



Europaforum Norra Sverige addressing the European Parliament with opinion on the European Commission proposal for the future TEN-T network

Europaforum Norra Sverige (EFNS) is a network of politicians from the four northernmost Counties in Sweden, representing 900.000 citizens and half the geographical area of Sweden.

The EFNS appreciate the open dialogue we have had with EU Commissioners, the European Parliament and EC officials throughout the TEN-T policy review process. We also had fruitful continuous contacts with the Swedish government in this matter. We offer our further participation in the remaining process towards the adoption of the new TEN-T policy, and look forward to provide assistance in the planning and realization of the proposed TEN-T core- and comprehensive networks.

Regarding the presented proposal from the European Commission, now adopted by the Council of European Union, we would like to express the following:

- We welcome with great appreciation that the so called Bothnian Corridor (that is part of the Core Network), on both sides of the Bothnian Gulf, the only land connection between Finland and Sweden, is, included in the EC proposal for the TEN-T Core Network.

The Bothnian Corridor, the strategically important link in the transnational transport system of goods in Europe east-westbound and north-southbound, coincides to the *legislative resolution 2011/2098(INI) adopted by the European Parliament on 15 December 2011*¹, in which the Parliament urges Member States inter alia to commit themselves to eliminating bottlenecks in transport modes and to prioritize cross-border projects between Member States without neglecting connections to neighbouring countries. We do notice with satisfaction the Parliament's recognition of the importance of connections to other axis; for our part concerning the east-west corridor from the Bothnian Corridor via Kiruna to Norway.

- We strongly emphasize the need for financial support from EU to this important infrastructure from north to south that constitutes the Bothnian Corridor, to create European added value connecting the vast natural resources in the north with all of Europe.
- We are satisfied that the European Commission proposes that the Bothnian Corridor, is included in the Connecting Europe Facility, the financial instrument that will co-fund TEN-T projects during the program period 2014-2020. The Swedish sections pointed out in the appendix b in the list of pre-identified objects CEF from EC are Luleå—Oulo (Cross boarder), Sundsvall—Umeå—Luleå (Bottleneck) and Bothnian—Kiruna—Norwegian border (Other core network). Since parts of Sundsvall—Umeå have been built, we see it as a technical adjustment to eliminate the bottlenecks that still exist in substancial parts of the Bothnian Corridor between Gävle—Sundsvall—Umeå—Luleå, as it is in fact fully covered by the proposal made from the EC. We are in favour of the suggested amount in the CEF, co-funding the Bothnian Corridor.

¹ *Legislative resolution 2011/2098(INI) adopted by the European Parliament on 15 December 2011* following the European Commission White Paper entitled “Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system”.

- We appreciate that the Parliament notes in resolution 2011/2056(INI) that the northern European countries and the Barents Region have substantial deposits of ores and minerals, and forests; and believes that the northern European region can make a substantial contribution to the raw material supply needs of other European companies and thereby reduce European dependence of import. The Parliament concludes that there is a clear need to increase awareness of the potential of northern Europe in the ongoing discussion over Raw Material.
- We appreciate that the Blue Highway/E12 corridor, together with other existing TEN T-roads in the north - E14, E10, E45 and E4 - is included in the Comprehensive network, which make the TEN T Network in Sweden complete.
- We recognize that the Commission suggests the strengthened new TEN-T policy to be adopted as a binding EU regulation, with very high goals for its realization in time.
- We declare our willingness to collaborate with the EU institutions and the national authorities in the upcoming decision process and the following implementation of the TEN-T core- and comprehensive networks as well as the Connecting Europe Facility.

30 March 2012

Europaforum Norra Sverige

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Annexes

Annex 1: PM from the European Offices for the network of Northern Baltic Sea Regions in Northern Sweden and Western parts of Finland (01/03/2012).