

## **Revision of the TEN-T Regulation Statement from the Interregional Alliance for the Rhine- Alpine Corridor EGTC**

The TEN-T approach has facilitated to shape the European infrastructure development tremendously. As one of nine Core Network Corridors, the Rhine-Alpine Corridor constitutes a very important backbone of the TEN-T network. In order to support the positive continuation of this policy, the „Interregional Alliance for the Rhine-Alpine Corridor EGTC“ likes to share its view for the future of the TEN-T.

The „Interregional Alliance for the Rhine-Alpine Corridor EGTC“ has been founded in 2015 in order to facilitate the cooperation among its 26 members from all 6 countries of the Rhine-Alpine Corridor. Our ambition is to promote, to jointly strengthen and to coordinate the integrated development of the multimodal Rhine-Alpine Corridor from the perspective of its regional and local members.

A main objective of the EGTC, as defined in its Convention, is the evolution of the joint development strategy for the Rhine-Alpine Corridor “One Corridor – One Strategy”. Hence the TEN-T revision process is a focal issue for our organization and its members to which we would like to emphasize some central positions to be used in the revision of the TEN-T.

**Our joint strategy “One Corridor – One Strategy” focuses on five development priorities:**

1. Optimize the network, procedures and the cooperation of key players
2. Raise capacity
3. Repair spaces and ensure sustainability
4. Accelerate speed
5. Ensure acceptance.

These priorities are fully in line with the EU Green Deal and can be summarized in our motto:

***The Rhine-Alpine Corridor: Fast, reliable & green.***

Accordingly, we would like to emphasize a set of recommendations from a corridor development perspective for consideration in the ongoing revision process.

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## 1.) Implementing the network and quality of infrastructure

We see the focus on aspects of cross-border cooperation, multimodality and resilience.

*Cross border regions are essential for the overall performance of corridors.*

Therefore the new TEN-T Regulation should focus and address the following elements:

- Removal of infrastructure bottlenecks in cross-border regions, e.g. Venlo-Kaldenkirchen-Viersen and Emmerich-Oberhausen. This will result in a better crossing of borders and a strengthening of the corridor performance.
- Streamlining and harmonization of regulations and rules and (rail) transport services by setting clear standards and procedures on a European level. Europe needs better long distance passenger train connections as e.g. the connection Amsterdam- Arnhem-Frankfurt, Düsseldorf-Mannheim-Zürich or Milano-Bern-Karlsruhe to make rail more competitive against road and also to reduce intra-European flights.
- A coordinated and integrated development for spatial planning and infrastructure on European level is necessary for a coherent network, removing missing links, especially with a perspective of larger Functional Urban Areas: The major urban nodes form one system whose elements can't be seen separately, especially in polycentric urban regions and cross-border regions (Upper Rhine Region (CH-F-D), Eurodelta (NL-B-D), Northern Italy/CH), and the comprehensive network will also play an undoubted role in cross-border sections for the connection of territories and corridors.
- Stimulate interregional cooperation on corridors and use cross-border regions' economic potential. Studies by the EU have shown that investing in cross-border and innovative projects results in economic growth.

## 2.) Create a more resilient transport system

Based on our experiences from the last 2 years and major disturbances of transport in the corridor due to severe incidents, like the damage at the Rastatt tunnel construction site and the collapse of the Morandi Bridge in Genova, we have learnt about the importance of a redundant network including the comprehensive system of TEN T. Therefore, we underline the necessity to create a more resilient transport system. Consequently, we would recommend EU to speed up the completion, and where useful, the supplement, of the comprehensive network, in parallel with the completion of the core network. Harmonization, interoperability and well organized information channels are to be considered key aspects for seamless international transport in a resilient network of corridors.

## 3.) Increasing multi-/synchromodality

Another focus we see in increasing multi-/synchromodality, which would require in particular significant investments for upgrading the terminals and hubs, linking them with rapidly evolving telematics solutions streamlined in a federated network for the entire logistics sector. A full introduction of synchro-modal transport on the corridors can contribute to increasing the sustainability of freight

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transport. Through these measures cargo is optimally combined using existing infrastructure and thus improving efficiency and reducing the carbon footprint.

## ***4.) Integration with Green Deal, Energy and Digital Transition***

### ***4.1 Greening transport flows towards climate neutral freight and passenger transport***

This issue is crucial for the overall performance as well as for healthy working and living conditions along the Rhine–Alpine Corridor.

Therefore the new TEN–T Regulation should focus and address the following elements of corridor development concerning the ambitions to make long distance transport greener:

- Greening the transport on the Rhine–Alpine Corridor is critical to the economic and climate ambitions of the European Union, as stated in the European Green Deal.
- The TEN–T Corridor Rhine–Alpine carries the biggest volume of goods of all corridors in the EU. The impact and visibility of coordinated actions along this Corridor will be huge.
- To benefit from the predicted growth in world trade, accessibility on these important logistics corridors is of major importance. It must be made safer, cleaner and quieter.
- The flow of goods and people must be organized in a safe, socially responsible, environmentally friendly and future–proof way. This goes beyond simply reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It is also about reducing negative effects such as congestion, the transportation of hazardous substances and noise pollution especially in urban areas along the corridor, and about the efficient land use, and the reutilization of resources.

Joint ambition should be directed towards a ***common strategy for zero-emission on the Rhine–Alpine Corridor*** by focusing on

- the use of rail and inland waterways transport;
- the availability of alternative fuels like hydrogen, LNG and/or electricity;
- setting a standard for zero-emission in all projects, and therefore
- reducing environmental and climate impact together with increasing safety & efficiency.

### ***4.2 Decarbonisation of transport***

brings together both the objectives of competitiveness and greening of transport. To truly green the corridor we need synergies in terms of energy use, implying that greening the corridor may also be seen in a broader context of regional development, noise protection, energy consumption and synergies between modes.

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The results of projects with corridor impact by our member regions such as Clean Energy Hubs, Clean Inland Shipping, RH2INE as well as manifold public-private agreements on climate change imposes the obligation to work on a greener Corridor Rhine-Alpine.

A clear and feasible strategy is needed to align TEN-T and TEN-E ambitions with the multitude of national programs leading to facilitation and integration of energy and mobility systems. Great quantities of reusable fuels are required as well as a wide distribution network and filling stations. This strategy should lead to an approach for the Trans-European Networks which outlines the availability of infrastructure based on demand, geography and network characteristics. Roadmaps will be needed to solve the 'chicken and egg' problem of investments while providing clarity and transparency.

### ***5.) The EGTC Rhine-Alpine as an governance example for other corridors.***

Besides the official Corridor Fora, the establishment of bottom up organisations for each Corridor offers the opportunity to consult planning procedures at an early stage by taking into account the concerns and interests of the directly affected population of cities and regions along the corridor(s). The creation of the "Interregional Alliance for the Rhine-Alpine Corridor", which has been founded as a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation in April 2015, by regions and cities along the corridor, is a good practice example for such an approach. It also supports the acceptance of necessary infrastructure investments.

Our Alliance is ready and willing to support the roll-out of such organisations to other interested corridors. It represents a successful form of multilevel governance and we offer to provide competent assistance during planning and implementation of such cooperation structures.

**Our Alliance is ready to cooperate and we would be happy to discuss and jointly elaborate on our proposals and ideas mentioned above.**