
D(1) Comparative Report on National Transport Policies

Public

EURO-TENASSESS

Contract No. ST-96-AM.601

Project Co-ordinator:

ICCR -- The Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences

Partners: Halcrow Fox
INRETS – Dept. of Transport Economy and Sociology
PLANCO Consulting GmbH
SYSTEMA – Systems Planning and Management Consultants
Gruppo CLAS
IVTB – Institute of Roads Transport and Road Planning
ERRI – European Rail Research Institute
TRT – Transporti e Territorio
NEA – Transport Research and Training
NEI – Netherlands Economic Institute
UKO – Universität Köln
LESEC – Laboratori Estudio Socials Enginyeria Civil
ICCR – London Ltd.
UWCC – School of Social and Administrative Studies

Date: 31.03.1997



PROJECT FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN
COMMISSION UNDER THE TRANSPORT
RTD PROGRAMME OF THE
4th FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

Foreword

This report comprises the first deliverable D(1) of the TENASSESS project to the Commission of the European Communities. It provides a synthesis of national and regional transport policies covering the EU15 with the exception of Portugal and Ireland (as specified in the Technical Annex). This report is the basis for a series of case studies which will be conducted in the framework of work packages 4, 7 and 8 as well as for the Delphi survey in work package 9. The report consists of the following parts:

Part I, the Comparative Report, draws together the results of the single country and overview reports and links them to the developments at the European level.

Part II deals with the issue of fiscal harmonisation according to the Commission's priorities specified in the terms of reference for task 1.6/32.

Part III contains the country and overview reports of the Member States that were investigated in the course of this project. Annexes A and B report on the relevant documents and actors in each country respectively. Finally Annex C displays in tabular form the transport policies and policy objectives for each country investigation and for the European Union.

This report will be subject to two updates in the course of the project,

- the first in July 1997
- and the second in January 1998

as specified in the Technical Annex. After this date deliverable D(1) can be considered final and will not undergo any additional changes.

1 Introduction

The *White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment* outlines the mission of the European Union towards the 21st century as that of achieving the free movement of goods, people and capital to improve the competitiveness of its Member States in the global market as well as the living conditions of its citizens. However, through the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, which formally marks the establishment of the European Union on the basis of the European Community, the European project has also assumed a strong political dimension which will have far-going implications in terms of the development of policy at the supra-national level.

This is also evidenced in the transport field: transport has gradually come to comprise one of the main fields of concern of European policy, with a continuously expanding scope for action. The increasing engagement of the European Union services in the field of transport policy also marks a shift from a rather narrow approach in dealing with transport market issues—consisting mainly in facilitating competition in the global market through reducing transaction costs for business activities—to a fairly comprehensive approach that considers competition and economic growth in the framework of sustainable development that pays attention to environmental and social issues.

In this connection, the subsidiarity principle constitutes a cornerstone of the European project of integration insofar as it legitimises decision-making and political action at the supra-national, yet at the same time regional, levels in areas where the latter can claim to command the best level of information and basis for action-oriented intervention. Transport and the environment—two closely inter-related fields, as this report will show—are two such areas where common European action is deemed necessary if the goals of growth, competitiveness and sustainable mobility are to be achieved.

Still, currently, the national governments remain the most powerful actors on the European level, not very willing to give away competencies, be it to the European or the regional level, and often seeking to use the principle of subsidiarity for their own benefit, i.e. by arguing that various policy issues, including transport, are best dealt with at the national level. The problem, as this report will show, is more than simply one of interpretation—be it in terms of form or content—or even of power relations; it is rather a problem inherent to the process of transition away from the model of strong political economy and system of fixed social relations, necessitated, among others, by the gradual, yet steady, increase of external costs. Inevitably, however, this process of transformation, which is ultimately what the project of European integration represents, raises questions about the allocation of competencies and about democratic procedures. Within the institutional framework of the European Union, the Council, where the Member States are directly represented, still remains the most powerful decision-making organ; the Commission and the Parliament are nevertheless trying to increase their decision-making powers relatively to those of the Council; the outcome of a possible shift of power is also of relevance for transport policy.

These changes are paralleled by equally interesting structural changes at the national level and in relation to the regions. As will be shown, a process of decentralisation of political power can be observed in practically all countries, partly enforced through social movements centred around regional identity and often organised around ecological concerns.

The report that follows lays a strong emphasis on the analysis of the context of decision-making at European level and at the national level in relation to transport. The underlying hypothesis is that such an analysis of the variation of the regulatory environment in relation to transport is necessary to understand the differences in terms of the set of substantial argumentation, and what is more important, in order to develop strategies for overcoming them and reaching consensus.

The section that follows discusses the transport policy environment at European level and at the national level in comparative perspective. It concludes with an overview of the main patterns of conflict at both these levels. Section 3, discusses the major trends and development in the field of transport planning and management and in relation to the objectives set out by the Common Transport Policy. Section 4 summarises the main problems encountered in the implementation process. The final section summarises the findings and conclusion.

2 Policy Environment

2.1 Development of European CTP in historical perspective

Transport policy has almost exclusively been a national issue in the past and despite the increasing number of common European initiatives in the field during the last several years, it still remains under the control of national governments. In fact, progress towards a common European action programme was very slow. Hence, even though, already the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, signed in March 1957, provides the legal basis for the creation of a common transport policy (Title IV, articles 74-84), until 1985 the European Conference of Transport Ministers (ECMT) remained the main institution to co-ordinate pan-European Transport policy initiatives.

As early as in 1961 the Schaus Memorandum presented first general guidelines of a common transport policy, which were followed by an action programme for regulations, and a first outline for a then Community-wide transport network. Due to the unfavourable reactions of the Member States those initiatives showed little effect. In 1975 the Commission then suggested a shift from regulating the transport market to seeking a balance between market forces without interventions.

The *White Paper on the Completion of the Internal Market* published in 1985 put a strong focus on the market aspects of transport, as restrictions on the provision of transport services were recognised to be one of the main barriers to open trade. Still, the removal of these barriers necessitated the intervention of the European Court of Justice, upon the initiative of the Parliament; called upon to interpret the application of the directives of the Treaty of Rome in relation to transport, it declared European inland freight and passenger transport open to all firms within the community without any discrimination of place of establishment. This was the first European-wide action to liberalise the access to the national transportation markets.

In the following years the Member States could agree on several actions to be launched at the Community level, including the DRIVE and the EURET programme. Specific initiatives were prepared regarding road safety (seat-belts, alcohol), waterborne transport (1101/89/EEC), the separation of rail infrastructure and service provision (440/91/EEC), as well as the three liberalisation packages on air transport 1987, 1990 and 1992. Generally, in the period between 1985 and 1992 a wide range of measures and initiatives were brought forward essentially aiming at the completion of the internal market through the elimination of regulatory barriers.

With the publication of the *White Paper on the Future Development of the Common Transport Policy* the common transport policy approach came to delineate a more comprehensive framework, covering a broad range of additional fields, including environmental protection and conservation, social impacts as well as the external

dimension, i.e. the relation to third countries. In total seven pillars were identified for a successful European transport policy:

1. An efficiently working internal market, facilitating free movement of people and goods;
2. A coherent, integrated transport system using the most appropriate technologies;
3. A trans-European transport network which interconnects national networks, makes them interoperable and links the peripheral regions with the central ones;
4. Transport systems helping to resolve major environmental problems;
5. Promotion of the highest possible safety standards;
6. Social policies to protect and promote the interests of both transport workers and users;
7. Developing relations with third countries.

The Maastricht Treaty of the European Union through its Title XII underlines the increasing importance of transport issues within the Union, with specific references to the development of trans-European networks. The competencies of the Council are specified in the Treaty (Articles 75-81) and are as follows:

- Establishing common regulations for international transport;
- Regulating the conditions for market access of companies in the field of transport;
- Initiating measures to increase transport safety;
- Abolishing discriminatory measures against companies from other Member States;
- Reducing customs duties and cross-border charges;
- Regulation of transport pricing;
- Abolishing subsidies.

The European Commission does not have a mandate to make decisions in the context of European transport policy. It prepares proposals, which are submitted to the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament for decision.

Subsidiarity is the Union's guiding principle in realising the objectives set out in its Common Transport Policy. Therefore partnerships between the Union's institutions and the Member States are necessary at all levels, that is not only at the highest political and official level, but also among operators, users, investors and environmental organisations. In the framework established by the principle of subsidiarity, it is the Union's task to promote the interconnection and interoperability of national transport networks as well as the access to those networks. The planning of transport infrastructure remains with the Member States with reference to Union priorities. It is the task of the Member States to decide the timing of realisation of projects and to determine financing strategies.

The Union fulfils its tasks through publishing guidelines which identify measures and projects of common interest, indicating also their priority in terms of realisation. It also issues guidelines for the technical harmonisation process of the national transport systems. All guidelines proposed by the Commission have to be adopted by the Council and the European Parliament in accordance with the co-decision procedure. In a consultation process the opinions from the Economic and Social Committee and from the Committee of the Regions is sought. Financial support is granted for feasibility studies, loan guarantees and interest subsidies are available for projects. Through the instrument of the Cohesion Fund up to 90 per cent of project costs may be funded in applicable regions.

In the course of the first months of 1994 and in accordance with Article 129 C of the Maastricht Treaty of the European Union, the Commission brought forward various policy proposals in the fields of energy and transport (COM(93)685 and COM(94)116), for interoperability of high-speed trains (COM(94)107) and for financial regulations of the trans-European networks (COM(94)62). The concept of the trans-European networks was elaborated during the formulation of the Maastricht Treaty of the European Union, which specified a network of transport corridors forming the backbones of the European transport system. At the Council in Essen December 9th/10th, 1994 the 14 TEN priority projects as suggested by the Group of Personal Representatives (Christophersen Group) were accepted. Special emphasis was put on the improvement of those European axes. The Action Programme to the White Paper was adopted by the Council, specifying the medium term perspective of the transport policy actions until 2000 in a detailed manner, was adopted by the Council in July 1995.

In order to stimulate discussion regarding the environmental aspects and impacts of transport, the Commission published two Green Papers in 1995: the Green Paper *Citizens' Network* and the Green Paper on *Fair and Efficient Pricing in Transport*. The Green Paper *Citizens' Network* has an additional significance: with it, the Commission, for the first time addresses officially the problems inherent in urban and regional transport; till this time,

these issues were only addressed indirectly through research carried out in the framework of the 4th Framework Programme. In 1996 another White Paper followed on the *Revitalisation of European Railways*, which focused on liberalising the market of railway operations in Europe.

Throughout the past decade, the Member States played different roles in the process of developing and shaping transport policies at Community level, depending on their specific policy environment. Deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation, which in today's political discussion comprise broadly accepted guidelines for advancement in the transport sector, were for a certain time very fiercely discussed and opposed to. Certain is, however, also that the orientation of the Common Transport Policy has changed following the input of the Member States.

With the forthcoming European Monetary Union and most Member States struggling to fulfil the convergence criteria, Treasuries are gaining a major influence on all aspects of transport investments which involve some measure of public involvement. The already existing bottleneck of financing transport projects and measures is increasing throughout Europe. The promotion of private-public partnerships for funding transport projects is a main issue in all countries, but very few implemented cases have been documented. The success in attracting private investors is generally still moderate.

2.2 National regulatory environments in comparative perspective

Many of the problems encountered in implementing the European Common Transport Policy relate to the variation in regulatory environment in the field of transport across Member States. The following were identified as of specific importance:

- the variation in the **distribution of administrative responsibility and competencies** at the national level;
- the variation in the **degree of planning of transport policy** in the form of master plans but also assessment and/or evaluation frameworks;
- the variation in the **degree of centralisation** or decentralisation, especially with respect to the role assigned to the regions, and
- the variation in the **degree of negotiation** with relevant actors, including citizens' movements or the public at large.

Having said that, there are at the same time some general harmonising trends across all four dimensions which can be attributed to the influence of the European Union: i.e. towards greater sharing of responsibility and stronger co-ordination at the national

administrative level; towards the development of a planning structure that fits the requirements of European CTP; towards the devolution of power to the regions, that is, decentralisation; and towards a stronger emphasis on negotiation at all levels.

2.2.1 Distribution of administrative competencies at national level

In most countries, the responsibility for drawing out and co-ordinating transport policy at national level rests with a single ministry. However, in a number of countries, including Austria, Spain, Italy and Finland, there is no one Ministry of Transport and administrative competencies, also across modes, are divided between typically two ministries. This may and does tend to complicate the decision-making process, especially in cases of a consensual type of democracy.

However, increasingly, and as a result of the increasing emphasis laid on consensus (see section §2.2.4) on the one hand, and the development of cross-sectoral policies on the other hand, a greater number of also administrative actors (i.e. other ministries or governmental authorities) comes to play a role in the formulation of transport policy. The most important among these actors tends to be the ministry responsible for environmental affairs (and/or public works or spatial planning):¹ this is, currently, especially the case in those countries like Denmark, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands, where transport planning is incorporated in the larger framework of spatial and environmental planning and where, subsequently, such consultations are already part of the regular process of policy formulation. However, increasingly, and as can be witnessed especially by the cases of France and Austria, this form of co-ordination is becoming extended.

Finally, it ought here to be noted that due to the heavy involvement of public funds in transport investments, the respective national ministries of finance have high influence on the realisation of transport policies and projects. This has always been the case, only currently, it is compounded by first, the budgetary restrictions imposed on both the national and the European budgets and second, the slow pace of development of the envisaged public-private partnerships.

2.2.2 Transport planning

Most European countries have elaborated specific master plans for transport, others additionally provide very specific assessment frameworks for transport investments and policy progress. Depending on the structure of the country such master plan concepts are available for the national, regional and, in the case of Austria, also partly at the local level.

¹ Alone this fact of institutional arrangements demonstrates already, that next to traffic flow and modal issues, land-use and spatial planning as well as environmental issues are closely linked to transport policy issues. This is elaborated in more detail in section §3.

Often they are accompanied by detailed infrastructure master plans. In some cases, such as in Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Germany, they are embedded in a wider frame for future planning and development covering socio-economic, environmental and spatial aspects; Austria and, partly also in France, are in the process of elaborating such a set of interconnections. Not surprisingly this set of countries also display quite comprehensive environmental plans or laws that make specific references to transport.

Only two out of the twelve European countries under investigation, namely, Greece and Luxembourg, have no form of general transport policy documents. Spain has merely an infrastructure development plan but no transport master plan; in Italy, the general plan for transport, dating back to 1986 has shown little relevance for transport development in the past decade – therefore, Italy would best be classified as a country with no master plan in the field of transport.

Table 1 displays in summary the principal policy documents in the field of transport across Europe. Note that in Belgium, transport infrastructure plans were prepared separately for the two main regions, i.e. Walloon and Flanders respectively. In Sweden, the 1988 ten-year plan on transport is in the process of being revised; in France, the transport framework law LOTI of 1982 is relevant only in relation to the annual reports on transport development CNT and in close relation to the recent enactment of the framework law on physical planning.

TABLE 1. MAIN NATIONAL TRANSPORT POLICY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DOCUMENTS		
COUNTRY	POLICY DOCUMENTS	INFRASTRUCTURE MASTER PLANS
Austria	General Transport Concept Austria, 1992	Federal Infrastructure Plan, under preparation
Belgium	Plan of mobility and transport in Wallonia, 1994 – <i>Walloon region</i>	Vlaanderen Spatial Structure Plan, 1995 – <i>Flemish region</i>
Denmark	White Paper on Transport and Traffic Plan 2005, 1993	White Paper on Transport and Traffic Plan 2005, 1993
France	LOTI - Framework Law on Domestic Transport, 1982 Framework Law on Physical Planning, 1995 Annual Reports on Transport CNT	National Infrastructure Masterplans (6 modal plans)
Germany	Federal Transport Investment Plan, 1992	Federal Transport Investment Plan, 1992
Great Britain	Green Paper, Transport - the way forward, 1996	<i>NOT EXISTENT</i>
Greece	<i>NOT EXISTENT</i>	<i>NOT EXISTENT</i>
Italy	(General Plan for Transport 1986)	<i>NOT EXISTENT</i>
Luxembourg	<i>NOT EXISTENT</i>	<i>NOT EXISTENT</i>
Netherlands	4 th Policy Document on Physical Planning Annual Report on Transport	2 nd Structure Scheme for Traffic and Transport
Spain	<i>NOT EXISTENT</i>	Infrastructure Guideline Plan 1993-2007, 1993
Sweden	Ten-year plan on Swedish Transport Policy, 1988	

Conflicts arose in those areas where there was no or little match between the two sets of policies, i.e. the national and the European. Insofar as the Common Transport Policy can itself not be viewed as an established policy viewpoint agreed upon in all its details (but rather represents a process), the areas that remain contested are practically also those that are still unresolved or are under discussion. These are discussed in more detail in section §3 of this report. Here, suffice to note that they relate to policy objectives as much as to policy instruments and assessment techniques; and that they also include those aspects of implementation specific to the regional or local level that were not sufficiently taken into account in the negotiation process between Member States and the Union.

2.2.3 Degree of centralisation

The third major discriminatory variable in comparing national transport policies is the degree of centralisation, especially with regards the role assigned to the regions.

Of course, at the most obvious level, competencies among the state's territorial authorities are distributed in different ways depending on the degree and character of federalisation as established in the respective State Constitutions. However, there is a variation according to the specific fields of application and with regards the role of the state as co-ordinator or planner of specific activities.

In the transport field, typically regions are responsible for urban as well as regional transport networks (and especially secondary road infrastructure, regional rail services and urban public transport) and by reason of the fact that they usually have the jurisdiction over physical planning and/or land use designation, they are indirectly, if not directly, involved in transport policy planning and formulation. However, with the exception of Germany and Belgium, in most countries, the relationship between the state and the regions is a clearly hierarchical—also in most cases regarding financing. Only in Germany and Belgium (as of recently) can the state be said to have more the role of co-ordinator.

However, there are two parallel phenomena that are in many countries, and most notably, in France, Italy and Spain, causing major re-orientations: the one is the growing demand of the regions to have more autonomy and, hence, reverse the top-down approach; the other is the wish of the state to more actively involve the regions in the financing of major infrastructure investments. Not least important is that it is today widely recognised, by all relevant actors at both national and regional levels, that a large number of problems in the transport area is caused by the uncoordinated sprawl of human activities (housing, working (education), leisure activities, shopping)—co-ordination would therefore appear necessary both at the national level and at the European level in relation to the regions.

2.2.4 Culture of negotiation and decision-making

Advanced industrialised societies are characterised by a deepening crisis of the state, paralleled by a shaking of public trust in state institutions. This is, among others, witnessed by the losing legitimacy, and, subsequently, electoral support, for traditional parties (of both the left and the right) and the increasing relevance of coalition governments; as well as the growing influence of regional and/or citizens' movements mobilising around mainly ecological concerns.

Partly in reaction to this legitimisation crisis, partly as a result to the demands made by harmonisation both within and between sectoral policies and across national boundaries, various negotiation mechanisms and procedures have been implemented in most countries in order to draw the relevant actors, including the public, into the policy formulation and implementation process already at the onset and in order to guarantee consensus building and more comprehensive results.

The opening or democratisation of decision-making processes does not in itself represent a panacea solution. Its success, in turn, depends on how it is implemented and used. Grass root democracy, even if building on the premises of consensus democracy, needs to be elaborated as a practice of 'communicative action' and this is still far from having been achieved. This notwithstanding, it ought to be kept in mind that consensus democracy has also shown to have major limitations—the delays in reaching or implementing decisions on the one hand, and the tendency to agree on the basis of the lowest common denominator being the major negative aspects.

The potential for success of such negotiation procedures will be examined in more depth in the framework of the research work that follows, namely in work packages seven and eight. Depending on the results of this work, the contents of this report will be updated and revised. Here, we rather focus on examining the variation in the decision-making context across the countries under investigation and the extent to which they have implemented such negotiation procedures.

A first point to be made is that the description of decision-making processes represents a complex task by reason of the increasing number of relevant actors. Moreover, not all of these actors are obviously organised as lobbies or interest groups, this tending to render the decision-making process at times and in some contexts informal or little transparent. Not surprisingly, this is especially the case in countries not displaying a formalised decision-making procedure or elaborated policy in the form of documents.

A special part is increasingly played by economic actors, whereby, in the case of transport, and given the only recent (or still ongoing trends) towards liberalisation or deregulation, these often represent 'players' who till recently represented the state, but which now have to represent private interests. Under the framework of liberalisation and privatisation the status of state-owned transport industry changed: in the airline sector all flag carriers and most of the major European airports have been transformed into public limited companies, though in all the cases the state or other public entities remained the major or exclusive shareholders. Railway operating companies have begun this structural change in some of

the Member States (Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy), or will do so in the near future. There is no doubt that Great Britain has been the most advanced along this path, having completely privatised both the air and rail transport markets in the very recent past.

Apart from transport service and infrastructure operators interest groups play a major role in transport policy. Trade unions traditionally had a strong influence on the public transport sector, but especially in Italy, France, Austria and Sweden. Representative organisations of the employers and operators are active in all the countries. Especially the supplying industry has gained major influence in transport policy, being one of the most important employers in some of the Member States.

With regards direct public participation in decision-making processes, these are very differentially evolved throughout the Union: in Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden there are structures implemented to give each single citizen the possibility to comment on transport infrastructure projects or policies, and the comments have to be taken into account, in other countries such as Italy there are such procedures only for specific type of projects, whilst in yet others, like in Austria, more emphasis is laid on encouraging citizens to become involved in such processes through public hearings and information campaigns. In other countries direct public participation is not that far developed: in Greece for instance grassroots' movements are considered to have no political power at all. Having said that, it is also not the case that in those countries where forms of public audits or direct public participation are encouraged, the latter always work in favour of the movements in question: in the Netherlands, Germany but also Austria cases are documented where direct public interventions were eventually overruled by government.

Some prototypical models are summarised below:

- In the Netherlands, the PKB (Planning central Decision) represents probably the most advanced system for direct public participation; the Netherlands, like Denmark and Sweden is characterised by a strong negotiation model in decision-making, involving all actors, including the public.
- Germany displays by far the most elaborate operationalised framework of federalism: the *Länder*, regions and the federal government are co-operating on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity.
- Decision-making in Austria is characterised best as proceeding according to a negotiated compliance model, marked by the so-called 'social partnership', that is a decision-making procedure involving the Chambers of Labour and Commerce, trade unions and the Agricultural Chamber; all these representatives of specific relevant actors comment on policy and legislation proposals of the government before the latter go to Parliament.

- In France, decision-making has traditionally been very centralised and technocratic. However, as a result of the decentralisation laws of 1982 and 1986, there are currently serious attempts to establish a decision-making framework which is based on negotiation and decentralisation, including revisions in the structure and form of public audits. Problems still exist with regards the degree and scope of competency to be achieved by regions, especially given that the various regions have different views on this matter.
- The transformation of Belgium into a federal state with autonomous regions from 1974 to 1995, has affected the decision-making process through the overall shift of competencies at the regional level.
- In Italy, trade unions have a specifically strong impact on policy and decision-making. Due to the notorious instability of governments and the frequent changes of ministers and of other relevant actors at the administrative level, some actors, such as the directorate of the national railways, have a very strong influence on policy making.
- In Greece, policy and decision-making depends very much on personal initiative, which can be considered as stronger and more important than formalised procedures.

2.3 Typical conflict patterns at national level

Three general conflict areas which are common to all of the countries under investigation can be identified. They comprise:

- conflicts about competencies;
- thematic conflict 'environment vs. economic development';
- conflicts related to the re-structuring of the transport market.

2.3.1 Conflicts about competencies

There are conflicts arising between the four established political levels local, regional, national and European, in the framework established by subsidiarity. Two developments are at the root of these conflicts: the rise of a new supra-national European level, and the demand of regional and local governments for more participation in decision-making.

Disagreements still obtain regarding the extent of harmonisation, specifically concerning which issues and areas are legitimately to be dealt with at the European level. Examples

include the common environmental threshold levels, safety regulations or negotiation mandates with third countries.

Partly conflicts arise by the fact that the European Union represents neither the sole, nor the first, attempt at harmonisation at policy level. The most important among the other concertation efforts is the European Conference of Ministers of Transport. Conflicts between these organisations on the European level arise regularly.

Regional authorities, especially in those Member States where they still have no or a low participation in decision-making, try to increase their influence within the Member States as well as directly on the European Union. The same is true of local authorities which have the least competence in transport policy, yet are the often the most affected through large-scale infrastructure projects. In some cases such as in Greece and Italy the policy initiatives of the European Commission have helped levelling such problems.

Conflict resolution relies on a number of co-ordination committees and councils which have been established to conciliate conflicts. In a number of preliminary expert interviews the existing frameworks have been identified as insufficient to advance at the necessary pace and to achieve satisfying compromises. This fact will be one of the main lines for further research in the forthcoming work packages of this project.

2.3.2 Thematic conflict ‘environment vs. economic development’

The conflicts within transport policy can basically be reduced to one pair of contrasting arguments. On the one hand there are policies concerned with reducing the negative impacts of traffic for the environment and society and even with reducing transport volume per se; on the other hand there are the policies to improve transport flows in order to further enhance economic development. Objectives are generally set in both directions, but the incompatibility or lack of direct congruence displayed by a wide range of such policies is often the source of fierce debate about effectiveness and equity in the medium- to long-term.

What is especially interesting about this type of conflict is that it cuts vertically across all dimensions and/or levels of political decision-making or action, but also can be seen to concern the industry. Furthermore, this principal conflict about, essentially, the future orientation of transport, only partly overlaps with the conflicts about competencies described above; for the most part it adds on an additional dimension. It is also for this reason that the ‘conflicts’ landscape’ in transport is very complex.

The specific instances of enactment of this type of conflict varies greatly among Member States, covering all kinds of environment-related concerns, such as noise abatement, air pollution, safety, pricing of external costs, the extension of transport infrastructure and telematics applications.

2.3.3 Conflicts related to the re-structuring of the transport market

Currently, and with very few exceptions, deregulation and the privatisation of the transport market is a generally agreed-upon policy agenda. Nevertheless a distinction, often conflict-ridden, can be drawn between those actors in favour of a swift transformation towards an open market system, and those supporting a slower pace and longer phase-out periods. These conflicts can for the most part be explained by considering the competition patterns among modes. The continuing direct and indirect subsidising of operators in the road, airline and railway business is not welcomed by competitors. Furthermore fair pricing for infrastructure use and service operations is claimed for all modes (*albeit* also in relation to the minimising of negative environmental impacts – see §2.3.2. above). Market entry for new transport operators empirically turns out to be very difficult. Conflicts about whether and how to re-regulate the transport markets have, subsequently, become more important as of recently.

The re-structuring of the transport market is also inevitably connected with some significant labour re-structuring processes, which are themselves the seedbed of conflicts and which certainly feed into the decline of trust in the state apparatus. The liberalisation of the transport market has involved, at worst, a number of lay-off in parts of the transport industry and, at best, a status change along with the decline of job security. Along the

same lines, the working conditions comprise a major source of of debate as they affect the personal situation of the individual employees, but also safety and competition issues.

3 **Transport Policy Issues**

In the Guidelines for the Future Development of the Common Transport Policy a number of policy issues are specified as being important for the development of a common European approach. Following also the categorisation scheme for conflicts proposed in the previous section (§2.3), these can be summarised under the three headers of environmental/social concerns, economic/network development and market access.

Two sets of policies lying outside this principal framework, but equally important for the improvement of the European transport system are the financing aspect, and the area of spatial structure/land-use. While financing has been identified as a key-issue at the European level, the recognition of the importance of spatial structure/land-use and its impacts upon transport still leaves a lot to be desired.

3.1 Current trends and developments

The Member States welcomed the Commission's initiative to publish policy documents on a common transport policy, fair and efficient pricing, citizens' networks and the revitalisation of railway companies as they have stimulated the discussion of transport policy issues at the national level. The Commission's proposals and directives can be shown to have had a direct impact on national transport policies only in a limited number of countries, and especially in the South; however, they more generally reflect national concerns, even if disagreement might obtain in terms of specific issues.

A comparative review of the principal problem areas or concerns of transport policy at the national level, confirms this conclusion. The following comprise areas of particular significance, delineating future priority areas:

- Decentralisation and regionalisation, in terms of competencies for infrastructure projects and with respect to transport and traffic management;
- Achieving sustainable transport systems through a minimisation of negative environmental impacts;
- Realising one integrated, interoperable and intermodal transport network;
- Improving public participation and increasing its policy significance;
- Resolving bottlenecks in financing of large infrastructure projects;
- Preparing transport operators, especially railway companies, for competition in a free market

As already indicated, these trends within the Member States are in line with the priority areas identified and promoted by the European Union.

3.2 Relation with European transport policy issues

3.2.1 Development and integration of transport system

The implementation of the trans-European transport networks (TEN) is complicated by the non-availability of funds. Especially endangered out of this reason is the realisation of the Brenner base tunnel, the TGV France, and the high-speed rail connection Lisbon-Madrid. According to some experts, part of the problem with the realisation of the TEN projects is that some countries, and especially Germany and Austria, have not accorded these the priority status granted to them by the Commission, pushing instead ahead with projects considered closer to national priorities, unless those projects have been integrated into the TEN anyway.

Another point of divergence, is that despite general calls (and wide formal acceptance) for the promotion of combined and rail transport, the construction of additional road infrastructure still comprises the priority policy area with regards new infrastructure development in Spain, Greece, the new *Länder* of Germany and also, partly, Italy. Otherwise, and apart from Italy, all countries display only very modest advances in terms of the realisation of intermodal interfaces for combined freight transport and combined transport operations. As has been pointed out by a number of experts, especially in France, combined and intermodal transport is still mainly paid lip-service, displaying little in terms of a strategy of implementation; the reason, it was suggested, has partly, at least, to do with the fact that the paradigm that still dominates the field of transport management, at least in Europe, revolves still very much around competition among modes.

The interoperability of railways technologies remains unsolved at the Paris-Brussels-Cologne-London connection and for the French and German high-speed rail systems. With the increasing number of different road pricing systems throughout Europe this question has been identified as crucial also for road transport. In air traffic management progress towards a common European system also remains slow.

3.2.2 Environmental protection and sustainability

Although identified as a key issue throughout the Community, Member States follow different approaches in assessing and evaluating the environmental impacts of transport. How to assess and to monetarise—or whether to monetarise at all—environmental costs is a hotly contested issue among experts. As indicated in the tables below, European-wide

countries (including the EU) by 2010 compared to 1990 levels, depending on the expectations for the range of emissions in developing countries.

The main causes for this overshoot are: continuous transport growth, remaining low energy prices, the slow improvement of energy efficiency and the fact that many of the measures in National Programmes will not be completed before 2000. Current measures are insufficient to prevent a further increase in CO₂ emissions after 2000 as a result of the expected growth of production, consumption and transport. Therefore the floor will be opened for new discussions about CO₂ reduction. On the other hand, the forecasts of the reduction of other emittants display promising trends.

In early 1997 the EU environment ministers have agreed on a common target of reducing greenhouse gases by 15% by 2010 with 1990 levels in the Union.

For other environmental impacts, effects and implications of transport policy measures are less clear. Actors suffer from little knowledge about the assessment of impacts such as noise, landscape splitting, visual intrusion and also noise. However, threshold levels for noise emission have been implemented on the national level.

3.2.3 Safety

In the last several years, the discussion of safety issues has mainly focused on road and waterborne transport, based on the accident statistics, which are relatively favourable for rail and air transport. There are no harmonised policies on the European level despite a number of initiatives, including:

- the 1984 resolution adopting that Community action is needed in the field;
- the 1986 European road safety year;
- the 1992 Final Report 'Priority fields for action and guidelines for a community road safety programme', prepared by a high-level group of experts.

In the Gerondeau (1992) report it was suggested to introduce an objective like reducing road casualties by 20-30% within 10 to 15 years. Member States could not agree on this objective and therefore it has yet to become an official target. As it proved difficult to set quantitative targets, qualitative objectives have been defined, covering the following areas:

- taking road safety into account in other policies and projects;
- proposing and implementing measures for calm driving;
- defining standards to improve vehicle safety;

- paying greater attention to the most important factors causing accidents and to the most vulnerable road user categories;
- measures to moderate speed;
- the problems caused by alcohol consumption in connection with driving;
- education of road users, including driver training and road safety;
- greater active and passive vehicle safety;
- exchange of know-how and experience, including a Community database.

By now most of the measures have been implemented; however, this says little as the majority are rather general. The CARE accident database was finished in December 1996 and will be available in 1997. The different viewpoints of the Member States on issues such as speed-limits, limits for blood-alcohol and harmonisation of road signs—partly related to the perception of competitive issues, partly to different national standards—has so far hindered the development of a common approach in this area.

3.2.4 Market access and structure

The transformation of state-protected transport sectors into a free operating market has been adopted as a priority policy area by all Member States. Changing existing systems is not an easy task and there is considerable resistance from operators and employees in the affected sector.

While the road and waterborne transport sectors are private (with the exception of Austria in the latter case) and are undergoing deregulation policies, in the air and rail sector deregulation is accompanied in parallel by privatisation, which makes the process more complex for both modes.

Moreover, whilst deregulation and privatisation is well advanced in the case of the air sector, the transformation of the rail sector into a market structure is proving to be more difficult than originally envisaged. Great Britain has followed the most radical policy by entirely privatising its transport services; in Germany and Greece the state railways have been transformed into public limited companies; France, Denmark and Austria are preparing similar transformations. Nevertheless, and with the exception of Great Britain, the state has remained a major stake holder, due to the public service functions the rail transport network is expected to fulfil.

The first experiences deriving from the privatisation of air transport and the privatisation of British rail have stimulated a discussion on equity and efficiency issues as well as about

fair competition in the newly created, respectively deregulated markets. Contested remains whether deregulation does achieve fair competition or whether it can enable co-operation at both the intermodal and intramodal levels. As yet there is no operational political concept available about how to deal with these twin issues. In the Member States competition is seen as a necessary prerequisite for creating an efficient market, on the other hand co-operation is considered of paramount importance towards reducing negative environmental impacts. The Netherlands follow a policy of complementarity of their ports. Experts in many countries, and especially in France, Austria and Denmark, underline the problems involved in adapting railway companies to competition.

3.2.5 Cost charges and pricing

The Commission's Green Paper on *Fair and Efficient Pricing in Transport* has given rise to a discussion about the introduction of direct user charges in transport (mainly in connection with road) in order to cover infrastructure and operation as well as external costs. In many of the Member States motorways are already operated as toll roads (Portugal, Spain, France, Italy). The introduction of a through telematic technology supported system for kilometre-based road pricing is being envisaged. Test systems are running in Austria and Germany.

The calculation of appropriate charges, and especially as a function of external costs, remains an unresolved problem. So far no satisfying compromise could be found among the various actors, again the main reason being the scope of intermodal competition.

3.2.6 Social dimension

The social dimension of transport has not been comprehensively dealt with by any of the Member States. Measures have dealt mainly with the reform of working hours and of working conditions of transport workers; solutions for the redundancies effected or expected through the re-structuring of the transport market are being considered.

Although the improvement of the transport accessibility situation of people with reduced mobility is a major objective expressed by the Commission, few activities could be detected within the Member States in this area. Relevant measures, targeting mainly disabled persons, could only be identified at the regional and local levels, for the most part comprising isolated actions.

3.2.7 External dimension

The Member States have individually negotiated or are in the process of negotiating agreements with the United States in air transportation on a bilateral basis. A common European position could not be agreed upon.

The integration of the CEEC/CIS transport infrastructure through the extension of the trans-European networks is a priority issue especially for those member States having common borders with those countries. The co-ordination of policies both at the European as well as at the bilateral levels is only at a nascent stage.

4 Main Problems

In a previous section, namely, §2.3, we outlined the main patterns of conflicts characterising national transport policies in relation to CTP. To reiterate, these concerned: first, disagreements regarding the share of responsibilities and the distribution of competencies among the European, national and regional levels in connection to the principle of subsidiarity; second, the perceived incompatibility or lack of congruence between economic and environmental goals in the field of transport; and, third, problems arising out of the ongoing reform of the transport market, characterised by the twin processes of privatisation and/or de-regulation.

In section §2.2 we also discussed the main factors explaining the variation of the regulatory framework across European countries; this variation is itself a reason that explains the difficulties encountered in implementing CTP directives. The four discriminating variables in this connection were identified as: first, the variation in the distribution of administrative responsibilities at national level; second, the variation in the degree and scope of transport planning; third, the variation in the degree of decentralisation and fourth, the differences in the type of negotiation procedures implemented in relation to policy formulation and decision-making.

Below, we summarise the main obstacles to the implementation of the TEN. These are used as a departure point for the exemplification of the problems being faced by national transport policies in relation to CTP. As outlined in the various country reports the main problems with the implementation of the TEN relate to the following points:

- The constraints on the Community’s and Member States’ public budget limit the scope of investment by the public sector.
- The long-term investment required in some sectors, particularly in transport infrastructures, necessitates new types of partnerships between private and public financing.
- The absence of open and competitive markets is hampering, to differing degrees, the optimal use of existing networks and their completion in the interest both of consumers and operators.
- The sluggishness of the preparation, planning, authorisation and evaluation procedures and regulatory obstacles hamper the implementation of large projects.

In fact the analysis of the national policies confirm the continuing existence of the propels identified by the Commission in 1993. Other additional issues were identified as problematic to the improvement of the transport system:

- The strong focus on the TEN at the European level is considered problematic by many relevant actors, especially in Central Europe. The most radical among the opponents insist that prior to judging the necessity of further corridor developments, it would first be necessary to resolve the question of pricing European-wide.
- There is a broad consensus throughout all the Member States that the gap between available sources and the demand for investments in transport infrastructure, telematics, policies and environmental action programmes is a major constraint for the development of the transport sector. The promotion of private-public partnerships has not been successful in any of the Member States so far. Out of this bottleneck, the availability alone of financial resources might come to determine decisions about the realisation of transport projects at the detriment of the quality or scope of the project.
- Despite the wide consensus on the necessity for the rapid improvement of intermodal transport networks on the national level and the existence of encouraging growth statistics from combined transport operators in most countries, the realisation of necessary interfacial infrastructure and technological adaptations is progressing at a rather slow pace, not least because, critics claim, the emphasis is instead placed on the operationalisation of modal infrastructure plans, the TEN representing itself such a plan. Moreover, despite policy declarations claiming the opposite, investments into road infrastructure remain high and comprise a priority, especially in Southern Europe.
- Despite road safety being a key issue in all the countries, there could be no agreement on common actions such as harmonisation of speed limits, blood-alcohol threshold values or road signs.
- Policies to reduce the negative environmental impacts of transport are best characterised as operating as ‘end-of-pipe technologies’, i.e. in a repair, rather than a preventive, fashion. More advanced approaches such as internalising external costs, changing spatial patterns or economic policy or even taxation policies are notoriously difficult to agree upon and more difficult to implement.
- In connection with the latter point, it is also relevant that there is a lack of harmonisation or even of co-ordination with regards the use of assessment techniques; moreover, there has been little systematic elaboration on the combined use of quantitative and qualitative indicators: Germany, displays a very advanced form of project assessment, yet only consider quantitative indicators; in other countries, like Austria, the Netherlands, and, as of recently, France, use also qualitative criteria.

- The amelioration of public participation has in the majority of cases not kept pace with the growing environmental concerns on the local level.
- A series of problems arise around the deregulation and privatisation of transport services and infrastructure operators. Lacking are guidelines regarding efficiency and equity issues, relevant when the state retreats from operating transport services. Decisions on how to deal with competition issues between the different modes in relation to the varying speeds in the process of market deregulation and pricing are pending.
- The current transport system has developed according to the conditions set by economic policy and urban development. New organisation of industrial production (just-in-time), the globalisation of the economy (disparities/competitive advantages of economies) and spatial/urban development (increasing distances travelled) have shaped the current situation of transport with its benefits and problems. Therefore solutions to the actual problems cannot be found within transport policy alone; the interaction of various policy areas have instead to be considered.

5 Conclusions

In all of the countries under investigation, transport policy has experienced major changes during the past five to ten years. Some countries embarked on a comprehensive (re-)formulation of transport policy objectives and measures; others have relied on the Commission's directives for structuring their transport policies. Regardless of the degree and scope of planning, the substantial changes have been embedded in a series of reforms, on the one hand, of the political and policy framework of decision-making with the trends pointing in the direction of decentralisation and greater transparency and, on the other, of the transport market with privatisation and de-regulation setting the agenda.

With these changes a new terminology has also made its way into transport policy: the new structuring terms are sustainable transport systems, intermodality and interoperability. However, whilst the underlying objectives or general goals—reduction of negative impacts, integration of transport services—are quite clear in general terms, the pragmatic implications of these new transport concepts remain still vague or little elaborated across all levels, the main difficulty in terms of operationalisation resulting from the fact that whilst integrated thinking is accepted as the primary point of departure, this is difficult to put into practice by reason of the still fragmented character of policy formulation within national boundaries and across, at the supra-national level.

The strive for the transformation of isolated national transport modes into one integrated system is accepted as a priority goal, however its realisation through the establishment of a set of specific policy instruments differs across the Member countries. Differences are caused by different political regimes, varying actors' structure and lobbying power and the market dynamics. This lack of a clear conceptualisation has been identified as one of the reasons for the to-date meagre success of intermodal transport networks in Europe.

The same line of argumentation is true for the reduction of negative environmental impacts. Even though every single Member State declares its intention to reduce negative environmental impacts, so far only common threshold levels for air pollutants and a common commitment to reduce greenhouse gases by 15% by 2010 could be agreed upon under the umbrella of the Rio Summit. For other environmental impacts different measuring and assessment is in use throughout the Member States, and the evaluation of environmental effects varies extensively.

Calls for common regulations and procedures in these areas are confronted with the general market deregulation policies to improve the competitiveness of the transport sector, leading to a confusing policy landscape. The necessary shift from infrastructure policy—which characterised transport policy in the past—to a more comprehensive transport policy focusing on mobility aspects and user needs and taking into account social and environmental impacts is further complicated by the still prevailing largely technocratic approach characterising the transport policy formulation of most Member States.

The large, and ever-increasing, number of relevant actors throughout the Member States and the very specific policy issues in the modally oriented transport market, render it difficult to keep the overview and integrate the different demands, but also the existing information, in a comprehensive manner. Concerns have been expressed that the ongoing process of decentralisation in the field of transport planning and decision-making, with the increasing involvement of regional and local authorities in the field, will only render the context and the process even more complex and might indeed make it even more difficult to find a common approach towards resolving transport problems. Nevertheless all the Member States foster to fulfil the regional demand for a stronger integration into transport policy.

The complexity of the field of action and the still largely fragmented character of intervention and implementation does give at times the impression that there is no transport policy, but rather a patchwork of transport relevant interests and policy instruments which is becoming ever more complex to capture at its generality. However, as this report has hopefully shown, and as the individual country reports that follow explicate in more detail, there is today much more awareness of the problems involved and a gradually emerging long-term thinking towards the realisation of sustainable transport towards the 21st century.

6 References

- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1990), *The European High-Speed Train Network*, Report to the High-Level Group, Brussels
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1992), *The future development of the common transport policy - A global approach to the construction of a Community framework for sustainable mobility*, COM(92) 494, Brussels
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1993), *European Transport Policy in the 90s*, Brussels
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1993), *Action Programme for Road Safety*, COM(93) 246 final
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1994), *The Trans-European Transport Network*, Brussels
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1994), *Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network*, Brussels, COM(94) 106
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1994), *Trans-European networks*, The Group of personal representatives of the heads of state and government, Report to the Corfu European Council, Brussels
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1995), *The Common Transport Policy Action Programme 1995-2000*, Brussels
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1995), *The Trans-European transport network; transforming patchwork into a network*, Brussels
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1995), 'Amended proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision on the Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network', Official Journal C97, Vol.38
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1995), *Towards Fair and Efficient Pricing in Transport - Green Paper*, Brussels, COM(95)-691
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1996), *The Citizens' Network - Green Paper*, Brussels
- CEC - Commission of the European Communities (1996), *Strategies for the Revitalisation of the European Railway Companies - White Paper*, Brussels COM(96)-421

<u>1 INTRODUCTION</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>2 POLICY ENVIRONMENT</u>	<u>5</u>
2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN CTP IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	5
2.2 NATIONAL REGULATORY ENVIRONMENTS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE	8
2.2.1 DISTRIBUTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMPETENCIES AT NATIONAL LEVEL	9
2.2.2 TRANSPORT PLANNING	9
2.2.3 DEGREE OF CENTRALISATION	13
2.2.4 CULTURE OF NEGOTIATION AND DECISION-MAKING	13
2.3 TYPICAL CONFLICT PATTERNS AT NATIONAL LEVEL	16
2.3.1 CONFLICTS ABOUT COMPETENCIES	16
2.3.2 THEMATIC CONFLICT 'ENVIRONMENT VS. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT'	18
2.3.3 CONFLICTS RELATED TO THE RE-STRUCTURING OF THE TRANSPORT MARKET	18
<u>3 TRANSPORT POLICY ISSUES</u>	<u>20</u>
3.1 CURRENT TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS	20
3.2 RELATION WITH EUROPEAN TRANSPORT POLICY ISSUES	21
3.2.1 DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION OF TRANSPORT SYSTEM	21
3.2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY	21
3.2.3 SAFETY	23
3.2.4 MARKET ACCESS AND STRUCTURE	24
3.2.5 COST CHARGES AND PRICING	25
3.2.6 SOCIAL DIMENSION	25
3.2.7 EXTERNAL DIMENSION	25
<u>4 MAIN PROBLEMS</u>	<u>27</u>

5 CONCLUSIONS	30
----------------------	-----------

6 REFERENCES	32
---------------------	-----------
