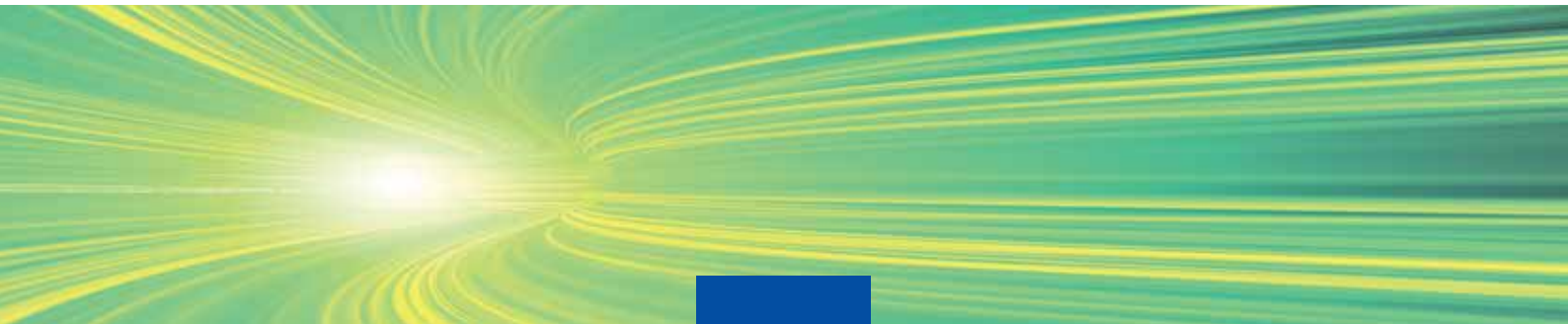
European Commission

THE EUROPEAN UNION EXPLAINED

Transport

Connecting Europe's citizens and businesses

Competitive transport systems are vital for Europe's ability to compete in the world, for economic growth, job creation and for people's everyday quality of life.



THE EUROPEAN UNION EXPLAINED

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This publication is a part of a series that explains what the EU does in different policy areas, why the EU is involved and what the results are.

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The EU explained: Transport

European Commission
Directorate-General for Communication
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Why does the EU have a transport policy?

Europe needs strong transport connections to drive trade and economic growth, and to create employment and prosperity. Transport networks are at the heart of the supply chain and are the foundation of any country's economy. They allow goods to be distributed efficiently and people to travel. They make places accessible, bring and bind us together and allow us a high quality of life.

Transport is a cornerstone of the European integration process and is firmly linked to the creation and completion of the internal market, which promotes jobs and economic growth. As one of the first common policy areas of today's European Union, it was seen as vital for fulfilling three of the four freedoms of a common market as established in the Treaty of Rome in 1957: the free movement of individuals, services and goods.

Without smooth transport connections and networks, there would be no such movement. This is why EU transport policy has always focused on overcoming obstacles between Member States and creating a single European transport area with fair competition conditions for and between the different forms of transport: road, rail, air and waterborne.

Over the past 60 years, EU transport has progressed substantially and continues to make a significant contribution to European prosperity and employment. The industry now employs around 10 million people, accounting for 4.5 % of total employment in the EU and creating about the same percentage of gross domestic product (GDP). Smooth transport connections are also vital to the EU's economy in terms of its exports — shipping carries 90 % of the EU's foreign trade.

Many European companies are world leaders in infrastructure, logistics and the manufacturing of transport equipment. And EU households today spend 13.5 % of their income on transport-related goods and services, such as season rail tickets and holiday or business flights, making transport the second-largest item in their household budgets after house-related expenditure.

Over the past decades, developments in European transport policy have helped to strengthen the wider EU internal market by opening up national markets previously dominated by public monopolies, such as in aviation and rail.

In addition, barriers to access, unnecessary differences in technical and administrative standards and distortions of competition across EU countries — pricing, taxes and other charges — are gradually being removed as part of the process of creating a genuine single European transport area across all forms of travel.

This has largely been achieved in areas such as aviation, where a policy of market liberalisation initiated in the 1990s sparked a period of unprecedented growth.

But market liberalisation alone is not enough to achieve the European Union's objectives of improving travel possibilities across Europe and ensuring high-quality transport services, both for citizens and for business.

Expanding, modernising and streamlining EU-wide infrastructure is also essential to create seamless cross-border networks across the different forms of travel. This is why the trans-European network policy was enshrined in the EU's Maastricht Treaty of 1992. In addition, the Treaty incorporated environmental protection requirements into transport policy as a tool to help complete the internal market.

EU transport policy is also about helping and protecting people when they travel. Here, one of its achievements has been to secure and uphold passenger rights. Now, when passengers experience delays, they no longer have to find out for themselves what has gone wrong. They have a right to information and they know they can demand it from their transport company. And passengers with disabilities and reduced mobility qualify for special attention.

The EU is the first, and only, region in the world whose passengers enjoy comprehensive and integrated basic rights across all means of transport.

These rights are based on the principles of non-discrimination; accurate, timely and accessible information; and immediate and proportionate assistance.

See and download the European Commission's passenger rights app:

http://europa.eu/!VJ79Wh

EU policy has also helped transport to become less polluting, as well as more efficient, safe and secure. The EU has advanced in these areas, both technical and regulatory, in all the main means of transport: road, rail, aviation and maritime.

Some transport history

Transport was one of the first common policy areas of the European Economic Community and has its roots in the Treaty of Rome.

But the treaty did not define the substance of a common transport policy, meaning that Member States had to agree how to formulate one. Progress in doing this was very slow until the 1980s, largely because governments were reluctant to give up control over their national transport networks and also because of major differences between the regulatory and transport structures in each country.

Frustrated after at least 25 years of patchy legislation, the European Parliament took the unprecedented step of taking the Council of the European Union to the European Court of Justice for its failure to develop a common transport policy. The Court's judgment of May 1985 had the effect of injecting some political impetus and finally, advances started to be made towards a common policy.

The 1985 Court judgment was quickly followed by a White Paper issued by the European Commission on promoting the internal market. It contained specific references to transport and certain goals to be achieved by 1992.

Evolving European transport policy has led to better, faster travel.

1986: The Single European Act replaced unanimity with qualified majority EU voting for air and sea transport policy, relieving some of the political deadlock of the previous decades.

1992: The Maastricht Treaty established the trans-European networks and incorporated environmental protection requirements into transport policy, a development that was reinforced in the Commission's White Paper of that year on the common transport policy.

This stressed the principle of sustainable mobility as well as the aim of opening up transport markets to competition.

By 1992, the foundations of a common transport policy had been laid.

1997: The Treaty of Amsterdam built more environmental protection measures into transport. It gave the European Parliament co-decision powers with the Council on nearly all aspects of transport policy.

In the following years, the Commission analysed national and regional differences in transport costs, charges and pricing in an attempt to create a better climate for competition.

Transport policy landmarks

2001: Another White Paper showed a more decisive shift towards an environmentally responsible transport policy as a way to adapt to uneven growth in the various forms of transport, congestion on Europe's roads and railways and the rising impact of pollution.

It predicted a massive rise in traffic, especially in road and air transport, as well as health and environmental problems caused by the increased pollution.

2006: A progress review decided that more was needed to combat transport's negative impact on energy use and environmental quality. It proposed measures such as a freight logistics plan, intelligent or 'smart' systems to make transport greener and more efficient and a plan to boost inland waterways.

2011: A follow-up White Paper ('Roadmap to a single European transport area') focused on the work remaining to be done to complete the internal market in transport. Among other areas, it focused on:

- building integrated transport networks which draw together different means of transport, or modes;
- creating multimodal hubs (or 'nodes') and removing longstanding bottlenecks that can be technical, administrative or capacity related;
- improving infrastructure in the countries which joined the EU from 2004 onwards;
- emphasising research, innovation, investing in transport for the future without dependence on oil and preparing the industry to meet difficult decarbonisation targets without reducing mobility.

How does EU transport policy work?

As part of the project to complete the European internal market, it is essential that transport connections are properly joined up across the 28 Member States that make up the European Union.

This involves building missing links and removing the many technical and administrative barriers that hinder smooth traffic and trade flows and generate unnecessary bottlenecks in Europe's transport system. It also often requires the streamlining of national differences in transport policy which can cause distortions of competition, as well as the removal of barriers to market access.

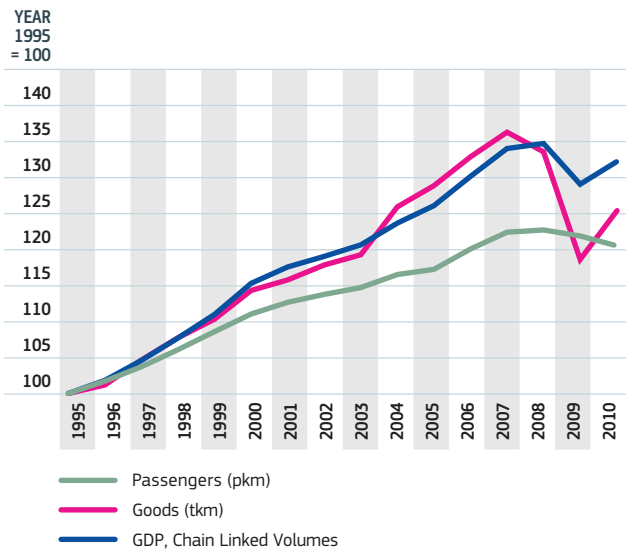
The ultimate aim is to create a single European transport area, to help Europe stay competitive by optimising the performance of the entire transport sector for the benefit of all.

For this to succeed, there must be access to top-quality transport infrastructure and services, backed by research, innovation and solid long-term funding.

Legislation

The legislative push towards the single European market that began in the 1980s heralded a turning point in transport policy. Since then, the trend has focused on facilitating cross-border movements of goods and services.

TRANSPORT GROWTH IN THE EU



This has meant not only dismantling cross-border barriers but also integrating national markets. Transport legislation also aims to open access to markets and infrastructure, achieve technical compatibility — rail rolling stock, for example — and remove other technical and administrative barriers to competition. In turn this has led to rising GDP figures across the EU, linked to increases in passenger and freight transport.

Market access is balanced with EU-wide rules in areas such as driving and rest times for road freight, guaranteed rights for passengers across all forms of transport and social equality in conditions that ensure a fair and open environment for competition.

Landmark pieces of EU transport legislation include the three railway packages, which began a gradual liberalisation of national rail markets, laws on road and maritime 'cabotage' (the transport of goods or passengers between two points in the same country by transporters registered in another country), and the two single European sky packages, which aim to create one European airspace under a set of common aviation rules.

Infrastructure

At the moment, transport infrastructure is unequally developed across Europe. In many of the countries that most recently became full EU members, there are no purpose-built high-speed rail links; their motorway networks are on average far less developed than in older Member States. Apart from the need to build missing links, a great deal of Europe's transport infrastructure also needs expanding and upgrading.

This is where the trans-European transport network, or TEN-T, comes in: a longstanding and ambitious project to modernise and 'knit together' today's patchwork of national parts into a smooth-running network that connects all corners of Europe while making the best use of all the different means of travel.

With the TEN-T, the EU plans to establish a core network by 2030, filling in missing cross-border links and making the network 'smarter', with deadlines to make sure that all projects contributing to the core network are implemented as a priority.

The core network will be supported by a comprehensive network of routes that feed into it, regionally and nationally. Standards are set to ensure that trains, ships, planes, trucks and cars can use the infrastructure safely and without any technical problems.

Transport financing under the Connecting Europe Facility for the period 2014–20 (see later section on the CEF) will also focus on this core transport network.

The aim is to ensure that, progressively, and by 2050, the large majority of Europe's citizens and businesses will be no more than 30 minutes' travel time from this extensive network. Apart from smoother and quicker journeys, it will provide safer and less-congested travel.

One of the most remarkable TEN-T success stories is the Øresund bridge between Malmö and Copenhagen, Europe's longest combined road and rail bridge, which connects Nordic countries to central Europe.

This link has contributed to an increase in economic traffic between the two sides and led to significant benefits for local regional development. Since it opened more than a decade ago, rail traffic has risen by more than 200 %.

Research and innovation

The EU considers research into resource-efficient transport that respects the environment across all forms of travel as an important part of transport policy. 'Smart, green and integrated transport' is identified as a major challenge as part of project funding within the EU's 'Horizon 2020' 2014–20 research programme, to ensure that Europe stays at the cutting edge of technological advances in transport.

The Øresund bridge is the longest combined road and rail bridge in Europe.

Technological advance is the basis for the future of European transport, not least to keep Europe's transport industry at the forefront of global competition. It is also the key to reducing the carbon emissions that transport produces, because innovation and progress help to improve efficiency — in aircraft and automotive engines, for example, or by replacing oil-based energy sources.

This will be especially important in the years ahead since a significant shift in type of transport use will be needed to reduce oil dependency, greenhouse gas emissions and local pollution. This can be achieved by making better use of cleaner — and often cheaper — alternatives like rail and waterborne travel.

Researching, developing and deploying intelligent, or 'smart', ways to improve use of the existing infrastructure and of ICT to ensure seamless connections between different means of travel will also help to make transport cleaner, safer and more efficient.

Road transport is one example where innovative technology can help drivers to reduce fuel consumption, direct them to available parking places and avoid traffic jams and collisions.

In aviation, the single European sky air traffic management research programme (SESAR) represents the technology dimension of the drive towards a single European sky. SESAR should triple airspace capacity and raise safety by a factor of 10. This would reduce carbon emissions by 10 % for each flight and cut air traffic management costs by 50 %. SESAR aims to combine efficient fuel consumption with optimised aircraft access to airports and flight trajectory management, so as to make aviation more sustainable and better performing.

See video: 'Shaping our future — research and innovation'.

http://europa.eu/!Nu48RW

What EU transport policy does

How do we prefer to travel?

In 2010, Europeans travelled, on average, around 12 900 kilometres per person within the territory of the EU's then 27 Member States.

For private individuals, cars remain by far the most common form of transport — partly due to their use for short local journeys and in rural areas where there are no other options — and accounted for nearly 74 % of this passenger travel distance. This was followed by aviation with 8 %, buses and coaches with roughly the same share, railways with 6 % and then powered two-wheel vehicles, trams and metros. Sea travel was last, with less than 1 %.

For freight, road haulage trucks still dominate over short and medium distances. A similar breakdown shows that road haulage accounted for nearly half of the freight tonnage transported in 2010, followed by seagoing ships and rail, and then inland waterways and oil pipelines. Air cargo came last with less than 1 % — but despite the low volume, the cost–value ratio of this type of transport freight is often far higher.

Cars remain the most popular form of transport for European citizens.

How much pollution is caused by transport?

The European Union relies heavily on fossil fuels to power its transport sector. Oil-based fuels account for around 96 % of the sector's total energy supply, with road transport taking by far the largest share of the energy used by all forms of transport.

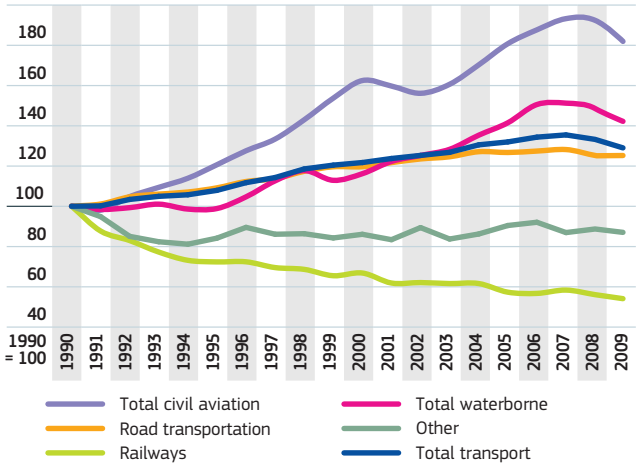
Meeting the EU's climate change targets will require deep cuts in emissions from transport, whose own carbon dioxide emissions account for at least 20 % of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions. To meet the target of reducing global greenhouse emissions by the 80 % thought necessary to keep climate change within safe limits (a temperature increase of no more than 2 ° Celsius), the transport sector needs to reduce its emissions by 60 % by 2050.

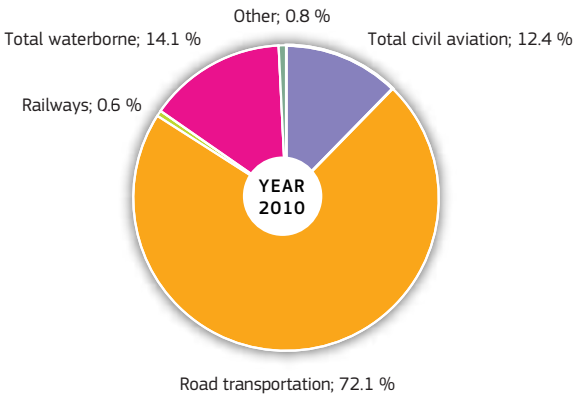
Cutting emissions caused by transport is a key part of EU policy, which is backed by numerous projects and initiatives to cut urban congestion, encourage more use of cleaner forms of travel such as rail and inland waterways and develop alternative non-oil fuels in the shipping and automotive sectors.

Road, as the largest single form of transport, is responsible for the largest share of pollution: some 71 % of overall transport CO_2 emissions, according to the latest data (and passenger cars cause around two thirds of that). But other sectors pollute significantly less. Maritime and aviation account for 14 % and 13 % respectively, then inland navigation with 2 %. Rail is the least polluting means of transport, with less than 1 %.

Given that a quarter of EU transport emissions originate in urban areas, towns and cities play a key role in mitigating the effects of climate change. Many are also struggling to battle congestion and improve poor air quality.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IN THE EU PER TRANSPORT SECTOR





Source: European Commission.

EU-supported projects already show that it is possible to make the transition to sustainable urban mobility; particularly the Civitas programme, which promotes city initiatives for low-emission vehicles, improved safety and reduced congestion.

Cities are a microcosm of what can be achieved on a wider scale, particularly with large-scale deployment of alternative fuels and energy sources to help reduce dependence on oil.

While the wide-scale use of these fuels and energy sources can be promoted in cities through the large fleets of buses, taxis and delivery vans used in urban areas, many rural areas suffer from a lack of necessary infrastructure.

This is addressed in the EU's strategy to promote clean fuels in transport, which aims to promote market take-up that has so far been held back by scant infrastructure for recharging and refuelling, along with the high cost of vehicles and low level of consumer acceptance.

The main means of transport

Rail

In rail, national considerations have historically prevailed over international ones. Even today, some 200 years after the invention of the train, many Member States still own the national rail operator and organise rail transport on a national basis.

This has led to a fragmented railway system, since countries apply different technical standards, signalling systems, power circuits and track gauges. These are all obstacles to smooth cross-border rail operations and inhibit the production of trains that can be used throughout Europe.

By the late 1980s, rail, along with other forms of transport, had to adapt to the opening of the internal European market. Freight transport by road was becoming more competitive, and by comparison railways were performing poorly.

The first major move to reform rail transport came in 1991, with a cautious opening of the rail networks to competition. Liberalisation of the rail sector, particularly for freight, pushed forward with moves to separate infrastructure and operations through a series of legal changes known as the three 'railway packages'.

After many years of stagnation and decline, since 2001 the European railway industry has managed to increase its passenger and freight volumes and to stabilise its market share among other modes of transport.

But that share has not risen as much as hoped, due in particular to a continuing decline in many southern and eastern Member States (balanced by growth in the north and west) and to lingering issues of network interoperability, as well as customer-related issues of price, punctuality and reliability.

Europe's railways are among the safest in the world. With rail safety, EU policies aim to maintain high standards and align requirements Europe-wide.

Although rail transport is much more environmentally friendly — and statistically safer — than road transport, it struggles to compete, in both the passenger and freight markets. Today, Europe's railways are not yet fulfilling their true potential.

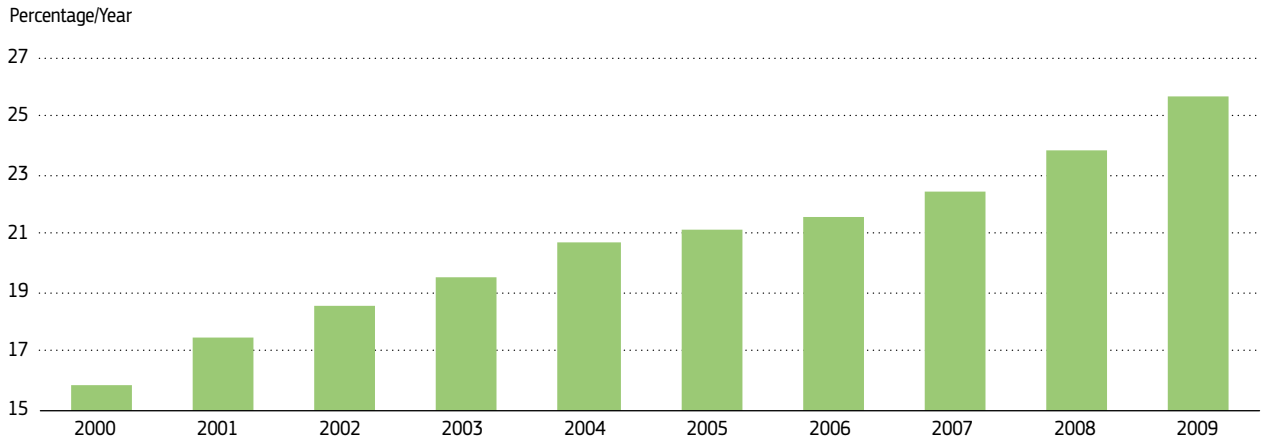
A fourth railway package aims to raise rail's profile, efficiency and market share within European transport and to open up the sector to more competition with smoother, higher-quality cross-border services.

See video: 'The future of rail'.

http://europa.eu/!gT94DH

Passenger numbers and freight volumes continue to rise on Europe's rail networks.

HIGH-SPEED RAIL TRANSPORT AS A SHARE OF ALL RAIL TRANSPORT IN THE EU



Source: European Commission.

Aviation

A strategically important sector that makes a vital contribution to the EU's overall economy and employment, aviation supports 5.1 million jobs, directly and indirectly, and contributes €365 billion, or 2.4 %, to European GDP.

In the years following the Treaty of Rome, air transport was organised based on national public regulation of competition conditions rather than on the free market. This led to a series of fragmented markets, national monopolies and very high tariffs. At that time, air transport was regulated by Member State bilateral agreements.

The aviation market was gradually liberalised through three successive packages of measures which covered air carrier licensing, market access and fares. These removed the restrictions that had limited air transport markets in Europe and prevented cross-border investment by European airlines.

In 1992 there were just 93 European routes served by more than two airlines. In 2011 there were 482 such routes. Thanks to EU transport policy, air travellers today have far more choice than 20 years ago and also pay much lower prices.

EU transport policy has provided air passengers with more travel opportunities.

The third (and most significant) package established the principle of full freedom to provide services within the single market and replaced the concept of 'national or flag carriers' with that of European airlines competing with each other.

The next step was to do something about the heavy airspace congestion causing lengthy delays on many European flights, given the projected doubling of demand for air travel by 2020 and the resulting strain on airport capacity.

In 2004, an ambitious initiative for a single European sky (SES) was launched to streamline air traffic management by collectively managing airspace. The aim is to reduce environmental pressures, and also fares, since airlines' extra costs for operating within such a fragmented market are enormous.

One of its main objectives is to replace the 28 national airspace systems with one to cover the entire EU. This would increase efficiency and cut costs.

The technology required for the future single sky is provided through the air traffic management research programme SESAR, which aims to modernise infrastructure and raise efficiency by optimising capacity — and so enable the SES to become a reality. A second package of measures, known as the single European sky II (SES II), followed in 2009 and focused in particular on the environment and cost efficiency.

The aim is to modernise Europe's air traffic control system, implement the single European sky and complete the European common aviation area.

However, Europe is still far from meeting its single European sky ambitions and more efforts are needed to make sure that the benefits of a genuinely integrated operating airspace are delivered as soon as possible.

Aviation safety and security: in the air and on the ground

Today's terrorists still view civil aviation as one of their main targets and are recklessly imaginative in their attacks. This is why EU security policy has to adapt constantly to new threats and new technology.

Starting with the 9/11 attacks in the United States, attacks on aviation have become increasingly innovative: the shoe bomber (2001), would-be bombers trying to use liquid explosives to blow up planes (2006), the attempt to blast a hole in a plane using explosives hidden in underwear (2009) and the interception of two homemade bombs transported as air cargo consignments (2010).

EU policy was quick to react to each new threat. Restrictions were placed on passengers carrying liquids, aerosols and gels, and new rules on the use of security scanners came into effect at EU airports and, most recently, on airlines carrying cargo and mail into the EU from non-EU states.

In aviation safety, effective standards have made the European Union's safety record among the best in the world.

© Ingrid Friedl/Lufthansa

EU aviation security measures have made Europe's safety record among the best in the world.

Tolls generate money which is used to improve Europe's road network.

To improve safety in Europe further, the Commission — in consultation with Member State aviation safety authorities — prohibits airlines found to be unsafe from operating in European airspace.

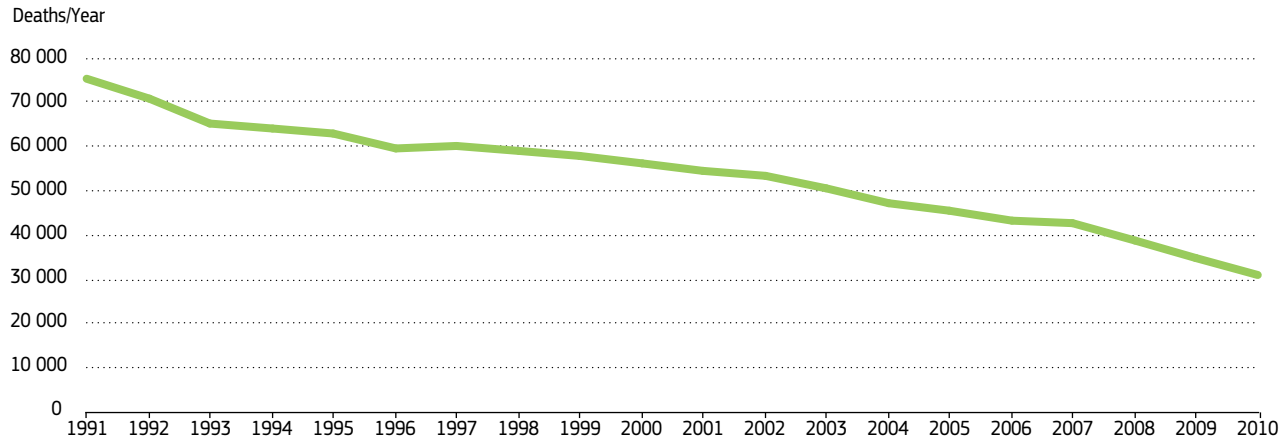
Known as the 'EU air safety list', it details all airlines which are banned from operating in Europe. A second list includes airlines which are restricted to operating in Europe under specific conditions.

Road

Roads are still the main way of moving passengers and freight in Europe. Economically, road is the main form of transport for freight, where it accounts for the bulk of inland transport in the European Union and has been growing steadily in recent decades.

It took around 10 years between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s for Europe to open up its international road freight market and remove barriers to competition, such as the licences required for a road haulier to gain access to another country's market, quotas to limit the capacity of road traffic and tariffs.

ROAD DEATHS IN THE EU



Source: European Commission.

The success of opening up this market throughout the EU is demonstrated by increases in international cross-trade and 'cabotage', where hauliers are permitted to offer their services for domestic journeys in other Member States. However, cabotage accounts for only a small share of domestic haulage markets and remains limited by legislation.

Progress in opening up the market for passenger transport services has been slower. In 1992, European coach and bus operators were allowed to run international passenger transport services between Member States. Now, commercial EU carriers may transport passengers by bus and coach across the EU road network based on a European licence issued by the country where they are based.

Another sensitive issue over the decades in the road transport sector has been road charges and tolls.

EU policy has two objectives in this area: firstly, any charges must not be excessive or discriminate against foreign drivers compared with those of the Member State concerned; secondly, charges should be consistent with the 'user pays' and 'polluter pays' principles, and help pay for the maintenance and development of transport infrastructure.

A key piece of legislation was the Eurovignette directive, passed in 1999 to charge heavy goods vehicles for using certain infrastructures such as motorways and multi-lane roads, bridges, tunnels and mountain passes. The Eurovignette is an electronic common toll collection system where a registered vehicle can pass through road tolls in Europe after paying a single fee related to its weight and size.

In certain regions, extra toll charges may be levied to tackle the problem of environmental damage, including poor air quality, or to invest in more environmentally friendly modes of transport such as railways.

From the early 1990s, many barriers to a single market began to be dismantled via a succession of rules designed to standardise technical and administrative standards. These included rules to fix the maximum dimensions and weights of certain vehicles, the format of driving licences, vehicle registration documents and minimum driver training standards.

It took many years for Member States to agree on working hours for road freight, which proved to be a particularly sensitive area partly due to national differences in labour relations and working cultures. The EU now has common rules for maximum driving times, as well as minimum rest periods for all drivers of road haulage and passenger vehicles.

With almost 75 % of inland freight being transported by road between Member States, this makes it easier for lorry drivers to plan their European trips and for authorities to check their driving times. Digital tachographs are now compulsory in new heavy goods vehicles and buses.

Safety is an integral element of EU road policy. Over the years there have been big improvements in safety levels. During the last decade, road deaths fell by 43 % and 2012 was a landmark year with the lowest ever number of road deaths reported.

However, accident rates still vary widely among the Member States, and in general, European roads are still far from safe. And while EU Member States have made clear progress in reducing road deaths, injury numbers are still unacceptably high and not falling at nearly the same rate. Estimates show that almost 1.5 million people were injured in 2010, of whom a quarter of a million sustained serious bodily harm. That compares with 28 000 deaths reported on EU roads for 2012.

For every person killed in a crash, there are an estimated four people disabled for life, and 10 serious and 40 slight injuries.

The Commission's road safety action programme aims to halve the number of EU road deaths by 2020. It calls for better safety measures for trucks and cars, better enforcement of road rules, a new focus on motorcyclists, promotion of modern technology to increase road safety and improved emergency and post-injury services — just some of its strategic objectives.

EU rules and standards have been tightened to prevent accidents at sea.

Maritime transport

Maritime transport is of huge importance for European trade since almost 90 % of the European Union's external freight and 40 % of its internal freight is moved by sea.

For many years, there was no EU-wide policy for maritime transport. It was only in 1986 that Europe was ready to adopt its first legislative package of regulations, which aimed primarily to open up its markets in maritime transport and services.

A second package came in 1989, allowing maritime transport services within one EU country to be offered by companies of another EU country (cabotage). This helped to maintain adequate connections between islands and more remote maritime regions and the European mainland.

As with the other forms of transport, a strong emphasis has always been placed on safety as well as working conditions and training of seafarers. Competent crews are essential for safety and quality of service.

Unfortunately, the 1990s saw a series of shipping accidents — Aegean Sea (1992), Braer (1993) and Estonia (1994). These were followed by Erika (1999) and Prestige (2002), both with loss of life and oil spills. These accidents created the political climate for the EU to tighten its rules and standards to prevent accidents at sea, in particular those involving ferries and oil tankers.

The Erika I and Erika II legislation, as it is called, led to a phase-out of single-hull vessels, introduced a blacklist preventing ships repeatedly found to be in poor condition from entering EU ports and created a pan-European system of traffic monitoring.

Environmental issues are now an integral part of shipping legislation. The EU contributes to setting global rules to reduce emissions and protect the sensitive marine environment. It enforces rules on ship waste and discharges, as well as fuel and emission standards. Sophisticated monitoring and control mechanisms help EU countries to detect, prevent and tackle maritime oil spills.

The Commission's approach to passenger ship safety consists of three policy strands:

- to ensure continuous improvements of existing legislation to protect passengers with a focus on setting global standards at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO);
- to enforce safety rules to make sure EU and IMO legal instruments are applied correctly;
- to encourage voluntary action from industry so that operations are improved constantly.

At the same time, EU policy aims to ensure the best use of quality and innovation to keep its shipping fleet up to date with global developments in ship design, technology and operational procedures.

On security, the main threat to international shipping is piracy.

Acts of piracy against ships are a serious threat to the lives of crews and passengers and to the safety and security of navigation. They are also of great concern given the importance of maritime transport for the EU's worldwide trade relations.

The EU enforces rules on ship and port security to make sure the high number of vessels arriving in or in transit through European waters are safe and secure.

Ports are vital to the maritime and other sectors, with great potential for growth in the years ahead. As gateways to the entire EU transport network, they are engines of economic development and sources of prosperity for countries, cities and regions.

Europe's seaports are a vital part of the EU transport infrastructure.

Europe depends heavily on its seaports, which by volume handle 74 % of the goods traded with the rest of the world. They are also the key to developing an integrated and sustainable transport system, where short sea shipping can be used as an alternative to saturated land transport corridors.

Even with only modest assumptions of economic growth, port cargo volumes are expected to rise by 60 % by 2030, almost certainly causing congestion.

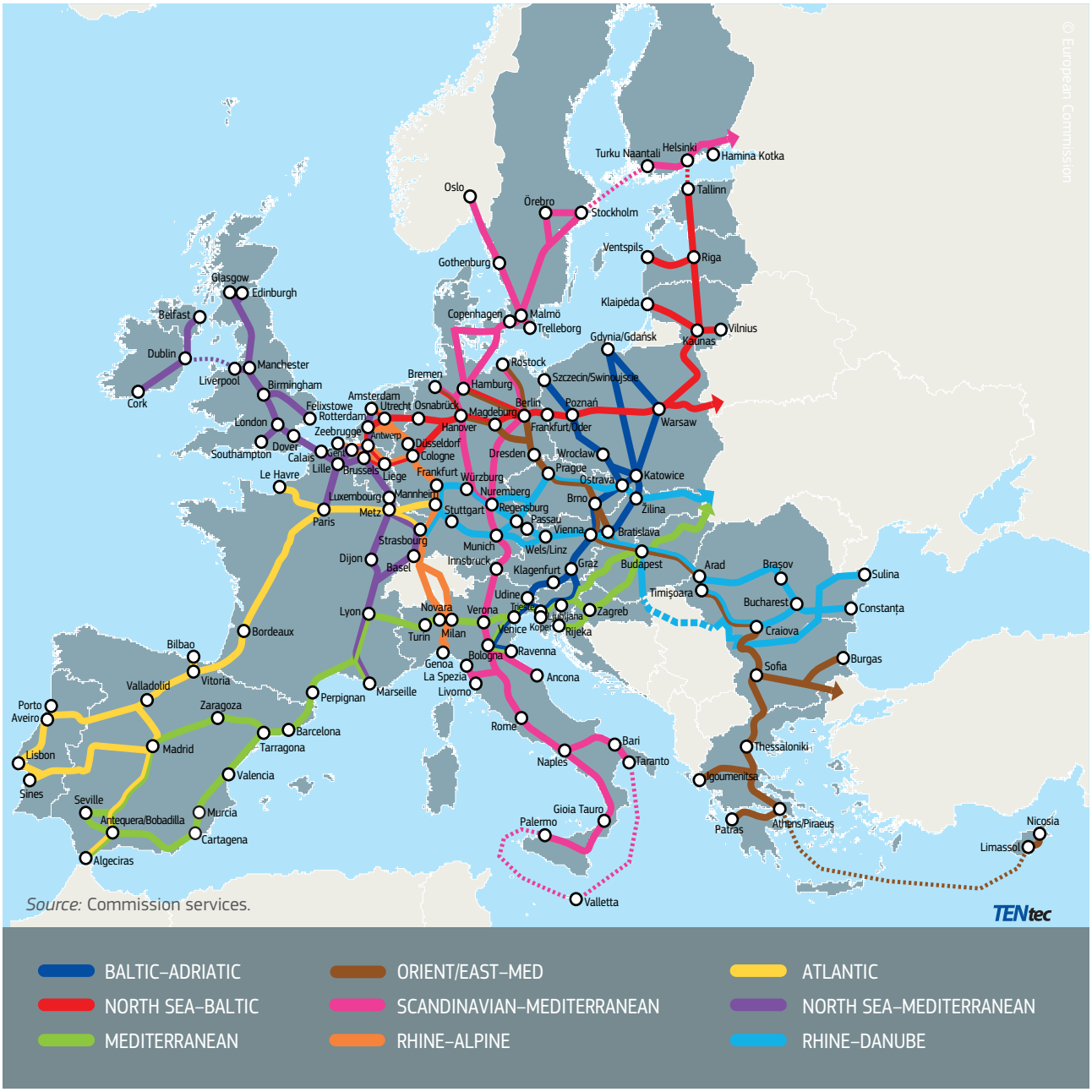
In less than 20 years, Europe's hundreds of seaports will face major challenges in productivity, investment needs, sustainability, human resources and integration with port cities and regions.

They will therefore need to adapt, and EU policy will make every effort to allow them to do this, to stay competitive and prepare for future growth.

Investment and funding: the Connecting Europe Facility

Building and maintaining infrastructure is an expensive exercise. The development of the infrastructure needed to match the projected rise in European transport demand is expected to cost €1.5 trillion up to 2030. Just up to 2020, the Commission estimates that around €500 billion will be required to complete the trans-European network, and of that amount, around half is needed to get rid of the main bottlenecks.

Transport has been allocated around €26 billion, the lion's share of funding under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), the financing instrument to be used in the EU's 2014–20 budget period to invest in transport, energy and ICT infrastructures.



The TEN-T network will transform connections, remove bottlenecks, upgrade infrastructure and streamline cross-border transport operations.

The CEF transport funding includes a significant amount solely for the poorest regions in the EU. This amount will ensure that east gets better connected to west and that important connections are built within and between these countries. This will assist in completing the trans-European transport network, particularly its planned core network.

The CEF is also designed to generate a good deal of leveraged private investment, most of which will be spent on projects seen as the most important for completing the trans-European transport network: its key corridors and cross-border sections.

Other methods used for financing European transport include public–private partnerships, or PPPs, to add more value for European travellers.

The future of EU transport policy

The European Commission's most recent policy document on transport was issued in 2011 and is entitled 'Roadmap to a single European transport area'. It sets out a vision for the future of European transport up to 2050, recommends fundamental changes in policy thinking and is accompanied by a series of concrete targets and initiatives.

Its main points are as follows.

Challenges ahead

- Demand for transport will increase (freight transport alone is expected to grow by 80 % by 2050) and the trend for urbanisation will continue.
- The EU transport sector, particularly road transport, depends almost completely on oil as a fuel source. Given volatile oil markets and likely future difficulties in sourcing oil, reliable fuel alternatives must be found.
- The EU has committed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80 % by 2050. Transport, as a major polluter responsible for a quarter of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions, has to make a major contribution towards reaching that target.
- One of the worst transport problems is congestion, especially on the roads and in the skies. Congestion costs Europe about 1 % of its GDP every year and also causes heavy amounts of carbon and other unwelcome emissions. This should be addressed.
- There is a need to raise transport efficiency, which also involves improving logistics and creating smarter 'travel behaviour' by making the best use of modern ICT and satellite-based technology. Europe must better combine all available modes of transport and networks rather than using a single form of travel, thereby optimising use and capacity.
- Focusing on research and innovation will keep Europe's transport sector competitive in the global marketplace and at the cutting edge of technological advances in transport.
- Infrastructure: the aim is to complete the Trans-European Transport Network; to better integrate road, rail, air and waterborne travel (sea and inland waterways) into a seamless logistics chain; to remove the main bottlenecks; and to construct missing links, particularly across borders. Europe's transport infrastructure needs to be modernised and maintained, and the required funding must be made available from both public and private sources.
- While much progress has been made across transport towards completing the internal market, there is still work to be done in sectors such as road and rail to open up markets and ensure fair and open competition.

Future objectives

- To place a Europe-wide focus on achieving optimal connectivity between different forms of transport: road, rail, air and waterborne travel (sea and inland waterways).
- To advance with work on the Trans-European Transport Network and build the smooth high-quality interconnections needed for the development of the internal market, thereby improving the lives of the travelling public.
- To promote investment in transport by making sure that the national and European regulatory environments are appropriate and in place.
- To develop innovative financing instruments for transport infrastructure; to make the best use of instruments already available within the Connecting Europe Facility; to find ways to complement national and regional funding from the European Structural and Investment Funds.
- To promote integration across different transport sectors which is increasingly based on a non-discriminatory approach of general infrastructure costs being funded by those who use them: the 'user pays' principle.
- To develop common European standards for transport safety and security; to strengthen Europe's role and influence in international transport.
- To advance work to complete the Single European Sky project and complete negotations on the Fourth Railway Package.
- To work with major sector companies in public-private partnerships such as SESAR and Shift 2 Rail, in order to bring innovation to the aviation and rail markets that will benefit citizens and business.

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Find out more

- **The European Commission website for mobility and transport**: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/index_en.htm
- **Questions about the European Union? Europe Direct can help**: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 — http://europedirect.europa.eu

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