

North Sea Commission - Statement on Transport

This statement intends to highlight some core requirements for the promotion of accessibility to peripheral and maritime regions and for sustainable transport solutions, in line with the NSR 2020 Action Plan. The policy messages in this statement are targeting relevant services of the European Commission, national transport authorities, the CPMR Secretariat and to some extent also our member regions.

Since the adoption of the new guidelines for the TransEuropean Transport Network and the funding instrument Connecting Europe Facility in 2013, the need to ensure better access to funding for projects in peripheral and maritime regions have become apparent. The governance framework for the TEN-T Core Network Corridors should also be made more inclusive, transparent and holistic.

To succeed with the ambition of moving freight from road to sea, it is furthermore required to improve the funding opportunities for maritime transport services at EU level, as well as to facilitate for a smooth compliance with the EU Directive for Sulphur emissions from shipping.

In order to exploit the big potential for greater uptake of low-emission vehicles & technologies there is a need to harmonise regulatory frameworks across borders and to apply state aid rules in a flexible manner - allowing for necessary public support and incentives.

Finally, the statement supports the "Bremen Declaration on Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning in Europe", and is encouraging the NSC member regions to take full advantage of the recommendations contained therein, as well as of the many practical solutions presented at the big international conference there on 12 -13 April.

Ensure better access to the TransEuropeanTransport Network (TEN-T) and the funding instrument Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for peripheral and maritime reigons

1. In the context of the upcoming review of the EU multiannual financial framework 2014-2020, the NSC is calling for increased financial allocations to the comprehensive network of the TEN-T, and more favourable co-financing rates for projects on this network. The selection of projects on the core network corridors should also be assessed against their impacts on accessibility to peripheral regions outside the core.
2. The CPMR Secretariat is, in cooperation with the geographical commissions, requested to start the preparation of concrete proposals for adjusting the definition of the TEN-T Core and Comprehensive Network in the review of the TEN-T guidelines which is due to take place by 31 December 2023. The proposals should have an ambition of including more ports and transport corridors in peripheral regions in the core network and strengthen the links between the different layers [core-comprehensive] of the network. In this context it is also important to analyse how projects on the core network could benefit the concern for improved accessibility to peripheral regions.
3. The implementation framework for the TEN-T Core Network Corridors should be made more inclusive, also allowing for the involvement in corridor forums of regions, ports and transport hubs not located directly on the corridors. Furthermore, the current approach whereby each corridor is treated like a closed circuit without addressing transport flows from the outside is artificial and should be changed.

Strengthen territorial cohesion and improve environmental performance of maritime transport

4. The NSC believes that EU instruments for maritime transport, such as the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) should be strengthened by re-introducing support for the start-up of maritime services, also including financial incentives for road transport operators who opt for maritime transport, in line with the so called eco-bonus principle. CEF calls for Motorway of the Seas (MoS) should be made more favourable for projects in peripheral areas in terms of co-financing rates and eligibility rules with a view of enabling more core-periphery connections, as well as connections between ports on the comprehensive network. It is also important to enable connections with non-EU ports in shared sea basins.

5. In order to ease the compliance with the EU Sulphur Directive for shipping, the European Commission should strengthen the support for alternative shipping fuel like LNG and Methanol.

Support clean, efficient and inclusive mobility

6. In order to facilitate a large-scale roll out of low-emission vehicles & technologies, the NSC believes that relevant regulatory frameworks should be better harmonised across borders in terms of technological specifications and density of charging systems and filling stations for alternative fuels.

7. It is also important that the application of state aid rules allow for necessary public support and incentives to support the development and operation of low-emission transport solutions, e.g tax exemption schemes for bio gas and hydrogen in public transport services

8. The NSC supports the "Bremen Declaration on Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning in Europe", launched at the 3rd European Conference on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans in Bremen on 13 April 2016. The conference focused on an efficient and people-centred approach to Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning (SUMP) in the context of European guidance documents. The NSC believes that the declaration and presentations from this conference could provide valuable inspiration and practical guidance for urban mobility planning in our member regions, and is encouraging them to take advantage of the knowledge contained therein.

The declaration is highlighting:

- The space-efficiency and low congestion levels in cities facilitated for walking and cycling.
- The importance of combined urban and mobility planning
- That vehicle technologies should be used as a tool to achieve goals, not as a driver or as a goal in itself
- The need for city and regional authorities to take better account of technological developments towards autonomous vehicles in the planning of urban transport systems
- That shared mobility concepts, such as ride-, bike- and car sharing can help improve transport efficiency, save street space and reduce transport-related emissions
- The importance of involving as many groups and individuals as possible in urban mobility planning

The presentations and the declaration from the conference are available for download here:

<http://eltis.org/resources/promotional-materials/3rd-sump-conference-presentations-0>

<http://www.eltis.org/discover/news/3rd-european-conference-sustainable-urban-mobility-plans#sthash.JJSWeOxm.dpuf>