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Institutional Cooperation

19 January 2016

Opinion

Institutional Cooperation – TEN-T

Context / Opportunity: Policy Development on Core Network Corridors of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)

Subject: Opinion on the “Issues Papers” in the scope of Core Network Corridors of TEN-T, presented by DGMOVE/EC Letter, dated on 8 January 2016, with the reference “MOVE B1/HR/GS/ac(2016)113656”

Addressee: DGMOVE/EC (through the Atlantic Corridor Consultant’s Team)

I. FRAMEWORK

1. The present Opinion states the position of the Portuguese Authority for Mobility and Transport (AMT) on the “Issues Papers” about the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Core Network Corridors, presented by the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DGMOVE) of the European Commission (EC), for a first-round contributions, through the Letter, dated on 8 January 2016, with the reference “MOVE B1/HR/GS/ac(2016)113656”.

2. The “Issues Papers” target to facilitate the identification and implementation of the full range of TEN-T project categories on core network corridors, beyond traditional infrastructure projects, and stimulate action within the corridor approach to advance relevant transport policy objectives.

They aim to help to identify, in corridor work plans, pilot actions, R&I and other innovative projects ready for deployment, as well as to suggest forward-looking ideas / concepts, of technical, legal, administrative or organization nature, which could be promoted through the joint “TEN-T / transport policy” approach, and also point out obstacles currently hindering such integrative and innovative approaches at project and policy levels and possible ways to overcome them.

There are five concrete “Issues papers”, one for each of the following subjects:

- Enabling multimodal and efficient freight transport logistics;
- Intelligent transport systems;
- New technologies and Innovation for TEN-T;
- Urban nodes / Urban mobility;
- Cooperation with third countries.

II. OPINION

3. As a cross component regarding to all matters in the scope of this Opinion of AMT, every action that boosts and speed up the investment, removing bottlenecks for the timely implementation of key sustainable projects for the conclusion of the TEN-T network, enhancing the added value for the EU economy and assuring a sustainable mobility, in the framework of social and territorial cohesion, as well as developing and consolidating the European Union (EU) Transport Single Market, as a competitive market, shall be primely supported.

4. This is supported in the key importance to fully implement the TEN-T, according to the schedule and requisites of Regulation (EU) 1315/2013, of 11 December 2013, on EU guidelines for the development of the TEN-T, in the scope of an effective Single European Transport Area and a competitive and resource efficient European mobility and transport ecosystem, which is a vital element to accomplish the EU Internal Market, economic growth, job creation and for the quality of life of the European citizens.

5. The improvement of mobility, using high quality transport and logistic services, based on efficient infrastructures and telematics, must go in pace with socioeconomic and territorial cohesion and ecological and energetic efficiency objectives, namely in what concerns to the emission reduction targets and resilience and mitigation of climate changes effects.

This addresses, as referenced in the 2011 (EC) White Paper on Transport, the importance to achieve an efficient core network for multimodal intercity travel and transport, in a global level-playing field for long-distance travel and intercontinental freight, and a cleaner urban transport and commuting reality, materializing the previous referenced Single European Transport Area, based on innovation, in particular in technology and behaviour, as well as on modernization of the infrastructure, smart pricing and funding.

6. Also, the achievement of a fully competitive environment on the ecosystem for mobility and transport, should be supported in the building of a paradigm of undistorted competition - meaning without restrictions neither distortions - protecting the public value of mobility, as well as promoting a dynamic and resilient balance between investors, users/professionals/clients and tax payers/citizens.

II.1 HORIZONTAL COMMENTS FOR THE FIVE ISSUES PAPERS

7. With the new regulations on TEN-T guidelines and its financial instrument (CEF-Connecting Europe Facility), immediately operationalized by Communication COM(2013) 940 final on Building the Transport Core Network: Core Network Corridors and CEF, that led to the preparation and approval of the first generation of the Core Network Corridors Work Plans, that are now being in a revision process and will add new dimensions to the analysis, the promotion of the discussion around main issues of the TEN-T, linked with relevant transport policy issues, is of key importance and constitute a main opportunity in the present, and thus we greet and welcome this EC initiative.

8. Also, the creation of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), along with the publication, in June 2015, of the Action Plan on Making the Best Use of New Financial Schemes for European Transport Infrastructure Projects (Christophersen/Bodewig/Secchi Report), as well as the Fraunhofer Study on the Cost of Non-Completion of TEN-T, add key elements to this wider reflection.

9. The deepening of this discussion, involving a wide range of stakeholders, among all the TEN-T geographical and horizontal corridors, is expected to expand project pipelines and focus on EU financial support (CEF, EFSI and other sources), take advantage of the corridors' process, enhance awareness, spread best / innovative practices along and across corridors, and advance infrastructure and policy development through a reciprocal interaction.

The Papers are expected to include namely common policy challenges, recommendations for project generation, pilot actions and R&I deployment depending on maturity, that will then be discussed in the Transport Ministers Councils meetings, foreseen for April and June of this year, potentially constituting these Papers as key reference documents on priorities for TEN-T deployment in the following years.

10. In this background, we agree, in general terms, with the topics identified in the five “Issues Papers”, although we consider that, some horizontal improvements could help the achievements of the documents, namely:

- They would benefit to be more concrete and, at the same time, not only restricted to the five “issues”;
- They should make use of the work produced and results achieved in the scope of the Core Network Corridors, namely corridor studies, project lists and work plans, in an integrated way for the full TEN-T, namely in what concerns to best / innovative practices and key issues, crossed with the findings of the Christophersen/Bodewig/Secchi Report and the Fraunhofer Study;
- Ponder a fast track to integrate the results of the Core Network Corridors studies and work plans conclusions in the working / program documents of EU financial instruments, notably in CEF, for example adjustments on eligibility criteria regarding types of interventions in the Core Network Corridors aligned with the findings of the referred Corridors’ studies / work plans.

11. Next, there will be presented the suggestions that we consider more relevant regarding the specific “Issues Papers” subjects, under the principle of opportunity in the scope of action of AMT.

II.2 SPECIFIC COMMENTS REGARDING THE ISSUE PAPER ON “ENABLING MULTIMODAL AND EFFICIENT FREIGHT TRANSPORT LOGISTICS”

12. We agree with the unsustainability in the long term of the congestion in the scope of the continuous increase of road transport volumes, also with negative impact on the environment and high fuel consumption, and the need for a more balanced and integrated use of all transport modes. Although, when mentioning other modes considered more sustainable and holding available capacities, not only rail and inland waterways should be referred, but also, explicitly, the maritime transport, notably, in the context of the EU territory and neighbouring third countries, the Short Sea Shipping and the Motorways of the Sea.

13. We also fully agree with the following findings referenced in the document:

- Multimodal and smart freight transport logistics can provide important benefits, such as a better capacity and infrastructure utilisation, and the reduction of negative effects on freight transport;

- Transport policy supports multimodal and smart freight transport logistics through setting the right regulatory framework conditions, hand in hand with removing technical and administrative barriers and investing into necessary infrastructure and the intelligent use of available resources and capacities;
- TEN-T policy can contribute to the enhanced uptake of multimodal transport in combination with smart logistics through the intelligent use of the existing infrastructure and the closing of infrastructure gaps, both defined from a freight transport user perspective;
- The aim of TEN-T policy in establishing a network of integrated multimodal freight transport corridors backed up by a functioning and well maintained physical and digital infrastructure, including nodal points, and in combination with intelligent management systems for managing the traffic, infrastructure and cargo flows throughout the corridors.

14. In this scope, and besides the continuous improvement of each telematic application, the deepening of an integrated approach to the telematic applications involving the several modes and freight transport services, is a key issue, thinking in a comprehensive corridor and network dimension.

Particularly, the development and implementation of the concept of the Logistic Single Window, duly supported in the IT systems from different modes and integrating the all logistic chain, with common standards, is a main step for the creation of an appropriate framework to allow tracking and tracing of goods in real time, ensuring multimodal interoperability and promoting cleaner freight transports.

For this, major potentials can be found enlarging and/or articulating port community systems concepts with the rest of the logistic chain, namely with logistic platforms / rail-road terminals, road and rail infrastructure managers and operators, as well as with the Rail Freight Corridors structures.

II.3 SPECIFIC COMMENTS REGARDING THE ISSUE PAPER ON “COOPERATION WITH THIRD COUNTRIES”

15. As referred in the Issue Paper, transport is by nature international and transport relations and developments beyond the EU borders include all modes.

While the external dimension of transport has mostly been developed in the past years as the extension of internal EU transport policy and, as regards the TEN-T, as an extension of the network to the neighbouring countries, the document identify new challenges ahead, namely beyond immediate neighbours like Western Balkans and Turkey, that can represent a bridge towards the neighbours of our neighbours, and the recently adopted “Connectivity Platform” that represents a first step towards a joint vision of the future connections between EU, and Europe in wider terms, Central Asia and China.

Although, no reference is made to the Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership (TTIP), that could be an issue that might deserve to be considered. In fact, the removal of trade barriers with USA would boost and facilitate the transactions of goods and services, as well as investment in both economies (EU and USA), that for sure will have a relevant impact on mobility and transport, mainly but not limited to maritime and air transport, and so, in transport policy and TEN-T.

The inclusion of the TTIP subject should not forget its three main elements: market access, improved regulatory coherence and cooperation, and improved cooperation regarding the setting of international standards.

16. The cooperation in the scope of current TEN-T neighbourhood has been based on three pillars: Candidate countries (Western Balkans and Turkey), Eastern Partnership countries, and Euromed countries and the ones belonging to the Northern Dimension Partnership.

A comprehensive EU transport policy and TEN-T, notably when considering new challenges, should also not forget the cooperation between the outermost territories of EU and its neighbours.

Particularly, in Macaronesia region (which integrates three EU territories – Madeira, Azores and Canary Islands), Cape Verde can play an interesting partnership role with EU, namely in the transport policy and TEN-T, notably in what concerns to Motorways of the Sea and supply chain issues around the use of marine cleaner fuels, like Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), and, in this way, could be considered in the scope of cooperation with third countries.

II.4 OTHER ISSUES PAPERS

17. Besides our agreement in general terms and the horizontal comments referred previously (Section II.1 of this Opinion), we don't have specific comments on "Intelligent Transport Systems", "New Technologies and Innovation for TEN-T" and "Urban Nodes / Urban Mobility", only stressing the pertinence to speed up the concretization of a structured articulation between CEF and the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (HORIZON 2020).

III. CONCLUSIONS

18. AMT welcomes the "Paper Issues" initiative of DGMOVE/EC and considers the discussion around the European transport policy and TEN-T topics fully opportune, taking in account that is an important action to ponder ways to speed up investments, remove bottlenecks and achieve the conclusion of the TEN-T network, that is a key element for consolidating the European Union (EU) Transport Single Market.

19. Despite we agree with the general topics around the "Issues Papers", there is space for improvements:

- Either horizontally for the 5 Papers, namely a greater concretization, together with not being so subject restricted, and integrating the findings of the previous work done among the Corridors' structures and other recent reports/studies in the framework of TEN-T and investments (see Section II.1 of this Opinion);
- Either specifically, for the topics of enabling multimodal and efficient freight transport logistics and cooperation with third countries, were respectively some suggestions are presented (as Sections II.2 and II.3 of this Opinion) regarding the implementation of the Logistic Single Window, duly supported in integrated IT systems from different modes and integrating the all logistic chain, and regarding the consideration of cooperation with neighbouring countries in the Macaronesia region.

20. The achievement of the European Union (EU) Transport Single Market is a vital element to accomplish the EU Internal Market and its benefits like economic growth, job creation and a better quality of life for the European citizens.

This should be supported in an efficient and effective European ecosystem for mobility and transport, working on a paradigm of undistorted competition, without restrictions neither distortions, protecting the public value of mobility, as well as promoting a dynamic and resilient balance between investors, users/professionals/clients and tax payers/citizens.

Lisboa, 19th January, 2016

President of the Board

João Carvalho