



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

REGIONAL POLICY

Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Romania, IPA/ISPA accession negotiations

**The Director**

Brussels,

Dear Mr Petykó,

**Subject: Introduction of e-tolls in the road sector, the implementation of the GSM-R in the rail sector and clean urban policy measures linked to the Budapest Metro 4 project**

**Ref.: Transport Operational Programme (CCI: 2007HU161PO007)**

With reference to some of the issues raised at the Annual Review Meeting of the Transport Operational Programme on 4 October, I would like to draw your attention to certain considerations outlined below and ask you to provide us with relevant information on these issues.

The Commission services were informed about possible delays to the introduction of the distance based e-toll system in the road sector which was originally foreseen to be applied as of 1 January 2013. The introduction of the e-tolls on motorways was a key requirement explicitly agreed when the Transport Operational Programme was adopted in order to fulfil the objective of promoting environmentally and economically sustainable transport systems. The Unified Transport Development Strategy (UTDS) approved by the previous Hungarian Government, as well as the Széll Kálmán Plan adopted by the current Hungarian Government, both reinforced Hungary's commitment to the rapid implementation of distance-based e-tolls. Moreover, the White Paper "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area - Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system " adopted by the College on 28 March earlier this year, and the recently adopted Directive 2011/76/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, also specify clear guiding principles and provisions on the charging of heavy goods vehicles. Finally, the application of the polluter pays principle in respect of the motorways is of the outmost importance for the current and future support of EU Funds to this sector.

Mr Zoltán Petykó  
President  
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Consequently, the Hungarian authorities are kindly requested to confirm Hungary's position on the implementation of e-tolls applied to the motorways and to indicate the time-frame for its implementation as well as the concrete steps already taken.

Furthermore, the Commission's services are seriously concerned about the current delay in implementing the GSM-R project. This project has always been considered as the essential infrastructure development project constituting the backbone for the implementation of ETCS level 2 signalling systems. These systems are an essential part of all railway major projects in the current programming period and of the three Cohesion Fund/Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession (CF/ISPA) railways projects of the 2000-2006 period. Therefore their implementation is a *sine qua non* condition for achieving the agreed results and objectives in the railway axis of the transport operational programme and in the CF/ISPA projects. Accordingly, the Commission urges the Hungarian authorities to submit the revised application for this major project as rapidly as possible. We kindly request to indicate the timeline for the submission.

Finally, let me also evoke the measures for ensuring the implementation of sustainable and clean urban transport policy in the Budapest Metropolitan Area in line with the Budapest Transport Development Plan. These measures are referred to in the Commission Decision (B(2009) 6793 adopted on 2 September 2009) approving the Budapest Metro 4 project and embedded the project in order to ensure that it perfectly fits into the objectives of priority axis 5. Please provide information on the current state-of-play regarding implementation of these measures, as well as planned further steps and their time schedule. We would also be particularly grateful for information on the introduction of access or congestion charges in the inner city of Budapest.

I attach the utmost importance to the above strategic issues as they are crucial to the attainment of the goals of the Transport Operational Programme and I will greatly appreciate receiving your response before the end of January 2012.

Yours sincerely,

Jean-Marie SEYLER