



INTERREG IVB NWE Project

CODE24

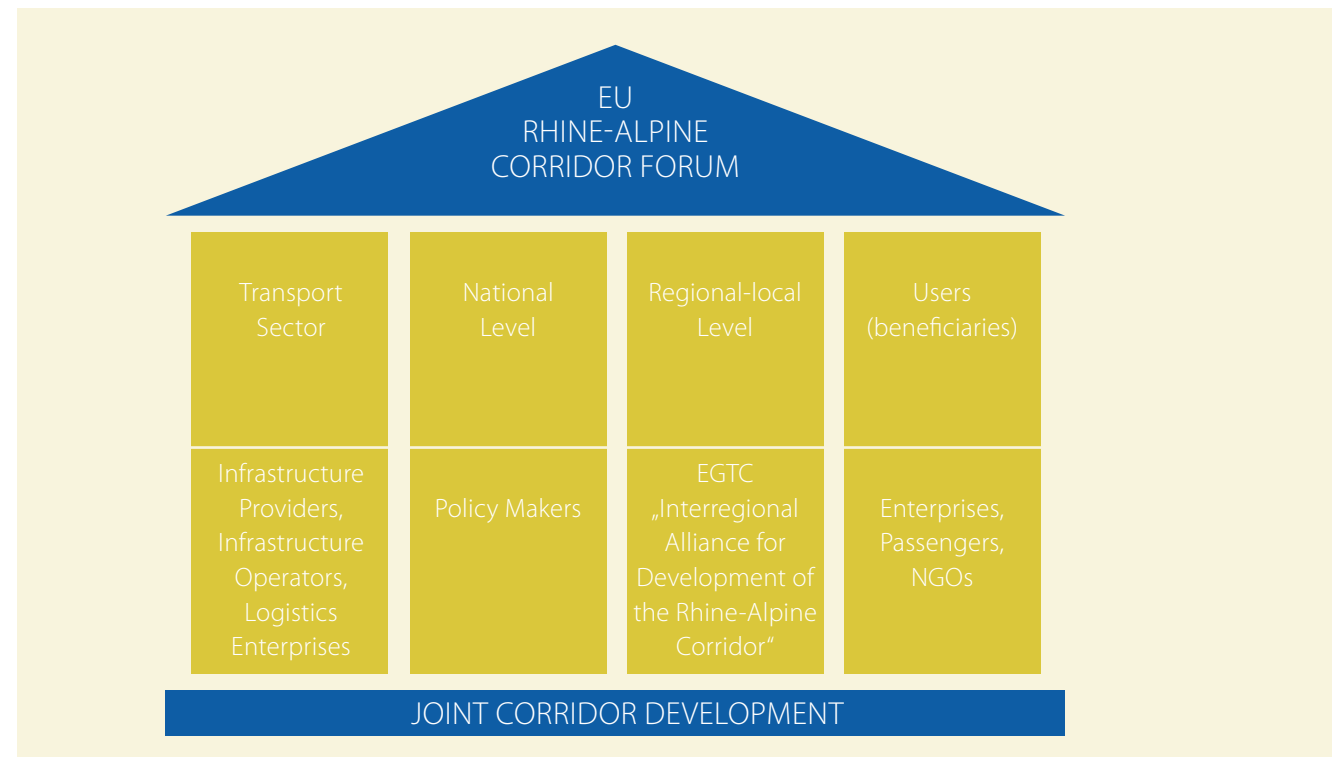
Corridor 24 Development Rotterdam – Genoa

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ONE CORRIDOR - ONE STRATEGY!

Towards an enduring interregional alliance
for the integrated and balanced development
of the Rhine-Alpine Corridor

1 Introduction



CODE24 is a bottom-up strategic initiative in the framework of the INTERREG IVB NWE program of the EU. The interconnection of economic development, spatial, transport and ecological planning along the TEN-T core network corridor Rhine-Alpine contributes to address urgent conflicts of capacity, sustainability and quality of life along the corridor. After five years, the CODE24 project partners present a common strategy for the future development of the Rhine-Alpine Corridor, the main transport corridor of Europe.

To tackle this task, an integrated planning of landscape, settlement and transport development is necessary for this densely populated and heavily used area. The acceptance of infrastructure development in all regions is only possible when the development for goods transport doesn't create any disadvantages for regional and long-distance passenger transport. As passenger transport in itself forms an important foundation for spatial development in all regions, the security and stimulation of this kind of transport needs to have priority.

Planning has to be carried out collaboratively by all stakeholders involved: the responsible authorities (international/national/regional/local), the transport sector and the users. For the international processing of activities in these spaces, as well as the implementation of the corresponding tasks, the relevant platforms for cooperation need to be created.

In order to continue the successful cooperation of CODE24, a follow-up organisation is in preparation with a proper legal personality. A European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) has been chosen as the appropriate form to join forces and to speak with one voice for its members. Thus, this EGTC representing the local and regional level should be considered the elemental stakeholder contributing to the joint development of the Rhine-Alpine Corridor as part of the Trans European Network.

2 Corridor Assessment

2.1 Main challenges

The CODE24 initiative identifies three main challenges to face developing the Corridor:

Stimulating international competitiveness

Effective use of capacity and an effective input of financial means on a European level offer a sound basis for the focus of settlements near transport infrastructures. As mobility is so essential for existing in an increasingly global economy, Europe needs to invest in sufficient and reliable infrastructure. Otherwise, it will not be able to keep up in international competition. If the Rhine-Alpine Corridor as the most important transport axis in Europe wants to keep its position it also has to face up to competition amongst European Corridors.

Setting priorities in financing

There is not enough public money available to be able to finance all the desired projects. The planned projects for solutions to reduce bottlenecks and accelerate the completion of the Rhine-Alpine corridor run up to a cost of around € 35 billion. To use the limited financial resources efficiently, priorities have to be set along the corridor and even more on European and national level. Possibilities for continued funding need to be found in order to maintain planning reliability for regional enterprises. A coordinated and integrated development for spatial planning and infrastructure is a necessity.

Using development potential

For a provident use of land and an efficient organisation of logistics and mobility, landscape and settlement development needs to be coordinated with transport infrastructure and service. The railway network and redevelopment reserves need to be valued to create a multifunctional axis which will strengthen the living and working environment in densely populated metropolitan regions and agglomerations between the North Sea and the Mediterranean.

2.2 Collaborative planning

The results of CODE24 regional workshops show that many regions along the axis have similar problems. It is also apparent that actions in one region have an effect on other regions along the Corridor. Therefore, the search for solutions needs to be a collaborative one. Along the Corridor, two lines of conflict repeatedly show up: 1) protection against railway noise caused primarily by goods transport, and 2) fear of displacement, i.e., limited development options for regional transport. Three postulates can be derived from this:

Integrated planning

The challenges of the Corridor have an influence on the spatial development of the regions involved. Solutions have to be found with participants from all areas. Only if all problems are on the table, enduring solutions can be found to avoid further “bottlenecks” in planning processes.

Involving stakeholders

The authority of the various officials for spatial and infrastructure development are distributed among several departments and administrative levels. The circle of affected stakeholders in functional spaces has little in common with the administrative authorities. Where future collaborative operations take place, collaborative planning and constructing should be done first. CODE24 EGTC offers a partnership that represents major interests along the corridor.

Create platforms

To find a solution for the most important coordination assignments, the parties that are relevant to the task need to be involved at an early stage. To do this, relevant platforms need to be created. One platform already available by 2015 is the EGTC initiated by the CODE24 partnership. Participation in European platforms is essential.

To test the feasibility of a project with regard to its acceptance by the population and its effect in the long-run, not only along the entire Corridor, but also for the population affected, the following criteria are regarded to be the minimum requirement for corridor projects:

- Regional support for the planning organisation
- Participation of the affected population
- Integrated regional spatial development strategy.

The planning of infrastructures is a long-term task. It can have preparatory lead times of twenty to thirty years. Building upon the TEN-T network the Rhine-Alpine Corridor needs more strategic time-planning (up to 2050) in order to secure the necessary space. However, this planning horizon leads to great uncertainty concerning the availability of new infrastructure and the resulting obviousness of spatial planning measures.

In contrast, spatial planning strategies and plans are of a relatively short-term nature in the area of settlements. They usually assume a time horizon of less than twenty years. These different time horizons for the development of settlements and infrastructures often lead to conflict. Therefore, it is important for the planning reliability of regional enterprises and private partners to have clear collaborative strategies as planning guidelines.

3 Strategy and Priorities

3.1 Setting development priorities

The development of the Rhine-Alpine Corridor needs European funding, e.g. from the Connecting Europe Facility. If funding is not sufficient, projects need to be prioritised according to criteria as agreed upon by the stakeholders involved in the CODE24 project and its related activities (e.g. regional round tables, etc.). Funding priorities should be considered for projects that:

Optimise the network, procedures and the cooperation of key players

Actual infrastructure still offers potential for improvements. Provisions that will advance disposability, i.e. redundancy, need to have priority status. Also projects aimed at optimising reliability, functionality and overall integration between transport modes, logistic clusters, terminals and spatial development especially with operational measures need to have priority. This goes far beyond investments in infrastructure and includes improvements in operational procedures as well as a wealth of business development activities.

Raise capacity

Increased speed in dealing with a node system offers only limited advantages to certain stretches, routes and relationships. Since at present, the node times for boarding relationships are mostly already adjusted, only great differences in speed are still advantageous. Raising capacity, also of terminals, however, quickly implicates advantages for all transport carriers.

Repair spaces and sustainability

Where negative externalities of infrastructure development inhibit the development of an area, it could mean impeded use of a larger redevelopment potential or a limitation of settlement and high-quality nature areas. A high noise exposure threatens healthy living and working conditions and a high level of quality of life along the Corridor on one hand and results in less acceptance of the corridor as such and all attempts to develop it further on the other hand. Noise control measures and landscaping therefore have a key role in a common strategy for the Corridor. The development of an electric fleet can enhance sustainability.

Accelerate speed

Europe is far behind in the use of high-speed trains. In China, the distance between Rotterdam and Genoa is covered, according to schedule, in about three hours. These kinds of times would make the train a worthy competitor of airplanes across the entire European continent. However, the population density of the European continent and the desired connections between cities and places of interest demand different strategies. Provisions for an increase in speed need to be implemented in places where other forms of operation will not be impeded.

Projects main findings

The CODE24 main project outputs support these priorities and identify a number of main projects. These project outputs are reflected the following table. These priorities do well reflect cost-efficiency effects in terms of improving the overall performance of the corridor. However it cannot be considered as a strict sequential order, as e.g. focal points of noise pollution may require immediate actions or already well prepared investments in capacity may be preferably implemented.

Priority „Provide Continuity“

- Corridor Info System CIS
- Collaborative Assessment Tool
- Case Study on Logistics Cluster Potential
- Feasibility Study of a Shuttle Train Northern Italy – Southern Germany
- Regional Accessibility Study
- CODE24 Transport Model for Economic Calculations
- Online Rail Freight Exchange
- Mobile Exhibition

Priority „Repair Spaces“

- Toolbox Environmental Compensation Management
- Planners Toolbox for Noise Protection
- Auralisation Tool

Priority „Raise Capacity“

- Corridor Info System CIS
- Collaborative Assessment Tool
- Test Planning Wesel
- Assessment Methodology for Land Potential in Inland Ports
- Master Plan Port.City.Mannheim 2035+
- Regional Accessibility Study
- Pre-permit Planning Node Lahr

Priority „Accelerate Speed“

- Optimal Timetable Concept

3.2 A common strategy

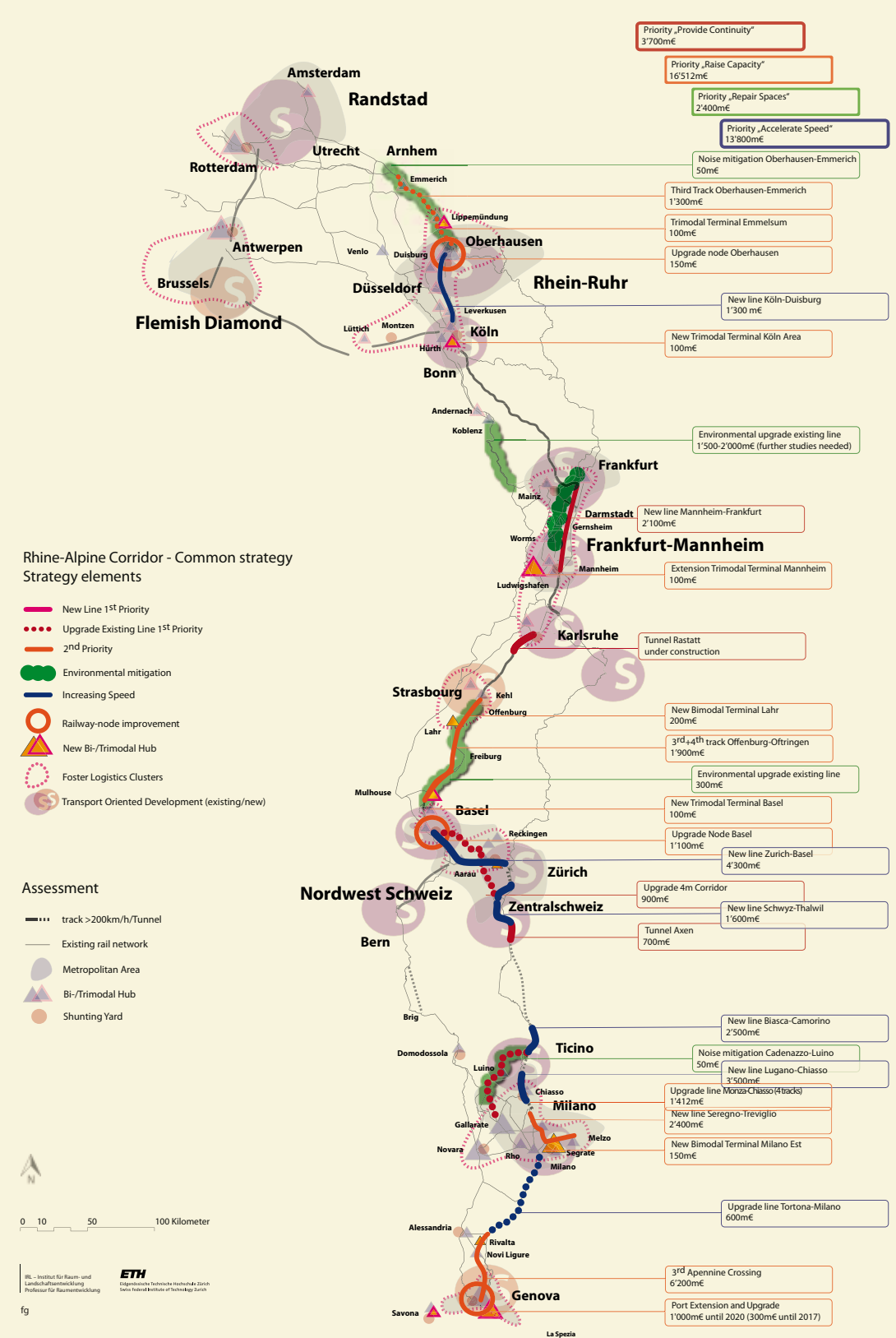
Capacity and reliability are clearly given preference over speed, with the argument that the smaller scale settlements in the catchment area of the Rhine-Alpine Corridor can only marginally profit from high-speed transport. Investments in mixed use lines instead create benefits for all transport modes. This suggests a strategy for the Corridor that prioritises improvement of capacity in the development of the infrastructure. The joint strategy is taking into account also measures for the coordination of infrastructure with the necessities of regional spatial strategies. Where necessary, modification or alternatives to existing infrastructures will be adopted to guarantee quality of life.

High-speed transport is not being realised along the Rhine-Alpine Corridor as a unified strategy, rather in places where capacity allows it without limiting other forms of transport in their development.

The priority treatment of passenger transport is being given up in favour of a management of the Corridor that prepares a sufficient amount of tracks for all categories of trains, with long-term security (e.g. ERTMS – European Rail Traffic Management System) and international coordination.

Regional railway systems share the goods sections where capacity allows for it. Where capacity is missing, regional «S-Bahn»-systems will be transferred to separate tracks.

The essential measures to bring to live this joint strategy are indicated in the following figure:



4 Conclusions

The common strategy for the development of the Rhine-Alpine Corridor as presented by the CODE24 partners in this paper provides the outlook for the future tasks of the EGTC „Interregional alliance for the development of the Rhine-Alpine Corridor“. The key lessons to be learned from the CODE24 results are threefold.

First, **continuing cooperation and development is vital**, both for the maintenance of the current physical infrastructure network and for enduring transnational coordination on the institutional level. The EGTC provides a useful platform to do this.

Second, **integrated planning of spatial, economic and transport development is key in creating sustainable and healthy living and working conditions along the corridor**. The EGTC takes this into consideration by joining local and regional perspectives in a bottom-up integrated regional development approach.

Finally, this paper has highlighted the **investment priorities regarding strategic transport infrastructure projects**. These projects are aimed first and foremost at increasing capacity along the lines and in the nodes. In a next step, projects aimed at accelerating speed along the corridor can also be considered. Besides such infrastructural investments, facilitating economic measures strengthening multimodal logistic developments will significantly contribute to the overall development of the Corridor. The joint strategy of the EGTC provides the right context to discuss and balance the future prioritisation of these projects.

In short, this paper has paved the way for the first steps to be taken within the EGTC towards the evolution of a joint development strategy for the Rhine-Alpine Corridor.

CODE24 Project Partners:

