

Saving on transport infrastructure is a false economy

In response to newly proposed cuts to the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) in the next long-term EU budget, the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) is renewing the transport sector's appeal to EU leaders to preserve this vital fund. In a joint open letter to EU Heads of State and Government, spearheaded by CER and the European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO), 39 European transport organisations strongly urge EU Member States to restore and strengthen EU investment in transport. Reducing funding for Europe's principal transport infrastructure instrument would undermine the European Union's competitiveness, resilience and cohesion at a time when transport has never been more central to all three.

Transport infrastructure is no longer simply a sectoral policy issue, it is a strategic asset. Modern, well-connected transport networks strengthen supply chains, support military mobility, reduce Europe's dependence on imported and polluting fossil fuels, and connect citizens and businesses across the single market. European Commission studies show that completing just the core section of the EU's envisioned Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) would increase EU GDP by 1.8% and create up to 10 million jobs by 2030.

Yet the current negotiating proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) would reduce the CEF transport envelope by 11%, from €45.8 billion to €40.6 billion in 2025 prices compared with the European Commission proposal. This would leave CEF transport with just 2.5% of the overall EU budget and less than €4 billion per year for civilian transport infrastructure across 27 Member States.

CER therefore urges EU leaders to restore the CEF transport envelope to at least the level proposed by the European Commission. It also calls for a dedicated minimum share for transport investment within the National and Regional Partnership Plans, while ensuring that the European Competitiveness Fund remains open to transport projects as a complement (not a substitute) to dedicated infrastructure funding.

CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola said: *"The Connecting Europe Facility is already heavily oversubscribed, while the investment needed to complete the Trans-European Transport Network still runs into the hundreds of billions of euros. Cutting transport funding now would be a false economy. In terms of gross value added to the economy, rail has a multiplying effect of 3.7 and a job multiplier factor of 3.6. When Europe invests in a railway, it is not simply building tracks; it is connecting regions, creating opportunities for businesses, improving access to services and strengthening resilience in times of crisis. Europe must match its ambitions with the investment needed to deliver them."*

The open letter builds on the initiative of a longstanding coalition of transport organisations advocating for a stronger EU transport budget and a future Connecting Europe Facility of at least €100 billion, highlighting transport investment as a prerequisite for Europe's economic, environmental and strategic objectives.

➤ **Read the full letter [here](#).**

Press release

Brussels, 14 October 2026



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About CER

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together around 70 railway undertakings, their national associations as well as infrastructure managers and vehicle leasing companies. The membership is made up of long-established bodies, new entrants and both private and public enterprises, representing 78% of the rail network length, 81% of the rail freight business and about 94% of rail passenger operations in EU, EFTA and EU accession countries. CER represents the interests of its members towards EU policymakers and transport stakeholders, advocating rail as the backbone of a competitive and sustainable transport system in Europe. For more information, visit www.cer.be or follow us on social media.