



To:

Adina Vălean  
Commissioner for Transport  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
1049 Brussels

Dirk Beckers  
Director  
Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA)  
European Commission W910  
1049 Brussels

Brussels, March 30<sup>th</sup> 2020

Dear Ms Valean,

Dear Mr. Beckers,

The decisions and measures taken these days by the Member States to stop the Covid-19 pandemic are unavoidably causing unintended but very serious consequences that are affecting a lot of sectors both at economic and social level.

In this context, we have learned that the INEA could sign before March 31 the agreement to extend the subsidy granted to the company TELT within the framework of the Lyon-Turin high-speed line project. Due to the current situation, we deem that suspending this decision would be appropriate.

The transport sector has been severely affected by the current crisis and many citizens and companies are experiencing serious financial difficulties. It seems now more necessary than ever to reconsider the budgetary priorities. This is why, in our view, the European Commission, and therefore the INEA, should redouble their attention before granting public funding, and should rethink the rationale behind some decisions that have already been made.

Projects which have a very harmful and immediate effect for the environment and which contribute to Climate Change such as the Turin-Lyon, should be immediately stopped, also because they absorb public-and much needed- resources and prevent the change of the economic and social paradigms that have been at the core of the decision-making in the EU.

The Lyon-Turin high-speed line project is affected by several issues: the economic justification is based on largely overestimated traffic forecasts, the overall cost of the project is increasing and there are better



environmental and economic alternatives. In addition, TELT company experiences repeated delays in the execution of works, raising serious questions about its reliability.

From an environmental point of view, the negative impacts on the environment are considerable and the benefits in terms of greenhouse gas emissions will only be felt in at least 15 years.

We would also like to remind you that the grant agreement not only explicitly mentions “force majeure” (this reference in article II.14: “*force majeure shall mean any unforeseeable exceptional situation or event beyond the parties’ control*” could obviously refer to the coronavirus pandemic) but also foresees the possibility of terminating the agreement “in duly justified cases” (art. II.16).

Reallocating the enormous amount of economic resources foreseen for this project (whose total cost is more than 26 billion €) will make it easier for Italy, France and the EU to give answers to the urgent problems of citizens: today the fight against Covid-19 and tomorrow the strengthening of public health and the realization of dozens of small useful infrastructural projects expected by citizens for decades.

For all these reasons, we ask you, Mr. Director, to suspend the validation of the extension of the subsidy granted to TELT and to consider redirecting funds to economically and ecologically viable projects.

We are at your disposal for any clarification request and we thank you in advance for your cooperation and your response.

Kind regards

***Tiziana Beghin, MEP, Five Stars Movement Head of Delegation***

***Mario Furore, MEP, TRAN Committee***

***Rosa D’Amato, MEP, Substitute TRAN Committee***

***Eleonora Evi, MEP, ENVI Committee***