

The White Paper on Transport

Position paper – May 2016

Introduction – The 2011 White Paper

In 2011 the European Commission adopted the White Paper *Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system* in the context of the Union's 2020 growth strategy.

The general objective of this *Roadmap* is to define a long-term strategy to make the European Union (EU) transport system more efficient, safe and secure.

The *Roadmap* differs from earlier White Papers in its scope since it is based on a vision that spans four decades, up to 2050, but also sets earlier goals for 2020 and 2030. It also clearly states that curbing mobility is not an option.

Nevertheless, the *Roadmap* sets ambitious sustainability targets, particularly in terms of energy efficiency, reduced oil dependence and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and technological development.

The 2011 White Paper identifies ten goals for a competitive and resource-efficient transport system, which serve as benchmarks for achieving the 60% GHG emission reduction target. The White Paper also sets out a strategy comprising 40 initiatives to contribute to achieving these goals over the next ten years.

The EESC's recommendations and response

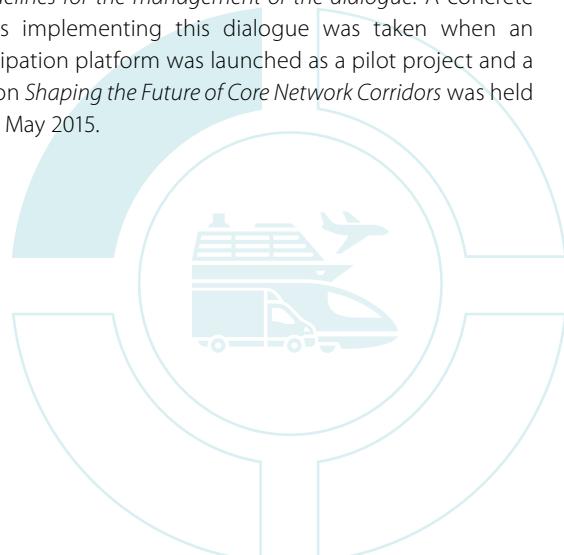
The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) agrees that the 2050 vision goal of a GHG reduction of 60% in the transport sector, while extremely challenging, is in line with the EU's overall climate policy aims. It strikes a reasonable balance between the need for quick GHG reductions and the time needed to optimise energy efficiency in a single European Transport Area and develop new and sustainable fuels and propulsion systems.

The EESC draws attention to an important gap between the objectives, the ways in which they are to be achieved and the financing that will be required. The EESC recommends better coordination between the *Roadmap*'s strategic measures (up to 2050) and the more practical and immediate measures (2020 and 2030).

As a result, in April 2013, the EESC set up a permanent study group on the *Implementation of the White Paper on Transport* (PSG) in order to establish genuine dialogue about key elements of transport policy in both the decision-making and the decision-implementation process. This improves not only the understanding and acceptance of possible policy measures but also the quality and efficiency of future decisions.

From the outset, the PSG set out to put forward innovative ways of involving European civil society in order to improve the quality of decisions and to ensure that policies and implementation measures are well understood and endorsed by those who are affected by them. The PSG has largely focused on organising a two-way participatory dialogue and finding ways to ensure the active participation of those concerned.

After its creation, as a first step, the PSG commissioned studies and organised events that provided information and inspiration on how the dialogue should be carried out. This work has resulted in a set of *Guidelines for the management of the dialogue*. A concrete step towards implementing this dialogue was taken when an online participation platform was launched as a pilot project and a Conference on *Shaping the Future of Core Network Corridors* was held in Malmö on May 2015.



What the European Union is doing – Mid-term review of the 2011 White Paper

The EESC's opinion on the Roadmap to *a single European transport area – progress and challenges* was adopted in April 2015. It highlights the fact that *the single European transport area remains an important item on the agenda*. It also emphasises that *major challenges still hamper the establishment of the single European transport area from achieving sustainable growth and job creation, quality jobs and working conditions*.

During its mid-term review of the 2011 White Paper on Transport in 2015, the European Commission organised a public consultation to take stock of progress. It assessed the situation in the transport sector as well as trends, priorities and targets that had been identified in 2011.

In response to this mid-term review, the EESC organised a hearing in March 2015 entitled the *White Paper on Transport: where do we stand?*. The event was held in connection with an exploratory opinion requested by the European Parliament on the *Roadmap to a single European transport area: progress and challenges*, which the EESC adopted in April 2015. In this opinion, the EESC advocated holding a participatory dialogue in connection with the review process.

Further information

EESC website: www.eesc.europa.eu

Section for 'Transport, Energy, Infrastructure and the Information Society' (TEN): www.eesc.europa.eu/ten

Links to recent EESC opinions

Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the White Paper – Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system: <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.ten-opinions.20491>

Transport White Paper: getting civil society on board: <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.ten-opinions.22570>

Roadmap to a single European transport area - Progress and challenges (exploratory opinion requested by the European Parliament): <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.ten-opinions.3462>

Permanent study group *Implementation of the White Paper on Transport*:
<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.transports-permanent-study-group>

Shaping the Future of Core Network corridors, 6 May 2015
<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-future-core-network-corridors>

Taking stock of EU transport policy - the 2011 White Paper: achievements and challenges, 12 November 2015
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/strategies/events/2015-11-12-white-paper_en.htm

EESC Public Hearing on White Paper on Transport: where do we stand?, 6 March 2015
<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-white-paper-transport-assessment>

TEN-T Guidelines Regulation (EU 1315/2013)
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2013.348.01.0001.01.ENG

Regulation on a Connecting Europe Facility (EU 1316/2013)
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1316>

The EESC's position

In 2015, as part of the mid-term review process, the EESC reiterated its support for the goals set out in the 2011 White Paper.

Four years into the implementation of the Roadmap, the EESC notes that there have been a number of initiatives, but with fairly limited results. Nevertheless, steps have been taken, in the form of legislative proposals and policy initiatives. These include the new TEN-T Guidelines Regulation and the Regulation on a Connecting Europe Facility (both adopted in 2013); legislation on the deployment of infrastructure for alternative fuels, and measures to reduce GHG emissions from vehicles.

Little has been achieved, however, in preparing the ground for opening the market further, monitoring compliance and facilitating cross-border road transport.

