

IELTS reading passage - European Transport System

European Transport System

- A. It is hard to imagine serious economic development without an efficient transportation system. Although current information technologies can lower the need for physical transportation by facilitating teleworking and teleservices, the demand for transportation continues to grow. There are two main factors behind this trend. With regard to passenger transport, the decisive factor is the incredible growth in car benefit. The number of cars on EU roads increased by three million cars each year from 1990 to 2010, and over the next decade, the EU will see further significant growth in its car.
- B. As far as freight is concerned, development is largely due to changes in the European economy and its mode of production. Over the past 20 years, the EU has shifted from a "stock" economy to a "flow" economy as internal borders have been abolished. This event is highlighted by migrating some industries, especially labor-intensive ones, to lower production expenses, even if the production site is hundreds or thousands of kilometers away from the final assembly plant or away from users.
- C. Strong economic growth anticipated in countries that are candidates for entry into the EU will raise traffic flow, especially road traffic. In 1998, some of these countries already shipped twice as much as 1990 volumes and imported five times more than 1990 volumes. Although many candidate countries have inherited a rail-promoting mode of transport, the distribution between modes in favor of road transport has fallen sharply since the 1990s. Between 1990 and 1998, road traffic expanded by 19.4%, while rail traffic fell by 43.5%, although this would help the expanded EU, which is on average higher than existing member states.
- D. However, a new forced-sustainable growth offers the chance to change the EU's general transport policy. This goal, agreed by the Gothenburg European Council, must be attained by combining environmental considerations into social policies and shifting the balance between transportation systems at the center of its strategy. The ambitious goal can only be fully accomplished by 2020, although the proposed measures are the first important step toward a sustainable transport system, which will take effect in 30 years, by 2040.
- E. In 1998, energy consumption in the transportation sector accounted for 28% of CO₂ emissions, the top greenhouse gas emissions. According to the latest estimates, CO₂ emissions from transport are hoped to grow by 50% to 1,113 billion tonnes by 2020, compared to the 739 billion tonnes recorded in 1990, if

nothing is done to reverse the development trend. Again, road traffic is the major culprit because it accounts for only 84% of the CO2 emissions that cause traffic. The use of alternative fuels and improving energy efficiency is an ecological need and a technical challenge.

- F. Meantime, more efforts must be made to complete a paradigm shift. With roads continuing to spoil for more than half a century, such a transformation cannot be accomplished overnight. It has reached a pitch where today freight services face a margin of just 8% of the market share and international freight trains are battling at an average speed of 18km / h. Three potential choices have emerged.
- G. The first method will concentrate on road traffic only via pricing. This choice is not compatible with other modes of transportation. In the short period, the growth of road traffic can be controlled by the optimal loading rate of lorries and occupation rates of passenger vehicles as an outcome of the growth in transportation costs. Yet, in the absence of measures to revive other modes of transport, more sustainable modes of transport are unlikely to take up the baton.
- H. The second method focuses on road transport pricing but with measures to improve the effectiveness of other methods. Nevertheless, this technique does not involve investments in new infrastructure or ensure better regional integration. This will help attain greater segregation than the first method but will continue to focus on saturated arteries, despite having the lion's share of the road transport market and most polluting systems. It is therefore not sufficient to ensure the required change in the balance.
- I. The third method, which is not new, involves a series of steps ranging from pricing to refreshing alternative ways of transportation and targeting investment in the Trans-European network. This integrated method will permit the market share of other systems to return to their 1998 levels, thus changing the equilibrium. Given the historical inequality in favor of roads over the past fifty years, it is far more ambitious than it looks to see a significant gap in the link between road traffic growth and economic growth, without restrictions on the movement of people and goods.

European transport system reading questions

Questions (1 - 5)

This reading passage has nine paragraphs, A–I.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

*Write the correct letter, **A-I**, as your answer to each question.*

Note: You may use any letter more than once.

1. The decisive factor is the incredible growth in-car benefit.
2. Many candidate countries have inherited a rail-promoting mode of transport.
3. Development is largely due to changes in the European economy and its mode of production.
4. Some of these countries already shipped twice as much as 1990 volumes and imported five times more than 1990 volumes.
5. The number of cars on EU roads increased by three million cars each year.

Questions (6 - 9)

Look at the following questions (6 - 9) and match each statement with the correct option given.

*Write the correct letter **A-C** with the answer on your answer sheet.*

Note: You may use any option more than once.

A. 1990

B. 1998

C. 2020

6. Some of these countries already shipped twice as much as 1990 volumes and imported five times more than 1990 volumes.
7. The ambitious goal can only be fully accomplished.
8. The distribution between modes in favor of road transport has fallen sharply.
9. Energy consumption in the transportation sector accounted for 28% of CO₂ emissions, the top greenhouse gas emissions.

Questions (10 - 13)

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the Reading Passage?

Write

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

10. CO2 emissions from transport are hoped to grow by 50% to 1,113 billion tonnes by 2020 based on the latest estimates.

11. Road traffic is the major culprit because it accounts for only 84% of the CO2 emissions that cause traffic.

12. The second method focuses on road transport pricing but with measures to lower the effectiveness of other methods.

13. Cars are more pricey in some EU candidate countries.