

Baltic Sea Region 2007-2013 -
 Baltic Cluster for Sustainable, Multimodal and Green Transport Corridors
Conference “Greening Transport - Blueprints from the Baltic Sea Region”

Conference Documentation

“Greening Transport - Blueprints from the Baltic Sea Region”

Interfaces of regional and transport policies

Under the auspices of the Baltic Sea Region Programme, the region of Skåne invited to a policy conference on integrating transport and regional policies and their instruments. The conference was organised in cooperation with the Capital Region Berlin-Brandenburg and several transport projects joint in the Baltic Sea Region Transport Cluster Initiative.

The conference took place on 04 June 2013, 13h00 to 16h30 in the Committee of the Regions,

High-level representatives from the European Commission (DG MOVE and DG REGIO) and from the European Parliament debated with representatives from the Baltic Sea Region on the increasing mutual benefit of transport and regional policies. The common aim was the greening of transport in Europe.



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Against the background of Europe 2020, latest transport (TEN-T) and cohesion (Territorial Agenda 2020) policies and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, panellists and audience were involved in a discussion on the contribution of transnational cooperation instruments to both regional development and greening transport policies. The synergies between EU policies and related regional strategies were demonstrated. A major aim was the future integration of both policies to improve sustainability and efficiency of the transport system, the increase of profit for European regions and the support generated by territorial cooperation instruments.



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Several Baltic Sea Region projects have developed components of blueprints for greening transport to build upon. The strong relation of the instruments of European territorial cooperation to regional growth and greening transport will thus become evident. Accordingly, the players in the Baltic Sea Region Strategy need to be understood as partners for the European Commission in the development of the cooperation programmes.



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Part 1: Greening transport in the Baltic Sea Region – where policies and initiatives meet

Moderation: Verner Kristiansen

Kathrin Schneider, *Infrastructure State Secretary, State of Brandenburg, Germany*

- A multi-level governance approach does not mean merely the coordination between European policy and national, regional and local initiatives. It must be real cooperation. Multi-level governance is a sensible approach to achieving aims on a multidisciplinary scale across all levels
- Beyond the vertical levels also horizontal cooperation between different policy fields and stakeholder is necessary to implement environmentally friendly and cost efficient transport policies (regional policy, transport planners, technicians and technologists).
- The recent Presidencies of the council have boosted the trend in making both specific areas of policy (regional and transport) and the funding policies more open for mutual cooperation. This must be seen as success.
- Interaction between concrete, investment-related and strategic/political action must be implemented on the ground. This means it has to be implemented in a certain place, an area, a region or a macro region. The Baltic Sea Region is a good example for this approach.
- The EU 2020 Strategy, the EU Baltic Sea Strategy, the TEN-T network and the Cohesion and Structural funds (including territorial cooperation) are strongly linked to each other in content, strategic orientation and implementation goals. Concrete and strategic aspects of each policy are reflected in the transport projects of the Baltic region. These links need to be continued. Furthermore it is necessary that the new funding period also takes adequate account of the European Territorial Cooperation.
- In turn, the representatives of the regions, specific areas of policy and local institutions must show an interest in initiatives and policies on a European level, taking an active role in shaping them.
- In the next years, the capital region Berlin-Brandenburg will continue to advocate the cooperation between the economic regions of Northern and Southern Europe. North/South corridor will be used as an area and infrastructural axis for linking up its regions and fostering the economic development.
- It is of great importance that representatives of DG MOVE, DG REGIO, coordinators of the Baltic Sea Strategy and the regions commonly informed about their interests. Now it must be the objective to intensify the cooperation in the near future in order find concrete agreements and results.



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Wiktor Szydarowski, Cluster manager

- The Cluster cooperation covers the whole BSR (incl. Russia and Belarus) and was funded by the BSR Programme 2007-2013
 - Duration of the program: September 2012 - September 2013
 - Lead partners of 8 projects, support from other project initiatives/Cluster leader: Region Skåne
 - The objective is to exchange knowledge, communicate achievements, and support specific solutions to green corridors
 - Vision: the Baltic Sea Region as a gateway for transcontinental flows and sustainable growth area.

- The cluster combines different perspectives, experiences on transport issues and know-how of regional development according to sustainable mobility. Through the support of the EU the transport policy for the Baltic Sea region should ensure mobility and boost sustainable economic growth, which includes territorial cohesion and the improvement of access to different parts of the BSR. This means to strengthen the international dimension regarding to the integration of the BSR over land and maritime borders as well as through the connection of existing national and regional transport networks and private/public (planning) strategies while focussing on the internal markets and development

- Key aspects to focus on:
 - to develop greener transports but at the same time in a user-friendly design
 - market response and public acceptance should be taken into account
 - communication campaigns and dedicated governance models should be introduced
 - available business models have to be promoted
 - Target corridors must be harmonised and supervised
 - Measures must be developed to be prepared for unexpected events

- Conclusion: Blueprints are transport greening solutions, along the market needs (developed with business stakeholders) which are beneficial for the sustainable regional growth. They should be applicable to TEN-T core network corridors/ other links (e.g. green corridor manual & information broker system, ICT tools, sustainable energy/ logistics learning programme, common service model for logistics centres, new multimodal chains/block trains, alternative vehicle fuels for long distance transport, duo-trailer based dry port etc.).



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Jean-Eric Paquet, European Commission, DG MOVE, Director TEN-T Networks & Smart Transport

- The policy idea of the conference that regional strategies have to work hand in hand with TEN-T policies is welcomed. Moreover it is very important for the GD MOVE to facilitate the knowledge exchange with the cluster initiative.
- The trilogue negotiations on the TEN-T network finally reached an agreement on 29 May and were reported to the Member States on 5 June. In the course of the week of 10 June the compromises are supposed to be published to the public. The transport committee of the European Parliament and the Plenary have to agree formally. The legal package will come into force by the end of this year.
- It can be regarded as full commitment of the EU institutions, the Member States and all involved stakeholder to make the TEN-T network fully functional by 2030. It is also a commitment to involve all nodes of transport and to set clear standards within the national infrastructure.
- The proposed Maps are confirmed and the TEN-T methodology was fully upheld.
- The negotiations on the Connecting Europe Facility are still on-going as they are in close connection to the negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework on the overall EU Budget 2014- 2020. However the technical parts are agreed. Technically agreed are also the 10 Billion earmarking from the Cohesion Fund, the corridors, and the co-funding rates.
- Final decisions have to be taken on the rail package. The framework has to be adopted in order to avoid overlapping. The rail freight corridor has to be expanded and will be added as Annex. These actions will be performed in the last part of the CEF negotiations. Therefore the discussions with the Member States are still on-going. The aim is to close the CEF negotiations under Irish Presidency.
- Now it is collectively necessary to prepare the network of all corridors. Therefore the guidelines are quite specific and comprehensive. The European Commission (DG MOVE) will organise by individual workshops and interactions with different actors by the end of the year in order to help to prepare the proposals for each corridor of the core network. The Commission will publish a Communication setting out more detailed descriptions on the legal framework by mid-October 2013. The upcoming TEN-T days taking place 17/18 October in Tallin.
- The next step is now to elaborate the implementation plans for the core network under the guide of the corridor coordinator. This will than turn into EU legislation as implementing act. The corridor coordinator will have the leading role under very close cooperation with national policymaker. Additionally the DG REGIO will be involved.



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Colin Wolfe, European Commission, DG REGIO, Head of Unit “Macro Regions and European Territorial Cooperation”

- Transport planning and development of regions will be regarded in the overall framework of the EU 2020 Strategy and is integrated in the proposals of the Draft Regulation on structural funds and European Territorial cooperation.
- The DG REGIO supports the implementation of seamless TEN-T network, especially sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key infrastructures. Thereby investments into the core network infrastructures build the skeleton, investments into regional interfaces and multimodal transport areas are the overall structure. Greening transport and high quality/interoperable rail systems are adding to that. Through the INTERREG facility and the macro-region strategy valuable tools exists to integrate the different findings. However, beyond the funding perspective, aspects concerning the cooperation and planning gaps, the coordination of the multimodal infrastructure, the involvement of the regions and concerned stakeholder is necessary.
- The regional policy development programmes and the Operational Programmes of the ERDF funds must be used as integration tool.
- Furthermore the European transport interconnections and particular conceptionalisation must be addressed in the partnership agreements.
- At this point countries should share their development strategies and development plans with neighbouring countries, so that the priority axis and corridors are in line.
- EUSBSR providing good framework for cooperation in the BSR. The neighbouring programmes are encouraged to exchange their programming documents to enable consistent corridor development. The exchange of knowledge and approaches between macro-regions should be executed as exchange of valuable experiences on the implementation.



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Part 2: Blueprints for greening the transport – a way for place-based TEN-T policy in the BSR?

Key issue: Blueprints for greening transport a suitable tool to implement the new TEN-T policy?

Kurt Bodewig, Former Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Housing. Maritime Ambassador of the EU, Baltic Sea Forum e.V.

- The Baltic Sea is a very sensitive area.
- More multimodal transport and investments into rail network and intermodal terminals are needed. The new freight streams from east and far-east countries must be directly brought on rail net and not on the road first as later changes will be very difficult.
- A preparation for SECA is needed: role back to road could be a consequence of rising transport costs in maritime transport >> special funding scheme for innovation in ports and short sea shipping are needed.
- Transnational networks of logistics service providers needed as durable platforms to facilitate modal shift.



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Michael Cramer, MEP, TRAN Committee

- Rail Baltica: sufficient money is available now it's time to act.
- Spanish high-speed railway shows that two gauges can co-exist
- Mentality changes are needed: instead of favouring mega projects, it is better to concentrate on gaps. Instead of investing billions into projects like Stuttgart 21 investing much smaller sums into several kilometres of missing cross-border links like between Berlin and Szczecin where only 30 km electrification is needed to give major effects.
- New incentives needed, e.g. increasing co-financing for real cross-border sections to 80%.
- Only 20% of EU money is spent into railway infrastructure. However the rail network is still a patchwork. This is where the European Union reveals its added value of its funding.
- The gaps are exactly along the borders and these small gaps must be closed. The amendment of the cross-border section must be forced by all instruments. Internal national axes like Erfurt Nurnberg have nothing to do with Europe. The same is with huge infrastructure projects like the Koralmtunnel. This is a mismatch of where the money should be spent.



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Thomas Erlandson, Coordinator PA 11, EUSBSR, Ministry of Enterprise, Energy, Communications, Sweden

- It’s a challenge to coordinate the BSR. In the reviewed strategy countries have to be coordinated. Additionally there are lot of networks in different levels.
- Corridor projects provide knowledge input.
- Good background available, focus needs to be put on implementation.
- The national level plays the decisive role.
- Shifting focus from new investments to increasing efficiency of existing systems (e.g. ITS)
- There are lots of processes ongoing bearing good possibilities (programming of the SF funds, strategy of the Baltic Sea, TEN-T regulations). The fast improvement possibility however is within the existing network – in particular in the rail network. National governments must work together if the existing transport system should be improved.



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Algirdas Šakalys, East West Transport Corridor Association, President

- Associations and initiatives close to business like EWTCa need to be involved in discussions about national / European transport policies and major investment projects.
- Rail Baltica will be modernised from Polish-Lithuanian border to Kaunas until 2015. But higher standards are needed: 240 km/h instead of only 120 km/h.
- Modal split inside Lithuania is satisfying: 50:50. However, in international transport, road transport gains a much higher share.
- More efforts need to be taken to look onto transports in East-West direction, as trends go increasingly into that direction. China is gaining as producer, Russia is investing much into rail connections.
- Still clarifications needed how to contribute to the TEN-T and greening transport approaches through the EU funds for investments in the rail networks in the Baltic States.



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Gudrun Schulze, DG MOVE, Trans-European Network

- Commission delivers toolbox for sustainable network planning.
- Existing potential is to be used / best practices need to be shared.
- Pragmatic approach needed; TEN-T guidelines clearly provide ambitions from a European perspective, the CEF provides incentives for member states.
- EU regularly monitors national transport policies, country reports elaborated for each Member State.
- Greening Transport is the overarching objective. Mobility has to be ensured, but CO₂ emission needs to be reduced. Thus the new infrastructure policy must ensure efficiency (targeted use of transport modes). In order to accelerate policy changes, concrete and measurable showcases are needed as well as the development of a toolbox.
- It is already a policy and mentality change visible in the way that policy departments consider other fields of policy actions (transport, energy, regional development...).
- With the CEF there is a chance to fund intelligent infrastructure. DG MOVE and DG REGIO work close together with the TEN-T and regional funds.
- Sufficient monitoring of the TEN-T implementation is provided by TEN-T EA and the BSR programme.



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Joachim Zeller, MEP, REGI Committee

- Connecting Europe Facility and structural funds will bring greening transport ahead.
- Gigaliners however are no solution for greening transport.
- Transport problems can be solved by interoperability.
- A better connection to Poland is needed.
- BSR strategy is a good platform for implementing policies. Bottom-up approaches need to be considered.



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Part 3: Outlook 2020 – green transport, growing regions, contributing instruments

Key issues:

1. Territorial cooperation programmes and implementation of TEN-T policy do they complement each other?
2. How to intensify integration of regional development and transport policy instruments in future?

Filippa Arvas Olsson, Director, Skåne Regional Office in Brussels

- Regional development is a major issue in region Skåne, especially the topic smart, sustainable cities and urban nodes.
- Transport policy is essential for regional development.
- ETC, ERDF, TEN-T and Horizon 2020 need to be linked.
- National level needs to be closely involved.
- The results of the projects should be used more intensive for future policy implementation.



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Gian Angelo Bellati, Secretary General, Association of Chambers of Commerce of Veneto Region, Italy

- Northern Italy orients northwards towards Central and Northern Europe to overcome the crisis.
- Business representatives have to be involved more intensely.
- More bottom-up approaches are needed.
- PPP models for the integration of the private sectors are needed.



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Pekka Sauri, Deputy Mayor of Helsinki, Finland

- There is no common Baltic Sea Region, as eastern shore side is not connected to Europe at all.
- European Integration connections are on the west side of the Baltic – links are still missing on the east side of the Baltic region. Finland is very separated in terms of the infrastructure of the interlinkage.
- Rail Baltica Corridor is crucial as Finland is an island in Europe, it is better linked to Moscow than to the rest of the EU.
- Changing transport patterns, e.g. increasing importance of North-East Passage need to be taken into account: rail link Finland – Arctic needed.



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Kathrin Schneider, State Secretary, State of Brandenburg, Germany

- Regions need to be ready to respond the invitation of the Commission to contribute to the set-up of core network corridor platforms. No time to wait for INTERREG programmes, immediate actions are needed.
- Businesses needs to be closer involved, support can be given via existing initiatives, e.g. the North-South-Initiative.
- Corridors should not to be seen as pure transport corridors but rather as regional development axis.
- Small and medium enterprises should be in focus.
- Instruments needed to limit risk for new and innovative approaches.



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- Strategic and pragmatic approach needed to be interlinked.
- The Commission will pay special attention to transnational and cross-border cooperation aspects when negotiating regional / national operational programmes.
- Connection of main networks to regional networks needs to be addressed at regional level.
- Macroregions provide a regional development perspective.



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Conclusions

The conference marked an important step of procedure in the mutual coordination process between the European Institutions, the Member States, Regions and further stakeholder. The INTERREG Baltic Sea Region Cluster therefore provided a valuable platform for the mutual exchange and gathered a multitude of topics and views on the implementation of the European transport policy. The conference underlined also the need not only on the vertical, but also on the horizontal cooperation of different stakeholder. Therefore, the common discussion with DG MOVE and DG REGIO showed an important political sign of a future policy design. It will thus be of utmost important now to coordinate the TEN-T implementation plans with INTERREG projects. As these projects provide the “breeding ground” for a necessary mentality change on cross-sector implementation approaches, that are needed for a successful corridor policy.

We would like to thank all participants and organisers for the success of this conference!