

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

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EIM strongly welcomes the TRAN Committee vote on the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)

On 14th April, MEPs of the TRAN Committee displayed a clear political will to preserve the budget of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and ensure the respect of the Tran-European Transport Network (TEN-T) map.

EIM welcomes the rejection of the proposed transfer of funds from the CEF envelope to the EFSI guarantee fund which would have put many TEN-T projects at risk. The financing of the EFSI guarantee fund will therefore be decided by the Parliament and Council in the framework of the annual budgetary procedure, giving priority to budgetary surplus and other EU budgetary resources. Multiannual programmes such as the CEF or Horizon 2020 will be used only as a last resort option and will be compensated to the largest possible extent. EIM also approves the amended eligibility criteria allowing EFSI funded operations to be in line with TEN-T and CEF provisions on the core and comprehensive networks as well as on horizontal priorities.

By safeguarding provisions on the objectives for transport infrastructures and the use of the CEF budget, the TRAN opinion provides a sound basis for the upcoming ECON/BUDG vote. In this perspective, two outstanding areas of concern still need to be addressed. EIM stresses the need to clarify the provisions regarding the:

- **governance of the Steering Board:** EIM is concerned that entitling third parties to be members of the EFSI Steering Board could lead to undesirable interferences;
- **investment guidelines:** EIM warns against the risk of adopting these guidelines without the prior consultation of the Council and Parliament. EIM supports thorough controls by these two institutions.

EIM Executive Director Monika Heiming said: *“It is essential that the CEF budget and the TEN-T objectives remain untouched. These are key elements for the development of rail infrastructure in the years to come. MEPs across the board (and not only from the Transport Committee) should stick to the CEF rules which were agreed in 2013 after tough negotiations”.*

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EIM, the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers, was established in 2002 to promote the interests and views of the independent infrastructure managers in Europe, following liberalisation of the railway market. It also provides technical expertise to the appropriate European bodies such as the European Railway Agency. EIM's primary goal is promoting growth of rail traffic and the development of an open sustainable, efficient, customer orientated rail network in Europe.

To find out more about EIM, visit www.eimrail.org