High Level Group
On the Extension of the Major Trans-European Transport Axes to the Neighbouring Countries and Regions

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The new Policy Initiative of the EU

- Formation of High Level Group of national representatives of:
  - 25 member states+ Bulgaria, Romania
  - 25 countries (Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya (as observer), Morocco, Moldova, Palestinian Authority, Russia, Serbia & Montenegro, Kosovo (under UNMIK administration), Switzerland, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and Ukraine)

- **Objective**: Extension of the major transport axes (including TEN-T) to the neighbouring countries, including the Motorways of the Sea
Other Related Exercises

• On-going exercises in the field of transport infrastructure in the regions neighbouring the EU that form the basis of HLG’s work

• **Pan-European Corridors and Areas**
  – Mainly in the EU as part of the TEN network. Also, Balkans, Russia, Western New Independent States and Turkey

• **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)**
  – Trans-European Motorway (TEM) and Trans-European Railway (TER) Projects’ Masterplan

• **UNECE and UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific**
  – Developing Euro-Asian Transport Linkages-Prioritisation of transport infrastructure projects along the adopted Euro-Asian transport routes

• **Euro-Mediterranean Regional Transport project (MEDA)**
  – Transport reform for an integrated system in the Mediterranean Region

• **TRACECA transport corridor**
  – Connecting Europe with Central Asia through Caucasus
Purpose of the High Level Group

• The mandate is to make proposals on the better connection of the European Union with the neighbouring countries or broader regions by identifying a limited set, some 5-7, of major transnational transport axes and priority projects on them.
• Good transport connections will result in trade and economic growth and ensure smooth and safe movement of passengers, goods and services.
• In view of efficient use of the system and implementation of common market rules, the Group will identify a number of “horizontal priorities”.
• Finally, the Group will analyse financial issues, environmental sustainability and cooperation along the axes.
HLG Methodology for Identification of Priority axes and Projects

• 2-step methodology
  1. Identification of major transport axes connecting the EU with the neighbouring countries or broader regions.
  2. Identification of priority projects on these major axes.
Criteria for Identifying Major Axes

• Institutional dimension: facilitate and promote development of exchanges between EU and neighbouring countries
  – Links one of the 30 major TEN axes and projects to the neighbouring countries
  – Takes account of international agreements and other joint decisions and actions

• Functional dimension: important route for international traffic flows (avoiding bottlenecks/barriers)
  – Interregional traffic (current, forecast for 2020) with O/D in the EU
  – Volume of transit traffic (current, forecast for 2020) with O/D in the EU
  – Possibility of a shorter, more environmentally friendly alternative

• Multimodal character: nodal points such as ports with potential strategic role

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Criteria for Selecting Priority Projects

• First stage: pre-selection
  – Part of the priority transnational axes
  – Sufficient size and significance (cost efficiency)
  – Firm commitment by country/region to implement based on schedule, potential benefits, realistic financial plan

• Second stage: evaluation
  – Improving economic efficiency
  – Enhancing environmental sustainability of the transport system
  – Improving transport safety and security
Proposed Five Major Axes

- Identified as most relevant to international trade and transport movements
- Northern Axis
- Central Axis
- South Eastern Axis
- South Western Axis
- Motorways of the Sea
Priority Axes (1)

• Northern Axis
  – Connecting the northern EU with Norway to the North and with Belarus and Russia and beyond to the East.
  – A connection to the Barents region linking Norway through Sweden and Finland with Russia is also foreseen.

• Central Axis
  – Linking the centre of the EU to Ukraine and the Black Sea and through an inland waterway connection to the Caspian Sea.
  – Direct connection to the Trans-Siberian railway and a link from the Don/Volga inland waterway to the Baltic Sea.
  – Connections towards Central Asia and the Caucasus are also foreseen.
Priority Axes (2)

• **South Eastern Axis**
  – Linking the EU through the Balkans and Turkey to the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea as well as to Egypt and the Red Sea.
  – Access links to the Balkan countries as well as connections towards Russia, Iran and Iraq and the Persian Gulf are also foreseen.

• **South Western Axis**
  – Connecting the south-western EU with Switzerland and Morocco and beyond, including the trans-Maghrebin link connecting Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.
  – An extension of the trans-Maghrebin link to Egypt as well as a connection from Egypt to the South towards other African countries are also foreseen.
Motorways of the Sea (MoS)

- HLG proposals for MoS as extensions of EU major transport axes
  - Extension of the motorway of the Baltic Sea towards Russia including Kaliningrad
  - Extension of the motorway of the sea of western Europe towards Norway in the north and towards Morocco in the south
  - Extension of the motorways of the Mediterranean towards North Africa and Middle East, including the Red Sea and beyond
  - Extension of the motorways of the Mediterranean sea to the Black Sea
- The Group has also identified a number of MoS Ports in the neighbouring countries.

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Major trans-National axes and Motorways of the Sea ports
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South Eastern Axis

TEN-T network
- TEN-T Road
- TEN-T Railway
- TEN-T Inland waterway

TEN-T priority axes
- Road priority axis
- Railway priority axis
- Inland waterway priority axis

Priority project number
- Road project
- Railway project
- Inland waterway project
- Airport project

Multimodal axes *
- Trans-national axis
- Axes towards other countries
- Inland waterway axis
- Motorways of the sea
- Motorways of the sea ports

* To be reviewed and updated in 2010
Cartography: DG T
Priority Projects

- 100 project proposals as priority investments on major axes
- Total estimated cost 45 billion euros
- Depending on maturity and their effect in alleviating core issues:
  - Projects ready to start before 2010 (completion by 2020) addressing the most pressing bottlenecks stemming from congestion, poor quality infrastructure or from environmental considerations that hamper international exchanges and traffic at present.
  - Projects of longer term interest (works to start by 2020) addressing these bottlenecks before they become too acute and costly to the users and operators.
HLG-Horizontal Issues

• For efficient use of the transport system and removal of non-physical barriers at border crossings:
  – Satellite radio navigation systems
  – Harmonisation of policies and administrative integration
  – Improving technical interoperability
  – Improving intermodality
  – Safety of traffic and infrastructure
  – Security of transport and infrastructure
Satellite Radio Navigation Systems

- Enhancing sustainability, navigability and management of transport infrastructure.
- GALLILEO programme for management of the trans-European network.
- Does not require investment on ground infrastructure.
- The Group promotes negotiations for cooperation between EU and neighboring countries (Ukraine, Morocco, MEDA study, Russian Federation).
- Greece has launched its own satellite HELLASTAT.

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Border Control Procedures

- Implementation of relevant international Conventions and agreements
- Simplification of language regime
- Standardisation of data requirements for customs declarations
- Implementation of the “one-stop office” concept (particularly for ports)
- Internal/external laboratory expertise, additional training to custom officials
- Single window approach for all international trade related documentation
- Common market rules
- Divergence of legal systems (for example EU/COTIF and OSJD)

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Technical Interoperability

• Rail Network
  – Gradual implementation of new railway signaling and telecommunication systems, European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) along the axes
  – Legal interoperability between different legal systems (COTIF and OSJD)
  – Transparent and consistent pricing/tariff systems

• Road Transport: implement measures to address driver behaviour, vehicle safety road infrastructure, traffic management systems

• Aviation Sector
  – Extension of the Single European Sky to South East Europe

• Inland waterways
  – Open access for international traffic
  – Mutually interoperable traffic information systems

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Maritime transport and MoS

• Harmonisation of the practices and procedures of the Paris, Mediterranean and Black Sea MoUs at the highest level of performance.

• Ratification and implementation of the international standards and conventions (IMO) in a timely manner.

• Technical support for actions to improve the quality of port infrastructure and services and to implement regular frequency of shipping services (at least once a week) operating on the Motorway of the Sea.

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Security of Transport and Infrastructure

- Security assessment at the design stage for all new transport infrastructures on the transnational axes.
- Security audits and emergency plans for existing infrastructure.
- Common security exercises and twinning between security forces.
- Joint surveys for detecting illegal trafficking.
- Operational liaisons between services and companies based on state-of-the-art protocols and procedures.

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Environmental Dimension of Projects

- Sustainable environmental development for the development of transport axes and horizontal issues.
- Assessment of environmental impact at the early stage of the identification process.
- Development of environmental control mechanism for the construction and operation of the new transport infrastructure projects.
- Promotion of alternative modes of transport to roads.
Options for Financing (1)

- Given that financing transport investments remains a major problem worldwide, the HLG would have to look at innovative financing tools involving the private sector and user charging.

EU Support

- Limited to technical assistance and support to institution building and limited investments to critical infrastructures
- 2 new relative instruments
  - Transition and pre-accession instrument
  - European neighborhood and partnership instrument
- *The Group stresses the need to ensure good articulation and synchronization of the instruments and reminds its members to ensure that the identified priorities are adequately reflected in country strategy documents.*
Options for Financing (2)

- World Banks
  - European Investment Bank
  - European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
  - World Bank
- The Group recommends that the EU and Banks focus their cooperation and financing actions on the priority axes and projects and continue building their strategies and programmes in line with complementarity between their respective strengths.
Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP)

• Feasible option for government to meet the investment needs.
• Economic, legal and political obstacles.
• Preconditions for PPP projects
  – Clear definition of project/appropriate economic scale
  – Transparent public procurement legislation
  – Established financial guarantees
  – Clear revenue and risk sharing
• Sound public spending and commercial transport sector management are key for the success of PPP projects.
Implementation and Coordination

- Focus on cooperation and financing actions on the five major axes on the horizontal measures.
- Exchange of best-practice on financing options.
- Strong and effective coordination frameworks
  - Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for axes/regions in the absence of such cooperation mechanism
  - Strengthening of existing MoUs into a binding Treaty
- Launch twinning actions on an EU Member state and a neighboring country by 2008 at the latest.
Role of Greece

• Strategic location: crossroad of three continents.
• Link Europe with the Black Sea, Middle East and Africa.
• Long-term investment program
  – Upgrade existing infrastructure
  – Promote multimodal freight transport (road, rail and maritime network, including development of freight villages)
  – Telecommunications
  – Energy grit with southeastern European countries and Italy
Proposals by Greece

• In addition to the priorities established by the TEN-T and the priority projects, and in line with the HLG guidelines, Greece has proposed the following:
  – Inclusion of Pan-European Corridor X (traditional corridor linking SE Europe with Central Europe)
  – Interconnection of Corridor X with Pristina (Kossovo)/ access to the Aegean and Mediterranean Sea through port of Thessaloniki
• Greece has made significant progress in including the connection Belgrade-Thessaloniki in the HLG map
• Access to Turkey and wider area of the Black Sea Region

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Thessaloniki-Freight Village (FV)

- Growing political initiative for the development of sustainable FV of national and international significance in key locations
- FV for the port of Thessaloniki
  - Nodal point for the Balkans
  - Significant upgrade and development of infrastructure (Egnatia Road, port of Thessaloniki)
- Strategic role as logistic platform in line with the criteria for the multimodal character of major axes

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Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

• Formation of the Blue Paper in order to lay down the foundations for an integrated transport system in the Mediterranean region.
• Identification of core problems hindering the transport reform.
• Proposed regional transport policy framework for:
  – Strengthening and modernising the institutional dimensions of transport
  – Integration and cohesion of infrastructure networks
  – Multimodal freight transport chain
  – Boosting air passenger traffic and exploiting air transport potential
  – Safety and sustainability
  – Ensuring funding

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Elaboration of the East Mediterranean MoS Master Plan

• Countries submitting the proposal:
  – **Greece:** Attica, Central Macedonia, East Macedonia and Thrace, Thessaly, Epirus, West Greece and Crete
  – **Italy:** Friuli - Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Emilia - Romagna, Marche, Abruzzo, Molise, Puglia, Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna, Campania, Lazio, Toscana and Liguria.
  – **Cyprus:** Whole of Cyprus

• Counties participating in the proposal:
  – Malta
  – Slovenia

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Master Plan

• The primary goal of the study is to develop the Motorways of the Sea (MoS) in the East Mediterranean area, through the creation, development and elaboration of a Master Plan.

• **Main objectives** of the study:
  - to define MoS in the area, quality and security requirements for their services.
  - to forecast the future demand of the MoS and identify bottlenecks and missing links, infrastructure and services needs
  - to identify and evaluate (Cost-Benefit Analysis and Environmental Impacts Assessment) alternative scenarios of the Master Plan elaboration
  - to provide investment and time planning and identify funding sources
  - to provide guidance of coordinated actions for implementation of MoS
Conclusions/Recommendations

• European Parliament and European Commission Decision on the extensions of the trans-European axes to neighbouring countries and regions (based on HLG report) is expected by Autumn 2006.

• *The Group understands that the lists of projects are just a starting point, not necessarily exhaustive, and that there is need for further studies and analyses before these projects are may be considered for implementation.*

• A **review and update** of the major axes/projects and horizontal measures in 2010 and regularly thereafter.

• A **mid-term review** in 2008, to prepare the update, based on information provided by the relative countries.

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