



Atlantic Arc Commission

Activities of the Atlantic Arc Commission's Transport Working Group since 2011

29/05/2015

Background Note for the Chair of the Transport Working Group

This background note intends to give a broad vision of what has been done in the framework of the Atlantic Arc Commission's Transport working group since 2011 under the Basque Country Chair and also gather the Atlantic Regions priorities.

A recap of Atlantic Arc Commission recent activities on Transport

- The Atlantic Arc Commission Executive Secretariat produced a **contribution to the debate on the future of the TEN-T** (June 2011)
- The Atlantic Arc Commission Executive Secretariat prepared an **Annex** to the CPMR opinion on the **"TEN-T Review and proposed "Connecting Europe Facility"** (February 2012)
- The Atlantic Arc Commission Executive Secretariat adopted a **Resolution on the future of TEN-T** (February 2013)
- The Atlantic Arc Commission Executive Secretariat produced a **background note on the EC's Communication: « Building the Transport Core Network: Core Network Corridors and Connecting Europe Facility»** (July 2014)

Contribution of the Atlantic Arc Commission to the debate on the future of TEN-T (2011)

Link to the document: [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [Portuguese](#)

The Atlantic Arc Commission (AAC) had already confirmed in 2011 (on the occasion of the contribution to the future of TEN-T) that, based on what was said on the Transport White Paper presented by the European Commission (EC), the Atlantic Arc was bound to be marginalised. The core network designed by the EC, especially "nodes" and ports, did not take the Atlantic Arc into account.

The Atlantic Arc Commission defined 5 main priorities:

1. Maintain the current priority projects in the core network

N°3: High-speed railway axis of southwest Europe (Paris-Bordeaux-Vitoria-Madrid-Lisbon): ongoing;
N°8: Multi-modal axis Portugal/Spain–rest of Europe (road axis): completion of this priority project could be extended to allow for improvements to port and rail infrastructures connected to this route;
N°9: Railway axis Cork–Dublin–Belfast–Stranraer (Ireland);
N°13 : Road axis UK/Ireland/Benelux;
N° 14 : West coast main line (UK);
N°16: Freight railway axis Sines/Algeciras–Madrid–Paris (third crossing of the Pyrenees);
N°19: High-speed rail interoperability in the Iberian peninsula;
N°21: Motorways of the Sea.

2. The Atlantic metropolitan Regions must be included in the core network

The Atlantic Arc's transport network has a radial structure. There is therefore a lack of connectivity between the territories. The document suggested that 12 metropolitan Regions should be included in the core network:

Dublin; Glasgow-Edinburgh; Manchester-Liverpool; West Midlands (metropolitan region around Birmingham); Cardiff-Swansea-Newport; Nantes-Saint-Nazaire; Bordeaux-Arcachon-Libourne; Metropolitan Area of Asturias (Oviedo, Gijón, Avilés); Metropolitan region of Euskadi and the Basque Eurocity (Biarritz-Anglet-Bayonne-San Sebastián); Porto; Lisbon; Seville.

3. The Atlantic Corridor

One of the other priorities of the Atlantic Arc Commission was to promote multimodal transport in the Atlantic Corridor. The paper stated that "about 50% of goods transport between the Iberian Peninsula and Europe uses the Atlantic seaboard route. However only 1% of this goes by rail; 16% goes by sea, and 83% by road."

The Atlantic Arc Commission therefore asked for the Atlantic Rail Corridor to be completed.

4. The Atlantic ports in the core network

In the document, the Atlantic Arc Commission clearly advocated for the integration of "peripheral ports" into TEN-T. The starting point is the observation that a very few Atlantic ports handle more than 1% of the European traffic, which shows that the Atlantic is once again marginalised.

The North-South road networks are heavily congested, which generates major bottlenecks. Maritime transport must therefore be considered as a good alternative to road transport.

Many sea motorways were launched in the past (Gijón-Saint-Nazaire; Bilbao Zeebrugge; Sines-La Spezia), showing that this sector has a great potential. Other sea motorways were to be established (Nantes-Saint Nazaire-Vigo; Le Havre-Algesiras; Brest-Leixões).

The Atlantic ports have a strong growth potential (Northern Sea route, Agreement with Canada, TTIP, etc.).

The AAC drew up a list of ports that should be included into the core network: Dublin, Belfast, Liverpool, Milford-Haven, Southampton, Dunkirk, Le Havre, Brest, Nantes-Saint-Nazaire, Bordeaux, Bilbao, Gijón-Avilés, Vigo, Porto-Leixões, Lisbon, Sines, and Algesiras.

It also made a list of smaller ports that should be taken into consideration: Oban, Belfast, Cork, Foynes, Waterford, Rosslare, Plymouth, Cherbourg, La Rochelle, A Coruña, Santander, Aveiro-Figueira da Foz, Setúbal, etc.

5. Strengthen the connections between the Atlantic seaboard and the centre of Europe

The Atlantic Arc Commission considered that "the effective link with other corridors is necessary to enable the Atlantic Arc to be linked with the centre of Europe. The core network as well as the comprehensive network must both contribute to the improvement of these connections. "

2012

The CPMR Opinion from February 2012 "**TEN-T Review and proposed "Connecting Europe Facility - Comments and proposals from the CPMR"**", was built on an intensive and concerted work with the CPMR Geographical Commissions.

Cf. link: http://www.crpm.org/pub/docs/358_en-ppp-ten-t-cef.pdf

Context: On 19 October 2011, the Commission issued two legislative proposals: - A proposed review of the TEN-T guidelines; - A proposed regulation establishing a "Connecting Europe Facility", a new

instrument designed to support the future network. The CPMR Position paper aimed at reacting at these proposed texts to influence the legislators during the negotiation phase.

This document includes the geographical dimension of the CPMR's proposals through annexes proposed by the Geographical Commission.

Atlantic Arc Commission's **Annex is N°2**, prepared on the basis of a working group meeting which took place in January 2012. The document, (only available in English) is accessible at this address: http://www.crpm.org/pub/docs/360_annex_2_atlantic_arc_commission.pdf

It lists the amendments to the EC proposals asked by the Atlantic Arc Commission. These amendments were "translated" on the maps provided by the EC:



2013

✓ **Resolution from the Atlantic Arc Commission on the future of TEN-T**

This Resolution was voted in the framework of the Atlantic Arc Commission meeting of the Political Bureau, in Nantes (Pays de la Loire) on 13 February 2013.

Link to the Resolution: www.arcatlantique.org

This resolution was a reaction to the European Council agreement of 8 February 2013, which had drastically reduced the budget proposed by the European Commission for the "Connecting Europe Facility" (as part of the negotiation on the Multiannual Financial Framework).

It expressed the **Atlantic Arc Commission disappointment** on the Council's decision. The Atlantic Arc Commission also urged the Parliament and the Council to take into consideration the amendments proposed in the CPMR position and AAC Annex n°2 adopted the previous year.

The Atlantic Arc Commission reaffirmed its 2011 position by mentioning again the hereinabove 5 priorities.

2014

✓ **Atlantic Arc Commission Summary note to the EC's Communication: « Building the Transport Core Network: Core Network Corridors and Connecting Europe Facility» and action proposals for the Working Group (July 2014)**

Link to the note: www.arcatlantique.org

This note from the Atlantic Arc Commission Executive Secretariat was meant to sum up the Commission from the EC published in January 2014.

This EC Communication aims at:

- providing information on the potential budget and instruments available under the future framework;
- guiding potential applicants with regard to direct management of funds and providing information on the expectations of the Commission's from potential beneficiaries;
- explaining how the Commission intends to support the creation and the functioning of the Core Network Corridors

This Communication gave some indications: the delivery of the core network was expected for 2030 and a coordinator was appointed for each corridor (9 corridors + 1 coordinator for Motorways of the Seas + 1 coordinator for European Railway Traffic Management System). This initiative included the creation of a Corridor Forum consisting of the coordinator, the Member States as well as other stakeholders (including Regions).

The EC also announced the development of a work plan in order to analyse the current situation of each corridor, identify the relevant parts, bottlenecks and interoperability problems.

In addition to this sum-up, the Atlantic Arc Commission prepared some recommendations for its Transport working group, among which:

- Pursue its long term political mobilisation in order to follow the evolutions the TEN-T maps;
- Participate, through our Working Group, in the Forum and in the elaboration of the work plan;
- Advocate the important points aiming to reinforce the accessibility of the entire Atlantic Arc to the Coordinator of the Atlantic Corridor;
- Bring our Working Group together to collect input on the position of the Regions regarding the priority portions of the Network that should be brought forward and bring forward the Atlantic Arc Commission's contribution as a Geographic Commission in the CPMR and within the framework of these Fora organised by each coordinator;
- Bring forward the Atlantic Arc Commission's contributions during the Fora organised by the Coordinator for the Motorways of the Sea in order to identify the "maritime" portions that need to be strengthened along the entire Atlantic area.

Other relevant information

- All Atlantic Arc Commission Transport working group meetings are listed on the website: www.arcatlantique.org - This includes the agenda, working documents as well as presentations of the speakers for each meeting.
- More information on the CPMR activities on Transport and accessibility can be found here: www.crpm.org
- In general, we organise Atlantic Arc Commission meetings back to back with CPMR inter-Commission Working Group on Transport. Next one is planned in Brussels next 15th September. As the Chair of the Atlantic Arc Commission Working Group, you will be invited to participate in these CPMR Meetings. A good option would be to organise a meeting of our working group the day after on **16th September** to discuss the outcome of the questionnaire and actions to be taken during the 2nd half of the year (Conference on Motorways of the Seas co-organised with CPMR on **25th September** in Palma de Mallorca, next Corridor Forum in the Autumn, etc.)