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**NOTE**

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Subject: TEN-T Days (20-22 June 2016) - Declaration of Rotterdam

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In view of the meeting of the Working Party on Transport Intermodal Questions and Networks on 13 June 2016, delegations will find attached a revised draft text on the above-mentioned subject.

Changes compared to ST 8900/16 are highlighted in **bold** and ~~striketrough~~.

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**DECLARATION**  
**Implementing the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)**  
**TEN-T Days 2016**  
Rotterdam

**Introduction**

A modern and efficient European transport system is critical to ensure the smooth functioning of the internal market and facilitate trade in goods and services across Europe. It is also essential to enhance Europe's links with other parts of the world and to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion with the specific objectives of allowing the seamless, safe and sustainable mobility of persons and goods. Transport infrastructure is not only the backbone of a well-functioning European economy. ~~Transport infrastructure;~~ **it** also shapes mobility behaviours and solutions and, thereby, constitutes an indispensable basis for the achievement of our common transport policy objectives.

European transport policy provides an essential contribution to the EU's "Jobs, Growth and Investment" agenda. It also aims to further strengthen EU competitiveness within the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy. Furthermore, TEN-T policy supports the objectives of the Investment Plan for Europe (**'Juncker Plan'**) launched by the European Commission in June 2015. **It also has an important part to play in the follow-up to the COP21 Paris Climate Agreement, with a view to facilitating the transition to a low and zero-emissions transport and mobility system.**

Considering that overall investments in transport infrastructure have clearly shown a downward trend in the course of the past few decades, it is essential to reconcile investment needs with a strong financial commitment from all parties involved to ensure that Europe remains a forward looking continent that seeks to promote creative solutions for smart and sustainable mobility and optimal use of infrastructure.

## **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)**

The Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) aims to accelerate investments in projects with high European added value in transport, energy and telecommunications. The CEF puts a strong emphasis on a competitive selection process, innovative financing solutions and sectoral synergies, in order to leverage funding from public and private sources, contributing to the long-term competitiveness and growth of the European economy. Since its launch, the CEF has clearly demonstrated that the demand for funding of transport projects far exceeds the availability of grants. Grants are targeted towards projects that offer the highest European added value, focusing in particular on cross-border missing links, bottlenecks and multimodal connections.

Furthermore, the absorption of funds available under the CEF Cohesion envelope has been exemplary, **indicating that there is a real need for funding of transport projects and that the EU response has been rapid and effective.** It is estimated that by the evaluation of the third call for proposals, all the remaining funds will be fully committed to transport infrastructure projects with high EU added value.

Following the establishment of the Investment Plan for Europe, the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) was launched to mobilise at least €15 billion of additional investments across Europe. The EFSI addresses market gaps and mobilises private ~~liquidity~~ **capital** in support of strategic investments in key areas such as transport infrastructure. EFSI contributes towards the financing of transport projects. However, there are also many projects, including economically robust projects, which lack the financial viability to be financed by innovative instruments alone.

~~In such cases,~~ **Combining EFSI funds with CEF grants ("blending" of financial instruments) may** create new opportunities to unlock additional private investments to support the implementation of the TEN-T, whilst optimising use of the EU budget. **This approach should contribute to the realisation of the TEN-T core and comprehensive networks by 2030 and 2050 and the acceleration of sustainable transport solutions.** The mid-term review of the Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020 **could in this regard** provides a timely opportunity to reconsider **priorities and available funding resources for transport-related infrastructure** ~~the CEF financial envelopes.~~

~~Increasing the availability of CEF grants and blending such funding with innovative instruments under the EFSI would create additional means to boost infrastructure development and sustainable transport solutions. This would help to achieve the objectives of both the TEN-T core and comprehensive networks by 2030 and 2050.~~

### **TEN-T core network corridor work plans**

The first TEN-T core network corridor work plans were approved by the Member States in May 2015. They ~~serve as a basis~~ **give focus to** ~~for Member States and other investors to secure relevant financial resources to support~~ investments in the TEN-T network ~~in a coordinated manner~~ and **aim** to ensure best value for money. This includes investments in projects to **promote** ~~boost~~ the competitiveness of rail freight, in particular ~~through~~ **in** the development of Rail Freight Corridors, ~~and to address rail noise~~. Investments are also geared towards the deployment of ERTMS, ~~which is essential in order~~ to ensure the emergence of a fully interoperable European railway network. Furthermore, investments **also** cover ~~areas such as~~ inland navigation, intelligent transport systems, ~~clean~~ **alternative** fuels, urban nodes and multi-modal terminals as well as the enabling of seamless multi-modal chains and digital solutions for freight and passengers. This creates unique opportunities for the **TEN-T** core network corridors to become front-runners of a ~~future-oriented~~ **forward-looking** transport system, including innovative **technologies and** mobility solutions, and to effectively contribute to the decarbonisation of transport **and the reduction of external costs**.

### **European TEN-T coordinators**

The European TEN-T coordinators contribute to **the implementation of the core network corridors, facilitating cooperation** ~~the reinforcement of governance structures~~ at European, national **and regional** ~~and local~~ level, promoting project maturity and smooth cross-border implementation, with the aim of developing seamless, interoperable, multimodal transport networks across Europe. **This important role of the coordinators may extend to other areas.**

The following conclusions drawn by the coordinators offer the potential to boost the integration of infrastructure development and transport policy objectives, thereby stimulating the evolution towards a forward-looking European transport system:

1. to enhance multi-modality and efficient freight logistics, terminal infrastructure, terminal accessibility and relevant ICT infrastructure need to be developed from a reinforced corridor-wide perspective, as well as with a better integration of user needs and demand forecasts; corridors should serve as test cases for the digitalisation **and automation** of freight transport;
2. to **promote** ~~ensure~~ the coordinated deployment of **Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)** along the **TEN-T** core network corridors, **by facilitating cooperation between** ~~based on comprehensive deployment plans in all~~ Member States;
3. to promote innovation and the deployment of new technologies in transport, making optimal use of the results of research and development activities, in particular along the core network corridors;
4. to exploit the full potential of **alternatively fuelled vehicles and vessels** ~~propulsion systems~~ - biofuels, electric, hydrogen and natural gas – and the corresponding **recharging/ and refueling** infrastructure to achieve the objective of decarbonising transport; national policy frameworks of the Member States, **as per Directive 2014/94/EU<sup>1</sup>**, should be highly ambitious, cooperation across national borders should be reinforced and the market take-up of alternative fuels should be stimulated through pilot actions along the core network corridors;
5. to improve "last mile" connections for people and freight, whereby urban nodes should be better integrated into the core network corridors; sustainable urban mobility plans are of vital importance to achieve this objective, making best possible use of multi-level governance;
6. to ensure continuity of the TEN-T **network** and its **core network** corridors in different geographical areas and thereby to facilitate trade; international cooperation between the EU **and its Member States** and third countries on transport infrastructure development should be strengthened, including the development of common standards.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2014/94/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure.

## Streamlining the regulatory framework

The 2015 Christophersen-Bodewig-Secchi ~~Action Plan~~**Report** contains twelve recommendations contributing to the effective implementation of projects along the TEN-T. Some of the recommendations clearly identified **potential** bottlenecks in the current legal framework. The European Commission is conducting a detailed study into the regulatory and administrative procedures that impact upon the realisation of TEN-T core network projects, in particular waterborne and cross-border projects. The results of the Commission study will be presented in the autumn of 2016, taking stock of good practices and where necessary identifying ways to simplify and streamline procedures for projects of common interest **with a view to ~~and to~~ creating** an improved regulatory framework for investments in the TEN-T.

### Considering the above, Ministers:

- (1) REAFFIRM the importance of the ~~full and timely~~ implementation of the TEN-T **network as a key driver for ~~contributing~~, sustainable growth, ~~and~~ jobs, competitiveness and territorial cohesion** in the European Union.
- (2) EMBRACE the corridor approach and the horizontal priorities as crucial instruments to ~~ensure~~**promote** coordinated investments and efficient cooperation along strategic transport axes **and between respective Member States in order to ensure a proper implementation of the TEN-T core network.**
- (3) UNDERLINE the need to **ensure interoperability and to** develop multimodality and efficient freight logistics, **innovative and** intelligent transport systems, urban nodes and ~~clean~~**alternatively fuelled vehicles and vessels and the related infrastructure** along the **TEN-T core network corridors and other parts of the TEN-T core network, including “last mile” connections, ~~in line with~~ taking into account the corridor work plans and the recommendations of the European TEN-T Coordinators; thereby contributing to the decarbonisation of transport, reducing the environmental impact of the transport sector and increasing its competitiveness.**

- (4) WELCOME the work undertaken by the European TEN-T **coordinators** to **further** develop the corridor work plans and to ~~advance~~ **facilitate** cross-border projects situated on the **TEN-T** core network corridors. ~~as well as the various declarations agreed to that effect in Rotterdam.~~
- (4a) TAKE NOTE of the presentation of a detailed implementation plan for Motorways of the Sea that is aligned with the **TEN-T** core network corridors and contributes to a sustainable, smart and integrated maritime dimension of the TEN-T.
- (5) **REITERATE support for SUPPORT the deployment of ERTMS, in welcoming the development of** the new deployment plan for ERTMS that ~~will~~ **should** allow for a more targetted investment strategy **based on a sound economic model** leading to an interoperable internal rail market and **underlining** the importance of the stability of ERTMS specifications in the deployment phase.
- (6) **ENCOURAGE cooperation between the TEN-T core network corridors and the Rail Freight Corridors in order to alleviate infrastructure bottlenecks along these corridors and to provide expertise for the elaboration of the work plans and the implementation of the TEN-T infrastructure requirements.**
- (7) **COMMEND the efforts made by the Commission's efforts to further** improve the competitive strength of rail transport and the functioning and integration of **the Rail Freight Corridors.**
- (8) ~~RECOGNISE~~ **ACKNOWLEDGE** the need **to find** ~~to address rail noise issues, by aligning noise related national plans with the envisaged~~ appropriate solutions to tackle the issue of rail noise ~~and refraining from introducing unilateral national measures affecting in~~ the Single European Rail Area.

- (9) UNDERLINE the importance of promoting the use of inland navigation, ~~in particular~~ by tackling key bottlenecks on the **TEN-T** core network corridors, as recommended by the European Court of Auditors Report, **providing support for the greening of the fleet** and promoting the deployment of River Information Services (RIS).
- (10) ~~INVITE TAKE NOTE of the~~ ~~to incorporate the findings of their~~ Issue Papers **prepared by the European TEN-T coordinators which contribute to the further development of** ~~in~~ the corridor work plans.
- (11) ~~REAFFIRM the importance of building and operating transport infrastructure and efficient networks as a key driver for growth, jobs, and competitiveness.~~
- (11a) **ACKNOWLEDGE the importance of connecting the TEN-T core network to the infrastructure networks of neighbouring countries, including Motorways of the Sea, focusing on the efficiency of cross-border connections to promote seamless traffic and transport flows.**
- (12) ~~RECOGNISE that considerable investment needs have been identified to complete the TEN-T network and~~ that TEN-T projects generally have a direct, verifiable and long-term effect on growth and jobs and benefit the competitiveness of the EU as a whole **and that the management of funds through the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) is proving to be effective.**
- (13) UNDERLINE the ~~undiminished~~ and significant need for additional funding from public and private sources to cover ~~estimated~~ investments in the TEN-T network, **which according to estimates by the European Commission exceed €500 billion until 2020, as well as the €1.5 trillion of investment needs until 2030<sup>2</sup>.**

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility (recital 15).



- (14) ~~ACKNOWLEDGE~~**INVITE** the Commission, Member States and the European Parliament to take into account the considerable level of investments still needed to complete the TEN-T network in this regard the importance of finding ways to **promote** reinforce the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) in **the framework of** the mid-term review of the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) **and beyond** in order to drive forward the investments identified on the TEN-T network.
- (15) **UNDERLINE** the need to fully exploit the financing possibilities offered by the European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI), focusing on projects that can attract private financing and complementing the funding of the EU instruments in place, **thereby taking into account budgetary constraints within Member States.**
- (16) ~~HIGHLIGHT~~**ACKNOWLEDGE** the need to **make use of the** further develop possibilities to blend funding and financing for TEN-T projects that have a higher risk profile, **underlining the importance of promoting a wide exchange of best practices in this regard.**
- (17) **STRESS** the importance to further **explore** diversify the **alternative** financing sources for infrastructure development, ~~and in particular to explore~~ **including** opportunities for cross-financing and to mobilise alternative resources, ~~including electronic charging for the use of infrastructure.~~
- (18) ~~ENCOURAGE~~ Member States to take into account the needs of the CEF in the oncoming MFF with a view to completing the TEN-T.

- (19) INVITE the Commission to present an updated assessment of the TEN-T project portfolio by the TEN-T Days 2017 at the latest, **taking note of** ~~based upon~~ the results of the ~~Fraunhofer~~ study **on the cost of non-completion of the TEN-T of 15 June 2015**<sup>3</sup> and the **proposals for the new revised** corridor work plans, in order to present new detailed figures **concerning potential impact** on growth and jobs, including decarbonisation of transport.
- (20) RECOGNISE **that the Third Pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe provides an opportunity to streamline** ~~the complexity of~~ **European** procedural requirements relating in particular to public procurement provisions and ~~other authorisations, including State aid rules;~~ and CALL for **the development and implementation of improved** ~~simpler, faster and better~~ coordinated procedures on such topics, **with the objective of facilitating the implementation of projects.**
- (21) CALL on the European Commission to assess various ways to simplify procedures for projects of common interest on the **TEN-T** core network.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/studies/doc/2015-06-fraunhofer-cost-of-non-completion-of-the-ten-t.pdf>.