

Trans-European transport network

2021/0420(COD) - 28/06/2024 - Final act

PURPOSE: coordinated creation and development of the trans-European transport network to ensure sustainable connectivity in Europe.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1153 and (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013.

CONTENT: this revised regulation regarding **EU guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network** (TEN-T) aims to build a reliable, seamless, and high-quality transport network that ensures sustainable connectivity across Europe without physical interruptions, bottlenecks, and missing links.

Objectives of the trans-European transport network

The overall objective of the development of the trans-European transport network is to establish a **single multimodal Union wide transport network of high quality**. It will demonstrate European added value by contributing to objectives falling within at least two of the four categories:

(a) **sustainability**, notably through the promotion of low and zero-emission mobility and greater use of more sustainable modes of transport, in particular by developing an interoperable long-distance rail passenger network, including high-speed rail, and an interoperable rail freight network, a reliable network of inland waterways and short sea shipping for the transport of passengers and freight throughout the Union;

(b) **cohesion**, in particular through accessibility and connectivity of all regions of the Union, taking particular account of the outermost regions and other remote, insulaire, peripheral and mountain regions, as well as sparsely populated areas;

(c) **efficiency**, in particular through the elimination of infrastructure bottlenecks and the creation of missing links;

(d) **increasing the benefits for its users** by ensuring accessibility for users, taking particular account of the needs of people in vulnerable situations, including people with disabilities or reduced mobility.

Gradual development of the trans-European transport network

The trans-European transport network will be gradually developed in three steps: (a) the completion of a core network by 31 December 2030; (b) the completion of an extended core network by 31 December **2040**; and, (c) the completion of a comprehensive network by 31 December **2050**.

European corridors

The regulation defines European transport corridors of the highest strategic importance on the basis of priority sections of the trans-European transport network and projects of common interest. The new regulation creates **nine ‘European transport corridors’**: 1) Atlantic; 2) Baltic Sea - Black Sea - Aegean Sea; 3) Baltic - Adriatic; 4) Mediterranean; 5) North Sea - Rhine - Mediterranean; 6) North Sea - Baltic; 7) Rhine - Danube; 8) Scandinavia - Mediterranean; 9) Western Balkans - Eastern Mediterranean.

Projects of common interest

Projects of common interest will contribute to the development of the trans-European transport network by creating of new transport infrastructure, modernising existing transport infrastructure or through measures to promote the resource-efficient use of the network. They will have to be carried out in compliance with relevant Union and national law, and in particular with Union law on the environment, climate protection, safety, security, competition, state aid, public procurement, public health and accessibility.

Member States will decide how to prioritise projects of common interest in line with realistic technical and priority requirements aiming to a unified, high-performant, and fully interoperable infrastructure to contribute to the decarbonisation of the transport sector and its multimodality. These requirements, as set out by the new regulation, are proportionate to the expected benefits, to the functionalities and to the required investments by the Member States.

Rail transport infrastructure

The regulation recognised the importance of railways in the shift to sustainable modes of transport and agreed new requirements that could generally contribute to the modal shift and to a better performance of the future TEN-T railway network. Provisions on: (i) the deployment of the European rail traffic management system (ERTMS); (ii) the extended core and comprehensive network, (iii) the migration to **European standard nominal track gauge** (1 435 mm), (iv) the increase of the number of **740-meter-long** freight trains, and (v) the 160km/h minimum line speed for passenger trains, were provided with a view to ensuring sufficient capacity and smooth rail transport operations without interruption on the whole TEN-T network.

The rail freight governance should make all possible efforts to ensure that the dwelling time of freight trains crossing a border between two Member States does **not exceed 25 minutes** on average and that most trains crossing at least one border of a European Transport Corridor arrive at their destination or at the external Union border at their scheduled time or with a delay of less than 30 minutes.

Road transport

The regulation stipulates that all core and extended core network roads will be specially designed, built or upgraded for motor traffic providing separate carriage ways for the two directions of traffic, separated from each other by a dividing strip not intended for traffic or, exceptionally, by other means. Furthermore, the co-legislators agreed on the deployment of **safe and secure parking areas** on the core and extended core network to guarantee better working conditions and rest for professional drivers. Such areas will be deployed within an average maximum distance of 150km on the core and the extended core network.

Urban nodes

Member States will ensure the availability of recharging and refuelling infrastructures for alternative fuels, and by 31 December 2027 at the latest, the adoption and monitoring of a **sustainable urban mobility plan** (SUMP) for each urban node including, among other things, measures aimed at integrating different modes of transport and moving towards sustainable mobility, promoting efficient mobility with zero or low emissions, and reducing air and noise pollution.

Air transport infrastructure

The new regulation supports the objective of improving the connectivity of airports with rail transport services. Airports of major European cities with a total annual passenger traffic of **more than 12 million**

passengers will be therefore connected to the trans-European railway network, including the high-speed railway network where possible, allowing long-distance services by 31 December 2040.

Governance

The **European Coordinators**, who are tasked by the Commission with coordinating the decisions and actions of the Member States and other relevant stakeholders, will continue to set the course for the implementation of the TEN-T corridors and horizontal priorities and to involve a wide range of stakeholders throughout the completion of the TEN-T network.

Lastly, in response to the impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and to ensure better connectivity with key neighbouring countries, the new regulation extends four European Transport Corridors of the TEN-T network to **Ukraine and Moldova** whilst downgrading cross-border connections with Russia and Belarus.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 18.7.2024.