 230 Creation of a European combined transport network and its operating conditions
COM(92) 231 Transport infrastructure
SEC(93) 354 Trans-European networks: towards a master plan for the road network and road traffic

⁴ See paragraphs 6, 7 and 8

conventional rail network and summaries of the Commission services' progress reports on seaports and airports. These reports are available in the form of Commission staff documents⁵.

The importance of these measures: reminder

3. As stated in the White Paper on the future development of the Common Transport Policy⁶, transport infrastructures are essential for the completion and operation of the internal market and for achieving economic and social cohesion in the Community. They are also beneficial for economic growth and employment. The European Councils in Edinburgh and Copenhagen and, more recently, Brussels recognized their full significance and stressed the prime importance of trans-European infrastructure networks for economic recovery in Europe. This significance has been further underlined by the importance placed on the role of transport networks in the Commission White Book on economic growth competitiveness and employment and reflected in the Council conclusions of 10-11 December 1993, which include a first list of strategic projects for which specific actions are foreseen.

In presenting draft guidelines for the various modes of transport, the Commission is pursuing its policy of defining the Community priorities for transport infrastructures.

4. Under the terms of the Council Regulation on the ERDF⁷, the use of the fund in regions eligible under Objective 1 contributes, when the occasion arises, within the framework of investments in infrastructure, to the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the field of transport. The Regulation establishing a cohesion financial instrument⁸ preceding the Regulation on the cohesion fund⁹ is particularly relevant to this objective (Article 130d, TEU). The new temporary mechanism for EIB loans, whose purpose is to speed up the financing of infrastructure projects, also relates to trans-European networks¹⁰.

In another connection, new sources of Community financing will soon be available: the financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area and the European

⁵ Doc. SEC(93)2128 "Report of the conventional rail working group on a Trans-European Rail Network".

Doc. SEC(93)2129 "Working report on ports and Trans-European Networks".

Doc. SEC(93)2127 "Progress report on the guidelines for the Trans-European airport network".

⁶ COM(92) 494

⁷ Council Regulation (EEC) No 2083/93 of 20 July 1993
OJ L 193, 31.7.1993, p. 34

⁸ Council Regulation (EEC) No 792/93 of 30 March 1993
OJ L 79, 1.4.1993, p. 74

⁹ Proposal for a Council Regulation establishing a cohesion financial instrument and draft proposal for a Council Regulation establishing a cohesion fund (COM(92) 599 final)

¹⁰ Cf., for example, the Conclusions of the Presidency of the European Council, Edinburgh, 11 and 12 December 1992

Investment fund.

The guidelines will provide a reference framework both for these financial instruments and for the financial Regulation on transport infrastructures.

The purpose of these measures

5. Initially, the approach will be centred on the various modal networks. It should, however, be borne in mind that, following *ad hoc* consultation between Parliament, the Council and the Commission, the three Council Decisions of 29 October 1993 on the establishment of trans-European networks in the combined transport and inland waterways sectors stipulate that "the Council, acting in accordance with the conditions laid down by the Treaty, shall adopt new rules for trans-European networks in the transport-infrastructure sector along multimodal lines, which shall enter into force not later than 1 July 1995" (Article 3 or Article 4 respectively).

During the Parliament and Council sessions at which the three Decisions were adopted, the Commission stated that

"in its White Paper on the development of a common transport policy, it (had) announced its aim of integrating all the networks relating to the various modes into a single trans-European multimodal network for the carriage of goods and passengers by rail, road, air sea and inland waterway.

The ports, airports and intermodal terminals, together with the combined transport network and coastal shipping, particularly ferry services, will figure prominently in this overall approach. The Commission therefore states that shortly, and by mid-1994 at the latest, it will submit to the other Community institutions outline plans for networks for:

- conventional rail;
- high-speed rail (updated plan);
- ports;
- airports;
- other combined transport terminals,

at the same time as the initial elements for integrating all the networks into a multimodal system."¹¹

The main objectives of these networks is to ensure the proper functioning of the internal market through the sustainable mobility of citizens and goods and the strengthening of

¹¹ Commission statement incorporated in the minutes of the European Parliament sitting of 25 October 1993 and the Council meeting of 29 October 1993.

economic and social cohesion.

To achieve these objectives requires Community action to develop the networks, the absence of which mean that, at present, some areas of the Community remain isolated or underdeveloped. With the same objective in mind, actions will be undertaken to improve interconnections of existing national networks (completion of missing links) in order to optimise their efficiency at a Community level.

Progress to date and future work

To achieve the above, the Commission is planning the following:

(A) Plans for existing networks

6. The trans-European combined transport network

The trans-European network for combined goods transport was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 29 October 1993¹², to apply until 30 June 1995, and is to comprise:

- railways
- inland waterways
- transshipment facilities between rail, road, inland waterway and sea transport.

It is to cover the whole of the Community territory.

The Council Decision setting up the network provides for two stages of six and twelve years respectively; the aim is to improve railways to enable containers and swap bodies to be transported and to set up efficient, purpose-built terminals (intermodal transfer centres) in Europe. The Decision also provides for specific rolling stock to be introduced - a measure unique to combined transport.

The combined transport network will be re-examined (updated) in the light of the limited validity of the Decision. Specific further action will have to be taken to improve terminals, and the network will form part of the future multimodal transport system.

¹² Council Decision of 29 October 1993 (93/628/EEC) on the creation of a trans-European combined transport network
OJ No L 305 of 10 December 1993

7. The trans-European road network

The master plan, adopted on 29 October 1993¹³ and to apply until 30 June 1995, provides for the installation and operation of a network of some 55 000 km of high-standard links across Europe, consisting primarily of 12 000 km of motorways or high-quality roads to be constructed or begun within the next ten years, 40% of them in peripheral Member States of the Community.

The Council has also paved the way for cooperation and exchanges of information at Community level between the authorities responsible for traffic management, implying that traffic control systems must be technically and operationally compatible and making it possible to develop large-scale road telematics systems, for example.

Further thought is currently being given to new approaches to such matters as traffic management, the extension of the network to EFTA countries and those in Central and Eastern Europe, increasing mobility, the impact on regional development and the environment, and the financing of all these measures.

These aspects, plus the integration of the network into a multi-modal system, will have to be taken into account when the network is reviewed during the first semester of 1994.

8. The trans-European inland waterway network

The Council Decision of 29 October 1993¹⁴, also to apply until 30 June 1995, provides for a coherent and interoperable network of waterways to be developed over a ten-year period on major goods transport routes, to serve industrial zones and conurbations and providing links with major seaports. The Decision includes a list of missing links and bottlenecks requiring priority action.

The network will have to be re-examined during the first semester of 1994, when nodes (river ports) will need to be defined to ensure better integration into the future multimodal system. Special attention will also be given to telematic technologies as a means of improving the management of the network.

9. The trans-European high-speed train network

In December 1990 the Council welcomed a proposal from the Commission concerning a high-speed train network. At the same time it asked the Commission to enlarge on the socio-economic impact of the network and its effects on the environment and to continue analysing key links, identified as priorities for

¹³ Council Decision of 29 October 1993 (93/629/EEC) on the creation of a trans-European road network
OJ No L 305 of 10 December 1993

¹⁴ Council Decision of 29 October 1993 (93/630/EEC) on the creation of a trans-European inland waterway network
OJ No L 305 of 10 December 1993

Community action.

The various studies have been completed, and a second report with a new proposal for the network, in line with the multimodal approach, is in preparation.

(B) New plans under preparation

Three reports on three planned networks have been compiled¹⁵. These are as follows:

10. The trans-European conventional rail network

During work on the development of a conventional trans-European rail network, it was established that the rail infrastructure forms a single entity. The contribution made by rail services to Community transport policy on trans-European networks must therefore be based on the basic rail network, which includes the high-speed network, lines used for freight transport (and hence for combined transport services) and a number of other lines used chiefly for access to the above networks or to provide multimodal connections.

For passenger transport, the priority will be to connect major routes to urban, suburban and regional transport systems and to link major airports to the rail network, the aim being to set up a multimodal network for European citizens.

Where goods transport is concerned, there are already rail/road terminals and river ports connected with the rail network. These will need to be extended to Community regions which are currently less well-served in this respect. The Community's major seaports will also require access to the rail network of suitable capacity and technical standard.

The network currently serves the Member States of the Community and neighbouring EFTA countries. Extension of the network to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and to other neighbouring countries in eastern and south-eastern Europe (Balkans) is felt to be needed as quickly as possible.

The report of the working group also mentions priority schemes for the further development of the network.

The possible impact of railway privatization on infrastructure planning also needs to be taken into consideration.

¹⁵ Doc. SEC(93)2128 "Report of the conventional rail working group on a Trans-European Rail Network".
Doc. SEC(93)2129 "Working report on ports and Trans-European Networks".
Doc. SEC(93)2127 "Progress report on the guidelines for the Trans-European airport network".

11. Airports

The Commission, in close collaboration with the Member States and following preliminary consultation of the parties concerned, has drawn up an initial set of draft guidelines for the establishment of a trans-European airport network.

The document begins by analysing the status of air transport and airports in the overall Community transport system, stressing their fundamental role of linking the Community airport network to networks in the rest of the world. It goes on to describe the current characteristics of and outlook for the demand for air transport and airport infrastructures.

The document also specifies the main functions to be fulfilled by a Community airport network and the status of each airport within the network in the light of its various functions, which are to:

- provide a link with the Community and world networks;
- provide a link with the main regions of the Community;
- provide access to the heart of the network and open it up.

These functions are expressed as quantitative and qualitative criteria, enabling the various components of the network to be identified. These are broken down into Community, regional and accessibility components and are termed common-interest airports.

The document on the establishment of the trans-European airport network explains the thinking behind airport policy, its aims and its priorities.

12. Seaports

The Working Report on suggested Guidelines for Ports and trans-European Networks explains the importance of ports and maritime transport to the Community and their role in the development of trans-European networks. It states that the objectives of the Guidelines are to improve the position of ports in the transport chain and the efficiency of port operations, so that ports and maritime transport can:

- facilitate intra- and extra-Community trade;
- help to relieve congested land corridors by promoting maritime and other environmentally-friendly modes of transport;
- improve accessibility and strengthen economic and social cohesion.

It explains why there are advantages in concentrating on identifying and implementing a series of port and port-related projects of common interest, which may involve the port areas or their maritime or hinterland access arrangements.

The projects identified are mature and economically viable and capable of making an early contribution to the establishment of a Community transport system. The report

therefore suggests a number of measures for ensuring that the projects receive priority treatment from the Member States and the Community where appropriate. It also suggests a number of background studies on ports and maritime transport flows in Europe which will provide a framework for considering subsequent projects of common interest as part of a rolling programme, which could be reviewed every two years.

13. Network and traffic management

For the adequate, efficient and safe use of the physical infrastructure of the trans-European transport network, its management needs to be improved. The major upgrading measures required for air, maritime, rail and road transport will also have to involve the intensive use of tools and services offered by information and telecommunication technologies, in addition to organisational, administrative, legal and other measures.

In order to address these challenges, the Community has launched major Research and Development programmes under the 2nd and 3rd Framework Programmes. The encouraging results now emerging mean that steps can be taken to exploit the use of these tools.

Evolving telematics tools for the road transport network based on different communication media such as the radio data system-traffic message channel of broadcasting, the cellular mobile telephony and short range two-way communications open new possibilities for efficient use of the network. The technical developments and the Council decision of 29 October 1993 on the trans-European road network encourage the Commission to prepare an action plan for the road network and traffic management.

The present incompatibilities of national railway networks are major technical barriers to trans-European rail services. Recent technical developments in particular for High Speed Trains, offer the interoperability tools which should be incorporated into railway management as soon as they become available.

Similarly, the request for better surveillance of vessels in European waters carrying dangerous goods resulted in the preparation of an action plan on Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) which will be ready by 1994.

Congestion in air traffic is to a large extent caused by the incompatibility of the traffic management system. The Commission intends to address this problem by presenting guidelines for air traffic management.

The deployment of Telematics tools and services for network and traffic management requires an identification of the supportive measures that transport and telecommunications policies could provide; they include the interconnection of the Telematic networks and traffic management systems so that the interoperability of the

corresponding equipment via appropriate standardisation efforts is accomplished. They shall provide easy and non-discriminatory access for operators and users to these new services; in addition they shall assess the impact on European Industry.

As an example, such supportive measures will include the preparation of a general radio navigation plan for Europe, including earthbound and satellite-based systems.

The Commission, taking these considerations into account, will therefore propose, during 1994, an action plan for the deployment of transport telematics tools.

14. Interoperability

Work on the various plans will be accompanied by whatever measures prove necessary to guarantee network interoperability, particularly where technical harmonization is concerned (Article 129c, paragraph 1, second indent, TEU). One of these is a draft proposal for a Council Directive, currently under preparation, on the interoperability of the European high-speed train network.

Conclusion

15. The Commission will, as promised, come up with the guidelines listed in item 5 of this communication by mid-1994. These and the other tasks mentioned above will, as far as possible, be integrated into a multimodal transport network approach to be implemented over a course of time. This approach also comprises strategic environmental impact assessments for which however a standard methodology must be developed.

To enable a set of rules in this area to take effect by 1 July 1995, the Commission, aware of the time it takes to complete the codecision procedure, intends to present a multimodal framework during the first semester 1994.

These proposals will be followed by the back-up work needed to guarantee interoperability, particularly on harmonizing technical standards, and to ensure that there is cooperation with non-member countries, and by a Regulation specifying the financial support to be given by the Community.