Meeting place

online
1 Organisation of the Meeting / 2 Opening and welcome
After a short introduction by Mr. Sondermann and some technical advices for the handling of the online meeting, he gave the floor to the European Coordinator Pat Cox, who welcomed the participants of this working group meeting. This working group meeting is the second in a row of four meetings which were agreed upon in the last Corridor Forum and shall put the spotlight on the ScanMed corridor infrastructures in and around the STRING region of the Corridor.

3 Tour de corridor
Too many participants and the “online” set up did not allow to introduce each participant so that it was just explained that stakeholders from the relevant institutions of the ScanMed Corridor were invited and are present in the meeting.

4 Starting in the North: National Transport Plans of Norway, Sweden and Denmark
The first technical agenda item included the following presentations:
- The proposed Norwegian National Transport Plan by Paal Iversen, Ministry of Transport (see Annex 2)
- The proposed Swedish National Transport Plan by Niklas Lundin, Ministry of Infrastructure (see Annex 4) and large projects from the present National Plan by Ulla-Stina Ingemarsson, Trafikverket (see Annex 3)
- The proposed Danish National Transport Plan, incl. the Fehmarn Belt Fixed Link and its northern access by Kueni Melu Aloysius, Ministry of Transport (see Annex 4)

All speakers presented the state of play of the three National Transport Plans of Norway, Sweden and Denmark respectively. Confirmed by the envisaged goals, the amounts of investment costs, and the huge number of agreed and/or planned projects, it was obvious that all three countries are ambitious to develop towards the most efficient transport network system until 2030 and beyond. Norway decided to invest about NOK 1.200bn (~ € 118bn) from 2022 until 2033, and the Swedish Infrastructure Bill also for the timeframe from 2022 until 2033 has a total financial frame of SEK 876 billion (~ € 86.6bn). The Danish Infrastructure Plan, to be valid until 2035, was announced and presented in April 2021, but is still in negotiations among the parties in the parliament. Keywords such as the further removal of remaining single rail track sections, high-speed for rail, ERTMS, a more attractive public transport, or many other measures for an infrastructure development towards an efficient, safer and an environmentally friendly transport system have been cited frequently from all presenters.

5 Continuing in the Centre: Regional perspectives on needed initiatives to strengthen the corridor
The second technical agenda item included the following presentations:
- The Gothenburg-Oslo railway project by Kristina Jonäng, Västra Götalandsregionen (see Annex 5)
- Fixed Links across the Öresund by Håkan Samuelsson, Region Skåne (see Annex 6)
- Infrastructure priorities of the Region of Southern Denmark in a ScanMed perspective by Stephanie Lose, the Region of Southern Denmark (oral intervention with no Annex 7)
- Oslo - Stockholm 2,55 railway project by Jonas Karlsson, Oslo - Stockholm 2,55 (see Annex 8)
De-carbonizing the region: the STRING hydrogen project by Stefan Seidler, Schleswig-Holstein (see Annex 9).

Kristina Jonäng presented the Gothenburg-Oslo railway project. Here it came obvious how much an inefficient railway system can affect the choice of a transport mode. As the travel on rail currently takes twice as long as on road, about 93% of the goods between Oslo and Gothenburg are thus also transported on road. The goal is clear: To remove bottlenecks and remaining single track sections, which not only help the megaregion of Oslo and Gothenburg, but also the ScanMed corridor itself for a shift from road to rail.

Two further projects concern the Öresund megaregion, fondly called the “wasp waist of the STRING corridor” by Håkan Samuelsson, who presented the projects HH – Fixed Link and Öresund Metro. Both projects, when realized, will not only help the regions to further growing together and may be beneficial for commuters. They will also play in important role for the European transport system. In so doing, the HH-Fixed Link, a road and a (passenger) railway tunnel between Helsingborg and Elsinore, shall help decreasing travel times on the corridor, and the Öresund metro, a Metro tunnel between Copenhagen and Malmö, will relieve the existing Öresund bridge by releasing capacity for long distance freight and passenger trains crossing the bridge. More than that, such projects can help to be less vulnerable, weather to external threats due to the tunnel construction, or as bypass for e.g. the Öresund bridge when this may be temporarily closed. The HH tunnel is currently in the phase of a location/feasibility study and the Öresund metro in the phase of a bilateral national study. Jarl Zinn (via chat) pointed out that Phase IV of the preliminary study of an Öresund Metro was just completed and the final report in English is in preparation (http://oresundsmetro.com/en/about-the-oresund-metro). Besides the two projects, Hanne Skak from the municipality of Landskrona remarked to consider also the Landskrona - Copenhagen project. The discussion concluded that the maturity and regional consensus favours the first two projects and that a dialogue should be completed at regional rather than European level.

Stephanie Lose presented the regional perspectives of the need for initiatives to strengthen not only the region, but also the ScanMed corridor. Centrally situated, Southern Denmark is part of the existing ScanMed corridor as well as part of the envisaged extension and important for their neighbouring countries and connecting Scandinavia with Continental Europe. One of the priorities is to remove the remaining 12 km long single-track section near the Danish and German border. As it is currently the only rail connection between Scandinavia and continental Europe before opening of the Fehmarn Belt Fixed Link, it is a bottleneck for both freight and passenger trains and limits the possibilities of shifting freight from road to rail and leaves the corridor vulnerable. Another priority for rail is a fast and frequented train connection between Copenhagen and the biggest towns in Southern Denmark, according to the “One Hour Model”. For road, there are three sections, being it the widening of existing motorways or the construction of new sections for more capacity on highly frequented routes.

Though not entirely on the ScanMed corridor, but with Oslo and Stockholm at least including two Core Network Nodes, it was Jonas Karlsson who presented how beneficial an efficient railway system may be when realized. Due to the long travel time of almost 5 hours currently between Oslo and Stockholm via rail, most of the traffic between these two cities takes place by plane and incredible 22 flights a day, compared to five trains a day. With several railway measure enroute and decreasing the travel time from 4:55 hours down to 2:55 hours, rail can be competitive and create a modal shift from air to rail including a huge impact on CO₂ emissions reduction. Jonas Karlsson highlighted the increasing feedback and support the project is receiving, not without
missing the opportunity pointing out towards Pat Cox, that Core Network projects, which are not entirely on the Corridor, are shall also receive financial support on European level. The project is currently in the phase of a finance study and localisation study.

Stefan Seidler rounded up this session with presenting the STRING hydrogen corridor project. The project is made up of a network of 12 hydrogen refuelling stations and the deployment of 570 hydrogen heavy-duty vehicles in the STRING region. It fits well in EU, national, and regional H2-strategies and shall be an international frontrunner region for the production, application and export of hydrogen. "Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg" (Jürgen Neumüller) immediately showed great interest in joining the hydrogen project and extending it from Hamburg to Berlin-Brandenburg. Stefan Seidler invited all interested parties to contact via mail: stefan.seidler@jumi.landsh.de.

6 Completion/Finish in the South

The third technical agenda item included the following presentations:

- The German National Transport Plan, by Frank Zwielich, Ministry of Transport and digital Infrastructure (see Annex 10)
- Southern access; by Karin Druba, Land Schleswig-Holstein (see Annex 11)
- Rail node of Hamburg, incl. S4; by Raimund Brodehl, Free and Hanseatic Town of Hamburg (see Annex 12)
- The Maritime Dimension/Role of ports; by Jens Larsson, Head of Public Affairs the Port of Gothenburg (see Annex 13)

Mr. Zwielich gave an in-depth insight into the approach and design of “The German National Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan (FTIP)” with planned investments of over € 60 bn for the Core Network Corridors until 2030. It includes the general framework as well as explicit projects ranked by priority. Karin Druba was glad to announce the successful progress of the four projects in Schleswig-Holstein concerning the Fehmarnbelt Fixed Link itself but also its hinterland connection. Here, too, an important information was that all projects are in line with the completion date of the Fehmarn Belt Fixed Link itself, which is to be ready in 2029. The hinterland connection projects are in particular the remaining upgrade of the B 207 to a motorway, the replacement of the Fehmarn Sound bridge by an immersed tunnel, and the rail electrification and upgrading to double track between Lübeck to Puttgarden. One of the key elements Karin Druba was keen to mention was the Dialogue Forum, which have been held since 2011 for the very first time for this kind and size of projects and includes a public consultation, thus allowing a certain transparency and a fact-based and open discussion. As a positive outcome of such public dialogues was the German Federal Parliament decision from July 2020 to spent further € 232 mill for additional noise protection measures, and thus hoping to reduce to the number of court cases right from the beginning.

The S4 project, presented by Raimund Brodehl, is a regional project in the Hamburg area by creating a new S-Bahn line on a length of 36 km. Like other regional projects already presented today, by new dedicated S-Bahn tracks, it not only helps improving the regional traffic, it relieves the existing lines and the overstressed Hamburg Central Station and thus gives more room to long-distance trains on this part of the ScanMed corridor. The start of the construction just took place on 10 May 2021 and shall end within the timeline of the Fehmarn Belt Fixed Link in 2029.

Finally, Jens Larsson, with the example of Port of Gothenburg as largest port in Scandinavia, presented the maritime dimension and role of the ports. Besides “typical” port related measures
such as deepening and improving the quaysides and fairways, the Port of Gothenburg also shows its strengths with the concept as a “Railport Scandinavia” and its daily hinterland rail movements from and to 35 inland terminals. Here, Jens Larsson could support the previously mentioned Gothenburg-Oslo railway project and the need of the development of this railway link, as there are currently only one to two trains per week, in comparison with three to four trains per day from and to Stockholm. The port has ambitious goals with 70% reduction of carbon emissions by 2030, which might be reached by several measures such as the use of e-trucks or hydrogen trucks in the hinterland, shifting more from road to rail in the hinterland, digitalisation, or by off-shore wind parks or the production of hydrogen.

8 Upcoming activities, by Martin Zeitler, Political Advisor of the European Coordinator

Martin Zeitler informed about the upcoming activities of the European Coordinator. One activity he highlighted was 2021 being the European Year of Rail with its Connecting Europe Express, which starts at 2 September 2021 in Lisbon and arrives on 7 October 2021 in Paris. It is planned from the European Coordinator to be also on the train, and partners are always welcome to organise small side-events (such as project presentations, handing over the flags of the regions, etc.) at the various stops of the train (https://europa.eu/year-of-rail/index_de).

The next regional workshops are scheduled for 5th and 13th of July and the next large Corridor Meeting will take place (online) on 24 June 2021. Invitations and Agenda should follow in week 22. As concerns the next CEF Call, the first under CEF II, the work programme shall be finalized before the summer break and the first call is expected to be published in the second half of September 2021.

9 Conclusions / wrap-up (European Coordinator)

The European Coordinator, Mr Pat Cox, was very positive and even optimistic about the ongoing activities and developments he heard in the several presentations and discussions, especially on the increasing level of integration and coherence of National Plans and EU TEN-T programme. They are on the “same page”. He thanked everyone for the excellent presentations and closed the meeting at 12:15.

Minuted by Kai Petri and Uwe Sondermann (KombiConsult)

Annexes:

- List of participants
- Presentations as indicated above available at https://www.kombiconsult.com/web/Deutsch/Publikationen/?publication_id=9718#