



**THE STATE OF TRANSPORT RESEARCH IN ECTRI MEMBER
COUNTRIES**

SYNTHESIS REPORT

**(THE ECTRI
BENCHMARKING
EXERCISE)**

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The ECTRI members decided on their General Assembly meeting of 27-28 January 2003 that took place in Lyngby (Denmark) at DTF headquarters to prepare and present in their consecutive meetings, reports on their Institutes and the organisation, execution, and financing of Transport research in their respective countries. These reports, known for short as “Benchmarking” reports, have produced a number of interesting facts and figures that give considerable insights in the situation concerning Transport research (as well as research in general) in each country member of ECTRI.

The reports available cover the following countries (in alphabetical order):

1. Czech Republic, author: *Centrum Dopravního Výzkumu (CDV)*.
2. Germany, author: *Deutsches Zentrum für Luft und Raumfahrt (DLR)*
3. Greece, author: *Hellenic Institute of Transport (HIT)*
4. Finland, author: *Valtion teknillinen tutkimuskeskus (VTT)*
5. France, author : *Institut National de Recherche sur les Transports et leur Sécurité (INRETS)*
6. Hungary, author: *Közlekedéstudományi Intézet Rt (KTI)*
7. Italy, author: *Politecnico di Torino (POLITO)*
8. Poland, author: *Instytut Transportu Samochodowego (ITS)*
9. Sweden, author: *Statens Väg-och Transportforskningsinstitut (VTI)*
10. UK: author: *Transport Research Laboratory (TRL)*

Perhaps the first realisation from reading the reports is the wide variety and diversity in systems and forms of organisation that exists in the countries of the reports. The fact that all of them are members of the EU does not reflect in any substantial collective trend or similarity. In fact to try and synthesize even broad (strategic) similarities and trends would be risky on many counts.

What will be attempted here is to place the context within which each country is performing research, transport research in particular, and leave the interested reader to seek more details for the country he (she) is interested in, by contacting the individual authors of the reports for each country¹.

An introductory synthesis can be attempted in the following areas:

- Funding levels
- Actors involved in transport research
- Supervisory and financing structures
- Contents and priorities of transport research.

As regards the funding levels, in almost all cases the data refer to research in general and not transport research. Specific data for transport research do not seem to exist. As regards the funding levels and sources for overall transport research, there simply are no similar patterns to be observed. On the contrary there is wide diversity and

¹ The author Organisations of the reports have to give permission in each individual case.

divergence both in the research funding as a percentage of GDP, as well as in the split of this funding between public and private sources. The first varies between 0.5 – 0.6% in the worse case, to 2.7 % or more in the best. Also the proportion of public / private funding varies from a 70 / 30% ratio to exactly the opposite. Characteristically, the first ratio (70/30 public / private) invariably is met in the cases of countries with low overall percentage funding of research.

As regards the “actors” involved in Transport research, these are fairly uniform in all cases. They invariably consist of:

- National Transport research Institutes, or similar research dedicated Organisations,
- University teams
- Consultancies and other private similar entities.

The mixture in terms of the magnitude of the research (in terms of projects, and / or budgets) between these entities does vary significantly between the countries surveyed with no specific pattern emerging.

The supervising and financing structures that are in place indicate that in most cases there is a complex web of interrelations and interdependences that has been put in place over the years, and which in most cases does not reflect any rational or visionary choice of effectiveness. Most common is the pattern where one or two Ministries (normally the Ministry of Transport and / or the Ministry of Industry) are in the top of the hierarchy. Invariably there is also a Committee or Advisory Board to advice on work programmes, research policies, and levels of funding.

The financing sources are the national lines of funding of the National budget, the EU funds delivered and administered via National government channels, the private industry, and the EU competitive programmes. The EU competitive programmes constitute a large part of the total funding in almost all cases (and to a percentage that is approximately between 30 and 60% of the total). The private sector is mainly participating through the co-financing arrangements of the joint research projects that require such co-financing. In a few number of countries (notably those with a strong and globally competitive automotive industry) the private sector finances substantially and autonomously transport research but these cases are relatively few.

Finally, as regards the contents and priorities of transport research, the following areas seem to persist in most of the cases (not in priority listing):

1. Freight transport and logistics
2. Mobility and travel behaviour
3. Modelling
4. Passenger transport
5. Traffic and transport safety and security
6. Transport economics
7. Transport ergonomics
8. Transport telematics
9. Transport and the environment
10. Transport infrastructure
11. Transport system management

For more information as well as permission to receive a specific detailed country report please contact the following addresses:

- for the report on **Czech Republic**, Mr Josef Mikulik, jmikulik@cdv.cz
- for the report on **Germany**, Mr Christian Piehler, Christian.Piehler@dlr.de
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