

Response regarding European Commission consultation on EU funds in the area of Strategic Infrastructure

County planners with regional development responsibility and public transport authorities in Stockholm, Uppsala, Västmanland, Örebro, Sörmland, Östergötland and Gotland Counties, who cooperate in the joint process A Better Seat [En Bättre Sits] and are members of the Council for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region, hereby present a joint response to the European Commission's consultation on EU funds in the area of Strategic Infrastructure. The consultation response is based on what the counties have previously jointly expressed concerning the priorities for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region's transport infrastructure. In other respects, refer to each county's own consultation response regarding the EU's long-term budget.

Summary

- The Council for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region's A Better Seat process welcomes the opportunity to submit a response to the European Commission's consultation on EU funds in the area of Strategic Infrastructure.
- The European Commission's designated ScanMed Corridor runs through the Stockholm Mälardalen Region. The prioritisations in the Council for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region's A Better Seat process coincide, to a large extent, with the EU Commission's priorities for the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T network).
- Transport infrastructure must be viewed from a system perspective when planning is done at the national and European level. Implementation of common standards throughout the entire TEN-T network benefits both the planning of the infrastructure system as well as creates predictability for movement of traffic.
- Reliable and efficient transportation to and from the Stockholm Mälardalen Region is crucial for the competitiveness of the region, as well as for Sweden and the associated European regions. The Council for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region desires to emphasise the value that all the counties in the A Better Seat cooperation can participate in the EU programmes and funds in the field of infrastructure.
- The Council for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region desires to emphasise the importance of the EU's programmes and infrastructure funds continuing to focus on long-term and strategic planning for good functionality of the trans-European infrastructure system.

The Stockholm Mälardalen Region as a part of the European Transport System

The Stockholm Mälardalen Region is growing and becoming increasingly important for all of Sweden's development and international competitiveness. Due to its strategic location in central Scandinavia, the region has a vital function in the Trans-European infrastructure system. The "ScanMed Corridor", The Scandinavian-Mediterranean Core Network Corridor, runs through the region from Finland and the Baltic Sea in the east and continues in a south-westerly direction via Region Örebro and Region Östergötland.

Slightly more than four million people reside in the Stockholm Mälars Region, who combined contribute to some 46% of Sweden's GDP. The population is expected to increase by almost 1.5 million inhabitants by 2050. The region is Sweden's largest consumer market, with an extensive production of products and large transit flows of goods. Freight transports have increased in recent decades, especially long-haulage lorry transports and international maritime transport. The EU Commission estimates that freight transport within the EU will increase by 80% between 2005 and 2050, and that passenger traffic will increase by 50% at the same time. (Transport 2050: The major challenges, the key measures, MEMO/11/197)

Greater regional consensus on the Stockholm Mälars Region's infrastructure priorities

The Council for the Stockholm Mälars Region coordinates the transport policy cooperation A Better Seat, which encompasses seven counties: Stockholm, Uppsala, Västmanland, Örebro, Sörmland, Östergötland and Gotland. The counties work together for a cohesive, sustainable greater region with infrastructure and public transport that facilitates people's everyday lives. The cooperation safeguards the high level of national and international accessibility for the Stockholm Mälars Region. Arlanda Airport, Sweden's most important international airport, with over 180 destinations and 25 million passengers a year, is in the region.

An important part of the work is to promote the greater regional consensus concerning what priorities and investments need to be made to create a stronger transport infrastructure in the Stockholm Mälars Region. A Better Seat is headed by a political steering group with county planners and public transport authorities in the seven counties. The joint submission has been prepared by public servants from the parties. Within the framework of A Better Seat, the counties have agreed on a common system analysis for deficiencies and needs in the Stockholm Mälars Region's transport infrastructure. The system analysis highlights the importance of seeing the Stockholm Mälars Region as an integral part of a larger national and international transport system. (En Bättre Sats [A Better Seat]. Greater Region System Analysis 2016)

An overall perspective at the national and European levels is needed in infrastructure development

High national and international accessibility requires that development of infrastructure at the national and European levels interacts with the circumstances in the greater regional conditions and ambitions in the Stockholm Mälars Region. The Stockholm Mälars Region's transport infrastructure cannot be looked upon as a finite system, but rather must be placed in its national and international context. There needs to be easy and simple transitions between airplane flights, long-distance/high-speed rail travel, regional trains and other local public transport. In addition, sufficient surplus capacity must be present in order to increase the competitiveness of travel by train, as well as the capacity for vehicular traffic, plus to facilitate the development of a sustainable transport system. This also includes the realisation of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T network) and adaptation to the "Motorways of the sea", i.e. maritime transport both within and outside the region, including Mälarsjöfarten [Mälarsjöfarten].

Prioritised needs for the Transport Infrastructure in the Stockholm Mälars Region

This spring, the Swedish Government will decide on the "National Plan for the Transport System 2018-2029". A Better Seat assumes that measures in the national transport infrastructure that have already been decided will remain and be completed according to plan. In addition, six prioritised needs for investments are highlighted for better greater region public transport and more efficient freight transport. The six prioritised needs all have a clear link with the trans-European transport corridors focusing on the ScanMed Corridor. Among these is Hallsberg's railway yard which

needs to be expanded coherently and with a system perspective in to facilitate that longer (750 meters) and heavier trains will be able to be operated according to the requirements of the TEN-T network. Implementation of common standards throughout the entire TEN-T network benefits both the planning of the infrastructure system as well as creates predictability for movement of traffic.

In the ScanMed Corridor designated by the European Commission, there are clear flows to and from the continent via Örebro-Stockholm and further on to Finland. It is important that the entire Stockholm Mälardalen Region is seen as an integral part of the ScanMed Corridor, since all counties have a direct bearing on the cohesive traffic system. The Council for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region would like to emphasise the value that all the counties in the A Better Seat cooperation can participate in the EU programmes and funds in the field of infrastructure. The Council for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region further emphasises the importance in these programmes and funds retaining their focus on long-term and strategic planning for good functionality in the Trans-European infrastructure system.

Continued work for good transport infrastructure via the TEN-T network in the Stockholm Mälardalen Region

Reliable and efficient transportation to and from the Stockholm Mälardalen Region is crucial for the competitiveness of the region and the country. The ambition of the Council for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region is to increase the dialogue and strengthen the work nationally and at EU level, so as to make our region a powerful part of the European transport network. We will be happy to assist with additional information concerning the greater regional consensus on the Stockholm Mälardalen Region transport infrastructure and the prioritised needs in our region.

THE COUNCIL FOR THE STOCKHOLM MÄLARDALEN REGION

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