



EU News

Monthly Journal

Number 103,
April 2012

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Dear Readers,

The recent days and weeks have brought as part of the published statistical data about developments in the EU two statistical sets of data that could be appropriate for further processing and interpretation.

The first is a series of current data about the development of regional economies for 2009. It is more than important for the upcoming period of cohesive policy, because the value of the GDP per inhabitant indicator will continue to represent an original qualification criterion regarding whether a particular region will be able to continue to enjoy generous support from EU funds or whether the amount of its allocation is cut. The regions in the Czech Republic are beginning in a very concentrated and obvious manner to approach the decisive limit of 75. We can generally state that even despite the course of the crisis, most domestic regions have actually been capable of converging, and for 2009 the Czech Republic as a whole reached the level of 82.2% of the EU average. We also witnessed something interesting. Although Prague retained its distinguished position in the wealthiest first 10 out of a total of 271 European regions (this time in seventh place, it was surpassed by two places by the Bratislava Region.

The second set of statistical data is somewhat gloomier and relates to current unemployment. That at the end of this year's first quarter in a negative sense is dominated by Spain and Greece, and its values are "successfully" attacking 20-year-old maximum records, when the labor market and unemployment were referred to as a tragedy and disaster.

For almost the duration of the time in between, Spain was the country with the highest unemployment in the EU, but just five years ago nearly a third of that country's population was unemployed, compared to 24% now. An examination of the long-term perspective of the labor market, showing that more than 50% of people under the age of 25 are now unemployed in Spain and Greece, could cause apocalyptic consequences.

From this point of view, on the opposite side of the ladder a couple of "miracles" can be mentioned. The first is the fact that in Austria, the Netherlands and Luxembourg even now the unemployment levels are not very far from the 4% level, although what is more noteworthy is the position of Germany, which long after its reunification in 1990 rather "excelled" with unemployment levels of around 10% (in the newer federal states 20%), and which now reports the fourth lowest unemployment level in the EU.

In contrast, the Czech Republic has the lowest unemployment level among EU countries outside of the Eurozone and the fifth lowest in the EU as a whole. There is never enough good news!

Petr Zahradník



Events

As of 1 April, a million citizens from a quarter of the EU member states will be able to call upon EU institutions to adopt new legislation. The Commission is concerned about the independence of courts and personal data protection bodies in Hungary, and therefore it has initiated further disciplinary measures. Finance ministers have agreed on the combined functioning of the temporary rescue fund EFSF and the new mechanism ESM. Greece has managed to trim its debt by 100 billion euros.

POLITICS

European Citizens' Initiative to begin functioning in April

The Lisbon Treaty, which became valid at the end of 2009, **will introduce into European law a new tool**, which could represent a major change in how European citizens can influence public affairs.

As of April 1, **at least a million citizens from a quarter of the EU member states** will be able to call upon European institutions to adopt new legislation. The organization of the initiative must also be backed by a "committee of citizens" consisting of at least seven people from seven different member states. A period of 12 months will be enough to collect the required million signatures. As soon as the initiators of the petition manage to collect a million signatures, the European Commission will have three months to consider whether to process a new bill. It will have to explain its reasons publicly.

Whether the new tool will function well will depend on several factors:

- **matters of a technical and legal character** – how many countries will be prepared for the launch of ECI by April 1, 2012, and to what extent (it is necessary, for example, to ensure certification of the number of signatures) – so far the certification process has not been set up in several member states, and they will not meet the April 1 deadline due to the amount of time national legislative processes take.
- **support for the Citizens' Initiative in individual countries**
- **increasing Europeans' awareness** through national information campaigns

In January the European Commission launched the **official register of the European Citizens' Initiative** and expects that the petition initiators will be provided with necessary advice by 400 information locations in the Europe Direct network.

A question remains whether European institutions are prepared for the ECI **and what role European civil society will play**. Based on currently available information, it is difficult to predict how popular the initiative will eventually become.

<http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome>
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=P/12/336>

Czech Republic is a step closer to implementing ECI

A bill has made it through the lower house of the Czech parliament, which if passed will enable the functioning of the

European Citizens' Initiative in the country. The bill is now headed for the Senate.

In the Czech Republic, **verifying the signature collection process is the responsibility of the Interior Ministry**, which will have to implement a special information system. The costs this year for putting the legislation into practice are expected to reach 8.5 million CZK. In subsequent years they should amount to 4.3 million CZK annually.

<http://www.psp.cz/sqw/historie.sqw?T=579&O=6>

Commission toughens against Hungary, initiates new disciplinary phase

The European Commission has decided to initiate **a new phase of legal disciplinary measures against Hungary**. Two supposedly **reasonable stances**, which it has sent to Budapest, relate to the independence of courts and bodies responsible for ensuring personal data protection. The Commission has also sent the Hungarian government a request that it clear up other controversial aspects of legislation regarding the retirement age of judges and the independence of the national bank.

The Commission reacted after **Budapest sent it an explanatory response to three formal warnings** that it received from the EU in the middle of February. The warnings, which are the first step taken when EU law is not respected, related to limitation of the independence of courts and personal data protection; the third issue addressed was the independence of the Hungarian central bank.

According to available information, **the Commission disagrees, for example, with the explanation that reduction of the retirement age of judges from 70 to 62** is in accordance with the rules that apply to the state sector as a whole. Brussels believes that it is a discriminatory measure.

Budapest now has a month to comment regarding the documents sent by the Commission and to adopt necessary measures. If it does not fulfill the requirements, there is a **risk that the matter will be referred to the EU Court Tribunal**.

Other bones of contention between Brussels and Budapest are the **act on the central bank**, which the EU says threatens the bank's independence, and the central bank president's salary, which the government wants to limit. The government says similar limits are being applied to all state employees.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=P/12/222>

Hungary faces fine for introduction of telecommunications tax

The European Commission **has sued Hungary over its unilateral tax**, which it collected from the telecommunications companies Magyar Telekom, which is part of the Deutsche Telekom group, Telenor a Vodafone. The Commission says the tax conflicts with EU law. The case will now be taken up by the EU Court Tribunal. The Commission has informed Hungary that its action amounts to non-permitted taxation of the particular sector. If the court in Luxembourg decides that Budapest has violated EU rules, **it could face a fine.**

The government of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, which enjoys a comfortable two-thirds majority in parliament, imposed the telecommunications tax with one aim, to fill a hole in the budget. Budapest has estimated that its move will raise **600 million euros** (15 billion CZK) in the next three years.

As far as the criticized taxation of telecommunications companies is concerned, Hungary is not the only EU member state being referred to the EU Court Tribunal over such a decision. The Commission has also taken a similar approach against France and Spain.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=P/12/286>

ECONOMY AND EURO

EU agrees on temporary strengthening of rescue funds

Eurozone finance ministers meeting in Copenhagen have agreed on temporarily increasing the capacity of rescue funds if more countries need assistance. The temporary **rescue fund EFSF will function until next year together with the new rescue mechanism ESM**. Combining both funds will temporarily increase the volume of resources needed to finance additional assistance for Eurozone countries if necessary.

A total of **700 billion euros** will be involved, according to Ecofin. However, the new volume of assistance will only amount to 500 billion euros, and the **remaining 200 billion** is money that has already been used (sent or pledged) to help Greece, Ireland and Portugal.

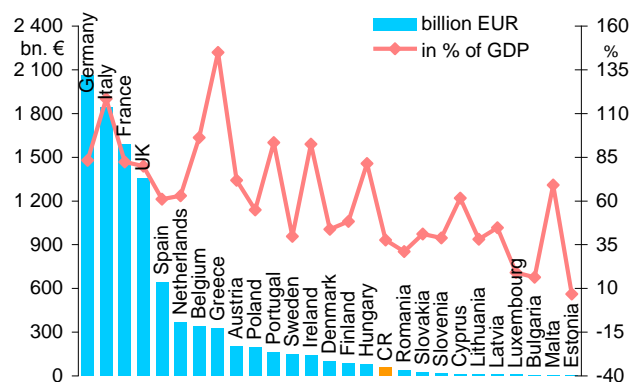
Both funds have been functioning at the same time, and the capital of ESM has gradually increased. This July ESM will begin operating with a **lending capacity of 200 billion euros**. By the middle of next year, the amount for lending will **increase to approximately 400 billion euros**, and until that time it will also be **possible to use approximately 240 billion euros**,

which have remained in EFSF, ČTK reports. Therefore, ESM will not reach the full capacity of half a billion euros until 2014.

The European Commission had originally proposed that the combined capacity of both rescue funds should reach 940 billion euros. **Germany in particular spoke against that idea**, and it remains to be seen whether other member states might also reject it.

Now it is important for **impacted or threatened states to take advantage of the reprieve** provided by the “dual” rescue fund ESM/EFSF and especially the ECB with its 3-year repo operations, so that they **can carry out deep reforms** and strict austerity measures that will enable them to regain the confidence of financial investors.

Public debt in member states of EU (2010)



Source: Eurostat

<https://www.bmf.gv.at/Presse/12967.htm>

Greece to cut over 100 billion euros in debt

Greece has successfully completed the restructuring of its debt. As a result, the country will avoid unmanaged bankruptcy, which would have a strong effect on the Eurozone. The EU and the IMF have **successfully arranged for the private sector to participate in Greece's rescue**. An agreement with private creditors was one of the **conditions for releasing aid from the second rescue package in the amount of 130 billion euros**. Athens desperately needed the loan, because the government had to pay creditors 14.5 billion euros.

A total of **85.8% of the private creditors** agreed to a voluntary exchange of Greek obligations for new ones with a longer maturity period, a lower nominal value and lower interest. Therefore, the **2/3 threshold has been exceeded**, and thanks to the collective action clauses, the “voluntary” exchange has been expanded to all holders of Greek state bonds issued pursuant to domestic law. **Banks, insurers and pension funds will lose approximately 74% of the value of their investments** into government bonds as a result of the



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The ratification of the fiscal agreement may encounter complications in individual member states. European institutions have agreed on new lower price ceilings for roaming. There will be a new price ceiling for data transfers abroad. The Czech Republic must adopt a new postal law by the end of the year, when the postal market will be liberalized.

deal, and the Greek state will be able to erase approximately 107 billion euros from its enormous debt of 368 billion euros.

Even following the generous forgiving of debt by foreign investors and under the assumption that agreed savings will be carried out, Greece's public debt is still expected to reach **120% of GDP in 2020**, and that is too much for a country like Greece, which has suffered such a loss of investor confidence. Therefore, we remain rather pessimistic, and we certainly are not convinced that the country's problem with public finances will be solved any time soon. **The April elections could also spell trouble.** Papadimos's technocratic government will be replaced by a new politically oriented cabinet, whose political priorities and approach to the agreed reform plan are unknown.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=M.EMO/12/174>

Ratification of EU fiscal agreement to be a long process in some EU states

The ratification of the fiscal agreement is facing complications in several key states. **The EU fiscal agreement**, or fiscal compact, will become valid **as soon as it is adopted by at least 12 signatory states** that use the euro. However, if any major countries refuse to adopt it, this will complicate one of the main objectives of the agreement, which is to convince financial markets that the Eurozone has the worst behind it already.

The fiscal responsibility pact **was signed at the last EU summit by all EU member states except the UK and the Czech Republic.** However, political obstacles are now bubbling to the surface for some of the 25 signatory countries, which could complicate ratification of the agreement.

In Germany and the Netherlands, the fiscal pact is the subject of tough **negotiations between the government and the opposition.** In Germany, the opposition Social Democrats have announced that they will support the agreement only if all of its conditions are fulfilled, which include the introduction of a tax on financial transactions. Members of the Dutch Labor Party have threatened to vote against ratification of the agreement of the government insists this year on fulfilling 3% of the budget deficit criteria, which Brussels is demanding.

Support is also being expressed in Europe **for French presidential candidate Francois Holland's effort to reopen the negotiations regarding the agreement.** His effort is even supported by the head of the Spanish Socialists, Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, under whose leadership the party lost the parliamentary elections last November.

Life on debt in Europe in the past ten years **has become engrained**, and therefore strong opposition to any **effort to effectively impose limits**, such as by adopting the fiscal fact, **is a natural phenomenon.** Nonetheless, it is existentially in European countries' interest to convince investors that their will for austerity and reforms is genuine, to which the fiscal agreement can also contribute.

<http://www.euractiv.cz/ekonomika-a-euro/clanek/s-ratifikaci-fiskalni-smlouvy-to-v-nekterych-zemich-nebude-jednoduche-009730>

Ireland to hold budget pact referendum at end of May

Irish Deputy Prime Minister Eamon Gilmore has announced that **Irish citizens will decide about the EU fiscal agreement in a referendum on 31 May.** Gilmore says a bill that will amend the conditions for holding a referendum should be passed by the end of this week. According to the most recent public opinion polls, **49% of citizens would vote for the agreement**, while 33% disagree with its adoption and 18% are still undecided.

Besides the governing parties Fine Gael and the Labor Party, **the largest opposition party Fianna Fail has also pledged to support the campaign in favor of the agreement.** The strongest opposition party, Sinn Féin, has announced that it will not support the agreement on budget discipline in the EU.

<http://www.merrionstreet.ie/index.php/2012/03/tanaiste-eamon-gilmore-doorstep-on-the-eu-stability-treaty-referendum>

INTERNAL MARKET

Surfing the web abroad to become cheaper as of summer

Watching a film online on a tablet or downloading songs to a smart phone while on vacation by the sea is expected to become **much cheaper** as of this summer, or at least this is promised by a preliminary agreement signed in Brussels by member states, the European Commission and MEPs. The agreement still needs to be approved by the European Parliament.

While **price ceilings** set by EU legislation **are not an exception for regular calling or sending text messages** from a foreign operator's network, we are encountering them for the first time for data transfers.

“Parliament managed to **succeed in its effort to reduce the costs of data roaming for consumers.** The achieved agreement will lead to greater transparency and protection of consumers against the shock that could be caused when

they see their bill for data downloading after their return home from a trip abroad,” Angelika Niebler (EPP), spokeswoman in relation to roaming legislation, explained.

Besides the promised drop in prices for downloading data on the internet, **the approved bill also calls for reduced prices for voice and text services.**

Retail ceilings excluding VAT

	Current	July 2012	July 2013	July 2014
Data (per megabyte)	None	70 cents	45 cents	20 cents
Phone calls made (per minute)	35 cents	29 cents	24 cents	19 cents
Phone calls received (per minute)	11 cents	8 cents	7 cents	5 cents
SMS (per SMS)	11 cents	9 cents	8 cents	6 cents

Source: European Commission

The new agreement among institutions is also expected to take care of a change to the structure of the telecommunications market, which will force mobile operators to lease part of the capacity of their networks to virtual mobile operators (MVNO). These are companies that do not have their own frequency and do not have a mobile network available to them. They will be able to purchase part of the capacity of existing mobile operators' networks and use them to offer their own mobile services.

Under the newly approved legislation, customers will also be able to select their roaming provider as of 2014. This could lead to customers using one operator's services at home and another's abroad, but their phone numbers will not change.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120326IPR41842/html/Mobile-roaming-MEPs-win-deal-with-Council-to-lower-price-caps>

http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=M_EMO/12/227

Frequency auctions: Revolutions in mobile networks are not expected

The Czech Telecommunications Office (ČTÚ) has published the first version of its conditions for the planned auction of frequencies in the frequency ranges of 800, 1,800 and 2,600 MHz. The ČTÚ wants to launch super high-speed mobile internet and also enable the entry of a new mobile operator.

The ČTÚ is also demanding from existing operators that they give the potential new operator the opportunity to use

their GSM and 3G networks as part of so-called national roaming, but it is not ordering them to open them up for virtual mobile operators as well.

Another condition imposed on operators requires that **within 2.5 years after obtaining its license, each operator's signal must cover 95% of sparsely populated areas** and the entire territory of the Czech Republic within five (in the case of existing operators) or six years (in the case of a new operator).

<http://www.ctu.cz/aktuality/tiskove-zpravy.html?action=detail&ArticleId=9009>

Czech Republic could face wrath of Brussels with postal law

At the end of last year, the Czech government introduced a **bill on postal services** in the lower house of parliament, which should **implement the third European postal directive in the Czech legal system** as part of the gradual process of **liberalization of the European postal market**. The proposed liberalization of postal services will strip the current state-run monopoly of its exclusive right to deliver packages weighing up to 50 grams.

This directive must be **adopted in the Czech Republic by the end of 2012**. The Czech Republic is one of eleven member states that have managed to negotiate the postponement of liberalization until 2013. In the other states, the regulations adopted based on the directive have been in force since 2011.

The main point to which the proposal is related is the **requirement to provide universal service**. On its basis, **letters must be delivered at least once daily and at least five times per week**. These services must be guaranteed even in **sparsely populated areas**. In the first five years after liberalization, **Česká pošta will carry out the universal service** required by the legislation.

The requirement to provide basic service poses a problem for the Czech Republic. **Losses incurred by Česká pošta as a result of its operation of universal service would be covered by a special fund**, to which Česká pošta and private operators of postal services would contribute based on their shares of the market. Postal operators are demanding that their **potential losses be covered by the state budget**.

The liberalization of the domestic postal market will gradually increase competition and bring benefits to users. Its expansion even for packages weighing up to 50 grams is more than desirable. Yesterday was too late.

<http://www.mpo.cz/dokument103600.html>



Events

The proposed wording of the legislation could face criticism from Brussels for violating economic competition rules. Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Reding has launched a debate regarding the implementation of gender quotas for representation of women in companies' boards of directors. Transport Ministers have approved a plan for development of TEN-T, which will implement a two-level structure of European transport networks.

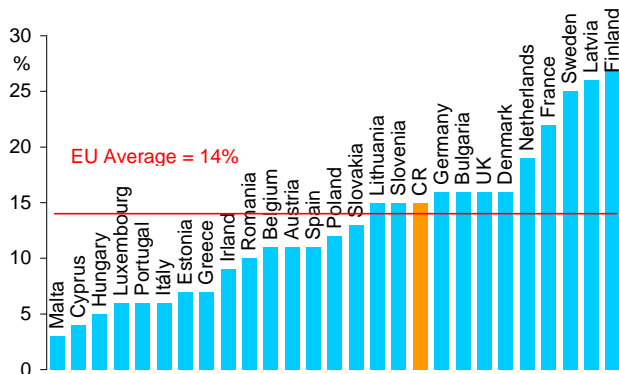
EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY

Euro Commissioner Reding launches gender quota debate

European Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Viviane Reding has launched a **three-month public debate about the unequal representation of men and women in companies' boards of directors**. The debate is expected to culminate with the adoption of legislation that should resolve this situation.

A year ago, the **Commissioner called on European companies** to take voluntary measures on their own to deal with the unequal position of men and women. She believes that companies should attempt to **ensure that in 2015 women hold 30%** of management positions. In 2020 this number should rise to 40%.

Share of women in management boards



Source: Eurostat, big companies traded on stock exchange (I. 2012)

According to a study conducted **by the European Commission, women currently make up 14%** of the management of major companies in the EU. This is slightly higher than in 2010, when they made up 11.8%. At such a pace, equal representation of both genders in the boards of directors of large companies will not be achieved until more than 40 years from now.

The low percentage of women in management positions in the business world **is harming the competitiveness of Europe and its economic growth,** explained Reding, who added that voluntary measures by companies so far had not had any effect. "I personally am not a fan of quotas, but I like the results that they bring," the commissioner said.

Some member states (Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain) have already begun addressing the situation **by adopting their own legislation**, which imposes **gender quotas for boards of directors**. Other countries

(Denmark, Finland, Greece, Austria and Slovakia) **have adopted rules for equal representation of both genders in the boards of directors of state companies**.

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/reding/womenpledge/index_en.htm

ENERGY AND TRANSPORT

Ministers approve transport plan, so far without corridor to Dresden

Representatives of EU governments have **approved a plan for the development of the trans-European network of transport (TEN-T)**. The amendment to the draft regulation regarding basic principles for the development of the comprehensive TEN-T, which the Council is now referring to the European Parliament, calls for **the creation of a two-level structure of European networks**.

- **core network** – the backbone network for the entire European space, the main purpose of which is to improve connections between EU member states and improve the connectivity between main European airports and seaports with railways and roadways – it should be completed by 2030
- **comprehensive network** – intended to ensure coverage of all European regions, so that the overwhelming majority of inhabitants and businesses will be a maximum of 30 minutes away from the main network.

Under the European Commission's plan, the development of the core network **should be financed in part by the new Connecting Europe Facility**. This is a new facility from which the EU as part of its next seven-year budget plans to support the development and modernization of missing roadway and rail connections of vital importance for Europe. Between 2014 and 2020, **the CEF should have 50 billion euros available** to support the development of infrastructure, on which 31.7 billion will be spent. The remaining funds are intended for support for the development of energy and telecommunications networks.

However, **new member states including the Czech Republic will not be helped much by the CEF**. The amount of 31.7 billion euros includes **10 billion from the Cohesion Fund**, whose resources can be used only by economically less developed EU member states.

More details regarding this issue can be found in the main topic of the Monthly.

http://www.mdcz.cz/cs/Media/Tiskove_zpravy/PM_se_zucas_tnil_Rady_ministru_dopravy_EU.htm

EU scolds Czechs, Poles for delayed implementation of energy tag rules

By last June, the **Czech Republic and Poland** were supposed to enshrine the EU directive about energy tags in their legislation. Already last July, the Commission sent both countries formal warnings, the first step taken when a state breaches or does not comply with EU law, **but neither state has yet informed the Commission about the complete transposition** of the new regulations into its legal systems.

The Commission therefore has **moved to the next phase in the process of disciplinary action** for breaching EU law and has **sent the countries explanations of its position**. If the member states do not fulfill their legal obligation within two months, the Commission may turn to the EU Court Tribunal.

The Directives regarding energy tags apply to **products related to energy consumption**. Energy tags provide consumers with comparison information about how much energy the products they purchase use. Consumers can then more easily decide which products are **more cost and energy efficient**. The EU believes that the tags will **ensure that manufacturers are motivated to develop highly energy efficient products**. Therefore, it regards them as a crucial tool for supporting energy efficiency and achieving the emission goals that the EU has pledged to fulfil by 2020.

The implementation of this directive has resulted in **changes to the system of appliance labelling** and promoted the withdrawal of appliances categorized as having high consumption.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=P/12/277>

ENVIRONMENT

EP supports adoption of road map towards low-carbon economy

The European Parliament has adopted a proposed road map for transition to a low-carbon economy by 2050, which during the next 40 years calls for an up to 95% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

MEPs supported the adoption of gradual goals for individual decades as well as setting of specific goals for individual sectors. According to the MEPs, the low-carbon economy **also must be better integrated into the EU's next multi-year framework**. The European Parliament also supported the adoption of **binding goals for the use of renewable resources** by 2030. These goals are being pushed by Connie Hedegaard, European Commissioner for Climate Issues, who plans their adoption by 2014. MEPs have placed

emphasis, for example, on the need for modernization of electrical networks, which must prepare for the transition to renewable resources. Other important topics focused on by lawmakers are **energy efficiency, sustainable use of resources and waste processing and recycling**.

The European Parliament says the **European Emission Trading System (ETS) will also be an important tool**, which first will have to cope with the very low prices of emission permits. MEPs have called on the Commission to take the necessary steps to give the system a boost. The European Parliament already previously called on the Commission to withdraw a certain number of permits from the market, in order to help increase their prices as a way of restarting trading.

Now the **decision of the Council of Ministers is being awaited**. The member states' approach to the road map is **somewhat more complicated**. **Poland** in particular has voiced its objection to the demand for adoption of gradual emission goals and even **blocked** discussion of the issue in the Council.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120315IPR40876/html/Parliament-calls-for-low-carbon-economy-by-2050>

Czechs recycling more, but too much waste still ends up in EU landfills

The amount of produced household waste in proportion to the number of inhabitants **in the Czech Republic is the fourth lowest in the EU**. According to the most recent data from Eurostat, 317 kg of household waste was produced in 2010 for each Czech. The average amount of **household waste per one inhabitant of the EU is 502 kg**, which compared to last year is a decline by 9 kg per inhabitant.

As far as waste handling is concerned, **38% of its total volume ends up in landfills** in EU countries, and only a **quarter is recycled**. Approximately 22% of the EU's waste ends up in incinerators, and 15% is composted. In comparison with the previous year, these numbers have changed only slightly.

According to the latest data, the Czech Republic has **managed to reduce the amount of waste hauled to landfills by 15%**. The amount of processed **waste that gets recycled has dramatically increased**. Whereas in 2009, only 2% of the total volume of household waste was recycled in the Czech Republic, in 2009 that amount rose to 14%.

However, according to data from the statistical office, there are major differences between EU countries. While in Cyprus 760 kg of household waste is produced per inhabitant, in Latvia the amount is only 304 kg. **Only seven countries are below 400 kg**, and all of them are countries



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in Central and Eastern Europe that joined the EU in 2004 or 2007. Luxembourg, Denmark and Ireland produce between 600 and 700 kg of waste per inhabitant.

The EU's main goal is to increase the volume of recycled waste. In the lead is **Germany**, which recycles 45% of its waste. Belgium, Slovenia, Ireland and the Netherlands all report favourable percentages of between 30 and 40%. **Austria is excelling as far as composting is concerned.** It uses 40% of its organic household waste for fertilizer production. Austria is followed by the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Denmark.

Municipal waste treated:

	Total, kg per person	Recycled in %
Latvia	304	9%
Estonia	311	14%
Poland	315	18%
CR	317	14%
Slovakia	333	4%
Romania	365	1%
Lithuania	381	4%
Bulgaria	410	-
Hungary	413	18%
Slovenia	422	39%
Greece	457	17%
Sweden	465	36%
Belgium	466	40%
Finland	470	20%
EU27	502	25%
Portugal	514	12%
UK	521	25%
Italy	531	21%
France	532	18%
Spain	535	15%
Germany	583	45%
Malta	591	7%
Austria	591	30%
Netherlands	595	33%
Ireland	636	35%
Denmark	673	23%
Luxembourg	678	26%
Cyprus	760	16%

Source: Eurostat

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/8-27032012-AP/EN/8-27032012-AP-EN.PDF

REGIONAL POLICY

Czech Republic gets time to improve system of drawing from EU funds

The Czech Republic has temporarily suspended applications for payments from EU funds for already approved projects, due to reservations expressed by the European Commission regarding how the Czech system of drawing from EU funds is set up.

Regional Development Ministry spokeswoman Jana Jabůrková explained that **the Czech Republic had entered into a gentlemen's agreement with the Commission** and actually would not request payment of money until this June.

In exchange, the Commission will postpone across-the-board freezing of drawing from all programs and will provide the Czech Republic with time to address the Commission's criticism.

According to Jabůrková, **the Commission mainly is displeased with the configuration of the audit system**, which has not guaranteed its independence, with the way the management bodies of operational programs have handled discrepancies discovered during audits, **and last but not least, with the personnel policies of certain management bodies.** For example, the Education Ministry is currently looking for its seventh management employee, who would be responsible for drawing from EU funds.

The Regional Development Ministry of the Czech Republic, which functions as a central coordinator of the use of EU funds in the Czech Republic, has promised the Commission that it will resolve the situation by gradually shifting the responsibility for audits to the Finance Ministry.

At the end of March, Prime Minister Petr Nečas's cabinet became familiar with the **action plan for improving the management and audit system for structural funds** in the Czech Republic, in response to the Commission's criticism.

<http://www.mmr.cz/Pro-media/Tiskove-zpravy/2012/Demonizovany-dopis-z-Bruselu-prinasi-jasna-reseni>

<http://www.mmr.cz/Pro-media/Tiskove-zpravy/2012/Vlada-se-seznamila-s-akcnim-planem-pro-strukturalni>



The EU Council for Economic and Financial Matters has evaluated a proposed directive for the introduction of a tax on financial transactions in the EU. However, the Danish EU presidency has stated that several issues have yet to be resolved. Now the member states will seek compromises, because the adoption of such a directive requires a unanimous vote in the Council. A survey by Eurobarometer has revealed that 54% of Czechs spend their vacations in the Czech Republic.

1 MARCH

Schulz: Europe is not a community of austerity but of solidarity:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/content/20120223STO39237>

Reviewing one of the EU's foreign policy priorities: the Rights of the Child:

http://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/2012/290212_children_rights_en.htm

2 MARCH

Commission proposes faster access to medicines for patients: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5802

5 MARCH

Ireland: European Commission gives green light for €5.8 billion payment following successful completion of fifth review of financial assistance programme:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/149>

6 MARCH

Tourism to become economic driver in 2012: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5804

Destinations for the main holidays taken in 2011 - OUR COUNTRY:

Greece	80%	Lithuania	55%
Bulgaria	77%	Czech republic	54%
Italy	74%	Austria	46%
Cyprus	73%	UK	46%
Spain	69%	Germany	45%
Poland	67%	Latvia	44%
France	65%	Denmark	42%
Hungary	64%	Ireland	33%
Rumania	63%	Slovenia	33%
Portugal	59%	Netherlands	32%
Finland	58%	Belgium	15%
Slovakia	58%	Malta	5%
Sweden	57%	Luxembourg	2%
Estonia	56%		

Source: Eurobarometer

7 MARCH

Shale gas: opportunity or threat to the environment?:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/content/20120302STO39863>

MEPs and MPs discuss "Equal pay for work of equal value":

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120305IPR39922>

Latvia: An economic success story:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/financial_operations/2012-03-05_latvia_economic_en.htm

8 MARCH

ACTA: how it started and how it will end:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/content/20120302STO39868>

Distribution of € 90 million of EU funds for the 2012/2013 School Fruit Scheme:

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/newsroom/73_en.htm

Environment: Better implementation will lower costs and improve the environment: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/220>

Commission acts to increase the safety and efficiency of securities settlement in Europe: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/221>

9 MARCH

Bonds designed to attract new funds for EU infrastructure:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/content/20120302STO39869>

COTER Commission sets regions' priorities for the TEN-T revision and the future of EU transport:

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/pages/PressTemplate.aspx?view=detail&id=5b1e5c62-52c2-4e00-883e-d4d14de03289>

11 MARCH

Economic and Financial Affairs: Statement by Commission Vice-President Olli Rehn on private sector participation in the second Greek programme:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/174>

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities: Czech European Year 2012 website online:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1227>

13 MARCH

Commission proposes to improve common greenhouse gas accounting rules for forestry and agriculture:



Diary

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=P/12/234>

14 MARCH

Monthly Labour Market Fact Sheet – March 2012: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1231>

15 MARCH

Financial transaction tax: first technical reading completed: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/homepage/showfocus?lang=en&focusID=81256>

Commission proposes one programming tool for all structural funds: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/236>

Six-pack? Two-pack? Fiscal compact? A short guide to the new EU fiscal governance: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/governance/2012-03-14_six_pack_en.htm

16 MARCH

Iceland, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120314IPR40746>

Is there room for sustainability under the current economic crisis?: <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.press-releases.22688>

EU Globalisation Fund pays €33.6 million to help 5 338 redundant workers in Austria, France, Italy and Portugal: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1236>

19 MARCH

European standards for safe consumer products: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5822

20 MARCH

Taking action on shadow banking: avoiding new sources of risk in the financial sector: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/253>

New plan proposes to make public procurement rules simpler and more efficient: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/content/20120316STO41058>

21 MARCH

Missions to help EU enterprises benefit from growth regions in the world: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5826

High-level conference on EU budget beyond 2013: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120319IPR41160>

23 MARCH

Taxation: The European Commission requests Sweden to stop discrimination against foreign pension funds: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=P/12/284>

26 MARCH

The financial transaction tax will reduce Member States' GNI contributions to the EU budget by 50%: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/300>

CLIMATE-ADAPT: a new tool for climate adaptation policy-making: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/309>

Commission asks Greece to end discrimination against workers with qualifications from other Member States: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1249>

27 MARCH

Culture in the EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/news/eu-cohesion-policy_en.htm

What young entrepreneurs in creative industries expect from Europe: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5844

26 MARCH

Small enterprises: Shift to green economy underway, but not at full speed yet: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=P/12/316>

Basic rights for crime victims across the EU: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120326IPR41845>

29 MARCH

New initiatives to assist small enterprises to go international: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5848&tpa=135

30 MARCH

Clamping down on the derivatives trade: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120329IPR42137>



Information service

Our Information Service section outlines upcoming sessions of EU decision-making bodies accompanied by other significant events such as international summits with super powers. Often agendas for negotiations by these important bodies are not ready until a few days before the actual meetings so they can be as up-to-date as possible. Agendas can be found at:

<http://europa.eu/eucalendar/>.

Meeting of the key EU institutions

17 – 20 Apr 2012	Strasbourg, France
- European Parliament plenary session	
18. – 20 Apr 2012	Horsens, Denmark
- Meeting of Ministers for energy and the environment (informal)	
23. Apr 2012	Luxembourg, Luxembourg
- Foreign Affairs Council	
23 – 25 Apr 2012	Horsens, Denmark
- Meeting of Ministers responsible for employment, social, health & consumer affairs (informal)	
24 Apr 2012	Luxembourg, Luxembourg
- General Affairs Council	
26 – 27 Apr 2012	Luxembourg, Luxembourg
- Agriculture and Fisheries Council	
26 – 27 Apr 2012	Luxembourg, Luxembourg
- Justice and Home Affairs Council	
9 – 10 May 2012	Brussels, Belgium
- European Parliament plenary session	
10 – 11 May 2012	Horsens, Denmark
- Meeting of General Affairs Ministers (informal)	
14 May 2012	Brussels, Belgium
- Eurogroup	
14 May 2012	Brussels, Belgium
- Foreign Affairs (Development) Council	
15 May 2012	Brussels, Belgium
- Economic & Financial Affairs Council	
21 – 24 May 2012	Strasbourg, France
- European Parliament plenary session	
29 May 2012	Brussels, Belgium
- General Affairs Council	



Main topic

In the previous two editions we focused here on one of the key topics of EU development policy in a very long-term perspective, TEN-T. We will also examine this topic in an upcoming contribution devoted to a detailed description of both key parts of TEN-T, the Comprehensive Network and the Core Network.

TEN-T: COMPLETION

1. COMPREHENSIVE NETWORK

Basic definition: The Comprehensive Network will be set up based on identification of projects of common interest. It will be specified via the maps in the annex to the regulation. It will be specified via a description of the parts of infrastructure. It will conform with the requirements for transport infrastructure. It will create a framework for the development of priority infrastructure.

Member states will ensure that the Comprehensive Network is completed and implemented and that it fully conforms to relevant rules by the end of 2050 at the latest.

1.1 Priority

The EU, member states, infrastructure managers and other supporters of projects in the process of development of the Comprehensive Network will especially consider measures that are necessary for:

- the implementation and deployment of intelligent transport systems, including measures that enable management of transport, multi-modal services related to transport schedules and information, multi-modal tracking and tracing, capacity planning, online reservation systems and integrated services related to tickets;
- overcoming of missing connections and elimination of narrow locations, mainly in cross-border sections;
- elimination of administrative and technical obstacles, mainly in relation to network interoperability and economic competition;
- ensuring of optimum integration of transport modes;
- ensuring of suitable passability for all regions of the EU;
- improvement or maintenance of the quality of infrastructure from the point of view of effectiveness, climate safety, overcoming unfortunate events, performance in relation to the environment, social conditions, availability for all users, quality of services and continuity of traffic flows;
- support for the current system of technological development;
- ensuring of safety related to fuels by enabling the use of alternative and especially low-carbon or carbon-free sources of energy and propulsion systems;
- bypasses of urban areas for freight transport by rail.

1.2 Rail transport infrastructure

Maps

The rail connections that form part of the Comprehensive Network are indicated on maps, which are part of the annexes to the regulation.

Infrastructure components

Rail transport infrastructure particularly includes:

- a) high-speed and conventional rail connections, including siding, tunnels and bridges;
- b) freight terminals and logistics platforms for loading of goods within railway mode and between railway and other modes of transport;
- c) stations along connections, indicated in the annex for the transport of passengers within railway mode and between railway and other modes of transport;
- d) related equipment;
- e) ITS.

Rail connections will take one of the following forms:

- rail connections for high-speed transport, which are:
- specially constructed high-speed routes selected for speeds of 250 km/h or higher;
- specially adapted and reconstructed conventional routes equipped for speeds of 200 km/h;
- rail routes for conventional transport.

The technical equipment related to rail routes will include electrification systems, equipment for boarding and exiting of passengers and loading and unloading of freight in stations, logistical platforms and freight terminals. It will include any facility necessary for ensuring safe and effective operation of the vehicles.

Requirements for transport infrastructure

The operators of freight terminals will ensure that any freight terminals are opened for all operators.

The operators of logistical platforms will offer at least one terminal opened to all operators.

The operators of freight terminals and logistical platforms will ensure this access in a non-discriminatory manner and shall apply a transparent system of fees.

The operators of stations for passengers will ensure that the stations for passengers offer access to information, ticket

and commercial activities for rail transport within the Comprehensive Network and where it is appropriate also information about connections with local and regional transport routes, in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) No. 454/2011 of 5 May 2011, on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the sub-system of 'telematics applications for passenger services' of the trans-European rail system.

Within the extent of their responsibility, member states and infrastructure managers shall ensure that:

- rail routes are equipped with ERTMS;
- rail infrastructure is in accordance with Directive 2008/57/EC of the European Parliament and Council of the EU of 17 June 2008 on the interoperability of the rail system within the Community and its implementation measures for achieving interoperability of the Comprehensive Network;
- the rail infrastructure is in accordance with the requirements of the technical specification for interoperability (TSI), adopted pursuant to Article 6 of Directive 2008/57/EC for new and renovated routes, with the exception of properly justified cases. In any case, the rail infrastructure should be in accordance with the following requirements:
 - a) nominal span of tracks for new rail routes – 1,435 mm;
 - b) electrification;
 - c) connections used by conventional freight trains: 22.5 t of weight and train length 750 m;
 - d) maximum gradients for new tracks used by conventional trains: 12.5 mm/m.



Framework for priority development of infrastructure

Member states and other submitters of projects in the case of support for projects of common interest shall particularly take into consideration:

- the use of ERTMS;
- reduction of the impact of noise caused by rail transport;
- achievement of standards higher than those set as the minimum requirements in the technical specifications.

1.3 Domestic water infrastructure

Maps

Domestic water routes and domestic ports that form part of the Comprehensive Network are indicated on maps in an annex to the proposed regulation.

Parts of infrastructure

The infrastructure of domestic water routes consists mainly of:

- rivers;
- canals;
- lakes;
- locations related to infrastructure, such as sluices, locks, bridges and reservoirs;
- domestic ports, including infrastructure essential for transport operations within the port area;
- related equipment;
- ITS.

Domestic ports will have a yearly volume of transported freight greater than 500,000 t. The total yearly volume of transported freight is based on the most current available three-year average published by Eurostat.

Equipment connected with the port will particularly enable propulsion and operating systems to reduce pollution, energy consumption and carbon intensity. This also includes equipment receiving waste.

Requirements for transport infrastructure

Within the extent of their responsibility, member states, port operators and infrastructure managers shall ensure that domestic ports are connected with roadway or rail infrastructure within the Comprehensive Network.

Port operators shall ensure that any domestic port can offer at least one freight terminal opened to all operators in a non-discriminatory manner and that transparent fees are applied.

As part of their responsibility, member states and infrastructure managers shall ensure that:



Main topic

- rivers, canals and lakes conform to the minimum requirements for class IV water routes, as specified in the European agreement on main water routes of international importance (AGN) regarding new classification of internal water routes and that related illumination of bridges is ensured;
- rivers, canals and lakes are equipped with RIS.

Framework for development of priority infrastructure:

Member states and other project implementers when supporting projects of common interest shall especially devote attention to:

- existing domestic water routes, implementation of measures necessary to achieve the standards of class IV domestic water routes;
- where appropriate, achieving higher standards than class IV domestic water routes, for ensuring market demand;
- implementation of ITS, including RIS;
- connection of the domestic port infrastructure to the rail transport infrastructure.

1.4 Roadway transport infrastructure

Maps

The roadways that comprise part of the Comprehensive Network are indicated on maps in an annex to the proposed regulation.

Infrastructure components

Roadway transport infrastructure consists particularly of:

- higher quality roadways, including bridges, tunnels, intersections, crosswalks and crossing points outside of level;
- parking zones;
- accompanying equipment;
- ITS;
- freight terminals and logistical platforms;
- bus stations and terminals.

Higher quality roadways are those that play an important role in long-distance transport for freight and people, integrate main urban and economic centers, connect other transport modes and enable connection of remote and peripheral NUTS 2 regions with central regions of the EU.

Higher quality roadways will be especially proposed and built for motor traffic and will have the form of highways or high-speed roadways.



A highway is a roadway specially proposed and built for motor traffic, which primarily does not serve entities located in their vicinity and which:

- consists, with the exception of special locations and sections or for a temporary period, of separated traffic lanes for two directions of traffic, separated from each other by a dividing line, which is not intended for traffic, or only in exceptional cases;
- does not cross another roadway, railway or tram lines or pedestrian paths at the same level, and
- is specially labeled as a highway.

A high-speed roadway is a roadway intended for motor traffic, which is available only from managed intersections and crossings and which:

- prohibits stopping and parking in travel lanes;
- does not cross at one level with any rail lines, tram routes or pedestrian paths.

Equipment related to roadways particularly includes equipment for managing traffic, informational and management equipment, equipment for collecting tolls for the use of roadways, safety measures, equipment for reducing negative environmental impacts, for tanking or charging vehicles with alternative propulsion and for ensuring parking zones for commercial vehicles.

Traffic infrastructure requirements

Within their extent of responsibility, member states and infrastructure managers shall ensure that:

- roadways are in accordance with the specified definitions;
- the safety of rail infrastructure is ensured and monitored and where necessary improved based on the procedure outlined in Directive 2008/96/EC of the European Parliament and Council of the EU of 19 November 2008 on road infrastructure safety;

- roadway tunnels longer than 500 m are in accordance with Directive 2004/54/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU of 29 April 2004, on minimum safety requirements for tunnels in the Trans-European Road Network;
- the interoperability of fee collection systems is ensured in accordance with Directive 2004/52/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU from 29 April 2004, on interoperability of electronic road toll systems in the Community and European Commission Decision 2009/750/EC of 6 October 2009 on the definition of European electronic toll service and its technical elements.
- interoperability of toll collection systems is ensured in accordance with Directive 2004/52/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU of 29 April 2004, on interoperability of electronic road toll system in the Community, and Decision of the European Commission No. 2009/750/EC of 6 October 2009, on definition of the European electronic toll system and its technical elements.

The intelligent transport systems for road infrastructure, which are in accordance with Directive 2010/40/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU of 7 July 2010, on the framework for the deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems in the field of road transport and for interfaces with other modes of transport, will be used.

Framework for development of priority infrastructure

Member states and other participants in the projects in the event of support for projects of common interest will devote primary attention to:

- use of ITS, particularly multi-modal information management and management of transport operation and will enable integrated communication and payment systems;
- implementation of new technologies and innovations for supporting low-carbon transport;
- ensuring of safe parking zones;
- support for road safety.

1.5 Marine transport infrastructure

Maps

Seaports that form part of the Comprehensive Network are indicated on maps in an annex to the proposed regulation.

Parts of infrastructure

The marine transport infrastructure consists particularly of:

- marine space;

- marine canals;
- seaports, including the infrastructure necessary for transport operations within the port areas;
- navigation aids;
- access to ports;
- maritime routes;
- related equipment;
- ITS.



Seaports will be entry and exit points for ground infrastructure of the Comprehensive Network. They will satisfy at least one of the following criteria:

- the total yearly volume of transport of persons will exceed 0.1% of the total yearly volume of transport of persons at all seaports in the EU; the reference value for this total volume is the last available three-year average, based on statistics published by Eurostat;
- the total volume of freight – either for mass or non-mass processing of freight – exceeds 0.1% of the corresponding total yearly volume of freight processed at all seaports in the EU; the reference amount for this total volume is the last available three-year average based on statistics published by Eurostat;
- the seaport is localized on an island and ensures an exclusive point for access to the NUTS 3 region within the Comprehensive Network;
- the seaport is localized in a remote region or peripheral area, beyond a radius of 200 km from the nearest other port within the Comprehensive Network.

The connected equipment with the marine transport infrastructure particularly includes equipment for breaking ice, hydrological overviews, excavation and maintenance of the port and access to it.



Main topic

Maritime routes

Maritime routes represent a marine dimension of the Trans-European Transport Network. They consist of coastal routes, ports, related marine infrastructure and equipment, equipment enabling coastal transport and/or services on seas and rivers between at least two ports, including connections with the mainland, in at least two different member states.

Maritime routes include:

- marine connections between marine ports within the Comprehensive Network;
- port facilities, information and communication technology, such as electronic logistical guidance systems, safety, administrative and customs procedures in at least one member state;
- infrastructure for direct access to land and to the sea.

Projects of common interest for maritime routes in the Trans-European Transport Network will be proposed by at least two member states. They will take one of the following forms:

- they will be a marine part of the Core Network corridor (see below), or they will create the marine part between two corridors of the Core Network;
- they will create the marine connection and its mainland connection within the Core Network between two or more ports in the Core Network;

They will create the marine connection and its mainland connection between the Core Network port and the Comprehensive Network port, with a special focus on mainland connection of Core and Comprehensive Network ports.

Projects of common interest for maritime routes in the Trans-European Transport Network may also include activities that have broader benefits and are not connected to specific ports, such as activities for improving performance related to the environment, making ice breaking equipment available, activities ensuring year-round passability of waterways, excavation work, equipment for alternative vessels as well as optimization of processes, procedures and human elements, ICT platforms and information systems, including management of operations and electronic and information systems.

Requirements for transport infrastructure

Within the extent of their responsibility, the member states, port operators and infrastructure managers shall ensure that:

- marine ports are connected with rail routes, roadways and where appropriate also with inland water ways in the Comprehensive Network, with the exception of those in Malta and Cyprus, for as long as no rail system exists on their territory;
- any marine port offers at least one terminal opened for all operators in a non-discriminatory manner with application of transparent fees;
- marine canals, port throughways and the mouths of rivers can connect two seas or ensure access from the sea to marine ports and be connected at least to class VI internal waterways.

Port operators shall ensure that ports contain the equipment necessary for ensuring corresponding performance related to the environment in the case of boats in ports, particularly within the receiving equipment for boats that generate waste and cargo residues in accordance with Directive 2000/59/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU of 27 November 2000, on port reception facilities for ship-generated waste and cargo residues.

Member states shall implement VTMS in accordance with Directive 2002/5/EC.

Framework for development of priority infrastructure

Member states and other project participants when supporting projects of common interest shall pay specific attention to:

- support for maritime routes, including coastal transport;
- interconnection of marine ports with inland waterways;
- implementation of VTMS and eMaritime services.

1.6 Air transport infrastructure

Maps

Airports, which form part of the Comprehensive Network are specified on the maps in the annex to the proposed regulation.

Parts of infrastructure

Air transport infrastructure consists mainly of:

- airspace, flight routes and airways;
- airports;
- related equipment;
- ITS.

The airports shall fulfill one of the following criteria:

- a) for passenger airports
 - the total number of passengers is at least 0.1% of the total yearly number of passengers at all EU

airports, the total yearly number of passengers is based on the last available three-year average, published by Eurostat;

- the volume ceiling of 0.1% is not applied if the airport is located beyond the radius of 100 km from the nearest airport in the Comprehensive Network or beyond the radius of 200 km, if the region in which the airport is located is equipped with a high-speed rail route.
- b) For a freight airport the total yearly volume of freight is at least 0.2% of the total yearly volume of freight at all EU airports. The total yearly volume of freight is based on the last available three-year average, published by Eurostat.

Requirements for transport infrastructure

Within the extent of their responsibility, member states and airport operators shall ensure that any airport offers at least one terminal opened for all operators in a non-discriminatory manner and applies transparent fees.

Within the extent of their responsibility, member states, airport operators and air carriers shall ensure that the basic standards for ensuring civil aviation against acts of unlawful interference are adopted in the EU in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 300/2008 of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU from 11 March 2008, on common rules in the field of civil aviation safety, which shall also apply to the air transport infrastructure in the Comprehensive Network.

Within the extent of their responsibility, member states, airport operators and air carriers shall ensure that the infrastructure for management of air transport enables the implementation of a single European sky in accordance with:

- Regulation (EC) No. 549/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU of 10 March 2004, laying down the framework for the creation of the single European sky (the framework regulation),
- Regulation (EC) No. 550/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU of 10 March 2004, on the provision of air navigation services in the single European sky (the service provision regulation),
- Regulation (EC) No. 551/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU of 10 March 2004, on the organization and use of the airspace in the single European sky (the airspace regulation)
- Regulation (EC) No. 552/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU of 10 March

2004, on the interoperability of the European Air Traffic Management network (the interoperability Regulation)

for improvement of the performance and sustainability of the European air traffic system and implementation of rules and EU specifics.

Framework for development of priority infrastructure

Member states and other project resolvers when supporting projects of common interest shall give priority to monitoring:

- optimization of existing infrastructure;
- increasing the capacity of airports;
- supporting the implementation of the single European sky and air traffic management systems, particularly those used by SESAR.

1.7 Infrastructure for multi-modal transport

Maps

Freight terminals and logistical platforms that form part of the Comprehensive Network are indicated on maps in an annex to the regulation.

Parts of infrastructure

Freight terminals and logistical platforms will show conformity with at least one of the following criteria:

- their total movement of freight will exceed the quantitative threshold for marine ports (see above);
- where there is no freight terminal or logistical platform in accordance with the previous point in the territory of the NUTS 2 region, the main freight terminal or logistical platforms proposed by the particular member state shall be involved, combined with at least roadways and rail routes for this NUTS 2 region.

Transport infrastructure requirements. Within the extent of their responsibility, member states, operators of freight terminals, ports and airports and infrastructure managers shall ensure that:

- individual transport modes are connected in any of the following areas: freight terminals, passenger stations, inland ports, airports, and seaports in order to enable multi-modal transport of freight and passengers;
- (without affecting the applicable provisions of EU and national legislation) freight terminals and logistical platforms, inland and seaports and airport handling of freight have been equipped for ensuring information flows within this infrastructure and between types of transport within the logistics chain. These systems will particularly be capable of providing information in real time about available infrastructure capacity, traffic flows



Main topic

and localization, routing and ensuring of safety through multi-modal routes;

- (without affecting the applicable provisions of EU and national legislation) continuing passenger transport after throughout the Comprehensive Network will be simplified through suitable equipment and availability of ITS in railway stations, bus stations, airports and where relevant also in marine and inland water ports.

Freight terminal operators will ensure that freight terminals are equipped with cranes, transporters and other equipment for moving freight between various modes of transport and for positioning and storing freight.

Framework for development of priority infrastructure

Member states and other project implementers when supporting projects of common interest shall pay special attention to:

- ensuring effective connection and integration of the infrastructure of the Comprehensive Network, including access infrastructure wherever it is necessary and via freight terminals and logistical platforms;
- elimination of the main technical and administrative barriers for multi-modal transport;
- development of smooth flows of information between transport modes and enabling ensuring of multi-modal and “single-type” services across the Trans-European Transport System, including related communication, payment, ticket and commercialization services.

1.8 Joint provisions

Urban nodes

During the development of the Comprehensive Network, member states and other project resolvers should focus on ensuring:

- passenger transport: connections between rail and air routes and whenever appropriate also inland waterways and roadway and marine infrastructure of the Comprehensive Network;
- freight transport: connections between rail routes and where appropriate also air, marine and roadway transport infrastructure in the Comprehensive Network;
- adequate connections between various railway stations or airports within the Comprehensive Network in the urban node;
- problem-free connections between the infrastructure of the Comprehensive Network and the infrastructure for

regional and local transport, including logistics consolidation and distribution centers;

- bypasses of urban areas for road traffic for improving long-distance traffic flows leading to the Comprehensive Network;
- bypasses of urban areas for rail transport of freight;
- support for effective low-carbon deliveries of freight in urban areas with low noise.

The joint provisions also address the topics of ITS, freight transport services, new technologies and innovations, infrastructure safety, infrastructure resistant to climate changes and disasters, environmental protection and availability for all users.

2. CORE NETWORK

2.1 Identification of the Core Network

The Core Network will consist of three parts of the Comprehensive Network, which have the most strategic importance for achieving the goals of the Trans-European Transport Network policy. The Core Network will contribute in particular to coping with increasing mobility and the development of a low-carbon transport system.

The Core Network will be connected in nodes and will ensure connections with the transport infrastructure networks of neighbouring countries.

The transport infrastructure comprising the Core Network is illustrated in maps related the Comprehensive Network in an annex to the proposed regulation.

2.2 Requirements

The Core Network will reflect the developing demand for transport and the need for a multi-modal transport system. The condition of technology and regulatory and management measures for managing the use of infrastructure will importantly be taken into account for ensuring efficient use of the transport infrastructure and ensuring sufficient capacity. The Core Network infrastructure will satisfy the requirements defined above for the Comprehensive Network, to which others will also be assigned:

- for rail transport infrastructure: full electrification of rail routes; routes with regular freight traffic (at least 22.5 t, tracks for speeds of up to 100 km/h and train lengths of 750 m);
- for infrastructure of inland navigation and marine transport: availability of alternative clean fuels;

- for road traffic infrastructure: development of rest areas approximately every 50 km on motorways and ensuring sufficient parking spaces for commercial users of roadways with a corresponding level of safety; availability of alternative clean fuels;
- for air transport infrastructure: capacity for available alternative clean fuels.

2.3 Core Network Development

The transport infrastructure included in the Core Network will be developed in accordance with the provisions regarding the Comprehensive Network (see above). The implementation of projects of common interest contributing to the completion of the Core Network will be given priority.

Member states shall ensure the completion of the Core Network no later than by the end of 2030.

2.4 Core Network nodes

The Core Network nodes are specified in an annex to the proposed regulation and include:

- urban nodes, including their ports and airports;
- seaports;
- border crossings with neighbouring countries.

Seaports will be connected with the rail and road infrastructure of the Trans-European Transport Network by the end of 2030 at the latest.

The main airports will be connected with the rail and road infrastructure of the Trans-European Transport Network by 2050 at the latest. Potential demand for transport will be taken into consideration; these airports will be integrated into the high-speed rail network whenever possible and rational.

2.5 Implementation of the Core Network through Core Network corridors

General significance of Core Network corridors

The Core Network corridors are a tool for facilitating the coordinated implementation of the Core Network. The Core Network corridors will be based on modal integration, interoperability and coordinated development and management of infrastructure leading to resource efficient multi-modal transport.

The Core Network corridors will ensure a coordinated approach from the point of view of use of infrastructure and investments, and so the management of capacity should be done in the most effective way. Multi-modal

infrastructure within the Core Network corridors will be built and coordinated where it is necessary in a manner that optimizes the use of each transport mode and cooperation. The Core Network corridors will support targeted use of interoperable transport and traffic management systems.

Definition of Core Network corridors

The Core Network corridors are part of the Core Network. They will include at least three transport modes and pass through at least three member states. They will cover the most important cross-border flows over long distances within the Core Network. Under reasonable circumstances, the Core Network corridor may include only two transport modes.

The Core Network corridors will include marine ports and access routes to them.

List of Core Network corridors

Each member state will participate in at least one Core Network corridor.

The list is contained in an annex to the regulation about the CEF (Connecting Europe Facility; see the previous situation report).

Core Network corridor coordination In order to facilitate the coordinated implementation of Core Network corridors, the European Commission shall specify, after consultations with affected member states and consultations with the European Parliament, persons given the title “European Coordinator”.

The European Coordinator will be selected mainly based on his/her experience with European institutions and knowledge of subjects related to financing and socioeconomic and environmental evaluation of main projects.

The decision by the European Commission that will select the European Coordinator will also specify how his/her objectives will be fulfilled.

The European Coordinator will act on the European Commission's behalf. In cooperation with the affected member states, he/she will create a workplace for the activities that will be fulfilled.

The European Coordinator:

- will perform coordinated implementation of the Core Network corridor in a manner that ensures fulfillment of the time plan set in the decision regarding implementation for the individual Core Network corridor;
- will inform the member states, the European Commission and when appropriate also all other



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entities directly involved in the development of the Core Network corridor about any problems and complications that arise and will contribute to finding appropriate solutions;

- will compile a report each year for the European Parliament, the European Commission and affected member states about the achieved progress during the implementation of the Core Network corridor;
- will consult in cooperation with affected member states and particularly with regional and local authorities, infrastructure managers, transport operators, transport users and when appropriate also other public and private entities in order to obtain greater knowledge about the demand for transport services, options for financing investments and the steps that need to be taken for optimization of the conditions for financing.

Core Network corridor management

For each Core Network corridor, the participating member states will establish a corridor platform responsible for defining the general objectives of the Core Network corridor and for the preparation and supervision of measures related to the corridor development plan (see below).

The corridor platform will be comprised of representatives of the participating member states, and when appropriate also representatives of other public and private entities.

The European Coordinator will sit at the helm of the corridor platform.

The corridor platform may be established as a permanent legal entity, such as a European economic interest group.

The establishment of the corridor platform shall not change the fact that the recipient of EU financial aid will have the final responsibility for implementing the projects.

Corridor development plan

For each Core Network corridor, the participating member states in cooperation with the corridor platform will jointly process (and notify the European Commission of) a corridor development plan within six months after this regulation becomes valid. The plan shall particularly include:

- a description of the characteristics of the Core Network corridor, including narrow locations;
- the aims of the Core Network corridor, particularly from the point of view of performance expressed based on the quality of services and capacity and in accordance with the definition requirements imposed for the Core Network;

- a program of measures necessary for the development of the Core Network corridor;
- a market study about the multi-modal transport;
- an implementation plan, including an accompanying plan, related to the interoperability of the management systems for multi-modal freight corridors; a plan for eliminating physical, technical, operational and administrative barriers between and within transport modes and for boosting the effectiveness of multi-modal transport and services; measures to improve the administrative and technical capacity for concept formulation, planning, design, securing, implementation and monitoring projects of common interest; evaluation of risks, including the potential impacts of climate changes on infrastructure, and when appropriate proposed measures for boosting resistance against climate effects; measures shall be adopted to curb greenhouse gas emissions;
- an investment plan, which will be regularly updated, including a list of projects for the expansion, restoration or proposal of transport infrastructure for each mode of transport, included in the Core Network corridor; a related financial plan with various sources considered for financing at the international, national, regional, local and EU level, including, when possible, predetermined systems of cross financing and private capital, together with amounts of obligations already earmarked and a reference to the EU's contribution expected as part of EU financing programs.





The statistical window in a tabular form shows important macroeconomic indicators from all member states and the EU as a whole. It includes economic performance indicators (per capita GDP as compared to the EU average, GDP growth, unemployment rate), external economic stability indicators (current account to GDP), fiscal stability indicators (public budget to GDP, public debt to GDP), and pricing indicators (annual inflation based on HICP, base price level).

Key macroeconomic indicators

in %	GDP growth y-on-y			Current account to GDP*			Unemployment rate			Inflation y-on-y average		
	2009	2010	2011	2008	2009	2010	XII-11	I-12	II-12	XII-11	I-12	II-12
Belgium	-2,8	2,3	1,9	-1.8	0.4	1.4	7.1	7.2	7.2	3.2	3.3	3.3
Bulgaria	-5,5	0,4	1,7	-23.0	-8.9	-1.0	11.8	12.2	12.4	2.0	1.9	2.0
CR	-4,7	2,7	1,7	-0.7	-3.2	-3.8	6.7	6.7	6.8	2.8	3.8	4.0
Denmark	-5,8	1,3	1,0	2.7	3.6	5.5	7.8	7.9	7.9	2.4	2.8	2.7
Germany	-5,1	3,7	3,0	6.2	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	2.3	2.3	2.5
Estonia	-14,3	2,3	7,6	-9.7	4.5	3.6	11.7	n/a	n/a	4.1	4.7	4.4
Ireland	-7,0	-0,4	0,7	-5.6	-3.0	-0.7	14.7	14.7	14.7	1.4	1.3	n/a
Greece	-3,3	-3,5	-6,9	-14.7	-11.0	-10.5	21.0	n/a	n/a	2.2	2.1	1.7
Spain	-3,7	-0,1	0,7	-9.6	-5.2	-4.5	23.0	23.3	23.6	2.4	2.0	1.9
France	-2,7	1,5	1,7	-1.9	-1.9	-2.1	9.9	10.0	10.0	2.7	2.6	2.5
Italy	-5,5	1,8	0,4	-2.9	-2.1	-3.3	8.9	9.1	9.3	3.7	3.4	3.4
Cyprus	-1,9	1,1	0,5	n/a	n/a	-7.7	9.4	9.5	9.7	4.2	3.1	3.1
Latvia	-17,7	-0,3	5,5	-13.1	8.6	3.6	14.6	n/a	n/a	3.9	3.4	3.3
Lithuania	-14,8	1,4	5,9	-13.1	4.3	1.8	14.3	n/a	n/a	3.5	3.4	3.7
Luxembourg	-5,3	2,7	1,1	5.3	6.9	7.8	5.1	5.1	5.2	3.4	3.2	3.3
Hungary	-6,8	1,3	1,7	-7.3	0.4	2.1	11.0	11.3	11.0	4.1	5.6	5.8
Malta	-2,7	2,3	2,1	-7.3	-6.9	-4.1	6.8	6.8	6.8	1.3	1.5	2.4
Netherlands	-3,5	1,7	1,2	4.4	4.9	7.7	4.9	5.0	4.9	2.5	2.9	2.9
Austria	-3,8	2,3	3,1	4.9	3.1	2.7	4.2	4.1	4.2	3.4	2.9	2.6
Poland	1,6	3,9	4,3	-4.8	-2.2	-3.4	10.1	10.1	10.2	4.5	4.1	4.4
Portugal	-2,9	1,4	-1,6	-12.6	-10.9	-9.9	14.6	14.8	15.0	3.5	3.4	3.6
Romania	-6,6	-1,6	2,5	-11.6	-4.2	-4.1	7.5	7.2	7.1	3.2	2.8	2.7
Slovenia	-8,0	1,4	-0,2	-6.7	-1.5	-1.1	8.7	8.7	8.7	2.1	2.3	2.8
Slovakia	-4,9	4,2	3,3	-6.2	-3.2	-3.4	14.1	14.0	14.0	4.6	4.1	4.0
Finland	-8,4	3,7	2,9	2.9	2.3	3.1	7.5	7.5	7.4	2.6	3.0	3.0
Sweden	-5,0	6,1	3,9	8.8	7.0	6.3	7.5	7.6	7.5	0.4	0.7	1.0
UK	-4,4	2,1	0,7	-1.5	-1.7	-2.5	8.3	n/a	n/a	4.2	3.6	n/a
EU	-4,3	2,0	1,5	-2.0	-0.9	-0.8	10.0	10.1	10.2	3.0	2.9	3.0

in %	Public budget to GDP*			Public debt to GDP			GDP per capita to Ø EU			Price level to Ø EU		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Belgium	-1.3	-5.9	-4.1	89.6	96.2	96.8	115.0	117.0	119.0	110.4	113.4	111.6
Bulgaria	1.7	-4.7	-3.2	13.7	14.6	16.2	44.0	44.0	44.0	49.2	49.7	50.5
CR	-2.7	-5.9	-4.7	30.0	35.3	38.5	84.0	85.0	82.0	72.2	70.0	72.0
Denmark	3.2	-2.7	-2.7	34.5	41.8	43.6	124.0	122.0	126.0	139.7	144.9	142.5
Germany	0.1	-3.0	-3.3	66.3	73.5	83.2	116.0	115.0	118.0	103.5	105.8	104.2
Estonia	-2.8	-1.7	0.1	4.6	7.2	6.6	69.0	64.0	64.0	77.7	76.6	75.1
Ireland	-7.3	-14.3	-32.4	44.4	65.6	96.2	133.0	128.0	127.0	129.1	126.0	118.2
Greece	-9.8	-15.4	-10.5	110.7	127.1	142.8	92.0	93.0	88.0	91.0	96.5	95.5
Spain	-4.2	-11.1	-9.2	39.8	53.3	60.1	103.0	103.0	100.0	95.2	97.8	96.7
France	-3.3	-7.5	-7.0	67.7	78.3	81.7	106.0	107.0	107.0	111.9	114.2	111.8
Italy	-2.7	-5.4	-4.6	106.3	116.1	119.0	104.0	104.0	100.0	102.9	105.5	103.6
Cyprus	0.9	-6.0	-5.3	48.3	58.0	60.8	97.0	98.0	97.0	88.8	90.1	89.3
Latvia	-4.2	-9.7	-7.7	19.7	36.7	44.7	56.0	52.0	52.0	74.7	73.5	69.3
Lithuania	-3.3	-9.5	-7.1	15.6	29.5	38.2	61.0	55.0	58.0	65.9	66.2	63.5
Luxembourg	3.0	-0.9	-1.7	13.6	14.6	18.4	279.0	267.0	274.0	117.5	121.1	119.9
Hungary	-3.7	-4.5	-4.2	72.3	78.4	80.1	64.0	64.0	63.0	69.3	64.3	65.5
Malta	-4.5	-3.7	-3.6	61.5	67.6	68.0	78.0	81.0	83.0	77.3	79.8	78.9
Netherlands	0.6	-5.5	-5.4	58.2	60.8	62.7	133.0	131.0	133.0	104.8	109.0	106.1
Austria	-0.9	-4.1	-4.6	63.8	69.6	72.3	124.0	125.0	126.0	105.4	107.6	107.1
Poland	-3.7	-7.3	-7.9	47.1	50.9	55.0	56.0	61.0	62.0	69.1	57.9	62.6
Portugal	-3.5	-10.1	-9.1	71.6	83.0	93.0	78.0	80.0	81.0	88.0	88.7	87.6
Romania	-5.7	-8.5	-6.4	13.4	23.6	30.8	47.0	47.0	45.0	62.8	57.8	58.6
Slovenia	-1.8	-6.0	-5.6	21.9	35.2	38.0	91.0	88.0	86.0	82.3	84.4	84.0
Slovakia	-2.1	-8.0	-7.9	27.8	35.4	41.0	72.0	73.0	74.0	69.6	72.4	71.2
Finland	4.2	-2.6	-2.5	34.1	43.8	48.4	119.0	114.0	116.0	121.3	125.4	122.9
Sweden	2.2	-0.7	0.0	38.8	42.8	39.8	123.0	119.0	123.0	113.2	107.7	119.8
UK	-5.0	-11.4	-10.4	54.4	69.6	80.0	114.0	113.0	114.0	102.1	95.2	100.3
EU	-2.4	-6.8	-6.4	62.3	74.4	80.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Eurostat, ¹⁾ net balance, GDP per capita according to PPP

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