

# SHORT CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE COMMUNITY'S POLICY IN TRANSPORTATION FIELD

**Lecturer PhD Elise-Nicoleta Valcu  
University of Pitesti  
Faculty of Law and Administrative Sciences**

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*Transport is a complex system that depends on multiple factors, including patterns of human settlements and consumption, the organization of production and the available infrastructure. Given this complexity, any intervention in the transportation sector should be based on a long term vision on sustainable mobility of people and goods, not least because structural policies needs long time to be made in practice and planned very early.*

*On 9-10 March 2009, the European Commission held a summit meeting of the interested parties, EU Member States, which included an assessment study of the European Transport Policy (ETP), for the previous period of 2009 but mostly, it follows, as perspective, the identification of the determinants' trend that affects transportation and the social problems that could be raised.*

*A component of transport policy is the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) policy which has the merit of greatly improved the coordination between Member States in planning infrastructure projects. Implementation has made significant progress and about one third of the investments required for the TEN-T (400 billion EUR) were made.*

I. In 2001, the Commission issued a White Paper setting an agenda for the European transport policy throughout 2010. This program was updated during the 2006 mid-term review.

In the year 2009, the Communication "A sustainable future for transport: Towards an integrated, technology-led and user friendly system" has been adopted by the Commission on 17 June 2009<sup>1</sup> "which encouraged all interested party to contribute to the consultation exercise launched by this Communication". The results of these consultations will be presented at a conference of the interested parties in autumn 2009. Based on feedback from the parties, from the European Parliament and the Council, the Commission will issue in 2010 a White Paper containing policy measures to be adopted during the decade 2010-2020.

Transport is an essential component of the European economy. Transport industry as a whole, generates about 7% of GDP and over 5% of total employment in EU. ETP contributed to a comparable mobility system, the efficiency and effectiveness, with the most economically advanced regions in the world. Also, ETP has stimulated social and economic cohesion and promoted competitiveness of the

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission's document COM (2009) 279 final.

European industry<sup>2</sup>, thus contributing to a significant extent to the implementation of the Lisbon Agenda for economic growth and jobs<sup>3</sup>. Regarding the SDS objectives, the results were more limited: as indicated in the progress report of 2007<sup>4</sup>, the European transport system still does not fall on a sustainable path in several respects.

Market opening has, in general, led to the increment of the efficiency and reduction of costs. This trend is visible in the air transport, where the process is more advanced.

The EU is about to create a fair competition in the more and more integrated transport market, but there are some remaining problems, such as differences in tax and subsidy, to be resolved. It should be noted that from the market opening and integration of various modes of transport have gained not only large companies but also small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

II. A component of transport policy is the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) policy which has the merit of greatly improved the coordination between Member States in planning infrastructure projects. Implementation has made significant progress and about one third of the investments required for the TEN-T (400 billion EUR) were made<sup>5</sup>. The TEN's extension to new Member States, based on investments that preceded the extension, highlighted the points where the structural and cohesion funds must interfere to complete the infrastructure deficits in these states.

On 03.04.09 the European Parliament issued a proposal for resolution on the Green Paper on the future of the TEN-T policy. This document was prepared by the EU co-legislator forum taking into account the Commission's Communication of February 4, 2009 entitled "Green Paper: TEN-T: A policy review", but also the resolution of March 11, 2009 on the Lisbon Strategy<sup>6</sup>. The draft resolution emphasizes the need to include both the Lisbon Strategy goals and the objectives of the Recovery Plan in the TEN-T policy, given the crucial importance of mobility, accessibility and appearance of their logistics for EU competitiveness, and also to improve the territorial cohesion.

This document of the European Parliament is the "political definition of the TEN-T policy", as described in the Decision no. 1692/96/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 July 1996 on Community guidelines for the development of European transport network<sup>7</sup> and Decision no. 884/2004/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 29 April 2004 amending the Decision No. 1692/96/EC on Community guidelines for trans-European transport network development<sup>8</sup>, considered as "a list of goals" containing 30 priority projects inspired primarily by the national interests. It is mentioned also the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the European rail network for a competitive freight<sup>9</sup>.

The document also refers to new states that have joined the EU when it asks the Commission to give a particular priority to projects of prime importance on the main routes by rail, road and inland waterway, to ensure cross-border links with new Member States and with other countries.

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<sup>2</sup> COMPETE, "Analysis of the contribution of transport policies to the competitiveness of the EU economy and comparison with the United States", October 2006, ISI-Fraunhofer in collaboration with INFRAS, TIS and EE for the European Commission, DG TREN.

<sup>3</sup> COM (2007) 803.

<sup>4</sup> COM (2007) 642.

<sup>5</sup> COM (2007) 135 final. Among completed projects is the way to Oresund, the Madrid Malpensa airport and the Betuwe freight railroad. Other projects, such as PBKAL (Paris-Brussels-Cologne-Amsterdam,-London high-speed railway line), will be completed soon. Also, were brought into function some important sections of a series of projects, such as the Madrid-Barcelona high-speed railway line and the first phase of the Eastern TGV in France.

<sup>6</sup> P6\_TA(2009)0120.

<sup>7</sup> OJEU L 15, 17.1.1997, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> OJEU L 167, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> COM (2008) 0852.

It is well known that the first attempts in developing a Community policy on transport infrastructure, inspired by the “missing links” of the round table of industrialists (RTI) were boosted by the Commission’s Communication of December 2, 1992 entitled "The future development of the common policy in transport", to "achieve the economic growth, competitiveness and employment" and were reinforced by the former Transport Commissioner, Karel Van Miert.

Regarding the maritime sector, for Europe, because of its coastal line length and its many ports, is a valuable alternative to road transport.

The full implementation of the "European maritime space without borders" and maritime transport strategy by 2018 may become the "motorways of the sea" and turn account their European potential as short distances sea transport.

The security of the European transport and beyond is also a component of the Community policy on transport. Thus, in the year 2009, the EU issued legislative measures in the field of transport safety for most modes of transportation and critical infrastructure.

By strengthening passenger rights, it has been promoted the provision of quality services for users of vehicles. Were adopted and are now in force legislative provisions on air passenger rights. In the rail sector, a regulation adopted in December 2007 provides broad rights of passengers<sup>10</sup>. In December 2008, there were adopted two proposals<sup>11</sup> for the rights of passengers in bus and coach, and in the maritime sector. However, the public transport (bus and train) has been identified as one of the sectors where consumer satisfaction is minimal.

III. Concluding, the aim of the European transport policy is to establish a sustainable transport system that responds to the economic, social and environmental aspects of society and to encourage the achievement of an inclusive society and a fully integrated and competitive Europe.

Current trends and future challenges show the need to meet a growing demand for "accessibility" in the context of growing concerns towards sustainability. The most pressing priorities stemming are a better integration of different modes of transport as a way to improve the overall efficiency of the system and an accelerated development and application of some innovative technologies.

Also, remember, as concerns in the field under review in this article, the improvement of the quality of transport in general, including personal safety, reducing accidents and health hazards, protection of passengers and the availability of the remote areas must remain a priority of the policy of transport.

## BIBLIOGRAPHI

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<sup>10</sup> EC Regulation no. 1371/2007, OJEU L 315, 3.12.2007.

<sup>11</sup> COM (2008) 817, COM (2008) 816.