BUSINESSEUROPE

**Showcasing Single Market problems - in the absence of EU legislation**

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# Transport infrastructure and systems

**This paper concerns inadequate or missing cross-border transport infrastructure and electronic systems. While (partial) frameworks exist, progress towards a complete and frictionless EU-wide transport infrastructure network is too slow.**

## CONTEXT

Europe's transport network lies at the heart of the EU Single Market as a key enabler for the free movement of people, goods, and services. The efficiency of transport services and the interconnection between all modes directly affects the impact on the environment, cross-border value chains, and the competitiveness of EU industry as a whole.

Yet businesses experience that Europe is not yet fully connected. In particular Europe's transport infrastructure network does not deliver. In many places, cross-border connections are inadequate (insufficient capacity) or completely missing, and often national digital systems or physical requirements are not compatible.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- **Trans-European Transport Network** (TEN-T) policy is set out by the TEN-T Guidelines (Regulation 1315/2013) which, among other things, define the setup of the network, the infrastructure requirements and its governance. During 2020 the European Commission is reviewing the Guidelines to determine if they are still fit for purpose in the context of ongoing trends such as decarbonisation and digitalisation. The main funding instrument at the EU level is the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). Grants should continue to be the cornerstone of the EU investment policy for the transport sector and it is therefore positive that the Commission, in the renewed MFF 2021-2027, has suggested an additional EUR 1.5 billion boost to trans-European infrastructure through the Connecting Europe Facility.
- A concrete EU Action Plan was released on the **European Rail Traffic Management System** (ERTMS) to ensure all rail infrastructure on the TEN-T core network is equipped with ERTMS by 2030, complemented by national Implementation Plans.
- **The Single European Sky** has been developed on the basis of various legislative packages aiming to modernise Europe's ATM system in terms of operation, technology, control, and supervision. The latest package (SES 2+) was released by the European Commission in 2013 – however, it has since been stuck in Council as a result of the British-Spanish territorial dispute over Gibraltar.
- **Airport capacity** is essentially a Member State competence. EU action in this area seeks to find common issues and solutions and to support national efforts where

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appropriate. In particular, the stakeholders and Member States are brought together at the EU Observatory on Airport Capacity and Quality.

## EXAMPLE

In 2017, the "Rastatt Incident" clearly demonstrated the fragility and static nature of the EU's transport network. It also highlighted the importance of improving interoperability and capacity of the overall network. A highly used section along the Rhine-Alpine rail freight corridor (connecting the Ports of Amsterdam/Antwerp/Hamburg with Italy/Switzerland) was closed for seven weeks after a tunnel collapsed. It caused severe disruption as alternative routes were inadequate. It has been estimated that the interruption resulted in approximately EUR 2 billion in damages: EUR 969 million for rail freight operators, EUR 771 million for manufacturing industries, and EUR 308 million for other industries such as infrastructure managers.

## HOW TO ACHIEVE BETTER RESULTS

**All modes of transport (air, rail, road, etc.) need to become increasingly interoperable** as in combination they can offer more efficient transport solutions. Especially with the expected increase in demand for transport services, progress is urgently needed on Europe's transport infrastructure network.

- The **TEN-T** must be completed on time, with a focus on infrastructure projects with the **highest EU added value**.[1] Moreover, better alignment is needed with other policy objectives in the sector, such as decarbonisation and the digital transformation.
- The availability of **safe and secure parking areas** for truck drivers needs to be improved so that transport operators can comply with binding provisions on resting times. Today, around 100.000 parking areas are still lacking for heavy duty vehicles.[2]
- The **ERTMS** must be rolled out at a greater speed. Only 8% of TEN-T core network corridors that need to be equipped with ERTMS by 2030 have been put into operation.
- The **Single European Sky** needs to be completed as a priority and effectively implemented. The current structure involving 36 national air traffic management (ATM) bodies remains fragmented. Modernisation and improved interoperability will allow for more efficient air transport and lower CO2 emissions in the sector.
- **Airport capacity** is set to become a major issue facing air transport in the coming decades, with a predicted 8% capacity gap in 2040.[3] Obstacles to capacity improvement such as planning issues and efficient airport processes need to be addressed.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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[1] The TEN-T *core* network by 2030 and the TEN-T *comprehensive* network by 2050.
[2] Commission Study on Safe and Secure Parking Places for Trucks, 2019.
[3] EUROCONTROL 2018 Report on Challenges of Growth.