

MARCO POLO II/ WORK PROGRAMME 2010

I. Political priorities II. Call for proposals

**FOR MODAL SHIFT, CATALYST, MOTORWAYS OF THE SEA, TRAFFIC
AVOIDANCE AND COMMON LEARNING ACTIONS**

I. Political priorities

The political priority targets are defined as follows:

- (1) Political priority for Inland Waterway Transport and Motorways of the Sea**
 - o Positively evaluated proposals presented with the objective of shifting freight transport from roads to Inland Waterways will have a preference over the rest of successful proposals for up to 10% of the available budget for the year.
 - o Positively evaluated proposals for Motorways of the sea actions will have preference over the rest of successful proposals, excluding the ones related to Inland Waterways referred to above, for up to 20% of the available budget for the year.
- (2) Political priority targets for Modal shift actions, Motorways of the sea actions and Traffic avoidance actions**
 - o Enhance intermodality;
 - o Reinforce interconnections between modes of transport and the integration of freight services at terminals;
 - o Reduce road congestion especially in the traffic bottlenecks in regions like the Alps, the Pyrenees and the Baltic Sea and improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system within the Union;
 - o Support actions in the freight transport, logistics and other relevant markets, taking into account the needs of SME's;
 - o Implementation of advanced emission abatement technologies in maritime transport

(3) Political priority targets for Catalyst actions

- Intra-European maritime freight services, meeting at least one of the conditions below:
 - o Road-competitive quality of service;
 - o Central integrated control of the services and offer of a “door-to-door” concept;
 - o High-quality in terms of punctuality, client information and transshipment concepts;
- Through interoperable rail services, meeting at least one of the conditions below:
 - o Road-competitive quality of service;
 - o Central integrated control of the services and offer of a “door-to-door” concept;
 - o Guaranteed departures and arrival times;
 - o Compensation system for quality deficiencies;
 - o Applied international interoperability of equipment, safety or information systems.
- Inland waterway services integrated with rail or maritime shipping, meeting at least one of the conditions below:
 - o Road-competitive quality of service;
 - o Central integrated control of the services and offer of a “door-to-door” concept;
 - o Optimisation of transshipment with other modes in terms of cost efficiency, handling speed and information technology.
- Transport services that shift road freight traffic to a combination of short sea shipping, rail and inland waterways modes of transport in which road journeys are as short as possible, meeting at least one of the conditions below:
 - o Road-competitive quality of service;
 - o Central integrated control of the services and offer of a “door-to-door” concept;
 - o Optimisation of transshipment with other modes in terms of cost efficiency, handling speed and information technology.

(4) Political priority targets for Common learning actions

- Common learning actions related to intermodal transport including training, addressing at least one of the following topics:
 - o Adapting procedures and methods in transport systems to meet today's logistics requirements;
 - o Improving procedures and methods in sea and inland ports;
 - o Co-operation between railways and inland waterway and/or short sea shipping and/or road;
 - o Integration of inland waterway transport in the logistics supply chain ("door-to-door" concept);
 - o New co-operation and capacity management models in rail;
 - o Improving pricing, procedures and methods in the terminal;
 - o European training centres;
 - o Reduction of transport damages and prevention of theft and/or sabotage;
 - o Increasing the demand for non-road transport;
 - o Improving the shippers' understanding of intermodal freight transport;
 - o Actions aiming to improve the integration of the new Member States into the logistics chain.
 - o Actions aiming to improve the knowledge and use of TEN-T corridors.

Budget

The proposed budget for 2010, coming from the budget lines 06 01 04 01 and 06 02 06, is approximately EUR 64 million, with which the Commission envisages to fund around thirty-five (35) projects. This budget includes also the funding of certain administrative expenses of EUR 256.000, especially for meetings, information actions, studies and publications and other administrative items that have to be accounted for. Furthermore, the proposed budget includes a maximum of €290.000 for implementation of the marketing approach for the Programme. This amount will be allowed to the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI) for commitment through its framework contracts or those of the Commission, or public tenders for service contract if necessary.

MARCO POLO II – CALL FOR PROPOSALS

II. Call for proposals

1. PURPOSE AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Shifting the balance between transport modes to achieve a more sustainable development strategy has been at the heart of the European policy and notably since the Gothenburg European Council in 2001.

In its review¹ of the White Paper on the European Transport Policy, the European Commission suggests a shift from the road to more environmental friendly modes where appropriate, especially on long distance, in urban areas and on congested corridors.

In order to continue the support action engaged on that scheme with the first Marco Polo Programme² between 2003 and 2006, the European Union decided to extend its support to the economic operators with the Marco Polo II Programme³ hereinafter called “the Programme”. At a later stage a mid-term review⁴ of the Programme has taken place in order to increase its effectiveness; the resulting changes to the legal basis are reflected in this call. The Programme aims at achieving a traffic shift or avoidance that is a substantial part of the expected yearly aggregate increase in international road freight traffic, measured in tonne-kilometres, to short sea shipping, rail and inland waterways or to a combination of modes of transport in which road journeys are as short as possible.

It will run between 2007 and 2013 with a global budget of 450 M€ and will be the subject of yearly calls for project proposals. In principle, each call will be published in the first quarter of every year and be closed 2-3 months later.⁵ The available budget for 2010 is approximately EUR 64 million.

¹Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament No. (2006) 314 final “Keep Europe moving - Sustainable mobility for our continent. Mid-term review of the European Commission’s 2001 Transport White Paper” - 22.06.2006.

² Regulation (EC) No. 1382/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 July 2003 on granting of Community financial assistance to improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system (“Marco Polo Programme”), OJ L 196, 02.08.2003, p 1.

³ Regulation (EC) No. 1692/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing the second “Marco Polo” programme for the granting of Community financial assistance to improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system (“Marco Polo II”), OJ L 328, 24.11.2006, p 1.

⁴ Regulation (EC) No. 923/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 amending Regulation (EC) 1692/2006 establishing the second “Marco Polo” programme for the granting of Community financial assistance to improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system (“Marco Polo II”), OJ L 266, 9.10.2009, p 1.

⁵ Undertakings do not have to wait until the call is published to prepare their proposals and to ask for advice from the Marco Polo Help Desk.

The programme proposes to support actions to reduce congestion, to improve the environmental performance of the transport system and to enhance intermodal transport, thereby contributing to a more efficient and sustainable transport system which will provide EU added value without having a negative impact on economic, social or territorial cohesion.

Five distinct types of action will be supported:

- (1) **Modal shift actions**, which focus on shifting as much freight as economically meaningful under current market conditions from road to short sea shipping, rail and inland waterways. They may be proposing start-up of new services or significantly enhance existing services. They shall be robust, but not necessarily innovative: *just shift freight off the road!*
- (2) **Catalyst actions** change the way non-road freight transport is conducted in the Union. Under this type of action, structural market barriers in European freight transport are overcome through a highly innovative concept: *causing a real break-through*. This is essentially done in three steps by applicants: first the barrier must be clearly defined, then a highly innovative solution presented, and finally a modal shift service of great growth potential for freight transport is proposed for timely implementation. Dissemination of results must be ensured within the duration of the EU grant.
- (3) **Motorways of the sea actions** achieving a door-to-door service, which shift freight from long road distances to a combination of short sea shipping and other modes of transport. Actions of this kind are innovative at a European level in terms of logistics, equipment, products and services rendered, *imply high quality and frequent transport services, move frequently very large volumes of freight and include, preferably, the use of the most environmentally friendly transport modes, such as inland waterways and rail for hinterland freight transport and integrated door-to-door services*. Dissemination of results must be ensured within the duration of the EU grant.

The Motorways of the Sea actions shall be consistent with the features of the Motorways of the Sea priority project defined in the framework of Decision No 1692/96 EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 1996 on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network.
- (4) **Traffic avoidance actions** integrate transport into production logistics: *reducing freight transport demand by road with a direct impact on emissions*. Actions of this type shall be innovative and shall not adversely affect production output and production workforce. Dissemination of results must be ensured within the duration of the EU grant.
- (5) **Common learning actions** enhance knowledge in the freight logistics sector and foster advanced methods and procedures of co-operation in the freight market, with an overall objective of promoting intermodal solutions. Under this type of action, improvement of co-operation and sharing of know-how is encouraged: *training on how to cope efficiently and in a sustainable manner with increasingly complex transport and logistics solutions*. Dissemination of results must be ensured within the duration of the EU grant.

The Commission, together with the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation – hereafter EACI – which is in charge of the management of the Programme, hereby invites interested parties to submit proposals for Modal shift, Catalyst, Motorways of the sea, Traffic avoidance and Common learning actions.

The following sections describe what is expected from potential applicants. Their proposals will first have to meet general and action-type specific eligibility and selection criteria as described in section 3, and will then be evaluated and ranked on their merits based on award criteria as described in section 4.

For the purpose of this call the definitions as mentioned in the Marco Polo II Regulation and its revision (mentioned in footnote 3 and 4) are repeated in Appendix 1. Please take them carefully into account.

2. FUNDING CONDITIONS

2.1. The Programme grant shall be conditioned as follows:

- (i) For Modal shift actions the grant will be limited to 35% of the total eligible costs necessary, and actually incurred, as described in Appendix 4. Ancillary infrastructure costs are eligible up to 20% of the total eligible costs. The grant will not amount to more than €2 (two Euro) for each shift⁶ actually realised of 500 tonne-kilometres or 2000 cubic metre-kilometres (in case the volumetric equivalent is used) from road to any other land or water modes.
- (ii) For Catalyst actions, the grant will be limited to 35% of the total eligible costs necessary, and actually incurred, as described in Appendix 4. Ancillary infrastructure costs are eligible up to 20% of the total eligible costs. The grant will not amount to more than €2 (two Euro) for each shift⁷ actually realised of 500 tonne-kilometres or 2000 cubic metre-kilometres (in case the volumetric equivalent is used) from road to any other land or water modes.
- (iii) For Motorways of the sea actions, the grant will be limited to 35% of the total eligible costs necessary, and actually incurred, as described in Appendix 4. Ancillary infrastructure costs are eligible up to 20% of the total eligible costs. The grant will not amount to more than €2 (two Euro) for each shift⁸ actually realised of 500 tonne-kilometres or 2000 cubic metre-kilometres (in case the volumetric equivalent is used) from road to any other land or water modes.
- (iv) For Traffic avoidance actions, the grant will be limited to 35% of the total eligible costs necessary, and actually incurred, as described in Appendix 4.

⁶ The shift will include the goods transported, the intermodal transport unit plus the road vehicle, including empty intermodal transport units and empty road vehicles effectively loaded and unloaded at the beginning and the end of the multimodal journey, if these are shifted off the road too.

⁷ The shift will include the goods transported, the intermodal transport unit plus the road vehicle, including empty intermodal transport units and empty road vehicles, effectively loaded and unloaded at the beginning and the end of the multimodal journey, if these are shifted off the road too

⁸ The shift will include the goods transported, the intermodal transport unit plus the road vehicle, including empty intermodal transport units and empty road vehicles, effectively loaded and unloaded at the beginning and the end of the multimodal journey, if these are shifted off the road too

Ancillary infrastructure costs are eligible up to 20% of the total eligible costs. The grant will not amount to more than €2 (two Euro) for each avoidance⁹ actually realised of 500 tonne-kilometres or 2000 cubic metre-kilometres (in case the volumetric equivalent is used) or 25 vehicle kilometres¹⁰ of road freight.

(v) For Common learning actions it will be limited to 50% of the total eligible costs necessary and actually incurred as described in Appendix 4.

- 2.2. The action shall start between 1st July 2009 and 1st July 2011; however **only costs incurred after the submission date of an application shall be eligible** for Union financial assistance.
- 2.3. The grant shall under **no** circumstances have the purpose or the effect of producing a **profit** for the beneficiary. The action may not produce an overall profit during the entire duration of the grant. This does not rule out periodic profit over the course of the action, provided the overall balance remains negative.
- 2.4. All requests for Union financial assistance shall be made in EURO.
- 2.5. Should a pre-financing payment be requested, a bank guarantee will have to be provided.
- 2.6. The Commission may award a smaller grant than the amount requested by the applicant. Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested.
- 2.7. Eligible costs for a Marco Polo II grant may not be funded or have been funded by another EU-scheme. However, the grant may be given in addition to other legitimate¹¹ public funding and as long as the combined public grant (for the part of the project financed by the Programme) is below the maximum grant rate of eligible costs highlighted above in 2.1 (i) to (v).
- 2.8. Where the implementation of the action requires financial support to be given to third parties, the beneficiary of a Union grant may give such financial support provided that the following conditions are met:

(a) the financial support is not the primary aim of the action;

(b) the conditions for the giving of such support which are provided in the grant agreement are met;

Without prejudice to the application of Directive 2004/18/EC, where implementation of the assisted actions requires the award of procurement contracts, beneficiaries of grants shall award the contract to the tender offering best value for money, that is to say, to the tender offering the best price-quality ratio, while taking care to avoid any conflict of interest.

⁹ The avoidance will include the vehicle-kilometres generated by empty or loaded truck movements.

¹⁰ The measure of vehicle-kilometres is needed to account for actions reducing empty runs or increasing load factors. These might not avoid tonne-kilometres but lead to less vehicles on the road.

¹¹ Please refer to State Aid rules (as mentioned in article 7 of the revised Marco Polo II regulation).

- 2.9. Except for applications submitted by a single undertaking, a Joint¹² Letter of Intent shall be signed by all undertakings - excluding subcontractors - participating in the project, stating their commitment and role in the project, and authorising the lead partner to represent them for submitting the proposal and interacting with the Commission services. See Appendix 2, Form I.4.
- 2.10. The grants awarded will be covered by a written agreement between the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI) and the successful applicants, which will be subject to an ex-post external financial audit of the expenses planned and incurred, and to an ex-ante and ex-post external audit of the tonne-kilometres shifted or vehicle-kilometres avoided together with its calculation procedure, in the particular cases of modal shift, catalyst, motorways of the sea and traffic avoidance actions.
- 2.11. As provided in point 1 of the Annex to the Marco Polo II Regulation, actions will not lead to distortions of competition in the relevant markets, in particular between transport modes alternative to road or within each mode, contrary to the common interest. Modal shift figures must result from traffic diverted from the road and not from pre-existing maritime or rail services.
- 2.12. As provided in points 1 and 2 of the Annex to the Marco Polo II Regulation, Union financial assistance for traffic avoidance actions must not be used to support business or production activities which bear no direct relation to transport or distribution, and should not adversely affect production output or workforce.

3. ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria define the scope of the call and apply to all five types of actions – Modal shift, Catalyst, Motorways of the sea, Traffic avoidance and Common learning.

3.1. General eligibility criteria

- E1. **Uniqueness:** the type of action for which a project is proposed must be clearly specified by the applicant.
- E2. **Transport Services:** the proposal must dominantly concern transport **services** or logistics concepts in the market place, i.e. infrastructure, research or study projects are not eligible.
- E3. **European Dimension - Undertakings:** an action can be submitted by either a single undertaking or by a consortium of undertakings established in any EU

¹² This may take the form of an identical letters of intent signed separately by the undertakings participating in the project.

Member State or fully participating country¹³. In case of actions submitted by consortia, one undertaking should be identified as the lead partner. An undertaking from a close third country may also be involved as an associated partner (not as a lead partner) to a project. Actions shall involve the territory of at least two Member States or the territory of at least one Member State and the territory of a close third country.

- E4. **European Dimension - Cost:** the budget will not finance costs¹⁴ arising outside the territories of the Union or fully participating countries¹⁵. Legal or natural persons established outside these countries cannot be the recipients of Union funds under this call in a capacity of project partner. Their costs shall not be eligible. Furthermore, subcontracting to legal or natural persons established outside these countries shall be duly justified in view of the technical and economic necessity and may not be used to circumvent the eligibility rules applicable to project partners.
- E5. **Type of Legal Entity:** all project participants must be legal persons. They must be privately or publicly owned commercial undertakings. Public law entities engaged in economic activities in accordance with their national laws are entitled to participate. Natural persons are not eligible. Project partners must prove the status of being a commercial undertaking, for instance by providing a VAT number or being listed in the commercial register.
- E6. **Start-up of action:** the action must start the proposed service or activity between 1 July 2009 and 1 July 2011.

3.2. Specific Eligibility Criteria

All projects submitted for financing will have to comply **simultaneously** with the corresponding eligibility criteria per type of action mentioned below:

3.2.1. Modal shift actions¹⁶

- MOD1. **Route:** The envisaged road route, from which transport is shifted by the action, must be situated on the territory of at least two EU Member States or on the territory of at least one EU Member State and a close third country.
- MOD2. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a maximum of 36 months.
- MOD3. **Threshold:** The minimum modal shift proposed by the action shall be an average of 60 million tonne-kilometres, or its volumetric equivalent, per year. In the specific case of projects aiming at modal shift from road to

¹³ Croatia and EEA countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein)

¹⁴ In practical terms this means that all bills required proving costs must bear a location on the territory of a fully participating country, in order to be eligible under a Marco Polo II contract. For maritime projects, costs are eligible up until the first port in the 3rd country not fully participating.

¹⁵ Croatia and EEA countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein)

¹⁶ Catalyst actions, Modal shift actions and Common learning actions may comprise several coordinated projects.

inland waterways the minimum modal shift proposed by the action shall be an average of 13 million tonne-kilometres, or its volumetric equivalent, per year.

3.2.2. Catalyst actions¹⁷

- CAT1. **Route:** The envisaged road route from which freight is shifted by the action is situated on the territory of at least two EU Member States or on the territory of at least one EU Member State and a close third country.
- CAT2. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a minimum of 36 months and a maximum of 60 months.
- CAT3. **Threshold:** The minimum modal shift proposed by the action shall be an average of 30 million tonne-kilometres, or its volumetric equivalent, per year.

3.2.3. Motorways of the sea actions

- MOS1. **Route:** The envisaged road route from which freight is shifted by the action must be situated on the territory of at least two EU Member States or on the territory of at least one EU Member State and a close third country.

The Motorways of the Sea actions shall be consistent with the features of the Motorways of the Sea priority project defined in the framework of Decision No 1692/96 EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 1996 on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network¹⁸. Therefore, regarding projects within the EU, only those relating to the category A ports as defined in Article 12(2) of the said Decision (i.e. ports with a total annual traffic volume of not less than 1,5 million tonnes of freight or 200.000 passengers) will be eligible to Marco Polo funding under the Motorways of the Sea actions.

- MOS2. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a minimum of 36 months and a maximum of 60 months.
- MOS3. **Threshold:** The minimum modal shift proposed by the action shall be an average of 200 million tonne-kilometres, or its volumetric equivalent, per year.

3.2.4. Traffic avoidance actions

- TAV1. **Routes:** The envisaged road routes on which freight is avoided by the action are situated on the territory of at least two EU Member States or on the territory of at least one EU Member State and a close third country.
- TAV2. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a minimum of 36 months and a maximum of 60 months.

¹⁷ Catalyst actions, Modal shift actions and Common learning actions may comprise several coordinated projects.

¹⁸ OJ L 228, 9.9.1996, p.1.

TAV3. **Threshold:** The minimum traffic avoidance proposed by the action shall be an average of 4 million vehicle-kilometres or 80 million tonne-kilometres per year.

3.2.5. Common learning Actions¹⁹

LEA1. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a maximum of 24 months.

LEA2. **Threshold:** The minimum indicative grant threshold per action is EUR 250,000.

3.3. Grounds for exclusion

Applications will not be considered for an EU grant if the applicants are in one of the situations which are described in Appendix 6. Applicants must certify in the declaration form I.2, provided in Appendix 2 that they are not in one of these situations.

3.4. Selection criteria

S.1. Financial Capacity of Applicants

Undertakings must be legally constituted and registered. They, acting alone or in a consortium, must have the financial capacity to give confidence in the action to be supported. Evidence of this requirement should be provided with audited financial statements.

The last available financial statements of at least one of the project partners should show the minimum values for the following two ratios: (1) Current assets/current liabilities >0.75, (2) EU grant/Equity<1.

S.2. Technical Capacity of Applicants

Applicants must have the technical and operational capacity to complete the action to be supported and should justify it with appropriate supporting documents. This capacity shall be supported with evidence of at least a 5-year experience by the applicants in the commercial and business area where the project will be implemented or with evidence of at least 5-year experience of their directly involved employees in the commercial and business area where the project will be implemented. Documentary evidence of this requirement shall be provided with company records and CVs.

¹⁹ Catalyst actions, Modal shift actions and Common learning actions may comprise several coordinated projects.

4. AWARD CRITERIA

4.1. Generalities

Proposals will be evaluated according to the type of action proposed (see Appendix 5) in an internal evaluation with the help of external experts. All evaluators will have to sign a declaration of confidentiality and absence of personal interest.

The Commission will base its selection of actions and the rate of Union financial assistance on the eligible written proposals **only**. The proposals having reached the minimum threshold for each criterion and having the highest total score shall be considered for Union financial assistance, within the limit of the available budget. Those projects covered by the political priorities established in the work programme will have priority for funding if they achieve a total score of at least 60 points and have reached a minimum threshold for each award criterion, as required in Appendix 5.

The applicants must demonstrate the credibility and viability of their proposal in describing their capacity²⁰ (financial, human, technical, commercial ...) to maintain the proposed activities throughout the project period, and beyond. This will require documenting the features described in the following sections 4.2. to 4.8.

4.2. Quantity of freight shifted off the road or quantity of road traffic avoided

This criterion requires a clear definition and presentation of both the old “road”-route and the new “modally shifted”-route for Modal shift, Catalyst and Motorways of the sea actions.

In a Modal shift, Motorway of the sea or Catalyst action, first the entire route should be described (preferably door-to-door), i.e. including the initial freight collection and final distribution leg by truck, if any. In a second step it should be shown, which parts of the transport/logistics chain are to be shifted from road to short sea shipping, rail and inland waterways.

Common learning actions are not required to be concerned with a transport route. However, there are elements discussed in this section, such as environmental & other external costs savings, which could be also of relevance to this type of action.

For Traffic avoidance actions a clear definition and presentation of the old and new transport service (route, number of trucks, number of tonne-kilometres and number of vehicle-kilometres) are obligatory.

In a Traffic avoidance action, first the “old” transport service should be described: number of trucks, tonnes transported, different journeys and corresponding distances driven. Then the concept used to avoid traffic should be introduced and the corresponding “new” service resulting in a net decrease of vehicle-kilometres or tonne-kilometres.

²⁰ This is proven by full co-ordinates of lead partner, contact person, all other partners in the consortium and, if any, all subcontractors involved in the action. Experience and track record of all partners and leading individuals (substantiated by proposal’s annexes 6 and 7, for catalyst actions annexes 7 and 8). See Appendix 2.

4.2.1. Modal shift

The effected Modal shift in a Modal shift, Motorway of the sea or Catalyst action is to be measured in tonne-kilometres.

As an **alternative for light goods** the volume equivalent “freight tonnes” measured in m³ may be used by the applicant. This means, that **4 cubic metre–kilometres (m³km) shall be equivalent to 1 tonne-kilometre (tkm)**, and all calculations and key-figures throughout the proposal are to be presented in analogy to the tonne-kilometres case. The choice of basic unit m³km or tkm must be clearly specified by the applicant.

4.2.2. Traffic avoidance

The effected traffic avoidance is measured in vehicle-kilometres (or tonne-kilometres or its volumetric equivalent) (see Appendix 3). This is measured in comparing the new quantity of road transport versus the old one.

4.3. Environmental benefits and external costs savings

Environmental benefits and external costs savings have quantitative and qualitative elements and they must be thoroughly described and justified.

The qualitative environmental and external costs savings from the proposed action could be, for instance, that the new “modally-shifted” route avoids sensitive and metropolitan areas and/or natural resorts or that the “new” concept in a Traffic avoidance action leads to less road congestion in densely populated areas. Other benefits may result from the use of clean fuels or abatement techniques on ships. A maximum of two extra points can be awarded to a proposal achieving qualitative environmental and external costs savings by avoiding natural or sensitive areas or by shifting freight to waterborne transport that makes use of clean fuel and emission abatement techniques. Additionally, up to three extra points can be awarded to a proposal contributing to reduction of congestion by avoiding specific areas with heavily congested roads.

The quantitative environmental benefits and external costs savings calculation is based on a comparison of the relevant external costs for the old “road”-route with the new “modally shifted”-route respectively “old” transport service with the “new” concept of traffic avoidance. Only benefits achieved on the territory of countries fully participating in the Marco Polo Programme may be used for this calculation.

Details on how to calculate and present qualitative and quantitative environmental and other external costs savings are given in Appendix 3. Note, that these calculations are an essential element for a proposal submitted to this call.

4.4. Credibility of the action

The market research or feasibility study results and a business plan coherent with the action described, are vital elements to judge the credibility of the proposal as well as the likely utilisation of the service in terms of potential customers (supported by letters of intent, or even better, letters of commitment), etc. When applicable, a

proper analysis of the service's competitiveness compared to existing road operators should be provided.

The business plan of every action has to contain a credible and justified financing plan, clearly differentiating eligible and non-eligible costs as well as revenues (see Appendix 4).

4.5. Viability of the action

All actions should be sustainable beyond the project duration. This should be clearly demonstrated in a solid business plan, including clear profit and loss projections.

4.6. Innovative approach

All actions (except Modal shift actions) have to be innovative (cf. Appendix 1).

4.7. Dissemination plan

For all actions (except for Modal shift actions) the results and methods shall be disseminated based on a concrete and detailed dissemination plan.

4.8. European added value – Improvement of co-operation, sharing of know-how

This criterion is only applicable to Common learning actions and covers the European dimension of the action, the target groups to be trained or reached, the cooperation among the stakeholders and the sharing of know-how. The added value of the action should be demonstrated through a proper analysis of the situation in the sector and any potential shortcomings the action would contribute to correct.

4.9. Degree of intermodal integration

This criterion is only applicable to Motorways of the Sea actions and covers the integration of the maritime link into the overall door-to-door transport chain, for instance through the availability of integrated tracking and tracing, of a single electronic window for the exchange of information between the service providers and users concerned by the Motorways of the Sea, of a one stop-shop for administrative issues, of a single liability regime covering the whole intermodal chain, coordination of timetables, common marketing and single invoicing.

5. HOW TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL

Applications must be submitted according to the structure given separately for each type of action in Appendix 2. A mixing of action types in a single proposal is not allowed (see section 3 “General Eligibility Criterion” E1).

6. HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

The proposal will be submitted as follows:

For each application, the applicant must supply **one signed original, five copies and an electronic copy on CD-ROM which contains the parts I and II preferably in Word format, together with the "Marco Polo calculator" Excel File.**

It is the responsibility of applicants to ensure that original and copies are identical and complete and that applications are sent to the address indicated in the call for proposals. The Commission cannot be held responsible for wrongly addressed applications. If necessary, applicants must be able to present proof of postage.

The proposal submitted will need to be signed and stamped by the lead partner, at the end of the main proposal text (before the annexes).

Photocopies of supporting documents can be forwarded at this stage of the procedure. Originals may be needed later for any financial statements during the contract negotiation phase in view of signing a possible grant agreement with the European Commission.

Applications may be submitted:

- (a) either **by registered letter or courier service²¹** postmarked **no later than the closing date for submission** (see section 8 “Timetable”)²², with the following address on the outer envelope:
- (b) **or by hand delivery to the central mail service of the European Commission** (personal delivery or delivery by any authorised representative of the applicant)²³ at the following address mentioned on the outer envelope:

European Commission

Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation - EACI²⁴

Ref.: Marco Polo II Programme – Call 2010

Courrier Central

Avenue du Bourget 1

B-1140 Brussels

by 16h00 (Brussels time) **on the closing date for submission** (see following section 8 “Timetable”) at the latest. In this case, proof of submission will be by means of a dated (and time!) and signed receipt issued by the receiving official in the above mentioned department.

Applications received by the Commission after the closing date and time will not be taken into consideration.

²¹ Note, that courier services are treated in the same way as national post offices. Applicants are advised to ensure that the submission date is clearly stamped/written on the envelope and on the registration slip. The registration slip should be maintained by the proposer as proof of submission.

²² This means that if the proposal is sent by registered mail (having a clearly readable date stamp on the envelope and the registration slip!) on the closing date for submission, the deadline would still be met. However, applicants are advised **not** to wait until the very last day of the open call.

²³ **Attention:** This means the proposal has to arrive at the indicated Commission address at the latest by 16:00 on the closing date for submission; - and the applicant has to be able to prove it (date and time!).

²⁴ The Evaluation of the proposals and the contract management are being handled by the Agency as from 1st March 2008

Applications may not be delivered to the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport nor to the EACI (whether personal delivery or delivery by any authorised representative of the applicant, including private delivery services).

Proposals must be submitted inside two sealed envelopes. The inner envelope must bear the words (*written in English and/or French and the applicant's language*):

**Call for Proposals
TREN/B3/SUB/01-2010**

Marco Polo II Programme

NOT TO BE OPENED BEFORE THE OPENING SESSION

**Square Frère Orban, 10 6/52
B-1049 Brussels**

If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across that tape.

Additionally, for any means of submission, applicants should send at the same time the completed Project Overview Form (part I of the full proposal) by email to the secretariat given in section 7 to announce the submission.

7. SECRETARIAT FOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Applications should **not** be delivered to this address (see previous section). This address is reserved for information and assistance provided by the Marco Polo Help Desk. The Marco Polo Help Desk is available for any questions related to the Marco Polo II Programme. The Help Desk cannot however give a qualitative assessment of a proposal or its potential for being selected

**EACI - Marco Polo Help Desk
Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation
Marco Polo Unit
Ref.: Call for Proposals 2010
Square Orban, 10 6/52
B-1049 Brussels**

Tel: (32-2) 2950924
Fax: (32-2) 2979506
E-mail: eaci-marco-polo-helpdesk@ec.europa.eu

Internet: <http://ec.europa.eu/marcopolo>

8. TIMETABLE

Closing date for submission of applications	18 May 2010
Date of opening of applications	May 2010
Estimated date for Report on Evaluation by Evaluation Committee	September 2010
Estimated date of notification of applicants & start of contract negotiations	September 2010
Estimated date for signature of contracts	First quarter 2011

APPENDICES

1. DEFINITIONS
2. HOW TO PREPARE THE PROPOSAL
3. CALCULATION OF MODAL SHIFT, TRAFFIC AVOIDANCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL/SOCIAL BENEFITS
4. HOW TO CALCULATE THE GRANT; ELIGIBLE COSTS, INCLUDING FINANCING OF ANCILLARY INFRASTRUCTURE
5. DEFINITION OF THE AWARD CRITERIA FOR THE DIFFERENT ACTIONS
6. GROUNDS FOR EXCLUSION AND RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL PENALTIES