



STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Short-term and long-term
prerequisites for development

Summary in English

The commission

The Swedish Institute for Transport and Communications Analysis, SIKA, has been requested by the Government to develop methods for strategic long-term infrastructure planning – in the short-term and more long-term perspective.

Over the past few years, SIKA has implemented or taken part in a number of different activities that have a bearing on this commission. As early as October 1999, SIKA decided to ask the Institute of Transport Economics (TÖI) in Oslo, Norway to investigate the process and data on which decisions were based in the Swedish strategic planning taking place at that time. The Institute of Transport Economics' reports, based on an examination of this data and interviews with representatives of the transport agencies and the counties, were published in January 2000.¹

The organisation of long-term planning has also been discussed on repeated occasions in SIKA's agency group² and in a special working group with representatives of the transport agencies, county bodies and the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications.

SIKA has interpreted the commission as being primarily about how strategic planning could develop in the short-term, mainly within the frameworks set by the present transport policy guidelines. The recommendation on the organisation of strategic planning made in this report also rests on this basis.

However, we have at the same time realised the importance of being able to broaden the perspective to discuss the long-term infrastructure planning and, in particular strategic planning, more unconditionally. This applies, for instance, to different conceivable far-reaching changes of strategic planning that may have to be considered in the somewhat longer term. We do not have any ready-made recommendations in this part, however, and the report is more intended to serve as a basis for further discussions.

This report is based on extensive material which has largely been produced jointly by SIKA, the transport agencies and other organisations concerned. While the recommendations made in this report have been discussed in these contexts, the report as such has not been the object of any consultation. Accordingly, SIKA bears sole responsibility for its contents.

Anders Wärmark has been project manager. Per-Ove Hesselborn and Åsa Vagland have also participated in the project.

¹ Henning Lauridsen, Inger-Anne Ravlum: *Evaluering av prosessen i den svenske innretningsplanleggingen*, TÖI report 469/2000 and Odd I. Larsen, Jens Rekdal: *Evaluering av den svenske innretningsplanleggingen – Strategiske analyser og beslutningsunderlag for tiltak*, TÖI notat 1154/2000.

² SIKA's agency group includes SIKA's director and heads of planning or the equivalent for the four transport agencies. Furthermore, representatives for the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, county bodies and a number of central authorities are co-opted to the group.

Summary

The report begins with an account of the starting points we have had for our considerations of how long-term infrastructure planning and, in particular, strategic planning should be organised. The development of infrastructure planning towards a successively higher level of ambition is described, as well as the evaluations and follow-ups that have been made by the most recent planning period. Furthermore, some comparisons with the planning process in other countries are presented.

In a separate chapter, we also discuss the overall task of strategic planning and the general requirements on the basis and forms of planning that this task entails. SIKA is proposing that the task of strategic planning be formulated in the following way: *Strategic planning aims at providing the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) and the Government with a basis for stating how transport policy is to be articulated by infrastructural measures. This also includes planning being able to provide a basis for guidelines for the work of the planning authorities in developing the infrastructure during the planning period.*

In this context, we also discuss what is required of the available data for decision-making to enable the Government and the Riksdag to provide overall guidelines for the development of the infrastructure. SIKA draws the conclusion that at least four requirements should be made on this material:

- All strategic and action planning should be based on common prerequisites.
- The same overall objectives and principles should apply to all modes of traffic.
- It should be possible to demonstrate how effective the action planning of the transport authorities is and its consequences.
- The mutual dependency of modes of transport should be taken into consideration.

Furthermore, we draw the conclusion that strategic planning with the tasks we have defined must include data that enables the Riksdag and the Government in strategic planning to:

- Specify more exactly the content of transport policy objectives.
- Give possible instructions for how certain means of control are to be dealt with in action planning.
- Provide instructions as to how projects that compete with or complement one another should be co-ordinated.
- Specify which other transport policy prerequisites are to be assumed to apply for action planning, such as taxation to internalise costs, vehicle regulations or subsidising traffic that affects demand and areas of competition.
- State how long action planning is to extend in the form of different measures or objectives for infrastructural measures.
- Specify the appropriate size of planning frames, overall and for different types of areas of inputs.

On the basis, inter alia, of the different evaluations and follow-ups made of the most recent planning period, SIKA is making a recommendation as to how strategic planning could be organised in the next planning period. We have then conceived of our commission as being primarily focused on how strategic planning is to be designed within the existing transport policy frameworks. This means that the recommendations made mainly take the form of a further development of existing planning.

To summarise, SIKA's recommendations mean that planning can have the same appearance as at present with the following changes in the *content* of the planning data:

- Produce more long-term surveys.
- Include overall analyses of very large projects.
- It should be possible to handle metropolitan area projects.
- The present framework allocation should be replaced by descriptions of different framework levels for rail and road measures respectively.
- A developed description of uncertainty should be included in the data.

Some changes of the *process* should also be considered:

- Replace the situation analysis with ongoing analytical work and a concluding seminar.
- Give the strategic analysis a clearer breakdown into two phases, analysis of strategic areas and analysis of directions.
- Include a phase for preparation of the data by the Government Offices.

Finally, the *presentation* of the material could be made more easily accessible:

- Make more concrete presentations in the form of, for instance, flows and specification of certain projects.
- Produce a outline brochure.
- Clarify which effects depend on differences in the use of funds for infrastructure or other means of control.

We also report on different conceivable timetables for a future planning period. These timetables are based partly on a wholly unchanged planning process and partly on a planning process that includes SIKA's recommendations for changes in the planning process.

SIKA considers that the changes presented above in the organisation, content and reporting of planning can contribute to further improving planning that already serves its purpose comparatively well. At the same time, it cannot be ignored that some of the problems that have come to the fore in various evaluations of planning are of a more deep-seated character and therefore can hardly be eliminated with limited changes in planning. In order not to pass by these problems without any comment, SIKA has decided in a concluding chapter to discuss some circumstances which we consider have a great impact on how planning can be implemented in practice and how the results of planning are perceived.

The issues taken up include how the focus of current planning on technical and economic rationality can be better combined with a more strategic and political rationality, how national and regional interests can be combined and different models for dealing with the relationship of infrastructure planning to other community planning. Furthermore, a survey is made of how long-term infrastructure planning will be affected by different lines of development as regards, for instance, new financing and management solutions and a more explicit European perspective on infrastructure planning. The intention of this chapter is not to produce any ready-made recommendations or conclusions but rather to bring to the fore examples of problem areas that may require continued analysis and development work.



THE SWEDISH INSTITUTE FOR TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS ANALYSIS

The Swedish Institute for Transport and Communications Analysis, SIKA, is an agency that is responsible to the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications. SIKA was established in 1995 and has three main areas of responsibility in the transport and communications sector:

- To carry out studies for the Government
- To develop forecasts and planning methods
- To be the responsible authority for official statistics

Swedish Institute for Transport and Communications Analysis

P.O. Box 17 213, SE-104 62 Stockholm, Sweden

Visit: Maria Skolgata 83

Phone: +46 8 506 206 00 Fax: +46 8 506 206 10

sika@sika-institute.se

www.sika-institute.se

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