

Encouraging investment in transport infrastructure

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Warsaw, Poland on 1 to 3 December 2016:

Notes that:

- the importance and multiplier effects of investments in transport infrastructure for Europe's economy has generally been underestimated;
- many dedicated transport infrastructures need public grants as they do not attract private investment;
- an efficient Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) is the backbone of the European internal market and a prerequisite for the Treaty objective of territorial cohesion in the EU;
- there is a high potential to increase economic activity and citizen mobility by completing small-scale cross-border transport infrastructure which can significantly increase opportunities for businesses and citizens in border cities and regions.

Considers that:

- the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) has been created in 2014 to support at EU level investment in TEN-T infrastructure, in particular the core network;
- transport volumes are expected to increase in the coming decades and transport infrastructures need to adapt;
- all transport modes must become more environmentally friendly which also involves new and modernised infrastructure like refuelling points for alternative fuels;
- digitalisation is the future in all transport modes which requires smart transport infrastructures;
- investment in transport infrastructure can help address regional social and economic disparities within national and European regions.

Welcomes that:

- thanks to the creation of the CEF more European funds are available for transport infrastructure as ever before;
- a major part of CEF has already been allocated to mature projects in the Member States;

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- CEF co-funding rates are particularly higher for cross-border bottlenecks which are often neglected by the neighbouring Member States;
- CEF funds are mainly allocated to environmentally-friendly transport modes like rail and inland waterways;
- several large cross-border infrastructure projects - among others the Brenner Base Tunnel, the Fehmarnbelt Fixed Link, Lyon-Turin high-speed Railway, Rail Baltica and Seine-Escaut - and have received substantial European co-funding.

Calls for:

- a continuation and increase of the CEF during the financial period 2021-2027;
- a better coordination of available European, national and regional public funds and private capital, in order to blend in the most optimal way investment in transport infrastructure during the financial period 2021-2027;
- special attention to be given to the investment in completion of small-scale cross-border transport links, which have a high European added value;
- an emphasis to be placed on low and zero emissions transport technologies in order to meet EU environmental and health commitments;
- a continued effort of Member States to invest in transport infrastructure;
- an increased attention and available budget for transport investments, which are less bankable, but comply with the sustainability goals;
- an increased effort to improve environmentally friendly transportation modes, e.g. rail- and inland waterway infrastructure which still offer unused capacity.

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