

NEWSLETTER 4

SEPTEMBER 2012

DETRA FINAL REPORT



The key priorities of the DETRA project were to examine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in the domain of transport research and develop a common understanding and approach to reduce fragmentation and overcome barriers.

The results of the DETRA project have been based on consultations and inputs from main stakeholders and experts to provide a series of key deliverables setting out the current situation, the identified barriers and recommendations for the next generation of the Transport ERA (ERA-T).

A Final Report has been prepared to conclude the DETRA project and give an overview of the findings and next steps to form the ERA to follow on from the project as of September 2012. The building blocks within DETRA focused on six ERA themes that were examined in detail. The "DETRA Final Report" gives comprehensive detail of the outcomes, the highlights being the following:

1. Mobility for Researchers

The transport sector faces growing problems to develop, attract and retain staff. Closer cooperation between academic institutions and end-users is needed and the transport PhD proposed within DETRA can be a contribution.

2. World-class transport Research infrastructures (RIs)

This is another area where wider cooperation is needed. Regardless of whether we are talking about databases or developing large-scale testing facilities, Europe-wide – or even world-wide, cooperation is needed to achieve the critical mass needed. DETRA proposed four new RIs of great relevance to solving the future challenges in a coordinated approach that can be taken forward either by the Alliance or its partner organisations.

3. Strengthening research institutions

Strengthening research institutions focused on how research organisations have already adapted to the ERA objectives and the actions still to be taken regarding research excellence, which comprises scientific excellence, relevance and governance excellence. One conclusion is the need to reduce fragmentation in the sector.

4. Sharing knowledge

So far DETRA has focused on how knowledge is generated. Looking at how the knowledge is shared is another key part of the innovation chain. This includes how knowledge is currently shared between public research organisations and industry in the transport sector and with the general public and civil society organisations. Related issues such as standardisation were also considered. The Transport Research Arena (TRA) series of conferences is one part of that process.

5. Optimising research programmes and identifying priorities

DETRA examined the wide range of research programmes and roadmaps coming from different stakeholder bodies. The partners have analysed the common priorities and the missing elements to produce an overall recommendation for transport research.

6. International cooperation

The state of European research cannot be considered without taking into account its role and position internationally. This includes our relations with our neighbours who we share our transport networks with, those who share the same problems as us with whom we can work together on common solutions. Aspects of international cooperation touch on all of the previous issues raised.

The Final Report of DETRA can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

A second report entitled «Transport Research Infrastructure RoadMap» has also just been published with the results of the work from World-class transport Research infrastructures (RIs) and can be downloaded by clicking [here](#). Copies of both reports are being distributed to the DETRA partners. If you would also like to receive a copy, please contact catherine.birkner@fehrl.org.



LAUNCHING OF THE EUROPEAN TRANSPORT RESEARCH ALLIANCE



The DETRA project will finish at the end of September, but the key outputs of the project will in the future be picked up by a new European Transport Research Alliance (ETRA) that was launched at a special reception in Brussels on 20th September 2012.

This reception was moderated by FEHRL President, Joris AI, and also included presentations by Dr. András Siegler, Director of the European Commission's DG Research & Innovation Directorate H – Transport, and new Chair of ETRA, Professor George Giannopolous of CERTH. It was also an opportunity to say farewell to Jean-Pierre Médevielle of IFSTTAR, the driving force behind the original Lyon Declaration process and the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the new ETRA, who retires at the end of October 2012.

András Siegler outlined that the DETRA project was one of the few initiatives in Europe that reflected on highly practical ways to realise an ERA in a single thematic domain. Many of DETRA's initial findings are in line with the EC's five priorities to speed up the ERA, he stressed, and the ETRA should now add a higher level of detail and take a more action-oriented approach. He advised ETRA to extend its membership to as many universities and research organisations as possible and ensure active engagement of all its players, as well as create synergies between national programmes and open discussions between modes.

ETRA to sing with one voice

"The Alliance will hopefully help Europe to speak with a more coordinated voice. Perhaps we could think of the Alliance as a choir – it is not once voice but hopefully from time to time singing the same song," commented Joris AI. The Alliance will provide a forum for coordination between the partners. The benefits of cooperation between the Alliance partners will provide them with a more powerful collective voice and the efficiency benefits of reducing duplication, and give the highest visibility to the transport research community and its potential contribution in supporting policies issues.

At the launch reception, the five Alliance partners - Neil Pauley of TRL (representing ECTRI), Wolfgang Steinicke of EURNEX,

Joris AI, Rijkswaterstaat (FEHRL), Horst Schulze, BASt (FER-SI) and Jean-Pierre Médevielle, IFSTTAR (Humanist VCE) – signed the ToR agreed as a basis for taking forward the ETRA activities. George Giannopolous, as the new Chair of ETRA, outlined that the ETRA complements the existing transport research structures in Europe. It will provide a more integrated form of representation for the research providers and help towards a more consensual approach to important debates on the future of transport research. In this respect, it will strive to complement the work of the other existing bodies, namely the European Technology Platforms or the various Advisory Groups within the EC.

Finally, he acknowledged the contribution of Jean-Pierre Médevielle for being a strong believer and supporter of DETRA and of ETRA with a certificate and present of a model train, and Jean-Pierre Médevielle then closed the reception with some final words to ETRA of his own.



Dr. A. Siegler, Mr H. Schulze, Mr W. Steinicke, Mr J.P. Médevielle, Mr N. Pauley, Mr J. AI



Signature of the Alliance Terms of Reference

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