



Investing in Resilience: Financing for a robust and sustainable European transport network

The full members of the Scandria Alliance have adopted the following joint declaration during their General Assembly meeting in Brussels on 25 June 2025.

A robust European transport network is of strategic importance in responding to Europe's current challenges.

Only with strong and state-of-the-art transport infrastructure at its core will Europe be able to ramp up its military mobility, strengthen its industrial competitiveness and economic, social and territorial cohesion, ensure its supply of critical raw materials, and safeguard its supply chain sovereignty.

On 6 November 2023, the General Assembly of the Scandria Alliance and the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission adopted their joint resolution "Adapting to a changing geopolitical landscape: the future of transport in the Baltic Sea Region and wider Europe". One and a half years later, we are even more concerned about the further pathway towards a clean, smart and resilient trans-European transport system. In light of current multiple crises including unsecure geopolitical developments, progressing and intensifying climate change as well as a huge transport infrastructure backlog, the room for manoeuvre is narrowing through tightened public budgets, whereas the need for swift and decisive action is growing.

The ongoing aggression of Russia against Ukraine, reinforced hybrid war activities of Russia against EU member states, especially in the Baltic Sea Region, as well as the current tensions in the transatlantic collaboration combined with insecure global economic development outlook call for enhanced efforts to develop a resilient, competitive, sustainable and seamlessly connected European transport system.

Given the notable and unavoidable shift of political priorities from European cohesion to security and economic competitiveness, we underline that a strong and well-connected European transport system is a prerequisite for building a competitive, net-zero and resilient Europe. Yet, the European transport network (TEN-T) is still incomplete and suffers from bottlenecks, missing links and lack of capacity.

We underline the importance of continuing a highly ambitious European transport policy. The TEN-T core network, the extended TEN-T core network as well as the TEN-T comprehensive network need to be completed as envisaged in 2030, 2040 and 2050 respectively. This includes the implementation of key cross-border projects creating new links along the Scandinavian-Mediterranean European Corridor across the Alps and the Baltic Sea.

At the same time, the efforts to develop a climate-neutral and climate-adapted trans-European transport system must not be lowered.

Key to achieving the aforementioned strategic goals will be the provision of sufficient and reliable financing.

We are fully aware of the fact that this will require a mutual effort of policy makers at European, national, regional and local level as well as utilising the full potential of financing instruments, including both public and private funds.

In this context, we call for:

- **strong, centrally managed European funding instruments**

We strongly urge member states and the European Commission to preserve and strengthen a solid dedicated European transport funding instrument under the future EU budget.

We are convinced that only a European, centrally managed funding instrument guarantees a maximum European added value. We believe that a strengthened focus of European funding instruments on cross-border and missing links, their hinterland connections as well as port-hinterland connections and on the integration of urban nodes will increase the effectivity and efficiency of European transport policy.

- **having regional policy issues managed at regional level**

We clearly reject the idea of a single plan per member state, including all cohesion policy funding and centrally prescribed reforms. It contradicts the proven decentralized EU regional policy. Funding must continue to be managed by regions with shared implementation. Cohesion policy's effectiveness depends on addressing local needs and implementing regional projects.

Switching to a single plan poses risks, delaying programming and implementation. EU principles like subsidiarity and budgetary law should guide future reforms, and regional categories should be maintained.

- **coordinated national level financing contributing to European cohesion and regional development and supplementing European transport policy**

Both national financing instruments as well as the proposed national single plans in the next European multiannual financial framework should earmark sufficient financing for projects that contribute to European transport policy objectives.

National level financing should be coordinated with European transport policy and contribute to European transport policy where relevant. National transport policy can't stop at national borders and needs to take into account European integration much more than today. Local, regional and cross-border interests need to be taken much more into account than nowadays, accounting for an ever-increased European integration. Regional level stakeholders need to be involved in the definition of both European, national and regional transport and infrastructure funding priorities.

- **Taking full advantage on alternative financing schemes**

The provision of transport infrastructure is a public service domain. Given the limited public budgets, the opportunities of public private partnerships and blending public financial resources should be given further attention where profitable and in the general public interest. Polluter pays and user pays principles can be applied where feasible to achieve a societal benefit. The assessment of wider economic benefits should be further developed to allow for a more just distribution of associated costs.

- **An efficient governance & increased collaboration at all levels**

We are convinced that only joint efforts of all levels responsible and concerned will result in a European transport system that benefits all Europeans. We provide links to people and companies living and working in our regions, directly benefitting and being affected. We provide access to regionally available knowledge and best practice contributing to a more balanced development throughout the European Union. As a network of regions and cities, the Scandria Alliance is able and willing to aggregate regional knowledge and interests and to facilitate necessary mobility transition across the Scandria Corridor.