

The Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics

The Northern Dimension Partnership on Transportation and Logistics (NDPTL) was established in October 2009, and is one of the four existing partnerships of the Northern Dimension. The current members of the NDPTL are Belarus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden and the European Commission.

It is envisaged that the NDPTL will accelerate the implementation of major infrastructure projects within the Northern Dimension region. With regard to expert work, the intention is for the partnership to serve as a regional forum for transport and logistics issues, and to complement the work of cooperation structures already in existence. It is envisaged that the financing of projects, promoted by the Partnership will come from national budgets, the EU and financial institutions.

A secretariat for the partnership will be set up within The Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) in Helsinki in early 2011. The Secretariat shall have a staff of a director and an assistant and shall provide administrative and technical support to the Steering Committee and High Level Meetings in their task of monitoring the implementation of the partnership.

Objectives of the Partnership

In general, objectives of the Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics are to promote cooperation in order to remove bottlenecks, accelerate transport channel-related projects in Northern Europe and coordinate cooperation on major issues in transport and logistics policy. NDPTL is a pan-regional initiative.

More specifically, the objectives of the partnership are set out in the Memorandum of Understanding signed in Naples on 21 October 2009 on a ministerial level by 11 countries and the European Commission:

- Work together to improve the major transport connections between the Northern Dimension partners to stimulate sustainable economic growth at the local, regional and global level by focusing on a limited number of priorities that reflect both the regional and national priorities of the Northern Dimension in a balanced way.
- Accelerate the implementation of transport or logistics infrastructure projects along the major transnational connections, and facilitate the approval of projects of mutual interest, through concerted project preparation and by offering faster access to a coordinated financial pool within the geographical scope of the Northern Dimension Partnership.
- Accelerate the removal of non-infrastructure related bottlenecks, including in particular the horizontal measures identified by the High Level Group and the recommendations of the ad hoc working group on logistics problems.
- Set up effective structures to monitor the implementation of the proposed projects and measures, and identify new bottlenecks and make recommendations for their removal.

Structure

The partnership is structured on the following three levels, composed of the relevant transport policy and decision makers:

- **High Level Meetings:** At times on a ministerial level, High Level Meetings take strategic decisions on the future development and priorities of the partnership.
- **Steering Committee:** Comprised of senior officials, the Steering Committee monitors the implementation of the partnership and ensures that the objectives are met and the agreed projects and measures are carried out as planned. To do this, the group currently develops tools and agrees on common methodologies and master plans for identifying and prioritizing transport and logistics projects within the Northern Dimension area. The group also assesses and identifies bottlenecks, proposals and priorities for projects and measures with the goal of removing the obstacles. The Steering Committee is the instance for deciding on working groups or task forces at expert level involving all or some of the partners so as to look into technical issues in more detail, when needed.
- **Secretariat:** The Secretariat will provide administrative and technical support to the Steering Committee and the High Level Meetings in their task of monitoring the implementation of the partnership. In the preparatory phase, WSP Finland Ltd. is acting as a consultant and coordinator for the project [NORDIM](#) financed by the European Commission.

Role of international financial institutions in the partnership

The capacity of the countries to mobilize the necessary funding, both at the national level and internationally, will be the key factor for successful implementation of the partnership and the investments along the transnational corridors. The involvement of international financial institutions (IFIs)—such as NIB, the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the World Bank Group—and relevant national financial institutions (NFIs) will be crucial in mobilizing the necessary funding. Therefore the IFIs, in liaison with the NFIs, are invited to reflect upon a new collaborative arrangement to advance the common objectives of the partnership.

Current status:

Inauguration of secretariat

A secretariat for the NDPTL has been inaugurated at NIB in Helsinki in November 2010.

Engaging assistants

There is as of yet no permanent leadership of the secretariat, but two assistants have been engaged to start work with setting up the secretariat. The assistants will commence work in January and February 2011.

Action plan

An action plan to be prepared for the NDPTL will include a methodology for project identification and evaluation as well as a list of priority projects. It can be expected that the project list will include infrastructure investments in railroads, such as Rail Baltica, linking the Baltic countries to Central Europe, and the Barents Link between Northern Scandinavia and the northern regions of Russia. The list is also likely to include airport enlargement projects, road building in all the Northern Dimension countries, and projects related to the 'motorways of the seas'.