

Public consultation on EU funds in the area of Cohesion

European Cyclists' Federation

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Summary

Transport and tourism across the European Union is a topic which affects almost every European citizen. A more integrated transport network that focuses on inter-modality and sustainable means of transport does not only have the ability to connect the people of the EU and achieve the dream of an ever closer Union but can also be the basis for the equality of all citizens in the transport sector and help reach the 2030 EU climate targets. Cycling tourism already delivers 44bn Euro economic impact per year and 500.000 jobs in Europe, but it needs further investments especially in the less developed regions of the European Union. That is why the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework, which the European Commission is currently working on, is of strategic importance: it will shape the way the modern European citizen lives and travels for the decades to come.

The European Cyclists' Federation, as a stakeholder in the mobility and tourism sector, strongly supports continued and increased funding to improve the EU regulatory framework for tourism and mobility. ECF nevertheless is concerned about the low importance given to cycling a mode of transport which is vital to reach the above outlined targets. We are calling for the recognition of cycling as a major mode of transport in the new financial frameworks, increased funds for the cycling infrastructure and for the obligatory inclusion of the active mobility infrastructure in TEN-T and other CEF co-financed projects (when relevant).

Increase Cohesion Funding

The ECF observatory for EU cycling funds estimates that during the 7-year period **only between €1.3 and €2 billion** euros are available for bicycle-related infrastructure projects.¹ This is a very small amount compared to the overall Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 (MFF) (€1,800 billion)² and also only around 1% of the EU commitments and investments in transport in the current period. When looking at these numbers it becomes obvious that mobility and transport and especially cycling is underrepresented

¹ <https://ecf.com/what-we-do/european-funding/eu-funds-observatory-cycling>

² <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/priorities/20130901TST18401/20131118IPR25541/european-parliament-approves-eu-s-long-term-budget-mff-2014-2020>



in the budget considerations of the EU , while around 8%³ of the EU citizens refer to cycling as their main mode of daily transport. ECF therefore demands:

Significantly increase the amount of financing for infrastructure projects in transport and mobility in general and drastically increase the percentage of bicycle funding. Streamline cycling into all relevant EU funding streams. This requires a close and regular coordination between all the responsible DGs within the European Commission and the executive agencies. We would like to achieve that 3bn Euro from the EU's transport budget should be invested in cycling measures.

Include Cycling projects in Cohesion Funding

Cycling is or has the potential to be a major part of urban mobility and sustainable tourism around the EU. Especially in urban areas with a high population and traffic density cycling is becoming an important piece of the solution when looking at air pollution and traffic congestion. In rural areas cycling (and especially e-bikes) can fill the gaps where public transport is not sufficient enough (for example in Eastern Europe). Urban, transport and tourism projects with cycling components or cycling focused projects were already eligible for ERDF funding in several countries. ERDF provided approx. 93% of the EU Funds available for cycling between 2014-2020. This was possible because several member states and regions explicitly proposed to invest EU Funds in cycling to achieve their growth and climate related objectives. We should also recognise, that not all member-states, regions were aware of the potential contribution of cycling and the EC also did not encourage systematically the investments in cycling. Regarding the next financial period we would like to change this situation, double the available ERDF funds for cycling and improve the quality and impacts of the cycling projects. To achieve this ECF demands:

The EC should refer to cycling as a solution to achieve climate, growth and job related objectives and encourage member states and regions to invest more in cycling. The Member States and Regions should double the amount of EU Funding invested in cycling measures.

In connection with that point ECF wants to encourage the creation of EU guidelines for active mobility infrastructure. These guidelines should be developed to provide minimum standards and requirements for all EU funded infrastructure projects.

Taking the above mentioned requests into account the new regulations and programming documents should lead to more funding, more appropriate calls, more and better projects related to active mobility and sustainable tourism.

³ Eurobarometer 2014. http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs_422a_en.pdf

