



BusinessEurope recommendations for the EU Global Gateway Initiative

- **Prioritisation**: The EU connectivity strategy needs to prioritise and focus on what is most essential, instead of trying to do everything at the same time.
- **Business involvement**: The business advisory group announced in the 2018 EU connectivity strategy should finally be created. Companies understand the realities on the ground and will thus be able to put meat on the bones of the strategy. Such a stakeholder platform should be easily accessible and serve to discuss the implementation of the strategy, receive input from business and share knowledge to maximise the strategy's impact and effectiveness.
- **Budget**: The EU needs a dedicated budget to implement its Connectivity Strategy. In line with its Team Europe approach, the EU needs to involve Member States, European development financing institutions and the private sector to ensure that sufficient funding is put on the table and maximise impact. Innovative financing mechanisms and blending should be used more widely to leverage additional private investment, but it must be kept in mind that grants remain key for certain types of non-commercially viable infrastructure.
- **Sustainability of investments**: The EU Connectivity Strategy, and its dedicated budget, should ensure the sustainability of investments, i.e. the financial and economic viability of the projects, as well as high environmental standards. This should be translated into overarching procurement rules ensuring the best price-quality ratio, and the integration of award criteria other than the mere purchase price (e.g. life-cycle costs).
- **Reciprocity**: EU-funded connectivity projects should not be open to companies and entities from countries that do not grant reciprocal access to their connectivity-related projects to EU operators. Moreover, the EU and its implementing partners need to have measures in place to address abnormally low bids that may result from foreign subsidies. At the same time, the EU should keep advocating for improved access for European companies to third country connectivity projects, particularly under the BRI.
- **Standards**: EU-funded Digital connectivity projects should be made accessible on conditions that ensure, where relevant, adherence to global standards (such as 5G), while broadly promoting reliance on international standards that are developed in a transparent manner, according to consensus-based processes. This will ensure open and non-discriminatory participation of all interested stakeholders, following the WTO TBT Principles for the Development of International Standards.¹
- **Communication**: Connectivity is not a well understood term and although the EU is a major donor, there remains a lack of awareness of EU-funded projects in partner countries. The EU should better showcase and communicate the benefits of EU-funded projects and rebrand its connectivity strategy with a more attractive name. This could also make European companies more aware of existing opportunities.

¹ https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tbt_e/principles_standards_tbt_e.htm



- Coherence: The EU and Member States need to coordinate their relevant policies more closely to ensure a true Team Europe approach to connectivity. In this way, the connectivity strategy should be flanked by a more coherent foreign economic diplomacy on EU and Member State level.
- International Context: Building on the Carbis Bay G7 Summit Communiqué, the EU and its Member States should coordinate the new Connectivity Strategy with the G7 'Build Back Better World' initiative (B3W) and engage pro-actively in the OECD 'Blue Dot Network' which aims to attract investment into sustainable quality infrastructure through the establishment of a certification scheme for infrastructure projects.
- Intra-EU connectivity: EU connectivity starts at home. Remaining regulatory, administrative, and technical barriers within the EU need to be addressed to boost investment in infrastructure and to promote interconnections and interoperability. Moreover, the EU should consider the BRI in its TEN-T corridor studies and cooperate with China to determine priority corridors to prevent possible bottlenecks and transport constraints.