

Public consultation on EU funds in the area of strategic infrastructure

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

"A stronger Union needs to be equipped with appropriate financial means to continue to deliver its policies. The Union has changed fundamentally in recent years, as have the challenges it faces. Our Union needs a budget that can help us achieve our ambitions. The Multiannual Financial Framework for the period after 2020 must reflect this." (Commission Work Programme 2018)

The EU budget currently amounts to less than 1 euro per citizen per day. Although a modest budget, at around 1 % of the EU's gross national income or 2 % of all EU public spending, it supports the EU's shared goals by delivering essential public goods and tangible results for EU citizens. These include: investing in skills, innovation and infrastructure; ensuring sustainable food supply and developing rural areas; promoting joint research and industrial projects; funding shared activities in the field of migration and security; and supporting development and humanitarian aid.

The current Multiannual Financial Framework — the EU's long-term budget — runs until the end of 2020. In 2018, the Commission will put forth comprehensive proposals for the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework and for the next generation of financial programmes that will receive funding. These programmes/funds provide financial support to hundreds of thousands of beneficiaries such as regions, towns, NGOs, businesses, farmers, students, scientists, and many others.

The Commission's proposals will be designed to make it possible for the EU to deliver on the things that matter most, in areas where it can achieve more than Member States acting alone. This requires a careful assessment both of what has worked well in the past and what could be improved in the future. What should the priorities be for future policies and programmes/funds? And how can they be designed to best deliver results on the ground?

As an integral part of this process and following on from the [Reflection Paper on the Future of EU Finances](#), the Commission is launching a series of public consultations covering all the major spending areas to gather views from all interested parties on how to make the very most of every euro of the EU budget.

Europe's sustainable growth and competitiveness depend on efficient connectivity. The internal market and territorial cohesion among Member States depend on bridging missing links and removing bottlenecks. Achieving interconnected, interoperable, safe, secure and efficiently managed transport, energy, digital and space infrastructures in Europe requires the ability to plan and invest for the long-term.

EU funds have sought to stimulate European-wide cooperation. The main EU funding tool to fulfil the objective (Article 170 of the EU Treaty) of the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy infrastructures is the Connecting Europe Facility programme (CEF). [CEF](#) seeks to boost investment where the EU added-value is highest, notably for cross-border projects and European-wide interoperable systems and services.

Regarding space, the EU has set up three major space programmes; [Galileo](#) and [EGNOS](#) as satellite navigation systems and [Copernicus](#) as an Earth observation system providing data and services. The EU also makes an important investment in the [ITER](#) project, an international cooperation project aiming at the development of fusion as an efficient and sustainable source of energy.

A. About You

* 1. You are replying

- as an individual in your personal capacity
- in your professional capacity or on behalf of an organisation

* 2. Respondent's first name

100 character(s) maximum

Christine

* 3. Respondent's last name

100 character(s) maximum

Le Forestier

* 4. Email address

c.leforestier@fiec.eu

* 5. Country of residence

Belgium

* 6. Your contribution

(Note that, whatever option chosen, your answers may be subject to a request for public access to documents under [Regulation \(EC\) N°1049/2001](#))

- can be published **with your personal information** (I consent the publication of all information in my contribution in whole or in part including my name or my organisation's name, and I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication)
- can be published provided that you remain **anonymous** (I consent to the publication of any information in my contribution in whole or in part (which may include quotes or opinions I express) provided that it is done anonymously. I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent the publication.

*7. Name of your organisation

100 character(s) maximum

European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC)

*8. Is your organisation included in the Transparency Register?

If your organisation is not registered, we invite you to register [here](#), although it is not compulsory to be registered to reply to this consultation. [Why a transparency register?](#)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

*8.a. If so, please indicate your Register ID number

100 character(s) maximum

92221016212-42

*9. Postal address of the organisation

300 character(s) maximum

Avenue Louise 225, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

*10. Country of organisation's headquarters

Belgium

*11. Type of organisation

- Private enterprise
- Professional consultancy, law firm, self-employed consultant
- Trade, business or professional association
- Non-governmental organisation, platform network
- Research and academia
- Churches and religious communities
- Regional or local authority (public or mixed)
- International or national public authority
- Other (Please specify)

*11.b. Please specify the type of organisation

- Chamber of commerce
- Business organisation
- Trade Union
- Representative of professions or crafts
- Other (Please specify)

*12. How many employees does the organisation have?

- More than 250 employees (Large enterprise)
- Between 50 and 250 employees (Medium-sized enterprise)
- Between 10 and 49 employees (Small enterprise)
- Less than 10 employees (Micro enterprise)
- Self-employed (Micro enterprise)
- Not applicable

* 13. Please let us know whether you have experience with one or more of the following funds and programmes:

- Connecting Europe Facility Programme (CEF) - Energy
- Connecting Europe Facility Programme (CEF) - Telecom
- Connecting Europe Facility Programme (CEF) - Transport
- Galileo, EGNOS, Copernicus or Space Surveillance and Tracking

* 14. Please let us know to which of the following topics your replies to this questionnaire will refer:

- Transport
- Energy
- Digital
- Space

B. EU funds in the area of strategic infrastructure

1. The Commission has preliminarily identified a number of policy challenges which programmes/funds in this area -strategic infrastructure - could address. How important are these policy challenges in your view?

	Very important	Rather important	Neither important nor unimportant	Rather not important	Not important at all	No opinion
*Promoting economic growth and jobs across the EU	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy and society	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Completion of trans-European networks in the areas of transport, energy and telecommunications	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Transition towards clean, competitive and connected mobility	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Transition of EU energy, ensuring security of supply	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Implementation of the Digital Single Market	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Long term sustainability of Europe's space capability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Development of new long-term energy sources	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 1.a. Please specify if you identified another policy challenge

200 character(s) maximum

The territorial cohesion (art. 174 TFEU) for which infrastructure are crucial, the freedom of movement, connecting people, EU's international competitiveness.

2. To what extent do the current programmes/funds successfully address these challenges?

	Fully addressed	Fairly well addressed	Addressed to some extent only	Not addressed at all	No opinion
* Promoting economic growth and jobs across the EU	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy and society	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Completion of trans-European networks in the areas of transport, energy and telecommunications	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Transition towards clean, competitive and connected mobility	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Transition of EU energy, ensuring security of supply	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Implementation of the Digital Single Market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Long term sustainability of Europe's space capability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Development of new long-term energy sources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 2.a. Please specify if you identified another policy challenge

200 character(s) maximum

The TEN-T addresses only partially the principle of territorial cohesion. Considering the needs, the CEF transport budget should be further increased. The same goes for digital projects.

* 3. To what extent do the current programmes/funds add value, compared to what Member States could achieve at national, regional and/or local levels?

- To a large extent

- To a fairly large extent
- To some extent only
- Not at all
- Don't know

4. Please specify how the current programmes/funds add value compared to what Member States could achieve at national, regional and/or local levels.

Please clearly indicate to which policies, programmes and funds your answers refer.

1500 character(s) maximum

The CEF has a strong leverage effect and adds great value, especially when it comes to cross-border projects.

CEF grants clearly boost public investment in projects which highly need it, while national public investment have become scarce. Considering the remaining needs for the full realisation of the TEN-T Core Network, the CEF transport budget should be even increased during the next MFF.

5. 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?

Please clearly indicate to which policies, programmes and funds your answers refer.

1500 character(s) maximum

Considering the success of the CEF, this budget line should be increased in the next MFF.

Moreover, the maintenance of strategic infrastructure should also be taken into account in this framework. Indeed, outdated infrastructure networks have a negative impact in terms of security, competitiveness and attractiveness. This problem could be addressed via specific calls for projects.

6. To what extent do you consider the following as obstacles which prevent the current programmes /funds from successfully achieving their objectives?

	To a large extent	To a fairly large extent	To some extent only	Not at all	No opinion
* Complex procedures leading to high administrative burden and delays	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Insufficient administrative capacity to manage programmes	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Limited information about funding and selection process	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Lack of flexibility to react to unforeseen circumstances and to new user needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Difficulty of combining EU action with other public interventions	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Insufficient synergies between the EU programmes/funds	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Difficulty to ensure the sustainability of projects when the financing period ends	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Difficulty to access financial instruments to complement funding	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Inadequate co-financing rates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 6.a. Please specify if you have identified another obstacle

1000 character(s) maximum

As the main priority is the added-value of the EU action and the fulfilling of the objectives of the Treaties, solutions should be envisaged as regards the budgetary impact of infrastructure investment projects (i.e. cross-border projects) which respond to EU objectives and have been validated by the EU institutions. Projects which have been selected and validated in the framework of the CEF should have a specific treatment: national co-financing should be exempted from the Stability and Growth Pact. Indeed, these projects fully contribute to EU's competitiveness. Clearer rules in the respect would encourage Member States to co-finance projects which would otherwise represent a heavy burden on their public deficit.

7. How could current programmes/funds be further simplified and administrative burdens for beneficiaries be reduced?

	To a large extent	To a fairly large extent	To some extent only	Not at all	No opinion
* Alignment of rules between EU funds	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Fewer, clearer, shorter rules	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* More reliance on national rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Sufficient flexibility between programming periods	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* More flexibility of resource allocation to respond to unexpected needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* More effective stakeholders' involvement in the programming, implementation and evaluation	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 7.a. Please specify if you have identified another way to simplify and reduce burdens

1000 character(s) maximum

The CEF rules are already aligned for transport, energy and telecom, which is positive. As mentioned above, SGP rules represent a heavy constraint on Member States' co-financing capacity. Also, solutions should be envisaged concerning the numerous actions in remedy which slow down the realisation of the projects.

8. 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?
Please clearly indicate to which policies, programmes and funds your answers refer.

1500 character(s) maximum

Having 3 different budget lines within the CEF is still useful as the needs are different. But synergy calls could be increased in the future for instance, provided that their definition is appropriate and their success is assessed and proven.

Also, there must be a clear distinction between the objectives of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and the Cohesion Fund, which support regional and local projects, and the CEF, which supports projects with an EU dimension. Their logic and objectives are not the same, but complementary. The earmarking of Cohesion funds to the CEF during the current MFF has created a certain confusion in this respect.

C. Document upload and final comments

1. Please feel free to upload a concise document, such as a position paper. The maximum file size is 1MB.

Please note that the uploaded document will be published alongside your response to the questionnaire which is the essential input to this open public consultation. The document is optional and serves as additional background reading to better understand your position.

The maximum file size is 1 MB

2. If you wish to add further information — within the scope of this questionnaire — please feel free to do so here.

1500 character(s) maximum

3 years before the end of the programming period, the CEF transport budget has already been fully used. This, together with the high oversubscription of all transport calls clearly illustrates the needs at EU level. If the CEF transport envelope is not increased in the next MFF, the realisation of the Core Network will be put at stake.

Useful links

[Consultation page \(https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-eu-funds-area-strategic-infrastructure\)](https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-eu-funds-area-strategic-infrastructure)

Contact

