More EU budget for transport | Connect Europe's Future: Invest in Transport Today

Joint letter to EU Heads of Government on transport funding in the MFF 2028-34

To: Heads of State or Government of the EU Member States.

Cc: António Costa, President of the European Council; Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission.

Brussels, 14 October 2026

Subject: Europe's transport networks must not pay the price of the MFF deal

Dear Heads of State or Government,

Europe's transport sector urges the EU Member States to restore and strengthen EU investment in transport. The Irish Presidency's negotiating box cuts the overall budget by 8% compared with the Commission's proposal. Transport is hit harder: the transport envelope of the Connecting Europe Facility falls by 11%, from €45.8 billion to €40.6 billion (2025 prices).[1]

Political compromises must not come at the expense of transport investment.

Investing in transport means investing in the whole European economy and society. Some 1.4 million transport companies employ 10.4 million people and generate 4.8% of EU value added[2], and every other industry depends on their networks to reach its markets. Commission's studies show that completing the TEN-T core network would add 1.8% to EU GDP and create 10 million jobs by 2030.[3]

Efficient and resilient transport networks contribute directly to Europe's energy security, particularly in times of supply disruptions. At the same time, Europe's transport infrastructure, including railways, roads, ports, airports and inland waterways, is essential for military mobility, ensuring the rapid movement of troops, equipment and critical supplies across the continent.

Yet after this cut, the Connecting Europe Facility would devote just 2.5% of the EU budget to transport, and less than €4 billion a year (2025 prices) to civilian transport across 27 Member States. Every euro removed means missing links left unbuilt and the TEN-T deadlines of 2030 and 2040 missed. You endorsed the Draghi diagnosis; you cannot now defund the investment it calls for.

We therefore call on you to:

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[1] Council of the EU, Multiannual Financial Framework 2028–2034 – Negotiating Box, doc. 13922/26, 10 October 2026, Annex (commitments, 2025 prices): total MFF €1,763.1 bn (Commission proposal) vs €1,622.0 bn (negotiating box), –8%; CEF Transport incl. military mobility €45.8 bn vs €40.6 bn, –11%.

[2] European Commission, DG MOVE, New EU transport and tourism report highlights key trends and developments, 22 July 2026.

[3] European Commission, TEN-T Core Network Corridor studies, presented at TEN-T Days 2015, Riga.

1. **Restore the transport envelope of the Connecting Europe Facility at least to the level proposed by the Commission.**
2. **Ring-fence a minimum share for transport in the National and Regional Partnership Plans, so that TEN-T sections are not crowded out by short-term priorities.**
3. **Open the European Competitiveness Fund explicitly to transport, as a complement to dedicated infrastructure funding, never a substitute for it.**

The choices made in the coming weeks will shape Europe's networks until 2034 and beyond. Competitiveness, decarbonisation and defense will be built on infrastructure, or not at all. We count on your personal leadership.

Yours sincerely,

ACEA-European Automobile Manufacturers' Association; **ACI** – Airports Council International Europe; **AERRL** – Association of European Rail Rolling Stock Lessors; **ALE** – Federation of European Train Drivers' Unions; **ALICE** – Alliance for Logistics Innovation through Collaboration in Europe; **ASECAP** – Association of European Motorway Concessionaires and Toll Infrastructure Operators; **CANSO** – Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation; **CER** – Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies; **CLECAT** – European Association for Forwarding, Transport, Logistics and Customs Services; **EBU** – European Barge Union; **ECASBA** – European Community Association of Ship Brokers and Agents; **ECG** – Association of European Vehicle Logistics; **EFIP** – European Federation of Inland Ports; **EIM** – European Rail Infrastructure Managers; **EMTA** – European Metropolitan Transport Authorities; **EPA –** European Parking Association**; ERA -** European Regions Airline Association**; ERF** – European Union Road Federation; **ERFA** – European Rail Freight Association; **ESPO** – European Sea Ports Organisation; **ESPORG** – European Secure Parking Organisation; **ETA** – European Tugowners Association; **ETF** – European Transport Workers' Federation; **ETSC** – European Transport Safety Council; **EuDA** – European Dredging Association; **EUROPLATFORMS** – European Association of Logistics Platforms; **FEPORT** – Federation of Private Port Operators and Terminals; **INE** – Inland Navigation Europe; **IWTP** – European Inland Waterways Transport Platform; **IWI** – Inland Waterways International; **POLIS** – European Cities and Regions Networking for Innovative Transport Solutions; **Rhine-Alpine Corridor** – International Alliance for the Rhine-Alpine Corridor; **Scandria Alliance** – Scandria Alliance; **UIP** – International Union of Wagon Keepers; **UIRR** – International Union for Road-Rail Combined Transport; **UNIFE** – The European Rail Supply Industry Association; **UNISTOCK** – European association of portside storekeepers of agribulk commodities; **WATERBORNE** – Waterborne Technology Platform