Transport and regional development: Taking trade and tourism beyond urban centres

Hall 1, Level +1
Friday, May 29, 2015, 11:00 - 12:45

In the early 1990s, Norway looked more closely at the combination of roads, natural landscape and tourism as a means of boosting regional development in the rural areas of Norway. The National Tourist Routes attraction is an example of how transport planning can increase trade and tourism in the regions. The attraction consists of 18 selected stretches of road from north to south, which pass through some of the country’s most beautiful natural landscapes. Along each stretch, Norway is building viewing points and rest areas featuring new, modern architecture. Development work is expected to last until 2023, by which time around 250 different constructions will have been constructed. The National Tourist Routes attraction is under government development and ownership to ensure long-term quality and consistency.

JR Kyushu was part of Japan’s national railway company, based on Kyushu Island. Operating within a severe business environment, characterized by shrinking population and car-centered societies, JR Kyushu adopted a strategy, whereby it kept the railway business as its core, but moved into other businesses to achieve synergistic benefits, while developing together with the region. Luxury cruise train “Seven Stars in Kyushu” is the culmination of this strategy. The Japanese government has highly praised JR Kyushu’s initiative to contribute to the region and revitalize local economy and plans to publicly list JR Kyushu.

The emergence of polycentric metropolitan areas requires new institutional arrangements and efficient mobility solutions for the connections between the different sub-centres of these areas. Mobility in outer parts of metropolitan areas in different European countries is challenging. New solutions for mobility in outer parts of metropolitan areas are emerging, such as IT-based demand-response transport services (e.g. Danish coordinated model for Demand Responsive Transport system) and community-based initiatives (e.g. Blauen ride-sharing system initiated with Carpostal; peer to peer e-carsharing in Austria in small municipality). The lessons learnt from these experiences in terms of governance, organization and business case show that coordination between local authorities is very important to reduce cost and meet demand more efficiently. Key to success is organizing the complementarity between “traditional” public transport and new mobility services in order to provide a complete mobility offer. It is necessary to develop mobility solutions adapted to populations’ needs.

Chile’s geographical features (desert, huge mountains, islands, archipelagos) make the
country difficult to connect. However, Chile has ensured the connectivity of the whole country through regional subsidies for public transport. These subsidies are supported by a specific law and cover different types of subsidies: tariff rebate in order to make public transport more affordable, special subsidies to services that connect isolated areas, rural connectivity, subsidies to busing (school buses), different modes of transportation and subsidies to finance new infrastructure. An important feature of these subsidies is that they are “competitive funds”, allocated to the best offered project. There has been progress, for example the service Puerto Yungay-Pto Natales. In this part of the country, the continent gets fragmented and many areas are isolated. The connectivity encourages the local production and also facilitates tourism. However, it is very difficult to assess these services, incorporating the tourism aspect.

Cycling tourism is a booming business. Its economic impact matches the impact of cruise (ship) tourism (i.e. 44 billion € per year), but goes directly to SMEs and therefore generates more tax income, as well as jobs. Bike tourism has grown by 20% in recent years, yet public support is needed. Authorities and operators have to make a stronger effort to promote the European cycling networks, such as the Iron Curtain Trail, in combination with all cross-border rail services, including high-speed and night trains. Intermodality presupposes the option of taking one’s bicycle along on high-speed and international trains.

Quotes

“For mass transit, there is no other way than public transportation, but then indeed when we enter into some diluted places where density is lower, then a combination with these new shared mobility modes is really the way to do it”. Alain Flausch

“Subsidies can get out of hand quickly, particularly when you have a lot of political pressure. So, it is important to have formal laws and regulations to determine their scope”. Andrés Gómez-Lobo

"Subsidised public transport services to provide access to remote communities definitely have an impact on development. It’s not now, it’s not in five years, but definitely in twenty years’ time”. Andrés Gómez-Lobo

“The more bicycles are on the road, the safer it will be”. Michael Cramer

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**Speaker**

**Andrés Gómez-Lobo**  
Minister of Transport and Telecommunications  
Chile

Andrés Gómez-Lobo is Chile’s Minister of Transport and Telecommunications. He was chief of staff of the Ministry of Transport between 2008 and 2010. As a consultant, Gómez-Lobo has advised public and private organizations on issues of infrastructure, natural resources, grants, public transport and telecommunications, including the World Bank, National Economic Prosecutor, Civil Aeronautics Board and Ministry of Public Works. He has served as Academic Director of the Masters in Public Policy and Academic Director of the Diploma in Territorial Policies, Urban and Environmental Faculty of Economics, University of Chile.

**Speaker**

**John-Ragnar Aarset**  
State Secretary  
Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications

John-Ragnar Aarset has been State Secretary at the Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications since 2013. The political post as state secretary in Norway’s government ministries was gradually introduced from 1947. The state secretaries and the political advisers are the political collaborators of the prime minister and the ministers. Prior to this Aarset was first then second Deputy Representative to Parliament for Buskerud between 2001 and 2009. Since 2000 he has been Chairman and member of The Decision Committee, The Norwegian Young Conservatives.

**Speaker**

**Michael Cramer**  
Member of the European Parliament  
Chairman of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

As a Member of the European Parliament, Michael Cramer works mainly on European Union (EU) transport policy. After ten years as transport policy spokesperson for the Green group, he was elected chairman of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) in July 2014. He initiated the "Iron Curtain Trail" project. This project transfers the concept of a "bike ride through history" from the "Berlin Wall Trail" to the European level. The "Iron Curtain Trail" stretches for approximately 10 000 km from the Barents Sea on the Norwegian-Russian border all the way down to the Black Sea, crossing 20 countries, 15 of which are today member states of the European Union. The project is co-funded by the EU as a model for sustainable cultural tourism. Cramer is also a Member of the European Parliament’s delegation to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and chairs the parliamentary platform “Rail Forum Europe”.

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**International Transport Forum**

2015 annual summit

**Session Summary**
Alain Flausch was elected Secretary General of the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) in 2011. He has been the Association’s President from 2009 to 2011 and was President and member of different UITP Committees and Commission from 2004 to 2009. From 2000 to 2011, as CEO of the STIB, the Brussels public transport operator, Flausch led the STIB through an in-depth cultural change. Before 2000, Flausch was active as top manager in the television and chemical industries.

Mamoru Tsutaka was appointed Director, General Manager of Oita Regional Office of the Kyushu Railway Company in 2012. Prior to this, he was General Manager of Track and Facilities Department from 2009 to 2012. His previous roles include General Manager of Miyazaki General Railway Operations Department and General Manager of Shinkansen Railway Operation Department. Tsutaka holds a Master’s Degree from Kyushu University’s Faculty of Engineering.

Matt Frei leads ITN’s Channel 4 coverage of the Americas and is also part of the presenting team across Channel 4’s news and current affairs portfolio, including the award-winning Dispatches programme. Previously, Frei anchored the BBC World News America bulletin and was also Washington Correspondent. He presented a weekly radio show called Americana, and in 20 years at the corporation reported from Bonn, Rome, Bosnia, Kosovo, North Africa, Hong Kong and Singapore.