



## **Response from the European Forum of Northern Sweden, to the EC Green Paper (COM 2009/0044) TEN-T: A Policy review TOWARDS A BETTER INTEGRATED TRANSEUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORK AT THE SERVICE OF THE COMMON TRANSPORT POLICY**

The European Forum of Northern Sweden welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the consultation of the EC Green Paper (COM 2009/0044) on TEN-T Policy, which was published on February 4, 2009. The standpoints and opinions in this response to the green paper is the result of a continuous process between political representatives for the regions and local authorities in northern Sweden.

### **The European Forum of Northern Sweden**

The European Forum of Northern Sweden (EFNS) is a network of politicians from the four northernmost counties in Sweden, representing almost 900 000 citizens and half the geographical area of Sweden. A group of 12 rapporteurs manages the regular work of EFNS.

### **The Transport Infrastructure Context of Northern Sweden**

Even though large areas in northern Sweden are sparsely populated, there are significant urban areas along the coast line of the Gulf of Bothnia. Most of the Swedish paper and pulp industry is located in northern Sweden, as well as processing of metals, wooden-products, and chemical industry. A critical success factor for the mining industry as well as for the wood industry is the presence of well functional freight transports systems. The current infrastructure is insufficient for the industrial need, in both northern Sweden and Finland. The railways have not enough volume and weight capacity. Several new railway lines need to be built in order to satisfy the need of the industry as well as for commuting and tourism.

Sweden and Finland are among the world leaders in exports of wood and wooden products. The value of the Swedish wood export was in 2008 approx. €12 billion and in Finland €11 billion. The wood-industry's share of the total export in Sweden was 13 % and in Finland as  
In both these countries, 70-80 % of the production is exported to other EU member states. The share of the total employment in this branch is 10-12 %. In the EU 10 % of the total consumption of paper and 20 % of processed wooden products, come from Sweden.

In Sweden there are 15 large mines and 12 of these is in northern Sweden. Some of these mines produce as much as 90 % of the need of iron ore in EU member states is produced in Sweden. Northern Sweden is also the biggest producer of gold and the second biggest producer of copper, silver and lead. New very large resources of iron ore have been discovered in Tornedalen at the boarder of Sweden and Finland. The new mines to be established will drastically increase the production of iron ore and generate at least 1500 jobs in this area. Both for the wood and mining industry there is a risk that the growth will be hampered by insufficient transport infrastructure. Unreliable freight transports may also affect the industry and growth in the rest of Europe.

Even though a large part of the industry in northern Sweden are based on natural resources there is a strong growth in tourism, the service sector, research and other knowledge intensive businesses. Efficient public transports and options for commuting are essential for supporting the growth potential in new businesses and facilitating skills supply in the knowledge-based sector.

Reliable, accessible and comprehensive infrastructure is a critical success factor for northern Sweden as well as for the rest of Europe. In order to achieve common goals for growth, employment, competitiveness and sustainability as agreed in the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas, competitive and sustainable transport solutions are an absolute necessity. The implication is that a continuous development of the railways and ports should have the highest priority. For northern Sweden, also roads and regional airports are important for public transports as well as for cargo.

### **Summary of the EFNS response to the issues in the green paper:**

The European Forum of Northern Sweden (EFNS) support the proposed alternative no 3, proposing a retained comprehensive network and a core network, under the condition that the core network is designed for supporting environmental and climate goals as well as objectives for cohesion, growth and sustainable development not only in the "Pentagon area" of Europe.

EFNS considers the alternative three to be an opportunity to create a core network for improvement of the supply of raw materials and products from northern Europe, to the main European markets. The core network should also support the need for efficient railway transports to Norway and Russia, via the Bothnian Corridor in northern Sweden and Finland.

EFNS urges for a realistic level of ambitions in the revised TEN-T guidelines. There is a risk that the consultation leads to expectations on TEN-T to cover every possible need. The priorities should be primarily based on environmental- and climate effects and secondarily on growth and cohesion between EU regions and member states.

EFNS suggests that the comprehensive network for roads should be co-ordinated with the well-established E classification conducted by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). This would facilitate design, planning and evaluation of the comprehensive TEN-T network at international as well as European and national levels. It would also make the comprehensive network more visible to the citizens.

EFNS proposes that TEN-T should stimulate the implementation of ERTMS in order to increase capacity on current railways, through a special instrument within TEN-T or included in the conceptual pillar of a core network.

EFNS believes it is important that TEN-T give the member states incentives for long-term investments in environmental friendly infrastructure, such as railways and sea transports. This demand for a much better co-ordination of infrastructure planning between regional and national level and the common European level.

## **The European Forum of Northern Sweden response to each question in the green paper**

**Q1: Should the Commission's assessment of TEN-T development to date cover any other factors?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Consider that the EC has performed a fair analysis of the status of TEN-T, but at the same time the EC is ambiguous about whether TEN-T is a success or failure. With only four out of 30 priority projects completed, we believe there is room for self-criticism what regards levels of ambitions, definition of objectives and evaluation of TEN-T. There are obvious reasons for considering clear goals, and improved balance between ambitions and resources as well as stronger commitments from the member states.
- Agree that the revision of TEN-T guidelines should be more extensively than originally planned. With changing prerequisites what regards environment, climate change, expected demand for transports and the extension of the European Union.
- Recommend that more attention be paid to factors such as territorial cohesion, industrial growth, and sustainable development in all EU regions. The assessment should be performed with the perspective of achieving a balanced development in Europe with equal opportunities to regional growth, regardless of proximity to the European central markets.
- Urge the EC to listen to the regions of EU in all phases of the upcoming process of forming new TEN-T guidelines.

**Q2: What further arguments are there for or against maintaining the comprehensive network, and how could the respective disadvantages of each approach be overcome?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Consider that the comprehensive network is needed also in the future, and to a greater extent should function as the basis for regional and national priorities.
- Is of the opinion that, even though member states have the overall responsibility to finance the comprehensive network, it is important to retain funding from TEN-T yearly calls for specific measures, trans-boarder measures and innovative projects.
- Suggest that the comprehensive network for roads should be co-ordinated with the well-established E classification conducted by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), in all EU member states. This would facilitate design, planning and evaluation of the comprehensive TEN-T network at international as well as European and national levels. For Sweden it is only one E-classified route, E12 between Umeå and Mo i Rana (Norway) that is not included in TEN-T. Besides less administration, a benefit from this would be that the TEN-T network would be more transparent and visible to the citizens.

**Q3: Would this kind of priority network approach be better than the current priority projects approach? If not, why not and what are the particular strengths of the latter? If so, what (further) benefits could it bring, and how should it be developed?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Believe that a shift to a priority network instead of priority projects is preferable first of all because the priority part of TEN-T, would be more evident, provided that the priority network only is developed as a way to solve embarrassing congestions on the infrastructure in the so called pentagon of Europe.
- Consider that in a priority network special attentions should be paid to need for improved infrastructure for long distance freight transports.
- Believe that a priority network is better suited than priority projects for solving multimodal needs of transports, especially in areas with production of basic resources for the need of rest of Europe and the world.
- Consider that environmental friendly transports such as railways and sea transports should have the highest priority, in the design of the priority network.
- Propose that a priority network should be a way of integrating the current priority projects with the five transnational transport corridors (Com 2007/32). In Scandinavia, this means that the Bothnian Corridor in both Sweden and Finland should connect the Nordic Triangle (project no 12) to the northernmost branch of Northern Axis.

**Q4: Would this kind of flexible approach to identifying projects of common interest be appropriate for a policy that, traditionally, largely rests on Member States' individual infrastructure investment decisions? What further advantages and disadvantages could it have, and how could it best be reflected in planning at Community level?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Consider the proposal of conceptual pillar to be interesting but in need of clarification for the future process of designing the core network. If the priority network will be set up with a geographical part and a conceptual part, it would be obvious to include overall projects such as Galileo and Motorways of the Sea as conceptual. ITS and ERTMS for optimizing use of current railway capacity could be included in the conceptual part.
- Propose that the EC initiatives on green transport corridors and a priority freight network should be included in the conceptual pillar.

**Q5: How can the different aspects outlined above be best taken into account within the overall concept of future TEN-T development? What further aspects should be taken into consideration?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Believe it is important that the TEN-T give the member states incentives for long-term investments in environmental friendly infrastructure, such as railways and sea transports. This demand for a much better co-ordination of infrastructure planning between regional and national level and the common European level.
- Consider optimizing capacity on current railway infrastructure to be of uttermost importance. On some lines, double tracks while most railways suffer from lack of this and difficulties to combine different types of train transports. If resources should be spent on high-speed tracks, it is important that this be done with the perspective of release capacity also for freight transports.

- Put forward that foreseen future need of natural resources and following expansion of cargo flows should be considered in the planning of the TEN-T network. In northern Sweden several new mines for iron ore will be opened in the next coming years which demand for investments in ports and hinterland connections
- Point out that ports important for export/import to the rest of the world also are located outside the EU area. Especially Norwegian ports, such as Oslo, Trondheim, Bodö, Mo i Rana and Narvik, with its hinterland connections by roads and railways are of very great importance for the whole of northern Europe. This should be considered in TEN-T.
- Urge for a realistic level of ambitions in the revised TEN-T guidelines. There is a risk that the consultation leads to expectations on TEN-T to cover every possible need. The priorities should be primarily based on environmental and climate effects and secondarily on growth and cohesion between EU regions and member states.

**Q6: How can ITS, as a part of the TEN-T, enhance the functioning of the transport system? How can investment in Galileo and EGNOS be translated into efficiency gains and optimum balancing of transport demand? How can ITS contribute to the development of a multi-modal TEN-T? How can existing opportunities within the framework of TEN-T funding be strengthened in order to best support the implementation of the ERTMS European deployment plan during the next period of the financial perspectives?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Consider investment in new technology for maximizing the capacity on current infrastructure to be important. This is especially true for railways where cost of investments in physical infrastructure is very high.
- Propose that TEN-T should stimulate the implementation of ERTMS in order to increase capacity on current railways, through a special instrument within TEN-T or included in the conceptual pillar of a core network.

**Q7: Do shifting borderlines between infrastructure and vehicles or between infrastructure provision and the way it is used call for the concept of an (infrastructure) project of common interest to be widened? If so, how should this concept be defined?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Believe research on new technology for both infrastructure and vehicles, such as alternative fuels should be given a higher priority in the EU research and competitiveness framework programmes (FP7/8 and CIP). Projects within TEN-T could function as test objects for new technology but TEN-T should not directly finance research.
- Suggest that special measures should be considered in TEN-T, for the converting of train engines to ERTMS.

**Q8: Would this kind of core network be "feasible" at Community level, and what would be its advantages and disadvantages? What methods should be applied for its conception?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Believe that the suggested core network is possible to realize on community level, but it demands a much better co-ordination between EU level and national as well as regional levels.
- regard that the realization of a common core network calls for better co-ordination with other EC initiatives in the field of transport, such as the five transnational axes (COM(2007) 32), green transport corridors and priority freight network (COM(2007) 608)
- Consider that the basis for the proposed core network should be climate friendly transnational goods transport infrastructure with the highest priority for railways, sea transports and intelligent transport systems.

**Q9: How can the financial needs of TEN-T as a whole in the short, medium and long term be established? What form of financing – public or private, Community or national – best suits what aspects of TEN-T development?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Believe it would be reasonable with a more binding commitment for each member state, but would also like to suggest the development of common recommendations on the application of member states responsibility for securing long term financing of infrastructure
- Suggest the criteria for TEN-T financing in the priority network as well as for the comprehensive network to be clarified. The division of responsibility between the EC and member states for the different networks also needs clarifying
- Put forward that one of the most important functions of TEN-T should be to give clear incentives for investments on regional and national levels, for the benefit of the whole EU community.

**Q10: What assistance can be given to Member States to help them fund and deliver projects under their responsibility? Should private sector involvement in infrastructure delivery be further encouraged? If so, how?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Consider it would be positive if common agreements or recommendation on how EIB financing resources should be utilised in each member states. This is especially important for large projects with long-term economic and environmental benefits.
- Have the opinion that infrastructure should be a commitment for the society, neutral to competition, for facilitating industrial growth, employment and social cohesion.
- Consider that industry should be involved in the planning of infrastructure and through commitment of use of infrastructure contribute to financing. However, co-financing from the private sector should not lead to skew distribution of societal funding favouring already beneficial areas.

**Q11: What are the strengths and weaknesses of existing Community financial instruments, and are new ones needed (including "innovative" instruments)? How could the combined use of funds from various Community resources be streamlined to support TEN-T implementation?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Favour improvement of co-ordination between different financial instruments. It is also important that the criteria for the possible use of structural funds be clarified in the structural funds directives.
- Stress that the type of cost/benefit analyses for projects of common interest that is suggested must take into consideration all other factors which are included in the basis for TEN-T, such as environment, climate effects, stimulation of growth and cohesion. The proposed analysis should not apply a narrow business perspective, which could lead to the turn down of project with important long-term positive effects for the society and the community.

**Q12: How could existing non-financial instruments be improved and what new ones might be introduced?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Support a higher degree of co-ordination between community, national and regional levels.
- Suggest that changes in the current state aid rules should be considered for making it possible to stimulate the establishment of important transport links, which today is not possible to manage on commercial basis. This is applicable for some ferry connections in northern Europe, which have the potential of reducing freight volumes on roads by modal shift.
- Put forward the importance of co-ordination of infrastructure with connecting third countries, such as Norway and Russia, in order to facilitate the implementation of the transnational axes and improvement of east-west transport connections.
- Stress the importance of the Baltic Sea Strategy as a tool for coordination of infrastructure planning and investments in northern Europe.

**Q13: Which of these options is the most suitable, and for what reason?**

**From the European Forum of Northern Sweden we:**

- Support the proposed alternative 3, with a comprehensive network and a core network, under the condition that the core network is designed for supporting environmental- and climate goals as well as objectives for cohesion, growth and sustainable development not only in the "Pentagon area" of Europe.
- Consider the alternative three to be an opportunity to create a core network for improvement of the supply of raw materials and products from northern Europe, to the main European markets. The core network should also support the need for efficient railway transports to Norway and Russia, via the Bothnian Corridor in northern Sweden and Finland.

The political rapporteurs of the European Forum of Northern Sweden have adopted this response to the EC Green Paper on TEN-T Policy review.

Harriet Classon  
City Commissioner, Skellefteå  
Main rapporteur for infrastructure

Jens Nilsson  
Mayor, City of Östersund  
Chair of EFNS Rapporteurs

Robert Forsberg  
Mayor, City of Kalix  
Rapporteur for infrastructure

Ewa-May Karlsson  
Mayor, Vindelns Municipality  
Vice chair of EFNS Rapporteurs

Benny Eriksson  
County Council Commissioner, Västernorrland  
Rapporteur for infrastructure

Glenn Nordlund  
City Commissioner, Örnsköldsvik

Thomas Andersson  
County Councillor, Jämtland

Jonny Lundin  
City Commissioner, Härnösand

Kent Ögren  
County Council Commissioner, Norrbotten

Mona-Lisa Norrman  
County Council Commissioner, Jämtland

Britt Fäldt  
Municipality Councillor, Piteå

Erik Bergkvist  
Regional Commissioner, Västerbotten

Administrative contact for this response is:

Gustav Malmqvist, Head of International Affairs, County Council of Västernorrland

E-mail: [gustav.y.malmqvist@lvn.se](mailto:gustav.y.malmqvist@lvn.se), Phone +46-70-6630442

For further information on the European Forum of Northern Sweden: [www.europaforum.nu](http://www.europaforum.nu)