

D.T1.4.3 - DEFINITION OF POTENTIAL POLICY MEASURES IN THURINGIA

Work paper

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1) Introduction

The politics of the past years and decades have led to the fact that in Thuringia, Germany and Europe the regional access conditions for freight transport to the rail network have deteriorated overall. In Thuringia in particular, this is primarily due to the fact that numerous branch lines with an overall length of 467 km have been closed since 1994.

This led to the following negative effects, which weaken the railways as a climate-friendly means of transport:

- All network access points especially private sidings and loading points along these disused routes can no longer be used.
- All potential shippers along these disused routes can only transport directly by road which lead on to a shrinking modal share of rail freight transport
- Due to the closure of routes, the rail network has lost flexibility and is characterized by bottlenecks.

In order to bring the railway as a means of transport back into the regions and to bring it back to its former strength and beyond, the framework conditions that are in responsibility of politics must be improved.

2) List of policy measures (linked to Priority list of action - D.1.4.2)

Action/measure	Policy measure	Policy document to be addressed	Process description	Stakeholders involved	Time frame
Maintain and expand state subsidies for rail freight transport	Financial policy that promotes rail freight transport, Financial policy that promotes climate protection	Thuringia budget Federal budget, European Union budget	The strengthening of rail freight transport requires intensive and sustainable state funding at all levels. Sufficient funds must be provided for this in budget planning.	Thuringian Ministry of Finance, Federal Ministry of Finance, European Commission	1 – 10 years



Revitalization of disused railway lines					
<i>Reactivation of the »Ohratalbahn«-line for rail freight transport</i>	Financial policy and infrastructure policy that supports in planning, financing and frame-conditions; Creation of cost fairness between the types of transport	State development programme 2025 /2040 for Thuringia, Federal transport route plan, Regional Transport Plan Thuringia 2023 -28. Thuringian Transport Programme Masterplan Rail Freight Transport Thuringia Sustainable Development Strategy Thuringia European green deal	In order to expand the usable rail infrastructure and further to fulfil the goals set for climate protection, closed secondary lines must be revitalized. This requirement must be included in the documents for future state planning, as this is where the direction of infrastructure development is defined.	ZossenRail GmbH*, Thuringian Ministry for Infrastructure and Agriculture, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, European Commission	1 – 3 years
<i>Reactivation of »Höllental« line</i>	Financial policy and infrastructure policy that supports in planning, financing and frame-conditions; Creation of cost fairness between the types of transport	State development programme 2025 /2040 for Thuringia, Federal transport route plan, Regional Transport Plan Thuringia 2023 -28. Thuringian Transport Programme Masterplan Rail Freight Transport Thuringia Sustainable Development Strategy Thuringia European green deal	In order to expand the usable rail infrastructure and further to fulfil the goals set for climate protection, closed secondary lines must be revitalized. This requirement must be included in the documents for future state planning, as this is where the direction of infrastructure development is defined.	DB AG, Thuringian Ministry for Infrastructure and Agriculture, Bavarian State Ministry for Housing, Building and Transport, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, European Commission	5 – 10 years
<i>Reactivation of »Max-und-Moritz-Bahn« line</i>	Financial policy and infrastructure policy that supports in planning, financing and frame-conditions; Creation of cost fairness between the types of transport	State development programme 2025 /2040 for Thuringia, Federal transport route plan, Regional Transport Plan Thuringia 2023 -28. Thuringian Transport Programme Masterplan Rail Freight Transport Thuringia Sustainable Development Strategy Thuringia European green deal	In order to expand the usable rail infrastructure and further to fulfil the goals set for climate protection, closed secondary lines must be revitalized. This requirement must be included in the documents for future state planning, as this is where the direction of infrastructure development is defined.	Thuringian Ministry for Infrastructure and Agriculture, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, European Commission	1 – 3 years
<i>Reactivation of »Werra-Bahn« line</i>	Financial policy and infrastructure policy that supports in planning, financing and frame-conditions; Creation of cost fairness between the types of transport	State development programme 2025 /2040 for Thuringia, Federal transport route plan, Regional Transport Plan Thuringia 2023 -28. Thuringian Transport Programme Masterplan Rail Freight Transport Thuringia Sustainable Development Strategy Thuringia European green deal	In order to expand the usable rail infrastructure and further to fulfil the goals set for climate protection, closed secondary lines must be revitalized. This requirement must be included in the documents for future state planning, as this is where the direction of infrastructure development is defined.	DB AG, Thuringian Ministry for Infrastructure and Agriculture, Bavarian State Ministry for Housing, Building and Transport, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, European Commission	3 – 5 years
<i>Reactivation and upgrading of the »Rennsteigbahn« line</i>	Financial policy and infrastructure policy that supports in planning, financing and frame-conditions;	State development programme 2025 /2040 for Thuringia, Federal transport route plan, Regional Transport Plan Thuringia 2023 -28.	In order to expand the usable rail infrastructure and further to fulfil the goals set for climate protection, closed secondary lines must be revitalized.	Rennsteigbahn GmbH* Thuringian Ministry for Infrastructure and Agriculture, Federal Ministry of Transport and	3 – 5 years



	Creation of cost fairness between the types of transport	Thuringian Transport Programme Masterplan Rail Freight Transport Thuringia Sustainable Development Strategy Thuringia European green deal	This requirement must be included in the documents for future state planning, as this is where the direction of infrastructure development is defined.	Digital Infrastructure, European Commission	
Reactivation, modernization and expansion of railports and loading points					
<i>Reactivation, modernization and expansion of the railport Nordhausen</i>	Financial policy and infrastructure policy that supports in spatial planning, financing and frame-conditions; Creation of cost fairness between the types of transport	State development programme 2025 /2040 for Thuringia, Federal transport route plan, Regional Transport Plan Thuringia 2023 -28. Thuringian Transport Programme Masterplan Rail Freight Transport Thuringia Sustainable Development Strategy Thuringia European green deal	An increase in the share of rail freight transport in total freight transport requires the availability of efficient access points to the rail network. This requirement must be included in the documents for future state planning, as this is where the direction of infrastructure development is defined.	DB AG, Thuringian Ministry for Infrastructure and Agriculture, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, European Commission	3 – 5 years
<i>Expansion of the Erfurt - Vieselbach container terminal</i>	Financial policy and infrastructure policy that supports in spatial planning, financing and frame-conditions; Creation of cost fairness between the types of transport	State development programme 2025 /2040 for Thuringia, Federal transport route plan, Regional Transport Plan Thuringia 2023 -28. Thuringian Transport Programme Masterplan Rail Freight Transport Thuringia Sustainable Development Strategy Thuringia European green deal	An increase in the share of rail freight transport in total freight transport requires the availability of efficient access points to the rail network. This requirement must be included in the documents for future state planning, as this is where the direction of infrastructure development is defined.	DUSS GmbH, Thuringian Ministry for Infrastructure and Agriculture, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, European Commission	1 – 5 years
<i>Reactivation of terminal »Sonneberg«</i>	Financial policy and infrastructure policy that supports in spatial planning, financing and frame-conditions; Creation of cost fairness between the types of transport	State development programme 2025 /2040 for Thuringia, Federal transport route plan, Regional Transport Plan Thuringia 2023 -28. Thuringian Transport Programme Masterplan Rail Freight Transport Thuringia Sustainable Development Strategy Thuringia European green deal	An increase in the share of rail freight transport in total freight transport requires the availability of efficient access points to the rail network. This requirement must be included in the documents for future state planning, as this is where the direction of infrastructure development is defined.	Thüringer Eisenbahn GmbH, Thuringian Ministry for Infrastructure and Agriculture, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, European Commission	5 – 10 years

* Line in private ownership -> Federal funding linked to certain conditions

3) Process

- 1) Which organisations/stakeholders were consulted in the selection of policy measures? What were their priorities and how were they involved?

Numerous actors from the rail freight transport sector in Thuringia have been involved to select the political measures. Most of them are working on this task in the Regional Advisory Board. These actors are representatives of public and private railway infrastructure companies, railway companies, operators of loading facilities, interest groups and responsible administrations.

The stakeholders were first consulted in qualified telephone interviews about their needs, concrete experiences and practical suggestions. The results of these interviews were evaluated, summarized and discussed in a video conference with all actors.

The expansion of existing and the development of new loading points turned out to be the top priority requirement for Thuringia. This requires the reactivation of disused routes and state funding for routes, connections and investments.

- 2) Who will ensure that potential policy measures will be realized and followed up and how (referring to stakeholders in the policy measures table)?

The established Regional Advisory Board will act beyond the end of our project and exchange ideas with the Thuringian Ministry of Transport. To this end, a regularly exchange of challenges and needs between railway actors and the responsible ministry has been set up.

- 3) What lessons were learnt when the policy measures list was selected/negotiated?

The policy measures represent a summary of numerous individual projects that were discussed by the stakeholders. It has proven to be useful to cluster these individual projects and summarize them in a few policy measures. In this way, the profile of the measures is sharpened and more easily enforceable.

- 4) Which constraints (obstacles, risks) are expected in its realization?

The biggest problem with the implementation of these policy measures will be the financing, because transport always has to deal with building and maintaining infrastructure. This will require high start-up funding. And as long as cost fairness between the modes of transport is not established, the necessity of these investments can be questioned again and again.

If climate protection is seen only as a cost factor and not as a necessary investment in securing the future, the implementation of the measures described remains at risk.

4) Conclusion

The most important policy measures are the revitalization of disused railway lines and the expansion of existing network access points or the establishment of additional ones. In Thuringia, both will help to improve regional access to rail freight transport and thus overall strengthen it. Due to the fact that the Thuringian industry is characterized by small and medium-sized enterprises, the paradigm shift from block trains back to single waggon trains is appropriate and digitization will support to improve this system.

In order to finance the associated investments and to support ongoing operations, considerable public subsidies are required now and in the future, which are listed as the third focus of the list above.

If it is possible to firmly anchor these policy measures in regional, national and European politics, positive impulses for rail freight transport in Thuringia will be expected

Thuringia initially has five disused branch lines that are urgently waiting to be reactivated. Others are possible.

In addition to the closed loading points on these disused routes, two specifically named railports and container terminals are to be expanded.