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POUR LA POLITIQUE DES TRANSPORTS
UNION OF EUROPEAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (UECC)
FOR TRANSPORT

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Editorial

The sharp drop in freight traffic volumes compared to last year is only one result of the economic crisis which has now taken a firm grip on Europe. Although there are indications that the slump may have bottomed out – demand has begun to creep up again in some industrial sectors at least – it will take a long time for the economy to recover its former strength.

European governments have provided enormous funds to back up the financial markets and stimulate trade, and in some countries perhaps also to improve reelection prospects. These measures have prevented an even more dramatic economic collapse.

To a great extent, debts have been moved from the private to the public sector. In many cases, States have resorted to protectionism, which could be dangerous for Europe's free market.

In the coming months, the UECC must keep a close eye on the use of the funds that are provided to stimulate the construction industry. It would be a pity if these sums were to be distributed at random all over Europe without the setting of clear priorities, as has happened often enough in the past. This approach would perhaps have a temporary effect on the labour market but it would not provide any sustainable improvement for Europe's main transport infrastructures.

On the contrary, Europe ought take the crisis as an opportunity to invest the additional funds in major transport projects and thus ensure that it emerges from its present difficulties stronger and more competitive than before.

Dr. Rainer Füeg
Secretary General

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EU publishes a new Green Paper on the European Transport Network

With its Green Paper (COM(2009) 44 final) the European Commission intends to launch a thorough review of its policies for the creation of a Transeuropean transport network.

In its position paper, the UECC draws attention to the following points:

- Transport projects for which there is a proven necessity must be implemented much more quickly than before. The integration of infrastructure projects into a core network helps to eliminate bottlenecks at important junctions and permits a more efficient deployment of available measures and financial resources. This does not mean however that the idea of a network covering the entire territory of the European Union must be abandoned.
- Reliable and transparent criteria must be established for planning the creation of a future core network. Most importantly, this network must have good connections to the European periphery, in accordance with the demands of business and trade. Sustainability and macroeconomic perspectives must be given more consideration than in the past. Present and future traffic volumes, the elimination of bottlenecks and the creation of additional capacity, but also a non-discriminatory access to all modes of transport are other important criteria that must be taken into account.
- The UECC rejects the proposal to include road pricing and the internalisation of external costs – both are used as measures to control traffic flows – in the policy and to define them as conditions for the integration into a core network or the receipt of financial support. A regulatory transport policy that is aimed at preventing traffic and increasing the cost of transport services has a negative impact on Europe's economy and prosperity.
- The rules of subsidarity must be respected, particularly when referring to urban transport services. Traffic problems in the cities can be solved adequately only by the local authorities concerned. The UECC therefore believes that the development of urban transport infrastructure should not be part of the Green Paper.

The Future of Transport – the UECC's point of view

In 2001, the European Commission issued a White Paper on its European transport policy until 2010, which the UECC also commented upon at the time.

Now the European Commission is preparing the guidelines for a continuation of this policy. A document to this effect is scheduled for publication in 2010.

At its General Assembly of May 15, 2009 in Strasbourg, the UECC drafted and adopted a position paper, which was then transmitted to the Commission as part of an ongoing consultation procedure. The UECC's demands can be summed up as follows:

- Improvements in climate policy ought to be achieved by reducing the amount of emissions and not the volumes of traffic.
- A better utilisation of existing infrastructures will help deal with the increase in traffic.
- The UECC also calls for an upgrading and extension of transport infrastructures in accordance with demand, particularly on Europe's main transport axes. The White Paper suggests that expansion projects should be limited to the new EU member States on the periphery, whereas in the other 12 member States the main focus should be laid on the creation of multimodal platforms. The UECC strongly opposes this idea. It also demands further market liberalisation, the reduction of regulations and administrative barriers and the elimination of price distortions. In addition, the UECC firmly rejects the EU's intention to make the road haulage industry pay for congestion costs.
- An improved coordination of spatial planning and infrastructure policy is to be welcomed, providing that local or regional interests do not delay the completion of infrastructure projects that are of key importance for Europe's transport network.

- The UECC approves the stronger focus on the "polluter pays" principle, again providing that all the funds thus generated are reinvested into the operation and development of transport infrastructures.

The full text of this and all the other position papers and resolutions published by the UECC can be downloaded from the website www.uecc.org.

Expertise on the sectoral traffic ban for trucks in Tyrol

The Chamber of Commerce of Vorarlberg in Austria commissioned the University of Innsbruck to conduct a study on the effects of the sectoral traffic ban for trucks on the Inntal motorway in Tyrol. The scientific expertise now published fully confirms that the ban has a negative impact on the regional economy. The most affected sectors are waste disposal, freight transport and the road haulage industry, manufacturers of metals and machinery, the automobile trade, paviours of ceramic tiles, and agriculture and forestry. These sectors employ 20 % of the workforce and generate about 25 % of the value added in the region's manufacturing industry.

For more information and updates on the sectoral traffic ban please see the website www.tirol.gv.at/buerger/umwelt/luft/nachtfahrverbot/.

Do you have any problems with the sectoral traffic ban?

The UECC also protested against the sectoral traffic ban, pointing out that it makes no sense prohibiting the transport of certain goods on the motorway in the Inntal instead of focusing on the amount of emissions produced by the vehicles concerned. As from July 1, 2009, the ban will be extended to cover even more goods, such as iron ores, steel, marble or ceramic tiles, which will cause only more problems.

In January 2009, the European Union brought in an action against the Republic of Austria at the European Court of Justice, a procedure which will probably take two to three years to complete.

The EU has however indicated that it will appeal for a temporary injunction against the ban at the European Court of Justice – as companies and entrepreneurs have always demanded – if serious problems with the ban are reported.

However, to that end, reliable information from the business community (shippers, transport companies, etc) is required, in particular with regard to difficulties and bottlenecks occurring when loading the cargo onto the rolling motorway, the piggy-back rail freight service that is offered as an alternative to road haulage. Please send your information to **Dr. Manfred Rothkopf, Munich Chamber of Commerce, e-mail: rothkopf@muenchen.ihk.de.**

Presentation of a new Rhine-Saône waterway project

Early April this year, Eurotrans Partners Network, an international engineering and consulting company, introduced new plans for a continuous waterway from the Rhine to the Mediterranean Sea. In 1997, the French government of the time stopped the old, controversial project of a Rhine-Rhone Canal, because of fierce local resistance to the construction plans in the Doubs valley.

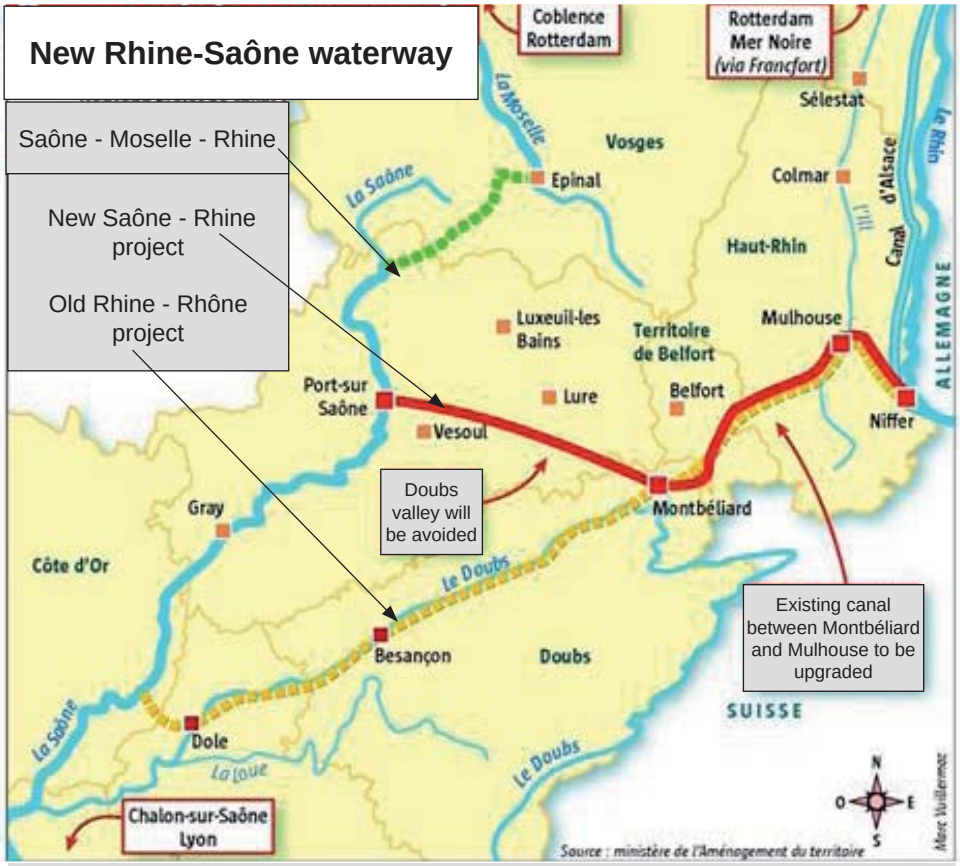
In the preliminary study, which was presented in Colmar, the waterway avoids the Doubs completely. It turns off at Montbéliard, south of Belfort and passes through the Haute-Saône near Vesoul to the Saône. The costs for the roughly 200 kilometers are estimated at about 10 billion euros.

The study, which was commissioned by the French State and ten other partners in the

regions concerned, calculates that the new Rhine-Saône connection could expect freight traffic volumes of about 11 to 19 million tonnes per year as from 2025. 4.5 to 6 million tonnes would be containerised cargo. The new canal would be open to ships of a maximum length of 185 meters.

Many new jobs could also be created by 2030 with the construction of the canal.

As a next step, the promoters of the project want to apply that their proposal is included in the list of priority projects in France and the European Union.



Reference: www.alsace.fr

Analysis of the external costs of freight traffic

Since January 2009, following an initiative of the "Voies navigables de France", a survey is being conducted to analyse the external costs of freight traffic in the corridor between Paris and Amsterdam. Operators of railway, road, waterway and short-sea shipping services from France, Belgium and the Netherlands have agreed to participate in the study.

The survey, 50 % of which is funded by the European Commission as part of its annual TEN budget, is also expected to provide valuable insights into the possible effects of various road pricing systems on the distribution of the traffic flows.

Rotterdam – Genoa railway axis: an Interreg project for Corridor 24

At its General Assembly, the UECC also discussed an Interreg project (2010-2012, 2-5 million euros) planned for Corridor 24. Following an iniatitive of Professor Scholl of the Technical University (ETH) of Zurich, the Regional Association of Rhine-Neckar will be mandated to form a cooperation between universities, regional associations, users of the transport axis (ports, railways) and Chambers of Commerce. The objective of the project is to define current inadequacies of the present route, develop lobbying activities and ensure that the necessary upgrades are completed.

The UECC ideally supports the project's aims and will be represented by the Chamber of Commerce of Karlsruhe in the operative committees. Mathias Tromp (Bern) was elected as the UECC's representative in the Advisory Board.

The Rotterdam-Genoa railfreight link is an important part of Corridor 24, a priority transport axis which runs from Lyon/Genoa via Basel and Duisburg to Rotterdam/Antwerp.

Plans for a further upgrade of rail freight axes

In June 2009, the Ministers of Transport from Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Austria and Italy signed a letter of intent with regard to long-term development objectives for the rail freight corridor Stockholm-Copenhagen-Hamburg-Munich-Innsbruck-Verona-Naples.

The corridor is to be equipped with the European Management System ERMTS. The axis includes major European infrastructure projects such as the Brenner base tunnel. Currently, more than 20 different national train control and command systems are in operation in Europe.

They are to be gradually replaced by the new management system. ERTMS should be installed in the large European rail freight corridors by 2020. Today, ERMTS is available on about 2000 km of the Europe-wide railway network.

The other ERTMS corridors: Rotterdam-Duisburg-Basel-Genoa, Antwerp-Luxemburg-Basel/Lyon, Valencia-Lyon-Milan-Ljubljana-Budapest, Dresden-Prague-Budapest/Vienna-Constanta and Aachen-Cracow/Warsaw-Terespol.

Italy invests in combined transport

With the approval of the European Commission, the Italian State will invest in the creation of a rail freight service between the port of Naples and Nola Interport, one of the country's most important industrial ports.

The objective is to transfer some of the freight traffic from the roads to the railways. The start-up aid will amount to EUR 1'322'000 and will cover a period of three years.

Research and development in the civil aviation industry

In June 2009, SESAR, a public-private partnership in air traffice management (ATM) research and development founded by the European Commission and EUROCONTROL, signed several contracts for the creation of Europe's future ATM system. A total of 1.9 billion euros will be invested over a period of seven years (2009-2016) in research and development and about 300 various projects. The aim is to create a single European airspace with a uniform air traffic management system. The SESAR programme is based primarily on:

- the notion of "trajectory-based operations", which will dramatically improve the predictability and precision of operations;

- a rolling network operation plan, taking into account real-time situations including weather and traffic evolution;
- the introduction of an air traffic management intranet, including aircraft, which will enable all actors to have full acess to the right information at the right time;
- the full integration of airport ground activities into the air traffic management processes;
- increased automation support for air traffic controllers and pilots;
- increased environmentally friendly operations at airports, allowing greener trajectories while maximising the use of existing runways.

More information, including SESAR's "masterplan", can be downloaded from the website www.eurocontrol.int/sesar/.

"Clean Sky" launches its first call for proposals

The "Clean Sky" initiative is a EU-wide private-public partnership of small and medium sized companies, universities and research centres, as well as leading aeronautics manufacturers.

Its aim is to promote the development of new technologies which help to reduce the impact of air traffic on the environment and strengthen the aviation industry's position on the market. "Clean Sky" has now published a call for proposals. It covers 72 different topics of research under five principal headings: green regional aircraft, green rotorcraft, sustainable and green engines, SMART fixed wing aircraft, systems for green operations, with the key objective of enlisting the technical capabilities of additional partners.

The call for proposals is the start of a European research project in which a total of 1.6 billion euros are to be invested by 2014. The membership of "Clean Sky" currently counts 120 organisations from 16 countries, 86 industries, including 20 SMEs, 15 research centres and 17 universities.

Further information on the initiative can be found on the website www.cleansky.eu.

Calendar 2009/2010

Executive Committee

October 2, 2009	St. Pölten (A)

Working group

October 29/30, 2009	Mulhouse (F)

General Assembly 2010

March 2010	The Netherlands