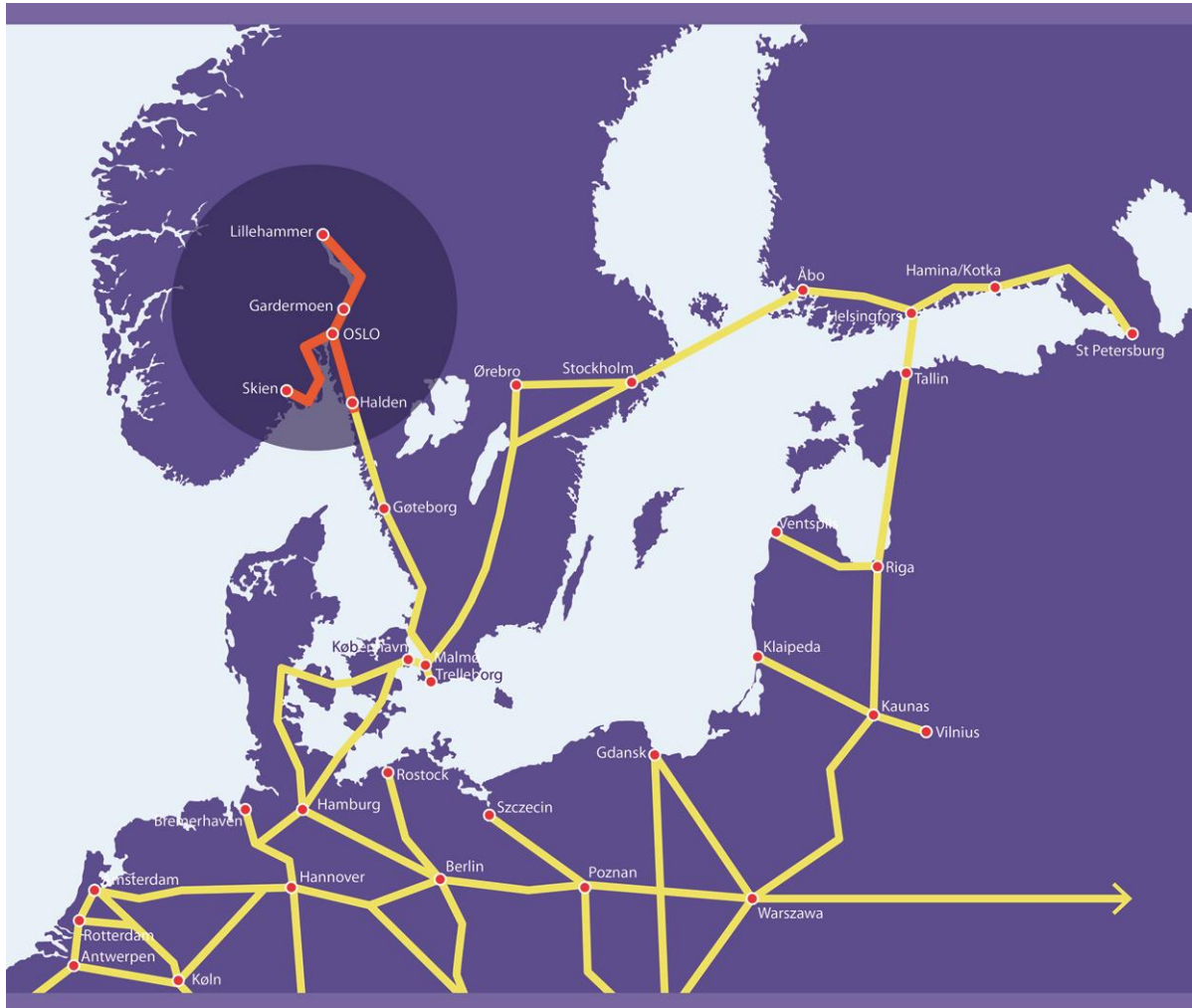


MESO case Eastern Norway County Area



Task 3.7 report

FINAL VERSION as of 13 May 2014

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| 2. BACKGROUND..... | 3 |
| The InterCity Triangle - a key to polycentric development | 3 |
| From fragmented building to a complete plan | 4 |
| 3. OBJECTIVES | 4 |
| Getting the wanted decision and a better planning process..... | 4 |
| 4. KEY ACTIVITIES | 5 |
| Communication strategy of Eastern Norway County Network | 5 |
| National Transport Plan 2014-2023 | 6 |
| Preparing for an efficient planning process..... | 7 |
| Planning of new InterCity sections has started..... | 9 |
| Transnational perspectives | 10 |
| Cooperation with the Interreg IV A project COINCO North II | 10 |
| Summing up the InterCity approach..... | 11 |
| 5. SOME THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS..... | 11 |
| Different planning models | 12 |
| Challenges of cross-border transport corridors..... | 13 |
| The InterCity approach compared with European MLG experiences | 14 |
| Closing remarks | 15 |
| 6. THE WAY FORWARD IN THE INTERCITY PROJECT | 16 |
| Keeping focus..... | 16 |
| Next step | 16 |
| LITERATURE | 17 |

1. INTRODUCTION

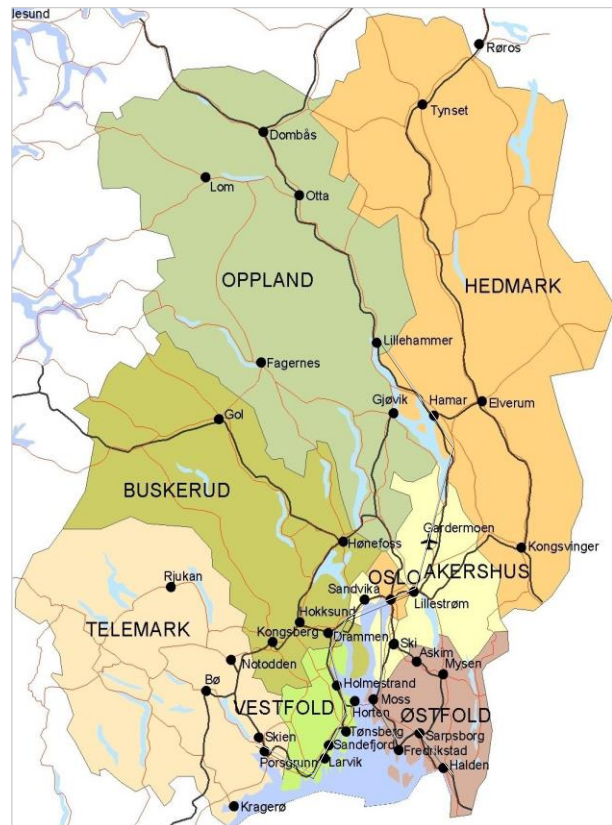
Eastern Norway County Network (Østlandssamarbeidet) - a cooperation body for eight county authorities (regional authorities) in the south-eastern part of Norway - has for many years worked for better rail connections in this geographical area. A fast train connection between the capital city Oslo and the cities Lillehammer, Skien and Halden - named the InterCity (IC) Triangle - has been planned since early 1990. In 1999 the InterCity Triangle was launched by Eastern Norway County Network (ENCN) as the most important transport project for sustainable and balanced development of the region.

The InterCity project is however more than a regional project. It also makes up the north-western node of the Scandinavian - Mediterranean TEN-T Corridor and is a Norwegian hub for all rail transport to the neighbouring countries and the rest of the Baltic Sea Region.

The transnational perspective has so far had most focus on the rapidly growing freight transport across the border to Sweden and a growing cross-border business and labour market. This perspective has been highlighted in two Interreg projects; “Corridor of Innovation and Cooperation” (COINCO) and COINCO North II.

According to the last Norwegian National Transport Plan 2014-2023, and follow-up decisions in the Parliament and the Government, the double track rail lines of the InterCity Triangle should be completed within 2030.

Task 3.7 of the TransGovernance project gives insight of a highly decisive period of the InterCity project. It seems that local, regional and national authorities have succeeded in getting the planning and building process on a stable track through a combination of traditional public steering measures and multi-level governance (MLG) approaches.



2. BACKGROUND

The InterCity Triangle - a key to polycentric development

Eastern Norway County Area consists of the eight counties Akershus, Buskerud, Hedmark, Oppland, Oslo, Telemark, Vestfold and Østfold. Together these counties have a population of about 2.5 million, which is 50 per cent of the total population in Norway. The population has increased with about 300 000 persons in the last ten years and is expected to rise by 500 000 - 1 000 000 over the next 30 years.

From an analytical perspective, it makes sense to divide the Eastern Norway County Area into three sub-areas:

- The capital city area (Oslo and Akershus);
- The rest of the InterCity Triangle Area;
- The rural areas (the outskirts).

As part of the Interreg IIC project “Metropolitan Areas”, the counties of ENCN adapted the principles of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), where concepts like “urban structure”, “polycentric development” and “urban - rural partnerships” are central aspects. Through strategic analyses and follow-up scenarios, the concept of polycentric development was introduced, with fast rail and road routes between cities as means to realise such a development.

There has been an agreement in the region by different stakeholders that implementation of the InterCity project would be crucial to meet the future challenges of the region; challenges of rapid population growth in the central parts of the region, declining population in the rural parts - as well as meeting the demand for better connection to the European Continent and reduction of CO₂ emissions from the transport sector. The InterCity Triangle is the key infrastructure project for more freight and passenger transport within the ENCN area as well as to the neighbouring countries.

From fragmented building to a complete plan

Building of a faster rail connection between cities in the Eastern Norway County Area started mid 1990’s with a new double track rail line between Oslo and the new Oslo Airport Gardermoen, about 45 km north of Oslo. In the following years some shorter sections of new rail double tracks were built, but without a complete plan for the whole Eastern Norway County Area.

In January 2011 the Norwegian National Rail Administration started the work with a plan for the whole InterCity Triangle - from Oslo to the cities Lillehammer, Skien and Halden - and followed by a concept evaluation. When the results from the work were presented in February 2012, they showed that the building of the InterCity Triangle could connect the cities of the area in a new way and making it even more attractive to live and work in the region. The plan and concept evaluation showed the travel time would be drastically cut down and the frequency would be much higher. The project may ease the pressure on the Oslo Area and transform large parts of Eastern Norway into one seamless residential and labour market. The InterCity project would also give large benefits for the environment and give fewer traffic accidents.

3. OBJECTIVES

Getting the wanted decision and a better planning process

The big question after the concept evaluation was how to make the Government and the Parliament decide the building of the whole InterCity Triangle - in competition with other important projects in the National Transport Plan 2014-2023. The calculations from the Norwegian National Rail Administration showed a total cost of EUR 15-20 billion for the remaining part of the InterCity project in 2012.

Another challenge was to prepare for a better and more efficient planning process according to the Norwegian Planning and Building Act. In Norway 7-10 years is the normal planning time for large infrastructure projects, and sometimes the planning process even takes more time. According to the Norwegian National Rail Administration, the optimal time for planning and building of the InterCity Triangle would be 13 years, but the project could be realised within 10 years, given predictable financing.

The building of the InterCity Triangle is the first step towards better rail connections to the European Continent. Finalising the building of a double rail track to Halden as quickly as possible, would also mean the continuation from Halden to the Swedish border could start earlier.

In chapter 4 we will point at some of the elements leading to the decision in the Parliament June 2013 and the work to make the planning processes more efficient.

Some theoretical reflections

As pointed out in the TransGovernance Task 3.2 report, the policy arena has become more complex and fragmented as a whole range of institutions and relations are now involved in planning and implementation of transport development projects. The Task 3.2 report analyses what key elements seem to be the most important in MLG approaches or decision making in network.

In TransGovernance Task 3.3, the authors argue that Interreg has a potential to facilitate also the traditional or fixed planning space by linking them closer to the flexible space.

Regarding the IC Triangle, as mentioned earlier, it seems that local, regional and national authorities have succeeded in getting the planning and building process on a stable track through a combination of two models: 1. Traditional public steering measures and 2. Multi-level governance approaches. The Norwegian researcher Dr. scient Ulla Higdem has done some analyses of characteristics in model 1 and 2.

In chapter 5 we will compare the InterCity project with lessons from BSR TransGovernance reports and the analyses of Higdem.

4. KEY ACTIVITIES

Communication strategy of Eastern Norway County Network

Through a period of twenty years from early 1990's only small sections of the InterCity Triangle was planned and built. Building of the triangle was not handled as one unity, with a date of finalising the project and with suggestions of how it could be financed. Convincing the Government of dealing with the InterCity routes as one project and getting the Parliament making the necessary decision seemed to be the main challenge for Eastern Norway County Network and other stakeholders working for more rapid rail connections in the region.

Rail transport and building of new rail infrastructure had for several decades had low priority in Norwegian transport policy. The focus on rail transport to solve capacity and environmental challenges grow continually after year 2000, and in 2012 the attention on rail transport was higher than ever. Lack of capacity, both for passenger and freight transport, and the problems of building more roads, had also given more attention to rail transport.

In addition of being the most important infrastructure project in the Eastern Norway County Area, the InterCity Triangle is, as mentioned, also of fundamental value for the whole Norwegian rail network. The InterCity Triangle is the hub of all national rail lines, and most lines to and from other countries goes through the area.

In 2012 the Regional Cooperation Board of Eastern Norway County Network decided to increase joint efforts to realise the InterCity Triangle within reasonable time. The Board decided to go for a joint communication plan involving inhabitants as well as local and regional authorities. The communication plan was launched officially by political leaders from all the eight counties meeting on the Oslo Central Station in August 2012.

In autumn 2012 and winter 2012-2013, when the Government was working with the white paper of National Transport Plan 2014-2023, political representatives from the eight county councils worked actively to raise an opinion saying the InterCity Triangle must be planned and build as one project and finalised as soon as possible.

To engage inhabitants in general and especially commuters, a new Facebook site was opened. There were also close cooperation with businesses and different organisations with interests of better rail communications in the Eastern Norway County Area. Altogether, there were more than 2500 press articles and other mentions of the InterCity Triangle in second half of 2012.

One of the most spectacular events was done mid October 2012, when more than 40 mayors from the municipalities along the three InterCity lines, together with political leaders from the county authorities, travelled by train to Oslo Central Station, where they were welcomed by the Governing Mayor of Oslo. After some interviews and other press activities, all the politicians marched to the Parliament, where they had a meeting with representatives from all the political parties.



During autumn 2012 and winter 2013 there were also several other meetings between political representatives of the eight county authorities and representatives of the Government and of the Parliament.

National Transport Plan 2014-2023

The National Transport Plan, which is submitted to the Parliament in the form of a white paper, is produced every four years and sets forth the Government's transport policy goals and strategies for the next ten years.

In April 2013 the Norwegian Government presented the white paper on *National Transport Plan 2014-2023*. The white paper stated that the Government wants to develop a modern transport system that will make it easier, faster and safer to travel, commute and transport goods in the future. People must be able to get to school and work easily and safely wherever they live in the country. Goods must be transported quickly and efficiently.

With regard to rail, the Government gave high priority to the development of the InterCity (IC) routes. By the end of 2024 there should be contiguous double track lines to Tønsberg, Fredrikstad and Hamar, which will make it possible to establish train services with half-hour frequency throughout the operating day. By the end of 2026, the double track will be extended to Sarpsborg in south east. The Government's basic assumption was that future planning will be aimed at completion of the entire IC-system in 2030.

The routes for new infrastructure on IC lines will be built to accommodate 250 km/h on the sections that do not entail significant additional costs compared with a speed of 200 km/h, and can therefore be included in any future high-speed networks.

The eight county authorities of Eastern Norway County Network gave a joint statement after the presentation of the National Transport Plan 2014-2023. They expressed satisfaction about the understanding of the need for building new rail infrastructure in the Eastern Norway County Area, to prevent collapse in the transport system, to reduce pressure on housing marked in the central areas and to stimulate business development in the outer parts of the Eastern Norway County Area. In the statement they also expressed satisfaction about the binding plan for the inner part of the InterCity Triangle, but disappointment about the vague formulations about finalising the whole triangle. In the statement they stressed the importance of building the double tracks all the way to Lillehammer, Skien and Halden as soon as possible.

Much of the same message was also given to the national authorities from the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO), the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) and several environmental organisations.

The content of the National Transport Plan 2014-2023 was generally accepted by the Norwegian Parliament when the representatives discussed the white paper in June 2013. Some comments from the discussion in the Parliament could be interpreted as a bit more ambitious about finalising the InterCity Triangle.

After the election to the Norwegian Parliament autumn 2013, Norway got a new Government. In its political platform the Government says it will make the investments needed to make major improvements of infrastructure. New approaches will be taken in order to modernise Norway's infrastructure faster and more efficiently.

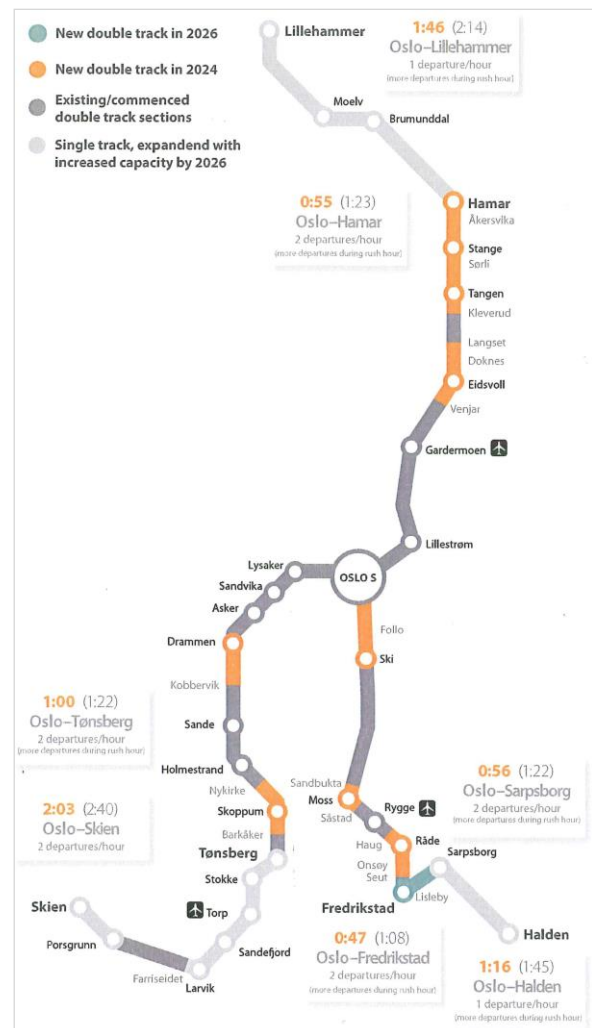
Railways must be a competitive alternative for passengers as well as freight haulage, the political platform says. The quality, accessibility and punctuality of train services must be improved. The Government will increase investment in railways and expand competition for use of the tracks. The Government will plan for full development of the InterCity routes in the Eastern Norway County Area, and plan for a new railway tunnel under Oslo. The government will give priority to crossing loops on important freight routes as well as passenger rail transport in and around the cities.

After the election autumn 2013 there have been several meetings between representatives of Eastern Norway County Network and the new Minister of Transport and Communications as well as the Parliaments Standing Committee on Transport and Communications. The common understanding about building of the InterCity Triangle now is that it should be finalised within 2030.

Preparing for an efficient planning process

In 2012-2013 building of double rail tracks was ongoing on three sections in the InterCity Triangle:

- One section in north on the route between Eidsvoll and Hamar. This section should be finalised in 2015.



- Two sections of new double tracks in south west: one to be finalised in 2016 and the other one in 2018.

A fourth section - the Follo project - (just south of Oslo) - was in the final stage of the planning process and is supposed to start building in 2014. The Follo project is a giant when it comes to costs - estimated to EUR 2.5 - 3.0 billion.

Because of the long planning time for large infrastructure projects in Norway, we have to develop more efficient planning processes to realise the InterCity project within acceptable time.

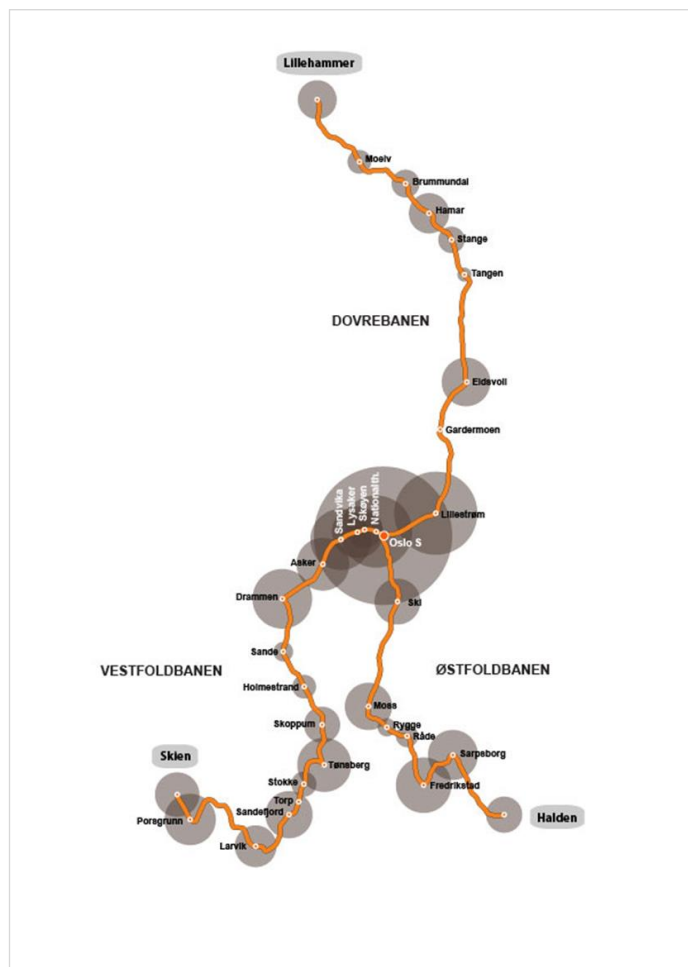
The planning process for the remaining parts of the InterCity Triangle has to include 230 km of the InterCity lines that in 2012 was not built or are under construction. In addition the planning will include 21 cities or urban areas which the InterCity lines will pass through. The planning process must secure that the InterCity project:

- facilitates an offer that meets the demand for transport in line with population growth;
- provides shorter travel times, higher frequency and high regularity;
- contributes to the development of a polycentric structure along the routes and ease the pressure on Oslo;
- develops well-functioning cities and urban areas;
- has sufficient capacity to carry more freight trains.

To prepare for an efficient planning process after the decision of the National Transport Plan 2014-2023 in the Parliament in June 2013, work with a pre-planning stage started autumn 2012.

One important event was a workshop in November 2012. The workshop was organised by Eastern Norway County Network together with the Norwegian National Rail Administration. The intention was to bring together representatives of stakeholders with interest of the InterCity building, and *especially representatives from local, regional and national authorities*. The workshop gathered more than 130 persons, discussing how to make the further planning process as efficient as possible, included which kind of formal planning processes would be preferable. The main message from the workshop was that **“together we shall manage the challenge of planning the InterCity Triangle”**.

Among the specific outcomes of the workshop was the creation of a cooperation group, involving five County Mayors and Deputy County Mayors from Eastern Norway County Network, three local Mayors, one County Governor (the chief representative of the Government in each county) and the Director General of the Norwegian National Rail Administration together with two persons from her staff.



To prepare the discussions in the cooperation group, the National Rail Administration established an administrative working group consisting of representatives from local, regional and national authorities. The working group prepared documents and questions to the cooperation group, which had three meetings during spring 2013.

An important message from the discussions in the cooperation group was **early involvement of all stakeholders to detect and solve conflicts of interests**. Objections to planning proposals must be given as early as possible, and thus give the possibility of being handled without severe delays in the planning process. Since many objections normally are related to the County Governor's fields of action - like environment protection, natural diversity, agricultural areas and cultural heritage - the County Governor in the cooperation group together with the National Rail Administration took a special responsibility of discussing new procedures with the other County Governors in the Eastern Norway County Area.

As a result of the pre-planning stage until June 2013, a manual for the further planning processes was produced. Main recommendations in the manual:

- Municipal sub-plans as the first planning stage;
- Follow up by local zoning plans;
- Special focus on coordination with other stakeholders in cities and other urban areas

The manual is only in Norwegian text, but available on:

<http://www.jernbaneverket.no/PageFiles/26153/Gjennomfoeringsplan%20IC%20-%20delprosjekt%20planprosesser.pdf>

Planning of new InterCity sections has started

The Follo project is the only section of the InterCity project where building of new rail lines will be started in the period 2014-2018. Planning work in line with the recommendations from the pre-planning stage, however, started in autumn 2013.

Early 2014 the consultation process for the planning programme of two new sections of the InterCity Triangle started:

- The section Sandbukta - Såstad around the city Moss, where the intention is to finalise the zoning plan with environmental impact assessment spring 2016. Building of this section of double tracks, included a new rail station in Moss, is planned to start in 2018.
- The section Nykirke - Barkåker west of the city Horten. In this sections there are still four alternatives of the new rail lines to be discussed, so the further planning process has to start with a joint municipal sub-plan for the three municipalities involved or eventually three coordinated municipal sub-plans. The intention is to have an adapted municipal sub-plan summer 2016 and then start working with the zoning plans, which should give possibilities of starting the building of new double tracks in 2020.



Planning processes have also started for several sections on the northern leg of the InterCity Triangle. Planning processes will start in 2014 or 2015 for all sections where the building is planned to be finalised within 2023.

Some planning activities will also be started coming years for cities in the outer part of the InterCity Triangle, since the planning process is expected to be very complicated there, and thus one needs to start in due time.

Transnational perspectives

Cooperation with the Interreg IV A project COINCO North II

Corridor of Innovation and Cooperation (COINCO) is a strategic development project working to improve infrastructure for transport and innovation and business in the corridor from Oslo to Copenhagen, creating the Scandinavian 8 Million City. The overarching objective of the COINCO project is to promote sustainable economic growth by reducing travel time, create new arenas for business cooperation, stimulate closer academic cooperation and strengthen the marketing of the region as an attractive location.

The partners of the COINCO project are the majority of the local and regional authorities as well as three government agencies in the corridor between Oslo, Gothenburg and Copenhagen. The COINCO North II is an extended continuation of the partnership in a precedent project.

One of the work packages of the COINCO North II project, Inter City trains and Green Freight Corridor, focuses on rail lines in the corridor Oslo - Copenhagen. Upgrading to double track standard in the whole corridor will create more capacity for both passengers and freight, increase the potential to gain a higher market share and prepare for a high-speed rail future.

A main challenge for more rail freight transport in the corridor Oslo - Copenhagen is the so-called “Missing link” - a 30 km single track corridor from Halden in Norway to the Swedish Border and further 100 km to Öxnered in Sweden. So far there are no national plans neither in Norway or Sweden for upgrading this corridor to double rail tracks.

Regional workshop in Oslo October 2013

How to enhance regional and business development in the Oslo-Gothenburg cross-border region and the need for better rail infrastructure was the main subject of a workshop in the TransGovernance project in October 2013. The workshop was arranged by the Eastern Norway County Network in cooperation with the leader of Work Package 6, Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg.

The relevant issues and approaches discussed in relevance to a cross-border perspective, in this case the Scandria - Corridor, were focused around the following topics:

- Coordinated planning approach at all levels: spatial planning mechanisms need to be well coordinated to avoid long planning processes, local area planning and participative approach is decisive, need for coordinated, cross-border planning schemes/schedules.

- Corridor may stimulate economic and labour market integration: relates to cross-border labour markets, where differences in salaries, need of qualified workforce and global competitiveness are major drivers. Improvements in transport infrastructure will lead to wider commuting area.
- National commitment to cross-border investments need to be improved. TEN-T and Scandria Corridor platform might support the closure of concrete bilateral agreements for cross-border investments. However decisive is the commitment of national policy makers. Currently Norwegian Government announced steps to improve collaboration with Sweden about cross-border transport-infrastructure investments.
- Scandria- Corridor could develop as a showcase for green transport, especially concerning alternative fuels. There is a high potential to link relevant initiatives in the corridor context and perform scale tests in a real environment.

Summing up the InterCity approach

The communication strategy

One event important to the fact that the Government and the Parliament decided to go for the InterCity building as one common project in the National Transport Plan 2014 - 2023, was *the communication plan* of Eastern County Network involving inhabitants and businesses as well as local and regional authorities.

The political representatives of the ENCN had likewise *several meetings* with representatives of the Government and the Parliament.

Joint actions together with the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise and environmental organisations over several years have been important elements to influence process.

Preparing for an efficient planning process

Although four sections of the IC Triangle were under construction in 2013, the remaining part of it, 230 km including 21 cities or urban areas, need efficient planning processes to be ready for construction from 2018-2026.

Main output from the pre-planning work, prepared before the decision in the Parliament, has been manuals for the further planning process recommending:

- Municipal sub-plans as the first planning stage
- Follow up by local zoning plans
- Special focus on coordination with other stakeholders in the cities and other urban areas.

5. SOME THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

Development of transport corridors are obvious a question of both national and transnational planning and cooperation. The policy arena has become (see Task 3.2) more complex and fragmented as a whole range of institutions and relations are involved in the governance process. Political institutions have become more and more dependent on other societal actors and international organisations.

Different planning models

The Norwegian researcher Dr.scient. Ulla Higdem has made studies of national and international planning and planning processes for years. Analysing the models, she has specified interesting differences.

Looking at “fixed planning” or planning after the “National Building and Planning Act”, she has been focusing on the following characteristics:

- The public actors roles and responsibilities are clearly defined;
- The municipalities have competences in area planning;
- Different public interests , different laws and objection opportunities;
- Participation through political positions and interests;
- Possible state takeover;
- Good formal legitimacy;
- Challenges regarding planning across administrative boundaries and frontiers (institutional differences);
- Resulting poor execution efficiency.

Network planning or multi-level governance can be characterised by:

- Established binding coalitions where we have the necessary resources to solve collective problems;
- Mobilised different types of actors and their resources as money, competence and their ability to make decisions in an effective way;
- Coordinated and binding cooperation on different types of tasks related to national/regional and local development;
- Agreements and contracts with each other to formalise the cooperation and commit the different actors, e.g. - a binding cooperation between independent actors in a negotiated interest community;
- Possible result - management network, governance, multilevel governance, as practiced by the different parties - public/public and public /private - nationally and internationally.

Higdem describes the different elements that relate to a traditional public, hierarchical management, versus a concept of management and decision-making in networks - which can be used in national and international multi-level governance.

The network-oriented partnership model characteristics related to factors like: mandate, legitimacy, control, etc. can be used as a checklist of what items it is essential to involve the establishment of multi-level governance in the network.

| | Traditional political public steering measures | Governance - through partnership measures |
|---|--|---|
| Organisation | Hierarchy | Network |
| Solving tasks (producing collective outcome) | Vertical command | Horizontal negotiation |
| Relations between actors | Division of tasks super- and subordination | Reciprocal dependent equality |
| Regulating the relationship between actors | Authorisation, mandate | Agreements and contracts |

| | Traditional political public steering measures | Governance - through partnership measures |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Actors (type of) | Defined public-sector actors | New and private-sector actors, civilian (NGO) actors |
| Decision-making process | Regulated, transparent | Unregulated |
| Main focus | Input: laws, rules, guidelines, and administrative arrangements | Output: Results |
| Type of solutions | Standardised | Customised, tailor-made (regional/ local) |
| Quality-assurance | Performance audit made by the Office of the Auditor General of Norway | Reports issued by the partnership |

Source: Higdem, 2011

Challenges of cross-border transport corridors

The territorial cooperation programmes under the ERDF have been conducted over a long period of time with the objective to strengthen the implementation capacity of participating partners, private as well as public stakeholders. So far, the INTERREG projects have seen the domination of partners from regional and local levels. Despite success in most sectors, it has been pointed out that INTERREG, within transnational transport planning, has been not that of a success for different reasons. But INTERREG has a potential of being used to facilitate cross-border transport planning in a better way than previous planning processes.

The BSR TransGovernance Task 3.3 Report (Hök, Ingo et al, 2013) aims to enhance the understanding of if, why and how a better interaction is needed between territorial cooperation projects, co-funded by the EU via the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Objective 3, and national planning processes (see the picture below):

1.3 Point of departure

Fixed and flexible planning spaces

One way to understand how the cooperation between different stakeholders in the transport planning system could be enhanced is to define the planning arenas or planning spaces as shown in figure 1. These spaces can be divided in two groups

- the fixed planning spaces led by governments, and
- the more flexible planning spaces based on multi-governance and involvement of various types of parties.

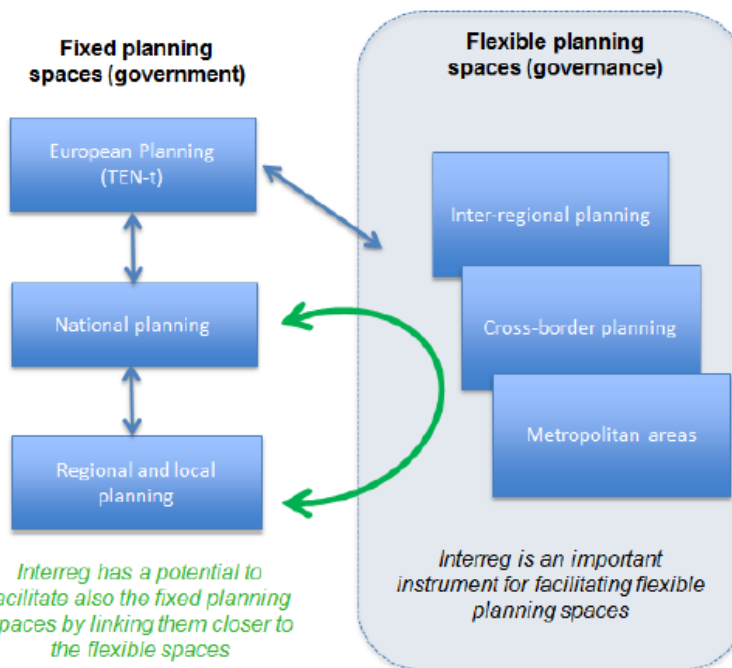


Figure 1 Planning is carried out in fixed planning spaces with formalized decision-making structures at several tiers of government, as well as in more flexible and network oriented governance structures. Interreg is an important instrument for facilitating flexible planning spaces. Today the link between the two spaces is weak, but Interreg has a potential to strengthen it.

The InterCity approach compared with European MLG experiences

In the Task 3.2 report: “MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE - European experience and key success factors for transport corridors and cross-border integration areas“, the authors have made some conclusion concerning the need to build a multi-level governance culture for a better and more comprehensive cross-border policy implementation. Studying the approaches enabling the optimising of transport planning and development across borders, they conclude that the approaches rely on two main factors: leadership and reflexive argumentation/communication. Looking at the basic elements in MLG-driven planning processes across Europe, they have listed 9 elements. A comparison between the ‘generalised MLG elements’ and the planning processes in the IC Triangle is done in the figure below.

| Generalised MLG elements (Task 3.2 report) | InterCity Triangle - ENCN area |
|--|---|
| Establishing of solid and credible personal contacts and relationship among top-level decision-makers | Yes, representatives from ENCN, National Rail administration, members of Parliament and Government and different organisations |
| Identification of relevant public and private stakeholders and the needs of knowledge and best practice exchange | Seminars and working groups, meetings with representatives from transport organisations and the Ministry of Transport |
| Regular multilateral working session in various set-ups, to enable presentation of different viewpoints; find common interests and building of consensus around large scale trans-border benefits. | Yes, see above, not regular meetings , more ad hoc |
| Involving representatives of EU level institutions for topical guidance and support in setting a dialogue with national level authorities | No EU political contacts on any administrative levels, but cooperation and information through administrative contacts |
| Establishing of a stakeholder platform composed of representatives of all involved partners | No permanent stakeholder platform, but establishing <i>coordination group</i> for the whole IC Triangle to find the most effective planning regime for the different parts of the railway and urban areas |
| Developing and adoption of a binding cooperation framework (e.g. commitments of clearly specified responsibilities) Consistent presentation of shared strategic goals across governance tiers and towards national priority program /plans of the involved countries. | The National Transport Plan 2014 - 2023 will be the framework for the IC Triangle Project. The impact of the project will depend on cross-sectorial implementation and more comprehensive approaches |
| Developing specific projects eligible for EU funding and supporting preparation of real life business cases stimulating the interests of strategic market players. | No EU funding within Norway. Contacts with strategic market players/conveyors are established. EU funding only relevant in case of cross- border projects |
| Launching of expert platforms/observatories to supervise the technical preparation projects/investments and of optimization of final solutions | Norwegian Rail Administration has established a specific IC organisation from 2014-04-01 |

Closing remarks

In light of the ‘model’ outlined earlier in this report, the IC Triangle represents a kind of mixed traditional- and governance driven project in its present form. The emphasis has been given to find solution on how to come up with more effective planning processes, connected to the corridors, involving mainly public stakeholders.

For the development of new ‘node’”, it is yet not fully decided how this work will be organised. There will probably be more options. Urban development is clearly linked to how the station areas will be developed. The development must be done in a cooperation of different stakeholders, both public and private. That will be a clear cross- sectorial challenge which calls for a MLG approach.

The fact that IC Triangle now is defined as one project (from Oslo to Lillehammer-Halden-Skien) must be regarded as a clear victory for regional/local authorities. The work done emphasises close connection and dialogue between different stakeholders, and the leading force of ENCN in the communication process.

One critical point in the coming years will be the time frame and size of the project. Starting up in 2014 and completion in 2030 means:

- a) Several local, regional and national elections and possible change of governments, locally, regionally and nationally.
- b) State budget processes are partly unpredictable.
- c) The concept of IC-Triangle as one project is a challenging starting point. Challenging to stay focused for so long time, until 2030. Even today, early in the process, there are suggestions from different interest groups within the region for projects that will be partially competing for resources/attention. This requires some coordinating, unifying role over time for the IC Triangle project.
- d) The distinction between technical railway acceptable solutions and local/ regional policy development plans can be challenging.

6. THE WAY FORWARD IN THE INTERCITY PROJECT

Keeping focus

With reference to point c) above, the ENCN will initiate a **stakeholder forum** for IC development. Main objective to inform about the development of the project; address common issues, present new development projects of common interest, be a platform for introducing new stakeholders and get information on how the time schedule is followed up and need for major correction. Once a year the stakeholders in the IC Triangle could discuss the way ahead, find solutions in case of complicated common questions, aiming to solve problematic question in a most effective way.

The railway is suited to meet future demand for transport over long distances. As the backbone of the transport system, railway should be based on the most concentrated pattern of development around station areas. This calls for a close cooperation between local and regional stakeholders with the support of national development programmes. Some planning processes have already been carried out in many counties, presenting frameworks for development of more compact city centres.

Next step

Further exploitation of the IC network for freight traffic will be crucial. In that respect the planned interconnection between the IC Triangle and Sørlandsbanen (from Oslo to Stavanger) is important to put in place. The Government has started this process.

Another consideration is how the development of double-track from Halden to Öxnared (between the Norwegian border and Gothenburg in Sweden) should be treated - in the context of the IC Triangle or as a cross-border project at the national level.

The IC Triangle is defined as a national project in the National Transport Plan for 2014-30. But for several years, different initiatives have been taken to promote better connections between Oslo and Copenhagen. Thus - reducing travel time, create better opportunities for business cooperation, stimulate closer cooperation among universities etc.

There have been various initiatives to address the cross-border challenges. The way ahead could be:

- Development through different cross-border programmes to see what kind of opportunities are available.
- There has been an initial meeting between transport ministers in Sweden and Norway to discuss modernisation of the last part of railway between Halden in Norway and Öxnered in Sweden. One result may be to establish a Norwegian-Swedish planning group.

The development of new station-areas and/or revitalising old ones while developing new downtown areas calls for special focus on coordination with local, regional and national stakeholders.

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