

Brussels, 10 December 2025
(OR. en)

16451/25

Interinstitutional File:
2025/0221 (COD)

TRANS 628
ENER 654
CODEC 2029
POLMIL 409
COMPET 1304
MI 1016
CADREFIN 363
FIN 1517

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Council
Subject:	Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility for the period 2028-2034, amending Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 - Partial General Approach

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 16 July 2025, the European Commission adopted a proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework for the period post-2027, including a proposal for the ‘Connecting Europe Facility’ (CEF). The CEF proposal aims to provide the legal basis for the period 2028-2034 for investments in trans-European networks for transport and energy infrastructure, including military mobility and cross-border energy projects, primarily for renewable energy.

2. For transport, the CEF proposal aims to:
 - a) contribute to the completion of the trans-European transport network ('TEN-T'), concentrating in particular on infrastructure projects with a strong cross-border dimension;
 - b) contribute to the completion of a smart, resilient, safe, interoperable, decarbonised and sustainable TEN-T;
 - c) invest in cross-border connections with third countries implementing the indicative maps on the TEN-T;
 - d) adapt the TEN-T for the dual use of transport infrastructure with a view to improve both civilian and military mobility throughout the EU.
3. For energy, the CEF proposal aims to:
 - a) contribute as a central objective to the development of projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest in accordance with the TEN-E Regulation to support the achievement of the internal market and the completion of the Energy Union by supporting cross-border infrastructure projects in the EU and with neighbouring third countries;
 - b) improve the interoperability of networks, facilitate the decarbonisation of the economy, eliminate interconnection bottlenecks, promote critical infrastructure protection and resilience and ensure security of supply;
 - c) facilitate cross-border energy cooperation, primarily through support to cross-border renewable energy projects or through the Union renewable energy financing mechanism established under Regulation 2018/1999 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action.

II. STATE OF PLAY IN THE COUNCIL

4. On 22 July 2025, the Commission presented the CEF proposal and the accompanying impact assessment in the Working Party on Transport - Intermodal Questions and Networks.
5. To coordinate and structure the work of the Council, and in accordance with Article 19(3) of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, the Permanent Representatives Committee approved the setting-up of the Ad Hoc Working Party on the Connecting Europe Facility (AHWP CEF)¹ in its meeting on 3 September 2025. The AHWP CEF met six times between 10 September and 19 November 2025 and discussed Presidency compromise texts.
6. On the basis of the comments received from the Member States in the AHWP CEF meeting of 19 November 2025, the Presidency revised further the compromise text, which was discussed by the Permanent Representatives Committee on 3 December 2025. The discussion showed broad support for the Presidency compromise text, with only a few adjustments required.
7. Changes in comparison to the Commission proposal are marked with bold underline for additions and strikethrough for deletions. Changes compared to the last document presented to the Permanent Representatives Committee on 3 December 2025 are marked additionally in italic.

¹ ST 11716/25.

III. MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE PRESIDENCY COMPROMISE

8. Since the CEF proposal is linked to the next MFF, all provisions with budgetary implications or of horizontal nature have been set aside and bracketed - and thus excluded from the partial general approach - pending further progress on the MFF. These provisions, which appear between square brackets in the text, concern the reference to the financial envelope in current prices and to the deflator (recital 1), references to the ECF InvestEU Instrument and Global Europe delivery mechanism (recitals 19 and 20), the reference to the Performance Regulation (recital 28), the duration of the programme (Article 1), the budget (Article 4), support to be provided through the InvestEU Instrument and Global Europe delivery mechanism (Article 8, paragraphs 3 to 5), and differentiated co-financing rates (Article 10, paragraphs 6 to 8). Bracketed provisions may be reviewed, if necessary, as negotiations progress.
9. The Presidency compromise also leaves aside the issues related to further fixed earmarking and geographical balance which have been identified as cross-cutting in nature and going beyond the CEF programme.
10. Amendments to the horizontal provisions:
 - a) **Programme objectives** - Article 3 - greater emphasis was put on the contribution of CEF to the decarbonisation, integration and competitiveness of the single market. In the recitals, specific wording was inserted emphasising the need to take the geographical specificity of each Member State into account when considering the cross-border dimension of projects.
 - b) **Third countries associated to the Programme** - Article 7 - while no amendments were introduced directly in that Article, clarifications on the existing *modus operandi* were added in recital (31), including with regard to the importance of preserving the level playing field.

- c) **Eligibility** - Article 9 - the Article has been redrafted to improve legal soundness and clarity by spelling out the eligibility criteria and specifying the content of work programmes. A new Article 9a on award criteria has been added (i) to clarify that award criteria shall be laid down in work programmes (and may be further detailed in documents related to the award procedure), and (ii) to set out elements that the Commission may consider when laying down the award criteria. Those changes are also reflected in recital (24). Additionally, paragraph 7 has been deleted, as it could be interpreted in a way that would significantly limit the possibility to apply for funding for infrastructure projects, especially those with prior national funding commitments.
- d) **Coherence with other MFF Programmes** – Article 12, paragraph 3a – a provision was introduced to reflect the need for coherence and complementarity between the work programmes implementing the CEF Programme and the European Competitiveness Fund, which - together with National and Regional Partnership Plans - should ensure better coverage of financial needs of Member States for infrastructure projects. Further elements regarding operational coherence are covered by bracketed articles and recitals of the compromise.
- e) **Complementary rules for grants** - Article 10 - clarifications were included to ensure that the beneficiaries of grants are properly involved in case of any reduction or termination of a grant.
- f) **Comitology** - Articles 12, 12a and 15 - to ensure proper involvement of Member States in setting up the work programmes and selecting projects for CEF funding, the advisory procedure has been replaced by the examination procedure. Additionally, a no-opinion clause has been included with regard to the adoption of the work programmes.

11. Amendments to the transport-specific provisions:

- a) Definitions - Article 2 - a number of definitions were clarified or added, including ‘dual-use transport infrastructure’ and ‘global project’.
- b) Programme objectives - Article 3 - in paragraph 2(a)(i)(1) an explicit reference to the **European Transport Corridors** was made to clarify the scope of projects that could be eligible for funding.
- c) **Eligibility (of military mobility projects)** - Article 9(4), Article 9(8) and recital (24) - the importance of due consideration of security and public order during award procedures was highlighted.
- d) Following extensive consultations, the **Annex** with the indicative list of projects of common interest with cross-border dimension was amended, mainly to take account of:
 - (i) various technical adaptations, (ii) inclusion of new cross-border sections that were not contained in the Commission’s original proposal, (iii) extensions of certain existing sections in case of high-speed rail. At the same time, it has been emphasised in recital (4) that the Annex is only illustrative and as such it neither prejudices the selection of projects for CEF co-funding nor establishes financial commitments on the side of Member States.

12. Amendments to the energy-specific provisions

- a) A new recital clarifies the **links between internal grid reinforcement and availability and cross-border interconnection capacity**.
- b) Specific wording was inserted to ensure that the geographical specificities of Member States, including **island Member States, are taken into account**.
- c) **Definitions** - Article 2 - the definition of cross-border project in the field of renewable energy was modified to take into account, where applicable, the **connection to the distribution or transmission grid**, provided that it forms an integral part of the project. This change also applies to storage projects defined in this article.

- d) **Programme objectives** - Article 3 - in paragraph 2(b)(i), the **central role of projects of common interest** and of **projects of mutual interest** was explicitly stressed. The **elimination of interconnection bottlenecks** was inserted while the **protection of critical energy infrastructure** was added to the resilience of energy infrastructure. The protection of critical energy infrastructures is also taken into account in the recitals. The scope of Article 3, paragraph 2(b)(ii) was further clarified when it comes to the objective of supporting cross-border energy cooperation, i.e. primarily for renewable energy projects.
- e) Still in Article 3, under paragraph 2(b)(ii), it has been clarified that projects that can be supported through the Union renewable energy financing mechanism also include storage where the conditions are met in accordance with Article 33 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999.
- f) **Cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy** - Article 11 - paragraph 2 was modified to add decarbonisation, system flexibility and storage to the benefits of the cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy. Such projects shall also be assessed for potential specific benefits when they are integrally linked to the expansion of cross-border energy networks. This was reflected in paragraph 4.

- g) **Allocation of a maximum of 5% of the Programme budget to the Union renewable energy financing mechanism** - Article 11 - paragraph 5 was modified to add that the allocation can also take place when it allows to finance projects which enable a **cost-effective integration of renewable energy sources into the energy system**. Moreover, if the 5% contribution to the Union renewable energy financing mechanism has been fully allocated by 1 January 2031, the Commission may decide to allocate a further contribution not exceeding 5 % of the remaining budget of this Programme (new paragraph 5a). Before doing so, the Commission shall evaluate the market uptake and demand for cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy as well as the functioning of the Union renewable energy financing mechanism. This change is also reflected in the recitals.
- h) **Work programmes** - Article 12- a new paragraph 2(a) was added to give clearer consideration in the work programmes in the energy sector to projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest that aim to better integrate the internal market for energy, end energy isolation and eliminate electricity interconnector bottlenecks. It is also reflected in the recitals.
- i) Still in Article 12, a paragraph 2(b) was inserted so that the work programmes indicate the estimated amounts for the specific objectives on energy, taking into account developments in the EU energy policy, inter alia the framework to decarbonise the energy system. Recitals 10 and 18 reflect this change.
13. There are also corrections that were introduced in the text after the meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee on 3 December 2025. These corrections do not change the meaning of the text. They harmonise the terms and the spelling used in the text.

IV. EXAMINATION BY THE OTHER INSTITUTIONS

14. On the EP side, the proposal awaits committee decision. The Committees on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) and on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) are jointly responsible for the proposal. The Rapporteur from ITRE: Kamila GASIUK-PIHOWICZ (PL, EPP) and the Rapporteur from TRAN: Oihane AGIRREGOITIA MARTÍNEZ (ES, Renew) were appointed on 3 October 2025. Three Committees were requested to deliver an opinion: Security and Defence (SEDE), Environment, Climate and Food Safety (ENVI) and Regional Development (REGI). The Committee on Budgets (BUDG) should prepare a budgetary assessment. The Parliament is expected to adopt its report in mid-2026.
15. The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions are currently preparing opinions on the legislative proposal.

V. CONCLUSION

16. The Council is invited to adopt a partial general approach on the basis of the text set out in the annex to this note.
17. This partial general approach will serve as the Council's mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament in the context of the ordinary legislative procedure.

2025/0221 (COD)

Proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

establishing the Connecting Europe Facility for the period 2028-2034, amending Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2021/1153

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 172, first paragraph, and Article 194(2) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee¹,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions²,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure

Whereas:

¹ *OJ L., p.

² *OJ L., p.

- (1) This Regulation establishes the ‘Connecting Europe Facility’ Programme (the ‘Programme’) with a view to accelerating investment in the field of trans-European networks for transport and energy and leveraging funding from both the public and the private sectors, while increasing legal certainty and respecting the principle of technological neutrality. It also aims to facilitate cross-border cooperation in the field of renewable energy, such as through the support of cross-border projects. The Programme should facilitate synergies between the transport and energy sectors to be harnessed to the full extent, thus enhancing the effectiveness of Union action and enabling implementing costs to be optimised. [This Regulation lays down a financial envelope for the Programme. For the purpose of this Regulation, current prices are calculated by applying a fixed 2% deflator.]
- (2) Efficient transportation of people³ and goods is an essential pillar for the functioning of the Union, playing a crucial role in fostering competitiveness and economic growth, ensuring cohesion, and achieving climate and environmental objectives. The ability of citizens and goods to move freely and efficiently in a well-connected and complete single market enhances connectivity, ensures access to jobs and services, and supports local economies and trade. At the same time, a decarbonized and sustainable transport system is a condition to meet the Union’s climate goals and address the Union’s economy’s strategic and unsustainable dependence on fossil fuel. Effective and secure freight transport is indispensable for the supply of necessary goods to citizens, keeping our economy running and backing our military security. The Draghi report on the future of competitiveness of Europe⁴, recognises the importance of raising investments in transport infrastructure and emphasises the need for an integrated multimodal transport market as well as the strong demand for decarbonization and clean solutions. The Draghi report calls for boosting the digitalisation in the Union across key economic sectors, such as transport. The Letta report on the future of the internal market highlights the transport sector as a key area where deeper European integration is essential to fully unlock the potential of the internal market.

³ Including persons with reduced mobility and disabilities.

⁴ Mario Draghi, “A competitiveness strategy for Europe”, September 2024, https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/draghi-report_en

The Letta report underlines notably the need to complete the TEN-T network and highlights the opportunities of a pan-European high-speed rail network to revolutionise European travel and catalyse Union integration. The Niinistö report on Europe’s civilian and military preparedness stresses the importance of dual-use transport corridors for military movements and supply chains and the resilience of the transport infrastructure to climate change and as well as the need for secure maritime supply routes used for the Union’s external trade.

- (3) The Union should facilitate projects in disadvantaged, less connected, rural, insular, coastal, peripheral, congested, outermost or isolated regions **and Member States, as well as island Member States** so as **to decrease energy isolation and** to enable access to the Trans-European energy and transport networks while bringing benefits to the entire Union in terms of security, competitiveness and social, economic and territorial cohesion. Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁵ identifies the infrastructure of the trans-European transport network, specifies the requirements to be fulfilled by it and provides for measures for their implementation. That Regulation provides for the completion of the core network of the trans-European transport network by 2030 and the extended core network by 2040 through the creation of new infrastructure as well as the substantial upgrading and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure. This will lead to a high-performing network for passengers and goods transportation.

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1153 and (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 (OJ L, 2024/1679, 28.6.2024)

- (4) In order to achieve the objectives laid down in Regulation (EU) 2024/1679, it is necessary to financially support the development **of projects of common interest with cross-border dimension through new or upgraded infrastructure, including the elimination of missing links. Such cross-border dimension is present on the European Transport Corridors, including the railway and inland waterway sections which are listed in the Annex of this Regulation. This Annex also includes additional projects on the comprehensive network as well as,**~~including ports~~ **which together with**~~and their~~ hinterland connections **have cross-border dimension. The indicative list of projects of common interest with a cross-border dimension set out in the annex is illustrative, non-preferential and does not prejudice Article 8(5) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679. Projects of common interest with a cross-border dimension that are not included in the annex are not excluded from support under this Programme provided that they fulfill the relevant criteria. The geographical specificity of each Member State, in particular island Member States, should be taken into account when considering the cross-border dimension of projects eligible for funding under this Programme,**~~as well as the~~
- (4a) **The Programme should support the development of a smart, resilient and sustainable TEN-T network. A smart TEN-T network should be equipped with interoperable and digital traffic management systems, such as ERTMS, ITS, SESAR, VTMS and RIS. A resilient TEN-T network should be ready to face a changing climate and geopolitical context, as well as natural hazards, hybrid and cyber threats, human-made disasters and disruptions. A sustainable TEN-T network should enable decarbonised transport, for instance through the deployment of alternative fuels. In addition, long-distance transport is suffering from a lack of interoperability and of infrastructures allowing for safe operations; the Programme should also address these issues,**~~and the elimination of missing links and to ensure,~~

- (4b) ~~Where applicable, that~~ the actions supported by the Programme ~~are~~ **should be** consistent with the corridor work plans drawn up in accordance with Article 54 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 and with the overall network development regarding performance and interoperability.
- (5) The Joint White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030⁶ recognised military mobility as an essential component of Union security and defence and stressed the Union added-value in supporting dual-use infrastructure for mobility. The Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁷ included for the first time a dedicated financial envelope for the development of civilian-defence dual use transport infrastructure. It is essential that the Union's transport infrastructure enables rapid and efficient movement of military personnel, material and equipment by air, land and waterborne. Accordingly, the infrastructure for all transport modes should ~~to~~ be upgraded to meet the military requirements. The Programme should seek complementarity with the specific activities supported under the European Competitiveness Fund (also with regard to Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEI)), notably aiming at strengthening Member State's access to and availability of military mobility capabilities, and to support the development of digital solutions to facilitate the military mobility as well as measures supported under the National and Regional Partnership Plans.

⁶ Joint White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030, JOIN(2025) 120 final, 19 March 2025.

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014 (OJ L 249, 14.7.2021, p. 38, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1153/oj>).

- (6) In the field of military mobility, the Programme aims to contribute to enabling transportation of military equipment and personnel across the EU at speed and scale, taking into account the military expertise at EU level. The Programme should be consistent with EU efforts to increase EU defence readiness as outlined in the Joint White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030 **and fully respect the sovereignty of EU Member States over their national territory and national decision-making processes regarding military mobility. The Programme should focus on the actions related to the four EU Priority Military Mobility Corridors identified in Annex II to the ‘Military Requirements for Military Mobility within and beyond the EU’, approved by the Council on 17 March 2025 and in any subsequent revision approved thereafter. This should not exclude the possibility of supporting other dual-use infrastructure actions, in accordance with the criteria set out in this Regulation.**
- (7) The Union has developed its own space systems for Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT) (Galileo, EGNOS and LEO PNT), Earth observation and monitoring programme (Copernicus, EOGS) and secure connectivity (GOVSATCOM and IRIS²). They all offer advanced services which provide important economic benefits to public and private users. Therefore, any transport or energy infrastructure funded by the CEF, that makes use of PNT or Earth observations services, should be technically compatible with those systems. To ensure such compatibility, where relevant, the work programme can ensure that actions supported by the CEF that include PNT, connectivity or observation technology are technically compatible with the EU space systems.
- (8) The PROTECT EU Strategy stresses that security is the bedrock upon which all our freedoms are built and builds on the consideration that security shall be mainstreamed in all EU policies.

- (9) The expansion and upgrade of energy infrastructure is an essential condition for a genuine Energy Union that is complete and interconnected, ensuring the Union's energy security and independence, energy affordability, industrial competitiveness, while meeting the Union's climate and energy objectives towards 2030 and achieving climate neutrality by 2050. Energy grids are necessary for the uptake of additional generation of renewable energy, including offshore generation, for boosting industrial decarbonisation and electrification, and for ensuring a well-functioning, **flexible** and competitive internal energy market that delivers a secure and affordable supply of energy, **including by connecting areas of high energy generation potential to future demand**. The Draghi Report recognises also the importance of raising investments in energy infrastructure. The Draghi report pointed in particular to investment in energy grids and the need to rapidly increase the deployment of cross-border energy infrastructure to ensure the integration of renewable energy into the European system and decarbonise Europe's industry. In the Clean Industrial Deal⁸ and the Action Plan for Affordable Energy⁹, the Commission underlined the crucial role of completing the Energy Union by investing in **and delivering** energy infrastructure and cross-border grids for safeguarding the competitiveness of European industry and the prosperity of people as well as for the affordability and security of energy supply. The Action Plan for Affordable Energy indicates that every person, community, and business should benefit from the clean transition. According to the Monitoring Report on electricity infrastructure¹⁰ of the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators, cross-border capacity needs will amount to 66 GW by 2030, of which 32 GW currently remain unaddressed. The support of the Programme to cross-border projects will play an important part in addressing this gap.

⁸ COM/2025/85 final

⁹ COM/2025/79 final

¹⁰ ACER: Electricity infrastructure development to support a competitive and sustainable energy system, 2024 Monitoring Report, https://www.acer.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ACER_2024_Monitoring_Electricity_Infrastructure.pdf.

- (10) Special consideration should be given to cross-border energy interconnections, including complex projects such as hybrid interconnectors, including those necessary to reach the 15 % electricity interconnection target for 2030 established by Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹¹. **In the Action Plan for affordable Energy, the Commission underlined that ambitious electrification of the energy system and expanding clean generation sources will increase energy efficiency of the energy sector as a whole, help decarbonise industrial, mobility and, with other solutions, heating and cooling sectors and support the uptake of clean and domestic energy production and announced the launch of an electrification Action Plan in 2026.**
- (11) Regulation (EU) 2022/869 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹² lays down guidelines for the timely development and interoperability of trans-European energy infrastructure. It provides for the identification of projects of common interest and of projects of mutual interest and determines the conditions for eligibility of these projects for Union financial assistance. However, given their cross-border nature, projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest not only create significant positive externalities and foster solidarity, but also entail specific challenges for project promoters, due to their multi-jurisdictional nature, coordination challenges and an often asymmetrical distribution of costs and benefits **between and beyond the hosting countries.**

¹¹ Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 328, 21.12.2018, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1999/oj>).

¹² Regulation (EU) 2022/869 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2022 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure, amending Regulations (EC) No 715/2009, (EU) 2019/942 and (EU) 2019/943 and Directives 2009/73/EC and (EU) 2019/944, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 (OJ L 152, 3.6.2022, p. 45, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/869/oj>).

They therefore require Union level support **and should be the particular focus under the energy objectives of this Programme, in line with the indicated distribution of funds of Regulation (EU) 2021/1153. As was the case for the Connecting Europe Facility 2021-2027, the Commission should regularly assess the uptake of funds under the energy objectives of this Programme to ensure an adequate dispersal in accordance with market demand and the need to complete the Energy Union.**

- (12) In the field of energy, the Programme aims to contribute to the development of projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest, with a view to promoting energy market integration and interoperability of energy networks across borders. Furthermore, the Programme aims to facilitate decarbonisation, **decrease energy isolation and eliminate interconnection bottlenecks,** promoting energy efficiency and ensuring security of supply, and facilitating cross-border cooperation in the field of energy including renewable energy generation, as well as storage facilities that are not fulfilling the eligibility criteria of Regulation (EU) 2022/869. **The geographical specificity of each Member State, in particular island Member States, should be taken into account when considering the cross-border dimension of projects eligible for funding under this Programme, as well as when assessing energy isolation, vulnerabilities and security of supply.** In doing so the interests of all stakeholders liable to be affected should be taken into account **and an analysis of costs and benefits of projects should be carried out.**
- (13) Cross-border cooperation between Member States, or between Member States and third countries, in the field of renewable energy is key to achieve the Union's objectives in terms of decarbonisation, competitiveness, completion of the internal energy market and security of supply in a cost-efficient and sustainable manner. The Programme aims to address a risk that cross-border cooperation will remain at a sub-optimal level in the absence of Union financial assistance.

- (14) Cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy should provide cost savings for the deployment **and integration** of renewable energy across the Union or other benefits for **decarbonisation**, system integration, **storage and system flexibility**, security of supply, competitiveness or innovation, ~~in comparison to a similar project implemented by one of the participating Member States or third country alone.~~ When selecting the projects, the Commission should particularly consider their contribution to the further integration of the Union internal energy market and endeavour to take, where possible, into consideration geographical balance. **Arrangements for cross-border storage projects in the field of renewable energy should not be limited to adjacent Member States and physical delivery of energy or flexibility services.** In case of grants for works, the applicant should demonstrate the need to overcome market failures or financial obstacles such as insufficient commercial viability, high upfront costs or the lack of market finance.
- (15) The Programme should enable a transfer of funds to the Union renewable energy **financing** mechanism established by Article 33 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999¹³, to ensure contribution to the enabling framework set out in Article 3(5) of Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁴, **including technical and administrative assistance for the implementation of the Union renewable energy financing mechanism.** This transfer can also concern projects that fall under the definition of cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy. Where relevant, the Commission should endeavour to prioritise such financial support for projects that enhance the further integration of the Union internal energy market, including cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy.

¹³ Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Text with EEA relevance)

¹⁴ Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (OJ L 328, 21.12.2018, p. 82, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2018/2001/oj>).

If the transferred funds to the Union renewable energy financing mechanism *have* been fully allocated by 1 January 2031, the Commission may further transfer an additional 5% of the remaining budget of this Programme envisaged for the specific objectives referred to in Article 3(2), point b, on the basis of a thorough evaluation of the market uptake of and demand for cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy, keeping in mind the need for available funding required to support as a central objective the development of projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest in accordance with the Programme objectives in Article 3(2), point b.

- (16) Synergies between the development of trans-European networks in transport and energy and cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy with strong cross border impact supported by CEF, and transport and energy projects in the scope of the National and Regional Partnership Plans, the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and the European Competitiveness Fund should be ensured. Synergies could also imply support for Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEI) focussing on cross-border infrastructure in the transport and energy sector.

- (16a) The expansion, reinforcement and availability of internal grid infrastructure is central to ensure an adequate and reliable utilisation of cross-border interconnection capacity, address infrastructure bottlenecks such as structural congestions in national power grids, support further integration of the internal energy market and completion of energy corridors, ultimately contributing to the realisation of the Energy Union and affordable energy prices and supporting the competitiveness of the Union. In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2022/869, national infrastructure projects with a significant cross-border impact may be classified as a Project of Common Interest or Project of Mutual Interest, to effectively support and enable cross-border interconnectivity, without prejudice to cross-border cost allocation.**

- (16b) The protection of critical transport and energy infrastructure is of urgency to ensure the Union's security and continuation of energy supply. In response to emerging threats, measures to protect critical energy infrastructure vary in scope, nature and urgency. While fully respecting the sovereignty of EU Member States over their national security interests, protective measures, including those related to cyber security, to ensure resilience and robustness in the project development and upgrading are of particular relevance for cross-border infrastructure projects in the Union and should be considered in relation to the development of Projects of Common Interest and Projects of Mutual Interest.**
- (17) The Programme should also seek coherence with actions financed under Global Europe. It is important that the trans-European networks for transport and for energy are well connected to third countries. The respective policy frameworks identify projects of common interest between Member States and third countries, or projects of mutual interest, which are the priority for the transport and energy connections from and to these third countries. For these projects, the support provided under the Programme should be closely coordinated with support provided under the Global Europe. In the field of transport, the cross-border sections **with third countries** listed in the Annex to this Regulation should be prioritised **to ensure the implementation of the indicative TEN-T as set out in annex IV of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679.**
- (18) In a rapidly changing economic, social and geopolitical environment, recent experience has shown the need for a more flexible multiannual financial framework and Union programmes. To that effect, and in line with the objectives of the CEF, the funding should duly consider the evolving policy needs and Union's priorities as identified in relevant documents published by the Commission, in Council conclusions and European Parliament resolutions while ensuring sufficient predictability for the budget implementation. **In the implementation of the energy specific objectives of the CEF through the work programmes, the estimated amounts for the specific objectives on energy should be indicated.**

- (19) [To ensure consistency, the budgetary guarantee and financial instruments under the Programme, including when combined with other forms of non-repayable support in blending operations, should be implemented in accordance with the applicable rules of the ECF InvestEU Instrument and GE delivery mechanisms through agreements concluded for that type of support under the ECF InvestEU Instrument and GE delivery mechanisms.]
- (20) [Where Union support under the Programme is to be provided in the form of a budgetary guarantee or a financial instrument, including where combined with non-repayable support in a blending operation, it is necessary that such support is provided exclusively through the ECF InvestEU Instrument and GE delivery mechanisms in accordance with the applicable rules of the ECF Investment Instrument and GE delivery mechanisms.] In the case of ECF InvestEU Instrument delivering the objectives of this Programme, advisory support should be available to all Member States at their request. Such support could cover capacity building, support for project identification, preparation and implementation, as well as advice on financial instruments and investment platforms.
- (21) The Programme should optimise the use of available funding through close monitoring of the funding made available and through applying, where appropriate, reduction or termination of grants. This should allow the reallocation of the budget dedicated to an action that remains unspent during its designated timeframe to other actions falling within the scope of this Programme.

- (22) Given the size of the necessary works, it can happen that for the implementation of a cross-border section, several activities are carried out in parallel and are supported through different grant agreements but contributing to the same objective which is called the 'global project'. In order to contribute to a more efficient use of Union resources and ensure that important infrastructure objectives can be fully achieved, the Programme should allow for redirection of available funds within the scope of the same global project. Without prejudice to the use of competitive procedures in line with Article 192(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁵ and in addition to the provisions of Article 198 of that Regulation, it should be possible to award such redirection of funds through amendments to the original actions, subject to the conditions set out in the work programme, including the maximum Union contribution.
- (23) Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council applies to the Programme. It lays down the rules on the establishment and the implementation of the general budget of the Union, including the rules on grants, prizes, non-financial donations, procurement, indirect management, financial assistance, financial instruments and budgetary guarantees.

¹⁵ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

- (24) In accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 Regulation, the work programmes and the call documents are the appropriate place to set out more technical implementation details for the budget across the set of policies supported by the Programme, including ~~specific~~ **more detailed** eligibility and award criteria depending on the instrument of budget implementation, whether grant or procurement, and the specific ~~policy~~ **Programme** objectives pursued, **including by considering the energy policy developments for 2030, 2040 and towards 2050. Such award criteria could take into account for example the priority and urgency, the quality of application, the impact, the maturity, as well as the catalytic effect of the action, in order to assess the project.** In accordance with Article 136 of the Financial Regulation, eligibility restrictions should apply to high-risk suppliers, for security reasons. **This should be taken into consideration in particular for military mobility actions.**
-

- (25) The support provided by the Programme should boost investment by addressing market failures or sub-optimal investment situations, in a proportionate manner avoiding duplication or crowding out and by incentivising private funding and should have a clear Union added-value. Without prejudice to the application of Articles 107 and 108 TFEU to national resources, this approach will ensure consistency between the actions under the Programme and the State aid rules, thereby avoiding undue distortions of competition in the internal market. **Similarly, combinations with support schemes such as contracts for difference (“CfDs”) should be possible if consistency with State aid rules is ensured and distortions of competition avoided.** Furthermore, the CEF and Savings and Investments Union¹⁶ measures can be mutually supportive, as public funding can be effective to de-risk large infrastructure projects and attract private investments in the EU, creating significant leverage effect. **For instance, the Programme should be open to public-private partnership projects.** At the same time, the growing availability of efficient collective investment vehicles, like the European Long-term Investment Funds (ELTIFs), can efficiently catalyse long-term investments by institutional and other private investors towards infrastructure projects, thereby complementing and amplifying the funding available from CEF.
- (26) In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of the Programme through work programmes, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission. Those powers should be exercised in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by the Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers¹⁷.

¹⁶ COM/2025/124 final

¹⁷ Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers, OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 13–18.

- (27) In accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁸, Council Regulations (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95¹⁹, (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96²⁰ and (EU) 2017/1939²¹, the financial interests of the Union are to be protected through proportionate measures, including the prevention, detection, correction and investigation of irregularities and fraud, the recovery of funds lost, wrongly paid or incorrectly used and, where appropriate, the imposition of administrative sanctions. In particular, in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 and (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out investigations, including on-the-spot checks and inspections, with a view to establishing whether there has been fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the financial interests of the Union. In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/1939, the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) may investigate and prosecute fraud and other illegal activities affecting the financial interests of the Union as provided for in Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council²².

¹⁸ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999, (OJ L248, 18.9.2013, p. 1. ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/883/oj>)

¹⁹ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L312, 23.12.95, p.1). LI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/1995/2988/oj>).

²⁰ Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities (OJ L292, 15.11.96, p.2). ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/1996/2185/oj>).

²¹ Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 of 12 October 2017 implementing enhanced cooperation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office ('the EPPO') (OJ L283, 31.10.2017, p.1). ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2017/1371/oj>).

²² Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2017 on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (OJ L 198, 28.7.2017, p. 29).

In accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, any person or entity receiving Union funds is to fully cooperate in the protection of the Union's financial interests, to grant the necessary rights and access to the Commission, OLAF, EPPO and the European Court of Auditors and to ensure that any third parties involved in the implementation of Union funds grant equivalent rights. Third countries associated to the Programme are to grant the necessary rights and access required for the authorising officer responsible, OLAF and the Court of Auditors to comprehensively exercise their respective competences.

- (28) [The Programme is to be implemented in accordance with Regulation (EU) [XXX]* of the European Parliament and of the Council [Performance Regulation] which establishes the rules for the expenditure tracking and the performance framework for the budget, including rules for ensuring a uniform application of the principles of 'do no significant harm' and gender equality referred to in Article 33(2), points (d) and (f), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 respectively, rules for monitoring and reporting on the performance of Union programmes and activities, rules for establishing a Union funding portal, rules for the evaluation of the programmes, as well as other horizontal provisions applicable to all Union programmes such as those on information, communication and visibility.]
- (29) Pursuant to Article 85 (1) of Council Decision (EU) 2021/1764²³, persons and entities established in overseas countries and territories (OCTs) are eligible for funding subject to the rules and objectives of the Programme and possible arrangements applicable to the Member State to which the relevant OCT is linked.
- (30) The Programme should respect the rights of persons with disabilities and in particular, ensure accessibility for them particularly in the transport sector.

²³ Council Decision (EU) 2021/1764 of 5 October 2021 on the association of the Overseas Countries and Territories with the European Union including relations between the European Union on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other (Decision on the Overseas Association, including Greenland) (OJ L 355, 7.10.2021, p. 6, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/1764/oj>).

- (31) The Programme should be open for cooperation with third countries where this is in the interest of the Union. To this extent, the Union may associate, fully or partially, third countries to the constituent activities of the Programme. **It is possible to support projects involving entities from third countries, subject to the approval of the Member States concerned and whenever this is essential for implementing the action and contributes to the objectives laid down in Article 3. The association could give further access to the programme for instance in terms of eligibility or the participation of the associated third country as observer in the committee procedure.** Association should be subject to a fair balance of contribution and benefits of the third country and ensure the protection of the financial and security interests of the Union. **It should also ensure a level playing field in maritime transport by preventing carbon leakage in compliance with Recital 41 and Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679. Cooperation with third countries on cross-border project in the field of renewable energy should be established within the framework set in Directive (EU) 2018/2001, whenever applicable.**
- (32) In order to take due account of the development of the trans-European network, the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union should be delegated to the Commission in respect of the amendments of the indicative list of projects of common interests in the Annex to this Regulation. It is of particular importance that the Commission carry out appropriate consultations during its preparatory work, including at expert level, and that those consultations be conducted in accordance with the principles laid down in the Interinstitutional Agreement of 13 April 2016 on Better Law-Making²⁴. In particular, to ensure equal participation in the preparation of delegated acts, the European Parliament and the Council receive all documents at the same time as Member States' experts, and their experts systematically have access to meetings of Commission expert groups dealing with the preparation of delegated acts.

²⁴ OJ L 123, 12.5.2016, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinstit/2016/512/oj.

- (33) Article 12(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 empowers the Commission to adopt implementing acts specifying the infrastructure requirements applicable to certain categories of dual use infrastructure actions. On that basis, Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/1328²⁵ was adopted. Following the revision of the legal framework with the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 and in order to ensure the ability to further update the infrastructure requirements independently of the limited duration of the present regulation, it is necessary to the empowerment in that act to adopt implementing acts specifying the infrastructure requirements applicable to certain categories of dual use infrastructure actions should be laid down in that Regulation. Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 should therefore be amended accordingly so that it empowers the Commission to adopt implementing acts for that purpose.
- (34) Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 should be repealed, with effect from 1 January 2028.

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Subject matter

This Regulation establishes the Connecting Europe Facility (the ‘Programme’) and lays down the objectives of the Programme, its budget [for the period 2028-2034], the forms of Union funding and the rules for providing such funding.

²⁵ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/1328 of 10 August 2021 specifying the infrastructure requirements applicable to certain categories of dual-use infrastructure actions pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 288, 11.8.2021, p. 37, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2021/1328/oj).

Article 2

Definitions

For the purpose of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:

1. ‘action’ means any activity which has been identified as financially and technically independent, has a set timeframe and is necessary for the implementation of a project;
- 1a. ‘beneficiary’ means an entity with legal personality with which a grant agreement has been signed;**
2. ‘trans-European transport network’ means the trans-European transport network referred to in Regulation (EU) 2024/1679;
3. ‘project of common interest’ means a project of common interest as defined in Article 3, point (1), of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 or Article 2, point (5), of Regulation (EU) 2022/869;
4. ‘sustainable trans-European transport network’ means a trans-European transport network fulfilling the requirements laid down in Articles 5 **on a resource-efficient and resilient network and environmental protection** and **Article 45 on new technologies and innovation** of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679;
5. ‘smart trans-European transport network’ means a trans-European transport network fulfilling the requirements laid down in Articles 43 **on information and communication technology systems for transport** and **Article 45 on new technologies and innovation** of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679;

6. ‘resilient trans-European transport network’ means a trans-European transport network fulfilling the requirements laid down in **Article 5 on a resource-efficient and resilient network and environmental protection and** Article 46 **on the resilience of infrastructure** of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679;
7. ‘military mobility’ means the ability of the European Union and its Member States to rapidly and effectively **receive**, transport, move, ~~and deploy~~ **and sustain** military personnel, equipment, and supplies within and across the borders of Member States, ensuring timely and effective response of ~~Member States~~ Armed forces;
- 7a. ‘dual-use transport infrastructure’ means a transport network infrastructure that addresses both civilian and military mobility;**
8. ‘studies’ means activities needed to prepare project implementation, such as preparatory, mapping, feasibility, evaluation, testing and validation studies, including in the form of software, and any other technical support measure, including prior action to define and develop a project and decide on its financing, such as reconnaissance of the sites concerned and preparation of the financial package;
9. ‘works’ means the purchase, supply and deployment of components, systems and services including software, the carrying out of development, **upgrading** and construction and installation activities relating to a project, the acceptance of installations and the launching of a project;
- 9a. ‘global project’ means a large-scale project with cross-border dimension that is broken down into several actions and that benefits from several grant agreements;**
10. ‘project of mutual interest’ means a project of mutual interest as defined in Article 2, point (6), of Regulation (EU) 2022/869;

11. ‘cross-border project in the field of renewable energy’ means any of the following:
- (a) a project for the production of renewable energy **and where applicable its connection to the distribution or transmission grid, provided it forms an integral part of the project, effectively enables the integration of and is ancillary to a renewables generation facility**, which is included in a cooperation agreement within the meaning of Articles 8, 9, 11 or 13 of Directive (EU) 2018/2001;
 - (b) a storage project **and where applicable its connection to the distribution or transmission grid, provided it forms an integral part of the project, effectively enables the integration of and is ancillary to a storage facility**, including co-located energy storage within the meaning of Article 2, point (44d), of Directive (EU) 2018/2001, that supports the integration of renewable energy into the energy system of the Union, except for energy storage facilities within the meaning of Annex II, point (1)(c), of Regulation (EU) 2022/869 and that is included in a similar arrangement between two or more Member States, or between one or more Member States and one or more third countries.

Article 3

Programme objectives

1. The general objectives of the Programme are to build, develop, secure, modernise and complete the trans-European networks in the transport and energy sectors, with the intention of supporting a **decarbonised, functioning, competitive and integrated** single market and fostering cohesion; to facilitate military mobility on the trans-European transport networks; to facilitate cross-border cooperation in the field of renewable energy; and to facilitate synergies among the transport and energy sectors.

2. The Programme has the following specific objectives:

(a) in the transport sector:

- (i) to contribute to the development of projects of common interest relating to **efficient, seamless,** interconnected, interoperable, decarbonised, smart, safe, sustainable, resilient, secure and multimodal transport networks in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2024/1679, in particular through:
 - (1) actions relating to the projects of common interest with cross-border dimension implementing the trans-European transport network, including actions **on the European Transport Corridors, such as actions** on the indicative sections listed in the Annex to this Regulation;
 - (2) actions relating to the projects of common interest ~~with Union dimension~~ relating to the completion of a smart, resilient, **safe, interoperable,** decarbonised and sustainable trans-European transport network;
 - (3) actions relating to the projects of common interest with cross-border dimension with third countries implementing the trans-European transport network in accordance with Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679;
- (ii) to adapt parts of the trans-European transport network for the dual use of the transport infrastructure with a view to improving both civilian and military mobility, **in accordance with Article 48 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679,** focusing on the four EU Priority Military Mobility Corridors identified ~~by Member States~~ in Annex II to the ‘Military Requirements for Military Mobility within and beyond the ~~EU~~’~~Union~~, as approved by the Council on ~~17~~ 18 March 2025 and **in any subsequent revision approved thereafter**~~with reference ST 6728/25 ADD1;~~

- (b) in the energy sector,
- (i) to contribute **as a central objective** to the development of projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest as set out in Article 18 of Regulation (EU) 2022/869, with a view to promoting the completion of the Energy Union, the integration of an efficient and competitive internal energy market, and the interoperability of networks across borders and sectors, to facilitating decarbonisation of the economy, **to ending energy isolation and eliminating interconnection bottlenecks,** to promoting energy efficiency and **the protection and** resilience **of energy infrastructure, and to ensuring the** and security of supply;
 - (ii) to facilitate cross-border **energy** cooperation ~~in the field of renewable energy~~, **primarily** through the support of cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy or through competitive bidding for new renewable energy **and storage** projects under the Union renewable energy financing mechanism established by Article 33 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999, where the conditions referred to in of Article 11(5) of this Regulation are met, with a view to achieving the Union's objectives in terms of decarbonisation, competitiveness, completion of the internal energy market, resilience and security of supply in a cost-efficient manner.

[Article 4

Budget

1. The indicative financial envelope for the implementation of the Programme for the period 2028- 2034 is set at EUR 81 428 000 000 in current prices.
2. The distribution of the amount referred to in paragraph 1 shall be indicatively as follows:
 - (a) EUR 51 515 000 000 for the specific objectives on transport and military mobility referred to in Article 3(2), point (a);

- (b) EUR 29 912 000 000 for the specific objectives on energy referred to in Article 3(2), point (b).
3. Budgetary commitments for activities extending over more than one financial year may be broken down over several years into annual instalments.
4. Appropriations may be entered in the Union budget beyond 2034 to cover the expenses necessary and to enable the management of actions not completed by the end of the Programme.
5. The financial envelope referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article and the amounts of additional resources referred to in Article 5 may also be used for technical and administrative assistance for the implementation of the Programme and of the sector-specific guidelines in Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 or Regulation (EU) 2022/869, such as preparatory, monitoring, control, audit and evaluation activities, corporate information technology systems and platforms, information and communication activities, including corporate communication on the political priorities of the Union, and all other technical and administrative assistance or staff-related expenses incurred by the Commission for the management of the Programme.]

Article 5

Additional resources

1. Member States, Union institutions, bodies and agencies, third countries, international organisations, international financial institutions, or other third parties may make additional financial or non-financial contributions to the Programme, without prejudice to Articles 107 and 108 TFEU. Additional financial contributions shall constitute external assigned revenue within the meaning of Article 21(2), points (a), (d), or (e), or Article 21(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.

2. Resources allocated to Member States under shared management may, at their request, be made available to the Programme. The Commission shall implement those resources directly or indirectly in accordance with Article 62(1), point (a) or (c) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. They shall be additional to the amount referred to in Article 4(1) of this Regulation. Those resources shall be used for the benefit of the Member State concerned. Where the Commission has not entered into a legal commitment under direct or indirect management for additional amounts thus made available to the Programme, the corresponding uncommitted amounts may, at the request of the Member State concerned, be transferred back to one or more respective source programmes or their successors.

Article 6

Alternative, combined and cumulative funding

1. The Programme shall be implemented in coordination with other Union programmes. An action that has received a Union contribution from another programme may also receive a contribution under the Programme. The rules of the relevant Union programme shall apply to the corresponding contribution or a single set of rules may be applied to all contributions under the Programme and a single legal commitment may be concluded. If the Union contributions is based on eligible cost, the cumulative support from the Union budget shall not exceed the total eligible costs of the action and may be calculated on a pro-rata basis in accordance with the documents setting out the conditions for support.

2. Award procedures under the Programme may be conducted jointly under direct or indirect management with Member States, Union institutions, bodies and agencies, third countries, international organisations, international financial institutions, or other third parties ('partners to the joint award procedure'), provided the protection of the financial interests of the Union is ensured. Such procedures shall be subject to a single set of rules and lead to the conclusion of single legal commitments. For that purpose, the partners to the joint award procedure may make resources available to the Programme in accordance with Article 5 of this Regulation, or the partners may be entrusted with the implementation of the award procedure, where applicable in accordance with Article 62(1), point (c), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. In joint award procedures, representatives of the partners to the joint award procedure may also be members of the evaluation committee referred to in Article 153(3) of Regulation (EU, EURATOM) 2024/2509.

Article 7

Third countries associated to the Programme

1. The Programme may be opened to the participation of the following third countries through full or partial association, in accordance with the objectives laid down in Article 3 and in accordance with the relevant international agreements or any decisions adopted under the framework of those agreements and applicable to:
 - (a) members of the European Free Trade Association which are members of the European Economic Area, as well as European micro-states;
 - (b) acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates;
 - (c) European Neighbourhood Policy countries;
 - (d) other third countries.

2. The association agreements for participation in the Programme shall:
- (a) ensure a fair balance as regards the contributions and benefits of the third country participating in the Programme;
 - (b) lay down the conditions of participation in the programmes, including the calculation of financial contributions, consisting of an operational contribution and a participation fee, to a programme and its general administrative costs;
 - (c) not confer on the third country any decision-making power in the Programme;
 - (d) guarantee the rights of the Union to ensure sound financial management and to protect its financial interests;
 - (e) where relevant, ensure the protection of security and public order interests of the Union.

For the purposes of point (d), the third country shall grant the necessary rights and access required under Regulations (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 and (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013, and guarantee that enforcement decisions imposing a pecuniary obligation on the basis of Article 299 TFEU, as well as judgements and orders of the Court of Justice of the European Union, are enforceable.

Article 8

Implementation and forms of Union funding

1. The Programme shall be implemented in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 under direct management or under indirect management with entities referred to in Article 62(1), point (c), of that Regulation.

2. Union funding may be provided in any form in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, in particular grants, prizes, procurement, and non-financial donations.
3. [Where Union support is provided in the form of a budgetary guarantee or a financial instrument, including where combined with non-repayable support in a blending operation, it shall be exclusively provided through the ECF InvestEU Instrument or GE delivery mechanism and implemented in accordance with the applicable rules of the ECF InvestEU Instrument and GE delivery mechanism through agreements concluded for that type of support under the ECF InvestEU Instrument or GE delivery mechanisms.]
4. [Union support in the form of a budgetary guarantee shall be provided within the maximum amount of the budgetary guarantee established by the ECF or GE Regulation.]
5. [Where the Programme makes use of the ECF InvestEU Instrument or GE delivery mechanism, it shall provide the provisioning for the budgetary guarantee and the financing to financial instruments, including when combined with non-repayable support in the form of a blending operation.]

Article 9

Eligibility

- ~~1. Eligibility criteria shall be set to support achievement of the objectives laid down in Article 3 of this Regulation and in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.~~
2. In award procedures under direct or indirect management, one or more of the following legal entities may be eligible to provide or to receive Union support:
 - (a) entities established in a Member State, **including joint ventures and special purpose vehicles**;
 - (b) entities established in an associated third country;

(c) **exceptionally, where the funding of such entities is essential for implementing the action and contributes to the objectives laid down in Article 3:**

(i) international organisations;

(dii) other entities established in non-associated third countries ~~where the funding of such entities is essential for implementing the action and contributes to the objectives laid down in Article 3.~~

3. In addition to Article 168(2) and (3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, associated third countries referred to in Article 7(1) of this Regulation may, where relevant, participate in and benefit from any procurement mechanisms set out in Article 168(2) and (3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. Rules applicable to Member States shall be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to participating associated third countries.
4. Award procedures affecting security or public order, in particular concerning strategic assets and interests of the Union or its Member States, shall be restricted in accordance with Article 136 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. In accordance with Article 136 of the Financial Regulation, eligibility restrictions shall apply to high-risk suppliers, in line with EU law, for security reasons. **Particular consideration shall be given to military mobility actions.**²⁶
5. As regards actions referred to in Article 3(2), point (a)**(i)**, of this Regulation, the assessment of proposals against the award criteria shall, where applicable, ensure that proposed actions are consistent with the corridor work plans and implementing acts referred to in Articles 54 and 55 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 and that they take into account the consultative opinion of the responsible European Coordinator pursuant to Article 52(9) of that Regulation.

²⁶ **Further reflection might be needed on eligibility restrictions concerning military mobility pending the outcome of the horizontal MFF discussions.**

6. Grant proposals shall be submitted by one or more Member States or with the approval of the Member States concerned by the project of common interest or project of mutual interest.
- ~~7. Award procedures for grants or parts thereof, that are already fully financed from other public or private sources, except contributions from the Union in the context of synergy actions referred to in Article 6, shall not be eligible for funding.~~
8. ~~The w~~**Work** programmes referred to in **Article 12 of this Regulation and** Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 ~~or the documents related to the award procedure may further specify~~ **shall set out:**
- a) expected results;**
 - b) actions supported, including studies and works;**
 - c) indicative timetable;**
 - d) indicative amounts available;**
 - e) forms of Union contribution;**
 - f) co-financing rates;**
 - g) the eligibility criteria set out in this Regulation or set additional where applicable, more detailed eligibility criteria for specific actions to ensure the achievement of the objectives laid down in Article 3 of this Regulation, as well as restrictions in line with paragraph 4 of this Article.**

Article 9a

Award criteria

Work programmes shall lay down transparent selection and award criteria, which may be further detailed in the documents related to the award procedure. Such award criteria may take into account the priority and urgency, the quality of the application, the impact, the maturity, as well as the catalytic effect of the action, in order to assess the project.

Article 10

Complementary rules for grants

1. In addition to the grounds for reduction set out in Article 132(4) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, the amount of the grant may be reduced under the following conditions:
 - (a) as regards studies, where the action has not started within one year following the starting date indicated in the grant agreement;
 - (b) as regards works, where the action has not started within two years following the starting date indicated in the grant agreement;
 - (c) following a review of the progress of the action, it is established that the implementation of the action has suffered such major delays that the objectives of the action are unlikely to be achieved;
2. The grant agreement may be amended or terminated on the basis of the conditions set out in paragraph 1.

Before any decision regarding the reduction or termination of a grant is taken, the case shall be examined comprehensively and the beneficiaries concerned shall be given the possibility to submit their observations within a reasonable time-frame.

3. Available commitment appropriations resulting from the application of paragraph 1 or 2 shall be made available under this Programme.
4. Without prejudice to the use of competitive procedures wherever appropriate in accordance with Article 192(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 and in addition to Article 198 of that Regulation, the work programme referred to in Article 12 of this Regulation may, where duly justified with reference to the need to facilitate completion of a global project, specify an action and beneficiaries, and set out an amount up to which proposals may be invited for extension of ongoing or completed actions under the Programme, while ensuring equal treatment and transparency in line with Article 191 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. The award for ongoing actions may take the form of an amendment to the original action by adding new activities and increasing the maximum Union contribution **to be used by the beneficiaries of this original grant agreement for the completion of the global project**. The commitment appropriations referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article shall be used to cover the amounts reserved in the work programme for such awards.
5. [For studies, the amount of Union financial support shall not exceed 50% of the total eligible costs.]
6. [For works relating to the specific objective referred to in Article 3(2), point (a), the amount of Union financial support shall not exceed 50% of the total eligible cost. The co-financing rate for actions taking place in Member States with a per capita GNI of less than 90 % of the Union GNI, the amount of Union financial support shall not exceed 75% of the total eligible cost.]
7. [For works relating to the specific objectives referred to in Article 3(2), point (b), the following shall apply:
 - (a) the amount of Union financial support shall not exceed 50% of the total eligible cost;

- (b) the co-financing rates referred to in point (a) may be increased to a maximum of 75% of the total eligible cost for actions contributing to the development of projects of common interest which, based on the evidence referred to in Article 18(2) of Regulation (EU) 2022/869, provide a high degree of regional or Union-wide security of supply, strengthen the solidarity of the Union or offer highly innovative solutions.]

8. [In each of the transport and energy sectors, as regards works undertaken in outermost regions, a specific maximum co-financing rate of 60% shall apply.]
9. The support provided by the Programme shall accelerate or boost investments by addressing market failures or sub-optimal investment situations, in a proportionate manner, avoiding duplication or crowding out, and by incentivising private funding and shall have Union added-value.

Article 11

Cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy

1. The Commission shall conduct, at least once a year, ~~a selection of~~ **call for funding for** cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy, based on the criteria and procedure set out in this Article, in the delegated act referred to in paragraph 4 of this Article and the related work programme referred to in Article 12.
2. Cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy should provide cost savings for the deployment of renewable energy across the Union or other benefits for **decarbonisation**, system integration, **system flexibility, storage**, security of supply, competitiveness or innovation, in comparison to a similar project implemented by one of the participating Member States or third country alone.

3. In case of grants for works, the applicant should demonstrate the need to overcome market failures or financial obstacles such as insufficient commercial viability, high upfront costs or the lack of market finance.
4. By (day month year) (or 12 months after entry into force of this act), the Commission shall adopt a delegated act in accordance with Article 14 supplementing this Regulation by laying down the specific criteria and procedure for the selection of cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy, **paying consideration to the potential specific benefits for achieving the objectives in Article 3(2), point (b)(i) and (ii), when cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy are integrally linked to the expansion of cross-border energy networks.**
5. The Commission may decide to allocate the Programme budget envisaged for cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy to the Union renewable energy financing mechanism established by Article 33 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 where it can achieve the specific objectives referred to in Article 3(2), point (b)(ii) of the Regulation, and where it can contribute to the reduction of the costs of capital for renewable energy projects **or to the cost-effective integration of renewable energy sources into the energy system in line with the purposes of the enabling framework laid down in Article 3(5)(a) and (b) of Directive (EU) 2018/2001.** The total contribution made for the period from 1 January 2028 to 31 December 2034 shall not exceed 5% of the budget of this Programme envisaged for the specific objectives referred to in Article 3(2), point (b).
- 5a. If the 5% contribution made to the Union renewable energy financing mechanism has been fully allocated by 1 January 2031, the Commission shall evaluate the market uptake of and demand for cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy and the functioning of the Union renewable energy financing mechanism and may decide to allocate a further contribution not exceeding 5 % of the remaining budget of this Programme envisaged for the specific objectives referred to in Article 3(2), point b.**

Work programme

1. The Programme shall be implemented by work programmes referred to in Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.
2. The work programmes shall set out, where applicable, the activities and related amounts of Union support to be implemented through the ECF InvestEU Instrument and GE delivery mechanism.
 - 2a. When adopting work programmes in the energy sector, the Commission shall give particular consideration to projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest and related actions that aim to further integrate the internal market for energy, ending energy isolation and eliminating electricity interconnection bottlenecks.**
 - 2b. Work programmes in the energy sector shall indicate the estimated amounts for the specific objectives on energy referred to in Article 3(2), point (b), and shall take into account developments in the EU energy policy, *inter alia* the framework to decarbonise the energy system.**
3. The work programmes shall be adopted by the Commission by means of implementing acts. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the ~~advisory~~ **examination** procedure referred to in Article 15(3).
 - 3a. The work programmes shall ensure coherence and complementarity with the Regulation (EU)[XXX] [European Competitiveness Fund].**

Article 12a

Granting of Union financial support

Following every call for proposals based on the work programmes referred to in Article 12, the Commission shall adopt an implementing act setting the amount of financial support to be granted to the projects selected or to parts thereof and specifying the conditions and methods for their implementation. That implementing act shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 15(3).

Article 13

Delegated acts

Subject to **the approval of the Member State concerned in accordance with** Article 172, second paragraph, TFEU, the Commission is empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article ~~14~~5 of this Regulation to amend the Annex to this Regulation regarding the indicative list of projects.

Article 14

Exercise of the delegation

1. The power to adopt delegated acts is conferred on the Commission subject to the conditions laid down in this Article.
2. The power to adopt delegated acts referred to in Article 11(4) and 13 shall be conferred on the Commission until 31 December 2034.

3. The delegation of power referred to in Article 11(4) and 13 may be revoked at any time by the European Parliament or by the Council. A decision to revoke shall put an end to the delegation of power specified in that decision. It shall take effect the day following the publication of the decision in the *Official Journal* of the European Union or at a later date specified therein. It shall not affect the validity of any delegated acts already in force.
4. Before adopting a delegated act, the Commission shall consult experts designated by each Member State in accordance with the principles laid down in the Interinstitutional Agreement of 13 April 2016 on Better Law-Making.

As soon as it adopts a delegated act, the Commission shall notify it simultaneously to the European Parliament and to the Council.

5. A delegated act adopted pursuant to Article 11(4) and 13 shall enter into force only if no objection has been expressed either by the European Parliament or by the Council within a period of two months of notification of that act to the European Parliament and the Council or if, before the expiry of that period, the European Parliament and the Council have both informed the Commission that they will not object. That period shall be extended by two months at the initiative of the European Parliament or of the Council. Representatives of third countries or international organisations shall not be present in deliberations on matters related to Article 12(3) of this Regulation.

Article 15

Committee procedure

1. The Commission shall be assisted by a committee. That committee shall be a committee within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.
2. For matters concerning the objectives referred to in Article 3(2), point (a), the committee shall meet in the following configuration: “CEF Transport”.

For matters concerning the objectives referred to in Article 3(2), point (b), the committee shall meet in the following configuration: “CEF Energy”.

3. Where reference is made to this paragraph, Article ~~4~~5 of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 shall apply.

3a. For matters concerning the procedure referred to in Article 12(3), where the committee delivers no opinion, the Commission shall not adopt the draft implementing act and the third subparagraph of Article 5(4) of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 shall apply.

4. Where the opinion of the committee is to be obtained by written procedure, that procedure shall be terminated without result when, within the time-limit for delivery of the opinion, the chair of the committee so decides or a simple majority of committee members so request.
5. In accordance with international agreements concluded by the Union, representatives of third countries or international organisations may be invited as observers in the meetings of the committee under the conditions laid down in its rules of procedure, taking into account security and public order of the Union or its Member States. Representatives of third countries or international organisations shall not be present in deliberations on matters related to Article 9 of this Regulation.

Article 16

Amendment to Regulation (EU) 2024/1679

In Article 48 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679, the following paragraph 3 is added:

‘3. The Commission may adopt an implementing act specifying the infrastructure requirements applicable to certain categories of infrastructure, **referred to in paragraph 1**, which addresses both civilian and defence needs (‘dual use infrastructure’).

That implementing act shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 61(3).’

Article 17

Repeal

Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 is repealed with effect from 1 January 2028.

Article 18

Transitional provisions²⁷

1. This Regulation shall not affect the continuation or modification of the actions concerned, until their closure, under Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 2021/1153, which shall continue to apply to the actions concerned until their closure.
 2. The financial envelope for the Programme may also cover technical and administrative assistance expenses necessary to ensure the transition between the Programme and the measures adopted under Regulation (EU) No 2021/1153.
- 2a. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/1328 shall continue to apply until it is repealed by the implementing act referred to in Article 48(3) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679.**

²⁷ **Further reflection might be needed on transition measures, including an exceptional start of eligibility, if the act is not adopted before 1 January 2028.**

Article 19

Entry into force and application

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from 1 January 2028.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament
The President

For the Council
The President

Indicative list of projects of common interest with cross-border dimension as referred to in Article 3(2)(a) first indent. **Unless indicated differently, the sections refer to railway connections.**

Atlantic Corridor	
FR - ES	Bordeaux - Burgos
ES - PT	Madrid - Lisboa
PT - ES	<u>Lisboa</u> - Porto - Vigo - A Coruña
Baltic Sea — Black Sea — Aegean Sea Corridor	
RO - BG	Craiova - Sofia
RO - BG	<u>București</u> Bucharest - Giurgiu - Ruse - Varna
BG - EL	Sofia - Thessaloniki
EL - BG	Thessaloniki - Alexandroupolis - Burgas
PL - SK - HU	Kraków - Košice - Miskolc
RO - UA	Ploiești - Bacău - Chernivtsi
RO - MD	<u>Pașcani</u> - Iasi - Chișinău
Baltic Sea — Adriatic Sea Corridor	
PL - CZ	Katowice / Opole - Ostrava - Brno
AT - SI	<u>Wien</u> - Graz - Maribor
<u>AT - IT</u>	<u>Villach - Udine - Trieste</u>
AT - SK — HU	Wien - Bratislava — Budapest
<u>AT - HU</u>	<u>Wien - Budapest</u>
<u>SK - HU</u>	<u>Bratislava - Budapest</u>
<u>AT - HU - HR</u>	<u>Wien - Szombathely – Zagreb</u>

PL - SK	Katowice – Žilina
Mediterranean Corridor	
FR - IT	Lyon - <u>Torino</u> Turin
FR - ES	Montpellier - Perpignan - Barcelona - <u>Valencia</u>
FR - IT	<u>Marseille</u> - Nice - Genova
<u>HR - HU</u>	<u>Rijeka - Zagreb - Székesfehérvár</u>
IT - SI	<u>Venezia</u> - Trieste / <u>Koper</u> - Divača - / Ljubljana
HU - UA	Nyiregyhaza - Chop
North Sea — Rhine — Mediterranean Corridor	
FR - BE	Seine - Escaut, <u>including tributaries</u> (inland waterway)
NL - DE	Arnhem - Emmerich - Oberhausen
<u>NL - DE</u>	<u>Eindhoven - Mönchengladbach</u>
BE - NL	Gent - Terneuzen
<u>BE - NL</u>	<u>Bruxelles/Brussel - Amsterdam</u>
BE - LU	Namur - Luxembourg / <u>Bettembourg</u>
IT - CH	Chiasso - <u>Genova</u> – Milano/ <u>Novara</u> - <u>Chiasso</u> / - <u>Brig</u>
DE - CH	Karlsruhe - Basel
IE - UK	Dublin - Belfast
North Sea — Baltic Corridor	
<u>FI</u> - EE - LV - LT - PL	<u>Tampere - Helsinki</u> - Tallinn - Riga - Vilnius - Warszawa (<u>covering</u> Rail Baltica)
DE - PL	Berlin - Szczecin
DE - PL	Berlin - Frankfurt-an-der- (Oder) - Poznań - <u>Warszawa</u>
PL - UA	Kraków - Lviv
PL - UA	Lublin - Kovel

Rhine — Danube Corridor	
DE - CZ	Nürnberg / Regensburg - Pilsen - Praha
DE - CZ	Dresden - Praha / <u>Kolín</u>
CZ - AT - SK	<u>Praha</u> - Brno - Wien / Bratislava
DE - AT - SK - HU - HR - <u>BiH</u> - <u>RS</u> - RO - BG - <u>MD</u> - <u>UA</u>	Rhine / Danube, <u>including tributaries</u> (inland waterway)
SK - CZ - <u>SK</u>	Olomouc (Zlin) – Žilina
HU - RO	Budapest - Cluj/Timisoara
<u>HU - RO</u>	<u>Budapest - Cluj – București</u>
SK - UA	Košice - Chop
Scandinavian — Mediterranean Corridor	
DE - AT - IT DE	München - <u>Innsbruck</u> - Verona (covering the Brenner Base tunnel)
DK - DE	<u>København</u> Copenhagen – Lübeck (covering the Fehmarn belt <u>fixed link</u> tunnel)
SE - FI	Umeå - Luleå - Oulu (Bothnian corridor)
<u>SE - FI</u>	<u>Stockholm - Turku - Helsinki</u>
SE - NO	Stockholm - Oslo
<u>SE - NO</u>	<u>Göteborg - Oslo</u>
<u>SE - NO</u>	<u>Luleå - Narvik</u>
Western Balkans — Eastern Mediterranean Corridor	
AT - SI	Villach - Ljubljana
HR - SI	Zagreb - Ljubljana
EL - MK	Thessaloniki - Guevgueliya - Skopje
BG - RS	Sofia - Niš

<u>BG - MK</u>	<u>Sofia - Skopje</u>
HR - RS	Zagreb - Beograd
Waterborne	
	European Maritime Space and TEN-T ports <u>(including hinterland connections)</u>
Comprehensive network	
FR - ES	Pau - Canfranc
<u>ES - PT</u>	<u>Sevilla - Faro</u>
<u>BE</u> FR - FR <u>BE</u>	Mons - Valenciennes
NL - DE	Groningen - Oldenburg
PL - CZ	Wrocław - Praha
<u>DE</u> AT - AT <u>DE</u>	München - Linz
BE - NL <u>DE</u> - DE <u>NL</u>	Antwerpen - Venlo - Mönchengladbach
<u>EL - AL</u>	<u>Thessaloniki - Durrës</u>
<u>EL - MK</u>	<u>Florina - Veles</u>
<u>SE - NO</u>	<u>Sundsvall - Trondheim</u>
