



## Minutes of Meeting

### Scandinavian Mediterranean Core Network Corridor session during the Connecting Europe Days

Friday, 5 April 2024, 11:00-13:00  
Square Conference Centre, Brussels - Silver Hall

TIME	SUBJECT
1	Opening and welcome by Pat Cox, European Coordinator
2	Main changes in the revised TEN-T Regulation by Martin Zeitler – Advisor to the European Coordinator
3	Corridor Studies by Uwe Sondermann - Lead Consultant KombiConsult
4	Panel discussion: The impact of the revised TEN-T Regulation on the corridor - Moderator: Pat Cox; Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marjukka Vihavainen-Pitkanen – Senior Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finland</li><li>• Siamak Jalali – Desk Officer at the Swedish Ministry of Rural Affairs and Infrastructure, Sweden</li><li>• Paal Iversen - Senior adviser, Ministry of Transport, Norway</li><li>• Kristoffer Bang Refberg – Adviser EU Affairs, TEN-T, CEF, Ministry of transport, Denmark</li><li>• Stefanie Schröder – HoU, Trans-European Networks, Federal Ministry of Digital and Transport, Germany</li><li>• Claudius Popescu – Department of Infrastructure Planning, Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Austria</li><li>• Federica Polce – HoU TEN-T and multimodal corridors, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, Italy</li><li>• David Sutton – Chief Officer, Ministry of Transport, Malta</li></ul>
5	Q/A - Involvement of Participants
6	Closing Remarks / Next Steps

#### Opening and welcome by Pat Cox, European Coordinator

The European Coordinator welcomed the participants and speakers. He explained that this is not a closed corridor forum but a corridor meeting open to all attendants of the Connecting Europe Days.

Subsequently Pat Cox presented (see [Annex 1](#)) key messages from the recent Coordinators' Position Paper titled „CONNECTING EUROPE - A transport financing that is adapted to the challenges ahead“. The paper is presented by all eleven TEN-T Coordinators to share their experiences, express their views on the challenges for EU transport infrastructure policy and to provide a set of recommendations on workable solutions for ensuring effective funding for the EU transport infrastructure network. The

purpose of that report (that builds on previous iterations) is to provide further guidance to EU Institutions and to Member States at this crucial moment for the completion of the TEN-T and while a new European Parliament and Commission take their place in 2024. The aim is to identify key needs and challenges and propose recommendations to augment overall investment in transport infrastructure, to contribute to preparations for the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) as well as to highlight the significance of funding transport infrastructure and its EU added value.

The various exogeneous shocks of the recent past - Brexit, COVID, the war in Ukraine and now in the Middle East – have revealed how vulnerable Europe is. Military mobility is still very much constrained. Extreme weather events due to climate change are increasingly affecting the continent with growing economic impacts, while the infrastructure is not yet adapted to these new conditions.

In order to become resilient, both to the changing geopolitical environment and to the changing climate will require mobilizing sufficient financial resources, both private and public. The report provides several recommendations to this end.

The first part of the report shows that the costs for the realisation of the TEN-T core network by 2030 are estimated at around EUR 515 bn. Additionally the investment needs to implement the new TEN-T requirements for the core network and for the completion of the extended core network are estimated at approximately EUR 330 bn until 2040 bringing the total to EUR 845 bn during the next fifteen years.

- Around EUR 110 bn of this total remains to be invested into our main cross-border projects, including for Fehmarn Belt fixed link, the Lyon-Turin Base Tunnel, the Seine-Escaut canal, Rail Baltica and the Brenner Base Tunnel.
- Another EUR 100 bn of this would be needed for complete the national major projects with EU relevance along the corridors.
- Additional costs will arise for making the network more resilient, smarter, more digital and greener, e.g., when considering the IPCC and EEA Reports on mitigation of climate risks.

The second part of the report deals with the way forward to complete the TEN-T and recommends among others:

- Public authorities to offer legal certainty to investors by creating a more stable investment framework and implementing market reforms based for example on the new possibilities offered by the TEN-T regulation i.e. the implementing decisions.
- Internalisation of external costs and positive external economies to make green investments more attractive.
- Increased use of cross-financing, earmarking transport revenues for transport investments.
- Exploring possibilities to increase EU 'own resources', through the wider application of the polluter pays and user pays principles, e.g., via the Eurovignette, or through ETS.
- Harmonising and simplifying conditionalities of EU funding instruments to make EU funding schemes more transparent and accessible to external stakeholders.
- Making EU funding instruments more transversal – across policy domains e.g. transport, energy and digital networks.

The third part of the report looks at transport funding under the next multiannual financial framework: It especially recommends:

- To focus centrally managed EU grant schemes such as CEF towards projects with highest EU added value (cross-border, military mobility, interoperability) and assure the appropriate budgetary envelopes while

- The “RRF-style” performance-based funding approach should be applied more broadly, in particular for national transport investments (such as national sections of the TEN-T), alternative fuels infrastructure and climate resilience.
- Blending private with public investments should be further promoted.

The European Coordinators look very much forward to discussing this report with all stakeholders in the near future and to work together on implementing its recommendations to the benefit of a fully functional, resilient and interoperable TEN-T network.

### **Main changes in the revised TEN-T Regulation by Martin Zeitler – Advisor to the European Coordinator**

Martin Zeitler (see presentation in [Annex 2](#)) recapitulated the milestones in the TEN-T revision process since December 2021 culminating in the political agreement reached between the co-legislators on 18 December 2023 as well as the positive votes which shall be completed with the EP Plenary vote in April 2024 so that the Regulation may enter into force in May 2024. The new regulation aims to address new political and societal challenges, to raise the network benefits and improve the integration and functioning of the urban and transport nodes, reinforce the infrastructure quality requirements for better services and to strengthen the governance of TEN-T. The revised network is therefore made of core, extended core and comprehensive parts which are to be completed in three steps (2030, 2040 and 2050 respectively). The integration of former Rail Freight and TEN-T Corridors brought the new European Transport Corridors (ETC) which will get a strengthened governance structure and reinforced infrastructure standards. The number of urban nodes has significantly increased. Urban nodes are required to adopt sustainable urban mobility plans and to develop their multimodal passenger and freight hubs.

### **Corridor Studies by Uwe Sondermann, Lead Consultant of the Corridor Studies, KombiConsult**

Uwe Sondermann introduced (see presentation in [Annex 3](#)) the main geographical modifications which result from the revised TEN-T Regulation which are to add the Finnish “East Link” Lontoranta – Porvoo - Kouvola fast rail connection, the direct (Stockholm -) Hallsberg – Oslo rail connection, the urban node of Frankfurt am Main to the corridor, the Pisa – Rome coast line for freight and the Messina bridge. He also presented the resulting figures in terms of kilometres of rail (now about 12.600), road (almost 9.000), airports and seaports (each 33) and urban nodes where we count 74 instead of 21 in the 2013-Regulation. Uwe informed that the stakeholders will be involved through the corridor forum meetings – the November 2024 one providing the status quo-analysis, working group meeting and in particular when updating the project list in January 2025 and when drafting the elements of the new generation Work Plans in autumn 2025.

### **Panel discussion: The impact of the revised TEN-T Regulation on the corridor**

Pat Cox invited the panellists to make a 5 minute presentation on the major issues relevant to the country and the ScanMed corridor

- **Marjukka Vihavainen-Pitkanen** – Senior Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finland, reported about the geopolitical changes and their impact in the Baltics Sea area. Already during the COVID-19 pandemic but even more after the Russian aggression on the Ukraine Finland has become a landlocked country losing much of its traditional hinterland. Via the ports around the Bothnian sea the Baltic sea has become its lifeline with a higher importance of military mobility (the NATO accession one year ago being only one signal). In this respect Finland welcomes the opportunities that the revised TEN-T regulation provides for fostering such topics.

- **Siamak Jalali** –Ministry of Rural Affairs and Infrastructure, Sweden, reported that also Sweden is reacting to the changed geopolitical order, underlining the importance of the Nordic Triangle linking the capitals of the three countries and that Sweden now is a “transit country” in the context of both trade and military mobility. Sweden is observing a new industrialization in the north as well as a reinforced whole-of-society preparedness in the other regions of the country.
- **Paal Iversen** - Senior adviser, Ministry of Transport, Norway stated that, following the EEA agreement, Norway is committed to a full TEN-T implementation and that he is glad to share the objectives towards zero emissions vehicles: all new passenger cars and light vans and all new city busses by 2025, all new heavy vans, 75% of new long-distance buses and 50% of new lorries by 2030. These goals are achieved since 9 of 10 new cars are already zero-emission. This became possible since Norway is a user but not producer of vehicles and has set up incentives such as exemption from purchase tax, free toll roads, VAT exemption, investment support, requirements in public procurement and installation of charging stations since decades. Finally the car producers have understood and started delivering vehicles accordingly. Electrification of some maritime services has started (see presentation in [Annex 4](#)).
- **Kristoffer Bang Refberg** – Adviser EU Affairs, TEN-T, CEF, Ministry of transport, Denmark stressed the importance of the alternative fuels supply rollout across the Union, that Denmark supports the extension of the TEN-T to neighbouring countries and that he is convinced that the integration of the Rail Freight and TEN-T Corridors into the new European Transport Corridors will contribute to the realisation of the TEN-T. The Fehmarn Belt Fixed Link is one of the Flagship projects due to be completed in the year 2029. Works have been started with Euro 6m spent every day. Denmark is grateful for having received an Euro 1.4bn finance from CEF for the rail part of the link.
- **Stefanie Schröder** – HoU, Trans-European Networks, Federal Ministry of Digital and Transport, Germany, stated that she is happy with the ETC, too. She took the opportunity to clarify that the decision of the Federal Constitutional Court (BVerfG) which prevented to exploit non-used of COVID-19 recovery funds for transport projects does not affect the realisation of Germanies TEN-T projects which are to be financed from the annual budget. In the light of that she confirmed that the Fehmarn Belt hinterland connections in Germany are progressing with plan approval of certain section in March 2024. Germany has also applied for CEF in the last call.
- **Claudius Popescu** – Department of Infrastructure Planning, Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Austria reminded the participants that the TEN-T objectives are minimum requirements that the respective infrastructure has to fulfil by 2030/2040 respectively but that the targets may be outperformed both in terms of value and their timing. Austria’s new rail infrastructure on the main corridors is built for 25 t axle load, more then only one slot per two hours and direction shall be made available for 740m freight trains ((base case scenario: two train paths per hour and direction) and ETCS may be installed before 2030. Design speed will be over 160 km/h for passenger respectively over 100 km/h for freight trains on the Brenner corridor<sup>1</sup>. Achieving the operational requirements, however, may be a challenge since it need cooperation of all involved stakeholders.
- **Federica Polce** – Head of Unit TEN-T and multimodal corridors, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, Italy, reported on the Resilience and Recovery Fund (RRF) projects and other relevant national investments progressing on the Scan Med Corridor. In 2023 Italy submitted a modified RRF with total cost of Euro 194.4bn of which Euro 22,8 bn are focusing on investments in sustainable transport infrastructure and support the deployment of railway infrastructure. Three projects on the ScanMed

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<sup>1</sup> In the Brenner base tunnel (BBT) for passenger trains 250 km/h, in the Lower Inn Valley 220 km/h and for freight trains 120 km/h in the BBT and depending on the train weight 100/120 km/h in the Lower Inn Valley.

corridor were highlighted for a total length of 119 km of rail infrastructure to be completed by 2026: 49 km on the Napoli – Bari High-speed line, 33 km of rail infrastructure on the Salerno – Reggio Calabria line and two lots for the doubling of existing line of Messina -Catania - Palermo line in Sicily (37km). Further five measures concern ERMS deployments, strengthening urban nodes, electrification, resilience and technology improvements in the South of Italy, railway stations as well as special economic zones. Other activities concern the Brenner Base Tunnel and its access routes, the Messina bridge and ports and green investments. She highlighted the importance of the tool which allows a full scale implementation, created leverage effects and has positive impacts on the appeal and capacity of rail (see document in [Annex 5](#)).

- **David Sutton** – Chief Officer, Ministry of Transport, Malta, informed that global challenges are affecting the traditional trade routes in which Malta plays an important role with its central mediterranean hub in Marsaxlokk, where about 3 million TEU are transhipped annually and Euro 320m were invested by Freeport Malta, though. After COVID-19, the Russian aggression in the Ukraine and the conflict in the Red Sea that latter has made seven out of ten shipping lines to re-route their vessels via Cape of Good Hope which is a plus of 9.000 nautical miles or 50 days.

The European Coordinator thanked the contributors for their presentation rapped up the presentation and concluded the meeting at 13:00.

For the Minutes of Meeting: Uwe Sondermann

Annexes: Document/Presentations as marked above including those which were not used in the meeting but are attached for illustration purposes herewith