



# Strengthening the comprehensive transport network is crucial: Sufficient EU funding needed in the MFF 2021 – 2027

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The Members of the CPMR North Sea Commission support the European Commission's mission to create efficient and sustainable transport infrastructure necessary to facilitate the further development of the EU Single Market and the reduction of greenhouse emissions. We underline the importance of the TEN-T policy, addressing key issues to increase sustainability and cohesion in European infrastructure and transport, and CEF Transport as the facilitator of this network.

Strengthening and further developing the Comprehensive Network is crucial to decrease potential gaps in socio-economic development and increase cohesion and cross border cooperation between EU regions. Additionally, simultaneous rollout of projects on the Core Network as well as the Comprehensive Network will speed up the implementation of smart and green transport innovations.

EU funding for transport in the period 2014-2020 significantly prioritises projects on the Core Network over projects on the Comprehensive Network. We believe it is important that in the new EU Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2021-2027 sufficient budget will be made available to further upgrade the Comprehensive Network in order to facilitate the connections to and from the Core Network. Therefore, we advocate for an increase of funding for transport projects on the Comprehensive Network for the period of 2021-2027.

## Acknowledging that:

1. A well-developed Comprehensive Network is fundamental for a well-functioning Core Network.

The Core Network corridors are currently handling the bulk of transport of goods and persons throughout Europe. From these corridors the transport is further handled to the hinterland via the

Comprehensive Network. Insufficient efficiency levels of infrastructure of the Comprehensive Network, and thereby insufficient handling of goods, will lead to congestion and pollution of these thoroughfares which will certainly have its impact on the Core Network as well.

2. The Comprehensive Network offers the space for ‘living labs’ necessary for transport innovations.

The Comprehensive network offers ample opportunity for the piloting and implementation of sustainable and innovative transport solutions. These ‘living labs’ are crucial for enabling the development and scaling up of European innovations in the transport sector.

3. The Comprehensive Network contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Since transport is currently responsible for 23% of the EU’s greenhouse gas emissions it is essential that investments are made to promote low-emission mobility in order to be able to reduce transport emissions by 60% by 2050. The support for investments in smart and green innovative solutions and infrastructure for clean (alternative) fuels cannot be limited to regions that are part of the Core Network but should include the ones that are part of the Comprehensive Network as well.

4. The Comprehensive Network boosts socio-economic development all over Europe.

Supporting the numerous regional initiatives in the areas of the Comprehensive Network in the field of research, innovation and industry in the transport sector through CEF-T funding will result in a large contribution to the EU economic development and employment of the (border) regions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

The North Sea Commission calls on the European Commission, European Parliament and the Council to:

1. Increase the EU budget for transport funding for projects located on the comprehensive network in the new multi-annual financial framework of 2021 – 2027
2. Continue providing grants as tool for funding transport projects on the TEN-T and comprehensive networks
3. Invest in the scaling up of sustainable and digital transport innovations
4. Invest in cross boarder connections supporting regional development
5. Invest in the development of all types of alternative fuels for transport

### The CPMR North Sea Commission

The CPMR North Sea Commission represents 32 regional authorities in Denmark, England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Scotland and Sweden. We have been working since 1989 to create partnerships between our members and to promote the interests of the North Sea Region in Europe, specifically in the fields of marine resources, accessibility and sustainable transport, energy and climate change and prosperous and sustainable communities.

We are part of the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions, a leading regional interest organisation and think tank with 160 member regions across Europe.