

Resolution:

Improved rail links between Oslo and Gothenburg/Stockholm.

Background

Regional and national politicians, representatives from transport authorities and transport organizations in both countries, and representatives from Norwegian and Swedish business organizations met in Oslo 23 May to discuss the cross-border rail connections between Oslo-Gothenburg and Oslo-Stockholm

The Mayor of Oslo, Raymond Johansen, and the Chairman for Transport in Gothenburg, Johan Nyhus, initially in their speeches referred to the very good relationship that exists between Norway and Sweden. The two countries have very close ties both socially/culturally and economically. Both speakers wanted to strengthen the close cooperation further, by building an improved cross border rail-infrastructure between the two countries. The County Mayor of Ørebro, Maria Larsson, emphasized in her speech at the end of the conference that it now is urgent to get some action in establishing new and improved rail links between Oslo- Gothenburg and Oslo -Stockholm.

From words to action

All the large towns in the Nordic countries are growing. It is hence necessary to enforce the work and cooperation related to land-use and transport planning between and inside these towns. By improving and building better and more effective rail connections between the towns, and linking up with Europe, one can shift a lot of the future growth in passenger traffic (car- and air traffic) to the railways. Furthermore, a railway system with sufficient capacity will also lead to the shift of freight from road to rail. Hence, this will show that one seriously tries to alleviate the climate challenges according to the commitments in the «Paris Environmental Agreement».

The organizers of the conference fully support the political signals given at this conference. We see it as an important task to try and establish a close and committed cooperation between the Norwegian and Swedish authorities in their national planning and rail projects in order to get more action in the planning, and to create modern and efficient rail links between Oslo-Gothenburg and Oslo-Stockholm.

In order to accelerate this planning process, one should also look into alternative financial and organizational models which might contribute to quicker planning and infrastructure implementation.

Oslo-Stockholm

Establishing a modern and more effective railway link between Oslo and Stockholm can reduce travel time between the two cities to less than 3 hours. This will lead to strengthened cooperation, increased growth and business development along the whole transport corridor between the two metropolitan cities. At present more than 1,4 millions passengers travel by air between Oslo and Stockholm every year. These trips could to a large extent be transferred to the railway system.

The Swedish Railway Authority are in the process of carrying out a feasibility study (ÅSV) on the railway section between Stockholm and Oslo. This proves that the Swedish Authorities see the importance of improved rail infrastructure in this corridor. It is hence important that the Norwegian

Parliament also is clear on this point, when discussing and treating the Norwegian Transport Plan 2018-2029 (NTP) in the Spring 2017. One must be active in following up the Swedish initiative and quickly initiate a comprehensive and coordinated study with regard to an improved railway link between Oslo and Stockholm. The planned study between Oslo and Kongsvinger in Norway (KVU) ought to be coordinated in such a feasibility study.

Oslo-Gothenburg

More than 2500 lorries cross the Norwegian/Swedish border at Svinesund every day, and the growth in both passenger and freight traffic between Norway and Europe/Continent is considerable. As a comparison, one freight train crossing the Norwegian/Swedish border at Kornsjø, can carry the same number of containers as 40 lorries. In order to succeed in the ambition to shift more freight from road to rail, one needs therefore to prioritize the rail connection between Oslo-Gothenburg and further on to Europe/Continent.

Norwegian and Swedish authorities must therefore now formalize the cooperation by establishing a common feasibility study (KVU/ÅSV) as soon as possible, in order to start the planning of the rail link on the whole distance between Oslo and Gothenburg. It is desirable that the Norwegian Government in connection with the decision and treatment of The Norwegian Transport Plan 2018-2029 takes the initiative to establish a common feasibility study (KVU/ÅSV) for developing a continuous dual rail track on the whole distance between Oslo and Gothenburg. Such an order on the Norwegian side would be very positive with regard to the upcoming discussion and treatment of the «Swedish National Transport Plan».

Final comments

The railways should be the backbone of the future Nordic transport system and the use of rail should be the preferred form of transport. We refer in this regard to the description of «The Nordic Triangle» in the Norwegian Transport Plan 2018-2029. In order to reach this goal, one must reduce the travelling time between the cities and the rail capacity must also be increased.

The planning of a comprehensive railway system is an important task for the *national* transport authorities. Between Norway and Sweden the implication has been that the cross-border rail links have not been prioritized sufficiently, when compared to other important national rail projects. Therefore, we hope that the Norwegian and Swedish Authorities now will take the necessary and required steps in order to speed up the planning process for building modern and efficient rail links between Oslo and Gothenburg and Oslo and Stockholm. In order to secure a common planning process, it is of the utmost importance that the Transport Authorities in both countries allocate sufficient planning capacity and resources for the necessary rail investments in the years to come.

Voksenåsen/Oslo - 23rd May 2017

Organisation	Name
Eastern Norway County Network/Scandia2Act	Head of Secretariat Jon Petter Arntzen
Norwegian-Swedish Business Chamber, Stockholm	Chairman Bjørn Rosengren
Norwegian-Swedish Business Chamber, Oslo	Chairman Harald Nordvik
Norwegian-Swedish Business Chamber, Gothenburg	Vice Chairman Jan Andreasson
Business Firms i West Sweden	Vice Chairman Cles-Henrik Martinsson
Coinco E.V	Chairman Knut Halvorsen
Osloregionen	Director Øyvind Sâtvedt
Gothenburg-Oslo Secretariat	Head of Secretariat Magnus Persson
Oslo-Stockholm 2.55 AB	Director Jonas Karlsson
Voksenåsen Secretariat	Project Manager Mikael Klingberg
Norden Association	Chairman Rune Mørck Wergeland

