

17.09.2013, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

## **European dimension of Balkan transport policy**

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### ***Abstract***

The study of transport policy imposed the need for a thorough analysis and elaboration of numerous and heterogeneous aspects related to the transport on state level, region level and EU level. Process of globalization and trade activities diversification contribute to the reform of the transport sector of private and public aspects.

Given the importance of transport as a commercial activity and the role that transport plays in meeting the needs of the consumer sector, a clear will of most institutions exist for joint coordination in the transport sector. This article represent an attempt to explain Balkan transport policy and the position of Republic of Macedonia in this context. Focus of the paper is the analysis and elaboration of the European dimension of Balkan transport policy.

Considering the importance of the transport sector and its role in the development of each national economy, the focus of the research will be exactly policy at EU level in the field of transport and its impact on the Balkans in which one segment occupies Macedonia. In this article we emphasize the important of integration when it comes to transport sector at national, regional and EU level.

***Key words: Transport, Integration, Balkan countries, European transport policy.***

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The Europe 2020 Strategy of 2010 highlighted the importance of an efficient and effective transport system for the future development of the European Union. Europeans should have access to mobility and transport services. These services should support a smooth functioning of the internal market, and minimise any burdens on the free movement of goods and people in the EU. Bearing in mind the trend of integration of all Balkan countries to Europe, and emphasize the process of harmonization and implementation of EU law, it's very clear the trend of complete ratification of EU law in the national law of Balkan countries.

The will of integration in the area of transport and the possibility of it are two different issue which has to be analyze and elaborated. More precisely, one question is related with the will to create uniform (*transport community*) transport law, other is to create capacity for implementation of EU transport law. The key question is: *Do the Balkan countries have a capacity to integrate with EU law, and what kind of methods EU use for achieve set goals in area of transport.* This is also very important issue because transport connected people all everywhere in the world.

Trade of goods and communication process is base for functioning EU market and connected different regions which disposal with different products. This segments create the needs of investing cross boarder in the region and on EU level.

The situation is clear, Balkan countries must create and implement EU transport policy, but there are important facts which show that this process exists *vice versa*. On this bases, EU invest in many aspects related to transport, especially, transport infrastructure. More precisely, transport infrastructure is

fundamental for the smooth operation of the internal market, for the mobility of persons and goods and for the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the European Union. The EU 27 comprises 5.000.000 km of paved roads, out of which 65.100 km are motorways, 212.800 km of rail lines, out of which 110.458 km electrified, and 42.709 km of navigable inland waterways.<sup>1</sup>

This data are result of the finding needs the goods, people, services are important to be mobility all over the Europe.

### ***The concept of presentation of the article\****

Focusing on the legal aspects of public transportation, sporadic and also to private legal aspects, in particular the transport policy in the Balkan countries, the focus of the paper will present through analysis of EU transport policy as the highest general policy, transport policy and activities of the Balkans on creating and implementing an effective transport policy, and finally with an emphasis on trends and perspectives of Macedonia concerning the creation and implementation of transport policy in all traffic branches. Explaining the Balkan transport policy, we'll use some statistical data in function to create a cleare picture about the situation.<sup>2</sup>

In the second part of the presentation we'll summarize the findings and point out trends, perspectives on Balkan policy *vis - a - vis* European transport policy. Specifically, we'll point out the fact that it is a segment of the public and private sector without exception should run parallel or nearly parallel.

The use of identical transport policy is key to success as the region and beyond. Illustratively, each closed system is doomed to extinction. Hence, it is necessary to require acceptance outside influences in the light of policy and legislative solutions that create us previously constructed base policy.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu>.

<sup>2</sup> We use this statistical data as a key for our theoretical research. All of these data are used from the official side of any ministry of Transport in any country that is object of study.

## 1. PERSPECTIVES OF BALKAN TRANSPORT POLICY

Transport policy is focused on the full integration of the Western Balkans region into the Trans European Transport Networks.<sup>3</sup> Considering that the European Council in Thessaloniki approved the Thessaloniki agenda for the Western Balkans which states that, “The drawing up of an integrated regional transport strategy, consistent with the trans-European Networks and taking into account the Pan European Corridors (in particular Corridors V, VII, VIII, and X), is a high priority; Generally, all aspects of important of this issue were reflected by creation of many transport network.

The countries from neighbourhood were aware from the fact that the collaboration in this process seems to be a necessary step. That’s why the three Pan-European Transport Conferences, 1991 in Prague, 1994 in Crete and 1997 in Helsinki, gradually developed the concept of, and finally established, the so called Pan-European Transport Network. The Pan-European Transport Network consists of the following five (5) components:

- *The Trans-European Transport Network on the territory of the European Union (TEN);*
- *The ten (10) Pan-European Transport Corridors (PETrCs), situated in the acceding countries, in the New Independent States and beyond;*
- *The TINA1 Network, composed of the ten PETrCs and the additional network components within the candidate countries for accession to the EU;*

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<sup>3</sup> Desiring to promote the regional and international transport of goods and passengers in South East Europe by way of progress in implementing the South East Europe core regional transport network, as developed in the European Commission’s working document of 15 October 2001 on transport and energy infrastructure in South East Europe, and further clarified and elucidated by the TIRS and REBIS technical studies of 2002 and 2003 and the Luxembourg, Skopje and London high-level meetings of February, May and June 2003; See also: <http://www.seetoint.org>.

- *The four (4) Pan-European Transport Areas (PETrAs), covering maritime areas;*
- *The four (4) Euro-Asian Land Transport Corridors.*<sup>4</sup>

### **1.1. The perspectives of Balkan transport policy through EU transport policy**

Establishing an efficient Trans-European transport network (TEN-T) has constituted a key element in the relaunched Lisbon Strategy for competitiveness and employment in Europe and will play an equally central role in the attainment of the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. If Europe is to fulfill its economic and social potential, it is essential to build the missing links and remove the bottlenecks in our transport infrastructure, as well as to ensure the future sustainability of our transport networks by taking into account the energy efficiency needs and the climate change challenges.

Of particular importance for the EU and Balkan countries is the cooperation agreements Memorandum of Understanding on the development of the South East Europe Core Regional Transport Network. The basic goal of this memorandum of understanding is connected with achieving over all policy treatment in any transport sector.<sup>5</sup> EU creates transport policy with standards on a very high level. EU regulate the transport policy in many aspects taking care about transport of goods<sup>6</sup>,

The Memorandum of Understanding furthermore envisages close cooperation among participants on the harmonisation and standardisation, wherever feasible, of technical standards and regulatory or administrative

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<sup>4</sup> Skayannis P., Skyrgiannis H., The role of transport in the development of the Balkans. 2010.

<sup>5</sup> See more about this: <http://www.seetoint.org>.

<sup>6</sup> EU has built mechanism for protection of all activities connected with transport. EU is creating policy and law about protection of fishers during the transport. This is very low case in Balkan countries. But, nevertheless, the countries from the region have to continue to integrate in this process, because the full success depends of it.

provisions affecting the flow of transport in and across the region, in accordance with EU standards and directives.<sup>7</sup>

The process of integration is essential connected with creation of transport network. This includes co-operation in and, where possible, harmonisation of customs and border control procedures. This co-operation will include a commitment to carry out any institutional reforms needed for efficient transport management in the region (including measures to eliminate corruption or malpractice relating to administrative or tendering procedures), and an undertaking to exchange information on a regular basis concerning the progress of such reforms. The best way of succeeding this to promote and implement couple of steps as: *Exchange of information, Technical standards and interoperability, Border crossing and customs co-operation, Framework for participation of economic and social partners, Ministerial meetings, Steering Committee.*

All these methods are used as a tool for achieving the goal on EU level, and make success in the Balkan countries. These kind of methods generally doesn't have oblige character. This is fact as in many other documents. But the respect to EU law and policy makers result to massive implementation of these types of documents. *In concreto*, this Memorandum of Understanding does not contain obligations governed by international law. But, in practice, this memorandum did a great impact on the Balkan region.

## **TRANSPORT POLICY OF BALKAN COUNTRIES (POSITION AND PERSPECTIVES)**

### ***Albania***

As any other country which basic aim is to be part of EU market and part of the World trade economy, Albania create and seeks to implement transport

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<sup>7</sup> See more: Wee Van B., Annema J.A., Banister D., The transport system and transport policy: an introduction, Cheltenham. 2013, p. 82.

policy on a high level. By its basic transport policy, Albania show will for great development and cooperation with countries from its neighbourhood. Albania has a great transport network and what it has to be emphasize is the fact that Albania works on the improvement of it.

The National Road Network in Albania is about 18,000 km long including about 3,719 km of National Roads: the primary road network is about 1,200 km (the main corridors), with nine main connections which made up the basis of the network. Total length of the secondary network is about 2,500 km; 10,500 km are interurban roads, and the rest of 4,000 km is under the jurisdiction of autonomous units, enterprises or companies.<sup>8</sup>

One of the biggest strategy for transport development of Albania refer to Road Transport Development Policy. In this context, Developing International connections with EU and regional countries. (Corridor VIII and Core Network), Soft measures. International & bilateral agreements, Reducing non-physical barriers and waiting times at border-crossings (Border issues constitute major barriers to trade, tourism and transport; Improving Infrastructure, Procedure, Staff), Modernise facilities and train Customs officers, Develop Single window strategy, Transport infrastructure and living standard-promoting family tourism, Develop feeder, rural and tourist transport infrastructure.

*The main international corridors of interest to Albania include:*

□ *The North-South Corridor between Greece and Montenegro via Kakavija on the Albanian border and Gjirokaster, Shkoder and Hani i Hotit, whose length is 405 km.*

□ *Corridor VIII (East – West National Road Corridor): Bari, Brindisi (IT) -Durrës, Vlorë-Tirane (AL) – Skopje (MK) - Sofje – Burgas, Varna (BG). Corridor VIII is the southernmost among the West-East Pan-European Corridors, linking the Adriatic/Ionian region and Balkans to the Black Sea.*

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<sup>8</sup> Creating a great transport network has its impact on any stakeholder. This is issue that attracts attention to many subjects in the society.

Part of Corridor VIII in Albanian territory is port of Durrës (branch port of Vlora in south of Albania) - Tirana until the FYR of Macedonia border.

Bearing this in mind, Albania offer a great collaboration in the area of transport. We'll may see, Albania made a great assessment about the impact on transport in economy sector.

### *Serbia*

One of the way to prove the will and capacity of Serbia to create integrated transport network is to emphasize the project title “*Facilitating Intermodal Transport in Serbia.*” We do not mention this project in case, we accent this project with aim to prove the Serbia goal to be a part of European transport network.<sup>9</sup>

Serbia show a policy strictly directed to basic components to achieving successful transport policy. In this context: Integrating Serbian transport network into the TEN-T, Efficient use of comparative advantages of each transport mode, Rising the quality of transport services, by increasing efficiency, better organization of transport operations from economics, safety and environmental perspective and application of target-oriented planning and managing of traffic flows. Serbia also pay attention on the Increasing the level of safety and security of the transport system, strengthening and gradual liberalisation of transport market, reducing adverse environmental impacts of transport, establishing stable financing of transport system's development.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Intermodal transport in the Republic of Serbia for 2008-2015 period. (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 004/08, 13 January 2008) The directions for future transport sector development in the Strategy are based on principles of safety, intermodality, application of new technologies, complementary use of different transport modes and rational use of available capacities and resources in Serbia. Basic goal of Serbia's transport strategy is to reach the compatibility with the EU's transport system, while ensuring as low as possible adverse environmental impacts of such development.

<sup>10</sup> Tošić V., Jovanović R., National background report on Transport for Serbia. available from: <http://kobson.nb.rs>.



## ***Montenegro***

As a part of Balkan's countries, Montenegro promote effective transport policy in all transport branches, Transport system in Montenegro will be developed so as to: provide safe and secure traffic; provide quality maintenance of transport infrastructure; be effective; contribute to economic development; minimize harmful impacts to the environment; be harmonized and support integration process of Montenegro in the European Union. These are key segments to which Montenegro create and implement its on policy.<sup>11</sup> This is fact in all air, sea and road transport. Montenegro actively take a part in creating Regional transport network.<sup>12</sup>

## ***Macedonia***

Republic of Macedonia submitted its membership application on March 22, 2004. Before that, Macedonia sign the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (2000). Signing this agreement Republic of Macedonia oblige to realize all the conditions that are contacted with *acquis communautaire* concept of EU.

Macedonia create transport policy in the context of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Analyzing all policy steps we conclude it will for greate transport network and achieve high level of standard that are set from the region. Bearing in mind that Macedonia is a small country, it seems to us the most important policy step is to follow the policy in the region. That how Macedonia is following the European policy of transport.

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<sup>11</sup>Transport development strategy of Montenegro, Ministry of *Transport*, Maritime Affairs and Telecommunications.2012.

<sup>12</sup>Karadaku L.,Time to build roads in the Balkans, for Southeast European Times in Pristina 2012.

All of Macedonia efforts have to be directed to be a part of any regional project. Strengthen regional cooperation in the field of transport policy and transport infrastructure is the key for successful transport policy.

Macedonia must take into account the South East Europe Core Regional Transport Network as a future part of TEN-T in the process of TEN-T Policy Revision. In order to support the further integration of the Western Balkans into the EU, Macedonia must improve border management and increase the capacity of border crossings in order to speed up and improve the quality of transport at regional level;

Give due attention to the development of training programmes for both employers and employees in order to enable them to better respond to changes in the labour market and improve transparency in public procurement in the Western Balkans.<sup>13</sup>

The strategy of transport development in Republic of Macedonia must arise from internal needs and possibilities, and has to consider external events, chiefly those in the EU. The improvement of transport conditions in Macedonia represents a strategic national issue of first priority and a contribution to the European transport policy. Regardless of the time of its association in the EU, Macedonia must make its preparations in due time to be capable of entering the EU. Transport integration of Macedonia with the EU can be traced directly through linking up the transport systems, and indirectly through the integration of economic and other subjects.<sup>14</sup>

Macedonia without thinking have to directed all it effort exactly to integration process. For Macedonia is very important to be a part of Regional/Balkan project connected with transport.

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<sup>13</sup> Eur-lex.europa.eu. Access to European Union Law. 2013.

<sup>14</sup> Temjanovski R., Transport systems in Republic of Macedonia and European economic flow.2005.

## **Conclusion**

Studying the field of transport through the prism of European and Balkan dimension in the area of public and private law is referred to the conclusion that Republic of Macedonia follow EU private law much more than public aspects of transport law. In fact, in terms of regulation in the area of private law, the Republic of Macedonia through domestic legislation and ratification of key international conventions simultaneously is developing its legal framework with EU law.

However, it is clear that the legal framework in the area of private law is the basis for the implementation of the legal aspects of public transportation. Namely, the degree of development of transport infrastructure, largely depends on the extent of the legal regulation.

Of course it largely depends on the level of economic development of each national economy. Hence, the bases frame generally founded, will conclude that in this segment, the legal aspects of developing the economic base. Specifically, the law is clear that upgrading the economic stage.

In the field of transport, this application is quite opportune. However, in terms of design and implementation of European transport policy remain the conclusion that the situation in the country in this field largely depends on regional flow of ground transportation. Realizing the importance of this segment of each national economy, the regional cooperation in the field of transportation is necessary.

As a best exemplar of this is the construction of most corridors, the establishment of transnational companies with heterogeneous capital, the implementation of multimodal transport as a form of using vehicles and transport infrastructure of the region. Finally, in terms of implementation of EU legislation, remain open questions about the methods of implementation and the effects thereof, that is finale goal of EU and neighbourhood countries.

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