Resolution on the transport pillar of the Connecting Europe Facility after 2020

2018/2718(RSP) - 31/05/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Transport Pillar of the Connecting Europe Facility after 2020.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, and ALDE groups.

Parliament recalls that the CEF is aimed at accelerating **investment in transport infrastructure** and leveraging funding from both the public and the private sectors. It considered that the **CEF is one of the most successful EU programmes** as calls have largely been oversubscribed. By the end of 2017, CEF Transport had already allocated EUR 21.3 billion in grants for TEN-T projects, triggering EUR 41.6 billion of total investments. During 2018, additional grant agreements will be signed for a blending call combining CEF grants with private finance, including from the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

In this context, Parliament called on the Commission and Member States to remain committed to the **CEF' s main policy objectives in the transport sector:** by 2030 – completion of the TEN-T core network, including the deployment of Single European Sky ATM Research (SESAR), Motorways of the Sea (MoS) and the European Rail Traffic Management Systems (ERTMS), and the transition towards clean, and connected mobility, including an EU backbone of alternative-fuels charging infrastructure by 2025; and progress towards the completion of the TEN-T comprehensive network by 2050.

Members acknowledged that the full benefit and potential of EU investment in the TEN-T network could only be realised after the completion of the core and comprehensive networks. They asked the Commission to bear in mind that the **completion of these networks will require significant investments,** part of which will depend on continued EU support, or they risk coming to a standstill.

They noted that the Commission proposal to **allocate EUR 42 265 million to the CEF for the period 2021-2027**, but regretted that in constant prices the **allocation to CEF–Transport** amounts to EUR 11 384 million and the **contribution from the Cohesion Fund** amounts to EUR 10 000 million, which represent **cuts of 12 % and 13 % respectively**. Parliament **could not accept that funds allocated to the transport pillar are the only ones that have been decreased** (there have been increases for telecommunications and digital projects). The Commission was asked to reconsider the amount proposed. Members noted that an insufficient budget for transport would put the completion of the TEN-T network at risk and that this would in fact depreciate investments from public finances already made. They stressed, furthermore, that the amount earmarked under the direct management of the CEF framework from the Cohesion Fund in the next MFF 2021- 2027 must at least **remain at the same level as in the previous MFF** 2014-2020 and that this amount must be sufficient to complete, during the next MFF 2021-2027, those projects funded from the earmarked Cohesion Fund under the current CEF.

The resolution also made the following points:

- the Commission should further reinforce and ensure the **complementarity** between the CEF and other programmes such as Horizon Europe and the InvestEU Fund, in order to maintain and promote the clear objectives of the programme, avoid overlaps and optimise budgetary resources;

- the future sectoral policy guidelines and the CEF instrument should be made more **flexible** in order to facilitate **synergies** and to be more responsive to new technological developments and priorities such as digitalisation,
- the Commission should **repeat the blending call for proposals**, which Members judged successful, and continue using a stronger CEF in the form of grants, to be combined with EU and non-EU financial instruments, where possible;
- the Commission should devote particular attention to the **outermost regions** by extending the core network of ports to improve connectivity and these **regions should have up to 85 % of cofinancing in all transport modes** in order to improve their access to calls and to create regular maritime connections with mainland areas;

Lastly, Parliament considered that the Commission should use the CEF to support the development of **dual-use civilian-defence infrastructure** along the TEN-T network.