

Declaration from the Nordic Transport Ministerial Meeting in Fredrikstad 7 and 8 November 2022

The Nordic transport ministers from Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Norway have gathered in Fredrikstad on 7 and 8 November 2022 and discussed topics of mutual interest. The Ministers agree to strengthen co-operation on transport and infrastructure in order to follow up Vision 2030: The Nordic region as the world's most sustainable and integrated region.

Our countries are at the forefront of developing sustainable transport, but the transition needs to be improved. Nordic co-operation is important in order to reconcile interests and positions among the Nordic countries, which share so many common features and challenges. The inhabitants of the Nordic region benefit from a highly integrated transport system, where roads, railways, aviation and maritime transport bind us together. All modes of transport are important, and they must be developed in co-operation. There is still a great need for improvements, especially on the development of green transport solutions and on border crossing connections. This requires a closer Nordic co-operation on transport.

It is our shared responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport. Developing smart and seamless transport solutions is important for reducing emissions and will also support Nordic integration.

Against this background, the ministers will:

- Strengthen the Nordic co-operation to promote innovative solutions in zero- and low-emission technologies.
- Strengthen Nordic research and development, including pilot projects aimed at implementing innovation and sharing best practices and knowledge.
- Pave the way for the establishment of Nordic fossil-free air routes by latest 2030 - by promoting a fossil-free aviation sector as a whole and encourage future collaboration between the Nordic countries.
- Improve charging infrastructure for road transport, with extra attention on cross-border connections.
- Continue co-operation on green shipping corridors.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has worsened the security situation in the Nordic countries and in Europe. We condemn in strongest possible terms Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine which is a grave breach of international law. The Nordic countries support the Ukrainian people in their struggle for peace and democracy. We will continue our support to Ukraine as long as needed. The changed security situation means that the Nordic co-operation on preparedness and resilience is ever more important.

The ministers will therefore:

- Continue the work in the EU Solidarity Lanes initiative.

- Consider closer civil co-operation across borders in matters regarding preparedness and resilience.

The Nordic transport system will be further developed to become even more integrated. We want to improve the cross-border corridors, not just those covered by the trans-European networks (TEN-T). As of today, we do not have an overall strategic Nordic perspective on the development of our transport system. We are convinced that an overall strategy document summarizing the existing transport plans and focusing on cross border connections in the Nordic countries will be beneficial. A strategy document will not replace the national transport plans and will only provide an overview of planned measures.

Another important challenge is the social dimension of the transport sector. This is an area where we, in co-operation with other relevant sectors, can develop closer Nordic co-operation based on common values. The Nordic region has high competence and good experiences that can contribute to the European discussion.

The ministers will consider:

- To summarize a Nordic strategy for long-term development of cross-border relations, based on each country's strategic transport plans.
- Closer co-operation regarding social conditions in the transport sector, including working conditions, the fight against work-related crime/social dumping, and recruitment of transport workers, in particular professional drivers.

In order to ensure good Nordic co-operation to solve current and future challenges in the transport sector and to follow up the Vision 2030, the ministers agree to continue and enhance our co-operation.

The ministers agree on:

- Continuation of the high level of activity established during the Norwegian Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2022, with frequent dialogue and ambition to meet at least twice a year.
- Maintain a Nordic contact group coordinating and preparing meetings and activities.
- Continuing with Nordic pre-meetings before the formal meetings of the EU Transport Ministers.