

Press Release: 7 September 2017

The Future of the Connecting Europe Facility post 2020

On the 5 September, **ERRIN**, the European Regions Research and Innovation Network, and **Polis**, the European network of Cities and Regions on urban transport innovation, welcomed **Karima Delli, Chairwoman of the TRAN Committee of the European Parliament**, to discuss the future of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

Despite the fact that the European Commission announced its proposals on the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for the summer of 2018, to take into account the Brexit negotiations, the preparation of the next programming period already starts today.

Both networks recognise the importance of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) as the only European funding programme that offers the opportunity to finance the deployment of sustainable transport projects. Therefore, we strongly believe that the European Commission should ensure the continuity of the CEF post the 2020 period, while also securing the level of its funding in the next MFF.

During the meeting with MEP Delli, four concrete transport cases, all with European added value and funding from CEF, illustrated that the urban nodes priority within **the programme has provided important funding in terms of sustainable and innovative mobility, and has helped solve some of the 'last mile' issues, thus increasing the overall TEN-T network efficiency**. The cases highlighted the role of regions and local authorities as key players in the implementation of CEF projects.

We therefore emphasise:

- A decrease of the EU Budget, due to BREXIT, should not push the European Commission to envisage a drastic reduction in CEF subsidies.
- Due to the lack of return on investment, loans and financial instruments, as in EFSI2.0, will not be the solution to finance transport projects.
- A balance between subsidies and loans/financial instruments should be offered by the CEF and combining different funding sources could be a solution.

Next steps:

The Council of Transport Ministers will be held during the "Connecting Europe conference" organised by Commissioner Bulc and the Estonian Presidency on 21 and 22 September 2017 in Tallinn, and will discuss the first guidelines for the EU transport budget after 2020.

At this meeting, Karima Delli, on behalf of the European Parliament, will support the renewal of the CEF beyond 2020, knowing this programme has already proven to be effective.

The CEF is essential to support the decarbonisation of the transport sector and to help reach the ambitious goals launched by the White Paper: reduce Europe's dependence on imported oil and cut carbon emissions in transport with 60% by 2050. To this end, Karima Delli asked Polis and ERRIN members to mobilise their respective regions, cities and governments for the meeting of the Council of Transport Ministers in Tallinn.

She also stressed the need to respond to the Reflection Paper on "The Future of EU Finances" launched at the end of June 2017. Prepared jointly by the Commissioners for Budget and Regional Policy, this document aims to identify the priority areas of the European Union and the resources with which they can be financed.

Reminder:

European transport policy is mainly achieved through support for the creation of a trans-European transport network (TEN-T), which aims to improve cross-border links, eliminate bottlenecks, but also to bridge the "missing links" of the European network and to improve interoperability within the Union. With an overall budget of €23.4 billion for the period 2014-2020, the CEF is financing the implementation of this network through major infrastructure projects. The current TEN-T guidelines recognise and formalise the role of urban nodes on the network as important hubs to facilitate the flow of people and goods.

In order to improve infrastructure, reduce the environmental impact of transport, improve energy efficiency and safety, the CEF also finances urban mobility projects within its priorities: urban nodes, innovation and new technologies and intelligent transport systems (ITS).

For more information, please contact the networks:

Polis, European network of Cities and Regions on urban transport innovation

Polis is the network of cities and regions working together to achieve more sustainable urban mobility. Currently, 69 cities and regions are members of the network and Rotterdam is the current Polis president. Polis has a permanent secretariat located in Brussels. www.polisnetwork.eu

Karen Vancluysen • Secretary General • POLIS • Tel: +32 (0)2 500 56 75 •

kvancluysen@polisnetwork.eu

ERRIN, European Regions Research and Innovation Network

ERRIN is a unique Brussels-based platform of more than 130 regional stakeholder organisations. The network supports regions in developing their regional innovation ecosystems and enhancing research and innovation capacity, to build a competitive Europe which supports smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in all regions. <http://www.errin.eu/>

Veronica Cornacchione • Communication Officer • ERRIN • Tel: +32 (0)2 503 35 54 •

communication@errin.eu