

Modernisation & Maintenance of Infrastructure

Brief description and main aims:

The EU has one of the densest transport infrastructure networks in the world. Nevertheless, Europe's transport network is far from complete and a large part of it is now ageing and coming under increasing pressure due to a rise in traffic. The maintenance deficit has led to the deterioration of transport infrastructure as demonstrated by the collapse or frequent closure of bridges or as observed in the poor state of some road surfaces.

The *Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Regulation* is a core instrument at EU level for influencing Member States' infrastructure policies. Recognising the necessity of modernising the EU's transport system, the European Commission adopted new transport proposals in December 2021, among which the revision of the guidelines for the trans-European transport network. The TEN-T revision aims at addressing the missing links in the TEN-T network and upgrading it. The revised rules were adopted in April 2024 and introduce obligations on Member States with respect to maintenance.

Why FIEC is dealing with this topic:

The continuous maintenance of existing infrastructure is necessary to ensure the uniform quality of Europe's transport network. In addition to increasing the safety of users, a well maintained and modern transport network comes with various environmental benefits, by contributing to a more circular economy (thereby reducing raw material consumption and generation of waste) and by reducing CO₂ emissions.

FIEC has put a particular focus on the TEN-T revision. Key provisions from our perspective are those that refer to the maintenance of the network's infrastructure and the deployment of innovative infrastructure. Thanks to FIEC's intense lobbying over the past years, the revised rules will strengthen the approach with the regards to the quality of the TEN-T infrastructure and its maintenance, including the structural stability of critical assets such as bridges and tunnels.

As essential connecting points in Europe's transport network, the malfunction of bridges attracts particular attention. For this reason, FIEC has decided to set up a new Working Group called "*Structural Maintenance*". This group mainly focuses on problems related to the lack of maintenance of bridges and promote initiatives to tackle this issue.

Actions and key dates:

14/12/2021 – The European Commission publishes its proposal for the revision of the (TEN-T) Trans-European Transport Network Regulation ([FIEC Position Paper](#)).

20/04/2022 – FIEC sets up a new Working Group on "Structural Maintenance".

03/06/2022 – *Eurobridge 2022*: FIEC chairs the first *Eurobridge* conference. Subsequent [Eurobridge](#) conferences were held on 14/04/2023 and 05/04/2024.

18/10/2023 – Kick-off meeting of the Working Group of the European Commission's DG MOVE of the European Commission working group on decarbonising transport infrastructure. FIEC is represented by its President, Philip Crampton.

05/03/2024 – FIEC participates in the Intergroup event "*Infrastructure Maintenance and the Decarbonisation challenge*" held at the European Parliament.

24/04/2024 – The revised TEN-T guidelines are approved.