

The 2015 Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan

Work is currently underway at the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure to draw up a new Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan (FTIP). The new FTIP will be presented before the end of this year. One component in the preparation of the 2015 FTIP will, for the first time, be a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the aim of which is to take environmental considerations into account at an early stage.

1. Subject matter of the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan

The 2015 FTIP will comprise the projects involving capital investment in the federal transport infrastructure which the Federal Government wishes to implement over the period to 2030. The federal transport infrastructure for the construction and structural maintenance of which the Federal Government is responsible consists of the federal railway infrastructure, federal waterways and federal trunk roads. In addition, the Federal Government is responsible for infrastructure linking seaports, inland ports, airports and freight villages to the federal transport infrastructure network. These installations are not, however, part of the federal transport infrastructure.

The 2015 FTIP will be sub-divided into a) investment in the structural maintenance and replacement of the existing infrastructure, b) ongoing projects and c) planned construction and upgrading projects.

a) The FTIP will identify the total requirements (no individual projects) for investment in structural maintenance and replacement infrastructure for each mode of transport. To this end, separate forecasts of structural maintenance requirements for the road and waterway modes have been prepared. For the railways, the necessary investment in structural maintenance and replacement infrastructure was assessed within the scope of the negotiations on the service level and funding agreement for the existing network.

b) Ongoing projects will not be reappraised, but they are described in the FTIP. These are projects that are already under construction, or where it can currently be assumed that construction is likely to have commenced by the end of 2015, or for which a concession contract exists or is likely to exist by the end of 2015 within the scope of a public-private partnership (PPP).

c) The main body of the FTIP will comprise construction and upgrading schemes which have been included in the FTIP, with their appraisal results, as an individual project or as a package of projects, provided that they prove to be worthwhile. This includes the construction of new and the upgrading of existing sections, locks or major rail junctions or solitary federal motorway nodes. Depending on the mode of transport, the focus of the construction and

upgrading schemes contained in the FTIP will be on significant capacity enhancement (especially roads and railways) or quality improvement (especially waterways).

Other investment going beyond this (for instance noise mitigation measures or cycle tracks on roads for the construction and maintenance of which the Federal Government is responsible) will not be the subject matter of the FTIP.

2. Appraisal of the notified upgrading or new construction projects before inclusion in the FTIP

When the FTIP is being prepared, every notified upgrading and new construction project is reviewed to determine whether it is beneficial and necessary in macroeconomic terms. This is done on the basis of the traffic forecast for 2030. First, the effects of the measures in the transport infrastructure project are determined (impact forecast). Subsequently, the effects of these measures are valued. Thus, for instance, the time gains for the transport user (in hours), increased exposure to noise (in dB(A)) or land take (in hectares) resulting from the project to be appraised are calculated. In the cases of the monetizable components, the effects are valued on the basis of cost or value estimates (in this example, time costs in euros per hour, noise costs in euros per dB(A)). Non-monetizable project effects are likewise quantified, so that they can subsequently be valued. However, they are not monetized. A total of four appraisal modules are used.

Module A: Benefit-cost analysis

The monetized effects are captured in a benefit-cost analysis (BCA). As its outcome, it delivers a macroeconomic benefit-cost indicator that reflects the profitability of the funds committed. The BCA comprises beneficial effects such as reductions in freight transport costs, road safety effects, environmental effects (such as noise, CO₂ emissions and emissions of air pollutants) and accessibility indicators (journey time gains).

Module B: Environmental and nature conservation appraisal

A BCA cannot reflect all environmental effects. This applies in particular to the impact on high-quality areas (such as priority nature conservation areas, Natura 2000 sites, unfragmented core areas of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation's habitat networks or floodplains). Thus, in the environmental and nature conservation appraisal, various criteria are used to examine whether, and if so to what extent, such areas will be or could be affected by the implementation of a construction/upgrading project as a result of land take, severance effects, reconnection of habitats or traffic passing through. These impacts are quantified and classified in appraisal categories, such as low, medium or high environmental impact. To be able to compare the various transport projects in terms of their environmental effects, a statement on the overall environmental impact of a project is made.

Module C: Spatial planning appraisal

The spatial planning appraisal comprises the non-monetizable connectivity and accessibility qualities. This involves, on the one hand, measuring shortcomings in the connectivity qualities between higher order centres and the cores of metropolitan regions. On the other hand, the accessibility of regions is examined in terms of the nearest infrastructure (for instance motorway junction, airport, mainline railway station). Unlike the BCA, which captures the macroeconomic network-wide total accessibility improvement in the form of journey time gains, the spatial planning appraisal takes into account aspects of distribution theory, such as the issue of minimum levels of accessibility for regions.

Module D: Urban development appraisal

The urban development appraisal of transport infrastructure projects reflects the objective of reducing traffic levels in built-up areas to improve living and working conditions, especially through road projects. This includes, for instance, new land-use options on roads passing through the centres of towns and villages (e.g. amenity areas such as squares) or refurbishment effects (e.g. renewal of adjacent buildings) through the reduction of high traffic volumes in town and city centres.

A total of over 2,000 construction and upgrading projects have been notified for appraisal. These are split among the modes of transport as follows: federal trunk roads – around 1,500; federal railway infrastructure – around 400; federal waterways – around 45 projects.

3. Prioritization of projects

With the "basic approach", the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure has presented the guidelines for stringent prioritization in the FTIP. The principle is that structural maintenance will take precedence over construction and upgrading and that the projects will be prioritized in line with needs and in a transparent manner. For proposed projects appraised as being worthwhile, various priority categories are available: first priority with first priority plus and second priority with second priority with planning go-ahead.

This means that urgently needed long-distance projects are explicitly flagged. The first priority plus category will be awarded to those projects which, from a professional perspective, have an especially high transport importance and should thus be implemented as early as possible. The focus will be on removing bottlenecks on main arteries and junctions of the transport network.

4. Implementation of the FTIP

Following the process of consultation with the public and authorities, the revised draft 2015 FTIP will be presented. The plan will then be adopted by the Cabinet. The FTIP is the basis on which the German Bundestag will subsequently, in the Upgrading Acts, take a binding decision as to which projects are to be implemented. This means that the project lists of the

2015 FTIP will be statutorily established by parliament. Because of this referral to the Bundestag, there may be deviations from the FTIP.

The FTIP does not stipulate any times for the implementation of projects. For a project to be delivered, it must have been given construction go-ahead. This means that, following adoption of the FTIP, each project has to go through a separate planning and approval procedure. If a project has been given construction go-ahead, it can be implemented if funds are available. As part of its annual budget preparation, the German Bundestag decides which projects can be funded.

5. Consultation with the public and authorities on the 2015 FTIP

Consultation with the public and authorities on the FTIP will take place within the scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). An SEA is conducted to identify, describe and appraise potential significant environmental effects of implementing the plan/programme in question.

The focus of the SEA and the consultation exercises is the overall plan level. The objective is to obtain information on the overall FTIP and, in particular, its environmental impact. In addition to the non-technical summary, which sets out the findings of the environmental assessment documented in the environmental report, it will be possible to inspect project-specific details of the draft plan at individual project level and to submit comments. Comments relating to individual projects, however, are only relevant if they have an impact on the overall plan. This is the case, for instance, if information comes to light that casts serious doubt on the proof of need for the projects (such as errors in the appraisal).

The Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure will only evaluate comments with well-founded arguments on FTIP decisions. Purely judgemental expressions of opinion ("the project is good") cannot be taken into account. The consultation exercise is not a coordination procedure. There is thus no offsetting of comments "in favour" and comments "against". The contents of comments with identical contents that are submitted more than once will only be taken into account once.

Likewise, the comments must be related to FTIP decisions. The exclusive object of the FTIP is the question as to whether there is a general transport need for a project. How the project is to be designed in detail will be fleshed out in the downstream planning procedure. Accordingly, specific project-related comments on impacts (noise mitigation for individuals, impact on protected species) are to be submitted in downstream administrative procedures such as the spatial impact assessment, the determination of the alignment or the plan approval procedure. At that stage, the individual project and its effects at the regional and/or local level will be examined further and in more detail.

All comments will be reviewed to determine whether they are relevant to the overall plan. They will be screened and examined by external consultants and the Federal Ministry of

Transport and Digital Infrastructure itself. Given the high number of likely comments, they will not be answered or published individually, but will be dealt with in a consolidated form in a report on the consultation exercise. If, on the basis of a comment, it is imperative or appropriate for technical, substantive or legal reasons, the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure will adapt the FTIP. The consultation exercise will end with the submission of the revised version of the FTIP, which will be the basis for the cabinet decision.