# Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions — Connecting Europe Facility

(2018/C 461/15)

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**Reference document:** Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014

COM(2018) 438 final

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1316/2013 with regard to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union

COM(2018) 568 final

## I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014

(COM(2018) 438 final) — Part 1

**Amendment 1**

Recital 15

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| In its Communication 'A stronger and renewed strategic partnership with the EU's outermost regions' ([1]), the Commission highlighted the outermost regions' specific transport needs ***and*** the necessity to provide Union funding to match these needs, including through the Programme. | In its Communication 'A stronger and renewed strategic partnership with the EU's outermost regions' ([1]), the Commission highlighted the outermost regions' specific transport***, energy and digital*** needs. ***It stresses, in relation to transport,*** the necessity to provide Union funding to match these needs, including through the Programme. |
| ([1]) COM(2017) 623 | ([1]) COM(2017) 623 |

***Reason***

In its Communication on the outermost regions (ORs) the Commission recognises the potential that these regions have in the energy and digital sectors, but they suffer from a number of constraints that require support if they are to be overcome.

**Amendment 2**

Recital 22

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| The Communication on 'Connectivity for a Competitive Digital Single Market — Towards a European Gigabit Society' ([1]) (the Gigabit Society Strategy) sets out strategic objectives for 2025, in view of optimising investment in digital connectivity infrastructure. Directive (EU) 2018/XXX (European Electronic Communications Code) aims, inter alia, at creating a regulatory environment which incentivises private investments in digital connectivity networks. It is nevertheless clear that network deployments will remain commercially non-viable in many areas throughout the Union, due to various factors such as remoteness and territorial or geographical specificities, low population density, various socioeconomic factors. The Programme should therefore be adjusted to contribute to the achievement of these strategic objectives set out in the Gigabit Society Strategy, complementing the support provided for the deployment of very high capacity networks by other programmes, in particular the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund and the InvestEU fund.<br><br>([1]) COM(2016) 587 | The Communication on 'Connectivity for a Competitive Digital Single Market — Towards a European Gigabit Society' ([1]) (the Gigabit Society Strategy) sets out strategic objectives for 2025, in view of optimising investment in digital connectivity infrastructure.<br><br>Directive (EU) 2018/XXX (European Electronic Communications Code) aims, inter alia, at creating a regulatory environment which incentivises private investments in digital connectivity networks. It is nevertheless clear that network deployments will remain commercially non-viable in many areas throughout the Union, due to various factors such as remoteness and territorial or geographical specificities, ***as is the case with the outermost regions,*** low population density, various socioeconomic factors. The Programme should therefore be adjusted to contribute to the achievement of these strategic objectives set out in the Gigabit Society Strategy, complementing the support provided for the deployment of very high capacity networks by other programmes, in particular the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund and the InvestEU fund.<br><br>([1]) COM(2016) 587 |

***Reason***

The outermost regions are a typical example of this situation. As recognised in Article 349 TFEU, they face a set of constraints (such as remoteness, insularity, small size, landscape and climate) which, due to their permanent and cumulative nature, hinder their development.

**Amendment 3**

Recital 28

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| The deployment of backbone electronic communications networks, including with submarine cables connecting European territories to third countries on other continents or connecting European islands or ***overseas territories*** to the mainland, is needed in order to provide necessary redundancy for such vital infrastructure, and to increase the capacity and resilience of the Union's digital networks. However, such projects are often commercially non-viable without public support. | The deployment of backbone electronic communications networks, including with submarine cables connecting European territories to third countries on other continents or connecting European islands or ***the outermost regions*** to the mainland, is needed in order to provide necessary redundancy for such vital infrastructure, and to increase the capacity and resilience of the Union's digital networks. However, such projects are often commercially non-viable without public support. |

***Reason***

The specific context of the outermost regions (ORs), isolated from the European continent but close to other continents, makes this problem even more acute.

**Amendment 4**

Article 2(h)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| (h) 'cross-border project in the field of renewable energy' means a project selected or eligible to be selected under a cooperation agreement or any other kind of arrangements between Member States or ***arrangements*** between Member States and third countries as defined in Articles 6, 7, 9 or 11 of Directive 2009/82/EC in the planning or deployment of renewable energy, in accordance with the criteria set out in Part IV of the Annex to this Regulation; | (h) 'cross-border project in the field of renewable energy' means a project selected or eligible to be selected under ***an EGTC,*** a cooperation agreement or any other kind of arrangements between Member States***, between local and regional authorities*** or between Member States and third countries as defined in Articles 6, 7, 9 or 11 of Directive 2009/82/EC in the planning or deployment of renewable energy, in accordance with the criteria set out in Part IV of the Annex to this Regulation; |

***Reason***

The use of EGTCs is to be encouraged in the development of cross-border projects. Furthermore, some projects are financed exclusively by local and regional authorities, which means that the latter also have to be proficient in submitting applications for EU funding.

**Amendment 5**

Article 3(2)(a)(i)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| i) to contribute to the development of projects of common interest relating to efficient and interconnected networks and infrastructure for smart, sustainable, inclusive, safe and secure mobility; | i) to contribute to the development of ***strategic*** projects of common interest relating to efficient and interconnected networks and infrastructure supporting smart, sustainable, inclusive, safe and secure mobility ***and strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion in the Union; in particular prioritising the implementation and finalisation of projects and works on the main corridors and major axes listed in the annex to the regulation***; |

**Amendment 6**

Article 3(2)(a), (b) and (c)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| The Programme has the following specific objectives: | The Programme has the following specific objectives: |
| (a) In the transport sector: | (a) In the transport sector: |
| i) to contribute to the development of projects of common interest relating to efficient and interconnected networks and infrastructure for smart, sustainable, inclusive, safe and secure mobility; | i) to contribute to the development of projects of common interest relating to efficient and interconnected networks and infrastructure for smart, sustainable, inclusive, safe and secure mobility; |
| ii) to adapt the TEN-T networks to military mobility needs; | ii) to adapt the TEN-T networks to military mobility needs ***to ensure civilian-military dual-use of some strategic transport infrastructure by implementing and completing improvements to interoperable border connections with solutions to enable and facilitate the modal transfer of goods and passengers to increase the interoperability of networks and corridors;*** |
| | ***iii) to improve accessibility for the outermost regions, the mobility of their people and the transport of goods;*** |
| (b) In the energy sector, to contribute to the development of projects of common interest relating to further integration of the internal energy market, interoperability of networks across borders and sectors, facilitating decarbonisation and ensuring security of supply, and to facilitate cross-border cooperation in the area of renewable energy; | (b) In the energy sector, to contribute to the development of projects of common interest relating to further integration of the internal energy market, interoperability of networks across borders and sectors, facilitating decarbonisation and ensuring security of supply, and to facilitate cross-border ***and inter-regional cooperation as well as*** cooperation ***between outermost regions,*** in the area of renewable energy; |
| (c) In the digital sector, to contribute to the deployment of very high capacity digital networks and 5G systems, to the increased resilience and capacity of digital backbone networks on EU territories by linking them to neighbouring territories, as well to the digitalisation of transport and energy networks. | (c) In the digital sector, to contribute to the deployment of very high capacity digital networks and 5G systems, to the increased resilience and capacities of digital backbone networks on EU territories, to linking them to neighbouring territories ***and to the outermost regions, as well as to establishing high-speed broadband systems in the outermost regions and*** to the digitalisation of transport and energy networks. |

***Reason***

Article 3(2) should include a reference to the specific case of the ORs, similar to the one which appears in Article 10 — General Priorities of the current Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013, on the guidelines for developing TEN-T.

**Amendment 7**

Article 4(8)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| 8. As regards the amounts transferred from the Cohesion Fund, ***30 % of these amounts shall be made available immediately to all Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund to finance transport infrastructure projects in accordance with this Regulation, with priority to cross-border and missing links. Until*** 31 December 2023, the selection of projects eligible for financing shall respect the national allocations under the Cohesion Fund ***with regard to 70 % of the resources transferred***. As of 1 January 2024, resources transferred to the Programme which have not been committed to a transport infrastructure project shall be made available to all Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund to finance transport infrastructure projects in accordance with this Regulation. | 8. As regards the amounts transferred from the Cohesion Fund, ***until*** 31 December 2023, the selection of projects eligible for financing shall respect the national allocations under the Cohesion Fund. As of 1 January 2024, resources transferred to the Programme which have not been committed to a transport infrastructure project shall be made available to all Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund to finance transport infrastructure projects in accordance with this Regulation***, with priority to cross-border and missing links and projects in the outermost regions***. ***For all funds transferred from the Cohesion Fund, national quotas are taken into account in the use by Member States.*** |

***Reason***

Resources transferred from the Cohesion Fund are a crucial part of the CEF. However, given the significant reduction in Cohesion Fund appropriations, the towns and regions of beneficiary Member States could not cope with the risk of further budget cuts. It is however necessary that the entire budget be used up at the end of the programming period.

**Amendment 8**

Article 4(9)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| Resources allocated to Member States under shared management may, at ***their request***, be transferred to the Programme. The Commission shall implement those resources directly in accordance with [point (a) of Article 62 (1)] of the Financial Regulation or indirectly in accordance with point (c) of that Article. ***Where possible*** those resources shall be used for the benefit of the Member State concerned. | Resources allocated to Member States under shared management ***and transferable in accordance with Article 21 of Regulation (EU) XX (… Common Provisions Regulation)*** may, at ***the request of the management authority, and having consulted the regional/local authorities***, be transferred to the Programme. The Commission shall implement those resources directly in accordance with point (a) of Article 62(1) of the Financial Regulation or indirectly in accordance with ***paragraph 1(c)*** of that Article. Those resources shall be used for the benefit of the ***geographical area corresponding to the managing authority*** concerned. |

***Reason***

Resources transferred to the Programme should be used by the MA that opts to carry out a transfer. This approach will enable the allocation for specific areas to be retained, and will also help to better steer allocations, in line with the current needs of regions and Member States.

**Amendment 9**

New article after Article 5

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| | ***Adapting TEN-T networks to military mobility***<br>***1. The Connecting Europe Facility shall contribute to developing a priority network of transport infrastructure adapted to civilian-military dual-use.***<br>***2. Projects supported under this objective shall be located throughout the TEN-T network.***<br>***3. Civilian-military dual-use infrastructure must comply with TEN-T and military technical specifications and meet a real need, whether existing or potential.***<br>***4. Infrastructure that benefits from funding under this objective cannot be limited to military use except under exceptional circumstances and for a limited period, and ensuring that the security of persons, goods, services and the infrastructure itself is maintained at all times.***<br>***5. Actions adapting infrastructure to civilian-military dual-use shall only be supported under this objective.***<br>***6. The Commission shall, by 31 December 2019, adopt delegated acts setting out the necessary technical specifications for civilian-military dual-use defined by the Council, a list of priority projects that may benefit from funding under this objective and the eligibility and selection rules. The Commission shall ensure that the geographical distribution of this infrastructure is coherent and balanced.*** |

***Reason***

In view of the envelope set aside for this objective, the Regulation must specify the rules here.

**Amendment 10**

Article 7(1)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| Cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy shall involve at least two Member States and shall be included in a cooperation agreement or any other kind of arrangement between Member States or arrangements between Member States and third countries as set out in Articles 6, 7, 9 or 11 of Directive 2009/28/EC. These projects shall be identified in accordance with the criteria and procedure laid down in Part IV of the Annex to this Regulation. | Cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy shall involve at least two Member States ***or an EGTC or two outermost regions,*** and shall be included in a cooperation agreement or any other kind of arrangement between Member States***, between local and regional and outermost regions' authorities,*** or between Member States and third countries as set out in Articles 6, 7, 9 or 11 of Directive 2009/28/EC. These projects shall be identified in accordance with the criteria and procedure laid down in Part IV of the Annex to this Regulation. |

**Amendment 11**

Article 8(3)(d)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| 3. Without prejudice to the award criteria laid down in Article 13, priority for funding shall be determined taking into account the following criteria: | 3. Without prejudice to the award criteria laid down in Article 13, priority for funding shall be determined taking into account the following criteria: |
| (…) | (…) |
| (d) projects aiming at the deployment of cross-border backbone networks linking the Union to third countries and reinforcing links within the Union territory, including with submarine cables, shall be prioritised according to the extent to which they significantly contribute to increasing the resilience and capacity of electronic communications networks in Union territory; | (d) projects aiming at the deployment of cross-border backbone networks linking the Union to third countries and reinforcing links within the Union territory, ***particularly mainland Europe with the outermost regions,*** including with submarine cables, shall be prioritised according to the extent to which they significantly contribute to increasing the resilience and capacity of electronic communications networks in Union territory; |
| (…) | (…) |

***Reason***

The distance between the outermost regions and mainland Europe and their proximity to neighbouring third countries makes establishing networks essential, particularly submarine cables, in order to reduce their isolation.

**Amendment 12**

Article 9(2)(a)(i)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| i) actions implementing the core network in accordance with Chapter III of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, including actions relating to urban nodes, maritime ports, inland ports and rail-road terminals of the core network as defined at Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013. Actions implementing the core network may include related elements located on the comprehensive network when necessary to optimize the investment and according to modalities specified in the work programmes referred to in Article 19 of this Regulation; | i) actions implementing ***and completing*** the core network in accordance with Chapter III of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, including actions relating to urban nodes, maritime ports, inland ports***, airports*** and ***intermodal*** rail-road terminals of the core network ***and addressing bottlenecks and missing links*** as defined at Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013. Actions implementing the core network may include related elements located on the comprehensive network when necessary to optimize the investment and according to modalities specified in the work programmes referred to in Article 19 of this Regulation ***promoting intermodality***; |

**Amendment 13**

Article 9(2)(a)(ii)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| ii) actions ***implementing*** cross-border links of the comprehensive network in accordance with Chapter II of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, notably the sections listed in Part III of the Annex to this Regulation; | ii) actions ***developing and improving*** cross-border links of the comprehensive network in accordance with Chapter II of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, notably the sections listed in Part III of the Annex to this Regulation; |

**Amendment 14**

Article 9(2)(a)(iii)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| iii) actions implementing sections of the comprehensive network located in ***outermost*** regions in accordance with Chapter II of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, including actions relating to the relevant urban nodes, maritime ports, inland ports and rail-road terminals of the comprehensive network as defined at Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013; | iii) actions implementing sections of the comprehensive network located in ***geographically detached*** regions in accordance with Chapter II of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, including actions relating to the relevant urban nodes, maritime ports, inland ports***, airports*** and rail-road terminals of the comprehensive network as defined at Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013; |

***Reason***

We consider that the problems of islands require differentiated treatment on the part of the EU institutions that is comparable to that of the outermost regions, the main problem being not so much distance as territorial discontinuity.

Airports are an essential tool for developing outermost regions, and are sometimes the most efficient way of integrating these regions into the EU's transport networks.

**Amendment 15**

Article 9(2) and (4)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| 2. In the transport sector, the following actions shall be eligible to receive Union financial assistance under this Regulation: | 2. In the transport sector, the following actions shall be eligible to receive Union financial assistance under this Regulation: |
| (a) Actions relating to efficient and interconnected networks: | (a) Actions relating to efficient and interconnected networks: |
| (…) | (…) |
| iii) actions implementing sections of the comprehensive network located in outermost regions in accordance with Chapter II of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, including actions relating to the relevant urban nodes, maritime ports, inland ports and ***rail-road*** terminals of the comprehensive network as defined at Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013; | iii) actions implementing sections of the comprehensive network located in outermost regions in accordance with Chapter II of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, including actions relating to the relevant urban nodes, ***airports,*** maritime ports, inland ports and ***rail*** terminals of the comprehensive network as defined at Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 ***and actions within outermost regions***; |
| (…) | (…) |
| (b) Actions relating to smart, sustainable, inclusive, safe and secure mobility: | (b) Actions relating to smart, sustainable, inclusive, safe and secure mobility: |
| (…) | (…) |
| ix) actions improving transport infrastructure accessibility and availability for security and civil protection purposes. | ix) actions improving transport infrastructure accessibility and availability for security and civil protection purposes. |
| | ***x) actions to improve the accessibility of the outermost regions, the mobility of their people and the transport of goods***. |
| (…) | (…) |

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| 4. In the digital sector, the following actions shall be eligible to receive Union financial assistance under this Regulation: | 4. In the digital sector, the following actions shall be eligible to receive Union financial assistance under this Regulation: |
| (…) | (…) |
| (d) actions supporting deployment of backbone networks including with submarine cables, ***across*** Member States and between the Union and third countries; | (d) actions supporting deployment of backbone networks including with submarine cables, ***between the*** Member States, between the Member States ***and the outermost regions*** and between the Union and third countries; |
| (…) | (…) |

**Amendment 16**

Article 9(4)(b)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| 4. In the digital sector, the following actions shall be eligible to receive Union financial assistance under this Regulation: | 4. In the digital sector, the following actions shall be eligible to receive Union financial assistance under this Regulation: |
| (a) actions supporting Gigabit connectivity of socioeconomic drivers; | (a) actions supporting Gigabit connectivity of socioeconomic drivers; |
| (b) actions supporting the provision of very high-quality local wireless connectivity in local communities that is free of charge and without discriminatory conditions; | (b) actions supporting the provision of very high-quality local wireless connectivity in local communities that is free of charge and without discriminatory conditions ***especially in the countryside (the concept of smart villages)***; |
| (c) actions implementing uninterrupted coverage with 5G systems of all major terrestrial transport paths, including the trans-European transport networks; | (c) actions implementing uninterrupted coverage with 5G systems of all major terrestrial transport paths, including the trans-European transport networks; |
| (d) actions supporting deployment of backbone networks including with submarine cables, across Member States and between the Union and third countries; | (d) actions supporting deployment of backbone networks including with submarine cables, across Member States and between the Union and third countries; |
| (e) actions supporting access of European households to very high capacity networks; | (e) actions supporting access of European households to very high capacity networks; |

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| (f) actions implementing digital connectivity infrastructure requirements related to cross-border projects in the areas of transport or energy and/or supporting operational digital platforms directly associated to transport or energy infrastructures. | (f) actions implementing digital connectivity infrastructure requirements related to cross-border projects in the areas of transport or energy and/or supporting operational digital platforms directly associated to transport or energy infrastructures. |
| An indicative list of eligible projects in the digital sector is provided for in Part V of the Annex. | An indicative list of eligible projects in the digital sector is provided for in Part V of the Annex. |

**Amendment 17**

Article 10(2)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| Within each of the transport, energy or digital sectors, actions eligible in accordance with Article 9 may include ancillary elements, ***which may*** not relate to eligible actions as provided for in Article 9(2), (3) or (4) respectively, provided that they comply with all of the following requirements: | Within each of the transport, energy or digital sectors, actions eligible in accordance with Article 9 may include ancillary elements, ***whether or*** not ***they*** relate to eligible actions as provided for in Article 9(2), (3) or (4) respectively, provided that they comply with all of the following requirements: |

***Reason***

It is worth facilitating synergies. Furthermore, the mechanism proposed in paragraph 2 should allow for actions eligible under the objective of another sector of the CEF to be included in the call for proposals in a specific sector. Calls for specific proposals for mixed projects will support projects with a sectoral mix of over 20 %-80 %.

**Amendment 18**

Article 11(2)(b)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| (b) legal entities established in a third country associated to the Programme; | (b) legal entities established in a third country associated to the Programme ***for actions related to a project concerning that third country***; |

***Reason***

The CEF should not provide a benefit to non-European enterprises for activities carried out in the EU.

**Amendment 19**

Article 11(5)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| ***5. The work programmes referred to in Article 19 can stipulate that only proposals submitted by one or more Member States or, with the agreement of the Member States concerned, by international organisations, joint undertakings, or public or private undertakings or bodies, are eligible.*** | |

***Reason***

Maintaining the approval procedure by the Member States would run counter to the administrative simplification supported by the European Committee of the Regions.

**Amendment 20**

Article 12

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| Grants under the Programme shall be awarded and managed in accordance with Title [VIII] of the Financial Regulation. | Grants under the Programme shall be awarded and managed in accordance with Title [VIII] of the Financial Regulation.<br><br>***1. The project selection process shall comprise two stages:***<br>***(a) assessment of project eligibility on the basis of a simplified initial application;***<br>***(b) submission, assessment and selection of the project.***<br>***2. The Commission shall publish calls for proposals at least one month prior to the opening date. Project proposers shall have at least one month in which to submit the initial application. The European Commission shall assess the eligibility of the initial applications within one month. Project proposers shall then have at least three months in which to submit the complete application.*** |

***Reason***

CEF implementation needs to be simplified to avoid a situation where project proposers submit lengthy and costly complete applications when they are not eligible under the call for proposals. Moreover, project proposers need sufficient time to take on a call for proposals and prepare a full application.

**Amendment 21**

Article 13(1)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| The award criteria shall be defined in the work programmes referred to in Article 19 and in the calls for proposals taking into account, to the extent applicable, the following elements: | The award criteria shall be defined in the work programmes referred to in Article 19 and in the calls for proposals taking into account, to the extent applicable, the following elements: |
| (a) economic, social and environmental impact (benefits and costs); | (a) economic, social and environmental impact (benefits and costs); |
| (b) innovation, safety, interoperability and accessibility aspects; | (b) innovation, safety, interoperability***, multimodality*** and accessibility aspects; |
| (c) cross-border dimension; | (c) cross-border dimension ***or improving accessibility to the island and outermost regions***; |
| (d) synergies between the transport, energy and digital sectors; | ***(d) European added value;*** |
| (e) maturity of the action in the project development; | ***(e) their contribution to addressing bottlenecks and completing missing sections;*** |
| (f) soundness of the implementation plan proposed; | (***f***) synergies between the transport, energy and digital sectors; |
| (g) catalytic effect of Union financial assistance on investment; | (***g***) maturity of the action in the project development***; and the degree of commitment to completing it***; |
| (h) need to overcome financial obstacles such as insufficient commercial viability or the lack of market finance; | (***h***) ***the social impact;*** |
| (i) consistency with Union and national energy and climate plans. | (***i***) soundness of the implementation plan proposed; |
| | (***j***) catalytic effect of Union financial assistance on investment; |
| | (***k***) need to overcome financial obstacles such as insufficient commercial viability or the lack of market finance; |
| | (***l***) consistency with Union and national energy and climate plans. |

**Amendment 22**

Article 14(2)(a)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| for works relating to the specific objectives referred to in Article 3(2)(a), the amount of Union financial assistance shall not exceed 30 % of the total eligible cost. The co-financing rates may be increased to a maximum of 50 % for actions relating to cross-border links under the conditions specified in point (c) of this paragraph, for actions supporting telematic applications systems, for actions supporting new technologies and innovation, for actions supporting improvements of infrastructure safety in line with relevant Union legislation and for actions located in outermost regions; | for works relating to the specific objectives referred to in Article 3(2)(a), the amount of Union financial assistance shall not exceed 30 % of the total eligible cost. The co-financing rates may be increased to a maximum of 50 % for actions relating to cross-border links under the conditions specified in point (c) of this paragraph, ***for actions relating to bottlenecks and missing links in the core network, for actions supporting motorways of the sea, for actions supporting maritime and river connections in the core and comprehensive networks, including actions in ports and links to the hinterland, for urban nodes and multi-modal and 'last mile' platforms and connections,*** for actions supporting telematic applications systems, for actions supporting new technologies and innovation, for actions supporting improvements of infrastructure safety in line with relevant Union legislation and for actions located in ***island and*** outermost regions; |

***Reason***

This amendment is in keeping with the Commission's proposal to add maritime links to the core network corridors. Furthermore, maritime transport requires substantial support if the EU is to meet its environment and climate targets.

**Amendment 23**

Article 14(5)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| The maximum co-funding rate applicable to actions selected under cross-sectoral work programmes referred to in Article 10 shall be the highest maximum co-funding rate applicable to the sectors concerned. | The maximum co-funding rate applicable to actions selected under cross-sectoral work programmes referred to in Article 10 shall be the highest maximum co-funding rate applicable to the sectors concerned ***increased by 10 %. Actions supported under the mechanism outlined in Article 10(2) shall benefit from the co-financing rate corresponding to the main sector, including ancillary costs.*** |

***Reason***

Synergies should be encouraged, including financially. In the interest of simplification, the mechanism outlined in Article 10(2) should benefit from a single co-financing rate.

**Amendment 24**

Article 15, point (a)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| The following cost-eligibility criteria shall apply, in addition to the criteria set out in Article [186] of the Financial Regulation: | The following cost-eligibility criteria shall apply, in addition to the criteria set out in Article [186] of the Financial Regulation: |
| (a) only expenditure incurred in Member States may be eligible, except where the project of common interest or cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy involves the territory of one or more third countries as referred to in Article 5 or Article 11 paragraph 4 of this Regulation or international waters and where the action is indispensable to the achievement of the objectives of the project concerned; | (a) only expenditure incurred in Member States may be eligible, except where the project of common interest or cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy involves the territory of one or more third countries as referred to in Article 5 or Article 11 paragraph 4 of this Regulation***, one or more outermost regions*** or international waters and where the action is indispensable to the achievement of the objectives of the project concerned; |

***Reason***

Article 15(a) should include a reference to the specific situation of the outermost regions.

**Amendment 25**

Article 16(2)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| 2. The use of grants referred to in paragraph 1 ***may*** be implemented through dedicated calls for proposals. | 2. The use of grants referred to in paragraph 1 ***shall*** be implemented ***in all calls for proposals and*** through dedicated calls for proposals ***and limited to 10 % of the CEF's overall budget***. |

***Reason***

Blending operations should be encouraged and made possible should project proposers wish to make use of them. Grants should continue to be the CEF's principal form of funding, however.

**Amendment 26**

Article 17(2) and new (3)

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| | ***3. Any funding recovered under this article shall be reused in other CEF work programmes; this funding will be allocated taking into account the agreed national envelopes.*** |

***Reason***

Funds allocated to the CEF under the MFF must be kept in the CEF. Taking into account agreed national envelopes when distributing funds provides an incentive for the Member States and those carrying out individual projects not to needlessly impede decisions on future projects for fear of losing financial support. This measure will also enable a more balanced geographical distribution of these funds across the EU Member States.

**Amendment 27**

Article 19

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| 1. The Programme shall be implemented by work programmes referred to in Article 110 of the Financial Regulation. Work programmes shall set out, where applicable, the overall amount reserved for blending operations. | 1. The Programme shall be implemented by work programmes referred to in Article 110 of the Financial Regulation. Work programmes shall set out, where applicable, the overall amount reserved for blending operations. |
| 2. The work programmes shall be adopted by the Commission by means of an implementing act. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 22 of this Regulation. | 2. ***The European Commission shall present an indicative timetable for the work programmes containing the allocations and priorities of these programmes for the overall programming.*** |
| | ***3.*** The work programmes shall be adopted by the Commission by means of an implementing act. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 22 of this Regulation. |

***Reason***

Funds allocated to the CES under the MFF must be kept in the CEF.

**Amendment 28**

Article 23

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 24 of this Regulation: | The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 24 of this Regulation: |
| (a) to amend Part I of the Annex regarding the indicators and to establish a monitoring and evaluation framework; | (a) to amend Part I of the Annex regarding the indicators and to establish a monitoring and evaluation framework; |
| (b) to amend Part II of the Annex regarding the indicative percentages of budgetary resources allocated to the specific objective set out in Article 3(a)(i); | (b) to amend Part II of the Annex regarding the indicative percentages of budgetary resources allocated to the specific objective set out in Article 3(a)(i); |
| (c) to amend Part III of the Annex regarding the definition of the transport core network corridors and pre-identified sections; and pre-identified sections on the comprehensive network; | (c) to amend Part III of the Annex regarding the definition of the transport core network corridors and pre-identified sections; pre-identified sections on the comprehensive network; |
| (d) to amend Part IV of the Annex regarding the identification of cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy; | (d) to amend Part IV of the Annex regarding the identification of cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy; |

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| (e) to amend Part V of the Annex regarding the identification of digital connectivity projects of common interest. | (e) ***to modify the technical specifications relating to civilian-military dual-use infrastructure defined by the Council and to define or modify the list of priority projects for adaptation to dual-purpose civil and military use;*** |
| | ***(f)*** to amend Part V of the Annex regarding the identification of digital connectivity projects of common interest. |

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014

(COM(2018) 438 final) — Part 2

**Amendment 29**

Annex, Part III, Table 1

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| Core network corridor 'Atlantic' | Core network corridor 'Atlantic' |
| Alignment | Alignment |
| Gijón — León — Valladolid | Gijón — León — ***Palencia*** –Valladolid |
| A Coruña — Vigo — Orense — León | A Coruña — Vigo — Orense — ***Ponferrada — Astorga*** — León — ***Palencia-Venta de Baños*** |
| Zaragoza — Pamplona/Logroño — Bilbao | Zaragoza — Pamplona/Logroño — Bilbao ***(Y vasca)*** |
| | ***Bordeaux — Dax — Vitoria/Gasteiz*** |
| | ***Bordeaux — Toulouse*** |
| Tenerife/Gran Canaria — Huelva/Sanlúcar de Barrameda — Sevilla — Córdoba | Tenerife/Gran Canaria — Huelva/Sanlúcar de Barrameda — Sevilla — Córdoba |
| Algeciras — Bobadilla — Madrid | Algeciras — Bobadilla — Madrid |
| Sines/Lisboa — Madrid — Valladolid | Sines/Lisboa — Madrid — Valladolid |
| Lisboa — Aveiro — Leixões/Porto — Douro | Lisboa — Aveiro — Leixões/Porto — Douro |
| Aveiro — Valladolid — Vitoria-Gasteiz — Bergara — Bilbao/Bordeaux — Tours — Paris — Le Havre/Metz — Mannheim/Strasbourg | Aveiro — Valladolid — Vitoria-Gasteiz — Bergara — Bilbao/Bordeaux– Tours — Paris — Le Havre/Metz — Mannheim/Strasbourg |
| | ***Shannon Foynes — Dublin — Cork — Le Havre — Rouen — Paris*** |
| Saint Nazaire — Nantes — Tours | ***Dublin — Cork*** — Saint Nazaire — Nantes — Tours |

***Reason***

The UK's withdrawal from the EU will have a huge number of consequences, including a significant impact on integrating Ireland into the TEN-T core network corridors, as it depends entirely on links via the UK. Sea links to ports on the Atlantic core network corridor and some ports on the comprehensive network would also have to be integrated into the map of corridors. Integrating a link between the Mediterranean corridor and the Atlantic corridor in the priority corridors of the core network will heighten the socioeconomic performance of these two corridors by upgrading infrastructure and increasing its use. It would also provide an opportunity to link the Mediterranean and Atlantic ports along a Bordeaux-Toulouse-Narbonne axis. In addition, the proposal is part of the major rail project in south-west France to introduce two high-speed trains sharing a common section from Bordeaux to Toulouse and from Bordeaux to Spain.

The Zaragoza-Pamplona-Y vasca line also makes sense, as it would link the Atlantic and Mediterranean corridors, giving access to the port of Bilbao. France should reactivate the Bordeaux-Dax-Vitoria connection, both for passengers and to remove freight bottlenecks (Irun-Hendaye, Bordeaux variant).

And finally, need to include those possible enclaves and logistic platforms of high strategic interest or future potential which are located in peripheral regions which still have many basic infrastructure needs to improve their accessibility and connectivity, particularly with ports.

**Amendment 30**

Annex, Part III, Table 3

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| Core network corridor 'Mediterranean' | Core network corridor 'Mediterranean' |
| Alignment | Alignment |
| Algeciras — Bobadilla — Madrid — Zaragoza — Tarragona | Algeciras — Bobadilla — Madrid — Zaragoza — ***Sagunto/*** Tarragona |
| | ***Madrid — Albacete — Valencia*** |
| Sevilla — Bobadilla — Murcia | Sevilla — Bobadilla — ***Almería*** — Murcia |
| Cartagena — Murcia — Valencia — Tarragona/Palma de Mallorca — Barcelona | Cartagena — Murcia — Valencia — Tarragona/Palma de Mallorca — Barcelona |
| Tarragona — Barcelona — Perpignan — Marseille — Genova/Lyon — Torino — Novara — Milano — Bologna/ Verona — Padova — Venezia — Ravenna/Trieste/Koper — Ljubljana — Budapest | Tarragona/***Palma de Mallorca*** — Barcelona — Perpignan — Marseille — Genova/Lyon — Torino — Novara — Milano — Bologna/Verona — Padova — Venezia — Ravenna/Trieste/ Koper — Ljubljana — Budapest |
| | ***Alcúdia — Ciudadela — Toulon — Ajaccio — Bastia — Porto Torres — Cagliari — Palermo*** |
| | ***Toulouse — Narbonne*** |
| Ljubljana/Rijeka — Zagreb — Budapest — UA border | Ljubljana/Rijeka — Zagreb — Budapest — UA border |

***Reason***

Integrating a link between the priority corridors of the core network between the Mediterranean and Atlantic corridors will enhance the socioeconomic performance of these two corridors by upgrading infrastructure and increasing its use. It would also provide an opportunity to link the Mediterranean and Atlantic ports along a Bordeaux-Toulouse-Narbonne axis.

**Amendment 31**

Annex, Part III, Table 4

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| Core network corridor 'North Sea — Mediterranean' | Core network corridor 'North Sea — Mediterranean' |
| Alignment | Alignment |
| Belfast — Dublin — Shannon Foynes/Cork | Belfast — Dublin — Shannon Foynes/Cork |
| | ***Dublin — Cork — Calais — Zeebrugge — Antwerpen — Rotterdam*** |
| | ***Shannon Foynes — Dublin — Rosslare — Waterford — Cork — Brest — Roscoff — Cherbourg — Caen — Le Havre — Rouen — Paris*** |
| Glasgow/Edinburgh — Liverpool/Manchester — Birmingham | Glasgow/Edinburgh — Liverpool/Manchester — Birmingham |
| Birmingham — Felixstowe/London/Southampton | Birmingham — Felixstowe/London/Southampton |
| London — Lille — Brussel/Bruxelles | London — Lille — Brussel/Bruxelles |
| Amsterdam — Rotterdam — Antwerpen — Brussel/Bruxelles — Luxembourg | Amsterdam — Rotterdam — Antwerpen — Brussel/Bruxelles — Luxembourg |
| Luxembourg — Metz — Dijon — Macon — Lyon — Marseille | Luxembourg — Metz — Dijon — Macon — Lyon — Marseille |
| Luxembourg — Metz — Strasbourg — Basel | Luxembourg — Metz — Strasbourg — Basel |
| Antwerpen/Zeebrugge — Gent — Dunkerque/Lille — Paris | Antwerpen/Zeebrugge — Gent — Dunkerque/Lille — Paris |

***Reason***

This amendment reflects the Commission's proposal to amend the CEF Regulation in the event of the UK withdrawing from the EU without an agreement and includes ports on the comprehensive and core networks.

**Amendment 32**

Annex, Part III, Table 9

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| Core network corridor 'Scandinavian — Mediterranean' | Core network corridor 'Scandinavian — Mediterranean' |
| Alignment | Alignment |
| RU border — Hamina/Kotka — Helsinki — Turku/Naantali — Stockholm — Örebro — Malmö | RU border — Hamina/Kotka — Helsinki — Turku/Naantali — Stockholm — Örebro — Malmö |
| Narvik/Oulu — Luleå — Umeå — Stockholm | Narvik/Oulu — Luleå — Umeå – ***Gävle*** – Stockholm – ***Örebro*** |
| | ***Stockholm — Örebro — Oslo*** |
| Oslo — Goteburg — Malmö — Trelleborg | Oslo — Goteburg — Malmö — Trelleborg |

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| Malmö — København — Fredericia — Aarhus — Aalborg — Hirtshals/Frederikshavn | Malmö — København — Fredericia — Aarhus — Aalborg — Hirtshals/Frederikshavn |
| København — Kolding/Lübeck — Hamburg — Hannover | København — Kolding/Lübeck — Hamburg — Hannover |
| Bremerhaven — Bremen — Hannover — Nürnberg | Bremerhaven — Bremen — Hannover — Nürnberg |
| Rostock — Berlin — Leipzig — München | Rostock — Berlin — Leipzig — München |
| Nürnberg — München — Innsbruck — Verona — Bologna — Ancona/Firenze | Nürnberg — München — Innsbruck — Verona — Bologna — Ancona/Firenze |
| Livorno/La Spezia — Firenze — Roma — Napoli — Bari — Taranto — Valletta | Livorno/La Spezia — Firenze — Roma — Napoli — Bari — Taranto — Valletta |

**Amendment 33**

Annex, Part III, 2. Pre-identified sections on the comprehensive network

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| The cross-border sections of the comprehensive network referred to at Article 9(2)(a)(ii) of this Regulation include notably the following sections: | The cross-border sections of the comprehensive network referred to at Article 9(2)(a)(ii) of this Regulation ***and the existing cross-border rail links and missing links at internal EU borders*** include notably the following sections: |

***Reason***

This addition enables links between the TEN corridors even if they are not officially part of the comprehensive network (e.g. missing links).

**Amendment 34**

Annex, Part V

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| 1. Gigabit connectivity to socioeconomic drivers | 1. Gigabit connectivity to socioeconomic drivers |
| (…) | (…) |
| — Gigabit Connectivity for education and research centres, in the context of the efforts to close digital divides and to innovate in education systems, to improve learning outcomes, enhance equity and improve efficiency. | — Gigabit Connectivity for education and research centres, in the context of the efforts to close digital divides and to innovate in education systems, to improve learning outcomes, enhance equity and improve efficiency. |
| | — ***Gigabit connectivity ensuring high-speed broadband connection systems within the outermost regions and between these regions and their respective Member States, in particular through the installation of redundant submarine cables.*** |

***Reason***

It is important to ensure that actions for the development of digital connectivity in the outermost regions are prioritised.

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1316/2013 with regards to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union

(COM(2018) 568 final) — Part 1

**Amendment 35**

Recital 6

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| ***In order to avoid the North Sea — Mediterranean Core Network Corridor being separated into two distinct and unconnected parts and to ensure connectivity of Ireland with mainland Europe, the North Sea — Mediterranean Core Network Corridor should include maritime links between the Irish core ports and core ports of Belgium and the Netherlands.*** | |

***Reason***

A number of French ports (Le Havre, Dunkirk, Calais) are part of the core network and included in the Atlantic and North Sea — Mediterranean corridors. There is no reason to exclude them.

**Amendment 36**

***Annex***

| Text proposed by the Commission | CoR amendment |
|---|---|
| In Part I of Annex I, point 2 ('Core network corridors'), in the section 'North Sea — Mediterranean', after the line 'Belfast — Baile Átha Cliath/Dublin — Corcaigh/Cork' the following ***line is*** inserted: | In Part I of Annex I, point 2 ('Core network corridors'), in the section 'North Sea — Mediterranean', after the line 'Belfast — Baile Átha Cliath/Dublin — Corcaigh/Cork' the following ***lines are*** inserted: |
| 'Baile Átha Cliath/Dublin/Corcaigh/Cork — Zeebrugge/Antwerpen/Rotterdam'. | 'Baile Átha Cliath/Dublin/Corcaigh/Cork — ***Calais/Dunkerque-*** Zeebrugge/Antwerpen/Rotterdam.<br><br>***Shannon Foynes — Dublin — Rosslare — Waterford — Cork — Brest — Roscoff — Cherbourg — Caen — Le Havre — Rouen — Paris'***.<br><br>***In Part I of Annex I, point 2 ('Core network corridors'), in the section 'Atlantic', after the line 'Aveiro — Valladolid — Vitoria-Gasteiz — Bergara — Bilbao/Bordeaux — Tours — Paris — Le Havre/Metz — Mannheim/Strasbourg' the following line is inserted:***<br><br>***'Shannon Foynes — Dublin — Cork — Le Havre — Rouen — Paris'***<br><br>***In Part I of Annex I, point 2 ('Core network corridors'), in the section 'Atlantic', the line 'Saint Nazaire — Nantes — Tours' is amended as follows:***<br><br>***'Dublin — Cork — Saint Nazaire — Nantes — Tours'*** |

***Reason***

The UK's withdrawal from the EU will have many consequences, including a significant impact on integrating Ireland into the TEN-T core network corridors. Sea links to ports on the core network should be integrated into the map of corridors.

**II. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

**General recommendations**

1. reiterates that a European policy on safe, modern, sustainable and efficient transport, energy and telecommunications infrastructure provided by the trans-European networks (TENs) is essential to strengthen the economic, social and territorial cohesion of all EU regions, including peripheral, outermost and island as well as demographically challenged regions, contributes to the proper functioning of the internal market and is necessary in order to achieve the objectives of many other EU policies, including climate and environment policy;

2. points out that some of the CoR's observations regarding the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), which was introduced in 2013, in particular in its opinion 1531/2017 on the Future of CEF Transport, adopted on 10 October 2017, are still pertinent;

3. considers that the voice of the cities and regions, which are responsible for policies to manage and develop mobility and public transport in their areas, should be listened to carefully;

4. acknowledges that the Commission proposal complies with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. The proposal's chief objective is to complete the trans-European transport network and the EU is the level of governance best suited for this;

5. points out that, in 2017, 72 % of Europeans lived in urban areas, and access to safe, efficient and sustainable forms of urban transport is crucial for them. The CEF is able to support the transition and reduce congestion, pollution and traffic accidents. Linking up various forms of transport more effectively and ensuring that journeys in urban areas go smoothly is key for completing the core network by 2030 and the comprehensive network by 2050. Interconnecting all forms of urban transport must be prioritised;

6. notes that the EU has a considerable stock of outdated maritime and river infrastructure which needs to be modernised and developed. These two forms of transport are part of the solution to road congestion and the need to shift the sector away from fossil fuels;

7. recognises that transport accounts for almost 50 % of greenhouse gas emissions in Europe. It is the only sector that has been unable to reduce its emissions since 1990. Cities and regions are directly affected by the impact of climate change, atmospheric pollution and congestion. This means that ambitious and immediate action must be undertaken to decarbonise the transport sector;

8. reiterates that the CEF must be adapted to the EU's ambitious objectives in terms of transport infrastructure. In particular, the TEN-T Regulation establishes a 2030 deadline for completion of the core network; notes that the needs of all regions should be monitored closely and steps taken to ensure that they keep up with the infrastructure innovations;

9. suggests encouraging cross-border projects, including by making use of EGTCs or the mechanism for removing legal and administrative obstacles in a cross-border context, proposed by the Commission for 2021-2027. In particular, EGTCs should be eligible entities for all calls for CEF projects, without prejudice to the powers conferred upon them;

10. welcomes the Commission's proposal to renew and amend the Connecting Europe Facility;

11. welcomes the fact that the proposal takes account of the specific features of the outermost regions and the need to provide funding for transport through the CEF, which should also be extended to include energy and digital;

12. points out that adequate funding of the CEF will help to create new jobs, support growth and make the EU a world leader in the area of research and innovation and the decarbonisation of the economy;

13. welcomes the efforts made to simplify the rules and procedures. No project proposer should be forced to give up the idea of submitting an application for funding;

14. takes note of the Commission's proposal to introduce an objective adapting TEN-T infrastructure to civilian-military dual-use, but regrets that the proposal is not more detailed and proposes spelling out the rules of this objective;

15. calls for the CEF to pay closer attention to social, economic and territorial cohesion.

Brussels, 10 October 2018.

*The President*
*of the European Committee of the Regions*

Karl-Heinz LAMBERTZ