

Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport

Dokumentasjon av prosjektene BOB og BEST samt TØIs delakelse

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Transportøkonomisk institutt (TØI) har opphavsrett til hele rapporten og dens enkelte deler. Innholdet kan brukes som underlagsmateriale. Når rapporten siteres eller omtales, skal TØI oppgis som kilde med navn og rapportnummer. Rapporten kan ikke endres. Ved eventuell annen bruk må forhåndssamtykke fra TØI innhentes. For øvrig gjelder [åndsverklovens](#) bestemmelser.

Forord

Benchmarking er en strukturert læringsprosess som har potensial til å heve kvaliteten, effektiviteten og bærekraften i samferdselssektoren.

TØI har deltatt i forskerkonsortiene bak EU-prosjektene Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport (BEST) og Benchmarking Of Benchmarking (BOB). Prosjektene har hatt som formål å spre kunnskap om benchmarking og samtidig teste ut den praktiske gjennomførbarheten av benchmarking på europeisk nivå.

Denne rapporten beskriver viktige konklusjoner fra disse prosjektene og dokumenterer prosessene og TØIs deltakelse.

EU-kommisjonen har vært hovedfinansieringskilde for TØIs deltakelse i BEST og BOB. Den nasjonale egenandelen for BEST er dekket av Samferdselsdepartementet, Luftfartsverket og AS Oslo Sporveier.

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TØIs prosjektleder har vært Nils Fearnley, som også har skrevet denne rapporten. Avdelingssekretær Kari Tangen har hatt ansvaret for tekstbehandling og utforming av rapporten. Forskningsleder Nils Vibe har gjennomført kvalitetssikringen av rapporten.

Oslo, april 2004
Transportøkonomisk institutt

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Sammendrag:

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Innledning

Benchmarking er en strukturert læringsprosess som har potensial til å heve kvaliteten, effektiviteten og bærekraften i samferdselssektoren. Både private transportselskaper og offentlig kommunikasjon kan ha nytte av den systematiske tilnærmingen benchmarking er, som et redskap til å forbedre seg på en rekke ulike områder.

TØI har deltatt i forskerkonsortiene bak EU-prosjektene Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport (BEST) og Benchmarking Of Benchmarking (BOB). BEST har vært organisert som et tematisk nettverk, og har arrangert i alt 6 konferanser for å spre kunnskap og utveksle erfaringer med benchmarking blant samferdselsmyndigheter i Europa.

Søsterprosjektet BOB har testet ut anbefalingene fra BEST gjennom tre benchmarkingpiloter og evaluert i hvilken grad benchmarking kan bidra til effektiv måloppnåelse i den europeiske samferdselssektoren. Pilotene har omfattet områdene jernbanekontrakter, trafiksikkerhet for yrkessjåfører og tilbringertjenester til flyplasser.

Denne sammendragsrapporten beskriver viktige konklusjoner fra disse prosjektene og dokumenterer prosessene og TØIs deltakelse.

BEST

Formålet med det tematiske nettverket BEST var å promotere anvendelsen av benchmarking i den europeiske transportsektoren. Med *tematisk nettverk* menes ikke et forskningsprosjekt i tradisjonell forstand, men et forum for utveksling av erfaringer og kunnskaper. Derfor har BEST vært konsentrert rundt en serie med konferanser der europeiske politikutformere har vært samlet i et nettverk sammen med fag- og bransjeeksperter. Hver konferanse har tatt opp forskjellige temaer knyttet til benchmarking:

1. Kunnskapsstatus for benchmarking generelt (oktober 2000)
2. Kunnskapsstatus for benchmarking i transportsektoren (januar 2001)

3. Indikatorer og benchmarking (juni 2001)
4. Praktisk anvendelse av benchmarkingmetoder (oktober 2001)
5. Benchmarking av *policymaking* i samferdselssektoren (juni 2002)
6. Siste konferanse – sammenfatning av resultater (mars 2003)

Konferansene har presentert gode eksempler på hvordan benchmarking kan brukes i samferdselssektoren og oppmuntret deltakerne til aktiv deltakelse med den hensikt å skape enighet "på europeisk nivå" om de viktigste forutsetningene for vellykket benchmarking og om nytten av benchmarking mer generelt. Med bakgrunn i presentasjoner og aktiviteter på BEST-konferansene har prosjektet utarbeidet anbefalinger til EU-kommisjonen om hvordan benchmarking kan være til nytte for kommisjonen, medlemslandene og kandidatlandene i deres arbeid med å utvikle bærekraftig og konkurransedyktig samferdsel.

BOB

BOB kan beskrives som "forskningsdelen" av EU-kommisjonens benchmarkingpakke BOB og BEST.

BOB har testet ut den praktiske gjennomførbarheten av europeisk benchmarking og evaluert i hvilken grad benchmarking kan bidra til effektiv måloppnåelse i den europeiske samferdselssektoren. Prosjektet har gjennomført benchmarking på europeisk nivå på tre ulike områder: Jernbanekontrakter, trafiksikkerhet for yrkessjåfører og tilbringertjenester til flyplasser.

BOB har fungert slik at prosjektgruppen har vært tilretteleggere, veiledere og overvåkere av benchmarkingprosessene. Selve benchmarkingen er blitt gjennomført av deltakere, som har vært representanter for operatører og myndigheter.

De mest fremtredende erfaringene fra de tre pilotundersøkelsene er at prosessene har vært tunge å dra i gang, at sammenliknbare data over landegrensene er en mangelvare, og at en god benchmarkingprosess trenger mer enn 1–1½ år på å materialisere forbedringer hos deltakerne.

Summary:

Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport Dokumentation of the projects BOB and BEST and TOIs participation

Introduction

Benchmarking is a structured learning process which has a potential to improve the quality, efficiency and sustainability of the transport sector. Both the private and public organisations can benefit from the systematic approach which benchmarking offers to challenges facing the transport sector.

Institute of Transport Economics in Norway has been partner in the EU funded projects Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport (BEST) and Benchmarking Of Benchmarking (BOB).

BEST has been organised as a Thematic Network and has organised 6 conferences to share information about, and experiences with, benchmarking among European transport authorities.

The sister project BOB assessed, by means of three practical pilot studies, how benchmarking can support the development and implementation of the various elements of a European sustainable transport policy. The three pilots are: Passenger Railways, Professional Road Transport Safety, and Airport Accessibility.

This summary report presents important findings from these projects and documents the processes and TOI's participation.

BEST

The Main Objectives of BEST were:

- To identify practical solutions as to how benchmarking can be developed as a practical tool to assist the European Commission, member states, and accession countries in effectively implementing sustainable transport policies in Europe.
- To provide specific recommendations to the European Commission in relation to the development and application of benchmarking in fields covered by transport policy, and further research needs and activities in the area of benchmarking in transport.

- To create an innovative dynamic of exchange of experience between the different transport sectors and sub-sectors.
- To create an effective network for the dissemination of practical information about benchmarking as an effective tool to support the implementation of sustainable transport policies and strategies through a series of conferences, newsletters, web site and links with other networks.

BEST established, for the first time, a European level framework for benchmarking in the transport sector. The thematic network built a consensus at a European level on the key requirements for successful benchmarking and the benefits of applying benchmarking in the transport sector. The network also produced specific recommendations on the development of benchmarking as a practical tool to assist the European Commission, Member States and Accession countries in effectively implementing sustainable and competitive transport policies in Europe.

The series of six conferences established a coherent thematic network. Each conference built upon the conclusions reached in the course of the previous conference(s), and upon inputs from the BOB pilots.

Conference 1: The state of the art in benchmarking in all sectors.

The first conference presented successful examples of innovative benchmarking from a range of non-transport sectors, and assessed the applicability of these 'good practices' to the transport sector.

Conference 2: The state of the art in benchmarking in the transport sector.

Successful examples of benchmarking in the transport sector were presented, with a focus on cases which have resulted in performance improvement. The conference also considered the use of benchmarking as a tool in the implementation of sustainable transport strategies.

Conference 3: Identifying effective benchmarking criteria.

The conference analysed both quantitative and qualitative indicators in order to identify the most effective and practical criteria for successful benchmarking. The conference considered benchmarking methodologies based on the complementarity of qualitative and quantitative criteria.

Conference 4: Identifying effective benchmarking methodologies.

The conference brought together experts to identify effective benchmarking methodologies in order to formulate 'best practice' benchmarking methods for application in the transport sector.

Conference 5: The application of benchmarking in transport policy.

Benchmarking transport policy is a new area of application for benchmarking. The conference brought together policy makers in order to identify the potential of benchmarking to promote the development of sustainable transport policies in Europe.

Conference 6: The final conference.

The final conference consolidated the conclusions and recommendations of the series of BEST conferences.

BOB

BOB acted as a 'laboratory' to test the recommendations produced by the BEST network. BOB assessed, by means of practical pilot studies, how performance measures and benchmarking can support the development and implementation of the various elements of a European sustainable transport policy.

The three topics addressed by the pilots are Passenger Railways, Professional Road Transport Safety, and Airport Accessibility.

Railway pilot

Passenger Traffic in Railways has been a topic in several previous policy papers produced within and outside the confines of the European Commission. The European Policy is outlining a firm relationship producing a greater demarcation between the responsibilities of transport authorities and those of operators. This relationship should be based on appropriate contractual agreements and is regarded as

an important way achieving lasting improvement and a firmer basis for public service obligations.

The objective of the railway pilot study has been to assess to what extent benchmarking can be used to improve the implementation of key objectives to increase the effectiveness of railway services, both from the point of view of the operator and as an instrument for national or regional transport authorities. This should allow these stakeholders to achieve sustainable mobility through attracting more passengers to rail and securing value for public money as well as supporting investment in the system.

To secure optimal participation of the stakeholders two working groups were formed to carry out the benchmarking: the 'authorities' and the 'operators' group. The national and regional authorities working group made an analysis of the institutional set-up in the participating countries, while the operators group made an analysis of some specific performance criteria.

A benchmark of institutional relations appeared to be difficult because of the high abstraction level (policy, law) and the differences between European systems. Moreover one cannot identify a single framework that has worked better than the rest in Europe. It did, however, seem that the actual comparison of different institutional systems applied is useful as this causes the stakeholders to think and to seek the best possible solutions.

Benchmarking of specific performance indicators is difficult but not impossible. Within this project we have concluded that there are possibilities for stakeholders to learn from the best practices regarding punctuality and growth. This pilot could only draw preliminary conclusions for these topics. There are, however, good reasons to continue the work in this field.

Participants included authorities and operators from Austria, Finland, France, Hungary, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, and Scotland. Union Internationale des Chemins de Fer and operators from Belgium, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom were participating as "observers", which enabled them to have limited involvement in the project.

Road safety pilot

There is increasing pressure on transport policy makers – both at national and European levels - to improve the safety of road transport. In the European Commission's White Paper 'European Transport Policy for 2010: time to decide', it has set a target of a 50% reduction in road

transport casualties between 2000 and 2010. The role of professional transport in road safety is particularly interesting for the European Commission because of its cross-border aspect and the importance of creating a level playing field for road transport throughout Europe. Since the market for professional transport has been liberalised, regulations for this sector are increasingly being enforced at the European level. Basic rules for driving times, transport of dangerous goods, type approval, driver training and examination, etc. are defined in EU Directives and Regulations.

Since most of the responsibilities for taking concrete measures fall mainly to national and regional authorities, the main instrument for the Commission to reach its ambitious target is the exchange of best practices. This underlines the importance of the BOB pilot study that aims to use benchmarking to improve policy at national and European level with the objective of achieving a higher road safety performance of professional road transport in particular and consequently the sustainability of road transport as a whole.

The benchmarking exercise has focused on policy measures. Two subjects were selected for benchmarking: professional driver training and the safety culture of transport companies.

Participants included representatives of the Ministries of Transport from the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Poland, Czech Republic, France, Finland, and Ireland. In addition to these countries the following organisations took part in the project: IRU (International Road Union), CEA (Comité Européen des Assurances), CIECA (Commission Internationale des Examens de Conduite Automobile) and TISPOL (Traffic Information System Police).

Airport accessibility pilot

The overall objective of the pilot has been to assess the use of benchmarking as a tool to improve airport accessibility. In particular, the results of the pilot have been used to identify effective policy measures for ensuring sustainable airport accessibility. Furthermore,

the pilot has acted as a laboratory to test in practice the recommendations produced by BEST.

The issue of airport accessibility is one that involves a great number of stakeholders including airport authorities, transport providers, infrastructure providers, local, regional and national authorities, employees, employers, etc. The initiatives of one party are heavily dependent on those of others. Consultation of the participating airports has resulted in the identification of a number of good practices related to airport accessibility. Many practices identified were especially related to resolving the problem of limited control over airport accessibility by some form of co-operation between actors in order to be able to address effectively the accessibility of the airport. The strength of these good practices, such as those in the UK (airport transport forums), the Netherlands (VCC-Schiphol) and Belgium (Brussels airport sustainability partnership) is that they provide the structure in which all relevant actors involved co-ordinate measures to improve airport accessibility.

The BOB airport accessibility pilot was successful in creating, for the first time, a network of airports that had never met in this kind of structured format to exchange ideas and experiences on airport access.

Airports that have participated in the pilot exercise have expressed enthusiasm about taking part in a group that enables them to compare performance and share good practices in the field of airport accessibility with other airports. Further, they expressed the need for a structure in which airports can compare their performance with others that have similar problems and in which they can learn from others and exchange good practice.

Participants that have contributed to the pilot include representatives of airports from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Spain, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, and representatives of ministries of transport in Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, as well as a local public authority in Poland. The Airports Council International - Europe (ACI Europe) and the International Air Rail Organisation (IARO) were also involved in the pilot.

1 Bakgrunn

Benchmarking har potensial til å heve kvaliteten, effektiviteten og bærekraften i samferdselssektoren. Både private transportselskaper og offentlig kommunikasjon kan ha nytte av den systematiske tilnærmingen benchmarking er, som et redskap til å forbedre seg til på en rekke ulike områder.

Økende grad av konkurranseutsetting og deregulering i samferdselssektoren gjør det nødvendig for alle aktører å fokusere på og posisjonere seg i forhold til de økonomiske, sosiale og miljømessige effektene av transportsektoren. Benchmarking er ikke bare et verktøy for sammenligne nøkkelindikatorer, som f. eks. godstransportens punktlighet i ulike land. Benchmarking brukes også til tilpasse seg kundenes krav til høy punktlighet gjennom en strukturert prosess der *forståelse av egne prosesser og læring av andre* er viktige faktorer.

EU-kommisjonen tok initiativ til benchmarkingprosjektene BEST og BOB¹ for nettopp å vurdere disse mulighetene som ligger i benchmarking på europeisk nivå innenfor samferdselsektoren. Denne sammendragsrapporten beskriver viktige konklusjoner fra disse prosjektene, og dokumenterer prosessene og TØIs deltakelse.

Bak prosjektene BOB og BEST står et konsortium som i tillegg til TØI har bestått av følgende organisasjoner:

- OGM, Belgia (koordinator for BEST)
- NEA, Nederland (koordinator for BOB)
- CERTU, Frankrike
- Erasmus-universitetet i Rotterdam, Nederland
- FAV, Tyskland
- INECO, Spania
- Det tekniske universitetet i Warszawa, Polen

Styringskomiteen for BEST har bestått av Jörg Beckmann fra European Federation for Transport and Environment, Paul Leonard fra Paul Leonard Consultancy og Jack Short fra European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT).

1.1 Europa og benchmarking

En viktig bakgrunn for benchmarkingaktivitetene som foregår i samferdsels-EU er en meddelelse EU-kommisjonen publiserte i 1996 (EU-kommisjonen 1996a). Den identifiserte Europas økonomiske konkurransevne som svak, og lanserte benchmarking som det nødvendige verktøyet for å hjelpe og støtte utviklingen mot kontinuerlig forbedring i Europas konkurransevne. Den europeiske ministerkonferansen inviterte EU-kommisjonen året etter til å lansere forslag til hvordan

¹ Henholdsvis **Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport (BEST)** og **Benchmarking Of Benchmarking (BOB)**.

benchmarking som verktøy kunne forbedre Europas konkurransevne. Den påfølgende rapporten fra EU-kommisjonen (1997) peker på tre nivåer for benchmarking – selskapsnivå, sektornivå og rammebetingelser – og viser til eksempler på benchmarkinginitiativer som er finansiert av EU-kommisjonen eller nasjonalstatene, på hvert av disse nivåene. Rapporten foreslår etableringen av et EU-rammeverk for å finansiere benchmarkinginitiativer av europeisk interesse. Flere temaer ble foreslått:

- Ny informasjons- og kommunikasjonsteknologi
- Finansiering av forskning og utvikling
- Miljø
- Transport og logistikk

I 1998, i forlengelsen av arbeidet med grønnboken *Citizens' Network* (EU-kommisjonen 1996b), som fremmet utveksling av metoder og erfaringer for å bedre Europas transportsektor, lanserte kommisjonen et pilotprosjekt for europeisk benchmarking. Dette prosjektet var så vellykket at det ble videreført i *Citizens' Network Benchmarking Initiative*, som involverte 41 byer og regioner i 13 europeiske land, i en ettårig benchmarkingøvelse.

Andre områder hvor EU-kommisjonen har jobbet med benchmarking, inkluderer utviklingen av europeisk sysselsettingsstrategi (DG Employment and Social Affairs), nasjonal forskningspolitikk (DG Research) og liberalisering av strøm- og gassmarkedene (DG Energy and Transport). Innenfor samferdselssektoren har EU-kommisjonen lansert en serie benchmarkingrelaterte initiativer. Blant disse er prosjektene BOB og BEST.

2 Benchmarking – metode for forbedringer

I industrien har benchmarking lenge vært brukt som et ledelsesverktøy, og har stor utbredelse. Barnes (1999) viser til at hele 78 prosent av *The Times Top 1000 Companies* i Storbritannia driver med benchmarking. Benchmarking er imidlertid et moteord som benyttes i en rekke ulike sammenhenger, og de fleste har bare et vagt forhold til begrepet og hva det betyr. I dette kapitlet gir vi en innføring i hva benchmarking innebærer som metode. Faktaboks 1 gir noen viktige definisjoner som det kan være greit å ha avklart.

2.1 En læringsprosess

Den alminnelige oppfatningen om at benchmarking er å sammenligne nøkkeltall, er bare delvis korrekt. Selv om de aller fleste benchmarkingøvelsene innebærer å sammenligne prestasjoner i en eller annen form, er det ikke dette som er *målet* med benchmarking. Å vite at noen produserer 15% mer kostnadseffektivt enn deg, har liten verdi i seg selv. Målet med benchmarking er å lære hvordan de andre har klart å bli så mye mer effektive, og hvordan du selv kan anvende deres erfaringer i din egen organisasjon.

Faktaboks 1: Definisjoner, basert på Leonard (2000)

Et “**benchmark**” er et høyt prestasjonsnivå som vi kan sammenligne oss med og som er verdt å forsøke og etterstrebe eller overgå. For eksempel X kroner per vognkilometer, eller en kundetilfredshetscore på Y prosent.

”**Best practice**” er de virkemidlene (metoder eller prosesser) som fører til høyeste prestasjonsnivå. For eksempel organisasjonsstruktur, plassering av billettautomater eller smilekurs.

”**Benchmarking**” er en læringsprosess der man identifiserer et benchmark for å studere og lære av den bakenforliggende best practice og implementere prosesser i egen organisasjon for å bli minst like gode selv.

”**Å benchmarke**” er å delta i benchmarking. (Kun å sammenligne og analysere nøkkeltall er med andre ord *ikke* å benchmarke i ordets rette forstand.)

2.2 Fem grunnleggende trinn

Benchmarking er altså en øvelse som går mye lengre enn bare å sammenligne nøkkelindikatorer eller kopiere driftsrutiner. Det er derfor vi sier at benchmarking er en *organisatorisk læringsprosess*. Kort presentert består en benchmarkingprosess av følgende fem trinn:

1. *Hvor står vi?:* Det første skrittet er en grundig analyse av deg selv. For å kunne oppnå forbedringer, må du først vite hvor du står: Hva gjør jeg, hvordan gjør jeg det? Hva er mine konkurransemessige og øvrige rammebetingelser? Og så videre. Du må ha svar på disse typene spørsmål før du kan bestemme hvilke områder som kan forbedres ved benchmarking.
2. *Sammenligne nøkkeltall:* Det andre skrittet er å sammenligne nøkkeltall og etablere et *benchmark*, altså en indikasjon på et høyere prestasjonsnivå som er verd å forsøke og etterstrebe. Utfordringen i denne fasen er å finne indikatorer som mest mulig objektivt og presist beskriver forskjeller mellom egen og de andres prestasjoner, samt mulige årsaker til disse forskjellene.
3. *Analysere forskjeller:* Når et *benchmark* er identifisert, er det tredje steget å analysere den bakenforliggende *best practice*, det vil si hvordan man har nådd det høye prestasjonsnivået. Dette kan være valg av tilnæringsmåte, organisatoriske grep, praktiske løsninger osv.
4. *Implementere endringer:* Det fjerde skrittet er å implementere nødvendige endringer i egen organisasjon. Målet er at prosessene du setter i gang skal bringe deg på høyde med de beste, slik at din organisasjon skal representere *best practice*.
5. *Overvåke forbedringsprosessen:* Det femte og siste steget i prosessen er å overvåke at forbedringsprosessen går i riktig retning, og at egne prestasjoner kontinuerlig vurderes i forhold til andres (dvs. starte på det første steget igjen). Dette siste punktet innebærer at benchmarking er en kontinuerlig prosess.

2.3 Krevende prosess

Benchmarking er et praktisk verktøy for å oppnå forbedring. I sin enkleste form handler benchmarking om noe så grunnleggende som å lære av hverandre, isteden for å finne opp hjulet på nytt. Lærdom fra benchmarking kan være håndgripelig og konkret, for eksempel helt konkrete handlinger.

Å implementere endringer, dvs. det fjerde steget i benchmarkingprosessen, understreker nødvendigheten av representasjon på relativt høyt nivå i organisasjonen. De som deltar i benchmarking må være i stand til å fatte beslutninger og sette i gang forandringer med bakgrunn i de erfaringene som er gjort. Ellers blir gevinstene av benchmarking sannsynligvis små.

Videre krever benchmarking evne til nytenkning og evne til å tilpasse det man har lært fra andre til din egen organisasjons behov. Det lar seg sjelden gjøre å kopiere andres metoder direkte. Fordi ulike organisasjoner i samferdselssektoren opererer under forskjellige rammevilkår, er det å lære av andres *prosesser* langt mer aktuelt innen benchmarking. Hvordan har finnene og japanerne klart å oppnå så høy forbedring av punktligheten i kollektivtransporten? Sannsynligvis ligger svaret i de organisatoriske grepene og valg av strategi, og ikke nødvendigvis bare i de tekniske løsningene. Benchmarking innebærer med andre ord grundige studier av andre bedrifters *best practice*.

Benchmarking innebærer samarbeid med andre omkring en strukturert læringsprosess. Hvem de andre er, avhenger av målet for øvelsen. Det kan være andre deler av samme organisasjon (f.eks. intercity og lokaltogdivisjonen), tilsvarende aktører i andre markeder (Stor-Oslo Lokaltrafikk og Vestfold Kollektivtrafikk) eller helt

forskjellige bedrifter (Nettbuss og Skiforeningen). Samarbeidet stiller krav til fleksibilitet, fortrolighet og disiplin. Velfungerende samarbeid er den kanskje viktigste forutsetningen for en god benchmarkingprosess. Derfor omfatter lister over viktige suksesskriterier i neste avsnitt mange momenter som er knyttet til samarbeidet med de andre i benchmarkinggruppen.

2.4 Suksesskriterier

Den som har erfaring med benchmarking vet at det er mange feller å gå i i løpet av prosessen. Mange av dem er opplagte, men likevel mangler det ikke eksempler på at benchmarking-øvelser har strandet fordi prosessene ikke har etterlevd suksesskriteriene nedenfor. Her følger et utvalg av suksesskriterier som er blitt presentert på BEST-konferansene:

1. Antallet deltakere må bestemmes ut fra målsettingen med benchmarkingen og ut fra kapasiteten til å håndtere gruppen.
2. Alle deltakere må ha en felles forståelse av målsetningen med arbeidet, av prosessen og de forventede resultatene.
3. Vær vidsynt i valget av benchmarkingpartnere. Det er mulig at du kan lære mest fra selskaper som jobber i andre sektorer og markeder.
4. Vær åpen for kritisk gjennomgang av egen organisasjons prestasjoner. Dette er ofte en stor hindring fordi man risikerer å bli identifisert som lite effektiv eller rett og slett svak. Det er imidlertid de som har størst potensial for forbedring som gjerne får mest igjen av å delta i prosessen.
5. Vær åpen for å dele informasjon og ekspertise med andre. Tillit internt i benchmarkinggruppen er helt nødvendig hvis det skal bli vellykket. Hvis dette er et problem, kan det løses med konfidensialitetserklæringer.
6. Indikatorer og sammenligninger er ikke sluttproduktet av benchmarking. Indikatorer er et utgangspunkt for å måle avstanden mellom deg og best practice, og kan være til hjelp for å analysere ditt forbedringspotensial.
7. Vær åpen for å lære av andre. Dette er hovedhensikten med å delta!
8. Vær i stand til å sette i gang nødvendige forandringer. Dette forutsetter at deltakerne sitter relativt høyt i sine organisasjoner, med fullmakter til å foreta og investere i nødvendige grep.
9. Ha gode rutiner for å overvåke at utviklingen går i riktig retning, at endringene fører til faktiske forbedringer.
10. En uhildet tredjepart, f.eks. en konsulent, kan være til hjelp med å tilrettelegge og holde prosessen i gang, sikre et faglig forsvarlig opplegg, garantere konfidensialitet osv.

2.5 Nytte på flere nivåer

Erfaringene fra benchmarkingprosjektene BOB og BEST har vist at gevinstene ved benchmarking er mange, og at de ikke nødvendigvis er begrenset til forbedringer i nøkkeltallene.

Et eksempel på at benchmarking har gitt stor uttelling både for operatører og myndigheter, er *Australian Bus Sector Benchmarking* (ABSB), som ble presentert på den fjerde BEST-konferanse (Wallis, 2001). ABSB ble startet på initiativ fra offentlige rutebilselskaper i 1992, som et virkemiddel for å snu den negative utviklingen med økende tilskudd og svak kostnadseffektivitet i næringen. Etter om lag 10 år med benchmarking oppsummerer Wallis at valget av benchmarking som metodisk tilnærming har bidratt til effektivitetsgevinster og til vellykkede reformer i sektoren. Forbedrede skiftordninger, ny lokalisering av depoter og endrede rutiner for vedlikehold av bussparken er blant de konkrete tiltakene som er iverksatt. Operatørene rapporterte at benchmarking har vist seg som et viktig planleggingsverktøy for dem, og fremheves som viktigste årsak til en 20 prosents effektivitetsgevinst i perioden. Myndighetene, på den andre siden, melder at benchmarking som verktøy har vært til støtte i tilskuddsforhandlinger, i vurdering av operatørens anbud og til utformingen av prisregulering i lokal kollektivtransport.

Det er også en del indirekte fordeler ved benchmarking som stadig trekkes frem. Muligheten til å møte sentrale personer fra andre organisasjoner som holder på med de samme problemstillingene som deg selv, er ofte i seg selv høyt verdsatt. I tillegg til at man møtes i strukturerte former og diskuterer leddene i benchmarkingprosessen, er det som regel rom for å utveksle andre erfaringer og problemstillinger mer uformelt i pauser og middager; en slags *Silicon Valley-effekt*.

I systemer som ikke direkte er utsatt for konkurranse, har benchmarking ofte vist seg å være en motivasjonsfaktor i seg selv ("Neste gang skal vi slå Stockholm!"). Slik kan benchmarking være et substitutt for konkurranse.

En helt annen bruk av benchmarkingarbeidet er at resultater av rangering av nøkkeltall med hell har vært brukt i PR-sammenheng. Hvis din organisasjon er "Best i Europa" på et område, har det markedsføringsverdi i seg selv. Samtidig kan dårlig rangering brukes for å rette søkelys på manglende politisk prioritering, vanskelige rammevilkår osv.

2.6 Kritikk av benchmarking

Det er viktig ikke å være blind for de begrensningene som ligger i benchmarking-metoden. Selv om benchmarking på mange måter er i vinden, er det likevel ikke noen vidunderkur som kan kurere 'alt'.

Den kanskje viktigste svakheten ved tradisjonell benchmarking er at det er en akontekstuell tilnærming, dvs. at den ikke tar hensyn til ulike organisasjoners rammebetingelser. I samferdselssektorens ofte komplekse problemområder oppstår det fort situasjoner som ikke kan løses med den enkle lære-av-andre-metoden. Hvis det for eksempel er dyrere å reise med tog i Norge enn i Frankrike, kan det skyldes at franskmennene er mer kostnadseffektive enn oss, slik at vi har noe å lære av dem. Men det kan også skyldes at franskmennene opererer under helt andre regulatoriske, økonomiske, politiske, topografiske og befolkningsmessige rammevilkår.

Tradisjonell benchmarking gir ikke noe klart svar på hvordan hensynet til slike faktorer skal ivaretas. Det finnes riktignok statistiske metoder som kan korrigere for ulike rammebetingelser. En slik tilnærming beveger seg imidlertid langt fra den tradisjonelle benchmarkingen, som skal være en praktisk tilnærming som er enkel å forstå for alle.

Mangelen på akademisk tilsnitt gjør at benchmarking er en forholdsvis upresis metode som statistisk sett kan gi lite holdbare konklusjoner. En operatør kan for eksempel tilsynelatende være mer kostnadseffektiv enn en annen når nøkkeltall sammenlignes, mens forskjellen i realiteten skyldes ulik forståelse av definisjoner, eller manglende korrigering for rammebetingelser. Den store praktiske utfordringen i benchmarking er derfor å utarbeide data som på objektivt grunnlag kan gi et mål på hvor du står i forhold til andre. Benchmarkingen blir i beste fall verdiløs hvis man sammenligner hummer med kanari uten å være klar over det, når resultatene bestemmer den videre prosessen. I verste fall setter du i gang ressurskrevende endringer uten å høste noen gevinster fra det, mens benchmarkingkonsulenten tar seg godt betalt.

Suksesskriteriene for benchmarking kan hver for seg virke trivielle og opplagte. Imidlertid kan summen av dem bli en uoverkommelig barriere mot å lykkes. Det faktum at benchmarkinglitteraturen flommer over av lister med suksesskriterier kan i seg selv indikere at benchmarking er langt mer utfordrende i praksis enn hva teorien skulle tilsi. En typisk benchmarkingøvelse innebærer at flere aktører, som gjerne representerer ulike bedrifter og sektorer, samarbeider om et prosjekt som skal gi gjensidig læring og nytte. Det vil kreve nærmest umenneskelige koordineringsevner å styre en benchmarkinggruppe fri av alle hindrene suksesskriteriene advarer mot. Noen eksempler:

- *Kan man vente at alle har identisk forståelse av målsetninger?* (2. suksesskriterium) Med utgangspunkt i at den populære forståelsen av benchmarking er å sammenstille nøkkeltall, kan det være grunn til å tvile på at alle deltakerne forestiller seg en strukturert læringsprosess når de blir med.
- *Kan man vente at 'den beste' vil gi andre innsyn i sin best practice?* (5. suksesskriterium) I tilfeller der deltakerne i noen grad konkurrerer i samme marked, kan man ikke vente det. Dessuten ligger det liten fortjeneste for 'vinneren' i å bruke ressurser til å lære opp de andre. En årsak til at mange benchmarkingøvelser strander når 'bestemann' er utpekt, kan derfor kanskje ligge nettopp her.
- *Kan man vente at bedrifter som vet de vil komme dårlig ut i rangeringen, vil delta?* (4. suksesskriterium) Til tross for at data kan behandles konfidensielt kan det være lite misunnelsesverdig å representere den som skårer 'dårlig' eller under middels i gruppen. Frykten for å bli pekt ut som 'dårligst' er en stor terskel for mange. Å være dårligst og måtte lære av andre (7. suksesskriterium) kan være en stor kamel å svelge for mange.
- *Kan man vente at folk i ledende posisjoner har kapasitet og mulighet til å engasjere seg i en krevende benchmarkingprosess?* (8. suksesskriterium) Valget av personer til å delta og representere organisasjonen, er kritisk for muligheten til å lykkes med benchmarking. De skal ha tillit i ledelsen, og ha evne til å omsette konklusjonene til handling. Ofte er det naturlig at 'yngre' medarbeidere, som i det daglige jobber med nøkkeltall og drift, blir pekt ut til å ta seg av benchmarkingaktiviteten. Selv om de har god forståelse av målsettingen med benchmarkingøvelsen i gruppen er ikke det noen garanti for at ledelsen har det.

I tillegg til den metodiske kritikken av benchmarking er det et problem at benchmarkingprosesser altfor ofte stopper opp etter at nøkkeltallene er sammenlignet og deltakerne er 'rangert'. I realiteten er dette bare de første små skrittene på vei til forbedrete prestasjoner gjennom en strukturert læringsprosess, og skal ikke defineres

som benchmarking. Innsamling og sammenligning av nøkkeltall må ikke forveksles med *læringsprosessen* benchmarking.

3 BEST – Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport

EU-kommisjonen lanserte det tematiske nettverket BEST i mai 2000. BEST skulle være et innovativt konsept for å promotere en omfattende tilnærming til anvendelsen av benchmarking i hele transportsektoren. Med *tematisk nettverk* menes ikke et forskningsprosjekt i tradisjonell forstand, men et forum for utveksling av erfaringer og kunnskaper. Derfor har BEST vært konsentrert rundt en serie med konferanser der europeiske politikktutformere har vært samlet i et nettverk sammen med fag- og bransjeeksperter. Hver konferanse har tatt opp forskjellige temaer knyttet til benchmarking:

1. Kunnskapsstatus for benchmarking generelt (oktober 2000)
2. Kunnskapsstatus for benchmarking i transportsektoren (januar 2001)
3. Indikatorer og benchmarking (juni 2001)
4. Praktisk anvendelse av benchmarkingmetoder (oktober 2001)
5. Benchmarking av policymaking i samferdselssektoren (juni 2002)
6. Siste konferanse – sammenfatning av resultater (mars 2003)

Konferansene har presentert gode eksempler på hvordan benchmarking kan brukes i samferdselssektoren, og oppmuntret deltakerne til aktiv deltakelse med den hensikt å skape enighet "på europeisk nivå" om de viktigste forutsetningene for vellykket benchmarking og om nytten av benchmarking mer generelt. Med bakgrunn i presentasjoner og aktiviteter på BEST-konferansene har prosjektet utarbeidet anbefalinger til EU-kommisjonen om hvordan benchmarking kan være til nytte for Kommisjonen, medlemslandene og kandidatlandene i deres arbeid med å utvikle bærekraftig og konkurransedyktig samferdsel (Gordon 2001). Disse anbefalingene er gjengitt i vedlegg 1 til 6 (på engelsk).

De to første konferansene ga en introduksjon til benchmarking generelt og til metodens anvendelse i samferdselssektoren. Kapitlene 2.1-2.5 i denne rapporten sammenfatter på mange måter de viktigste elementene fra disse konferansene. En rekke prosjekter, både fra samferdselssektoren og andre sektorer, ble presentert for å illustrere prinsippene i en benchmarkingprosess og nytten av benchmarking.

Den tredje konferansen konsentrerte seg om indikatorer (nøkkeltall) for bruk i samferdselssektoren. Behovet for å tolke nøkkeltall i lys av hvor og hvordan de er samlet inn, ble sterkt understreket. Videre ble det lagt vekt på at sammenligning av nøkkeltall ikke er noe mål i seg selv, men et første skritt på veien for å identifisere *best practice* for så å lære av det.

Den fjerde konferansen omfattet benchmarkingmetoder i vid forstand. Mye av konferansen handlet om praktisk tilnærming til de enkelte trinnene i en benchmarkingprosess (jf. kapittel 2.2, f.eks. hvordan man kan motivere og utvelge medarbeidere til å delta i benchmarking). Samtidig presenterte bl.a. James Odeck fra Vegdirektoratet en alternativ tilnærming til sammenlignende analyser av effektivitet, *dataomhyllingsanalyse* (Odeck, 2001). På denne måten ble det fokusert både på

hvordan man best kan gjennomføre den klassiske "benchmarkingoppskriften", og på valg av metodologisk tilnærming til et problemområde.

Transport policy benchmarking var tema på den femte BEST-konferansen. Det var mye forventninger knyttet til dette temaet, i og med at politikkutforming er et fullstendig nytt område for benchmarking. Mye ressurser ble brukt på å definere *politikkutforming*, og på *benchmarking av politikkutforming*. Videre var det mye forvirring omkring måling og sammenligning av policymaking: Kan det kvantifiseres? Kan det sammenlignes gitt ulike rammebetingelser? Er benchmarking det naturlige verktøyet til å evaluere policymaking? osv. Selv om konferansen ikke ga noen entydige svar på disse spørsmålene, ble det presentert eksempler på studier som i høyeste grad benyttet benchmarking til å evaluere policymaking (f.eks. Wyatt 2002, Hatch 2002 og Grayson og Dunning 2002). I tillegg til de konkluderende anbefalingene som er gjengitt i vedlegg 5, er temaet videre utdypet i vedlegg 6 og 7.

Den sjette og siste BEST-konferansen oppsummerte og befestet de viktigste prinsippene for benchmarking slik de har kommet frem i løpet av prosjektet. Det kanskje viktigste resultatet av konferanserekken - gjennom utvekslingen av kunnskap og erfaringer med benchmarking - er en økt forståelse for hva policy benchmarking innebærer og hva det kan bidra til. I anbefalingene fra den 6. BEST-konferansen (vedlegg 6) beskrives et rammeverk for forholdet mellom benchmarking og policy. I alt 5 relasjonelle forhold analyseres og gis en beskrivelse med praktiske eksempler.

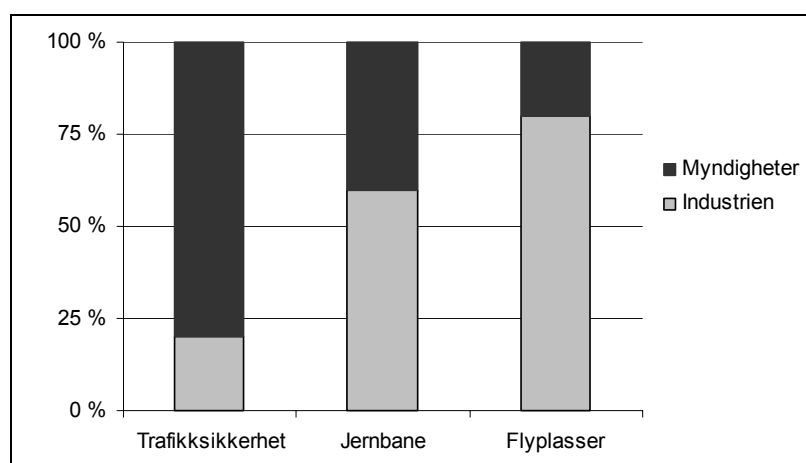
4 BOB – Benchmarking of Benchmarking

Samtidig med BEST lanserte EU-kommisjonen prosjektet BOB. Dette er et søsterprosjekt til BEST, og kan beskrives som 'forskningsdelen' av kommisjonens benchmarkingpakke BOB og BEST.

BOB har testet ut den praktiske gjennomførbarheten av europeisk benchmarking, og evaluert i hvilken grad benchmarking kan bidra til effektiv måloppnåelse i den europeiske samferdselssektoren. Prosjektet har gjennomført benchmarking på europeisk nivå på tre ulike områder: Jernbanekontrakter, trafiksikkerhet for yrkes-sjåfører og tilbringertjenester til flyplasser. Disse områdene er blitt valgt av EU-kommisjonen med bakgrunn i de store utfordringene de representerer for europeisk politikktutforming.

Formålet med BOB har vært å teste anbefalingene fra BEST i praksis, og samtidig rapportere tilbake til BEST om prosessene. Prosjektet har også gitt innspill til Kommisjonen om forutsetninger for å lykkes med benchmarkingprosesser.

BOB har fungert slik at prosjektgruppen har vært tilretteleggere, veiledere og overvåkere av benchmarkingprosessene. Selve benchmarkingen er blitt gjennomført av deltakere, som har vært representanter for operatører og myndigheter. Figur 4.1 viser fordelingen av deltakere i de tre pilotundersøkelsene mellom offentlige myndigheter og industrien/operatører.



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Figur 4.1: Deltakerne i BOB-pilotundersøkelsene slik de fordelte seg mellom offentlige myndigheter og industrien/operatører

For å hjelpe deltakerne har BOB/BEST-teamet utarbeidet "Benchmarking Guide" (BG) og "Performance Assessment Guide" (PAG). Disse skulle hjelpe EU-kommisjonen, prosjektteamet og deltakerne til å gjennomføre og overvåke prosessen. BG gir

en innføring i benchmarking og en veiledning til datainnsamling og analysedelen av prosessen. PAG inneholder et spørreskjema til deltakerne som referer seg til fire definerte stadier i benchmarkingprosessen. Spørreskjemaet ble brukt til å fange opp problemer og muligheter underveis.

Arbeidet med BOB startet opp tidlig i 2001 med identifisering av temaområder for de tre pilotene. Deretter ble det brukt mye tid og ressurser på å samle og motivere aktuelle deltakere. Selve benchmarkingen startet derfor ikke før i slutten av 2001, og varte frem til slutten av 2002. Det er derfor om lag ett års erfaringer med benchmarking som presenteres her. Gjennom prosjektets relativt korte aktive periode, har BOB-teamet måttet forholde seg til tre forskjellige kontaktpersoner i EU-kommisjonen: Anna Panagopoulou var med på å starte opp prosjektet og identifisere problemstillinger og tema for pilotundersøkelsene. Hun ble flyttet til en annen avdeling innenfor DG TREN ved årsskiftet 2001-2002. Jean Houcarde overtok ansvaret for BOB i en kort periode før han pensjonerte seg sommeren 2002. Deretter overtok Maria Ibarra Gil. De tre kontaktpersonene har hatt ulik stil og tilnærming til prosjektet, og dette har vært med på å bidra til at prosessene ikke har vært så strømlinjeformede som ønsket.

I de neste kapitlene blir erfaringene fra hver av de tre benchmarkingpilotundersøkelsene presentert. TØI deltok aktivt i jernbanepilotundersøkelsen, men har kun fungert som observatør i forhold til de to andre pilotundersøkelsene.

4.1 Jernbanekontrakter

Det overordnede formålet med piloten har vært å vurdere i hvilken grad benchmarking fungerer som metode for å styrke den europeiske jernbanen innenfor passasjertrafikk.

Passasjertrafikk på jernbane ble valgt som tema for BOB fordi det representerer en vesentlig utfordring for både nasjonal og europeisk politikkutforming, samtidig som det kan bidra til mer bærekraftig utvikling av europeisk transport. EU-direktivet 91/440² og den påfølgende "Jernbanepakken" fra EU-kommisjonen har lagt premisene for store endringer i jernbanesektoren det siste tiåret, og det er stort behov for å effektivisere relasjonene mellom myndigheter og operatører. I alle deltakerlandene har både operatørene og myndighetene gjennomgått, eller er i ferd med å igangsette, organisatoriske endringer og endrede ansvarsforhold.

Pilotprosjektet er dokumentert i NEA (2003b).

4.1.1 Prosessen

Fra operatørsiden er det behov for kommersiell utvikling, samtidig som myndighetene søker et best mulig styrings-, regulerings- og tilskuddsverktøy. Derfor har denne pilotundersøkelsen blitt delt inn i to separate tilnærminger, utfra de forskjellige behovene til operatørene versus myndighetene: (1) institusjonelle analyser og (2) analyser av resultatmål med spesiell fokus på punktlighet. Førstnevnte vektlegger kontraktsforholdet mellom myndigheter og jernbaneoperatører, og har vært hovedanliggende for de av deltakerne som har representert myndighetssiden. Sistnevnte har i hovedsak analysert forsinkelser og (årsaker til) driftsavvik, og har blitt gjennomført

² Rådets direktiv 91/440/EØF af 29. juli 1991 om utvikling af Fællesskabets jernbaner

av representantene for operatørene. Selv om myndighetene og operatørene i stor grad har jobbet isolert fra hverandre, har de vist stor interesse for hverandres prosesser.

Det var en tung prosess å komme i gang og motivere tilstrekkelig mange deltakere. Så godt som alle deltakerne måtte overbevises om at de ville dra nytte av å delta i forhold til deres egne målsetninger og utfordringer. Spesielt var det vanskelig å få med operatørene. De nølte både med å stille tilstrekkelige ressurser til rådighet, samtidig som de var kritiske til å dele sensitiv informasjon med gruppen av representanter fra myndighetssiden. Det siste ble løst ved at deltakerne ble tilbudt en konfidensialitetsordning og at operatørgruppen arbeidet mye på egenhånd uten innblanding fra den andre gruppen.

I Norge var det for eksempel Samferdselsdepartementet som først og fremst så nytten av deltakelse, mens NSB nølte fordi de ikke forventet nytte som sto i forhold til innsatsen som krevdes. Policyen i BOB var i utgangspunktet at myndigheter ikke fikk delta med mindre også operatører forpliktet seg til å delta. Dermed ble det viktig for Samferdselsdepartementet å motivere NSB til deltakelse, noe de også klarte til slutt. NSB har siden vært svært aktive deltakere og bidratt vesentlig til at gruppen med operatører har fungert veldig bra.

Etter hvert som gruppen av deltakere tok form, var det nye land som viste interesse for å delta. Samtidig trakk andre seg ut. Deltakerne forholdt seg med andre ord aktivt til sitt engasjement i benchmarkingprosessen, og vurderte kontinuerlig nytten de hadde av å delta. I forhold til suksesskriteriene i kapittel 2.4 viser disse erfaringene også hvor viktig det er å sikre at alle deltakerne har god forståelse av nytten av å delta, og at en aktiv tredjepart, i dette tilfellet BOB-konsortiet, spiller en viktig rolle som pådriver i prosessen.

Tabellen under viser landenes deltakelse i prosjektperioden. Fire land har deltatt med både myndigheter og operatører gjennom hele prosessen, og til enhver tid har minst 5 land vært representert med både myndigheter og operatører. Frankrike og Belgia fikk endret sin status til "observatør" som følge av at de ikke hadde tilstrekkelige ressurser til full deltakelse og at de hadde problemer knyttet til datakonfidensialitet. UIC, det internasjonale jernbaneforbundet, har også vært knyttet til prosjektet som observatører.

Kommunikasjonen mellom gruppen av myndigheter og gruppen med operatører ble utover i prosjektet begrenset, og BOB-teamet måtte aktivt oppmuntre til mer kontakt mellom gruppene. Spesielt utviklet operatørgruppen seg til en relativt lukket klubb der ikke en gang BOB-partnerne fikk fullt innsyn. Årsakene til utviklingen ligger i at operatørene følte seg "overvåket" av myndighetene, samtidig som de fant det lite motiverende hvis utenforstående operatører skulle kunne være gratispassasjerer og ha nytte av resultatene uten å selv ha bidratt til prosessen.

Tabell 4.1: De ulike landenes deltakelse (som medlem eller observatør) i BOB railway case ved ulike tidspunkter i perioden 2001-2002. Mørkegrå celler betegner medlem i benchmarking gruppen, lysegrå celler betegner observatørstatus og hvite celler betyr ingen tilknytning

Medlem		Brussel mars 2001	Utrecht okt 2001	Brussel jan 2002	Oslo mars 2002	Brussel juni 2002	Brussel nov 2002
Observatør							
Land	Operatør/ Myndighet	Kickoff-møte					Avslutning
Nederland	O & M						
Norge	O & M						
Skottland	O & M						
Japan	O						
Frankrike	O & M						
Belgia	O & M						
Finland	O & M						
Ungarn	O & M						
Polen	O & M						
Østerrike	O						
Sveits	O						
Sverige	O						
Danmark	O & M						
Tyskland	M						

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I gruppen av offentlige myndigheter var det vanskelig å få deltakerne til å vie tilstrekkelig tid til arbeidet. Dermed måtte BOB-teamet gjøre mye av arbeidet på vegne av gruppen, noe som forsinket prosessen fordi det ikke var satt av midler til BOB-teamet til dette. Den eneste muligheten for å få til en vellykket prosess under slike forhold, vil være å gi konsulentene tilstrekkelig ressurser til å gjøre jobben på vegne av gruppen. Som kontrast til dette, var operatørgruppen langt mer proaktive og selvgående. Et viktig suksesskriterium i denne sammenhengen var en kjerne av svært aktive deltakende operatører (deriblant NSB) som hadde frigjort tilstrekkelige ressurser til oppgaven.

Det er beklagelig at EU-kommisjonen, som finansierer BOB, må sies å ha styrt prosessen med ustø hånd. Underveis har kommisjonen bl.a. ønsket å endre formålet med prosjektet fra en studie av benchmarking til en studie av jernbanerelaterte problemstillinger. I periodene har Kommisjonen vært såpass passiv at prosjektet har vært de facto uten styring fra dem. Kommisjonen har i noen tilfeller kommet i etterkant og kritisert utviklingen de passivt hadde gått god for. Hovedårsaken har vært byttene av kontaktpersoner, som nevnt innledningsvis til dette kapittelet.

4.1.2 Resultater og funn

Gruppen av myndigheter jobbet lenge med å velge en innfallsvinkel til problemstillingen, som i utgangspunktet var knyttet til kontraktsforholdet mellom myndigheter og jernbaneoperatører. Som et første skritt før selve benchmarkingen tok til, ble det derfor utarbeidet to arbeidsdokumenter om "Institutional Organisation" (Fearnley 2002) og "Relation authority-operator" (NEA 2001). Disse ga deltakerne en oversikt over organiseringen og finansieringen av jernbanen i deltakerlandene. Imidlertid var det ikke mulig å gå videre med benchmarking på dette området. Alle deltakerlandene var, og er, midt inne i store omstillingsprosesser, og det var ikke mulig å identifisere noen som representerte *best practice* i forhold til organiseringen av jernbanesektoren.

Analysen av de ulike landenes jernbanepolitikk, viser at

- Ganske mange land har ikke spesifiserte eller kvantifiserte målsettinger for jernbanen. De har heller ingen uttalt, skriftlig strategi eller visjon for jernbanen.
- Til tross for EU-direktivene om jernbanens organisering, er det store ulikheter i landenes valg av organisering og ansvarsfordeling.

Selv om BOB ikke kunne identifisere noen *best practice* i form av en ideell organisering av jernbanen, så representerer pilotprosjektet likevel et første skritt i retning av å hjelpe landene med komme sammen og diskutere problemstillingene rundt implementering av EU-direktivene.

Arbeidet til operatørgruppen har hovedsakelig vært knyttet til problemstillinger omkring punktlighet og årsaker til driftsavvik. Gruppen arbeidet lenge med å utarbeide sammenlignbare data for punktlighet. De fleste landene hadde forskjellige måter å rapportere driftsavvik, både i forhold til hva som regnes som avvik, og i forhold til årsaken til avvikene.

Operatørgruppen har underveis holdt mye av informasjonen hemmelig for utenforstående, inkludert BOB-partnerne. En del av resultatene er publisert i NEA (2003b), men vi ikke detaljkunnskap om alle resultater og funn. Det viste seg raskt at Japan hadde spesielt gode punktlighetstall. Samtidig er rammebetingelsene annerledes og resultatene deres i en helt annen klasse enn i de europeiske jernbanene. Finland viste seg å være et mer interessant case for gruppen – ikke bare fordi de hadde relativt gode punktlighetstall, men først og fremst fordi de har fått til en sterk bedring de siste årene. Bedringen er et resultat av en målrettet og omfattende prosess som har involvert alle deler av organisasjonen. Gruppen av operatører gjennomførte en tur til Finland for å lære mer om det de har gjort der. NSB-ledelsen fulgte opp i 2003 med en egen studietur til VR/Finland mht. organisasjonsarbeidet rundt punktlighetsforbedring.

Operatørgruppen har også hatt stor nytte av å komme sammen med hverandre og diskutere problemstillinger som alle jobber med til daglig. De rapporterer at de ikke har tenkt å slutte og møtes, men vil videreføre klubben uavhengig av BOB-prosjektets avslutning.

4.2 Tilbringertjenester til flyplasser

Denne pilotundersøkelsen fokuserte på utviklingen av mer bærekraftige tilbringertjenester til flyplasser, og spesielt på virkemidler for å fremme bruken av kollektive transportmidler, gang og sykkel. Formålet med undersøkelsen var:

- Å identifisere effektive tiltak for mer bærekraftige tilbringertjenester.
- Å vurdere om benchmarking som metode kan bidra til å bedre tilgjengeligheten til flyplasser.
- Å prøve ut anbefalingene fra BEST i en faktisk benchmarkingøvelse.

Pilotprosjektet er dokumentert i Reeven mfl. (2003).

4.2.1 Prosessen

Pilotundersøkelsen har hatt deltakelse fra flyplasser i Østerrike, Belgia, Danmark, Frankrike, Tyskland, Irland, Italia, Polen, Spania, Nederland og Storbritannia. Representanter fra offentlige myndigheter kom fra Tyskland, Nederland,

Storbritannia og en regional myndighet i Polen. I tillegg har Airport Council International (ACI Europe) og the International Air Rail Organisation vært involvert i prosessen.

I perioden september 2001-september 2002 ble det i alt avholdt 5 arbeidsmøter på ulike steder i Europa. På tre av disse møtene besøkte gruppen de lokale flyplassene og studerte deres praksis.

Proessen fulgte langt på vei de fem benchmarking-trinnene presentert i kapittel 2.2.

1. *Hvor står vi?* Det ble utarbeidet deskriptive rapporter fra hver av de deltagende flyplassene. Rapportene beskriver de ulike tilbringeralternativene på hver flyplass: veier, jernbane, parkering, osv., samt planer for fremtiden. Videre beskriver rapportene transportmiddelfordelingen og fordelingen av ansvaret for planlegging og finansiering av tiltak.
2. *Sammenligne nøkkeltall.* Det ble gjennomført en økonometrisk analyse av de dataene som fremkom i rapportene i trinn 1. Av analysen fremgikk det at kollektivandelen i stor grad bestemmes av avgangsfrekvensen på kollektivtilbudet til flyplassen og av at det finnes gode jernbaneforbindelser til flyplassen.
3. *Analysere forskjeller.* Hver av flyplassene identifiserte et område som de anså seg selv som gode på. Disse områdene inkluderte ansattes reisevaner, lokale transportfora, "sustainability partnerships" og så videre.
4. *Implementere endringer.* Deltakerne ble informert om en metode, som er utarbeidet av CMPS (2002), som legger til rette for implementering av andres gode prestasjoner i ens egen organisasjon. På grunn av prosjektets korte varighet er ikke implementeringen av endringer i egen organisasjon dokumentert i prosjektet.
5. *Overvåke forbedringsprosessen.* Dette trinnet, som i realiteten innebærer at benchmarkingøvelsen er en kontinuerlig prosess, var ikke aktuelt for BOB-pilotprosjektene hvis levetid har vært begrenset til halvannet år.

4.2.2 Resultater

Følgende hovedkonklusjoner ble trukket:

- Flyplassoperatører og -myndigheter har begrenset kontroll over tilbringer-tjenestene, og bør få mer innflytelse over disse.
- Et godt samarbeid mellom aktuelle myndigheter og interessenter (luftfartsmyndigheter, arbeidstakere, lokal industri, samferdselsmyndigheter osv.) vil bidra til å fremme spørsmålet om bærekraftige tilbringer-tjenester. Flere gode eksempler på slike samarbeid ble identifisert: Transportfora i Storbritannia, mobility management ved flyplassen i Amsterdam og partnerskap for bærekraftig transport i Brussel.
- Pilotstudien viser at benchmarking i stor grad kan bidra til å fremme bærekraftige tilbringer-tjenester til flyplasser.

4.3 Trafikksikkerhet for yrkessjåfører

EUs hvitbok om transportpolitikken mot 2010 (EU-kommisjonen, 2001) legger vekt på trafikksikkerhet, og setter som mål å halvere antall drepte i trafikken i løpet av

tiårsperioden 2000-2010. Yrkestrafikk, som ofte krysser landegrenser, er et spesielt aktuelt område for EU-kommisjonen. Derfor finnes det allerede en rekke EU-direktiver som regulerer kjøre- og hviletider, transport av farlig gods, føreropplæring og så videre. For å nå målet om 50% reduksjon i antallet drepte i trafikken, er EU-kommisjonen avhengig av nasjonalstatenes bidrag til økt trafikksikkerhet. Denne benchmarkingpilotundersøkelsen er tenkt som ett av Kommisjonens virkemidler til å fremme kunnskap om god praksis mellom medlems- og søkerlandene.

Pilotundersøkelsen har som mål å bidra til at denne reduksjonen blir realisert gjennom å effektivisere trafikksikkerhetspolitikken. Prosjektet er dokumentert i NEA (2003a).

4.3.1 Prosessen

Deltakerne i prosjektet representerte samferdselmyndighetene i Nederland, Storbritannia, Polen, Tsjekkia, Frankrike, Finland og Irland. I tillegg deltok flere internasjonale organisasjoner med interesse for temaet: IRU (International Road Union), CEA (Comité Européen des Assurances), CIECA (Commission Internationale des Examens de Conduite Automobile) and TISPOL (Traffic Information System Police).

Selv om kommunikasjonen i hovedsak forgikk på e-mail, arrangerte gruppen fire arbeidsmøter i perioden mai 2001 til september 2002.

4.3.2 Resultater

I tillegg til analyser og diskusjoner omkring generelle data for trafikksikkerhet, ble to områder valgt som objekt for benchmarkingøvelsen: trafikksikkerhetstiltak og transportselskapenes "trafikksikkerhetskultur".

Analysene av ulykkesdata viser at det er til dels store forskjeller mellom landene nå det gjelder definisjoner og målemetoder. Slike data ligger derfor dårlig til rette som grunnlag for benchmarking. Gruppen har sendt et klart signal til EU-kommisjonen om at det er sterkt ønskelig med en felles definisjon av *død* og *hardt skadet* i trafikken.

Benchmarking av trafikksikkerhetspolitikk, som ikke er en kvantitativ størrelse, var vanskelig. Gruppen lanserte en distinksjon mellom *kurative* og *preventive* tiltak. Det viste seg å være fruktbart å inndele trafikksikkerhetstiltak etter disse kategoriene. Inndelingen ga gruppen ny innsikt i utformingen av effektive trafikksikkerhetstiltak. Land har en tendens til å bevege seg fra i hovedsak kurative til i hovedsak preventive tiltak på veien mot bedret trafikksikkerhet. Det ble understreket at dette er en nødvendig prosess hvis trafikksikkerhetsarbeidet skal lykkes, men at det kan føre galt av sted å hoppe rett fra stadiet med kurative tiltak til et regime med overveiende preventive tiltak.

I analysene av trafikksikkerhetskultur ble begrepene *retrospektiv* og *prospektiv* introdusert. Distinksjonen ga ingen fruktbare resultater.

4.4 Oppsummering - BOB

Med hensyn til erfaringer og anbefalinger, hadde BOB-pilotene noen fellesnevnerne. Blant disse er:

- Benchmarking kan være tungt å dra i gang, og krever en beslutsom koordinator eller initiativtaker
- Ikke undervurder behovet for felles enighet omkring formålet med øvelsen.
- Sammenlignbare data over landegrensene er en mangelvare
- Følg suksesskriteriene! Vær disiplinert i forhold til de grunnleggende trinnene i en benchmarkingøvelse
- Benchmarking tar tid. 1-1½ år er normalt ikke tilstrekkelig
- En sterk leder (konsulent eller motivert deltaker) med tilstrekkelig tid og ressurser, er viktig
- Alle gruppene hadde stort utbytte av networking og uformell utveksling av ideer og erfaringer.

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Vedlegg

Vedlegg 1: Anbefalinger fra 1. BEST-konferanse

Recommendations to European Commission, following BEST Conference 1, 'The state of the art of benchmarking in all sectors', October 2000

i) Introduction

The first BEST Conference provided a general introduction to the concept of benchmarking and a broad overview of successful examples of benchmarking exercises from a range of non-transport sectors. The focus of the Conference was directed on the principles of the benchmarking process, the key factors of successful implementation and the lessons learnt from the process. The recommendations to the European Commission resulting from the Conference set out some practical and general guidelines for the use of benchmarking as a tool to bring about improvement, and the particular role of the European Commission in supporting its implementation.

ii) Benchmarking as a practical tool

1. There is a need for a clear, European-wide definition and understanding of what benchmarking is, and what benchmarking is not.

In order to promote greater use of benchmarking as a tool to improve performance and to ensure credible and effective implementation at a European level, there needs to be a general consensus on the meaning of the concept of benchmarking.

Lack of understanding of the concept often leads to its being confused with the terms 'a benchmark', 'to benchmark' and 'best practice'. Benchmarking, however, is a rigorous and systematic process of assessment, comparison and implementation leading to improvement.

Benchmarking is not simply a process of data collection and analysis, used to rank different levels of performance (for example of different organisations, companies or countries etc.), nor is it a process of sharing ideas and practices with others working in the same field. Data collection, comparison and sharing information are elements of the benchmarking process. However a rigorous benchmarking process is a much more comprehensive process which is motivated by a desire to improve and which leads to the implementation of changes.

Benchmarking is the means by which we attempt to locate a level of performance in a certain area that is superior to ours, then to change the way we do certain activities in order to improve our performance.

A benchmark is a standard of excellence or level of achievement against which other similar things must be measured or judged. It tells us *what* and *where*.

Best practice is the means by which the benchmark level of performance is achieved. It tells us *how*.

To benchmark is to take part in a benchmarking exercise using the benchmarking process

Paul Leonard, Benchmarking expert (Paul Leonard Consultancy)

- 2. There is a need for a clear understanding of the potential of the benchmarking process to improve performance and the limitations of benchmarking, as well as the key success factors and the barriers to successful benchmarking.**

It is important for the European Commission, and other organisations involved in benchmarking, to recognise both the potential and the limitations of benchmarking in order to ensure a realistic and effective approach to its implementation and results.

*Benchmarking is a process of learning with the aim of changing processes, practices or methods in order to improve performance. It is a powerful tool to improve performance, however it is **only** a tool. It cannot deliver outstanding results by itself and needs to be part of an integrated management process.*

Paul Leonard, Benchmarking expert (Paul Leonard Consultancy)

The commitment of all participants in a benchmarking exercise is essential as benchmarking is not an easy or quick process that brings immediate results. Participants must have full understanding of the requirements of the process and a willingness to improve in order to enable the process to work successfully.

A list of the fundamental key factors for the successful implementation of benchmarking in all sectors has been provided in the Annex.

- 3. The principles of the benchmarking process are the same in whatever sector the process is applied.**

Although transport does present some particular challenges for benchmarking, including the scale and the diversity of the sector, and the impact of framework conditions, it is not essentially unique or different from other sectors in terms of applying the benchmarking process and achieving positive results. (The recommendations resulting from the second BEST Conference on the State of the Art of Benchmarking in the Transport Sector will be focused on the particular requirements of benchmarking transport).

- 4. Identifying benchmarking partner(s) may not always be obvious.**

Experience has demonstrated that benchmarking partners may not be direct competitors but industry leaders from other sectors. For example Rank Xerox identified L.L.Bean, a mail catalogue company, as an excellent 'benchmarking partner' in the area of distribution.

- 5. Benchmarking has the potential to provide effective tools and measures to inform and guide policy objectives in the setting and reviewing of key framework policies???**

iii) **The role of the European Commission**

6. **The European Commission has an important role in promoting and supporting the use of benchmarking as a tool to improve performance. Areas of activity in which the European Commission can effectively contribute to the understanding and implementation of benchmarking:**

- **Dissemination** and awareness raising of the benchmarking process and its benefits at European and national level.
- Establishing an **overview** of benchmarking activities in Member States and Accession Countries with the aim of promoting co-ordination of initiatives through, for example, the creation of networks.
- Encouraging top level **political support** for the process at a European level.
- Identifying **priority areas** of EU policy for the application of benchmarking (e.g. the DG Enterprise benchmarking initiative to improve the competitiveness of European Industry).
- **Co-ordination** of benchmarking activities at a European level by bringing together those involved in benchmarking in the different EU institutions and other European organisations (e.g. agencies and NGOs working with the European Commission).
- Supporting benchmarking **research and pilot projects** in Member States and Accession Countries to further understanding of the benchmarking process and its practical benefits

iv) **The BEST Network**

7. **The BEST thematic network is an important forum for bringing together benchmarking and transport experts and disseminating information about benchmarking in the transport sector.**

However, the limitations of what the network can achieve must be recognised. The role of BEST should be clarified. The BEST network can act most effectively as:

- a forum for dissemination of benchmarking as a practical tool to improve performance,
- a network builder and facilitator between benchmarking and transport experts,
- a provider of practical guidance on the benchmarking process,
- a consensus builder on the role of benchmarking in the transport sector.

ANNEX: Key Factors for Successful Benchmarking,

Ken Watling, HM Customs and Excise, UK Government

1. **Support from senior management** - particularly, by providing adequate resources, implementing recommendations and rewarding success. The creation of a Benchmarking Office as a central focal point in an organisation is a practical way of demonstrating commitment.
2. **Clear objectives** - setting clear, achievable objectives from the outset. These help to determine the type and scope of benchmarking required.

3. **Comprehensive training** - providing those embarking on benchmarking projects with the necessary knowledge, skills and awareness of how to apply the technique effectively.
4. **Sound planning and recording** - ensuring benchmarking projects are feasible within timescales (not too long or too short), tailored to suit the culture of the organisation, integrate with other improvement initiatives and are recorded in sufficient detail to support clear audit trails.
5. **Good communications** - keeping management and staff informed of the reasons for benchmarking and the progress made. It is also important to involve them in the process wherever possible.
6. **Credible recommendations** - basing recommendations for improvement on sound analysis of the findings, and ensuring they can be implemented in the light of other initiatives and overall strategies.

Vedlegg 2: Anbefalinger fra 2. BEST-konferanse

Recommendations to European Commission, following BEST Conference 2, 'The State of the Art of Benchmarking in the Transport Sector', January 2001

i) Introduction

The second BEST conference examined the application of benchmarking in the transport sector. Practical examples of benchmarking exercises from a range of transport sectors were presented. The various examples illustrated a number of key factors to take into account when benchmarking in the transport sector. The recommendations to the European Commission aim to set out the main requirements for benchmarking in the transport sector and the ways in which the Commission can support and promote its implementation.

ii) Benchmarking sustainable transport

There is need for consensus on a clear definition of 'European sustainable transport' in order to give clarity and focus to the work of BEST, and to ensure that those responsible for transport policy-making in Europe are working towards a common goal.

The first and second BEST conferences aimed to stimulate debate on sustainable transport in order to increase understanding of the concept at a European level. However, a post conference questionnaire showed that 59% of respondents felt that the conference did not increase their understanding of the concept of sustainable transport (whereas 91% felt that their understanding of benchmarking following the conference had increased). The European Commission should continue to promote actively, through BEST and other initiatives (research and policy), efforts to build a European consensus on the meaning and objectives of sustainable transport.

It is necessary to identify a clear set of priority areas in the transport sector on which benchmarking efforts should be focussed.

Benchmarking can be applied in many different areas of transport, including both individual modes and transversally to several modes in a particular transport chain or entire transport network. It is also possible to use benchmarking at many different levels: international, national, regional and local.

One of the key success factors for benchmarking presented at the BEST conferences is the identification of a clear topic to benchmark. The European Commission should work with the EU Member States and Accession Countries, and other organisations involved in transport policy in order to reach a consensus, at European level, on some priority areas for benchmarking that are directly relevant

to the overall objective of promoting and implementing sustainable transport policies.

iii) The Role of the European Commission: Practical measures to support benchmarking in the transport sector

It is possible to identify some common key success factors and main barriers to benchmarking in the different transport sectors (see Annex). The European Commission has an important role to play in disseminating this information and in helping to create the right conditions for successful benchmarking:

Top level support is essential for the successful implementation of benchmarking in the transport sector.

The European Commission can act as an important catalyst to the use of benchmarking by actively promoting benchmarking and seeking high level support at European level. Support at European level will encourage the use of benchmarking by national governments.

One of the main barriers to the use of benchmarking in the transport sector is a lack of knowledge of the process and its benefits. The European Commission can help to reduce this barrier in some practical ways:

- **disseminating information** about benchmarking to those responsible for the provision of transport services, particularly authorities and operators. This could include the production of literature/information documents, organisation of conferences/events;
- promoting practical **training** for those wishing to undertake a benchmarking exercise. The European Commission can support benchmarking facilitators ('trusted third parties' such as universities, research institutes, consultants) that have the expertise to manage the benchmarking process, including training for the participants;
- continuing to support **transport benchmarking projects** at a European level in order to demonstrate the benefits of benchmarking to national governments and operators (for example, DG TREN's 'Citizens' Network Benchmarking Initiative', the research project 'Benchmarking of Benchmarking' and the BEST network). The topics of the projects should be directly relevant to the goals of European sustainable transport policy;
- assisting - both by providing financial support and technical advice - national governments to set up national **benchmarking centres** to co-ordinate benchmarking activities and to provide information about benchmarking in specific sectors, for example, transport;

5. Lack of co-operation between authorities and operators is another major barrier to benchmarking at the level of national transport ministries.

The increasingly competitive environment in which the transport sector is operating has made co-operation between the different organisations more complicated. The European Commission can support national governments in the implementation of benchmarking as an effective means to establish performance standards, encourage improvement, and create productive working relationships with operators.

6. Issues relating to data availability, collection and comparison are important and difficult aspects of benchmarking in the transport sector. The European Commission can help to facilitate a harmonised approach to transport data by:

- taking the initiative to establish European transport databases in association with all the relevant actors (for example, the current European Commission initiative to establish a European Transport Information Service - ETIS);
- establishing harmonised standards and definitions for transport data;
- bringing together transport experts with the aim of creating consensus at a European (and international) level on transport data, indicators, measurement etc.

iv) Accession Countries

7. The European Commission should support Accession Countries (AC) in the implementation of benchmarking in the transport sector.

In general, AC experience the same difficulties as Member States with regard to benchmarking in the transport sector, although the different framework conditions in AC may require specific consideration.

However, it is not so much a question of a division between Member States and Accession Countries, but between countries that are already advanced in transport benchmarking and those which have little experience. For example the Czech Republic is more involved in transport benchmarking than many Member States. The European Commission should aim to encourage countries with more experience to share their knowledge with countries where transport benchmarking is a very new idea, for example through the creation of networks such as BEST.

v) The BEST Network

8. The BEST network should aim to maximise the potential synergies of the work previously and currently being carried out by other EU, international and national organisations in the field of transport benchmarking.

By facilitating the sharing of knowledge, the BEST network will help to minimise the duplication of work. The European Commission can contribute to initiating the harmonisation of all the work that is being carried out, through networks such as BEST and through taking active steps to establish links with other organisations, for example:

- OECD/CEMT benchmarking work on sustainable transport,
- European Environmental Agency work on developing indicators within the framework of TERM (Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism),
- European Commission: DG Environment, DG Regio, DG Enterprise, DG Research are all involved in work on benchmarking or indicators,
- Eurostat,
- International Union of Public Transport

9. The BEST project team should work with DG TREN and other transport and benchmarking experts to develop 'tools' to support delegates from national

transport ministries in disseminating benchmarking information in their respective countries in order to gain political support for the benchmarking process.

For example:

- Producing a 'benchmarking information pack',
- Developing the BEST website as a database of international, European and national transport benchmarking initiatives,
- Organising brainstorming sessions with DG TREN, transport and benchmarking experts, active benchmarkers and national ministries across Europe.

10. **As a long-term vision the BEST network should provide recommendations to DGTREN towards the establishment of a European platform for benchmarking in the transport sector.**

ANNEX: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR BENCHMARKING IN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR

- **Top level support** is very important. Transport operators and authorities need the commitment of managers and policy-makers in order to undertake and follow through a benchmarking exercise.
- It is necessary to follow a **planned benchmarking methodology** in which the stages of the process are clearly defined and understood.
- Before undertaking a benchmarking exercise, it is necessary to define a **specific area** (and level) in the transport sector to which the exercise will be applied.
- The integration of the benchmarking process into the overall strategic plan of an organisation is very important. The area being benchmarked must be **relevant to the strategic objectives** of an organisation in order to enable it to assess its position in relation to its own goals and its competitors.
- The **objectives and outputs** of the benchmarking process must be clearly defined from the outset. The exercise should focus on producing practical output and implementation of the results.
- The aim of benchmarking is to bring about real improvement. It is necessary to assess the influence of external factors on the results of the benchmarking process in order to identify where it is **practical and realistic** to implement measures for improvement.
- A **'trusted third party'** or 'facilitator' to manage the benchmarking process is very useful both in open and closed (confidential) benchmarking exercises. The facilitator helps to ensure co-operation between participants and the systematic implementation of the different steps of the process. Practical support (as well as political/management support) for those involved in the benchmarking process is essential to its success.
- The **number of participants** in a benchmarking exercise is important. Smaller groups can be more effective because the process is easier to manage.
- The **choice of data** to be collected should be determined by high priority factors in order to ensure that the process is manageable and realistic.

Vedlegg 3: Anbefalinger fra 3. BEST-konferanse

Recommendations resulting from BEST Conference 3: Indicators and Benchmarking in the Transport Sector

i. Introduction

The third Conference of the BEST Project was held in Brussels in June 2001 and focussed on 'Indicators and Benchmarking in the Transport Sector'. A wide range of viewpoints and scenarios were presented to the delegates but all served to illustrate that without good and appropriate indicators the results of a Benchmarking exercise may fail to meet the expectations of the participants, the stakeholders, customers and the community at large.

The Conference identified that there were a wide range of appropriate and useful approaches to the choice of Indicators as part of the Benchmarking process and delegates were given a selection of views which illustrated how important the choice of indicators was in any specific exercise and how they must be tailored to the objectives of the exercise.

During the Conference there was a clear view expressed that the difficulties in establishing good and effective indicators had become a barrier to the full acceptance of Benchmarking within their areas of competence. In a survey 57% of the delegates said these barriers and conflicts had a marked or very marked effect on use of the techniques in the transport sector.

This report sets out recommendations that have been drawn from the whole range of material covered at the Conference and seeks to outline the principles and themes relating to Benchmarking and Indicators in the Transport Sector in Europe. Following the summary of the recommendations, the report is divided into four sections. Section 1 addresses some of the methodological principles to be taken into account prior to defining and developing indicators. Section 2 elaborates on the process of defining indicators and their acceptance. In section 3 a wider perspective is given by indicating how indicators systems can be established, maintained and used to their maximum effect. Section 4 contains conclusions.

ii. Summary of Recommendations

- Prior to carrying out a benchmarking exercise and choosing indicators, identify clear objectives, agree on a strategy for using the results, and brief and seek acceptance from those involved.
- Establish the principles of the benchmarking exercise in a firm written agreement between the parties involved.
- Understand the Capabilities of your Undertaking and its position in the market.
- Make sure all participants contribute and provide what they see as Critical Success Factors and related Key Processes and that the views are well and accurately interpreted.

- Ensure that Key Performance Indicators are linked to Primary and Secondary Indicators which demonstrate policies and processes that are of critical importance to achieving the objectives and 'vision' of the undertaking.
- Define indicators that are useful and identifiable and do not measure more than resources allow or the task at hand requires.
- Apart from operationally oriented data-sets, seek to collect additional supporting data in terms of customer/end-user satisfaction and characteristics of the demographical, geographical and political environment.
- If Indicators do not tell the whole story set up special Working Groups to study the issues - do not create more data.
- Continuously collect and analyse data with increasing attention paid to the secondary indicators in order to progressively increase understanding of processes and improve data quality.
- Indicators are not an end to a process but should be used as a starting point to illustrate differences within or between undertakings and to identify areas for further examination or analysis.
- Foster a Culture of Change and present this to all involved both within and outside the organisation.
- Support the change process organisationally by clearly and openly assigning tasks and roles, arranging for multi-level participation, and ensuring support from the Board and Senior Management.
- Support those involved by clarifying the process, identifying mileposts and wins, and help those that have to adjust to changes.
- The European Commission has an important role in contributing to the harmonisation of data at a European level and the establishment of databases for European transport policy-makers and other stakeholders. It is important to learn from experiences within and outside Europe in order to maximise the value of the range of data and indicator initiatives that are being undertaken both by the European Commission and other international organisations.

iii. Indicators and benchmarking in the transport sector

1. Preliminary considerations in establishing useful indicators

Indicators need to be established which are relevant to the exercise to be undertaken. Very often both the benchmarking exercise and the choice of indicators fail to leave the starting line because the objectives have not been identified, the strategy for using the results has not been agreed or because those involved have not been briefed and accepted the process.

To define indicators, it is necessary first of all to identify:

The Starting Point

- Where are we now?
- Where do we need to go?
- Is there a possible route to follow?

The Finishing Point

- Do we have a Vision?
- What are the Critical Success Factors to achieve it?
- Do we understand the Key Processes involved?

The Processes

- What Key Processes impact most on the Critical Success Factors?
- What Key Processes can be measured usefully and accurately as Indicators?

Only once the key processes have been identified can indicators be defined. To be effective, an Indicator must be:

- a true measure of an element of performance
- a measure which is made at a defined time, place, and situation
- a measure of Reliability
- a measure of Inputs and Outputs of all types
- a measure of quality or customer satisfaction

If the indicators are chosen successfully they will tell us the quality of the output or service, the reliability of the service or product, the areas where improvements can be made, and the areas where change of policy or process will be beneficial.

2. Establishing good principles to create useful Indicators for a Benchmarking Exercise and persuade participants to 'Buy in' to the process

There are some important principles to be established in connection with the acceptance of Indicators linked to Benchmarking or indeed any other process as part of the establishment of the methodology as 'the way we do things round here':

- 'What gets measured gets done'
- Establish a culture of change
- Determine Positioning and Capability
- Support the change process organisationally
- Agree that 'the future has not been achieved yet'

- 'What gets measured gets done'

There is an old tradition in much of the Transport sector that it is not helpful to measure what is happening because 'if I really knew I would be worried'. The alternative philosophy is that of setting up measures which will produce a comfortable result and then a programme of 'improvement' which merely results in getting the wrong things done. It is therefore essential that the measures are focussed on useful and identifiable indicators. A vital part of the 'buy-in' process is to seek a wide range of views on what is useful and how it can be obtained and whether the results will justify the degree of cost and difficulty in securing it. The key to this feature is the identification of 'winners' as opposed to 'losers'. So often at all levels there is a tendency to identify 'victims' and not 'success stories'. The process cannot support a culture of measuring everything; that is rapidly identified by all involved as a waste of time and energy. Take advice from people involved at all levels including the customer - possibly through focus groups - to identify the essential, useful, and helpful indicators and resist the temptation to add more. At the end of the selection process use a 'sore thumbing' review to ensure that you have not chosen to measure more than your resources or the task in hand requires.

- Establish a culture of change

A common mistake is to believe that the barriers to change, which can render a Benchmarking process useless, are all related to the employees and not the Managers, Customers or Stakeholders. This is certainly not true and is based on a complete misunderstanding.

It is for Management to foster a Culture of Change and to present this to everybody both within and outside the organisation. However, often Management and the political or professional Stakeholders will themselves have to change their behaviour and acknowledge to all concerned that 'if you cannot measure, you cannot manage it' - 'if you cannot manage it, you have to go'. Professionally it has to become accepted that Managers will say 'I know what are the indicators of performance in my area, I will be trying to improve performance where I can through a Continuous Programme'. This

can apply equally well in a professional area such as Transport Planning (with its environmental consequences) as in Transport Operations.

Benchmarking and the Indicators which go with it have to be successfully presented to all concerned as well as the Customer. To achieve this Managers have to allocate time to presenting the proposals and procedures to all concerned. With Operating staff that may mean briefing bus drivers in small groups as they report for or go off duty. However it must be done and done effectively if the total process is to succeed.

The final barriers to change which are identified by research into measurement and indicator based processes are that many of those involved feel that they have no idea whether there will be any possible tangible benefits for them. In addition an infrequent or inadequate briefing process gives the impression of inappropriate or 'useless' measurements and indicators.

Last of all a process with a firm measurement and implementation timescale is appreciated - 'pain is acceptable but it must have an end'.

- Determine Positioning and Capability

The examination of Indicators and their analysis in terms of a Benchmarking Exercise must follow from the strategic view of the objectives. There are two main parameters to be determined:

(i) Capability - composed of:

- Organisational Characteristics
- Methods and Processes
- Technological Features
- Human Resources and Skills
- Cultural Orientation

(ii) Positioning - composed of:

- Services and Products offered
- Stakeholder and Customer Needs
- Competitors and Regulatory Framework
- Environmental Parameters

These two principal characteristics sustain competitive advantage and enable a firm position to be developed for the enterprise whether it is transport based or otherwise. It also facilitates a virtuous curve of performance from the 'now' position towards a cost effective position and from there to that of 'Good Practice' and onwards to achieve a Vision of World Class in the field. This progressive approach makes it possible to make a virtue - with benefits for all - out of a change process that will re-engineer the ways of the Business and the Process.

This assessment of positioning and capability will materially assist the development of the Key Performance Indicators and supports a view that they must be

- Created from the vision and strategy of the Organisation
- Coherent across the whole organisation
- Few in number to create and support focus
- Both static and dynamic
- Linked to targets and incentives to make change happen

- Support the change process organisationally

The change process leading to the establishment of the Indicators and the Benchmarking process cannot be achieved without some important changes in the way that all the people involved work together and move into specific Groups to focus on the present operation, the new capability for tomorrow, and the position of the undertaking for tomorrow.

There is no absolute prescription for this but multi-level participation and support from the Board and Senior Management is an essential. In addition, the 'front line' management and their Staff must be empowered to maintain the current and immediate future of the operation. A Middle Management Team with specific assistance from the staff in general must determine what is necessary to improve future capability whilst a Board/Senior Management Team reviews the position of the undertaking in the future. None of this must be secretive or exclusive - the role of the people in the hierarchy may be very different to their 'normal role'. There has been more than one successful exercise where a 'front line' or 'shop floor' staff member has been the supporter and catalyst for an extensive change programme.

- Agree that "the future has not happened yet"

Finally it is vital for people to know how the process will be carried out. They cannot sustain a very lengthy process, but what does happen must be well organised and distinct with published mileposts made known to all concerned. The future must contain 'wins' by way of improvement for as many participants as possible - however the process must not disguise that some may lose. The only concession must be that the maximum of help must be available to the losers to adjust to the new or changed situation.

3. Criteria enabling the establishment of a successful Key Performance Indicator System

The Conference heard from a variety of speakers who amply demonstrated that Benchmarking and its associated processes are related to a whole 'cook book' of differing needs and circumstances. In this field there is no laid down solution but there are and will continue to be failures caused by slavish adherence to what others have done rather than establishment of objectives and needs. Whatever is agreed to be the objective of any Benchmarking exercise, there are some important principles and questions to be asked as well at the very beginning:

- What system of indicators is to be used?
- Will the indicators contribute to the identification of Best Practice or Good Practice?
- Will indicators of Best or Good Practice be accepted and be used by all the participants at all levels (Staff, Board, Authority, Regulator, all Governmental levels)?
- Will participants use the Indicators and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as an internal management tool?
- How will areas for a change process or a Continuous Improvement Programme be prioritised?

When these preliminary but vital principles have been established and recorded as a firm written agreement between the parties involved, some further work is needed to establish the basis of the Key Performance Indicator System. The development of a usable system depends on:

- The identification and understanding of the operation or sectors of operation which are to be the subject of the Benchmarking Exercise.
- The use of indicators which, as a set, outline the relevant dimensions of the undertaking but without being so large that they cannot be used in a concise and practical fashion.
- The development of a logical hierarchy of indicators which can be split for use at differing levels. For example, Middle Management has varying needs and interests from the Authority and hence it is likely the Key Performance Indicators will have a Primary and Sub-Primary level

supplemented by a range of Secondary Indicators. This hierarchy of Indicators must be flexible so that they can be varied over time or as needs change. They must not be cast in stone forever!

- The establishment of definitions and data sources which remain consistent between all parties to the exercise throughout so that even when data or indicators are changed the source and definition of the old and the new are retained within the database.
- A pragmatic view of which Indicators and KPIs have the most influence on the potential improvement of the undertaking whilst the Benchmarking Exercise proceeds.
- Acceptance by all participants that initially not everyone will be able to provide all the requested data. Non availability in the first instance does not act as a disqualification - it should act as a spur to encourage means to be found to acquire the information in the short or long term.

In general, any Key Performance Indicator must be capable of being influenced by the participants at any level in the exercise but particularly by the Management, Authority or Board. This appears to be a constraint but is not really so whether you are considering a Planning, Environmental or Operational activity in the Transport Sector. The Primary and Secondary KPIs must include information about

- Reliability/Service Quality
- Efficiency
- Safety
- Assets/Capacity Utilization
- Financing
- Regulatory and Environmental Policies

Apart from these operations based datasets, to complete the picture it should be possible to seek to collect a standardised set of customer focused data and national, regional or city indicators. The Customer focussed data, to be obtained from surveys, enables levels of customer or 'end user' satisfaction to be reviewed. The National, Regional or City indicators enable a view to be taken on demographics, land use and political policies and practice - all of which impact on the undertaking and the way it performs.

If the Benchmarking Exercise contains any element of International Benchmarking, even within the European Union, it will be essential to record a protocol which indicates how currency values, GDP per capita, and wages and salaries will be handled during the course of any comparative exercises.

Finally, in this part of the process all parties to the exercise must decide and record how the chosen Indicators and KPIs that are derived from them are supported by a high quality dataset which must be

- Collected in a uniform way
- Controlled in an independent and analytic manner
- Analysed so that inconsistencies can be referred back to source for review
- Subject to an agreed Confidentiality protocol where necessary

In this process it is not sufficient to collect data and analyse it once. Continuing analysis and collection of supporting data will enable progressive improvement of the understanding of background, environmental, and political factors. The collection of data on a continuing basis with increasing attention paid to the secondary indicators has benefits not only in the volume of data available, but also in the maturing of data quality. This has another benefit in allowing all participants to have increasing perception of the process and a better knowledge of their own undertaking.

Indicators and, more particularly, KPIs derived from them are an essential of the Benchmarking process. They are not in themselves a universal panacea and do not in the fashion of a crystal ball provide all the answers. They should be used to illustrate the differences within undertakings or with other partners and also to evaluate the variations that occur after changes to operational, planning or managerial practices. However, they are not the end of the process - they are merely the end of the beginning. As part of the process, all involved must use them effectively to identify areas that require further examination or analysis. This further work may be quantitative but is more likely to be qualitative and involve work in sub-teams who will report back. Only at this stage will all the participants begin to acquire the focus that will release full added value from the Benchmarking exercise.

4. Conclusions

It is essential to take into account a list of the main factors which link together a Benchmarking Exercise based on sound Indicators, clear Key Performance Indicators, and excellent analysis, both in quantitative and qualitative terms.

For this the following list of 'headline' items is a useful Guide:

- Identify at the outset objectives and strategies for the Exercise.
- Ensure that the principles of the methodology of Benchmarking are understood.
- Establish the acceptability of the principles which enable participants to 'buy in' and 'sign up' to the process.
- Remember the vital principle of acceptance of 'the way we do things round here'.
- Understand the Capabilities of your Undertaking and its position in the market.
- Make sure all participants contribute and provide what they see as Critical Success Factors and that the views are well and accurately interpreted.
- Ensure that Key Performance Indicators are linked to Primary and Secondary Indicators which demonstrate policies and processes that are of critical importance to achieving the objectives and 'vision' of the undertaking.
- Establish clear and unambiguous Indicators and have the data updated on a regular basis.
- Review changes in policy and use this review to ensure Indicators are still relevant.
- Focus on outcomes and 'wins' as success areas and identify the good practice.
- Make peer pressure work to the advantage of the total Exercise.
- If Indicators do not tell the whole story set up special Working Groups to study the issues - do not create more data.
- Understanding of the Benchmark is essential to enable valid and informed analysis to be accepted by all concerned.
- Do not be over-ambitious - work with 'bite size' chunks.
- If you at first do not succeed, review the process and try again - the success will be even sweeter.

iv. Role of the European Commission

The European Commission has an important role to play in contributing to the harmonisation of data at a European level and the establishment of databases for European transport policy-makers and other stakeholders. The following recommendations are proposed:

- The European Commission should aim to build on the work that has already been carried out in the field of transport indicators both in the framework of the European Union

transport research programmes³ and by other services of the European Commission, for example, the Directorate-Generals for Environment and Regional Policy.

- There should be increased consolidation and dissemination of available data and indicators by the European Commission in order to avoid duplication of data collection at European and national levels and to facilitate the use of benchmarking in the transport sector.
- The European Commission should also strengthen links with other European and international organisations active in the field of transport and transport-related indicators, for example, the European Conference of Transport Ministers (Sustainable Urban Travel Survey) and the International Association of Public Transport (Millennium Cities Database for Sustainable Transport).
- The European Commission should continue to investigate the feasibility of establishing common European indicators and standard indicator definitions that can be used for benchmarking in different areas of the transport sector (for example, quality of passenger transport services, freight transport infrastructure etc.).

³ For example, SESAME (a transport research project under the European Union's Fourth RTD Framework Programme. The aim of the project was to study the links between land-use planning and transport in different European countries by establishing harmonised data and common definitions for indicators. For more information <http://www.cordis.lu/transport/src/sesame.htm>), and ETIS (European Transport policy Information System, a transport research project under the European Union's Fifth RTD Framework Programme.

Vedlegg 4: Anbefalinger fra 4. BEST-konferanse

Draft recommendations to BOB pilot participants and DG TREN, Resulting from BEST Conference 4, 'Putting Benchmarking Methodology into Practice', October 2001

Recommendations: summary

Part 1: Recommendations to the European Commission (DG Energy and Transport)

1. The benefits of benchmarking must be more actively disseminated to European and national transport policy makers. The European Commission has an important role to play in 'selling' benchmarking and informing senior European and national transport policy makers about its benefits.
2. The European Commission should consider establishing a European Transport Benchmarking website, linked to the DG TREN website, to act as a one-stop-shop on transport benchmarking for transport policy makers and public service providers.
3. Benchmarking activities supported by the European Commission must take into account the underlying principles of the benchmarking methodology: planning, analysis, integration and action.
4. Clear objectives and specific topics must be identified for benchmarking. The objectives and topics should be agreed in consultation with stakeholders at all levels within the European Commission and with key actors outside the Commission.
5. The European Commission should consider establishing a benchmarking training network aimed at senior European transport policy makers and public service managers.
6. The European Commission should recognise the value of learning from other sectors and facilitate the identification of appropriate benchmarking partners by cooperating with other benchmarking initiatives undertaken by its various Directorates-General and creating benchmarking networks of professionals in the transport and non-transport sectors.
7. The European Commission should continue to support third party experts - research institutes, universities, consultants - to facilitate transport benchmarking exercises.
8. The European Commission should promote the use of the European Benchmarking Code of Conduct which provides a framework agreement on the procedures to be followed by participants in a benchmarking exercise.
9. The European Commission should ensure that current data relevant to transport are made available for benchmarking purposes and that expertise on data collection and analysis techniques are shared at a European level.
10. The European Commission should actively communicate the results of its benchmarking activities both within the Commission (for example, at internal seminars) and externally to outside parties.
11. The European Commission should ensure that there is appropriate follow-up of its benchmarking activities and that sufficient support is provided to those involved to monitor the results of the exercise and implement improvements.
12. Benchmarking is a continuous process. The European Commission should establish a long-term vision for benchmarking to ensure that the value of its individual activities is maximised.

Part 2: Recommendations to benchmarking participants

1. Ensure the support and commitment of senior management by involving them closely in the benchmarking exercise from the outset.
2. Agree a work plan that sets out the different steps, time schedule, deadlines and required resources (human and financial) for the exercise.
3. Limit the number of participants so that the project is manageable.
4. Be open-minded when identifying benchmarking partners. It may be the case that you can learn most from partners working in different sectors.
5. Appoint a strong overall project leader to ensure the effective coordination and coherence of the exercise and to maintain levels of motivation.
6. Identify one main contact person in each participating organisation to coordinate the exercise internally and communicate its progress to other stakeholders.
7. Establish a benchmarking team to carry out the necessary tasks and ensure that the appropriate people are involved.
8. Ensure that those involved in the exercise are trained in benchmarking.
9. Agree a code of conduct such as the European Benchmarking Code of Conduct, in order to facilitate mutual trust between participants.
10. Determine the data collection method and agree on definitions of indicators and performance measures to be used.
11. Explain clearly the reasons for collecting the required data and its relevance to the overall objectives of the exercise.
12. Ensure that the data used are accurate and accepted by participants in order to ensure the credibility of the recommendations resulting from the exercise.
13. Ensure that participants understand and trust the chosen method of data analysis in order for the analysis results to be accepted as a true reflection of performance.
14. Identify and understand any gaps in performance between your organisation and your benchmarking partner(s). Focus on the *reasons* for the differences in performance, rather than simply on ranking performance.
15. Ensure good communication of results to all stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in implementing the necessary changes for improvement.
16. Integration of results should focus on identifying areas for improvement rather than attributing blame.
17. Having identified areas for improvement, develop a concrete action plan that focuses on practical and achievable measures for implementation.
18. Allocate adequate resources to ensure that the action plan is implemented and its progress monitored.
19. On the basis of the results achieved, establish new objectives for improvement.
20. Integrate benchmarking into the overall management processes of your organisation so that it is used as a tool for continuous improvement.

i. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out recommendations on benchmarking methodology for application in the transport sector. The recommendations have been formulated on the basis of the presentations and discussions at the fourth BEST conference 'Putting Benchmarking Methodology into Practice'⁴. The aim of the conference was to present a variety of approaches to benchmarking in order to learn about some of the different ways to carry out a benchmarking exercise. The recommendations are intended to serve two purposes:

- (i) To propose ways in which the European Commission (DG Energy and Transport) can promote and facilitate a common approach, at European level, to benchmarking methodology in the transport sector;
- (ii) To provide useful guidelines on benchmarking methodology for participants in a practical benchmarking exercise⁵.

The remainder of this report has been structured in three sections:

- Introduction to the basic benchmarking methodology.
- Examples presented at the BEST Conference.
- Annex setting out the key benefits of benchmarking in the transport sector.

ii. Benchmarking Methodology

There are many variations of the benchmarking methodology, but all contain the same basic steps: planning, analysis, integration, and action. It is important to understand and implement all these steps in order to carry out a successful benchmarking exercise. The examples presented at the BEST conference illustrated some of the different ways to approach the basic benchmarking methodology.

In the following chapters, the conference examples have been presented under the four steps, each of which involves a series of tasks (outlined below). The examples do not represent all possible approaches to benchmarking⁶, but they are intended to be a kind of '**benchmarking methodology menu**', providing some practical suggestions and guidelines to support transport authorities and operators in their benchmarking work. Recommendations relating to each stage of benchmarking are proposed for both benchmarking participants and DG TREN.

1. Planning

- Identify subject to be benchmarked and determine the objectives of the benchmarking exercise.
- Identify potential partners: What is the 'benchmark' against which you are going to compare yourself?
- Seek approval, commitment and support of senior managers.
- Produce a work plan to determine the time-schedule, tasks, and team for the exercise. It is advisable to establish an agreement on the procedures to be followed by adopting, for example, the European Benchmarking Code of Conduct.
- Determine the data collection method and agree on definitions of indicators and performance measures to be used.
- Collect data.

⁴ Brussels, 4-5 October 2001

⁵ Particularly the BOB pilot participants

⁶ For a general introduction to the benchmarking methodology, a useful reference is 'Benchmarking in the Public Sector', published by the Public Sector Benchmarking Service (UK Government Cabinet Office and HM Customs and Excise, www.benchmarking.gov.uk).

2. **Analysis**

- Analyse data collected.
- Identify the gaps in performance between your organisation and your benchmark organisation, and examine the reasons for these gaps.
- Forecast future performance. On the basis of the data collected, it is useful to forecast your future performance, if you continue as you are, and to compare this against the performance of the benchmark organisation whose performance is likely to keep on improving. The projected increasing gap over time emphasises the need for benchmarking to bring about improvement.

3. **Integration**

- Communicate results of analysis.
- Establish revised goals/targets.

4. **Action**

- Develop action plans.
- Implement plans and monitor results of implementation.
- Re-assess the benchmark: does it need to be changed?
- Repeat steps 1-4.

iii Examples from BEST Conference 4

→ **Step 1: Planning**

Example 1: How to engage senior management in benchmarking

The support and front line participation of senior management is crucial at every stage of a benchmarking exercise. However, it is necessary to have top-level support from the outset in order to ensure that adequate resources are made available for the exercise and that its findings lead to concrete action. At Vancouver airport, an innovative approach is used to engage senior management in the use of benchmarking as a strategic management tool.

Approach: Passenger Service Simulation Exercise

The Passenger Service Simulation exercise is a strategic planning tool for transportation industry management involved in passenger service benchmarking at their facilities. Senior managers are assigned specific tasks (e.g. exchanging currency, purchasing goods etc.) to carry out as 'departing passengers' and 'arriving passengers'. At the end of the exercise, all senior management rate their **actual passenger experience** using the IATA Global Airport Monitor survey⁷, and summary findings are reported back to them. The survey results prompt debate on their first-hand experiences versus previously held beliefs and expectations. This is followed by a moderator-led strategic planning session on passenger service priorities and improvements, relative to need, budget and timing.

Points for consideration

⁷ Since its inception, the IATA (International Air Transport Association) Global Airport Monitor programme remains the largest passenger service benchmarking survey of its kind worldwide. In the year 2000, 90 000 surveys were carried out at 48 airports in 24 countries.

The Passenger Service Simulation exercise:

- Exposes decision-makers to the experiences of passengers within their facilities, providing context and balance to the somewhat detached boardroom process of planning service and facility initiatives.
- Increases senior management 'buy-in' to benchmarking as a strategic planning tool. First-hand experience of actual levels of performance enables senior management to gain a better understanding of areas for improvement and the need for benchmarking.
- Is an integral part of the Vancouver Airport benchmarking programme which is seen as a continuous process, not a one-off exercise. Benchmarking is part of the airport management's working culture.
- Is an inexpensive exercise to conduct, especially relative to the financial magnitude of the service and facility decisions that transport management make in their strategic planning activities.
- Is a flexible exercise that can be customised for airports, ferry terminals and railway stations, regardless of management framework or world region.

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Example 2: Establishing a plan and team structure

It is very important for participants in a benchmarking exercise to know from the start *who* is doing *what*, *when* and *how*. Benchmarking is usually carried out in addition to the 'normal' workload of participants, and therefore risks being put aside by 'more important' commitments. Effective project planning and a clear team structure will help participants to organise their work around their additional benchmarking commitments.

Approach

- **Establishing a plan:**

Once the subject to be benchmarked and the objectives of the exercise have been established, a work **plan** with a corresponding **time schedule** needs to be agreed by the participants. The plan should indicate the different steps of the exercise and **deadlines** for completion of each task. It is possible to carry out a benchmarking exercise within 8 to 12 weeks with proper planning. Indeed, it can be harder to maintain motivation and commitment over a long period of time.

At the planning stage, it is also important to estimate the **resources** (human and financial) needed for the benchmarking exercise. Participants will better understand the value of the exercise, if they are informed of the resources involved. Participants should represent a good cross section of management and the work force - both in terms of vertical and horizontal positioning - to ensure comprehensive understanding of the process.

- **Team structure:**

It is necessary to identify from the outset the participants in the benchmarking exercise and the role of each person. It is important to have **one main contact point** in each participating organisation. This person will act as the internal coordinator of the benchmarking exercise and ensure that **good communication** is maintained with internal staff and external project partners. It is advisable that the participants remain the same throughout the exercise to ensure the

consistency and quality of the work undertaken. It is also crucial that those participating in the exercise are **trained** in quality and benchmarking process techniques.

Possible team structure:

- **Project sponsor:** Senior level executive in the area being benchmarked. The sponsor's role is to provide vision, purpose and importance to the exercise. He/she must be fully committed to the exercise and should be regularly updated on progress (e.g. every two weeks).
- **Organisation coordinator:** Director level and well respected within the organisation in order to motivate team and ensure deadlines are met. The coordinator should have a good knowledge of the organisation's activities in the area being benchmarked as well as strong communication and project management skills. He/she should be fully trained in benchmarking in order to act as the organisation's benchmarking 'expert', responsible for the daily management of the exercise, communication with team members, and overseeing data collection and consolidation.
- **Location coordinators:** If the organization has bases in several locations, there needs to be a coordinator at each location to oversee data collection and communicate progress to central coordinator.
- **Third party facilitator:** A benchmarking expert (Consultant/Research Institute) should provide day-to-day support to the project team at different stages of the process: planning, training, quality control, analysis of final data, presentation of results etc.

Points for consideration

- Sufficient time should be given to training which should cover each stage of the process (planning, data collection, implementation).
- In some cases, it could be more effective for everyone involved in the exercise to receive training, rather than one internal coordinator. This will depend on the size and scope of the exercise.
- A project sponsor or 'champion' is crucial to the success of the project in order to keep the process moving and maintain levels of motivation. Someone at middle management level may be the most appropriate person for this because he/she is in a position to liaise with senior management and has close contact with other levels of staff.
- It is important to identify the staff that can provide the required data. The benchmarking team which will probably include several different levels of staff.

For further information

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Example 3: Working in partnership

Identifying the 'right' benchmarking partner is a very important, but potentially difficult part of the benchmarking process. The most appropriate partner may not always be obvious. Do you look within your own sector or in other sectors? Do you benchmark against one partner or several? The choice of partner(s) will be affected by the objectives of the exercise and the topic being benchmarked. It is necessary to identify partner(s) in the planning phase.

Two different approaches to working in partnership were presented at the conference.

Approach (1): Forming a club – Benchmarking Public Transport

The first example described a benchmarking project undertaken by four public transport authorities in Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oslo and Helsinki. The authorities decided to form a 'club' to benchmark the quality of public transport in their cities. They wanted to create an easy, user-friendly, and task-oriented benchmarking network. They chose to work with partners whom they knew well, building on the strong links already existing between the four Scandinavian cities of approximately the same size and facing similar challenges.

The approach taken was practical and focused on mutual learning between the different cities. The authorities were clear from the outset that they did not want another quantitative comparison of key figures. The main objectives of the benchmarking exercise were to:

- Increase public transport ridership in the participating cities;
- Strengthen the focus on customer needs, demands and expectations;
- Create a learning process based on users'/citizens' experience of the quality of public transport services;
- Establish a network of professionals interested and closely involved in similar issues;
- Promote public transport in the participating cities by creating an open dialogue on the development possibilities for their public transport networks.

The first phase of the project involved carrying out a common survey of inhabitants in the cities. The survey was divided into ten categories, focusing on qualitative aspects of transport, ranging from safety to value for money. The survey was complemented by 1000 telephone interviews with a representative sample of citizens in each city. The results of the survey were analysed and presented to the participating public authorities to enable them to learn from each other's successes and failures.

In the second phase, 'Common Interest Groups' were established in four areas, each corresponding to an area in which a city had performed particularly well. In this way, the emphasis was placed on the strengths of each city rather than creating a league table. The cities compared and analysed good practices in the different areas, identified measures for improvement, and implemented new ideas.

Points for consideration

- This approach is easy to use, inexpensive, and practical.
- It can be easier to make contacts within your own sector than with those in different sectors.
- Good working relationships between participants are necessary for successful benchmarking. Same-sector (but non-competitive) partners tend to feel comfortable working together as they have a common understanding of the issues being addressed and share common goals and challenges.
- It is necessary to take into account cultural differences between partners from a variety of countries. For example, there may be differences in customer expectations or the interpretation of indicators.
- It is often easier to convince senior management of the utility of benchmarking with same sector partners than with partners from different sectors.
- The transfer of knowledge between same-sector partners is often quicker and easier than between partners from different sectors.
- Same-sector benchmarking often leads to productive networks as partners make useful contacts for future cooperation.

When forming a club of partners from several organisations, it is necessary to:

- Agree on clear and realistic goals.
- Limit the number of participants in order to keep the process manageable.
- Appoint a strong project leader.

- Integrate the work into the individual participating organizations: ‘local’ employees are familiar with the workings of their organisation and closer to the issues being addressed.
- Learn from the strengths of each participant rather than simply identifying the best and worst performers.

If you want to use a survey similar to that used in the example presented, it is advisable to:

- Appoint a steering committee to coordinate the survey.
- Agree on a questionnaire and avoid making changes.
- Avoid focusing on ranking the performance of the participants.
- Consider developments over time.
- Agree on a common press policy/communication policy in order to ensure confidential or sensitive issues are not published without joint agreement

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Approach (2): How apples can learn from pears

The desired level of similarity of your benchmarking partner depends on the objectives of the benchmarking exercise. If the objective is to learn new practices to improve performance, benchmarking with partners outside your own sector can be very effective. One of the main drawbacks of benchmarking with same-sector partners is that the focus tends to be only on best practice within the sector, rather than on absolute best practice in the area being benchmarked. This will limit the level of improvement that can be achieved.

It can be difficult to convince participants of the utility of benchmarking with different sectors. A typical response is ‘What can we learn from *them*? They have no understanding of our sector. We are too different: you cannot compare apples with pears’. However, this is a common and mistaken interpretation of what it means to benchmark with partners from a different sector.

In order to identify a benchmarking partner from outside your sector, a very systematic approach is required. It is necessary to identify very precisely the area that you wish to benchmark. Once a specific area for benchmarking has been identified, it is then possible to research other sectors in which a similar process is undertaken.

Example:

A freight transportation company that wished to use benchmarking to improve its risk management could learn most from a partner outside the transport sector. It would first be necessary to identify individual areas of learning within the very general area of risk management in order to break it down into several components: operational risk, environmental risk, fuel rate risk, capacity/asset risk etc. It would then be possible to identify other sectors in which similar risks were faced and to examine the processes that these other sectors implemented to manage them. For example, banking and energy are industries from which the freight transportation company can learn in this particular area.

It is not therefore a matter of comparing the freight transport sector with the financial services or energy sectors. The whole ‘apple’ is not compared with the whole ‘pear’, but rather a piece of the apple is compared with a similar piece of the pear.

Points for consideration

- The process of cutting into bite-size pieces the area to be benchmarked requires effort and understanding. It means digging deeper into the underlying processes of a particular activity of your organisation. The investment (time, effort, money) that you want to put into the

benchmarking exercise may affect your choice of partner: do you want a general overview of good practice in your sector or do you want a detailed examination of a specific area in which you are prepared to learn innovative ideas and make radical changes?

- Participants in a benchmarking exercise tend to be less confident when working with partners from a different sector. Addressing the concerns of those involved is crucial when benchmarking with unobvious partners. Participants will feel more comfortable once they understand the reasons for the choice of partner in the context of the overall objectives of the exercise.
- An offensive, positive approach is necessary to convince people that it is possible to benchmark with partners from different sectors. The emphasis is on learning, not comparing.
- It may happen that there is no optimal performer in your sector and it is therefore necessary to look at other sectors.
- Issues relating to competition will affect the choice of partner. There are likely to be fewer problems of data confidentiality when working with different sector partners who are not direct competitors.
- It is advisable to work with an objective, third party to help to bridge the potential divide between partners from different sectors.
- The learning potential is much greater when benchmarking with a partner from a different sector which can offer radical and innovative ideas for improvement.
- The focus of this approach is on methods and processes rather than on outputs. It stimulates you to examine in detail how you do things in a particular area.
- A good equilibrium between the partners is important. The status and experience of partners should be equal to create a working environment in which all participants feel comfortable. This is true whether or not the partners are from the same sector.

For more information

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Recommendations for Step 1: Planning

Benchmarking participants:

1. Ensure the support and **commitment of senior management** by involving them closely in the exercise from the outset⁸.
2. Agree a **work plan** that sets out the different steps, time schedule, deadlines and required resources (human and financial) for the exercise.
3. **Limit the number of participants** so that the project is manageable.
4. **Be open-minded when identifying benchmarking partners.** It may be the case that you can learn most from partners working in different sectors: “Benchmarking is learning, not comparing”. It can be effective to contact umbrella organisations in order to find suitable benchmarking partners.
5. Appoint a **strong overall project leader** to ensure the effective coordination and coherence of the exercise and to maintain levels of motivation. This could be an external expert (e.g. research institute, consultant).
6. Identify **one main contact person** in each participating organisation to coordinate the exercise internally and communicate its progress to other stakeholders. The contact person should preferably remain the same throughout the exercise.
7. Establish a **benchmarking team** to carry out the necessary tasks. The team should be made up of staff that have access to the required information and are directly involved

⁸ See Annex for a summary of the benefits of benchmarking and practical suggestions for winning support for benchmarking.

in the area being benchmarked. The role of each team member should be clearly defined.

8. Ensure that those involved in the exercise are **trained** in benchmarking.
9. Agree a **code of conduct** such as the European Benchmarking Code of Conduct, in order to facilitate mutual trust between participants. Such an agreement will ensure that confidential and sensitive issues are not published without common consensus.

DG TREN:

1. DG TREN should gain the **support of internal senior European policy makers** (European Commission, Council of Ministers, European Parliament etc.) to ensure that adequate political support is available to implement the results of its benchmarking activities and to engage the commitment of national policy makers and other key stakeholders.
2. **Clear objectives and specific topics** must be identified for benchmarking. The objectives and topics should be agreed in consultation with stakeholders at all levels within the Commission and with key actors outside the Commission, for example, sectoral experts, European and international transport associations, Ministries of Transport, operators etc.
3. Training in benchmarking is essential for those participating in a benchmarking exercise. DG TREN should consider establishing a **benchmarking training network** aimed at senior European transport policy makers and public service managers. The training could involve a series of seminars on practical benchmarking, focusing on different applications relevant to the work of policy makers. The seminars, building on the work undertaken by the BEST network, could involve a wide range of top-level policy makers. DG TREN should also encourage similar training at national level to be organised by national Ministries of Transport.
4. DG TREN should **recognise the value of learning from other sectors**. It is possible to carry out a successful benchmarking project even though the partners involved work in different sectors.
5. DG TREN should **facilitate the identification of appropriate benchmarking partners** by cooperating with benchmarking initiatives undertaken by other Directorates-General and creating benchmarking networks of professionals in the transport and non-transport sectors. DG TREN is a valuable source of information on useful contacts and potential benchmarking partners for particular transport sectors or national transport ministries.
6. DG TREN should **promote the use of the European Benchmarking Code of Conduct** which provides a tried and tested framework agreement for participants in a benchmarking exercise on the procedures to be followed, for example regarding data confidentiality, communication policy etc.

→ Step 2: Analysis

Example: Managing data analysis

Rigorous benchmarking depends on the collection of accurate, relevant data and objective data analysis. There is a range of ways to analyse data including linear programming and regression analysis. The method chosen should be appropriate for the kind of data collected and the objectives of the benchmarking exercise.

Approach: Data Envelopment Analysis

Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) is one method that can be used to analyse data in the context of a benchmarking exercise. It is an innovative linear programming technique that has been developed over the last decade and is particularly suitable for measuring performances of service organisations such as bus services, road maintenance services, rail operations etc. DEA has been

found to be particularly suitable for responding to the following three basic performance questions that any organisation faces:

- (1) How well are we doing relative to others doing the same things?
- (2) What do we need to improve?
- (3) Who are the best-in-class performers for benchmarking purposes?

DEA helps you to establish a benchmark, measures performances against this benchmark, and supplies information on how to reach this benchmark. Like many other methods, it allows for anonymity of individual producers (providers) - an important factor when issues of confidentiality are concerned.

DEA constructs a benchmark (frontier) composed of best practice performers and then measures the performance of others relative to that frontier. Thus the performance of individual producers is evaluated against best performers.

The producers lying below this frontier are inefficient because they could have managed their production using less input and could have produced more output using the same amount of input. The efficiency of the best practice producers will be equal to 1(100%) while those who are inefficient will have a rating of less than 1. DEA thus gives a performance ranking of all producers being assessed.

Points for consideration

- It is fairly easy to conduct a DEA with some elementary knowledge of its workings. This can be acquired through the many available introductory books and manuals. There are also several research institutions and commercial companies that specialise in DEA. DEA software is relatively inexpensive and is no more complicated to use than any other simple statistical analysis tool.
- The effectiveness of DEA depends on the quantity and quality of the data available.
- DEA has a wide range of applications and has been used to assess the performance of schools, hospitals, legal courts, and farms.
- DEA can handle multiple inputs and outputs, and it allows inputs and outputs to be measured in different units. It does not require an assumption of a functional form relating inputs to outputs.
- DEA enables producers to be directly compared against a best performer or combination of best performers.
- DEA is a useful starting point for benchmarking because it offers a practical, user-friendly tool for comparison with best performers. However, it must be handled with care and its limitations must be recognised. It does not explain the differences in performance or take into account its more qualitative or subjective aspects.

For more information

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Recommendations for Step 2: Analysis

Benchmarking participants:

1. Clearly **establish the reasons for collecting the data and its relevance to the overall objectives of the exercise**. If participants understand the context of requests for data, they will be more willing to provide it.
2. Ensure that the data used are **accurate and accepted by participants** in order to ensure the credibility of the recommendations resulting from the exercise.
3. Ensure that participants **understand and trust** the chosen method of data analysis in order for the analysis results to be accepted as a true reflection of performance.

4. **Don't focus too much on ranking.** Data analysis should not be used simply to identify strong and weak performers, but to identify areas for improvement and good practices for achieving improvement.

DG TREN:

1. DG TREN should ensure that **existing European transport data⁹** are made available for benchmarking purposes and that **expertise on data collection and analysis** techniques are shared at a European level. There should be close cooperation between the various Directorates-General (DG TREN, DG Environment, DG Regio), transport organisations (UITP, UIC etc) and national governments to facilitate the development of indicators and data collection and analysis.
2. DG TREN should **promote data harmonisation and consolidation** in order to ensure that the value of existing data is maximised. However, EC benchmarking activities should not only focus on data collection and indicators, but primarily on learning from others to bring about real improvements in the transport sector for Europe's citizens.

→ Step 3: Integration

Example: Stakeholder involvement

If benchmarking is to lead to real improvement, its findings must be integrated into the wider working context of the organisation. Effective stakeholder involvement will increase stakeholders' sense of ownership of the proposed measures for improvement and help to overcome possible resistance to change. At Vancouver airport, an innovative approach is used to ensure the involvement of all stakeholders in proposing actions based on the findings of passenger service benchmarking.

Approach: Service Solution Sessions

Service Solution Sessions are multi-disciplinary, multi-partner working groups that bring transport operators and external business partners/stakeholders together to build consensus and achieve jointly created solutions to passenger issues identified in passenger service benchmarking.

Sessions begin with a presentation of the key findings on passengers' service experiences (typically using IATA data and other benchmarking research). The delivery of service issues to the group is deliberately neutral in tone and entirely non-accusatory. Regardless of the closeness or distance of the issue to participating experts, all session members are involved in contributing to the solution. Similarly, other group members, regardless of actual jurisdiction, offer suggestions on where they can help. In this "blame-free" environment, there is no finger pointing and service solutions are worked out together.

Points for consideration

Service solution sessions:

- Direct the focus on the needs of the customer rather than attributing blame internally. This approach creates a culture of cooperation, transparency, and shared responsibility. It also increases motivation to implement measures that have been decided on the basis of consensus rather than imposed by management.
- Could be a useful approach to policy making which needs to be more inclusive and foster joint-responsibility among decision-makers and citizens. It would encourage politicians and other senior decisions makers to take a practical, rather than theoretical, approach to policy-making by basing policies on information/suggestions provided by those directly affected by the delivery of public services. Cooperation between all stakeholders would help to reduce the gap between policy makers and citizens.

⁹ For example Eurostat data and other data collected by European institutions and associations.

- Provide a cohesive, facility-wide approach to passenger service issues and therefore offer solutions which have real impact and are all-encompassing.
- Result in cost and time efficiencies by involving all service providers/stakeholders in passenger service solutions from start to finish.
- Foster enhanced cooperation and closer professional relationships within an organisation, leading to an inclusive, communicative approach to ongoing issues. Potential problems of conflicts of interest between different groups are overcome by highlighting the needs of the customer. The aim is to improve the quality of service provided to the customer (at the policy making level, the customer is the citizen). Focusing on a common purpose helps to resolve potential internal conflicts.
- Offer a flexible process that can be instituted at airports, ferry terminals and railway stations, regardless of management framework or world region.

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Recommendations for Step 3: Integration

Benchmarking participants:

1. Ensure **good communication** of results to all stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in implementing the necessary changes for improvement.
2. Integration of results should **focus on identifying areas for improvement** rather than attributing blame.

DG TREN:

1. DG TREN should **actively communicate the results of its benchmarking activities** both within the European Commission (for example, at internal seminars) and externally to outside parties. The European Commission should consider establishing a European Transport Benchmarking website¹⁰, linked to the DG TREN website, to act as a one-stop-shop on transport benchmarking for transport policy makers and public service providers. The website could build on the present BEST website and include practical advice on benchmarking, a summary of all European benchmarking initiatives in the transport sector, and links to useful publications and other websites.

→ Step 4: Action

Example: Practical application of benchmarking

Action is an integral part of benchmarking. You are not benchmarking, if you do not improve the way you do things as a result of what you have found out in Steps 1 to 3 of the benchmarking methodology. In order to keep benchmarking a practical, rather than an academic exercise, it is necessary to ensure that recommended actions are relevant to the objectives of the organisation, realistic, accepted by stakeholders, and monitored to assess their implementation.

¹⁰ The Benchmarking-in-Europe website (www.benchmarking-in-europe.org), established in the framework of DG Enterprise benchmarking initiatives, provides a useful model for a similar kind of website for the transport sector.

Ideally, benchmarking should be a continuous learning process because the process of improvement itself is not finite. Benchmarks are not static but will change as best practices are adapted and improved. Monitoring the implementation of an action plan will enable you to identify new objectives and areas for improvement.

Approach: Benchmarking as a tool for reform

Major reforms in the Australian bus sector took place during the 1990s, driven by several factors including funding pressures, efficiency concerns, the changing role of public authorities, new regulations and legislation relating to competition, and the introduction of Competitive Tendering and Contracting (CTC). Benchmarking played a substantial role in driving efficiency improvements and contributing to the success of regulatory and institutional reforms.

Benchmarking was used by bus operators as a practical tool to help them adapt to the changes in the sector by improving their cost efficiency. The exercise measured the unit cost rates (drivers, repairs and maintenance etc.) and efficiency (staff utilisation, asset utilisation, operations etc.) of five public bus operators. The performance of the bus companies was compared to identify the strong and weak performers in different categories.

Example of application by public bus operator in Tasmania	
Benchmarking results used to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make detailed efficiency comparisons with private sector operators • diagnose areas of weakness • develop action plan to overcome weaknesses • implement plan • monitor progress 	
Outcomes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement outcomes, eg. casual drivers, driver shift conditions, satellite depots, maintenance practices • Key input to evidence presented to Pricing Tribunal of Tasmania State Government 	
Operator Comments:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Central to detailed Business Planning process" • "Most important tool for improving and monitoring efficiency" • "Major factor in achieving efficiency levels 20% better than other public operators" 	

Points for consideration

- Benchmarking is a valuable complement to Competitive Tendering, acting as a check on tender prices and often affecting tender prices. Benchmarking may also be used as a reasonable substitute to Competitive Tendering.
- Analytical credibility (understanding of the business, attention to detail), intelligible reporting, client/operator buy-in, and integration into business planning are critical factors for ensuring the successful application of benchmarking.
- Both operators and authorities can benefit from the practical application of benchmarking:

Australian Bus Sector	Applications	Responses
Operators	Critical tool to 'get competitive' Key input to business planning, budget setting, tender pricing etc.	"Plays central role in our business planning process"
Government / Regulators	Important tool to assist: Contract rate negotiations Tender evaluation Price setting (fares and rates)	"Information provided in the (Australian Bus Benchmarking) report is commercial-in-confidence, but this work has been of major assistance to the Commission's investigation (of Pricing Policies)", Government Prices Oversight Commission, Tasmania 2000

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Recommendations for Step 4: Action

Benchmarking participants:

1. Having identified areas for improvement, **develop a concrete action plan** that focuses on practical and achievable measures for implementation.
2. Allocate adequate resources to ensure that the **action plan is implemented** and its progress **monitored**.
3. On the basis of the results achieved, **establish new objectives** for improvement.
4. **Integrate benchmarking** into the overall management processes of your organisation so that it is used as a tool for continuous improvement

DG TREN:

1. DG TREN should ensure that there is **appropriate follow-up of its benchmarking activities** and that sufficient support is provided to those involved to monitor the results of the exercise and implement improvements. Benchmarking should always be a practical, not an academic, exercise. If benchmarking stops after comparison or analysis, it is not true benchmarking.
2. Benchmarking is a continuous process. DG TREN should establish a **long-term vision for benchmarking** to ensure that the value of its individual activities is maximised. DG TREN should continue to support networks such as BEST and practical benchmarking pilot projects such as BOB, in addition to encouraging national governments to support benchmarking initiatives in the transport sector.

IV Annex

The benefits of benchmarking in a nutshell

Benchmarking requires significant resources in terms of time, money and staff. It is not easy and can be daunting for those who have never been involved in such an exercise. The key is to convince potential participants that the benefits gained from benchmarking will repay the effort/expenditure put into the process. The more you put into benchmarking, the more you will get out of it. In addition, there is a clear management imperative for benchmarking: you need to know what is happening in your activity or business, otherwise you cannot expect to manage it as well as others.

Commitment to benchmarking is most effectively achieved by making it clear that benchmarking will directly benefit those participating. 'Selling' benchmarking is like selling any other product. You have to understand your client when presenting the potential benefits of benchmarking. Whether your 'client' is senior management, colleagues, or external organisations, it is necessary to consider the particular benefits that will persuade them to benchmark.

Some key benefits of benchmarking in the transport sector:

- Benchmarking will force you to start **asking questions about how and why** you do the things you do and to think of ways to do your job better, whether it involves policy-making, strategic planning, administration, maintenance, operational processes etc.
- Benchmarking is **practical and efficient**:
 - Practical because it assesses real performance and leads to **concrete actions**. It is not an academic research exercise.
 - Efficient because it is based on **learning from others**: experience is the best teacher, but making use of others' experiences will save time and help you to avoid repeating the same mistakes as others.

- Public authorities and operators are under increasing pressure to improve the delivery of transport services because users and authorities are demanding higher quality and more efficient transport services.
 - For **public authorities** working in a public sector environment, without local direct competition, benchmarking can act as a **stimulus to drive improvement** by providing a framework for establishing priorities and implementing actions. Policy makers need to know if they are following the right policies and if they are, whether or not the policies are being effectively implemented. Benchmarking can help transport policy-makers (European, national, regional) to set targets, monitor achievement of the targets, and find ways to improve the direction and implementation of their policies.
 - **Public transport operators** are facing challenges of working in an increasingly competitive environment. Transport operators - whether public or private companies - can benefit from benchmarking to help them **adapt to the cultural, political and regulatory changes** in the transport sector. In addition, the public transport sector is becoming more international, which means that operators may have responsibility for networks in several countries. Internal benchmarking can help individual operators to monitor and improve the performance of their different networks whilst recognising the essential differences between regions in different geographic, climatic and socio-economic zones.
- Benchmarking offers a valuable opportunity to **gain insights into the practices of others**. An operator or authority on the other side of the world may have found a solution to a specific problem that you are currently facing. Solutions may even be found in other sectors, not just in the transport sector. Benchmarking involves listening to how others do things, but also going to **see best practice in action** on site visits to best performers. You may come across an approach or practice that you never thought was possible or had never even occurred to you. Benchmarking acts as a **reality-check**, giving you an accurate and objective understanding of your own performance in relation to others. At the same time it encourages **open-mindedness to new ideas** and ways of doing things.
- Benchmarking can help you to **set targets and standards** by identifying best performers in particular areas. These benchmarks can be used to guide your own performance standards. This can be particularly useful for **evaluating and negotiating service contracts** between operators and authorities.
- Benchmarking increases **the involvement and commitment of stakeholders**. For example, within a transport operating company, involving all levels of staff in a benchmarking exercise can lead to a sense of ownership of performance which increases the motivation of staff to improve current levels of performance. Policy-makers may favour a benchmarking exercise that involves internal and external partners (authorities, operators, and users) in order to build consensus on solutions to a particular policy issue and to stimulate joint responsibility for its implementation.
- Benchmarking enables you to **build networks and partnerships** which often result in productive working relationships in the future. Benchmarking in the transport sector is not restrictive. You may wish to benchmark with partners from the same specific sector or from countries similar to your own. Or you may wish to look further afield and see how things are done in a totally different part of the world. In either case, your business network will be enriched and expanded at international, national, regional or local levels depending on the scope of the benchmarking exercise.
- Benchmarking enables you to learn about the good practices of others, but also to **promote or 'market' the successes of your own organisation, city, region etc.** Benchmarking may help you to demonstrate that your performance in a particular area compares favourably to the performance of others. Policy-makers can use such information to gain wider political support for proposed measures or strategies, and operators can attract more customers by publicising the quality of their services.

Winning support: some practical suggestions

The first, vital step in convincing senior management and colleagues to undertake benchmarking is to dispel confusion about benchmarking. Some practical suggestions to achieve this:

- Organise a seminar on benchmarking in your organisation and invite a benchmarking expert to give an introduction to benchmarking. The expert should describe his/her practical experience of benchmarking, the concrete benefits resulting from benchmarking, and how any difficulties were overcome. It is advisable to focus on practical benchmarking, identifying an example relevant to your organisation.
- Distribute information about benchmarking within your organisation. A wide range of information on benchmarking is available. Ensure that practical case studies are available for presentation and examination. Informing colleagues about websites and providing information may stimulate interest and encourage them to find out more in their own time. At least it will raise awareness that lots of other people are already benchmarking and benefiting from it.
- Keep informed about external benchmarking events such as conferences and seminars. If appropriate, propose to colleagues/senior management that they should attend particular events on benchmarking.
- Arrange an informal meeting with your director and someone who has already undertaken benchmarking. One-to-one discussions can often be productive and a senior manager may be more willing to attend an informal meeting, than a longer seminar or conference.

Vedlegg 5: Anbefalinger fra 5. BEST-konferanse

Recommendations to DG TREN, European Commission Resulting from BEST Conference 5, 'Benchmarking Transport Policy, June 2002'

Recommendations: summary

- Policy makers need tools to help them improve the sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of the transport system. Benchmarking is a management tool that has long been successfully used both in the private and public sectors to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of products and processes. Its potential should now be exploited at the policy level to support the implementation of a sustainable transport system in Europe.
- It is essential for policy makers to define precisely what it is that they want to benchmark, including the policy activity (e.g. the process of developing or implementing policy), the policy area (e.g. policy outcomes or instruments) and policy level (European, national, regional).
- Three main categories of participants in a policy benchmarking exercise can be identified: (i) those who initiate the exercise, (ii) those who do the benchmarking and (iii) those affected by the results of the exercise. In many cases, the exercise is initiated at a high political level by senior management in public administrations or elected politicians. It is most effectively carried out by a limited number of committed participants (usually middle management civil servants) who are supported by a benchmarking expert and who regularly consult a wider range of stakeholders and inform them (particularly the media) of the progress and results of the exercise.
- The basic benchmarking principles - planning, analysis, integration and action - set out in previous BEST recommendations are equally valid for policy benchmarking.
- A policy benchmarking exercise can be carried out by one country (unilateral approach) or jointly by a group of policy makers from different countries (multilateral approach).
- A policy benchmarking exercise must be particularly sensitive to external factors. Economic, institutional, geographical, demographic, social and cultural differences between countries need to be properly understood when identifying benchmarks and understanding good practices.
- For policy makers who are benchmarking for the first time, it is recommended to start with limited objectives and a few indicators based on already available or easily available data.
- It is possible to propose two main directions for the future of EU transport policy benchmarking, (i) indirect involvement based on the promotion and facilitation of benchmarking through the provision of information and creation of networks to help others to use benchmarking and (ii) direct involvement, by participating in benchmarking projects that feed directly into the development and implementation of EU transport policy and by establishing a comprehensive transport benchmarking exercise, involving all Member States.
- Any benchmarking activities undertaken by DG TREN should aim to create synergies with other relevant European projects both in the field of benchmarking and on related topics such as mobility management, exchange of good practice, sustainability indicators and policy evaluation.
- It is important for DG TREN to continue to involve Accession Countries in its transport policy benchmarking activities. Evidence shows that Accession Countries find benchmarking a useful way to support the process of EU enlargement.

- It is important that any future policy benchmarking undertaken by DG TREN is driven by the overall objective to improve the European transport system through a continuous process of identifying benchmarks (standards of excellence), learning from good practices and implementing actions.

Introduction

The purpose of these recommendations is to outline some of the main factors to take into account in the application of benchmarking to transport policy. The recommendations are based on the work of the BEST network, particularly the fifth conference on Benchmarking Transport Policy¹¹ which presented a range of examples of policy benchmarking in transport and non-transport sectors.

The recommendations are aimed primarily at national and European transport policy makers. The term 'policy maker' is being used in a very broad sense to indicate those involved in the development or implementation of public policy, primarily those working in public administrations (civil servants in national ministries of transport and the European Commission). However, it is recognised that a much wider range of actors are involved in transport policy making (politicians, non-governmental organisations, citizen/user-groups, research institutes, service providers and the private sector) and if these groups are interested in policy benchmarking, it is hoped that these recommendations will also be useful for them.

The structure of the recommendations is intended to be practical and clear to respond to some of the key questions that a transport policy maker may have when considering the use of benchmarking. The final section makes proposals for the future of EU transport policy benchmarking.

I Why benchmarking?

1. There is growing pressure on transport policy makers across Europe to reduce levels of public spending. At the same time, there is increasing urgency to meet the targets set out in the Kyoto Protocol to improve the sustainability of the transport sector. In addition, the electorate are demanding ever-higher standards of quality in both the public and private transport sectors (passenger and freight). In this context, policy makers need tools to help them improve the sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of the transport system. Benchmarking is a management tool that has long been successfully used both in the private and public sectors to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of products and processes. Its potential should now be exploited at the policy level to support the implementation of a sustainable transport system in Europe.

2. Benchmarking can help policy makers by providing a useful structure to prioritise objectives, set targets, monitor the achievement of those targets, compare their performance to others (e.g. other countries), learn from the good practices of others, and implement changes for improvement.

3. Benchmarking is not the only tool available to policy makers nor is it able to provide a solution to all the challenges faced by policy makers. However, it offers an approach that can certainly provide policy makers with support to understand and clarify their work and to learn from others who do the same things better.

¹¹ 1 10-11 June 2002, Brussels

II What can be benchmarked?¹²

4. It is essential for policy makers to define precisely what it is that they want to benchmark. The term 'policy' is regularly used to refer to documents (e.g. White Papers, strategies), programmes and projects, actions and measures, and even non-actions (not taking action can be seen as a 'policy'). Benchmarking can, in principle, be applied to most of these interpretations of the term policy. For example, a policy maker may want to use benchmarking to improve the process of formulating national/European policy or to improve the implementation of an action programme. However, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the subject proposed for benchmarking in order to determine whether or not benchmarking is an appropriate tool to use: understand the issue and then consider benchmarking – do not try to dress the issue in a benchmarking 'coat' that doesn't fit.

5. It is necessary to clarify what policy-related activity will be benchmarked. If a government, for example, wanted to benchmark its national rail policy, it would be necessary for it to decide on which policy-related activity it wanted to focus, for example it could benchmark the process of making or developing the rail policy, implementing the policy or evaluating the policy. It may even want to benchmark all these activities, but to carry out an effective exercise it would still be necessary to distinguish between them in order to make useful measurements and comparisons with others.

6. In addition to the different policy-related activities that can be benchmarked, it is also necessary to consider the policy areas to be included in the benchmarking exercise. The focus of most transport policy benchmarking¹³ is on policy outcomes (the results of policy) or policy instruments (the means used to achieve the results).

7. The level at which the benchmarking exercise is to be carried out must also be determined. These recommendations are aimed primarily at policy makers at the national and European levels, but it is also possible to benchmark policy at local and regional levels.

8. More importantly, in a sector such as transport where responsibility for policy is shared at many different levels (European, national, regional) and the implementation of policy is dependent on the coordination of all levels, a benchmarking exercise at European or national level will probably have to take into account several different policy levels. For example, an exercise to benchmark national public transport policy may have to consider the impact of relevant EU legislation (regulations, directives etc.) and initiatives, as well as the structure and implementation of regional and local transport policies. However, it is necessary to define clearly one specific level on which the benchmarking exercise will focus in order to avoid incorrect or confusing conclusions.

9. It is also necessary to determine the level at which comparisons in the benchmarking process are made. A European benchmarking initiative can compare the performance of Member States¹⁴, i.e. at the national level, but it can also compare different European regions¹⁵ in an inter-regional benchmarking exercise. In some cases, for example, there may be more potential for transference of good practice between two regions in different countries than between the countries at national level. The level at which comparisons are made and benchmarks identified must be determined in relation to the objective and focus of the benchmarking exercise.

¹² The aim of this section is to clarify, in general terms, the most important elements of transport policy that can be benchmarked or need to be understood before starting a benchmarking exercise. It does not aim to provide specific proposals of topics for a benchmarking exercise.

¹³ These recommendations are based on the findings of the BEST network and the examples of transport policy benchmarking presented at the fifth BEST conference on Benchmarking Transport Policy (10/11 June 2002).

¹⁴ For example, the National Cycle Policy Benchmark Program (NATCYP), funded by DG TREN and the participating Ministries of Transport, and managed by Vélo Mondial. For more information: <http://www.besttransport.org/Programme%20Conference%205.htm>.

¹⁵ For example, the EU sponsored project, the Citizens' Network Benchmarking Initiative. For more information: www.eltis.org/benchmarking.

10. In addition to the different levels of transport policy, there are different fields of policy that have an impact on the transport sector. This is particularly important in the context of sustainable transport policy which requires a balanced integration of transport, environment, social and economic policies. An effective transport policy benchmarking exercise should therefore aim to include relevant information from other policy fields.

III Who needs to be involved?

11. The preceding section stated that transport policy benchmarking should take into account a number of different policy levels and policy fields. This implies that a number of different stakeholders should be involved in the benchmarking exercise. Three main categories of participants can be identified: (i) those who initiate the exercise, (ii) those who do the benchmarking and (iii) those affected by the results of the exercise.

12. In many cases of policy benchmarking, the exercise is initiated at a high political level i.e. by senior management in public administrations or elected politicians (for example, the European Commission's national research policy benchmarking was initiated by the Council of Ministers). In other cases, policy benchmarking has been a joint initiative of public administrations and non-governmental organisations (for example, the National Cycle Policy Benchmark Program was initiated by the European Commission and Vélo Mondial). In practice, it does not really matter who initiates the exercise, but it is essential that it has high level and long term political support in order to ensure that those doing the benchmarking are given the necessary resources to carry out the exercise and the results are implemented.

13. However, political pressures mean that high level policy makers want immediate and visible results from benchmarking which demands long term commitment and whose benefits increase with the maturity of the exercise. A distinction needs to be made between a well-informed and serious commitment to use benchmarking to improve policy over the long term and a politically motivated decision to use benchmarking so that policy makers are seen by the public to be doing 'something'.

14. Those who do the benchmarking are usually middle management civil servants together with a benchmarking 'expert' (a consultant) to provide support with the technical part of the exercise (methodology, indicators, data analysis etc.). Middle management civil servants are in a suitable position to undertake a benchmarking exercise because they have a good understanding of policy fields and activities, direct (and objective) knowledge of and input into policy development and implementation, and are well placed to liaise with other levels of management (senior and 'on-the-ground').

15. Those affected by the results of the benchmarking exercise include a wide range of stakeholders. The results of the exercise should lead to change and improvement in the policy area benchmarked and this will usually have an impact on different levels and departments of government, non-governmental organisations/associations, service-providers, end-users etc. It is important to establish a communication/consultation strategy to involve all stakeholders¹⁶. This will enable those doing the benchmarking to benefit from the expertise of others from different policy levels or fields and will increase the credibility and acceptance of the final results by all stakeholders.

16. It is especially important for policy makers to ensure effective management of communication with the media. It is easy for the media to focus on the negative findings of a benchmarking exercise particularly rankings between countries¹⁷ which highlight the poor performance of some

¹⁶ For example, in the EU sponsored project, the Citizens' Network Benchmarking Initiative, some participants - representatives of regional and local transport authorities and operators from across Europe - established a 'local reference group' in their region or municipality in order to involve local stakeholders in the benchmarking exercise.

¹⁷ As these recommendations are intended primarily for national and European policy makers, the country level is referred to, but these recommendations apply equally to regions and cities.

countries. The less sensational (in terms of newspaper and television headlines) benefits of benchmarking – learning from those who do things better and implementing changes to improve – can easily be ignored by the media and subsequently the wider public. Policy makers may, as a result, see benchmarking as a threat rather than a support.

III How to benchmark policy?

17. Previous BEST recommendations have identified the different steps of the benchmarking process, which have been summarised as planning, analysis, integration and action. Within this basic structure, there are a variety of approaches that can be taken. Evidence shows that these basic benchmarking principles are equally valid for policy benchmarking. In order to avoid repetition, a summary of the BEST recommendations on benchmarking methodology has been provided in the Annex¹⁸.

18. The Centre for Management and Policy Studies (CMPS)¹⁹ has identified five main elements in the process of international comparisons in policy making: scanning, selecting, understanding, assessing and recommending²⁰. The methodology developed by the CMPS provides a very useful and practical framework for policy makers interested in policy comparison and benchmarking. It is recommended that any European or national policy benchmarking work refers to the CMPS methodology.

19. It is important to define clearly the activity, area and level of policy that will be benchmarked (see section on ‘What can be benchmarked?’).

20. High level political support, i.e. senior management in public administrations and elected politicians (see section on ‘Who should be involved?’) is necessary to ensure that adequate resources are made available for the exercise and the results are implemented.

21. Examples of (transport policy) benchmarking show that the exercise is most effectively carried out by a limited number of committed participants (middle management civil servants) who are supported by a technical expert, and who regularly consult a wider range of stakeholders and inform them of the progress and results of the exercise.

22. A policy benchmarking exercise can be carried out jointly by a group of policy makers from different countries, for example the National Cycle Policy Benchmark Program involved representatives of five national ministries of transport, or by one country, for example a UK study on European best practice in delivering integrated transport²¹ was initiated by the Commission for Integrated Transport (an independent government advisory body) and undertaken by a consultant (Atkins). The main benefit of the former, ‘multilateral’ approach is that it is based on the active participation of policy makers and provides the opportunity for creating partnerships with and

¹⁸ The full version of BEST Conference 4 Recommendations on benchmarking methodology can be downloaded from www.besttransport.org/Recommendations/BEST%20Recommendations4.PDF. These recommendations describe the basic steps of benchmarking and provide a ‘menu’ of approaches that can be taken at each step.

¹⁹ The Centre for Policy and Management Studies is part of the Cabinet Office of the UK Government. More information on its very useful work on international comparisons in policy making can be found at www.cmps.gov.uk/policyhub.

²⁰ There is no fundamental difference between the four steps identified in the BEST recommendations and the five steps of the CMPS approach. Whereas the BEST recommendations provide general guidelines on benchmarking methodology in the transport sector, the CMPS work focuses on policy comparison (all sectors).

²¹ This study was presented at the fifth BEST conference. The conference paper can be downloaded from <http://www.besttransport.org/Programme%20Conference%205.htm>. The full study can be downloaded from <http://www.cfit.gov.uk/research/ebp/key/index.htm>.

learning directly from peers in other countries. The main benefit of the latter, ‘unilateral’ approach is that it is easier to manage and can be conducted more quickly than the multilateral approach which demands coordination of different partners each doing their own work in different countries.

23. In a benchmarking group of policy makers from a variety of countries, it may happen that there are differences between the countries in the state of progress or level of priority of the policy area or activity selected for benchmarking. These differences are not, in principle, a barrier to benchmarking as long as all participants have agreed on a common objective, are equally motivated to learn and improve, and have communicated and understood the differences between their countries’ policy development and priorities. For example, in the National Cycle Policy Benchmark Program, the Czech Republic Ministry of Transport was interested in the benchmarking exercise because it was at the early stages of developing a national cycling policy and wanted to learn from those who already had experience. The Dutch Ministry of Transport, on the other hand, had a well-developed national cycling policy but was in the process of reviewing it and wanted to participate in the benchmarking exercise to support its internal process of evaluation.

24. A policy benchmarking exercise must therefore be particularly sensitive to external factors. Economic, institutional, geographical, demographic, social and cultural differences between countries need to be properly understood when identifying benchmarks and good practices. The benchmarking process is based on learning from others. In rare cases, it may be possible for one country to copy exactly a successful policy in another country, but usually it will be a case of adapting the policy to the local context. If external factors are not fully taken into account, the transfer of good practices will probably result in failure.

25. It is difficult to isolate a direct cause-effect relation between a policy and a policy process/outcome. For example, an increase in the use of public transport (a policy outcome) may be the result of a war in the Middle East and a subsequent increase in petrol prices (external factor) rather than increased public spending on public transport (a transport policy).

26. However, by establishing a thorough understanding of external factors and using a combination of both quantitative (for example, the percentage increase of public transport) and qualitative data (for example, from interviews with stakeholders – policy makers, service providers, end-users), it is possible to draw useful conclusions from a benchmarking exercise.

27. To conclude, the basic benchmarking methodology practised successfully for many years in the private and public sectors can also be applied to transport policy. However, for policy makers who are benchmarking for the first time, it is recommended to start with limited objectives and indicators based on already available or easily available data. A simple approach is more likely to be successful and will allow policy makers to familiarise themselves with the process and involve other stakeholders before re-launching the process on a wider scale with more ambitious objectives.

IV The future of EU transport policy benchmarking

28. The main European Union sponsored projects²² in the field of transport benchmarking are the Citizens’ Network Benchmarking Initiative (CNBI)²³ Extending the Quality of Public Transport

²² Other EU transport benchmarking projects have recently begun or will soon start. This list focuses on those already or soon to be completed.

²³ The CNBI created a network of transport public authorities and operators from 45 regions and municipalities from EU and Accession countries. The participants worked in sub-groups to benchmark specific topics, for example accessibility, interchanges and contracts. For more information: www.eltis.org/benchmarking.

(EQUIP)²⁴, National Cycle Policy Benchmark Program (NATCYP)²⁵, Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport (BEST) and Benchmarking Of Benchmarking (BOB)²⁶. The focus of the CNBI and EQUIP projects was not on transport policy although the CNBI involved local and regional transport policy makers and the results of both projects provided useful information for policy makers. The main DG TREN work on transport benchmarking in a policy context is concentrated in the three projects, NATCYP, BEST and BOB.

29. On the basis of the work carried out in the BEST network²⁷, it is possible to propose two main directions for EU transport policy benchmarking:

(i) Indirect involvement:

- The European Commission can continue to promote and facilitate the use of benchmarking by funding networks such as BEST, NATCYP and CNBI which support European, national and regional transport policy makers in the implementation of benchmarking.
- - In practical terms, this kind of involvement would mean funding activities such as help desks/technical assistance offices²⁸ to coordinate benchmarking networks, a transport benchmarking website²⁹, benchmarking training³⁰ and regular conferences/workshops to present the state of the art of transport policy benchmarking and bring together all those active in the field to learn and exchange information.
- - In association with the previous recommendation, it would be useful to establish a database of European and non-European³¹ transport policy benchmarking initiatives in order to support a better understanding of the process and, based on the successful examples, build a common European methodological framework for benchmarking transport policy. BEST has been an important first step towards achieving this objective via the series of conferences and recommendations, but it is important to continue and develop this work.
- - Indirect involvement would therefore mean that the European Commission would provide tools and information to help others to use benchmarking, but would not be directly engaged in benchmarking exercises.

²⁴ EQUIP produced a self-assessment handbook to support transport operators and authorities to benchmark the internal efficiency of urban passenger transport operators. For more information: www.europjects.ie/equip.

²⁵ See Footnote 4

²⁶ BOB is a 'sister' project of BEST. Three practical benchmarking pilots are being carried out in the framework of BOB. For more information: <http://www.besttransport.org/cadrebobwhat.html>.

²⁷ These recommendations are produced by the BEST project consortium on the basis of the papers presented at the BEST conferences (October 2000 to June 2002), particularly the fifth conference (June 2002) on Benchmarking Transport Policy, and the proposals made by participants at the conferences. For more information about Conferences 1-4, see the conference reports and recommendations: <http://www.besttransport.org/cadreconf2.html>.

²⁸ For example, a technical assistance office was set up to coordinate and manage CNBI.

²⁹ DG Enterprise created the Benchmarking in Europe website (www.benchmarking-in-europe.com) as part of its initiative to promote the use of benchmarking to improve the economic growth and competitiveness of European industry. The website is intended to be a one-stop-shop for benchmarking in Europe. It would be possible to develop a similar website for the transport sector, based on the current BEST website.

³⁰ One of the main achievements of BEST is that it has provided European and national policy makers with a training in benchmarking. Questionnaires completed by BEST network participants show that, as a result of BEST, they feel more confident about undertaking a benchmarking exercise in their own organisations.

³¹ The BEST project has always taken an outward looking approach and identified interesting examples of transport benchmarking both in and beyond Europe (North America, Australia etc).

(ii) Direct involvement:

- - The European Commission can continue to support benchmarking projects that feed directly into the development and implementation of EU transport policy.
- - This can be done by developing projects such as BOB, which addresses particular areas of transport policy (passenger rail, road safety and airport accessibility) and whose results are intended to contribute to EU policy in these areas. The number of participants in the BOB pilot projects has been limited and participation has been on a voluntary basis. DG TREN could expand these specific policy benchmarking exercises to include all Member States and Accession Countries and set up thematic benchmarking working groups for specific policy areas³² which would be coordinated by the relevant policy unit in DG TREN.
- - DG TREN could also establish a more comprehensive transport benchmarking exercise, involving all Member States, such as the benchmarking activities undertaken by DG Social Affairs and Employment to monitor the implementation of EU common targets for employment and labour market performance in the Member States and by DG Research to improve research policy design and implementation at all levels (European, national and regional) and promote coordination of research efforts in Europe.
- - A comprehensive benchmarking approach is coherent with the 'open method of coordination', endorsed by the Lisbon Summit³³, to increase the coherence and coordination of national policies in the Member States. DG TREN could use such an approach, for example, to monitor the achievement of its targets set out in the White Paper on European transport policy for 2010: time to decide³⁴.

30. The two directions described above have been presented separately for the sake of clarity, but they are complementary and can be combined. It is not a question of deciding between them, but understanding the range of possibilities for the future of EU transport policy benchmarking. The first option based on the indirect involvement of the European Commission may be easier and quicker to implement as many of the necessary structures are already in place (for example, the BEST website and conference series, the NATCYP group). The second option based on direct involvement would require more time and resources to define and implement.

31. Any benchmarking activities (whether indirect, direct or mixed) undertaken by the European Commission should aim to create synergies with other relevant European projects³⁵ including both other benchmarking projects (transport and non transport³⁶) as well as projects on related topics such as mobility management, good practice exchange, sustainability indicators, and policy evaluation. It is important that EU supported benchmarking activities do not duplicate previous work, but complement and advance it.

32. It is important for the European Commission to continue to involve Accession Countries in its transport policy benchmarking activities. Evidence³⁷ shows that Accession Countries find

³² The European Commission's Draft Communication on Benchmarking European Transport (20/4/99) identified areas and examples for benchmarking. The Commission should review the possibility of approving the Draft Communication.

³³ Council of Ministers of the European Union, Lisbon Summit, March 2000.

³⁴ COM(2001)370

³⁵ This includes EU supported research and policy projects as well as work carried out by other organisations active in the field, for example the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, European Conference of Ministers of Transport, and the European Environment Agency (particularly the TERM initiative).

³⁶ BEST currently aims to do this by creating links with benchmarking activities of DG TREN, DG Environment, DG Enterprise, DG Research, DG Employment and Social Affairs etc. Coordination to create synergies in this field should be continued at EU level.

³⁷ Central and Eastern European Countries participate actively in BEST, BOB, NATCYP and CNBI.

benchmarking a useful way to support the process of EU enlargement. Benchmarking provides information³⁸ about policy developments in the Member States to help Accession Countries identify priority areas for policy development in their own countries. It also facilitates the exchange of knowledge and good practice between Member States and Accession Countries so that, on the one hand, Accession Countries can learn from the experiences of Member States that have already implemented many of the policy reforms that Accession Countries are now carrying out, and, on the other hand, Member States can have a better understanding of the challenges faced by Accession Countries and learn from their good practices.

33. Evidence³⁹ suggests that Accession Countries do not have specific needs with regard to transport policy benchmarking. They may be at a different stage of policy development and implementation in relation to the Member States, and external factors may be more dominant (especially economic), but the principles set out in these recommendations are equally valid for policy makers in the Accession Countries.

34. The objective of EU policy benchmarking must not be to create league tables to compare the performance of policies in Member States and Accession Countries. Comparison is part of the benchmarking process, but it is a means, not an end, to identify performance gaps, good practices and actions for improvement.

35. There is concern that the aim of some EU policy benchmarking is to work towards the convergence of national policies. In theory, this aim is commendable if all countries' policies are converging at the standard of excellence identified in the benchmarking exercise. However, there is a risk that convergence may be at a level that is below the benchmark but commonly acceptable.

36. Therefore it is important that any future policy benchmarking undertaken by DG TREN is driven by the overall objective to improve the European transport system through a continuous process of identifying benchmarks (standards of excellence), learning from good practices and implementing actions.

Annex

Summary of Recommendations resulting from BEST Conference 4, 'Putting benchmarking methodology into practice'

Part 1: Recommendations to the European Commission (DG Energy and Transport)

1. The benefits of benchmarking must be more actively disseminated to European and national transport policy makers. The European Commission has an important role to play in 'selling' benchmarking and informing senior European and national transport policy makers about its benefits.
2. The European Commission should consider establishing a European Transport Benchmarking website, linked to the DG TREN website, to act as a one-stop-shop on transport benchmarking for transport policy makers and public service providers.
3. Benchmarking activities supported by the European Commission must take into account the underlying principles of the benchmarking methodology: planning, analysis, integration and action.
4. Clear objectives and specific topics must be identified for benchmarking. The objectives and topics should be agreed in consultation with stakeholders at all levels within the European Commission and with key actors outside the Commission.

³⁸ Many Accession Country representatives at the BEST conferences say that a key motivation for their participation is to stay up-to-date on EU transport policy developments.

³⁹ BEST, BOB, NATCYP, CNBI etc.

5. The European Commission should consider establishing a benchmarking training network aimed at senior European transport policy makers and public service managers.
6. The European Commission should recognise the value of learning from other sectors and facilitate the identification of appropriate benchmarking partners by cooperating with other benchmarking initiatives undertaken by its various Directorates-General and creating benchmarking networks of professionals in the transport and non-transport sectors.
7. The European Commission should continue to support third party experts – research institutes, universities, consultants - to facilitate transport benchmarking exercises.
8. The European Commission should promote the use of the European Benchmarking Code of Conduct which provides a framework agreement on the procedures to be followed by participants in a benchmarking exercise.
9. The European Commission should ensure that current data relevant to transport are made available for benchmarking purposes and that expertise on data collection and analysis techniques are shared at a European level.
10. The European Commission should actively communicate the results of its benchmarking activities both within the Commission (for example, at internal seminars) and externally to outside parties.
11. The European Commission should ensure that there is appropriate follow-up of its benchmarking activities and that sufficient support is provided to those involved to monitor the results of the exercise and implement improvements.
12. Benchmarking is a continuous process. The European Commission should establish a long-term vision for benchmarking to ensure that the value of its individual activities is maximised.

Part 2: Recommendations to benchmarking participants

1. Ensure the support and commitment of senior management by involving them closely in the benchmarking exercise from the outset.
2. Agree a work plan that sets out the different steps, time schedule, deadlines and required resources (human and financial) for the exercise.
3. Limit the number of participants so that the project is manageable.
4. Be open-minded when identifying benchmarking partners. It may be the case that you can learn most from partners working in different sectors.
5. Appoint a strong overall project leader to ensure the effective coordination and coherence of the exercise and to maintain levels of motivation.
6. Identify one main contact person in each participating organisation to coordinate the exercise internally and communicate its progress to other stakeholders.
7. Establish a benchmarking team to carry out the necessary tasks and ensure that the appropriate people are involved.
8. Ensure that those involved in the exercise are trained in benchmarking.
9. Agree a code of conduct such as the European Benchmarking Code of Conduct, in order to facilitate mutual trust between participants.
10. Determine the data collection method and agree on definitions of indicators and performance measures to be used.
11. Explain clearly the reasons for collecting the required data and its relevance to the overall objectives of the exercise.
12. Ensure that the data used are accurate and accepted by participants in order to ensure the credibility of the recommendations resulting from the exercise.
13. Ensure that participants understand and trust the chosen method of data analysis in order for the analysis results to be accepted as a true reflection of performance.

14. Identify and understand any gaps in performance between your organisation and your benchmarking partner(s). Focus on the reasons for the differences in performance, rather than simply on ranking performance.
15. Ensure good communication of results to all stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in implementing the necessary changes for improvement.
16. Integration of results should focus on identifying areas for improvement rather than attributing blame.
17. Having identified areas for improvement, develop a concrete action plan that focuses on practical and achievable measures for implementation.
18. Allocate adequate resources to ensure that the action plan is implemented and its progress monitored.
19. On the basis of the results achieved, establish new objectives for improvement.
20. Integrate benchmarking into the overall management processes of your organisation so that it is used as a tool for continuous improvement.

Vedlegg 6: Anbefalinger fra 6. BEST-konferanse

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and aim of the recommendations

In the period 2000-2003 the BEST thematic network⁴⁰ has explored the opportunities and challenges of benchmarking in the transport sector through a series of conferences and exchanges, involving contributions from professionals, managers, researchers and policy makers from the whole spectrum of the transport sector. The results of the work undertaken through the BEST (and BOB⁴¹) process confirm that benchmarking is potentially a very valuable means of developing a performance-based culture in the transport sector, fostering continuous improvement through self-awareness and learning from others in transport sector organisations (both operators and public authorities). The BEST process has also provided a much improved understanding of the conditions for successful benchmarking in the sector. This report summarises key findings of BEST in order to make recommendations to the European Commission⁴². The recommendations aim to provide practical guidance on the most effective use of benchmarking as a tool to support the objectives of European sustainable transport policies and strategies. The report also recommends areas for future research activities to develop the full potential of benchmarking, and proposes further actions that the Commission can take to promote and facilitate benchmarking in the transport sector.

1.2 Benchmarking in relation to policy

One of the principal outputs of BEST has been the clarification, through the pooling of the knowledge and experience of a wide range of participants from across Europe and beyond, of what is implied by the use of benchmarking in the area of policy. BEST provides for the first time a framework for understanding the different ways in which benchmarking is relevant to the development, implementation and evaluation of policy in the transport sector. Application of the framework will enable the Commission and Member States to focus their support for benchmarking so as to ensure that this powerful tool is used in the most effective way. The framework distinguishes between five different kinds of relationship between benchmarking, a tool originally developed in management and production contexts, and the more complex sphere of public policy. These are discussed in the following sections⁴³. In each case a brief analysis of

⁴⁰ Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport (BEST) is a Thematic Network, managed by the Directorate General for Energy and Transport under the European Commission's Fifth Framework Programme (Growth Programme). Website: www.besttransport.org

⁴¹ The BEST network provided input to a 'sister' project, Benchmarking of Benchmarking (BOB), also managed by the Directorate General for Energy and Transport under the European Commission's Fifth Framework Programme (Growth Programme). BOB implemented three benchmarking pilot projects in the areas of passenger rail transport, road safety, and airport accessibility. Website: <http://www.besttransport.org/cadrebobwhat.html>

⁴² The recommendations are made to the European Commission, but they also aim to support actors at national and regional level both in EU Member States and Accession Countries.

⁴³ Four of the different relationships between benchmarking and policy are illustrated in Figure 1 in the Annex.

the relationship is given, followed by examples of its practical application and practical guidance for the Directorate General for Energy and Transport. The framework presented in this report is intended to complement the Benchmarking Guide which was one of the deliverables of the BOB project. The Guide describes the benchmarking methodology and provide guidelines for the successful implementation of benchmarking in the transport sector.

2 POLICY ON BENCHMARKING

2.1 Analysis

Benchmarking has a number of different uses, and different potential users, in the transport sector. The geographically extensive nature of transport systems and networks means that there is likely to be particular value for transport organisations in seeking benchmarking partners across national boundaries. Member State governments have a key role to play in promoting benchmarking. However, because it is desirable both for service operators and for authorities at national, regional and municipal level to be able to exchange data with a wide range of comparable entities, the Commission should also play a part in facilitating the establishment and maintenance of benchmarking networks across national boundaries. This can be described as policy on benchmarking, which these recommendations propose should be positive and supportive.

2.2 Examples of the practical application of policy on benchmarking

- At European level: In October 1996, the European Commission, Directorate-General Enterprise, published a Communication⁴⁴, 'Benchmarking the Competitiveness of European Industry', in which it identified weaknesses in the performance of the European economy. In order to assist the implementation of the necessary measures to strengthen European competitiveness, the European Commission proposed the use of benchmarking to compare performance in the different key areas and factors that determine economic success. In its Communication⁴⁵ of April 1997, 'Benchmarking: Implementation of an instrument available to economic actors and public authorities', the Commission identifies three levels of benchmarking: Enterprise; Sectoral; and Framework Conditions. DG Enterprise supported benchmarking initiatives at each of these level in a range of sectors (small and medium-sized enterprises, logistics, environment etc.)⁴⁶. The DG Enterprise approach illustrates how a European policy that supports benchmarking in specific sectors can contribute to overall EU objectives to improve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

- At national level:

The UK government has implemented several initiatives to support and promote the use of benchmarking especially in reforming the public sector. The Public Sector Benchmarking Service (PSBS), launched in November 2000 as a partnership between the Cabinet Office and HM Customs and Excise is one of the key initiatives⁴⁷. The PSBS is a membership-based service that provides information, advisory services and facilities in relation to public sector benchmarking such as: examples of successful projects and studies including lessons learnt and benefits derived; details of potential partners from both the public and private sectors in the UK and abroad; Help Desk facility to respond to requests for information or questions on benchmarking; and co-ordination of cross-cutting benchmarking projects on common interest areas. The role of the PSBS is to promote benchmarking as an aid to organisational learning, rather than simply comparing performance via league tables. This kind of national policy on benchmarking therefore serves a

⁴⁴ COM (96) 463, October 9 1996

⁴⁵ COM (97) 153/2, April 16 1997

⁴⁶ Paper presented by Sean O'Reagain - Benchmarking for Competitiveness: the DG Enterprise Experience - at BEST Conference 1, Brussels, October 19-20 2000.

⁴⁷ Paper presented by Ken Watling - The UK Public Sector Benchmarking Service: A Model for the EU? - at the Final BEST Conference, Brussels, March 10-11, 2003.

very important role: to promote a more sophisticated and yet practical usage of benchmarking in the public sector.

2.3 Practical guidance for the Directorate General for Energy and Transport

Immediate actions to implement a policy on benchmarking can be adopted by the Commission and national governments⁴⁸, and guidelines to ensure the quality as well as the relevance of practical projects can be provided. In practical terms for the Directorate General for Energy and Transport, a policy on benchmarking could mean revising and adopting the Draft Communication on Benchmarking European Transport (1999)⁴⁹ or drafting a new policy document or Communication on benchmarking in the transport sector. It is a key result of the BEST project that benchmarking should be seen as part of a wider effort to promote and apply performance improvement instruments in the transport sector. Other tools and approaches such as performance planning, sustainability indicators, quality assessment, common learning actions, peer reviews, and policy evaluation are often complements to or in some cases even preconditions for successful benchmarking. Therefore the policy paper or Communication would include the Commission's position on benchmarking as an element in a wider effort to improve and secure the performance of transport systems and policies in Europe, and outline its actions from e.g. 2005 to 2015. The basis of the policy could be the recommendations made in this report.

A further element to consider in this policy paper would be the possible use of the Open Method of Coordination⁵⁰ in the area of sustainable transport. This method could provide a framework within which a common set of key objectives could be collated from the White Paper on European transport policy and other relevant documents, indicators agreed, and monitoring, benchmarking, review and reporting arrangements established at European level.

3 BENCHMARKING INTO POLICY

3.1 Analysis

The question here is how existing benchmarking data can be brought most effectively into the processes of policy formulation and implementation. If maximum value is to be derived from benchmarking studies, particularly those supported by public funds, attention needs to be given to how policy-relevant information and transferable lessons can be systematically distilled from studies that have already been defined or concluded. For meaningful lessons to be learnt by users other than the original participants, it is essential that they should be able to understand how the operations, performance and context (or framework conditions) of their own organisations compare with those featured in the study, and thus how relevant to their circumstances its findings might be. This points to the need for some means of assuring the quality of the results of any benchmarking study on which reliance is placed, and assessing the transferability of any conclusions that might be drawn from it. This will entail at the very least validating the methodology used and the robustness of the statistical analysis, but should go further to consider

⁴⁸ This recommendation reflects the views of participants at the final BEST conference, 12-13 March 2003. Many participants expressed their wish for the Commission to provide 'moral' or 'political' support for benchmarking which could be achieved by developing a clear and coherent EU policy on benchmarking. 67% of participants in the final BEST conference who completed the post-conference questionnaire, wanted to see a commitment to benchmarking in EU policy documents. 73% thought that the European Commission should take the initiative for benchmarking in the transport sector, and 67% thought that national governments should do so.

⁴⁹ Communication from the Commission, Draft 20/4/99

⁵⁰ Community action may be complemented or reinforced by the use of the 'open-method of coordination' which is a way of encouraging cooperation, the exchange of best practice and agreeing common targets and guidelines for Member States, sometimes backed up by national action plans. See the White Paper, European Governance, Brussels, 25/07/2001, COM(2001)428.

the conditions under which the transferability of policy lessons from one administrative or operational context to another can be assessed.

3.2 Example of the practical application of a methodology for reviewing policy research

- Systematic review⁵¹ of medical and social policy research

A possible model for a methodology for assessing the value for policy makers of different benchmarking studies is the systematic review of medical and social policy research. The techniques developed in these fields enable conclusions to be drawn about the relative validity of different studies. These techniques are well understood in the research communities in these fields, and have attracted a substantial literature in recent years. A full account of the approach to the systematic review of evidence promoted by the international Cochrane Collaboration in the field of health care can be found on the Cochrane website⁵². More recently the same methodological approach has been extended to social policy under the auspices of the Campbell Collaboration⁵³.

3.3 Practical guidance for the Directorate General for Energy and Transport

The Commission should develop a methodology for the systematic review of completed and ongoing transport benchmarking projects in order to help European, national and regional policy makers to extract the policy-relevant lessons from benchmarking. Further research will be required to establish the appropriate methodology, and to define the criteria against which the validity, and potential relevance to other users, of transport benchmarking studies can be tested.

It is possible to illustrate from the existing BEST materials the uses to which the outputs of such research could be put. For example, a number of benchmarking initiatives presented by BEST, as well as the pilots carried out in the BOB project, are relevant to the Commission's White Paper objective of ensuring high quality public transport⁵⁴. The examples provided by BEST include Benchmarking European Service of Public Transport (presented at Conferences 4 and 6⁵⁵), the Citizens' Network Benchmarking Initiative (BEST Conference 2⁵⁶), and the Vancouver Airport customer satisfaction benchmarking programme (BEST Conference 4⁵⁷). These studies provide a

⁵¹ A systematic review can be defined as a means to synthesize evidence on policy interventions. It can focus on intervention or policy effectiveness and how effectiveness is influenced by variations in process, implementation, intervention components, recipients, and other factors such as environmental conditions. A systematic review should use systematic, transparent rules to define, gather, summarize, integrate, and present research evidence. (see e.g. <http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/>).

⁵² <http://www.cochrane.org/cochrane/cc-broch.htm>

⁵³ See Davies, P. and Boruch, R. (2001), 'The Campbell Collaboration: Does for Public Policy What Cochrane Does for Health', *British Medical Journal*, Vol 323, No 7308, pp.294-295. See also Wyatt, A. (2002), 'Evidence Based Policy Making: The View from a Centre', *Public Policy and Administration*, Vol 17, No 3, pp. 12-28.

⁵⁴ CEC 2001, *European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to Decide*, COM (2001) 370 final, Brussels 15.5.2001, pp. 83-85.

⁵⁵ Papers presented by Anders Lausten, Greater Copenhagen Authority, at BEST Conference 4, Brussels, October 4-5, 2001 and Final BEST Conference, Brussels, March 12-13, 2003.

⁵⁶ Papers presented by Paul Hodson, the Directorate General for Energy and Transport, European Commission, and Hilary Howatt, Strathclyde Passenger Transport, at BEST Conference 2, Brussels, January 25-26, 2001.

⁵⁷ Paper presented by Paul Clark, InterVISTAS Consulting, and Peter Morris, International Air Transport Association, at BEST Conference 4, Brussels, October 4-5, 2001.

range of results, pointing towards possible best practice in relation to quality (supply, reliability, information, staff behaviour, safety, comfort, value for money, availability, facilities) and passenger consultation processes (surveys, passenger groups). The systematic review of these projects would assess the quality, relevance and transferability of the projects and results. In practical terms, the review should include the following steps⁵⁸:

- (i) Putting together a review team with wide experience in quality of service and urban transport.
- (ii) Identification of key goals of urban transport quality (e.g. based on the European Standard EN 13816)⁵⁹ and other relevant effects (economic, social, and environmental).
- (iii) Identification of criteria to be used for assessing the benchmarking studies (to be further defined by the review team:), e.g.:
 - Adherence to general benchmarking recommendations (such as the BOB Benchmarking Guide);
 - Methods used to identify performance and best practice (e.g. qualitative/quantitative indicators);
 - Relevance of measures to European transport policy (e.g. few/many of key urban transport quality goals);
 - The number of urban areas included in the study;
 - Range of stakeholders involved (service providers, policy makers, experts, users, citizens etc.).
- (iv) Ranking of the criteria (what weight will e.g. quality of benchmarking methodology have in relation to e.g. policy relevance of goals in the review of the benchmarking studies?)
- (v) Identification of all relevant benchmarking studies in the area.
- (vi) Undertaking the analysis and review.
- (vii) Reporting, including statements concerning possible conflicts of interest and review update.

The results of such a review would provide input to the development of EU policies, targets, and standards for urban transport to support the implementation of the overarching objectives set out in the White Paper. It is important that the results of the review are further tested for their relevance to different operating environments, before conclusions are drawn from them about the policies and practices that should be recommended for adoption by the Commission and other authorities.

4 BENCHMARKING FOR POLICY

4.1 Analysis

Another approach that could be taken by the Commission would be to initiate benchmarking projects in particular areas in order to directly exploit and learn from them in the development of policies. This can be described as the use of benchmarking for policy. Arguably this represents the most interesting area of application and one which BEST would recommend the Commission to emphasise in particular. The data and conclusions produced by operational level benchmarking can themselves provide useful inputs for policy makers at sub-national, national or European level. They may point towards aspects of the framework conditions within which operators function - for example regarding funding mechanisms, or the way in which regulatory or inspection regimes are implemented - that can be associated with high or low performance, and suggest areas for improvement. They may also indicate aspects of transport industry performance where national authorities will wish to work with operators to raise performance to the levels equated with European best practice.

⁵⁸ These steps are based on the Cochrane and Campbell techniques. See footnotes 10 and 11.

⁵⁹ European Standard – Public passenger transport – Service quality definition, targeting and measurement – CEN EN 13816 (April 2002).

4.2 Examples of the practical application of benchmarking for policy

- The BOB railway pilot

The BOB railway pilot carried out a detailed analysis on causes of delays. This analysis clarified the roles of the different actors (authority, operator, infrastructure provider, regulator etc.) in relation to punctuality. The results of the analysis could lead to changes in the allocation of tasks between responsible actors and therefore to more effective contractual relations between authorities and operators, thus contributing to the development of the White Paper objective of revitalising the railways and ensuring a high quality public service (e.g. in the development of the public service requirement)⁶⁰.

- The BOB airport pilot

The BOB airport pilot highlighted the value of establishing Airport Transport Forums in the development of airport accessibility strategies. Such Forums improve coordination of the key actors responsible for airport accessibility issues and result in more effective and sustainable access to airports. The European Commission could use these results by developing a European policy on airport accessibility which promotes the establishment of national and European level Airport Transport Forums.

4.3 Practical guidance for the Directorate General for Energy and Transport

The Commission should identify a set of key policy areas (between five and ten) with related indicators where it will initiate benchmarking projects⁶¹. Starting from key policy objectives and indicators, a screening⁶² could be undertaken in order to select the more from the less promising options for benchmarking, consulting basically the following criteria:

- High policy relevance;
- Availability of indicators to measure performance;
- A learning potential due to variations in performance;
- A clear role for practices in good performance.

If a positive reply can be given to all steps, then the opportunities for added policy value of benchmarking might be good. If not, other opportunities than benchmarking may be pursued instead. It is recommended to start with policy objectives relating to sustainable transport identified in European policy documents with related indicators. The sources to identify high priority objectives and indicators would most likely include the following⁶³:

- The Transport White Paper (no indicators defined at this point);

⁶⁰ CEC 2001, European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to Decide, COM (2001) 370 final, Brussels 15.5.2001, pp.25ff and p.84.

⁶¹ 72% of participants in the Final BEST Conference (March 2003) that replied to the post-conference questionnaire, considered it a medium to high priority that the Commission coordinate working groups of national experts to benchmark specific transport policy areas.

⁶² See Figure 2 in the Annex.

⁶³ A number of specific proposals were also made by participants at the Final BEST conference and these should also be taken into account by the Commission. They include: environmental integration, quality of urban transport, customer satisfaction, public transport information, rail safety and security, maritime safety, marketing intermodality, transport charging, infrastructure investment, CO2 emissions, and road safety. More details are given in the questionnaire results, provided in Annex 4 of the Final Conference Report which will be available on www.besttransport.org, following approval by the Commission.

- The Sustainable Development Strategy⁶⁴ ('Structural Indicators' for the Lisbon Process)⁶⁵;
- The Council Strategy on the integration of environment and sustainable development into the transport policy⁶⁶ (the 'Transport and Environmental Reporting Mechanism'/TERM⁶⁷).

The selection of policy areas for benchmarking should be carried out in consultation with Member States and Accession Countries, as well as relevant organisations such as the European Conference of Ministers of Transport. Benchmarking groups could be set up for each policy area identified. Representatives of the Ministries of Transport in all Member States and Accession Countries would be invited to participate in the benchmarking groups, which would be coordinated by the European Commission. Participation would be on a voluntary basis, although participants would have to meet set criteria for participation (availability of adequate resources, commitment to attend meetings and share data etc.). Where appropriate, representatives of other sectors – e.g. environment – and countries – e.g. USA, Canada, and Japan⁶⁸ - would be invited to participate. The benchmarking exercise would enable the identification of best performers in the selected policy areas and would directly support the implementation of sustainable transport policy at European and national levels. The Commission could also encourage national representatives to establish parallel benchmarking groups on the selected policy areas at regional level in order to improve transparency, coordination and communication between EU, national and regional policy makers. These recommendations have proposed (Box 1) some examples of high priority objectives for improving transport policy performance.

⁶⁴ CEC 2001. A Sustainable Europe for a Better World: A European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development (Commission's proposal to the Gothenburg European Council). Communication from the Commission. COM(2001)264 final Brussels, 15.5.2001.

⁶⁵ EUROSTAT Structural Indicators. URL: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/structuralindicators>

⁶⁶ See the Presidency Conclusions. Cardiff European Council 15 and 16 June 1998. Press:0 Nr: 00150/98 URL: <http://europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/index.htm>, and the Council (Transport) 1999: Transport and Environment, Council Strategy on the Integration of environment and sustainable development into the transport policy submitted by the Transport Council to the European Council of Helsinki. Council of the European Union, Brussels (11/10/1999) Nr: 11717/99.

⁶⁷ Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism: EEA 2000. Are we moving in the right direction? Indicators on transport and environment integration in the EU. TERM 2000. Environmental issues series No 12. European Environment Agency, Copenhagen.

⁶⁸ For example, important EU policy areas in which non-EU countries have been particularly successful and which could be selected for benchmarking include freight transport by rail in the USA, and quality of service of public transport in Japan.

Box 1: Examples of key sustainable transport policy related issues and indicators

Decoupling of transport growth from economic growth

- Volume of freight transport relative to GDP
- Volume of passenger transport relative to GDP

Change modal split of freight and passenger transport (return to 1998 levels by 2010)

- Modal split of freight transport – percentage share of road
- Modal split of passenger transport – percentage share of cars

Traffic fatalities (Halving number between 2000 and 2010)

- Road fatalities per million persons

Improving Urban Air Quality

- Population exposure to air pollution by ozone (Urban air quality)
- Population exposure to air pollution by particulate matter (PM10)

Contribution to Kyoto target

- Transport emissions of greenhouse gases by mode

Reduction of Vehicle Pollution

- Transport emissions of air pollutants

Reducing noise from road, railways and aviation

- (no clear indicator)

Example: Using the screening procedure for modal split policy

If the Commission decided to select modal split as a policy priority for benchmarking, this is how the screening procedure would work on a step-by-step basis:

(i) Major policy problem?

To change the modal split of both freight and passenger transport from still increasing shares of road (and air) transport is a key European policy concern⁶⁹. The overall European aim is that the share of road transport in 2010 is not greater than in 1998.

(ii) Indicators available?

Relatively comparable European data on modal shares of transport exist, and the modal split has even been included among the structural indicators monitored in the Lisbon Process⁷⁰. The data may not be perfect, but there is a good basis to build on.

(iii) Variations in performance?

⁶⁹ This is reflected in a) European transport policies, b) Sustainable Development policies as well as in c) Policies for Environmental Integration. a) see: EC 2001. European transport policy for 2010: time to decide. White Paper. COM(2001) 370. Commission of the European Communities. Brussels, 12/09/2001 (p 11). b) see: CEC 2001 A Sustainable Europe for a Better World: A European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development (Commission's proposal to the Gothenburg European Council). Communication from the Commission. COM(2001)264 final Brussels, 15/5/2001 (p 12). c) see: Transport Council Strategy on the integration of environment and sustainable development into the transport policy. (Council (Transport) 11717/99).

⁷⁰ CEC 2003. Choosing to grow: Knowledge, innovation and jobs in a cohesive society. Report to the Spring European Council, 21 March 2003 on the Lisbon strategy of economic, social and environmental renewal. European Commission, Brussels COM(2003).

The structural indicators and other sources reveal that there is a considerable variation in the modal composition of the freight transport flows in the Member States, whereas the modal split is more even for passenger transport. This suggests a focus on freight⁷¹.

(iv) Variations due to practices?

It is then necessary to identify which policy related practices would be most relevant to consider further in a benchmarking context. Overall indicators do not reveal this. To identify the role of practices (and thus the potential for benchmarking) a further exploration is needed.

(v) Exploring benchmarking options

It is necessary to consider the more specific policies that are in place to support the overall policy objective. One could focus e.g. on policy to promote intermodal freight transport, such as the Marco Polo programme⁷². Marco Polo actions will involve parties from at least two different States working closely together to attain the objectives of the action. So called 'Common Learning Actions' are proposed for the following fields, among others:

- Procedures and methods in sea and inland ports to better integrate short-sea shipping and inland waterway into the transport chain;
- Co-operation models between railways and inland waterway, which make use of the competitive advantage of both modes;
- New co-operation and capacity management models in rail transport;
- Procedures and methods in the rail, short sea and inland waterway transport systems to meet today's logistics requirements;
- Pricing, procedures and methods in the terminal pre- and end-haul;
- European training centres for rail, inland waterway and freight forwarding professionals, and train drivers and inland waterway boat masters.

For most of the above fields benchmarking could be one way to establish a Common Learning Action. The Commission could encourage potential applicants to the Marco Polo programme to consider benchmarking as a tool for the Common Learning Actions, and the Commission could monitor and incorporate the results of Common Learning Actions in its further development of the policies to achieve the modal split objective. In order to serve the purpose as benchmarking for policy, such projects would have to consider both the mutual learning effects and the potential results to support the overall policy objective (effects on modal split), as well as possible external effects related to other EU transport policy objectives (e.g. safety, cohesion, efficiency, environmental, impact etc.).

5 BENCHMARKING OF POLICY

5.1 Analysis

⁷¹ There is considerable variation when comparing the passenger modal split of Europe with the USA and Japan, respectively. Also, comparing at city level would reveal much greater variation within Europe.

⁷² The Commission proposal for a Council and Parliament Regulation for the Marco Polo programme was adopted on 4 February 2002 (Brussels, 04.02.2002 COM(2002)54 final). It is envisaged that the Marco Polo programme should be fully operational by 2003. The Marco Polo programme aims to help the transport and logistics industry to achieve sustained modal shifts of road freight to short-sea shipping, rail and inland waterway. Website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/themes/land/english/lt_28_en.html#polo.

The possibility of the benchmarking of policy has also been examined in the course of the BEST project⁷³. Benchmarking of policy implies the application of benchmarking methodologies to compare the performance of different policies adopted by different administrations. There are, however, considerable difficulties with this notion; the essentially managerial methodologies of benchmarking do not necessarily transpose easily into the higher levels of complexity and contestability in the policy realm. There is a well-established discipline of policy evaluation within which the expertise to deal with these issues has developed, and it would probably be more productive to re-frame any questions about policy benchmarking in terms of the comparative evaluation of particular policies or policy instruments.

5.2 Examples of the practical application of benchmarking of policy

- The BOB road safety pilot

In the BOB road safety pilot, an attempt was made to benchmark national road safety policies. First the policies per country were classified into four clusters according to the categories retrospective (“learning from the past”) and prospective (“avoiding the occurrence of future dangerous situations”). Next, this classification was assessed in relation to the number of casualties per billion vehicle kilometre per country. The result was the identification of a link between road safety policy and the number of traffic casualties. A closer study of this link suggests a direct relation between the number of casualties and national safety policy: the higher the number of casualties per billion vehicle kilometres, the more retrospective the (national) road safety policy. This may mean that, to further increase road safety, a differentiated road safety policy for the EU should be adopted.

- Benchmarking transport-related CO₂ policies

A study has recently been made comparing various transport-related CO₂ policy instruments and the extent to which benchmarking is a useful tool to help improve CO₂ reduction policies in EU Member States⁷⁴. The preconditions for benchmarking should be relatively favourable in this area since CO₂ reduction in the transport sector is a policy objective of the EU and most Member States in order to fulfil the Kyoto Protocol targets. Moreover data on CO₂ emissions are relatively good compared with many other environmental and sustainable transport problems. Nevertheless it has proved difficult to do policy benchmarking. In order to enable CO₂ policy benchmarking in the future, the study recommends development of common policy evaluation methods, more detailed assessment of structural differences, and measures to ensure more effective (policy specific) and committed project teams.

- International comparisons in policy making

Work carried out on the use of international comparisons in policy making by the Centre for Management and Policy Studies (CMPS) and presented at BEST Conference 5⁷⁵, provides a basis for addressing the problems of transferring policy lessons between administrations. The CMPS has developed a Toolkit which provides a framework for detailed comparisons between countries, taking into account different aspects of policy making (actors, policy arena, institutions, interests, constraints etc) as well as contextual factors (economic, cultural, environmental etc.).

⁷³ BEST Conference 5 (June 2002) addressed the possibility of the benchmarking of policy. The conference report and recommendations can be accessed on the BEST website on the ‘Conferences’ page.

⁷⁴ R. Harmsen et al 2003. International CO₂ Policy Benchmark for the Road Transport Sector. Results of a pilot study ECN-C-03-001. Energy Research Centre of the Netherlands (ECN), Petten, NL. The project was also presented by Joost Vermeulen, Transport Research Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Transport, at BEST Conference 5 (June 10-11, 2002) and the Final BEST Conference (March 12-13, 2003).

⁷⁵ Paper presented by Andrew Wyatt at BEST Conference 5, Brussels, June 10-11, 2002.

5.3 Practical guidance for the Directorate General for Energy and Transport

Full scale benchmarking of transport policies should not be a priority and actions in this area of application should be undertaken in the context of research and development. Building on the lessons learnt from completed projects on benchmarking of policy, the Commission should undertake research to identify areas where the best opportunities and conditions for the benchmarking of policy appear to exist in terms of agreed objectives, definitions, indicators, existing policy analysis, and reliable models.

6 BENCHMARKING OF POLICY MAKING

6.1 Analysis

There is one further way in which benchmarking is relevant to transport policy makers. Instead of the benchmarking of policies as such, it would be valuable to benchmark the processes of policy making in different administrations. Such an exercise would focus not directly on the comparative effectiveness of the policies adopted in different administrations, but on the quality of the processes in place to support decision making and implement decisions taken. Its value would lie in the identification and dissemination of best practice in relation to such elements of good policy making as the use of evidence, objective setting, option appraisal techniques, consultation and evaluation. (The potential benefits of such process benchmarking are of course by no means limited to the transport sector.)

6.2 Examples of the practical application of benchmarking of policy making

- The US Framework for Transportation Policy

The analysis presented at BEST Conference 5⁷⁶ of the role of benchmarking in the US Department of Transportation's framework for national transportation policy provides a useful exemplar for the European Commission's potential role. The US approach similarly discriminates, as advocated in this report, between the benchmarking of the outputs and outcomes of policy and the benchmarking of policy processes. The Federal Administration concentrates on benchmarking the planning process, which is defined at national level; best practices are documented for dissemination, and reviews increase their visibility. Implementation of policy, on the other hand – the delivery of outputs and outcomes – is left to individual states and metropolitan area authorities. This approach has enabled the focus to be shifted towards measurable and enforceable standards, holistic intermodal thinking, long-term strategies, and funding based on achievements. An emphasis on the benchmarking of the performance of transport planning has enabled a delicate balance between national and local goals to be respected, and active cooperation to be secured.

- National Cycle Policy Benchmark Programme

The National Cycle Policy Benchmark Programme (NATCYP) was funded by the European Commission and participating Member States, and was carried out over a ten-month period in 2001⁷⁷. The objectives of the benchmarking exercise were to satisfy the need for good quality data on cycling policies, and to promote and improve national cycling policies. Representatives from Ministries of Transport in five countries took part in the exercise. One of the topics selected for benchmarking was the process of making national cycling policies, addressing such aspects as the actors involved, consultation processes, monitoring and financing. Participants shared information and learnt from each other about how cycling policies were developed in their respective countries. The project resulted in improved insight into the potential and significance of

⁷⁶ Paper presented by Bill Lyons, US Department of Transportation, at BEST Conference 5, Brussels, June 10-11, 2002.

⁷⁷ NATCYP was presented by Oliver Hatch, NATCYP Programme Director, Vélo-Mondial, at BEST Conference 5, June 10- 11 2002.

cycling, and provided a valuable framework for national cycling policy development. There are currently plans to undertake a second stage of NATCYP.

6.3 Practical guidance for the Directorate General for Energy and Transport

The European Commission should take the lead in promoting a benchmarking study of policy making in the transport sector. The study could usefully involve Ministries of Transport in Member States and Accession Countries, regional and municipal authorities, the European Commission itself as a policy formulating body, and governments in other non-European countries. BEST and BOB have demonstrated both the value and the feasibility of inviting the participation of transport operators and authorities in non-European countries such as Japan, the USA and Canada in order to broaden the perspective of benchmarking exercises, and enhance the lessons they can provide. It would be necessary at the outset to establish agreement between participants on a description of the key steps in the process to be benchmarked, but there is a well-established scholarly literature on which this could be based⁷⁸.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EU RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

In addition to the actions recommended in the preceding sections of this report, the following recommendations are made for EU research activities in order to support the realisation of the full potential of benchmarking as a tool to assist the implementation of European sustainable transport policies.

7.1 Research to support environmental integration

Research is needed to improve environmental performance assessment methods for transport systems, and to identify the best way to measure, monitor and compare the way environmental concerns are integrated in transport policies of Member States and Accession Countries.

Monitoring and improving sector integration is one key element in the Cardiff⁷⁹ process and the Sustainable Development Strategy. This research should build on steps taken in the TERM⁸⁰ initiative. Research studies could include benchmarking of national performance in terms of adopted policies to reduce emissions and noise and the promotion of environmentally friendly technologies and management practices.

7.2 Research to improve the understanding of the institutional and psychological conditions for successful benchmarking

In particular, the research should investigate the conditions for trust in an increasingly competitive and deregulated environment, and the possible mechanisms to reduce the perceived risks and threats of participating in common learning and/or benchmarking projects. This research could draw on experiences from previous benchmarking studies, as well as develop benchmarking

⁷⁸ The policy cycle concept is often used to describe a progression of stages in policy making from problem identification and agenda setting, through target setting, analysis of measures and choice of instruments, to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. For original definitions see e.g. May, Judith V. & Wildavsky, Aaron B., eds. (1978), *The Policy Cycle* (Sage: London) or Hogwood, Brian W. & Gunn, Lewis A. (1984), *Policy Analysis For The Real World* (Oxford University Press: Oxford). For a recent application to transport and environment see e.g.: Scheppelmann, Philipp (2000), *From Helsinki to Gothenburg: Evaluation of environmental integration in the European Union* (Sustainable Europe Research Institute: Vienna, 2000), URL: www.seri.at

⁷⁹

⁸⁰ Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism (see footnote 28).

pilots, for example one specific area of research could establish what kinds of incentives would help to reduce the risks of participation in benchmarking.

7.3 Research to identify the role and effectiveness of particular practices and policies in the fulfilment of overall structural transport policy objectives

Priority areas for such research would be identifying successful policies for decoupling transport and economic growth, and achieving modal shift to environmentally-friendly modes of transport. The research should also investigate methodologies for evaluating the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of different policy measures, as well as barriers to policy implementation.

8 FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR THE PROMOTION OF TRANSPORT BENCHMARKING IN EUROPE

8.1 Supporting benchmarking initiatives

The Commission should help and guide organisations, institutions, and stakeholders throughout the European transport sector in their efforts to set up collaborative benchmarking efforts, both specific projects and more permanent frameworks. The practical tasks of the Commission would be to:

- Disseminate information about the methodology, benefits and limitations of benchmarking, and practical experiences of benchmarking projects. The Commission could promote its own guidelines on the basis of the work done in BEST and BOB (for example, the BEST recommendations and the BOB Benchmarking Guide), as well as creating links with services provided by other organisations⁸¹.
- Provide assistance (e.g. a help-desk) and guidelines to assess the applicability and feasibility of benchmarking for particular ideas, projects or practices⁸²;
- Provide institutional support and/or funding⁸³ for networks or projects. The Commission should develop a checklist of criteria for quality and policy relevance in order to ensure that any projects to which it provides funding at national and regional levels, secure the basic conditions for successful benchmarking, for example: clarity of objectives, commitment, reliability of information, mutual confidence, and continuity. The projects must also be relevant to European policy objectives in terms of integration of performance criteria that are both useful to participants and also take into account the social, environmental and economic or external effects of the particular practices. In particular, the Commission should make sure that the environmental dimension is integrated and made explicit in future EU sponsored transport benchmarking projects.

8.2 Establishing a European forum for transport benchmarking

The Commission should take steps to maintain the momentum created by the BEST and BOB projects. Building on the work of BEST and BOB, it should establish a single, European transport benchmarking forum to encourage and support the valuable networks of operators, policy makers and researchers which have been developed. The Commission should organise annual or biannual conferences for the dissemination of good benchmarking practices in the transport sector. It

⁸¹ For example, the Public Sector Benchmarking Service (PSBS). Website: www.benchmarking.gov.uk.

⁸² 63% of participants at the Final BEST Conference (March 2003) who completed the post-conference questionnaire, wanted practical support for benchmarking (guidelines, help desk, resource centre etc.).

⁸³ 67% of participants at the Final BEST Conference (March 2003) who completed the post-conference questionnaire, wanted EU funding to support benchmarking projects.

should also provide support for the development and maintenance of the BEST website as a transport benchmarking database and a virtual forum for the exchange of information. Within the framework of a pan-European transport benchmarking forum, the Commission should organise specific events (workshops, benchmarking training sessions etc.) for Accession Countries. The themes of the workshops would be defined in consultation with Ministries of Transport in Accession Countries in order to help them to use benchmarking as a tool to measure their performance and identify priorities for improvement in relation to EU integration. Good practices identified in Accession Countries should be disseminated via the forum to Member States.

8.3 Harmonising transport indicators and data

One of the preconditions for benchmarking is the availability of good quality and comparable indicators. As a complementary task to its dedicated benchmarking activities, the Commission should work with other organisations (European Conference of Ministers of Transport, International Association of Public Transport etc.) to encourage the harmonisation of transport data and indicators in Europe⁸⁴.

⁸⁴ 80% of participants at the final BEST conference (March 2003) who completed the post-conference questionnaire, wanted to see the development of European harmonised datasets for the transport sector to support their benchmarking activities. The European Commission is currently supporting the development of a European Transport Policy Information System (ETIS) for policy-makers and policy analysts. Website: www.etis-link.info.

ANNEX

Figure 1: The different roles of benchmarking in relation to policy

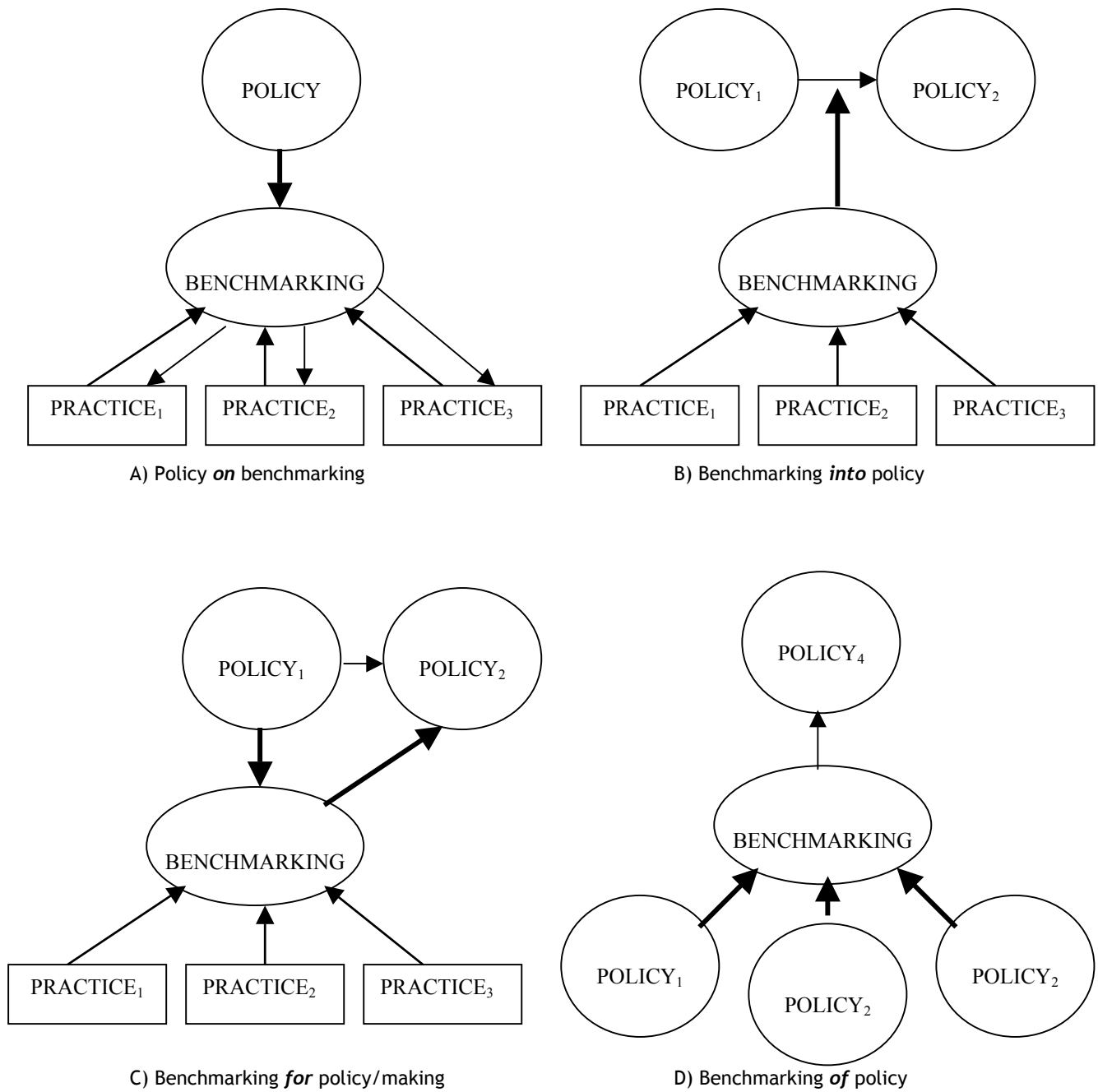
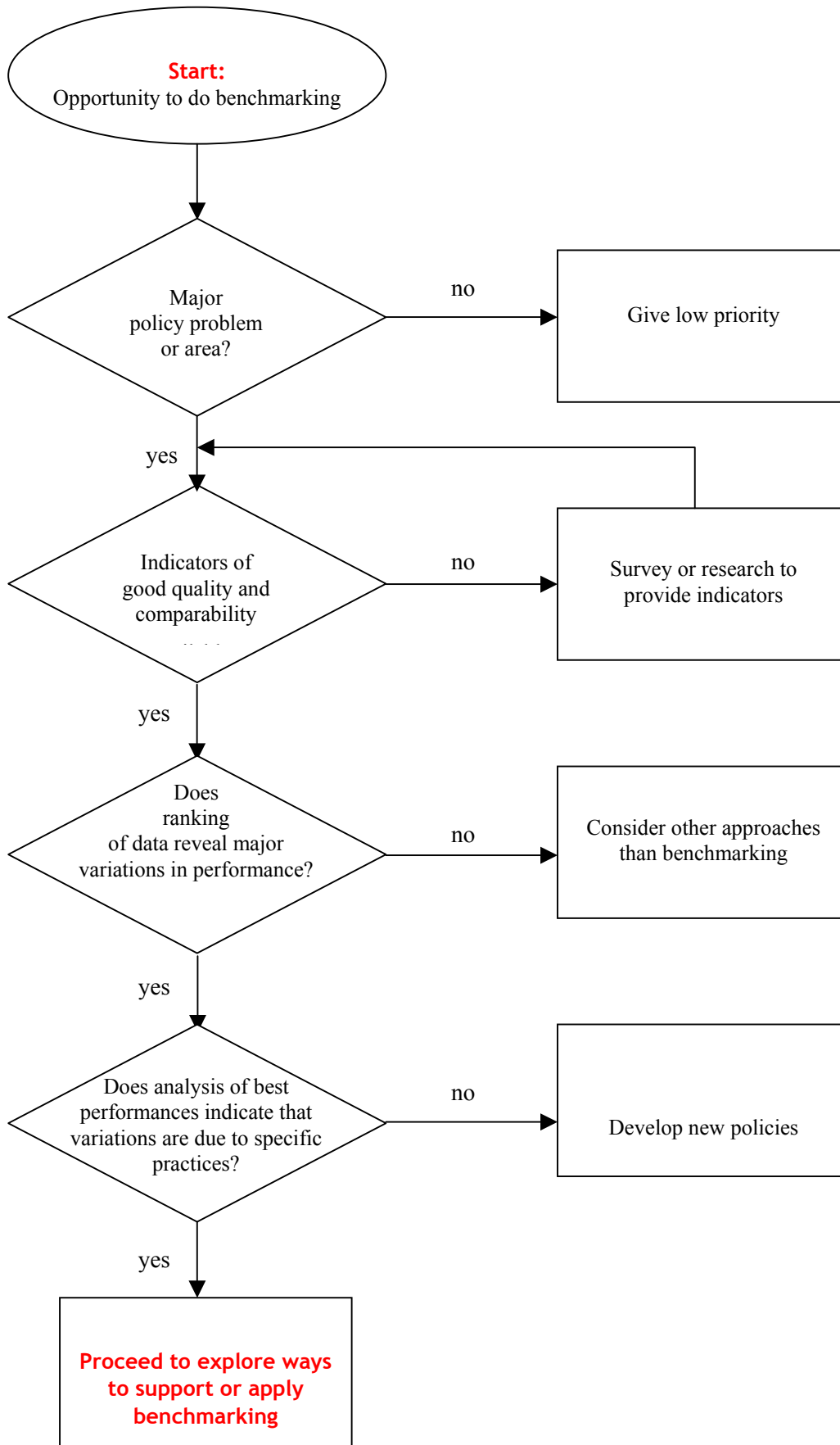


Figure 2: Screening chart to select topics for benchmarking



Vedlegg 7: Konferansepaper

BENCHMARKING TRANSPORT POLICY: THE USE OF BENCHMARKING IN EFFECTIVELY DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING TRANSPORT POLICY

Paper presented at the European Transport Conference 2002 in Cambridge, England

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1 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The potential of benchmarking as a tool to improve the quality, efficiency and sustainability of transport is considerable. Both public and private transport sectors can benefit from the systematic approach it provides to performance assessment and identification and adoption of best practice. Benchmarking is a tool that has been applied for process and performance assessment in a non-policy context. Benchmarking may also have an important role to play in defining and implementing transport policy, working towards achieving sustainable transport systems at local, regional, national and European levels.

Benchmarking is not only a tool to compare, for example, the number of buses that run on time in different cities. It also has the potential to be used to respond more effectively to passengers' needs by assessing and comparing their experiences of the transport services where they live. The opening up of the transport market to competition will increase the need of all actors, public and private, to evaluate and improve their performance in relation to the economic, social and environmental impact of transport on the citizens' of Europe.

The main objective of this paper is to present the innovative concept of benchmarking in the field of transport policy. Policy makers need to be able to set clear objectives, monitor the achievement of these objectives, and identify necessary measures for change to ensure that the objectives respond to current needs and trends. In this context, benchmarking is potentially a very useful tool for policy makers.

The paper is based on the authors' experiences gained through participation in the BEST project - Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport – a thematic network sponsored by the European Commission under its Fifth Framework Programme for Research, Technological development and Demonstration. The paper refers to concrete examples of policy benchmarking and draws conclusions on:

- The role and value of benchmarking European transport policy
- The methodology to be applied
- Managing the exercise and the stakeholders involved

2 BENCHMARKING EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

2.1 The European Commission and Benchmarking

In October 1996, the European Commission, Directorate-General for Enterprise, published a Communication (COM (96) 463)) in which it identified weaknesses in the performance of the European economy. In order to assist the implementation of the necessary measures to strengthen European competitiveness, the European Commission proposed the use of benchmarking to compare performance in key areas and factors that determine economic success. The Commission was then invited by the European Council of Ministers to present proposals on developing the use of benchmarking as a tool to improve the competitiveness of European industry.

In its subsequent Communication (COM (97) 153), the Commission identified three levels of benchmarking: enterprise level, sectoral level, and framework conditions. The Communication referred to Commission-sponsored and nationally funded benchmarking initiatives that have been set up at each level. The Communication also proposed the establishment of a community framework to support pilot benchmarking projects in a limited number of Member States in areas of common interest to the European Community. A number of eligible themes were identified:

- New information and communication technologies
- Financing of innovation
- Environment
- Logistics and transport

In 1998, the then Directorate-General for Transport (now Directorate-General for Energy and Transport) launched a benchmarking pilot project in the framework of the European Commission's Green Paper, 'The Citizens' Network – Fulfilling the potential of public passenger transport in Europe' (1996b). Facilitating the exchange of good practice and information was identified in the Green Paper as an important way in which the European Union could contribute added value to the improvement of local and regional transport for Europe's citizens. The success of the pilot project led to the launch of the Citizens' Network Benchmarking Initiative, which involved forty-five European cities and regions in a one-year (2001-2002) benchmarking exercise.

The Commission, Directorate-General for Energy and Transport, later (November 1999) presented a Draft Communication on transport benchmarking at a conference, jointly organised by the Commission and the European Conference of Ministers of Transport. The objective of the Communication is 'to identify areas and examples for benchmarking and benchmarks and to initiate follow-up by other actors at policy (EU, national, regional, local) and market (transport service providers, operators, customers) levels for a better exploitation of benchmarking as a tool for improving transport'.

The Communication identifies four horizontal areas for transport benchmarking: the European transport system, transport infrastructure, the environmental impact of transport, and intermodality. The Communication indicates that the application of benchmarking to transport policy will serve to identify 'potentials and possibilities for improving existing framework conditions for transport in order to increase the efficiency and sustainability of the transport system'. In the context of promoting sustainable mobility, it states that 'particular attention should be paid to the competitiveness of environmentally friendly modes and their integration with other modes. Benchmarking can support companies and policy makers in finding strategies to increase the position of these modes in the transport market'.

Other areas in which the European Commission has undertaken benchmarking work include the development of the European Employment Strategy (DG Employment and Social Affairs), national research policies (DG Research) and the liberalisation of the electricity and gas markets (DG Energy and Transport).

2.2 The BEST Process

In response to the developments in benchmarking in Europe, the Commission launched (May 2000) the thematic network BEST – Benchmarking European Sustainable Transport. The BEST network is an innovative project which for the first time promotes a comprehensive approach to the application of benchmarking in all sectors of transport. The main objective of BEST is to bring together European transport policy makers and service providers working in the transport sector to learn, through the exchange of knowledge and experience, about benchmarking and to assess its application as a practical tool to improve the performance and sustainability of European transport.

The network is based on a series of six conferences over three years. Each conference addresses a different theme relating to transport benchmarking:

1. The state of the art of benchmarking in all sectors (October 2000)
2. The state of the art of benchmarking in the transport sector (January 2001)
3. Indicators and benchmarking in the transport sector (June 2001)
4. Putting benchmarking methodology into practice (October 2001)
5. Benchmarking transport policy (June 2002)
6. The final conference – consolidation of results (January 2003)

The objectives of the conferences are to address, in a coherent and progressive way, the principles of benchmarking in the transport sector and to encourage participants to engage in the issues through interactive discussion and networking with the aim of building consensus, at a European level, on the key requirements for successful benchmarking and the benefits of applying benchmarking in the transport sector. On the basis of the conference presentations and discussions, the network produces specific recommendations on the development of benchmarking as a practical tool to assist the European Commission, Member States and Accession Countries in effectively implementing sustainable and competitive transport policies in Europe (Gordon 2001).

The first two conferences provided an introduction to benchmarking and its application in the transport sector. A very broad range of projects was presented from non-transport and transport sectors to illustrate the principles of benchmarking, the key success factors and main challenges for implementation, and the positive results of its application.

The third conference focused more specifically on the role of indicators in the benchmarking process, including the definition and use of indicators in the transport sector. The fourth conference aimed to increase understanding of benchmarking by examining in more detail the different steps of the benchmarking methodology and its practical application in the transport sector; The fifth conference consolidated and developed the most important lessons learnt during the previous conferences and addressed the application of benchmarking in the field of transport policy. A final conference will present the principal findings of the whole project.

2.3 BOB

The findings of BEST are also intended to feed directly into another 'sister' transport research project, *Benchmarking of Benchmarking* (BOB), which runs in parallel to BEST. Three benchmarking pilot projects are being carried out in the framework of BOB. The aim of the pilots is to act as a 'laboratory' to test in practice the recommendations produced by BEST, to assess the benefits of benchmarking in the transport sector, and to evaluate its contribution to achieving and informing transport policy objectives. The topics addressed by the pilots were selected by the European Commission on the basis of some of the key challenges currently facing European transport policy makers:

- Rail passenger transport, in particular the contractual relationships between authorities and operators

- Professional Road Safety, focusing on strategies to improve safety for professional drivers
- Airport accessibility, which addresses sustainable surface access to airports

Transport authorities (Ministries of Transport and regional transport authorities) and operators are participating in the pilots which will be completed by the end of 2002.

3 BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking has long been recognised as a useful management tool. Xerox was the first major company to develop the use of benchmarking in 1979 and by 1992, 65 percent of Fortune 1000 companies were using some form of benchmarking (Bartol and Martin 1994). A year later, MIT's Commission on Industrial Productivity found that almost all successful US companies were benchmarking (Karlöf and Östblom 1993). By 1994, this was also true of 78 percent of The Times Top 1000 companies in the UK (Barnes 1999).

The term benchmarking is, however, often incorrectly used. Benchmarking is not simply a process of data collection and analysis, used to rank different levels of performance (for example of different organisations, companies or countries etc.), nor is it a process of sharing ideas and practices with others working in the same field. Indeed, data collection, comparison and sharing information are all elements of the benchmarking process. However, a rigorous benchmarking process is a much more comprehensive process which is motivated by a desire to improve and which leads to the implementation of changes: "Benchmarking is the art of finding out (...) how others do something better than you – so that you can imitate – and perhaps improve – upon their techniques" (Main 1992). It is "the search for industry best practice that will lead to superior performance" (Camp 1989). Benchmarking is best described as a *learning process*. It is a rigorous and systematic process of assessment, comparison and implementation leading to improvement.

3.1 Benchmarking Methodology

Numerous benchmarking methodologies have been developed, catering for the specific context in which the exercise is carried out (see e.g. Camp 1998, ECMT 2000). There are, however, a number of basic principles that underlie any benchmarking process. These can be described in the following 5-step approach (Fearnley 2002):

1. *Know yourself*. The first step is a thorough self-analysis. In order to improve your performance you need to know where you stand: What are we doing that is of prime importance to us? How do we do it? What are our strengths? - and so on. Any attempt to carry out a benchmarking exercise without first having the answers to such questions will result in failure. In this phase you identify the subject to be benchmarked, and identify partners. Further, the 'topic' has to be, and seen by the organisation to be, in an area that is important to the achievement of key goals.

2. *Compare indicators*. The second step is to compare indicators, either with other organisations or internally in your own organisation. You do this in order to identify gaps between your organisation and others, and to establish a benchmark, that is, an indication of a standard of excellence in your field. A challenge in this phase is to obtain and gather data, which describes the gap in performance between you and the others in a consistent, neutral and reliable way, and which can point to possible reasons for the performance gap.

3. *Analyse differences*. When a benchmark is established, the third step is to identify reasons for this performance gap, and analyse the underlying best practice, i.e. how they have reached the superior performance level. This could be organisational structure, practical solutions etc.

4. *Action*. Having analysed the best practice of others, the fourth step is to develop action plans, and implement them. The goal is to match or exceed the benchmark level of performance identified in the previous steps, i.e. to adopt best practice in your own organisation.

5. *Monitor*. Progress has to be monitored and your performance relative to best practice must be updated. Otherwise you may be moving in the wrong direction. This fifth phase implies that benchmarking is a continuous process.

The benchmarking process provides a rigorous, step-by-step approach to bring about improvement. Any 'shortcuts' taken invariably lead to guesswork and assumption replacing facts. This leads to recommendations for change being riddled with holes.

The commitment of all participants in a benchmarking exercise is essential as benchmarking is not an easy or quick process that brings immediate results. Participants must have full understanding of the requirements of the process and a willingness to improve in order to enable the process to work successfully.

The fourth step – implementing changes – emphasises the importance of the active support of the organisation. Real, active support from management with sufficient seniority to authorise, implement and finance the recommended changes is a prerequisite for successful benchmarking. Without that, the process is likely to fail (Leonard 2001).

Benchmarking is a *process*. It is the means by which we attempt to locate a level of performance in a certain area that is superior to ours, then to change the way we do certain activities in order to improve our performance.

A benchmark is a standard of excellence or achievement against which other similar things must be measured or judged. Something that is worthy of emulation.

Best practice is the means by which the benchmark level of performance is achieved.

To benchmark is to undertake a benchmarking exercise

Fact-box 1: Benchmarking terminology. Adapted from Leonard (2000, p. 2)

3.2 Key Success Factors for Benchmarking

The BEST conferences have identified a number of key factors for successful benchmarking. Some may seem obvious, but experience shows that numerous benchmarking processes have failed to observe even the most basic requirements. This section therefore recapitulates some of the most crucial success factors (BEST 2000, 2001, 2002).

Top-level support is important. Transport operators and authorities need the commitment of managers and policy makers in order to undertake and follow through a benchmarking exercise.

It is necessary to follow a planned benchmarking methodology in which the stages of the process are clearly defined and understood by all.

Before undertaking a benchmarking exercise, it is necessary to define a specific area (and level) in the transport sector to which the exercise will be applied.

The integration of the benchmarking process into the overall strategic plan of an organisation is very important. The area being benchmarked must be relevant to the

strategic objectives of an organisation in order to enable it to assess its position in relation to its own goals and its competitors.

The objectives and outputs of the benchmarking process must be clearly defined from the outset. The exercise should focus on producing practical output and implementation of the results.

The aim of benchmarking is to bring about real improvement. It is necessary to assess the influence of external factors on the results of the benchmarking process in order to identify where it is practical and realistic to implement measures for improvement.

A 'trusted third party' or 'facilitator' to manage the benchmarking process has proved useful both in open and closed (confidential) benchmarking exercises. The facilitator helps to ensure co-operation between participants and the systematic implementation of the different steps of the process. Practical support (as well as political/management support) for those involved in the benchmarking process is essential to its success.

The choice of data to be collected should be determined by high priority factors in order to ensure that the process is manageable and realistic.

3.3 Benefits of Benchmarking

BEST has identified wide-reaching benefits from benchmarking for transport authorities and operators.

One example of the benefits of benchmarking is illustrated by the benchmarking exercise undertaken by the Australian Bus Sector, which was presented at a BEST conference in 2001 (Wallis 2001). Public bus operators initiated the exercise in 1992 in response to the negative trend of increasing subsidy levels and increasing costs. The results of a decade of benchmarking have led to considerable efficiency gains and successful reforms in the industry. Among the more concrete improvements were improved driver shift conditions, satellite depots, and new maintenance practices. Operators consider benchmarking as an important planning tool, and say benchmarking has been a major factor in achieving a 20 percent efficiency gain in the sector over the ten-year period. Authorities, on the other hand, say that benchmarking has supported them in negotiations over subsidy levels, in the assessment of tender bids, and in the design of their price regulation.

Another frequently cited benefit of benchmarking is the opportunity that it offers for networking. Benchmarking enables participants to build partnerships which often result in productive working relationships in the future at international, national, regional or local levels depending on the scope of the benchmarking exercise. In between structured working meetings there are opportunities for the informal exchange of experiences, ideas and problems.

Benchmarking also offers a valuable opportunity to gain insights into the practices of others. A benchmarking exercise involves going to see good practice in action on site visits to best performers. An operator or authority in, for example, an Asian country may have found a solution to a specific problem in a European country. Solutions may even be found in other sectors, not just in the transport sector. Benchmarking acts as a reality-check, and provides an accurate and objective understanding of an organisation's performance in relation to others. At the same time it encourages open-mindedness to new ideas and ways of doing things.

Many transport systems do not face competition. In such contexts benchmarking can act as a stimulus to drive improvement by providing a framework for establishing priorities and implementing actions. In this way benchmarking creates a sense of 'ownership' of performance and can be regarded as a substitute for competition.

On the other hand, in competitive markets, transport operators – whether public or private companies – can benefit from benchmarking to help them adapt to the cultural and regulatory changes in the transport sector. In addition, the public transport sector is becoming more international, which means that operators may have responsibility for networks in several countries. Internal benchmarking can help individual operators to monitor and improve the performance of their different networks.

Benchmarking also enable organisations to promote or 'market' their successes. Policy makers can use such information to gain wider political support for proposed measures or strategies (Howatt 2001), and operators can attract more customers by publicising the quality of their services. If your organisation is "best in Europe" this has a marketing value in itself.

3.4 Limitations of Benchmarking

Benchmarking is not a panacea that can solve every problem in an organisation, region or country, and it is therefore important to have a sound understanding of the limitations of benchmarking. One of the main weaknesses of the benchmarking methodology is the fact that it does not explicitly take into account the different framework conditions of the individual participants. For example, differences in unit costs may result from a difference in cost efficiency but also from differences in external conditions, including economic, political, topographical, legal, and cultural factors.

Lack of knowledge about benchmarking and its incorrect application result in, at best, a worthless exercise and, at worst, a serious waste of resources. A benchmarking exercise may provide participants with spurious results if the process is not carried out with care. An organisation may be judged 'efficient' according to comparisons of performance indicators in a benchmarking process, whilst in fact it may be found to be operating inefficiently when correcting for external conditions, different definitions of indicators etc. Such specious conclusions lead to the implementation of unnecessary or harmful actions.

The range and quantity of benchmarking literature available indicates that benchmarking is not as easy and straightforward as it may seem from the outset. Each individual success factor may seem obvious enough, but omitting any can mean the difference between the success and failure of the exercise. Benchmarking is particularly challenging when the benchmarking team consists of representatives from different sectors or countries, who are likely to have different objectives and expectations of the exercise, different corporate cultures, different data, and probably work under different framework conditions. In this case, it is very important that there is an experienced benchmarking facilitator to guide the process.

Despite the limitations inherent in the benchmarking method, it has been seen that failure to success in most cases is not due to deficiencies in the benchmarking methodology per se. Often it is caused by lack of knowledge and proper training of the participants. For example, there is ample evidence of benchmarking exercises that end when performance indicators have been compared and participants ranked. In fact this is only the first step of a benchmarking exercise, and should not be confused with real benchmarking, which is, above all, a learning process.

4. POLICY BENCHMARKING

4.1 Examples of Policy Benchmarking

This section summarises a number of policy benchmarking initiatives (both transport and non-transport) presented at BEST conferences, with the aim of highlighting some of the key choices made in setting up the exercise and the lessons that were learned.

National Cycling Policy Benchmarking (NATCYP)

The main objectives for starting the NATCYP program (Hatch 2002) were to satisfy the need for good quality data on national cycling policies and to promote and improve cycling policies worldwide. The first stage of the NATCYP program involved the Czech Republic, Scotland, the United Kingdom, Finland and the Netherlands. The program started in early 2001 and was carried out over a ten-month period. Vélo Mondial, the program director, is now preparing the second stage of NATCYP. The program targeted the national policy level in order to act at a strategic level and maximize the impact of the project on other levels of government.

The main steps of the NATCYP methodology:

- Organising an initial meeting with representatives of the countries involved and experts to debate issues in cycling policy generation, review and delivery.
- The (bottom-up) selection of a number of topics to be benchmarked following brainstorming session:
 - Targets and performance (targets such as promotion, theft, intermodality, parking)
 - Process of policy making (who is involved, consultation process, monitoring and finance)
 - Tools and measures (technical guidelines, pilot projects, research efforts)
 - Barriers and support
- The definition of indicators (both quantitative and qualitative) for these topics
- Setting up an active process of exchange of data and experiences during working meetings. A site visit was also part of this exchange process.
- Disseminating the results to raise common understanding of cycling policies both within and outside the cycling planning world.

The first stage of NATCYP resulted in a better understanding of benchmarking among the participants, supported personal and professional development, and provided much improved insight into the potential and significance of cycling. It provided cycling policy reviews and development, addressing areas such as the promotion of cycling, promotion of public/private partnerships, improvement of road infrastructure guidelines and the development of a framework for national cycling policy development. NATCYP raised the status and visibility of cycling policy at national and international level and helped participants in their own organisations. It is intended that the second stage of the program will develop the benchmarking process by providing a deeper understanding of *how* and *why* successful results have been achieved by the participating countries.

Benchmarking Integrated Transport Policies

The UK government's Department for Transport set up a Commission for Integrated Transport (CfIT) in 1998 with a remit to provide independent advice, monitor policy developments and review progress. Due to the widespread perception that in the area of integrated transport the UK was lagging behind some of its neighbouring countries, the CfIT commissioned the consultants WS Atkins to carry out a benchmarking study on *European Best Practice in the Delivery of Integrated Transport*, (Dunning et al 2002). The objective of the study was to produce pan-European rankings of transport outcomes, conduct case studies in areas where others were superior, identify best practice and assess its transferability to the UK.

The approach taken was to compare countries in a number of areas such as mobility, modal choice, congestion, social inclusion and local determinants. For each area a number of indicators were drawn up. The data used was taken from several sources, e.g. Eurostat, Citizen's Network Benchmarking Initiative and national ministries.

The benchmarking exercise proved to be an effective method for identifying case study areas and learning useful lessons for UK policy. However, the media mainly focused on

the poor rankings of the UK and it is not possible to predict the extent to which the government will implement the recommendations made in the study.

International Comparisons in Policy Making

The Centre for Management and Policy Studies (CMPS), UK, has developed a methodology to support the policy making process, to enable policy makers to learn and apply experiences from abroad and to facilitate access to information about international policy making experiences. This approach is intended to improve the effectiveness and quality of public policy development and delivery in the UK. As part of its work, the CMPS produced a Toolkit to provide practical advice and a methodological framework for policy makers wishing to carry out international policy comparisons.

In order to avoid controversy about the term 'benchmarking', the CMPS decided not to use the word, but instead simply referred to 'policy comparison'. However, its approach is clearly based on the benchmarking methodology. The CMPS' systematic approach for policy comparison is based on the following five steps:

- Scan widely for innovative developments
- Select a few promising comparators for closer examination
- Understand how the comparator works in practice by reducing the policy to a simple model of key elements
- Assess the comparator's relevance to different policy environment; in policy benchmarking, it is of extreme importance to take into account differences in context
- Recommend on the basis of the evidence (learning not copying): modify or reject if necessary. What should be prevented is 'policy tourism' – it is opportunistic, politically driven and not effective

The Toolkit provides a valuable framework for the comparison or benchmarking of policies.

Benchmarking National Research Policies

An important factor in increasing the impact of European research efforts is strengthening the coherence of research activities and policies in Europe (European Commission 2001a). In the framework of the creation of a European Research Area, the Council (June 2000) called upon the Commission to set up a methodology and indicators for benchmarking national research policies in Europe. In this context, the Directorate-General for Research initiated a benchmarking exercise that was aimed at increasing the coherence of the national research policies of the EU Member States. The benchmarking exercise, which started in October 2000, focused on the following five themes:

- Human resources in RTD, including attractiveness of science and technology professions
- Public and private investment in RTD
- Scientific and technological productivity
- Impact of RTD on economic competitiveness and employment
- Promotion of RTD culture and public understanding of science

The Commission established a "High Level Group", composed of representatives from research ministries in Member States, to collect data and assist in carrying out the analysis. The initial task was to propose relevant indicators and to elaborate the methodology for the five themes selected. This resulted in the definition of appropriate indicators for all five areas of research for which data was collected. The indicators were compared and extensively assessed. On the basis of the assessments, recommendations were made. The benchmarking process is still ongoing.

Some valuable lessons were learned from the first stage of benchmarking:

- The topics and indicators chosen were too broad, more specific targeting is required.
- The expansion of the benchmarking exercise to include up to 32 EU-countries will only be successful if all participants are prepared to cooperate fully – not only in collecting the data but also in its evaluation. The High Level Group that was involved in the study did not overcome the problem of data collection and lack of participation – DG Research is now exploring the possibilities to hire outside contractors or contact national ministries directly. Also the policy users should be involved in the process – in this case research institutes, science, industry, etc.
- The analysis of data in itself was good, but there was not a lot of comparison and learning. As a result, the practicability of the resulting recommendations remains to be seen.

4.2 Preliminary Conclusions

On the basis of these examples of policy benchmarking and other presentations at BEST conferences, a number of preliminary conclusions can be drawn in the following areas:

- The role and value of benchmarking in European transport policy
- The methodology to be applied
- Managing the exercise and the stakeholders involved.

Role and Value of Benchmarking in European Transport Policy

Policy-makers need and seek tools to help them formulate, implement and evaluate policies. From the above (and other) examples, it is clear that benchmarking is one of the tools that can play a valuable role in providing this support. The previous paragraph discussed the application of benchmarking in the initiation (NATCYP), evaluation (CfIT), comparison (CPMS) and coherence (RTD policy benchmarking) of policies in various sectors at different levels. The results show that the added value of benchmarking in policy areas, if properly applied, is as significant as in non-policy areas where benchmarking has already proven its full potential. However, it is necessary to have a better understanding of the possible approaches that can be used so that the approach chosen best meets the objectives of the exercise. In this respect, alternatives or complements to benchmarking should also be further investigated. It is also essential when policy benchmarking to define clearly the specific aspect of policy to be benchmarked. As has been seen, the term 'policy' covers many different activities (development, implementation, evaluation) and as with any benchmarking exercise, a specific topic for benchmarking must be identified.

It is important for Europe to play a role in the development of policy benchmarking because comparison and exchange of good practice at a European (and international) level is very useful especially in the increasingly global context of policy development. Benchmarking could for example be applied to monitor the implementation of the action programme of the European Commission's White Paper on European transport policy (European Commission 2001b) and to help Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) to formulate and implement new transport policies, replacing the historic fragmentation of transport systems with one, harmonized, efficient, sustainable transport system. At a lower level also (e.g. regional level), there is potential for policy benchmarking.

Many transport policy measures have long-term effects. The impact and benefits of policy improvements brought about by benchmarking may therefore be visible only in the longer term. It should not be expected that benchmarking will replace other policy and planning instruments currently in place, including transport planning, transport forecasting and "classical" policy making studies.

The Methodology To Be Applied

The basic principles of benchmarking are the same when applied in any topic or sector, and there is no obvious reason why transport policy requires a different methodological approach. However, transport is a complex sector, especially in the context of sustainable transport which requires several different factors to be taken into account (environmental, social and economic). This complexity may require a less quantitative approach which involves a qualitative assessment of policy and performance in addition to quantitative measures.

Comparing policies (i.e. the policy measures proposed) is not in itself a valuable process. One should either benchmark the impact of certain policy elements or instruments (relating these to objectives and outcomes) or the process that leads to certain results in the area to which the policy applies. This can be done by making high-level objectives (e.g. air quality) operational by breaking them down into more concrete goals (e.g. CO₂-reduction, vehicle exhaust improvement, etc.) that can form a basis for comparison.

Some degree of similarity in *objectives* of the policies investigated reduces the complexity of the exercise and increases the value of its results. For example, CEEC share many transport policy challenges with EU countries. However, CEEC policy objectives and circumstances, and therefore policy priorities, differ. This is of crucial importance when identifying 'best in class' policies. In the case of the NATCYP study, the overall objective of the exercise and of the participants involved was to promote cycling – differences in (the ranking of) objectives did not play a prominent role here. On the other hand, the European best practice study was related to the very broad theme of integrated transport that was treated in different ways in different countries. The exercise was tailored primarily to the objectives of the UK and other countries were not directly involved in carrying out the exercise.

Even when objectives of participating countries or regions are similar, the complexity of external conditions makes it difficult to foresee the impact of policy measures in another context. In the NATCYP study, differences in, for example, climate had an impact on the possibilities and conditions for cycling. The direct involvement of participants from all countries involved enabled these factors to be better understood and properly taken into account.

Policy can be benchmarked at different levels (international, national, regional, local). It is important to choose the appropriate level and scope of the benchmarking exercise in relation to the objectives to be achieved. A broad scope at high (e.g. national) level may be less likely to result in concrete results given the complexity and unclear influence of external conditions.

Managing the Exercise and the Stakeholders Involved

The motive for policy benchmarking is clear: to understand inputs and outcomes of policy and reasons behind results. However, there may be conflicts between civil servants and experts, on the one hand, and politicians on the other, given their differing objectives. This raises the question whether we are talking about "benchmarking policy" or "benchmarking for politicians". Political support for benchmarking can be gained either close to an election as a promise of future action or between elections when politicians have time to demonstrate the benefits to voters. However, benchmarking requires long-term vision and commitment which, given political pressures, can be difficult to find at the political level. Therefore, the most appropriate role for policy benchmarking may be at the level of public administrations or authorities, at some distance from politicians.

A related issue is the communication of the results of the benchmarking exercise. Examples have been seen where the media focus primarily on the statistics and rankings resulting from the exercise rather than on the useful lessons learned from the exercise (e.g. Dunning et al. 2002). The results (especially rankings) can also be used for purely political motives. A strategy to deal with these kinds of issues must be defined from the outset of the exercise.

Benchmarking could be seen as a rather complex tool to apply to policy. Starting with over-ambitious expectations easily results in disappointment, loss of interest from those involved and a waste of resources. It is often better to start simply with limited objectives and gradually develop the process to include other areas and issues. Some of the examples presented, such as NATCYP and the national research policies benchmarking exercise, have now completed their first stage and, taking into account the lessons learned, are now preparing for a second stage of benchmarking.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Benchmarking has been successfully applied as a management tool for decades. During that period, understanding of benchmarking in terms of the approach to be taken, its benefits and its limitations has matured.

Policy is a relatively new area for the application of benchmarking. Experience shows that the basic approach to benchmarking does not differ when applied in a policy context. The starting point should be a thorough understanding of one's own situation and a strong motivation to improve through learning from others. In no case should benchmarking be considered a stand-alone device that will deliver instant results by itself. It should be embedded in a framework that is aimed at working towards pre-defined goals by a process of continuous improvement that is supported by all stakeholders.

The complexity of transport policy underlines the need for a well-structured and clearly outlined approach that focuses on specific policy instruments, outcomes and processes that can be compared. The results of the exercise should be carefully examined in the context of the, often significant, differences in external conditions between countries and regions.

There are many opportunities for the application of benchmarking in the context of European transport policy. These can be found in the initiation of new policy, policy evaluation, policy implementation and policy evaluation. The European Commission, and other European organisations, can play an important part in facilitating the sharing of best practices among Member States and Accession Countries where appropriate and beneficial. Benchmarking is not the only tool available to achieve this. There is a need for a better understanding of the merits of policy benchmarking in combination with, or instead of, other policy making and policy evaluation tools.

The establishment of a broad inventory and assessment of policy benchmarking initiatives undertaken so far could be a first step to promote the transmission and comprehension of experiences in the application of benchmarking in a policy context throughout the EU and Accession Countries. This should clarify issues such as the appropriate level of benchmarking in relation to context and objectives, and the role and participation of politicians, policy makers, citizens and experts in the exercise.

Benchmarking is, however, only some way to being an "exact" science. It is a process of "learning by doing" for which the definitive textbook will never be written. Initiatives such as the BEST thematic network have not only facilitated the interactive sharing of transport policy benchmarking experience among policy makers, benchmarking experts and the transport industry. They have also stimulated participants to form new networks, gain mutual trust and co-operate in the future to work out solutions to the challenges facing the European transport system.

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More information about the projects BEST and BOB and their deliverables can be found at the project website www.besttransport.org .

Vedlegg 8: Ressurser på internett

BEST og BOB	http://www.besttransport.org/
Citizens' Network Benchmarking Initiative .	http://www.eltis.org/benchmarking
Public Sector Benchmarking Service	http://www.benchmarking.gov.uk/
Benchmarking in Europe	http://www.benchmarking-in-europe.com/
Benchmarking Exchange	http://www.benchnet.com/
Global Benchmarking Network.....	http://www.globalbenchmarking.org/
Le Benchmarking Club de Paris.....	http://www.bench-club-paris.asso.fr/
The Benchmarking Resource Guide.....	http://www.benchmarkingnetwork.com/