

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANS 1

Transport networks allow the movement of people¹ and goods² and contribute to the creation of wealth and activity. However, by fragmenting the territory, they also contribute to the creation of ecological barriers. Their use also entails various pressures on the environment and human health (emissions of air pollutants³, noise⁴, etc.).

A dense network

In 2015, transport and communication infrastructures covered about 5.3% of the Walloon territory. With more than 4,820 km of roads⁵, nearly 100 km of railways and 27 km of navigable waterways operated for 1,000 km² of territory, the transport networks in Wallonia are among the densest in Europe. Wallonia also has two airports (Liège Airport and Brussels South Charleroi Airport) and two separate pipeline transport networks, one civilian and the other used by NATO. The road and motorway network was primarily extended between 1970 and 1990. Since then, the development of the network has been mainly carried out by municipalities, with the length of the network of major roads being stable. More than 85% of paved roads are local municipal roads. The remaining 15% is intended for major traffic (motorways and regional roads).

Integration into European networks

The large-scale development of Walloon infrastructures is due to the specific characteristics of the territory (population density, the historical importance of industrial and manufacturing activities) but also the fact that Wallonia is located on major European routes for the movement of people and exchange of goods, which increases transit flows. Wallonia is integrated

into the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), which aims *inter alia* to develop trade within the internal market, improve interoperability (e.g. *via* multimodal platforms) and increase the modal share of soft modes of transport. Various European axes cross Wallonia, mainly from north to south (European North Sea - Mediterranean axis) but also to the east *via* Montzen (railway network) or to the west with the Seine - Scheldt basin connection (river network).

Investment priorities

The investment priorities of the Walloon Government⁶ for rail transport concern both passenger transport (Regional Express Network, axis 3 Brussels-Luxembourg) and freight transport (maintenance of the network, optimisation of train make-up yards). The road investments in Wallonia are mainly focused on the secondary network (renovation, security, integration of soft modes of transport), while those relating to inland waterways are mainly aimed at maintaining the network⁷ and developing strategic links⁸.

[¹] → TRANS 3 & TRANS 4 | [²] → TRANS 2 | [³] → TRANS 6 | [⁴] → HEALTH 1, 2, 3 & 4 | [⁵] Including unpaved roads | [⁶] Approval of the rail investment plan is a federal responsibility, but the Regions are consulted. | [⁷] → WASTE 9 | [⁸] Infrastructure Plan 2016-2019

Map 16 Transport networks and multimodal platforms

