

Connecting Europe Facility: a budget in line with decarbonisation targets is urgently needed

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The Platform for Electro-mobility welcomes yesterday's vote on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), which supports investment in sustainable and strategic transport infrastructure. The European Parliament confirmed the agreement found with the Council on the objectives and rules governing that European Union (EU) programme for the 2021-2027 period.

Pauline Fournols, from the Union of the French Electricity Industry and Chair of the Infrastructure Working Group of the Platform for Electro-mobility said: *"Investing in zero-emission mobility is an imperative if we are to meet the climate targets that are set out in the Paris Agreement, especially in those areas where there is a funding gap."* This concerns for example zero-emission public transport, railway infrastructure, recharging stations in rural or low-income areas, such as those in Cohesion Fund countries, and projects aimed at decarbonising road freight, including electric roads.

In addition, the recently adopted EU legislation, such as the Clean Vehicle Directive, and the implementation of the Directive on Alternative Fuel Infrastructure, should increase the demand for zero-emission mobility solutions. It is therefore positive that, besides the completion of the trans-European network, the text agreed foresees a bigger role for the deployment of zero or very-low emission alternative fuels, by pre-allocating 40% of the transport envelope to the modernisation of the infrastructure.

The new programme also grants 10% in additional co-funding for so-called 'synergy projects', which would benefit projects like smart charging that connect grids with vehicles (and vice-versa), as they are common to the transport, energy and digital sectors.

However, the effective transition to a carbon-neutral transport system, which would benefit the EU industries that are active in the field of electro-mobility, will depend on the budget that will eventually be allocated to the CEF.

"We therefore support the MEPs call to increase the CEF transport envelope to €33.5 billion, including a €10 billion cohesion fund envelope, and we urge Member States not to use transport as a bargaining tool during the upcoming negotiations on the Multiannual Financial framework." said Ms Fournols.

Since its creation in 2014, the CEF has undoubtedly proved its added value, by focusing EU public support on clean modes of transport to connect citizens (including the deployment of new technologies), while giving priority to projects with a European dimension. Blending operations, which were successfully tested during the current period, were confirmed in the text agreed yesterday.

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