

Memorandum of Understanding

between

Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications, Tallinn City Government, City of Helsinki, Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council and Harju County Government, later referred to as the Founding Partners of the Finnish-Estonian Transport Link Initiative

on the joint understanding of the challenges and objectives of Finnish-Estonian cooperation towards further integration of the two economies.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) sets forth the terms and forms of cooperation towards the implementation of improved mobility and interactions of the Finnish-Estonian Transport Link.

Background

The economic integration of Estonia and Finland and the regional integration of the Helsinki-Tallinn twin-city are laying the foundations for this region's ambition of becoming one of the leading economic centres of Northern Europe. By combining the financial, material and human resources of these two regions, the innovation potential of the area can be multiplied. Both cities have a high education level and the economic complementarities bring large-scale opportunities both for traditional industries and for new industries based on innovation.

Helsinki and Tallinn are the two most remote EU capitals from the centre of Europe with regard to land transportation and travel times in Europe. Rail Baltic will address this issue by removing a missing link in the European rail network. It is essential to link Finland better to this corridor.

Purpose

The Founding Partners and other signatories of this MoU share the ambition to activate Estonian-Finnish dialogue and cross-border cooperation through enhanced mobility and digital interaction, to further support the integration of our economies and improve our common labour markets and to establish economic, social, cultural and educational links and networks in order to intensify the mutually beneficial integration of the Finnish and Estonian societies.

The signatories of this MoU together establish the Finnish-Estonian Transport Link Initiative, which will be promoted through various measures, such as

- remove the Helsinki-Tallinn bottleneck of the North-Sea Baltic TEN-T Corridor.
- synchronise the digital transport services between Helsinki and Tallinn
- support the implementation of a full feasibility study on the Finnish-Estonian Transport Fixed Link
- support pilots projects on smart digital transport services between Helsinki and Tallinn.

Implementation

This MoU is signed by the six Founding Partners and later by the associate partners. The Founding Partners form a working group named secretariat of the Finnish-Estonian Transport

Link Initiative to coordinate the above-mentioned activities. The Initiative organises thematic round-tables and conferences and works for broad and effective communication and participation of the two societies. Communication with the entire Baltic Sea Region and the EU institutions is a priority task. The partners work together with the aim of linking the different parts our region more closely to each other. The partners will lobby and promote the Initiative in all political and public arenas.

Initiative

By signing this MoU, the Founding Partners form an open initiative called the Finnish-Estonian Transport Link Initiative. It is an open cooperation network for all interested parties.

Duration

This MoU shall become effective upon signature and will remain in effect until modified or terminated. This MoU may be modified by mutual consent of authorised officials from founding partners. In the absence of a mutual agreement by the authorised officials this MoU shall end on 31 December, 2018.

Signatories:

Signed in Tallinn, _____ January 2016

**Estonian Ministry of Economic
Affairs and Communications**

(Name, position)

Tallinn City Government

(Name, position)

Harju County Government

(Name, position)

**Finnish Ministry of Transport
and Communications**

(Name, position)

City of Helsinki

(Name, position)

Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council

(Name, position)