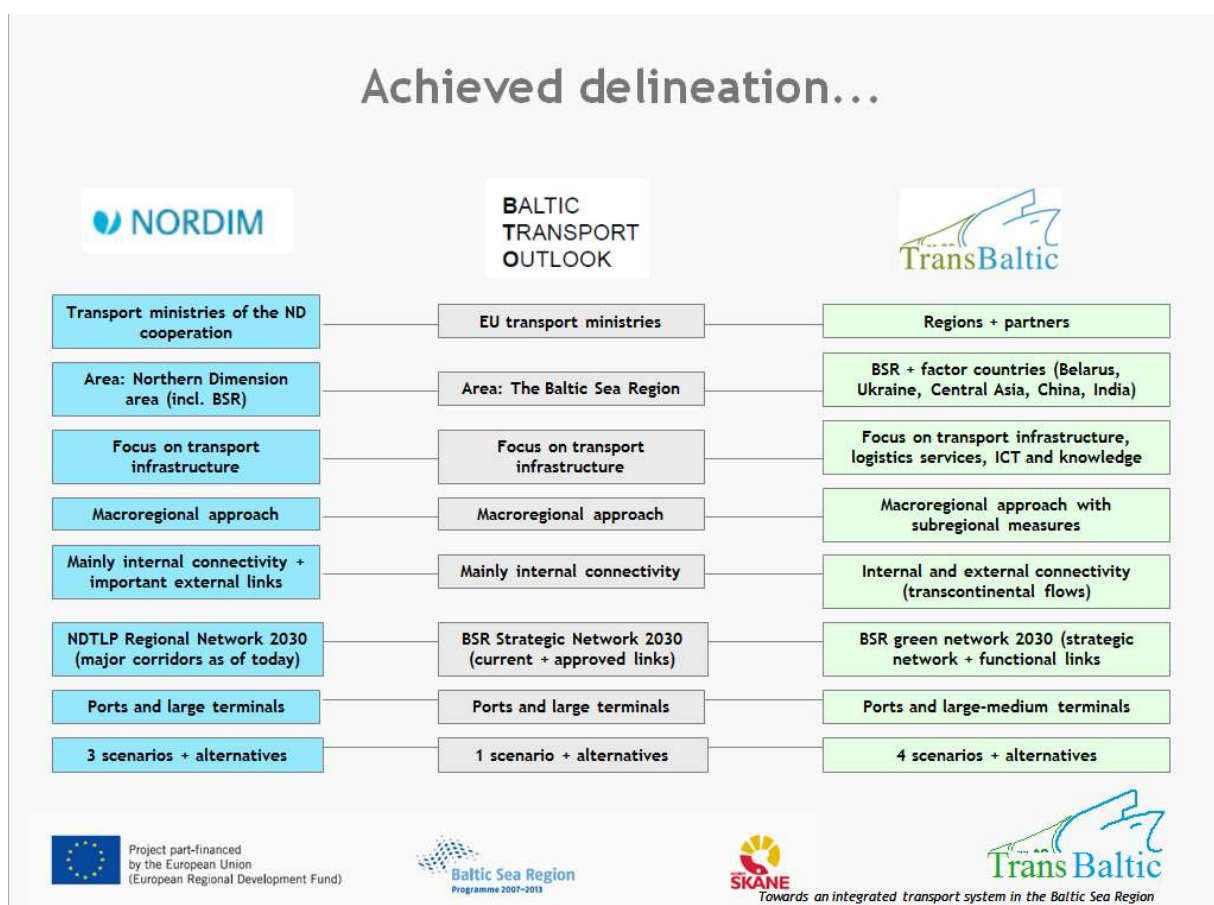


Baltic Transport Outlook - NORDIM study and TransBaltic

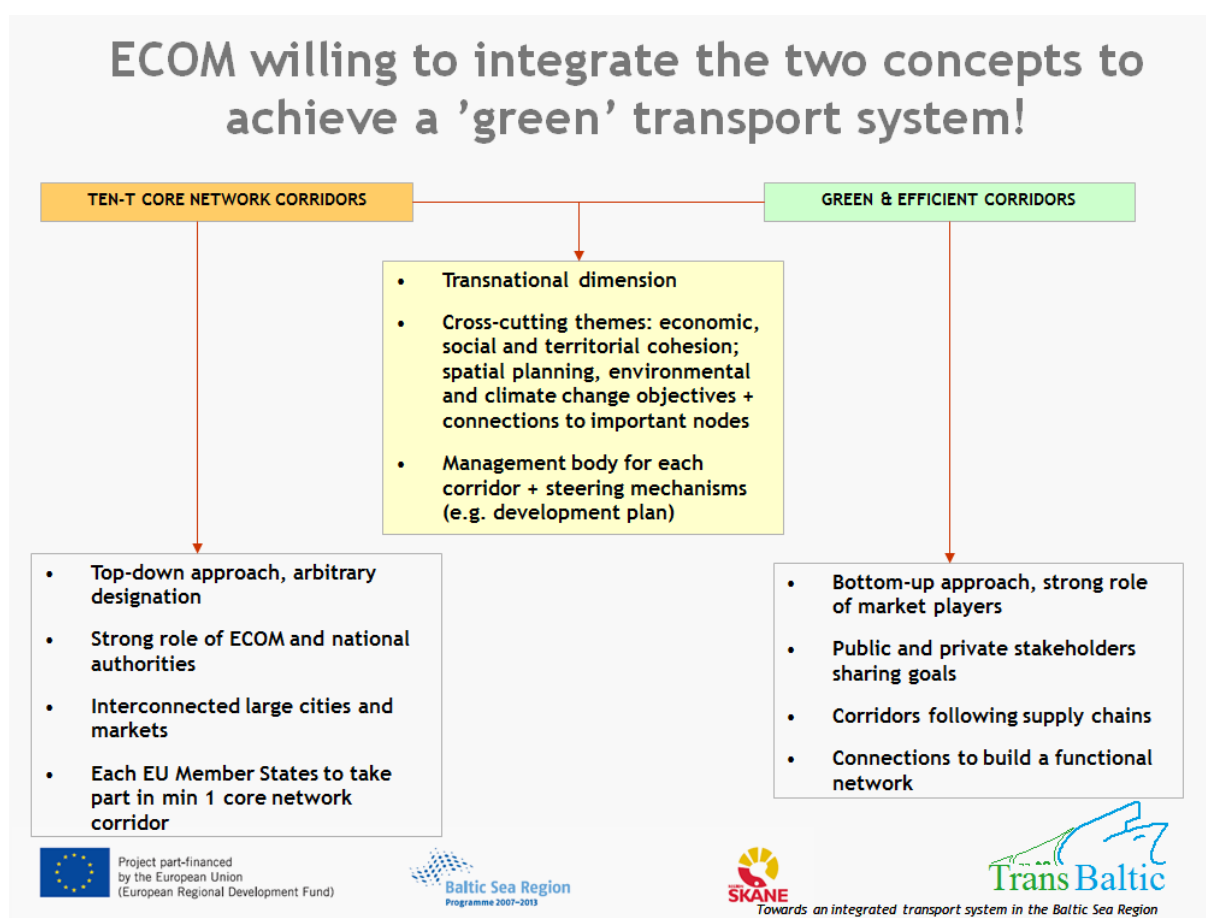
MEMO ON STREAMLINING OF THE THREE PLANNING PROCESSES

1. Joint transport planning at the macroregional level, as a part of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy (Priority Area Transport), requires a consistent decision-making basis. Before the start-up of the Baltic Transport Outlook, the NDPTL (supported by the NORDIM study) and TransBaltic, no instruments of this kind were available. The scattered traffic flow data, and different methodologies and models applied for networks in individual countries offered no fundament for the idea of the sustainable multimodal transport system at the Baltic Sea Region scale.
2. A decision-support tool in question must be able to:
 - a. Operate with reliable data encompassing important ongoing transport processes,
 - b. Detect relevant trends and tendencies both within and outside the BSR area that could affect the transport patterns,
 - c. Translate the processed facts and figures into policy messages and recommendations for action,
 - d. Formulate ideas to make the BSR transport system more consolidated (to make it not just a sum of national networks and policy frameworks) and resilient (to effectively accommodate future changes related e.g. with the global developments and market decisions).
3. The intergovernmental cooperation in transport has led to the development of two reports: the Baltic Transport Outlook and the NORDIM study. The former has delivered a **strategic network for the Baltic Sea Region** which shall correlate with the TEN-T core network but also contain connections to the important economic, social and territorial locations in the BSR countries. Meanwhile, the latter has come up with a **regional transport network** as a basis for priority projects (on both infrastructure and soft measures) of the Northern Dimension countries. As stated in the NORDIM report, approval of the NDPTL Regional Network in the final shape shall be made after the endorsement of the TEN-T core network.
4. The two studies, each on its own, are supposed to serve as a decision support tool in planning transport investments in more or less same geographical area and are pursued by the very same national governments (albeit often different departments or even ministries). Yet, they show considerable differences:
 - a. The NDTLP Regional Network results from a **sectoral approach** to achieving seamless international traffic along the links, which now carry the largest volumes. In contrast, the BTO Strategic Network combines elements of transport, socio-economic, and territorial planning, in an effort to increase not only the trade exchange rates but also the accessibility.
 - b. The BSR Strategic Network incorporates all links and nodes of the NDTLP Regional Network, but it shows a denser mesh of nodes and links both on land and on sea, with an additional layer of intermodal terminals. It also has separate lines for freight and passenger traffic.
5. The two networks overlap territorially, with the BSR Strategic Network extending into Russia despite absence of the Russian government in the Baltic Transport Outlook project, and the NDTLP Regional Network covering also the territory of European Union and Norway despite an accent placed on integration and interoperability between the transport systems of the EU and its neighbours (in other words, along the EU-Russia and Norway-Russia border, and in the adjacent zone where the investments could bring a transborder impact).
6. In order to mitigate this inconsistency, either the two networks shall end at the EU-Russia and Norway-Russia border (as they are compatible) or pre-requisites for approving the BTO Strategic Network on the territory of North-West Russia shall be put on the agenda of the NDPTL.

7. Clear declaration is needed, which of the two networks (or desirably the combination) will in fact be a reference for decisions on future projects in the transport system of the Baltic Sea Region to be taken by the European Commission, the EU Member States, Russia, Norway and International Financial Institutions. There is a visible threat that on account of budget constraints the above actors decide to prioritise projects located on the TEN-T core network and the NDPTL Regional Network (outside the EU borders). This would put the BSR Strategic Network in a position of merely an intellectual and one-stand exercise, with a question mark on further use of the Baltic Transport Outlook.
8. To this end, TransBaltic has brought up insufficient or so far unexplored knowledge on transport development processes, as an input to the PA Transport of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy, with such topics as:
 - a. Thematic scenarios and analyses resulting from the foresight process and sustainable regional growth perspective of the harmonised transport planning efforts in the BSR;
 - b. Analysis of the external connectivity and accessibility of the Baltic Sea Region as a potential transport gateway area for intercontinental flows;
 - c. Impact of specific policy regulations on the freight flow patterns and their territorial distribution.
9. The competence area/methodological approach of TransBaltic as an added value to the BTO and the NORDIM study, in the context of their very similar scope, is presented on the diagram below:



10. One of the most valuable inputs by TransBaltic in that regard is the contemplation of the transport greening proposals by the Commission, their translation to the Baltic Sea Region specificity (to the so called **green scenario**) and their territorial visualisation as the **network of green multimodal transport corridors**. Such a network forms a non-exclusive grid of those links within and across the BSR, which demonstrate economic efficiency and lower environmental nuisance in their performance and which are subject of policy interventions (harmonisation, steering mechanisms, quality supervision and operational management).
11. The two inputs above add a business-related dimension to the TEN-T policy and TEN-T core network corridors (see below), and provide an integrated concept, already appreciated by the Commission (DG MOVE).



12. The final product by TransBaltic, the Macroregional Transport Action Plan, specifies policy actions (many of them validated through pilots tested with the business community) to develop a sustainable multimodal transport system in the Baltic Sea Region. It delivers concrete ideas, which complement and further extend key messages and recommendations proposed in the Baltic Transport Outlook study. Similarly, the policy actions laid down in the Macroregional Transport Action Plan may be fed into the NDPTL planning process towards priority projects (soft and hard).
13. The three macroregional transport planning processes must be streamlined and synergised into a consistent decision-support tool, the attributes of which should conform with the postulates elaborated in point 2. The recently launched 'BSR TransGovernance' project may provide a reasonable framework (and resources) for this exercise. For that purpose the following steps may be taken into account:

- a. Establish a task force with representatives of the three planning processes,
- b. Analyse commonalities and differences between the processes through more in-depth investigation of the methodologies, scenarios, delineation of the networks and policy implications (with a reference to the effort made in the TransBaltic Policy Report 2011),
- c. Propose solutions to streamline results of the processes towards a consistent and durable decision-support tool for the joint infrastructure planning in the Baltic Sea area, including the territory of North West Russia, and, optionally, Belarus.

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