

【欧州】 【海事】

Common - Environmental issues, TEN-T: TEN-T network as key instrument to ensure better connectivity within the EU and neighbouring countries, including Ukraine and Moldova

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【概要 : Summary】

The aim of the EU's Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) policy is to build a multimodal network of rail, inland waterways, short sea shipping routes and roads across the EU for a sustainable economic growth.

The main reasons for proposing a revision of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 on the TEN-T policy were related to insufficient and/or incomplete standards and a lack of integration of alternative fuel infrastructure standards within the TEN-T policy after the introduction of the European Green Deal and its 2050 carbon neutrality target. Main changes under the TEN-T revision COM(2021) 812 final are the introduction of a new intermediary deadline of 2040 to advance the completion of major parts of the comprehensive network ahead of the 2050 deadline and to oblige the 424 major cities on the TEN-T network to develop Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans to promote zero-emission transport and the greening of the urban fleet, by 2025.

The revision also aims at facilitating seamless and efficient transport, as well as fostering multimodality and interoperability between the TEN-T transport modes, while better integrating the urban nodes into the network. However, the

European Commission's initial proposal for a revision of the TEN-T Regulation had to be revised again in response to the new geopolitical realities and the impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Accordingly, the amendments under COM (2022) 384 final on the TEN-T guidelines for the development of the TEN-T network also consider the recent changes in the geopolitical context based on the Russian invasion in Ukraine. The extension of four European Transport Corridors of the TEN-T network to Ukraine and Moldova under the new regulation COM (2022) 384 final is a notable decision that not only symbolizes solidarity with the Ukraine and Moldova and fosters better transport links, economic integration, and resilience in the face of new geopolitical challenges.

The Council and the European Parliament's provisional agreement on the revised TEN-T regulation under COM (2022) 384 final also demonstrates the EU's strategic commitment to improve and reinforce the connectivity of transport links with Ukraine and Moldova, while cutting transport infrastructure projects with Russia and Belarus, thereby recognising the new geopolitical realities in these neighbouring countries.

【記事 : Article】

1. The proposal on the TEN-T revision COM (2021) 812 final

The EU's trans-European transport network (TEN-T) policy is a key instrument for the development of the EU's common, multimodal transport infrastructure network of rail, inland waterways, short sea shipping routes and roads, which are connected to urban nodes, maritime and inland ports, airports, and terminals across the EU (European Commission n.d.a, DG Mobility n.d.a). It has the ultimate objective to close gaps, remove bottlenecks and technical barriers, while also aiming at reducing the environmental impact of transport and to increase the safety and the resilience of the network (DG Mobility n.d.a, European Commission n.d.b).

As set out in the TEN-T Regulation (EU) 1315/2013, the TEN-T network consists of two layers, the core, and the comprehensive network (DG Mobility n.d.a). The core network includes the most important connections linking major cities and nodes and must be completed by 2030. The backbone of the Core Network is represented by nine Core Network Corridors, which were identified to streamline and facilitate the coordinated development of the Core Network (European Commission n.d.b). The European Coordinators oversee the progress of the corridor or priority and acts as "ambassador" of the TEN-T policy (DG Mobility n.d.a). Furthermore, the second layer, the comprehensive network needs to be completed by 2050 and will connect all regions of the EU to the core network (DG Mobility n.d.a). However, considering the objectives of the European Green Deal in 2019 (COM (2019)640 final) with its target to reach climate neutrality by 2050, also the TEN-T network policy and the TEN-T Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 had to be revised (DG Mobility n.d.a, Antolini 2023a). Accordingly, the COM(2021) 812 final had to revise TEN-T infrastructure standards, which were still insufficient and/or incomplete. There was also a

lack of integration of standards for alternative fuels infrastructure on the TEN-T (COM(2021) 812 final). Secondly, the TEN-T network still suffered from capacity bottlenecks and an insufficient network connectivity to all regions. Thirdly, the insufficient safety and reliability of the TEN-T infrastructure needed to be addressed and finally, the governance instruments were still inadequate compared to the new needs introduced by the climate neutrality target to be reached by 2050 (COM(2021) 812 final).

Therefore, the European Commission presented a proposal to revise the trans-European transport network guidelines under TEN-T Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 and to align them with the European Green Deal objectives and the climate targets of the EU Climate Law on 14.12.2021 (European Parliament 2021a).

Accordingly, the TEN-T revision COM(2021) 812 final aims at reducing GHG emissions and making transport sustainable (COM(2021) 812 final). While under the TEN-T Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 there were two layers of infrastructure to be developed, with the revision of the TEN-T Regulation under COM(2021) 812 final, a third layer - the extended core network to be completed by 2040 - was added (DG Mobility n.d.a). The reason behind the introduction of the extended core network was to advance the completion of major parts of the comprehensive network, such as some high-speed rail links Porto-Vigo and Budapest-Bucharest ("extended core network") (European Parliament 2021a). Furthermore, it included new standards for transport links, such as a minimum speed of 160 km/h for passenger rail and 100 km/h for freight as well as reduced waiting times at border crossings, longer freight trains, as well as transport of lorries by train along the network (DG Mobility n.d.b). The revision also aims at facilitating seamless and efficient transport, fostering multimodality and interoperability between the TEN-T transport

modes, and better integrating the urban nodes into the network (COM(2021) 812 final, see also Antolini 2023b). The Commission's proposal to revise the TEN-T Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 should put the transport sector on track to cut its GHG emissions by 90% and to respond to the need to increase connectivity across Europe, foster the resilience of the transport system, shift more passengers and freight to the sustainable modes of transport and focus on sustainable urban mobility (DG Mobility n.d.b). It also includes the integration of rail freight corridors into the TEN-T corridors, to create nine 'European Transport Corridors' with integrated rail, road, and waterways with canals and rivers being in good navigation conditions for a minimum number of days per year (DG Mobility n.d.b). Moreover, the number of transshipment terminals and their handling capacity should be increased, and the 424 major cities on the TEN-T network need to develop Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans to promote zero-emission transport and the greening of the urban fleet, by 2025 (European Parliament 2021a). The proposal COM (2021) 812 final also revised the annexes to contain detailed maps of the core, extended core, and the comprehensive network, as well as the indicative maps for the neighbouring countries (COM (2021) 812 final).

2. The amendments to the TEN-T Regulation's revision proposal under COM (2022) 384 final

However, the proposal for a revision of the TEN-T Regulation COM(2021) 812 final had to be revised again in response to the new geopolitical realities and the impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Accordingly, the European Commission proposed to amend its proposal on the revision of the TEN-T Regulation COM(2021) 812 final and presented the "Amended proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on Union guidelines

for the development of the trans-European transport network, amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 and Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulation (EU) 1315/2013" on 27 July 2022 (COM (2022) 384 final).

The amended proposal for a revision of the TEN-T Regulation (COM(2022) 384 final) aims to introduce important changes to the legislative proposal COM (2021) 812 final that takes into consideration the new geopolitical necessities after the Russian invasion in Ukraine. The amended proposal extends four European Transport Corridors to Ukraine and Moldova (European Parliament 2023a). On the other hand, the EU does not consider any longer a cooperation with Russia and Belarus on transport projects appropriate, nor in the EU's interest (COM (2022) 384 final). Therefore, the amended proposal COM (2022) 384 final terminates the expansion of the TEN-T network in Russia and Belarus and explicitly removes these two countries from the TEN-T project maps (European Commission 2022, European Parliament 2023a).

Moreover, the last miles of all cross-border connections between the EU and Russia or Belarus are downgraded from "core network" status to the "comprehensive network" status, thereby postponing their completion to 2050 (European Commission 2022).

Instead, the EU intends to improve connections with the territory of Ukraine and Moldova, in particular by extending four European Transport Corridors and upgrading the transport connectivity with these two neighbouring countries, including the ports of Mariupol and Odesa (COM/2022/384 final, European Commission 2022). Notably, the upgraded connection to Ukraine and Moldova includes the North-Sea Baltic Corridor via Lviv and Kyiv to Mariupol, the extension of the Baltic-Black-Aegean Sea Corridor to Odesa via Lviv and via Chişinău as well as an extension of the Baltic Sea-Adriatic

Sea and the Rhine-Danube Corridors to Lviv (DG Mobility n.d.b).

The issue of different nominal track gauges used in Ukraine compared to most of the EU clearly emerged as a problem following the Russian invasion in Ukraine (COM(2022) 384 final). Since the technical differences between rail track gauges pose a huge obstacle to interoperability, this problem is also addressed in the proposal COM (2022) 384 final. To harmonise EU rules, the text provides for the establishment of standard rail track gauge as a norm for the TEN-T and towards Ukraine and Moldova (European Parliament 2023a, European Commission 2022). This also applies to non-standard track gauges within the EU, as the difficulties at the Ukrainian border have highlighted the impact of a lack of interoperability within the railway network (European Commission 2022). In fact, within the EU, the Member States Ireland (1,600 mm gauge), Finland (1,524 mm gauge), Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (1 520 mm gauge) and Portugal and Spain (1,668 mm gauge) have different gauges (DG Mobility n.d.b). These differences in railway track gauge considerably restrict rail interoperability also within the EU with impacts being demonstrated by the current crisis in Ukraine and its problems in exporting grains by rail due to its different track gauge (DG Mobility n.d.b). Against this backdrop, all EU Member States with a land rail connection with other Member States will have to fulfil the requirement to develop all new TEN-T railway lines with a European standard nominal track gauge of 1,435 mm and to develop a migration plan towards this European standard nominal track gauge for all existing lines of the European Transport Corridors (DG Mobility n.d.b, European Parliament 2023a).

After the amendments proposal COM (2022) 384 final became part of the ongoing negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council on the TEN-T revision, on 6 December 2022, the

Council of the European Union adopted its general on guidelines for the development of the TEN-T network (Council of the EU 2022). On 17 April 2023, the TRAN Committee announced in the European Parliament's plenary that it had decided to enter interinstitutional negotiations with EU Member States on the final version of the legislation under Rule 71, which allows to start negotiations with the Council ahead of Parliament's vote when a majority of its Committee members has voted in favour of it (European Parliament n.d., 2021b, see also Antolini 2023c). On 18 December 2023, the trilogue negotiations on the new legislation came to a successful conclusion (Council of the EU 2023, European Parliament 2023a).

3. The Council and the European Parliament's provisional agreement on the revised TEN-T legislation

The Council presidency and European Parliament's provisional agreement on a revised regulation regarding EU guidelines for the development of the TEN-T will contribute to the achievement of the EU's sustainable mobility objectives (Council of the EU 2023). The new regulation sets clear deadlines for the completion of the 3-layer TEN-T network including the core network to be completed by 2030, newly added extended core network by 2040 and the comprehensive network by 2050 (Council of the EU 2023). The Parliament and Council negotiators agreed on updated guidelines for accelerating the implementation of major projects of the TEN-T network of railways, roads, inland waterways, and short sea shipping routes connected through ports and terminals across the EU by 2030 (European Parliament 2023b). Furthermore, the new intermediary deadline of 2040 was introduced to advance the completion of large-scale, mainly cross-border projects, such as missing rail connections, ahead of the 2050 comprehensive network deadline (Council of the EU 2023).

The Member States will decide how to prioritise projects of common interest in line with realistic technical and priority requirements set out by the new regulation. The provisional agreement also considers the available financial resources of the Member States, as well as the investment needs for infrastructure development (Council of the EU 2023). The compromise agreement between the Council and the European Parliament is also expected to ensure better and faster connections for passengers and freight by rail, as well as better integration of ports, airports, and multimodal freight terminals in the TEN-T network (Council of the EU 2023).

Moreover, national plans need to be aligned with the commitments made at EU level to establish the TEN-T network in a coordinated and timely manner (Council of the EU 2023).

The revised TEN-T regulation also introduces mandatory targets including that the core TEN-T railway network should be fully electrified, operating at a minimum speed of 160 km/h for passenger and 100 km/h for cargo trains. Also passenger railway lines on the TEN-T extended core network should travel at 160 km/h or faster by 2040. (European Commission 2023). Moreover, they should be able to cross internal EU borders in less than 15 minutes by the end of 2030 (European Parliament 2023a).

The European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) must be deployed on the entire TEN-T network as the single European signalling system in Europe to make rail safer and more efficient, while progressively decommissioning national legacy “class B” systems (European Commission, 2023, DG Mobility 2023).

Regarding the deployment of safe and secure parking areas on the TEN-T core and extended core network, they should be built by 2040, on average every 150 km to guarantee better working conditions and rest for professional drivers (European Commission 2023, Council of the EU 2023).

Furthermore, major airports with more than 12 million passengers annually will have to be connected by long-distance rail, including the high-speed railway network where possible by 31 December 2040 to improve connectivity and accessibility, while increasing the use of sustainable modes of transport and reducing the number of domestic flights (European Commission 2023, Council of the EU 2023). The number of transshipment terminals must develop in line with the current and expected traffic flows and the equally handling capacity at freight terminals must improve, which is expected to help shifting more freight onto more sustainable transport modes (DG Mobility 2023). This, as well as allowing the circulation of 740m trains across the network, is expected to help shifting more freight onto more sustainable transport modes and support Europe’s combined transport sector in using a combination of rail and road to move freight (European Commission 2023).

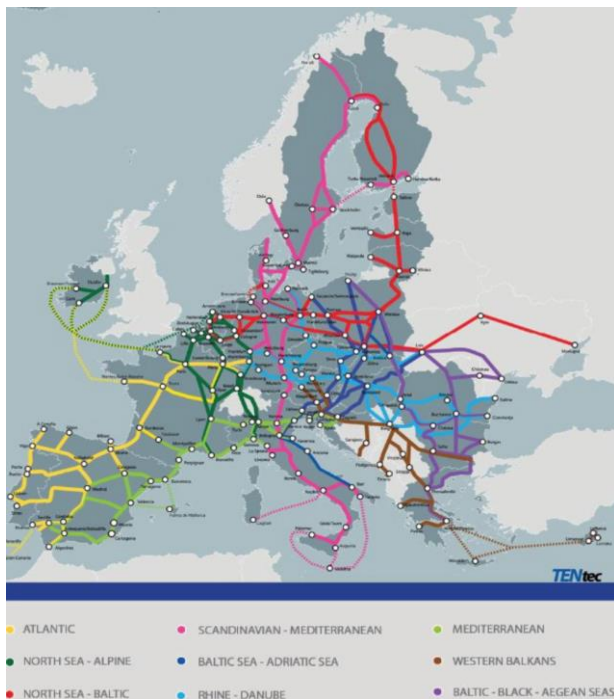
Regarding the urban nodes, the co-legislators intend to strengthen the urban centres of the TEN-T network by establishing a long-term, integrated sustainable urban mobility plan (SUMP) for freight and passenger mobility in the 424 major cities along the TEN-T network by 2027 (DG Mobility 2023, Council of the EU 2023).

All major cities along the TEN-T network will also have to increase and improve public transport and infrastructure for walking and cycling (European Commission 2023, Council of the EU 2023). In addition, the co-legislators maintained the obligation to have at least **one** multimodal freight terminal per urban node by 31 December 2040, where economically viable (Council of the EU 2023).

Moreover, the MEPs secured more focus on intermodal transport undertaken primarily by rail, inland waterways, or short-sea shipping (European Parliament 2023b). Moreover, the European Maritime Space aims to integrate the maritime transport with other transport modes

efficiently, viably, and sustainably by upgrading and creating short-sea shipping routes and further developing maritime ports as well as their hinterland connections (DB Mobility 2023). Regarding military mobility, to ensure the seamless transfer of military troops and equipment, MEPs convinced EU governments to consider military needs (weight or size of military transport) when constructing or upgrading infrastructure that overlaps with the military transport network (European Parliament 2023b). Within one year after the entry into force of these new rules, the Commission will have to conduct a study on short-notice large-scale movements across the EU, to facilitate military mobility planning.

Fig. 1: Alignment of the European transport corridors (COM(2022) 384 final)

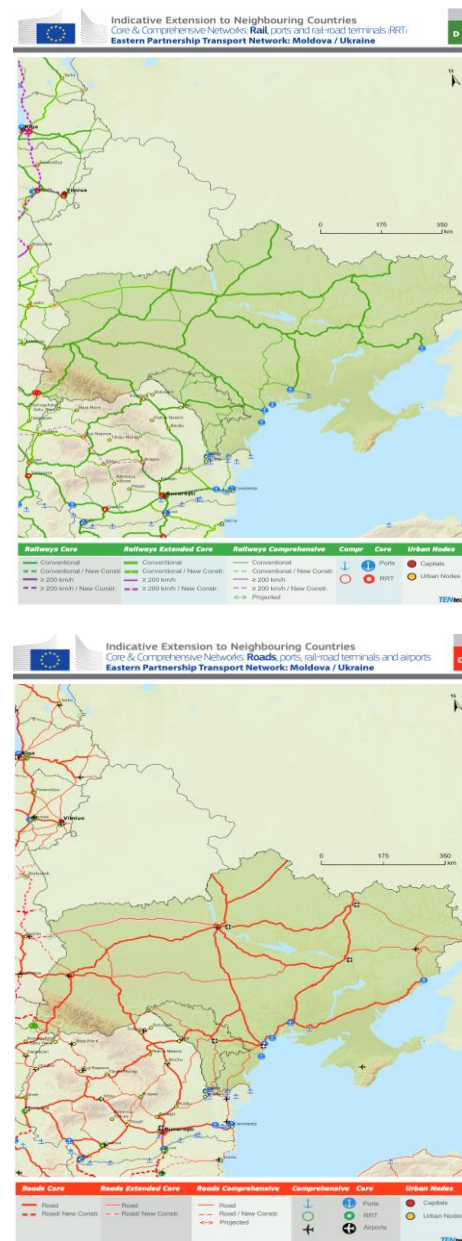


(DG Mobility 2023, <https://transport.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-12/TEN-T-revision-2023-annex-3.pdf>)

Regarding the transport links with neighbouring third countries, the Council and the European Parliament agreed on the extension of four European Transport Corridors of the TEN-T network to the Ukraine and Moldova under the new

TEN-T regulation in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Thereby, some routes of main interest were added to the Eastern Partnership Transport Network: Moldova / Ukraine and a better transport connectivity on the newly established European Transport Corridors will be ensured for Ukraine and Moldova, as well as the six Western Balkan partner countries (European Commission 2023, DB Mobility 2023, Map finder Chart for Neighbouring Countries, n.d.).

Fig. 2: Indicative Extensions to Moldova / Ukraine: Rail and Roads



Map finder Chart for Neighbouring Countries, n.d.: <https://transport.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-12/TEN-T-revision-2023-annex-4.pdf>

At the same time, cross-border connections with Russia and Belarus were downgraded (Council of the EU 2023).

The European Commission welcomed the political agreement on the amended TEN-T regulation reached between the European Parliament and the Council towards building a sustainable and resilient TEN-T network (DG Mobility 2023). Once the provisional agreement between the Council and the European Parliament is formally adopted, the new rules will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union and enter into force 20 days later (European Commission 2023).

4. Conclusion

The political agreement of 18 December 2023 between the Council and the European Parliament marks a significant step forward in shaping the future of the TEN-T network towards the creation of a sustainable, efficient, and resilient single European transport area. The extension to a three-layered TEN-T network, including the core, extended core, and comprehensive network by 2030, 2040, and 2050, respectively, reflects the commitment to timely rollout the entire TEN-T network. The introduction of a new intermediary deadline in 2040 specifically is intended to accelerate the deployment of large-scale cross-border projects, towards building an inter-connected transport network in the EU and beyond. In conclusion, the provisional agreement reached by the Council presidency and European Parliament negotiators maintains mandatory targets, such as minimum speeds for passenger and freight trains and the full electrification of the core TEN-T railway network, underscoring the commitment to achieving sustainable and efficient transportation. The deployment of the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) as the single European signalling system further enhances safety and efficiency in rail transport. The focus on urban nodes, with the establishment of integrated mobility plans SUMPS and

multimodal freight terminals, aims to promote zero and low-emission mobility also in major cities.

In response to the changed geopolitical context due to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the provisional agreement between the Council and the European Parliament demonstrates a strategic commitment by cutting transport infrastructure projects with Russia and Belarus and instead reinforcing transport links with Ukraine and Moldova, by extending four European Transport Corridors of the TEN-T network to Ukraine and Moldova. This aligns the TEN-T network projects with the new geopolitical realities. Therefore, the new regulation on EU guidelines for the development of the TEN-T network not only symbolizes the EU's commitment to build a sustainable, efficient, and resilient single European transport area. It also shows the EU's solidarity with the Ukraine and Moldova in the face of geopolitical challenges, with the aim to foster economic integration, and resilience by improving the Ukraine's and Moldova's transport connections with the EU.

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