



Position paper

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EUROCHAMBRES position on Transalpine Transport

For European economies, the internal market is the basis for prosperity and economic development. The European Union has welded its member states together economically and politically. However, our European community will only remain successful in the future if the four freedoms of the internal market are fully respected.

Freight transport is a reliable indicator for economic growth. The flourishing exchange of goods and commodities across European countries and regions is as such the expression of a common economic area with production based on the division of labour in European value chains. Due to economic growth, traffic volume – and thus freight transport – is increasingly growing within the European Union.

The Alpine region is a fundamental trade link between North and South. The connection between Munich and Verona is one of the most important transalpine transport axes. It is part of the Scandinavian-Mediterranean Corridor of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), which represents a crucial north-south axis for the European economy and helps to strengthen social, economic and territorial cohesion in the EU. With more than 50 million tons of goods – 36 million by road and 14 by rail - and approximately 2.4 million lorries in 2018 alone the Brenner axis is the single most important alpine crossing for the European economy.

Transalpine transport, however, brings with it a number of issues. The increasing number of heavy goods vehicles crossing the Brenner axis caused loud demands for restraining measures in Tyrol, as transport has a strong impact on the population of the crossed Alpine regions. In order to minimise the impact of the growing freight transport on the population, regional, national and European measures must be taken to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the transport systems and infrastructure.

EUROCHAMBRES wishes to contribute to the sustainable development of the Brenner corridor and therefore proposes the following measures to the European institutions:

1. Promotion of intermodal transport by road and rail

The key to relieving the congestion on the Brenner corridor lies in intermodal transport. In the short term it is possible to relieve the road congestion by using the "ROLA" (Rolling Road) and thereby shifting traffic to the railway. In the long term, after the opening of the Brenner Base Tunnel (BBT), the focus must be on promoting unaccompanied freight transport. In view of the existing traffic and environmental problems EUROCHAMBRES would like to see a meaningful and substantial commitment from the European and

national institutions to promote and actively support the accompanied and unaccompanied combined freight traffic. In particular, it is necessary to increase the European support quota for combined transport and create incentives for intermodal transport.

2. Implementation of common rules for the European railways

Compared to the road, rail freight transport is far from being competitive. Cross-border railway operations face several regulatory barriers that impact on delivery times, reliability and costs. Still today, EU countries have different signal systems, power supply systems, working languages and required number of train conductors. These, and other regulatory barriers increase the costs of cross border operations and thus make the rail less attractive for freight transport. The adoption of a single technical framework for European railway is necessary in order to improve the performance of rail transport. A Single European Railway Area is the target. Only a well-functioning single European rail market can make the rail a valid and competitive alternative to the road in freight transport. Common rules would reduce the costs and reduce complexity caused by different national rules. The creation of a single European rail market must be considered as a priority by the European institutions.

3. Optimising, improving and renovating of infrastructure

High-performance infrastructure is the basis for functioning traffic. Therefore, the existing rail and road infrastructure has to be continuously improved and maintained at a high level in order to manage transalpine passenger and freight transport. Disadvantages and difficulties for one mode of transport due to legal, monetary or organisational measures must be avoided. The expansion and modernisation of terminals and transshipment capacity, for combined transport and the rolling road, should be dealt with as key priorities. This should especially be the case in the loading and receiving regions, keeping in mind long-distance transit traffic. Furthermore, the construction of a distribution infrastructure, the ambitious expansion of the northern and southern inflows to the Brenner Base Tunnel and the provision of sufficient parking capacities along the axis are examples, which are important to supply a demand-actuated infrastructure. Altogether, transport policy measures must take into account all neighbouring regions as well as the regional specificities of the economy along the Brenner axis. This applies both to economic requirements and to measures to protect the environment and the health of the concerned population living next to the corridor.

4. Digitalisation of transport modes and infrastructure

Using digital tools is crucial for optimising transport as well as making a better use of the existing infrastructure. Technologies can calculate transport times and routes and schedules for the railway. These systems can be the basis for a new traffic management system along the Brenner corridor, which would allow the temporary use of breakdown lanes, the coordinated application of an intelligent dynamic traffic guidance system and the better organisation of slot capacities and carriers on the railway. As a next step, the combination and interconnection between corresponding systems, across borders and transport modes must be used to promote a fluent traffic flow and intermodal traffics.

5. Adaptation of night-time restrictions

The states, people and companies in the region are characterised by a strong partnership and a common relationship in their trade relations. These connections create dependencies. The trading partners depend on reliable delivery of goods. Delayed supply with just-in-time leads to serious disadvantages. The trade lane of these countries is currently handled to a large extent on the European route 45, but the capacities of this trade lane are limited. Therefore better and more efficient usage of the existing capacity is necessary. For this purpose, peak times in the transport of goods must be equalised. Restrictions such as the night time speed limit and extra night time rates for trucks and other limitations on transport times should therefore be

examined on their usefulness and, if appropriate, adjusted. Any restriction and limitation must be in conformity with Union law.

EUROCHAMBRES urges the European institutions to implement bold and coordinated measures reflecting the points above in order to tackle the Brenner issue and to promote the ambitions for Europe of the President of the European Commission. In the Brenner Area, important parts of the freight transports must be shifted from road to rail. This will contribute to a European transport fit for a clean, digital and modern economy. The European Chambers of commerce and their members support this process. They represent the European connectivity and stay ready for participating and supporting the decision making process with professional knowledge at EU-level.

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