

Memorandum of understanding (MoU) between actors in Northern Norway, Finland and Sweden regarding Platform North

Platform North

Cross-border cooperation to support the development of the transport system and society



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Parties

The intention of this MoU is to facilitate cooperation in Platform North by forming a relationship between national governmental authorities, regional governmental authorities, politically governed regions, and business representative organisations operating in Northern Norway, Northern Finland and Northern Sweden.

Parties signing the MoU are found in the end of the MoU.

Future additional driving parties may join the MoU at a later stage.

Purpose

This MoU establishes objective, purpose, and forms of cooperation for Platform North.

Background

Major industrial investments are on-going in Northern Norway, Northern Sweden and Northern Finland, with new or expanding businesses. Most of them are connected to the green transition in society with aims for sustainable and fossil-free solutions. In order to strengthen Nordic and European competitiveness, resilient transport infrastructure is key.

Further, Sweden, Norway and Finland are all member states of NATO. This has enhanced the importance of cross-border transport and cooperation in an east-west direction. In addition, extensive military exercises are being held in the Northern area.

All three countries work with climate targets for reduced emissions, enhancing the need of low-emission transport solutions. Another aspect is the effect of climate change that brings challenges to society and infrastructure.

Freight and passenger transports increases, stressing a need for efficient climate-smart transport solutions and infrastructure investments.

There is a need for

- Continuous cooperation in the north building on the multimodal TEN-T corridors (EU) – development and use .
- Continuous regional cross-border cooperation for infrastructure managers for all modes of transport – in connection with other stakeholders for desired development.

Platform North – objective and purpose

The ambition of Platform North is to be an umbrella cooperation for exchange of information, to enhance a system perspective, and to coordinate and collaborate efforts for development, complementing the several on-going initiatives in specific geographies and issues, within the Northern Nordics.

Platform North will work in accordance with any established or coming agreements and priorities on a National, European, EU and/or NATO level. Transport and infrastructure are important for both civil and military preparedness. Open information is used in Platform North, and a close cooperation with the NTPC (Nordic transport preparedness cooperation) is strived for regarding civil preparedness needs and dual-use.

Objective

- Adaptation of the infrastructure to the needs of infrastructure users, such as business life, citizens and the military
- Reduced barriers to seamless cross-border transport, both physical (infrastructure) and administrative (laws, regulations, systems, etc.)

Purpose

- Provide a regional cross-border forum where issues can be raised and discussed that are important to meet the growing demand for transport in Northern Europe, as part of the TEN-T
- Strengthen the development of the transport-system to facilitate business start-ups and expansions, labour supply etc. in order to enhance Europe's competitiveness
- Strengthen the development of climate neutrality infrastructure and transport
- Contribute to stakeholders in gaining a common overview, understanding and information
- Support stakeholders with the conditions to plan their activities at an early stage, individually and collectively
- Strengthen collaboration between different stakeholders
- Focus on key areas such as financing, information sharing, transport planning, transport flows forecasts, future developments

Forms of cooperation

A network

Platform North is a network. Platform North does not take over any formal mandate or responsibilities from the participating organisations.

Stakeholder organisations from national governmental authorities, regional governmental authorities, politically governed regions, and business representative organisations operating in the area can join this MoU, and be part of driving the Platform North. Participation is decided upon by the Steering Committee. Contacts are Administrative Coordinators.

Concerned stakeholders can participate in arranged events and sign-up for receiving information from Platform North. Stakeholders can be public, semi-public, private or organisations from global, European, national, regional or local levels. Participation is administered by Administrative Coordinators. If there is a joint initiative, each organisation signs/participate depending on their interest.

Each organisation is involved due to its own expertise and interest, and is responsible for its own costs related to participation in the network.

Ministers of transport from Sweden, Norway and Finland are invited to the yearly Platform North Forum.

Steering Committee

Platform North is governed by a Steering Committee with 12 representatives, 4 from each country, of which one is Chair. The Steering committee aims to represent a mix of participants regarding organisations and geography. This structure ensures balanced representation and facilitates effective decision-making in consensus. The Chair is rotated yearly among countries, in the following order Sweden, Norway, Finland. Each representative will appoint a vice-person.

Specific tasks

- Clarify, concretize, initiate ideas for collaboration
- Find leading organisation for ideas/tasks/initiatives. The leading organisation decides how to proceed with that task
- Follow, support, and give professional recommendations to the progress of these ideas/tasks/initiatives
- Ensure maintenance of the website for Platform North

- Handle MoU (update change of parties)
- Plan and organise annual workshops for the Steering Committee
- Plan for a Platform North Forum once a year

The Steering Committee can agree to form Reference groups or similar further ahead, to help overcome differences between the countries' organisations, or otherwise improve the progress.

If differences occur the Chair has a responsibility to push for acceptable solutions.

Chair

All signatories, as driving stakeholders for the Platform North can act as Chair.

Administrative Coordinators

The Administrative Coordinators help with the progress and operation of Platform North. There will be 4 Administrative Coordinators. Each country will have one Administrative Coordinator who serves as the contact point for their respective country, and the Chair will have one Administrative Coordinator that also coordinate the joint work of the Administrative Coordinators.

Specific tasks

- Arrange yearly nominations for the Steering Committee, Administrative Coordinator and Chair (when relevant) in their respective country
- Help prepare meetings and documents for the Steering Committee
- Participate in the Steering Committee meetings
- Gather input from the driving parts in their respective country for work progress in Platform North
- Offer participation to other organisations in respective country

- Help organising the Platform North Forum, such as preparing the program and distribute invitations in respective country
- Help administrating the Platform North website

The Administrative Coordinator for the chair should support the Chair and ensure progress by:

- Arrange and participate in meetings in the Steering Committee
- Prepare documents for the Steering Committee
- Coordinate collaboration with Administrative Coordinators
- Plan for Platform North Forum with own responsible organisation

Appointment of Steering Committee representatives, Administrative Coordinators and Chair

- Once a year the current Administrative Coordinator from each country contacts the organisations in the MoU from their country for possible rotating participation in the Steering committee, appointment of the Administrative Coordinator and Chair (when relevant).
- The 4 representatives/country in the Steering Committee should as far as possible include one from each type of organisation: national governmental authorities, regional governmental authorities, politically governed regions, and business representative organisations
- The representation should reflect the concerned geography
- The representing organisation decides which individual that will represent from their organisation. There are no requirements of the individual position, although it is considered preferable if the Steering Committee is represented in a similar way from the different countries
- The representatives should serve as representatives for similar organisations from their country
- The Chair appoints the chairs Administrative Coordinator from its own organisation.

Signatories

All signatories, as driving stakeholders for the Platform North, are expected to contribute to the work depending on needs and possibilities. This could concern competence support, tasks in connection with the forums, serving as a reference part for the Steering Committee etc.

Platform North Forum

The organisation that holds the Chair position of the Steering Committee is responsible, including financial risk, for arranging the yearly Platform North Forum.

Duration

This MoU is not legally binding. Any amendments and additions to the text of this MoU shall only apply if they are in writing and signed by all parties.

If any part wants to withdraw from the MoU, they can do so at all times.

Addition to, or withdrawal from, this MoU of a single part will be handled by the Steering Committee and will not require all parties involvement.

The MoU will be evaluated by the Steering Committee after three years. If decided to continue, the MoU is extended another three years, else the MoU will be terminated. All signatories will be informed about the decision by the Administrative Coordinators.

Date:

Organisation:

Signatory name/title:

Organisations E-mail:

A list of organisations that have signed and been accepted as parties by the Steering Committee will be available at the Platform North website.

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