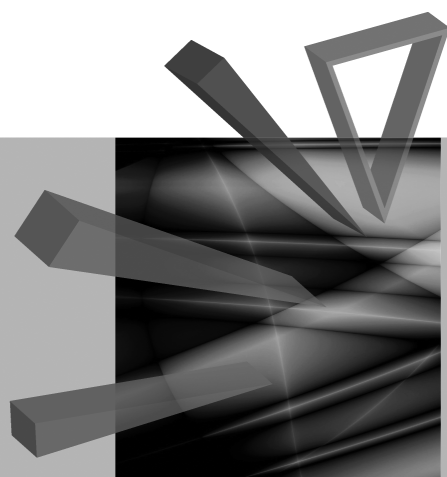


# Faces of Competitiveness in Asia Pacific



edited by  
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**TRANSPORT AS AN AREA OF CO-OPERATION  
BETWEEN INTEGRATING COUNTRIES  
IN EUROPE AND ASIA**

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**Summary:** Transport is one of the most important factors determining positive effects of an integration processes. This article is aimed at presenting a short characteristics of a transport policy directed at strengthening integration in selected integration groupings in Europe and Asia – the European Union and ASEAN, as well as in a loose co-operation forum APEC. The main focus is on the effectiveness of the co-operation in transport in the context of fostering benefits from integration as well as creating a competitive position.

**Keywords:** integration process, transport policy, European Union, ASEAN, APEC.

## 1. Introduction

Integration processes, extraordinarily important for regional, national and international economies and for the global economy, are stronger and stronger as well as more and more expressive all over the world. Trying to achieve as much as possible from the integration, different countries on all continents aim at fulfilling a lot of conditions determining the effectiveness and efficiency of co-operation at various levels. One of these conditions, which is very important at each stage of integration, is a developed, efficient transport system that generates a lot of positive effects. First of all, transport enables spatial distribution of economic activity, mobility of production factors, distribution of semi-finished and final products, division of labour as well as it increases the potential production of an economy.<sup>1</sup> Putting it simply, without properly organised transport and developed transport infrastructure there would be no or poor effects of an economic co-operation between countries, including the creation of free trade areas or more advanced integration forms. For this reason, transport plays a crucial role as one of policy areas seriously treated in many integration groupings that want to be successful. However, real and measurable results of a transport policy within an integration grouping or in some other platforms of co-operation depend

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<sup>1</sup> J. Platje, *Institutional Change in the Polish Economy since the 1970s – Incentives and Transaction Cost*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Nasz Dom i Ogród, Wrocław 2004, p. 44.

also on different conditions, which are often a great challenge to overcome. One can say that, on the one hand, there are some impulses aimed at economic integration between given countries, which could be considered as independent from the level of development of transport on that area. But on the other hand, it turns out that at a certain moment some deeper and wider actions are needed in the field of developing a common transport system in order to boost and even enable the continuation of an integration process.

In the article there are some examples of transport policy within integration groupings in Europe and Asia described from the point of view of improving the effectiveness and competitiveness of these groupings. For the comparative analyses the author chose: the European Union (considered as the most developed integration grouping in the world), ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, one of the most developed integration grouping beside Europe), and APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation, one of the most important cooperation platforms in Asia). As transport is an essential condition for a successful integration, the author tried to analyse at which level of development the particular co-operation platforms are in the context of developing a common transport policy and improving advantages from integration.

## 2. Common transport policy in the European Union

Transport was one of the EU's earliest common policies. The need for the creation of a common transport policy was included in the Treaty of Rome *inter alia* in order to ensure the possibility of implementing three of four freedoms. From the beginning the common transport policy was based on three main assumptions:<sup>2</sup> investments in transport infrastructure will bring many benefits in the field of the socio-economic growth and development; deregulation and liberalisation in the transport sector are essential for integration; logistic management plays a crucial role in improving transport processes all over Europe.

However, despite treaty obligations, effects of integrating the analysed sector across the Community were poor and slow until the late 1980s, which was connected above all with the attitude of member states, which were averse to give up the national control. Beside the collision of national interests and difficulties with estimation of national benefits from international investments, there were also other barriers for developing common transport policy related to the inequality of economic development and the development of transport infrastructure in particular member states, differences in the approach to transport policies in member states, lack of capital, different national regulations, technical requirements etc.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> W. Grzywacz, K. Wojewódzka-Król, W. Rydzkowski, *Polityka transportowa*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk 1994, p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> See: W. Januszkiewicz, Transport w Białej Księdze Unii Europejskiej, *Rzeczpospolita*, 6 October 1995, [supplement]; W. Rydzkowski, K. Wojewódzka-Król (eds.), *Transport*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2007, p. 445.

A real breakthrough in integration of transport began in 1990s, which resulted from intensified efforts to complete the European single market. Actions within the European transport policy comprised several key points. Firstly, focus was on transport providers from member states, which should be allowed equal access to all national markets within the Community. The EU set out guidance and (in some areas) regulations for common standards on many aspects of transport activity such as pollution, safety, transport pricing, environmental sustainability etc. The creation of European transport system, including most of all infrastructure, was also of great importance, which was reflected in substantial funding put into the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) of rail, roads, and waterways,<sup>4</sup> but also in national transport systems of new member states, most often characterised by underdevelopment or a lack of infrastructure. Improving logistic management, implementing intelligent transport systems, achieving sustainable transportation across Europe as well as in regions and urban areas, particularly affected by negative effects of transport activity are other examples of the co-operation within the common transport policy.

While describing in brief the European transport policy, it is not possible to mention all important actions and documents setting out directions of common ventures and regulations. But it is important to present shortly the assumptions of the last two White Papers<sup>5</sup> which were signs of tightening the co-operation and improving the quality and effectiveness of actions at the European level. In the White Paper *European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to Decide*, published in 2001, the European Commission proposed 60 measures aimed at developing a European transport system, which will enable and ensure shifting the balance between modes of transport, revitalisation of the railways, promotion of transport by sea and inland waterways, control of the growth in air transport as well as improvement of urban mobility.<sup>6</sup> At the beginning of 2011, the EU announced a new White Paper which comprises plans in 25 policy areas, concentrated on building a competitive transport system that will increase mobility, remove major barriers in key areas, and hamper fuel growth. According to the White Paper, by 2050, key achievements will include:<sup>7</sup> (i) no more conventionally-fuelled cars in cities; (ii) 40% use of sustainable low

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<sup>4</sup> *EU Facts, Transport*, CIVITAS, <http://www.civitas.org.uk/eufacts/FSPOL/EC7.htm> (date of access: 1.05.2011).

<sup>5</sup> The EU has published White Papers regarding transport once a decade since the 1960s, each White Paper underlines main problems and goals of a common transport policy and sets out the transport strategy for the forthcoming ten years (approximately).

<sup>6</sup> *European Strategies. White Paper – “European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to Decide”*, European Commission, DG TREN, [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies/2001\\_white\\_paper\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies/2001_white_paper_en.htm) (date of access: 1.05.2011).

<sup>7</sup> *European Strategies. White Paper 2011 – “Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a Competitive and Resource Efficient Transport System”*, European Commission, DG TREN, [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies/2011\\_white\\_paper\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies/2011_white_paper_en.htm) (date of access: 1.05.2011).



carbon fuels in aviation; at least 40% cut in shipping emissions; (iii) a 50% shift of medium distance intercity passenger and freight journeys from road to rail and waterborne transport; (iv) 60% cut in transport emissions by the middle of the century thanks to all above actions. These objectives draw up two most important challenges for the common transport policy for the next decades: implementation of sustainable transport as well as reducing Europe's dependence on imported oil.

Although there were many difficulties to overcome in the first decades of integration, finally the common transport policy brought a lot of positive effects across the Community.<sup>8</sup> The most significant benefits are: liberalisation (more or less advanced dependent on the transport mode), elimination of discrimination and unfair competition on the market, better safety in all transport modes, developed infrastructure in member states as well as across Europe, improved passenger rights, improved conditions for transport workers, common standards and regulations, reduction of many differences between member states, etc.<sup>9</sup> And, last but not least, all these effects contribute to the strengthening of benefits and advantages of socio-economic integration.

### 3. Developing transport policy within ASEAN

Similarly to the level of advancement of the economic integration, also the progress in transport integration is lower between the ASEAN countries than in the European Union. Though, there are some stable institutions and frameworks established as well as common actions undertaken and agreements made in order to create common transport policy. What is important, the transport sector is seriously treated by the grouping's leaders, at least in official statements. The ASEAN Transport Ministers (ATM), which was established in 1996 and meets annually, has stressed at many occasions that an efficient and integrated transport system is crucial for member states to achieve a series of goals, such as strengthening of AEC (ASEAN Economic Community), integration with the global economy, improvement of competitiveness, enhancement of the inflow of foreign direct investment, and even recovery after the last (2008) crisis.<sup>10</sup>

The common transport policy within ASEAN also comprises several significant areas. Main objectives and problem areas are key points of so-called "transport action plans". First *ASEAN Plan of Action in Transport and Communications* was set

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<sup>8</sup> It does not mean, of course, that there were no failures in the past and that there are no problem areas or delays with the realisation of planned actions within the common transport policy now. Moreover, one can argue that cabotage can threaten the potential national security in terms of operating transport infrastructure or that some carriers have advantages resulting from low labour costs in their country. See *EU Facts, Transport...*, *op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> W. Grzywacz, K. Wojewódzka-Król, W. Rydzkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

<sup>10</sup> *Transport and Communications*, ASEAN, 2009, <http://www.asean.org/7363.htm> (date of access: 1.05.2011).

for the period 1994-1996 and included six main issues: development of multimodal transport and trade facilitation; development of ASEAN inter-connectivity in telecommunications; harmonisation of road transport laws, rules and regulations in ASEAN; improvement of air space management in ASEAN; development of ASEAN rules and regulations for carriage of dangerous goods and industrial wastes on land and by sea; human resources development in transport and the communications.<sup>11</sup> The document was published in the time of creation of AFTA (ASEAN Free Trade Agreement) and probably reflected main transport goals needed in order to fulfil and enable its resolutions. After a period of “relative silence” and establishing of ATM meanwhile, there was the second document announced in 2004, namely the *ASEAN Transport Action Plan 2005-2010* (ATAP). As was stated in the paper, “For the period 1999-2003, ASEAN transport co-operation has been focused on the development of the trans-ASEAN transportation network, finalization of the ASEAN transport facilitation agreements, policy and development projects and studies, capacity building programs, and mutual sharing of best practices and experiences”.<sup>12</sup> The action plan was meant to be carried out through 48 proposed actions, specified in the annex and covering such fields of co-operation as: promoting efficient door-to-door cargo transport and cross-border transport facilitation; improving land transport network infrastructure; developing responsive regional maritime transport policies; promoting open-sky arrangements; enhancing transport security and safety in the regional supply-chain networks; pursuing environmentally sustainable regional transport strategies; creating enabling policy towards conducive environment for the increased private sector involvement and/or public-private partnerships; intensifying co-operative bonds with dialogue partners like China, India, and Japan; intensifying co-operation with international and regional organizations such as International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Maritime Organization (IMO), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB); promoting greater involvement of the ASEAN Airlines Meeting (AAM), ASEAN Federation of Forwarders Associations (AFFA), ASEAN Ports Association (APA), Federation of ASEAN Shipowners’ Associations (FASA), and Federation of ASEAN Shippers’ Councils (FASC).<sup>13</sup>

The successor plan for ATAP is the *ASEAN Strategic Transport Plan 2011-2015* (ASTP), also referred to as *Brunei Action Plan 2011-2015* (BAP). Based on a full assessment of the current situation in ASEAN and of the achievements in the implementation of the previous action plan as well as other related plans, the ASTP identifies strategic ventures to be implemented in the period 2011-2015 to

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<sup>11</sup> *ASEAN Plan of Action in Transport and Communications (1994-1996)*, ASEAN, <http://www.asean.org/7373.htm> (date of access 2.05.2011).

<sup>12</sup> *ASEAN Transport Action Plan 2005-2010*, ASEAN, 2003, <http://www.asean.org/16596.htm> (date of access: 2.05.2011).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*.

support the realisation of the AEC by 2015 as well as the new priority of enhancing regional connectivity identified in the *Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity* (MPAC). In the Action Plan there are strategic and operative objectives described, covering such important areas as completing some infrastructure investments, reducing road fatalities by 50% by 2020, developing intelligent transport systems and enhancing human, technical and institutional capacity. Focus is also on building an ASEAN Single Aviation Market (ASAM), accomplishing an integrated, efficient, and competitive maritime transport system, establishing integrated and seamless multimodal transport system and enhancing the competitiveness of ASEAN Logistics Industry as well as making the transport system more sustainable in all dimensions.<sup>14</sup> For the first time the document sets arrangements and rules necessary for a successful accomplishment of actions, including a common reporting and monitoring mechanism, roles and functions of particular sectoral working groups, rules and the need of mobilisation regarding financial co-operation as well as the necessity of engaging other stakeholders, such as private companies or research institutions. Simultaneously, there is an agenda for different projects and actions presented.<sup>15</sup>

In the context of integration, strengthening and developing co-operation with partners beyond ASEAN, namely Japan and China, there are also agreements made in order to facilitate the economic co-operation and improve trade and investment flows.<sup>16</sup> For example, in January 2011 there was a summit of foreign ministers from ASEAN member states and China aimed, among others, at discussing details of construction of a network of roads, railways and pipelines. This will contribute to the achievement of some important goals for countries in the region – realisation of ASEAN-China Free-Trade Agreement (2010), deepening of economic integration as well as protecting China's interests from the US rivalry.<sup>17</sup>

#### 4. Examples of co-operation within transport policy in APEC

The transport policy within APEC, as an economic co-operation forum and not an integration grouping, is supposed to be in some aspects different from the cases shortly presented earlier. Though, common actions and transport projects have the same main objective: contribution to the free and open trade in the Asia-Pacific region. Competences regarding the transport development are the domain of The

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<sup>14</sup> *Brunei Action Plan (ASEAN Strategic Action Plan) 2011-2015*, ASEAN, Jakarta 2010, <http://www.asean.org/25790.htm> (date of access: 2.05.2011).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>16</sup> *ASEAN Annual Report 2009-2010. Bridging Markets, Connecting People*, ASEAN, Jakarta 2010, <http://www.aseansec.org/publications/AR0910.pdf> (date of access: 2.05.2011).

<sup>17</sup> J. Chan, *ASEAN transport links boost economic integration with China*, World Socialist Web Site, 27 January 2011, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2011/jan2011/asen-j27.shtml> (date of access: 2.05.2011).

Transportation Working Group (TPTWG) and cover issues connected mostly with the liberalisation of transportation services, enhancing the safety of transport systems to encourage economic development in APEC, balancing security, safety and environmental requirements with trade facilitation, the development of intermodal supply chains and secure transport activity, and building the capacity of all stakeholders to help them reach the aim of free and open trade.<sup>18</sup> In 2007 the Transportation Ministerial Meeting took place with focus on three main themes: transport's role in trade liberalisation and facilitation, transport safety as well as transport security. In the 2007 APEC Transportation Ministerial Meeting there were also definite goals established, comprising:<sup>19</sup>

- aggressive road safety strategies tailored to the special circumstances of each economy,
- priorities regarding the harmonisation of security measures,
- help for developing economies comply with global security requirements,
- developing timetables and strategies to work towards the liberalisation of air services,
- working together on a balanced package of options for addressing greenhouse gas emissions from aviation.

## 5. Conclusions

Activities and efforts within transport policies of different forms of economic co-operation in Europe and Asia presented briefly in the present article show that transport plays a huge role in enhancing benefits from integration. In the twenty first century the EU can boast of the most successful effects of the common transport policy, including creation of a "single" European transport system. However, plenty of Asian countries face rapid economic growth and development and, for this reason, they have to meet the challenges and pressure resulting from the necessity of transport infrastructure development. The previous co-operation within ASEAN or APEC did not bring sufficient effects and, in many cases, transport seems to be rather a barrier now for further co-operation and integration progress as well as a threat for competitiveness rather than a facilitation, especially in terms of diversity at the level of transport development between for example ASEAN member states or its partners. Similar as the EU, ASEAN regional co-operation in transport was unsuccessful in the first decades of integration, which can be explained by several causes:<sup>20</sup> the absence of a coherent set of objectives for transport co-operation, domination of national

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<sup>18</sup> *Transportation*, APEC, <http://www.apec.org/Home/Groups/SOM-Steering-Committee-on-Economic-and-Technical-Cooperation/Working-Groups/Transportation> (date of access: 3.05.2011).

<sup>19</sup> *2007 APEC Transportation Ministerial Meeting*, APEC, [http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Ministerial-Statements/Transportation/2007\\_transport.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Ministerial-Statements/Transportation/2007_transport.aspx) (date of access: 3.05.2011).

<sup>20</sup> K.S. Sandhu, *The ASEAN Reader*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1992, pp. 277-278.

priorities over the common interest, difficulties in project identification, formulation and implementation, including financing problems. Some of these obstacles were overcome during the next years of deepening and strengthening of integration, which is visible also in brief description of the ASEAN's transport policy. Though, results of transport co-operation are still insufficient for the "Seamless Asia". According to the ADB (Asian Development Bank) this situation is connected with: inadequate legal and regulatory frameworks, weak governance and institutional capacity, low operational efficiency and complex procedures, insufficient mechanisms for regional co-operation.<sup>21</sup> These are main differences between Asian and European models of co-operation and integration. But on the other hand, ADB argues that ASEAN+3, ASEAN+6, and APEC as "large and strong regional groupings or forums" could take the leadership of Pan-Asian co-operation within transport and transport infrastructure construction.<sup>22</sup>

The importance of well developed and organised transport system for fostering integration benefits and effects seems to be indisputable. However, there is one more issue to consider. Namely, the leading economies of ASEAN and APEC face a better pace of economic growth and development than many of the EU member states, which is reflected to some extent also in the level of competitiveness. Moreover, their position in the global economy is stronger and stronger, which is connected among others with intensification of integration processes, especially with such partners as Japan and China, becoming the major trade partner of ASEAN. And – what was signalled – the co-operation in transport is here an important point of mutual meeting, agreements, and co-operation.

In the light of the aforementioned considerations one can argue that transport is really a necessary condition of a successful integration process, enabling and fostering socio-economic benefits, but for sure not a sufficient condition of creating and improving potential and competitiveness of integrating economies in the regional, continental scale as well as in the global arena.

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<sup>21</sup> *Infrastructure for a Seamless Asia*, Asian Development Bank and Asian Development Bank Institute, Tokyo 2009, pp. 146-148.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 151.

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## TRANSPORT JAKO OBSZAR WSPÓŁPRACY W INTEGRUJĄCYCH SIĘ KRAJACH EUROPY I AZJI

**Streszczenie:** Transport stanowi jeden z najważniejszych czynników determinujących pozytywne efekty procesów integracyjnych. Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu krótką charakterystykę polityki transportowej nastawionej na umacnianie procesów integracyjnych w wybranych ugrupowaniach integracyjnych Europy i Azji – Unii Europejskiej oraz ASEAN, a także w luźnym forum współpracy APEC. Główny nacisk położono na efektywność kooperacji w dziedzinie transportu pod kątem czerpania korzyści z integracji, jak również budowania pozycji konkurencyjnej.