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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: European Court of Auditors' Special Report No. 19/2019 "INEA: benefits delivered but CEF shortcomings to be addressed"
- *Discussion of draft Council conclusions*

Following the tasking by the Permanent Representatives Committee¹, the Working Party on Transport - Intermodal Questions and Networks had a first discussion on the European Court of Auditors' Special Report 19/2019² titled "INEA: benefits delivered but CEF shortcomings to be addressed", at its meeting of 15 January 2020, following a presentation by the Court of Auditors³. Based on this discussion, the Presidency prepared draft Council conclusions as set out in the Annex, which will be examined by the Working Party at its meeting on 31 January 2020.

After an agreement of delegations is reached on the text of the draft Council conclusions, in accordance with the Council conclusions of 8 May 2000 on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors⁴, the Permanent Representatives Committee will be invited to suggest to the Council to adopt the conclusions, under the "A" items of a forthcoming session.

¹ 14172/19

² https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR19_19/SR_INEA_EN.pdf

³ WK 388/2020

⁴ 7515/00 + COR 1

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Council conclusions on European Court of Auditors' Special Report 19/2019 titled "INEA: benefits delivered but CEF shortcomings to be addressed"

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

1. THANKS the European Court of Auditors for the Special Report 19/2019 titled "INEA: benefits delivered but CEF shortcomings to be addressed".
2. REMARKS the focus of the Special Report on the management of EU spending programmes by the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA).
3. RECALLS in this context the legislative proposal for establishing the Connecting Europe Facility for the period of 2021-2027, which is currently under negotiation.
4. REITERATES the Council conclusions of December 2017 on the progress of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) implementation and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for transport, where the Council underlined inter alia the potentials for synergies between different programmes and among CEF sectors as well as the importance of a timely implementation of projects.
5. TAKES note of the conclusions and recommendations in the Special Report and WELCOMES the Court's overall very positive assessment of the performance of INEA.

In particular:

6. WELCOMES the Court's assessment that INEA is fulfilling its tasks as measured by performance indicators, that standardised procedures have led to a simplification of the implementation of delegated spending programmes and that procedures for selecting funded projects are well organised.

7. TAKES good note of the Court's recommendations to the Commission and INEA to improve the potential of synergies by removing obstacles to synergies, to ensure harmonisation and transparency of project selection procedures, as well as to reinforce the assessment of the maturity criterion of projects.
 8. ENCOURAGES the Commission and INEA to take into account the Court's recommendations for improving the conditions for the timely implementation of CEF and the monitoring of project results, and UNDERLINES in this context the importance of adequate long-term planning, especially concerning multi-annual CEF calls and projects.
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