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FEEDBACK PAPER

Proposal for a regulation establishing the Connecting Europe Facility for the period 2028-2034

The European Office of the Metropolitan Region FrankfurtRheinMain welcomes the proposal of the European Commission to continue the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for the transport and energy sector as a programme directly managed by the EU Commission and the Executive Agency for Climate, Infrastructure and Environment in the period 2028-2034.

The trans-European transport network (TEN-T) is essential for a functioning European internal market and an important lever for improving the mobility of people and goods in the European Union. The European TEN-T regulation identifies nine trans-European transport corridors and 431 urban nodes. Three transport corridors and six urban nodes are located in the Metropolitan Region FrankfurtRheinMain. The CEF has so far proven its value in initiating project ideas and consortia and in ensuring quality, transparency and efficiency in the TEN-T roll-out. The CEF programme framework is giving a European dimension to individual projects. **Therefore, we welcome the continuation of the CEF programme in the transport sector.**

However, we regret the fact that urban nodes are not mentioned in the European Commission's proposal. By the end of 2027, each urban node should have a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and collect data on urban mobility and submit it to the European Commission. In order to improve connectivity and overcome the challenges of the first and last mile, the development of multimodal transport hubs should be completed by the end of 2030. Similarly, since 2023, the EU regulation on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure (AFIR) obliges EU member states to expand the number of e-charging points and hydrogen refuelling stations for cars and trucks along the TEN-T network and in urban nodes by 2030. In addition to passenger mobility, efforts are also being made to improve freight transport. By the end of 2040, every urban node should have access to at least one multimodal freight terminal, subject to a prior socio-economic cost-benefit analysis.

The new CEF programme should provide funding to support projects aimed at enhancing urban mobility within urban nodes. This should include the implementation of projects on urban transport infrastructure and urban mobility solutions – including important cycling and pedestrian routes to link up with the main traffic routes in the functional urban area (FUA). **It is important that the new CEF programme not only covers the financing of cross-border projects, but also takes into account transit regions without European internal borders that have significant traffic flows, such as those with major airports or important rail connections.**

In addition, urban nodes should have direct access to CEF funding for TEN-T projects in order to be able to streamline processes and implement local projects efficiently. Moreover, not only public bodies should be eligible for funding, but also municipal companies that actually carry out the infrastructure investments, such as public transport operators.