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Impact Assessment

Accompanying the document

**PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF
THE COUNCIL**

on Union Guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network

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projects completed/abandoned and changes in national planning; addition of selected and well-defined missing links and nodes, especially in new MS; elimination of dead-ends and isolated links in current TEN-T if not justified by geographical particularities; implementation of minimum standards for infrastructure and equipment in accordance with relevant legislation currently in place; revision of the selection of seaports and airports according to a number of specific criteria (concerning mainly traffic volumes and accessibility conditions). As a result, the comprehensive network will directly reflect the relevant existing and planned infrastructure in Member States, while ensuring at the same time the accessibility of all regions of the Union. It will include road, rail, inland waterways, maritime and air infrastructure network components, as well as the connecting points between the modes. It will feature minimum infrastructure standards, and aim at interoperability wherever necessary for seamless traffic flows across the network. All European citizens and economic operators should be able to access the Core Network, via the Comprehensive Network, on comparable terms.

Core network

The aim was to develop a coherent and transparent methodology that could be applied consistently across all Member States and which comprises elements to enhance cohesion, economic efficiency and environmental sustainability simultaneously.

In addition to infrastructure interconnectivity and traffic related goals, the methodology was crafted to take into account a sound balance between these planning objectives and larger treaty mandated goals such as geographical coverage and cohesion, accessibility and competitiveness. Thus, all "primary city nodes" – corresponding to the capitals of all MS and large cities and conurbations across the EU – are linked within the Core Network. Large cities and conurbations include the MEGAs ("MEtropolitan growth areas") according to ESPON atlas 2006 and conurbations or city clusters with more than 1 million inhabitants, on the base of "Larger Urban Zones" ("LUZ") according to "Urban Audit" (EUROSTAT).

Adequate connections with neighbouring and other third countries have also been taken into account. For this reason, all major seaports of the Union are also considered primary nodes. Moreover, in order to connect the Core Network with corresponding infrastructure in neighbouring countries, the points where the multimodal axes cross the external border of the Union are considered primary nodes. As a result, the main existing connecting points with bordering countries, including rail or road platforms in the East of Europe and the seaports would become connected to the main economic centres of the EU.

In order to ensure the Member States' ownership of the process (and of the results) of core and comprehensive network identification, continued consultation with the Member States representatives would be ensured throughout the process of application of the methodology.

The current Priority Projects will be included in the core TEN-T, but whether in their entirety or partially will depend on their meeting the methodology criteria.¹¹³

As far as implementation is concerned, the establishment of multi-modal corridors along the core network, governed by specific binding legal instruments in the form of "Corridor Decisions" are envisaged to provide the basis for modal integration, interoperability and coordinated development and management of infrastructure. A specific methodology for corridor identification will ensure that each corridor links a number of multimodal nodes, supports co-modal transport solutions and involve at least three Member States. The specific Corridor Decisions will provide for a coordinated approach in the undertaking of infrastructural investments, in the management of corridor capacity, in building (wherever needed) and coordinating transshipment facilities (particularly for freight) that optimise the use

¹¹³ This should not however affect the continuity of current Priority Projects because inclusion on the core network outlay plan will concern the prioritisation of *future* funding decisions.