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| Suggested Answers for the Public Consultation in the area of Cohesion |
| European Cyclists’ Federation |
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The Public Consultation in the area of Cohesion

Link to the consultation: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-eu-funds-area-investment-research-innovation-smes-and-single-market_en>

ECF calls on its partners to reply to the above public consultation (link) by Thursday the 8th of March to advocate for more budget for cycling in the most relevant EU programmes of the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, which is currently under negotiation.

The aim is to share the same message: Cycling must be linked to the EU priorities , included in the EU programmes and benefit from specific actions within the new generation of Fuding Instruments.

You are invited to use the text below when replying to the open ended questions in the consultation.

**Q34: Please explain how the current programmes/funds can add value compared to what Member States could achieve at national, regional and/or local levels.**

The EU Cohesion policy provides approx. 93% of the EU financial subsidies 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. In the less developed regions it would be impossible to invest hundreds of millions of Euros in cyclin infrastucture without EU funds, because the majority of the public investments (in the transport and tourism sector) comes from the EU. In the more developed regions the limited ERDF subsidies helped to unlock regional resourses to implement innovative measures such as cycle highways.

**Q35: Is there a need to modify or add to the objectives of the programmes/funds in this policy area? If yes, which changes would be necessary or desirable?**

Increase the financial resources available for cycling measures through the Cohesion Policy in the next Multiannual Financial Framework; regions and cites should be encouraged by the EC to use them for cycling. The awarding of the EU subsidies should be more linked to the effectiveness to achieve EU objectives such as the decarbonisaion of the transport sector and less connected to the eligible costs. It maybe sounds unusual, but the relatively low cost cycling investments were less prefered because they require the same amount of administrative efforts as big transport projects (highways, highspeed railway etc). We need to provide more adequate and simplified procedures to award subsidies for cycling projects.

**Q40: How could synergies among programmes/funds in this area be further strengthened to avoid possible overlaps/duplication? For example, would you consider grouping/merging some programmes/funds?**

Indeed, we would only see advantages in strengthening synergies among programmes and grouping them in a systematic approach along a project idea, which can be supported in a sort of “cascade” system meaning a range of instruments which can support its continuity. The projects supported by the Cohesion Policy instruments should use the proven results of the future Frameworkprogramme for Research and Innovation. The fully European scale cycling tourism initatives should be supported by the future Single Market Programe and the ERDF funds should upscale their impacts which were tested already.