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Monitoring developments in pan-European transport networks – The European Commission briefing on the progress made in developing the Trans-European Transport Network

The European Commission briefing on the progress made in developing the Trans-European Transport Network

Submitted by the European Commission and the secretariat

1. The European Commission announced on 28 March 2012 the projects selected to receive over €160 million in EU co-financing from the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) programme to continue improving transport infrastructure across the EU. The 26 selected projects would use the EU's financial support to speed up the implementation of important priorities of the TEN-T Programme in order to contribute to delivering a safe, competitive and efficient transport infrastructure network.
2. The 2011 Multi-Annual Programme Call granted €161.3 million in total funding and aimed to finance the highest priorities of the TEN-T network, focusing on three fields:
 - (a) Motorways of the Sea (MoS – TEN-T Priority Project 21), providing viable alternatives for congested roads by shifting freight to sea routes – 7 projects selected, €47.8 million in funding;
 - (b) River Information Services (RIS), involving traffic management infrastructure on the inland waterway network – 4 projects selected, €10.2 million in funding;
 - (c) European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) – 15 projects selected, €103.3 million in funding.
3. The TEN-T Executive Agency, which is entrusted with the financial and project management of the TEN-T programme, received 47 eligible proposals. 26 of these were selected, after a meticulous selection procedure, as the ones best meeting the criteria set out in the 2011 Multi-Annual Call, which was published on 28 June 2011.

4. The selected projects, whose objectives range from improving viable, regular and reliable sea-based transport services in Motorways of the Sea to equipping trains and lines with the most advanced version of ERTMS, involve 21 member States. The grants will also help to mobilize substantial public and private financing.
5. The TEN-T network consists of two layers: a core network to be completed by 2030 and a comprehensive network feeding into this, to be completed by 2050. The comprehensive network will ensure full coverage of the EU and accessibility of all regions. The core network will prioritize the most important links and nodes of the TEN-T, to be fully functional until 2030. Both layers include all transport modes: road, rail, air, inland waterways and maritime transport, as well as intermodal platforms.
6. The TEN-T guidelines set common requirements for the TEN-T infrastructure – with tougher requirements for the core network. This will ensure fluent transport operations throughout the network. The policy also fosters the implementation of traffic management systems which will allow optimizing the use of infrastructure and, by increasing efficiency and supporting innovative propulsion technologies, reducing CO2 emissions.
7. The Commission proposed creating corridors to facilitate the implementation of the core network, covering the most important cross-border projects. Ten corridors will provide the basis for the coordinated development of infrastructure within the core network. Covering at least 3 modes, 3 EU member States and 2 cross-border sections, these corridors will bring together the EU member States concerned, as well as the relevant stakeholders, for example infrastructure managers and users. European coordinators will chair "corridor platforms" that will bring together all the stakeholders — these will be a major instrument to guarantee coordination, cooperation and transparency.
8. The core network will connect:
 - (a) 83 main European ports with rail and road links;
 - (b) 37 key airports with rail connections into major cities;
 - (c) 15,000 km of railway line upgraded to high speed;
 - (d) 35 cross border projects to reduce bottlenecks.
9. In January 2013 the deadline for the Multi-Annual Programme Call was extended and more funding became available for TEN-T projects. An additional €332 million has been added to the 2012 TEN-T multi-annual programme, under the area of TEN-T Priority Projects. Deadline for proposal submissions was extended to 26 March 2013 for all 6 fields of the multi-annual work programme.
10. In May 2013 the Commission welcomed an "historic" agreement on new trans-European transport network. The agreement was between the Commission, the Council and the Parliament on proposals to transform the existing patchwork of European roads, railways, airports and canals into a unified transport network (TEN-T). The agreement established a core transport network to be established by 2030 to act as the backbone for transportation within the Single Market. Transport financing under the Connecting Europe Facility (for the period 2014–2020) would also focus on this core transport network, filling in cross-border missing links, removing bottlenecks and making the network smarter. The new core TEN-T network will be supported by a comprehensive network of routes, feeding into the core network at regional and national level. This will largely be financed by Member States, with some EU transport and regional funding possibilities, including with new innovative financing instruments. The aim was to ensure that progressively, and by 2050, the great majority of Europe's citizens and businesses will be no more than 30 minutes' travel time from this comprehensive network.