The North-South Initiative

Declaration

Building a new economic region in Europe
(21 December 2010)

The economic restructuring in recent years, together with the enlargement of the European Union, offers new opportunities in an increasingly integrated and competitive Europe. At the same time the globalisation of markets and the internationalisation of trade impose the need for reorientation. In competition with other major economic regions of the world, Europe, too, needs larger and more specialised networks.

Against this background, the strategic importance of an international development corridor as the shortest central route from Scandinavia (Nordic Triangle) through the eastern and southern German federal states, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia to the North Adriatic Sea Region of Italy is becoming increasingly evident.

1. The north-south corridor from Scandinavia to the Adriatic Sea has the potential of becoming one of the most competitive macro regions in Europe.

The conditions in the economic area are conducive to this:
• 11 adjacent countries contribute to the development of the corridor;
• The Baltic Sea region in the north is one of the most innovative regions in Europe;
• The South has a high growth momentum;
• The re-industrialisation of Central and Eastern Europe produces an increase in trade interdependencies in this region;
• Several metropolitan regions and economic areas of outstanding importance, which cooperate with each other across borders, are situated in this corridor;
• The North Adriatic Region is a highly industrialised region and a polycentric metropolitan area, only separated from the European core by the Alpine Arc, and playing the role of a land bridge between North-South and, after the iron curtain fall, also between East-West.

In addition, the Scandinavian-Adriatic Corridor offers the regions in Denmark and Sweden, the east German federal states, the western Polish provinces, the North Adriatic ports and many other regions of Central Europe an attractive, well-developed and largely congestion-free north-south link.

The undersigned agree to explore all sides of this development potential and to draw the attention of stakeholders from business, politics and administration to the opportunities of the area.
2. The Scandinavian-Adriatic Corridor must become part, along its entire length and territorial articulation, of the core network of the trans-European transport networks. The improvement of the accessibility of regions belonging to this strategic macro-region makes them more attractive to corporate investments and thereby propels the prosperity of regions furthermore.

The largest part of the Scandinavian-Adriatic Corridor already belongs to the "priority projects" that form the prerequisite to establish the new "priority network". These include the following projects in detail:

- No. 1 – Railway axis Berlin-Palermo;
- No.11 – The Øresund land bridge;
- No.12 – Railway/road axis "Nordic Triangle" (Copenhagen-Oslo-Helsinki);
- No.21 – Motorway of the Sea (Sassnitz-Trelleborg);
- Motorway of the Sea (Rostock-Gedser)

In linking these priority projects in the shortest and most competitive way, however, some rail and road links will have to be complemented.

For this reason, the North-South Initiative calls for the following:

- a combination of the priority TEN-T projects No.1 (railway axis Berlin-Palermo) and No. 12 (railway/road axis "Nordic Triangle"), and
- a combination of the priority TEN-T projects No.22 (railway axis Athens-Sofia-Budapest-Vienna-Prague-Nuremberg/Dresden) and No.1 in Berlin;
- close coordination between the priority project No.6 (railway axis Lyon-Trieste-Divača/Koper-Divača-Ljubljana-Budapest-Ukraine border) and No.1, necessary to connect the Adriatic Ports of Ravenna, Venice, Trieste with Scandinavia through the Alps.

This is to be achieved by identifying rail and road links between the nodes Berlin and Øresund region via the ports of Gedser, Trelleborg, Rostock and Sassnitz as well as by identifying the rail and road link Dresden-Berlin as future components of the core network of the trans-European transport networks.

To ensure the performance and reliability of the transport corridor, also over the long term and in view of increasing traffic volumes, it is absolutely necessary to drive the targeted expansion of transport infrastructure forward.

*The undersigned agree to use a political framework and jointly advocate the designation of a.m. connections as future integral parts of the TEN-T core network and targeted expansion of transport infrastructure.*
3. The North-South Initiative is committed to generating economic momentum and producing further logistical solutions and optimisations, through increased co-operation in the Scandinavian-Adriatic Corridor.

This goal is to be achieved:
• through the joint development of efficient, cost-effective and sustainable logistics services;
• through improvement and enhancement of the Adriatic port system, promoted by the newly created NAPA (North Adriatic Port Association), aimed at valorising the maritime route between South East Asia and Europe;
• through a close cooperation between the four main Baltic Sea ports Gedser, Trelleborg, Rostock and Sassnitz in this central corridor;
• By the development of the Motorways of the Sea not only between EU countries (European maritime transport space without barriers), but also extended to third countries in the Eastern Mediterranean (Northern Africa and the Middle East)
• through a significant reduction in railway passenger travel times between urban and metropolitan regions;
• through the establishment of business sectors that depend on transport routes as well as of further innovative businesses;

The undersigned agree to jointly cooperate in the a.m. fields of action.

4. The Scandinavian-Adriatic Corridor and its quality features should become well-known through marketing measures and by setting up communication structures to ensure that it is placed at the forefront of public consciousness as alternative and relief corridor for other, already congested transit corridors.

The undersigned agree to establish a close co-operation with all stakeholders in order to contribute to the smooth functioning of the corridor and to raise the awareness for the corridor among third parties.
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