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EU transport networks

Commission proposals fall short of ensuring sustainable transport projects

The European Commission today presented proposals on the future direction of European TEN-T transport networks. The Greens are concerned that the proposals will not ensure that large-scale transport network projects are consistent with the EU's sustainability, climate change and environmental goals. Commenting on the proposals, Green transport spokesperson **Eva Lichtenberger** said:

"Today's proposals fall short of ensuring a sustainable direction for EU transport networks, whether as regards ensuring priority is given to sustainable transport modes or ensuring that projects are consistent with EU environmental and climate goals.

"Significantly extending rail transport will be crucial if the EU is to meet its climate and environmental goals and we welcome that it has been given a prominent place as part of the core network. However, the proposed corridors risk failing again due to the preoccupation with large, long-term prestige projects, and the never-ending planning and financing procedures these entail.

"The proposals fail to set clear eligibility criteria, combined with efficient enforcement mechanisms and sanctions, to ensure that transport projects are consistent with EU environment and climate goals.

Green transport co-spokesman **Michael Cramer** added:

"Efficiency should be the main criterion for selecting TEN-T projects, not size, but the lion's share of funds is allocated to four major infrastructure projects: the Brenner Base Tunnel, the Lyon-Turin tunnel, the Messina bridge and the fixed link over the Fehmarn Belt. These gigantic projects will not be finished within the next decade but the enormous funding requirements means they are blocking smaller, more important projects. On top of this, some member states will not be able to meet their national co-financing requirements in three of these projects.

"The list of more useful and urgently-needed alternatives is long but the Rail Baltica is a clear example. This would be the only environmentally-friendly connection between the Baltic States and the rest of the EU but it still lacks funding. This is the kind of transport network that provides EU added-value and should be given priority."

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Michael Cramer

Member

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