

Stakeholder consultation on the mid-term review of the 2011 White Paper on transport

Background information

In 2011 the European Commission adopted the White Paper: "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system" in the framework of the Union's 2020 growth strategy. This document defined a long-term vision for a transport sector that should continue to serve the needs of the economy and of the citizens while meeting future constraints: oil scarcity, growing congestion and the need to cut CO₂ emissions. The vision was to a substantial degree based on better multimodality of transport and new technologies that should lead to more optimised journeys.

The general objective of the 2011 White Paper was to define a long-term strategy that would help the EU transport system achieve the overall goal of the Common Transport Policy, i.e. to provide current and future generations with access to safe, secure, reliable and affordable mobility resources to meet their own needs and aspirations, while minimising undesirable impacts such as congestion, accidents, air and noise pollution, and climate change effects.

According to the analysis of the White Paper this underlying objective required that particular attention is paid to the most pressing challenges faced by the transport sector at that time: vulnerability to oil price increases and growing network congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. In relation to these challenges, the White paper identified three specific objectives:

- A reduction of GHG emissions that is consistent with the overall target for the EU of reducing emissions by 80% by 2050 compared to 1990. Transport-related emissions of CO₂ should be reduced by around 60% by 2050 compared to 1990.
- A drastic decrease in the oil dependency ratio of transport-related activities by 2050, as requested by the EU 2020 Strategy for transport calling for "decarbonised transport".
- Limiting the growth of congestion.

Besides setting the objectives, the White Paper offered a vision of how the transport system should evolve in order to be capable of meeting its challenges. It needs to become a transport system with better integration between modes, fewer barriers to market entry, coherent infrastructure design and wide deployment of new technologies for traffic management, travel planning and vehicle propulsion. These developments are deemed necessary to achieve the objectives without curbing mobility, which is vital for both social and economic growth.

Finally, the 2011 strategy also proposed ten goals for guiding policy action and helping assess progress (these operational policy objectives should serve as benchmarks indicating the way forward, but they are not ultimate objectives per se):

1. Halve the use of conventionally fuelled cars in urban transport by 2030; phase them out in cities by 2050 and achieve essentially CO₂-free city logistics in major urban centres by 2030.
2. 40% low carbon sustainable fuels in aviation by 2050; reduce EU CO₂ emissions from maritime bunker fuels by 40% by 2050.
3. Shift 30% of road freight above 300 km to rail and waterborne by 2030.
4. Triple the existing high-speed rail network by 2030. The majority of medium-distance passenger transport should go by rail by 2050.
5. Complete the TEN-T 'core' network by 2030 with a corresponding set of information services.
6. Multimodal connections between all core network airports and rail, core seaports and rail freight and inland waterways by 2050.
7. Deployment of traffic management infrastructure and systems in the various modes. Deployment of Galileo
8. Development of the framework for a European multimodal transport information management and payment system by 2020.
9. Halve road casualties by 2020, move close to zero fatalities by 2050. Make sure that the EU is a world leader in safety and security of transport in all modes of transport.

10. Move towards full application of 'user pays' and 'polluter pays' principles in order to generate revenues and ensure financing for future transport investments.

In order to achieve these objectives the White Paper's strategy set four broad areas of intervention:

- Internal market - elimination of the remaining internal market barriers;
- Innovation - acceleration of the deployment of new vehicle and fuel technologies, and of IT solutions for traffic management;
- Infrastructure - creation of a 'core' TEN-T network as a backbone of a truly multimodal European network and finding new sources of and mechanisms for funding, including greater recourse to user pay and polluter pays principles;
- International - continuation of the efforts to open international market, promote European technical standards and defend with one voice EU global business in maritime and aviation.

For each of these areas, a ten year programme was defined with in total 40 specific action points, each containing a handful of specific initiatives. Typically, the proposed initiatives within each point are of different nature, different time horizon and different economic/political relevance.

Four years after the adoption the Commission has made a substantial progress with the White Paper programme, two thirds of which have generally speaking been covered by the European Commission. Work has progressed fast in the field of infrastructure, internal market, security and passenger rights. More efforts remain to be made in the technological, pricing and social aspects.

Introduction

The 'new start' of the Juncker's Commission concerns all policy areas and five of the ten Commission priorities (jobs, growth, investment / energy union / internal market/ digital agenda / EU as global actor) are directly linked to transport. In this context, it has become evident that there is also a need to analyse, if the 2011 transport policy agenda properly meets the new priorities and the 2030 climate and energy package. The Commission's intention is to take stock of the progress and to assess the validity of the analysis of the situation in transport sector as well as trends, priorities and targets that were identified in 2011. The online consultation will provide an important input to this exercise.

The prolonged economic crisis had a substantial impact on transport activity, so the Commission's projections might need to be adjusted taking into account also the effects of the expected recovery. In this context this consultation asks for your informed opinions and suggestions concerning:

- The validity of the analysis of the situation in the transport sector, trends, objectives and targets that were identified in 2011.
- The expected effectiveness of the Commission initiatives in contributing to a more efficient and sustainable transport system and to the strategic target of reducing GHG emissions from transport by 60% by 2050 (while acknowledging the impacts of those initiatives are still not visible in most of the cases).
- The progress in the implementation of the work programme and the contribution of EU Member States to the EU objectives by related actions.
- The areas where additional actions might be needed in order to secure the objectives of the strategy.