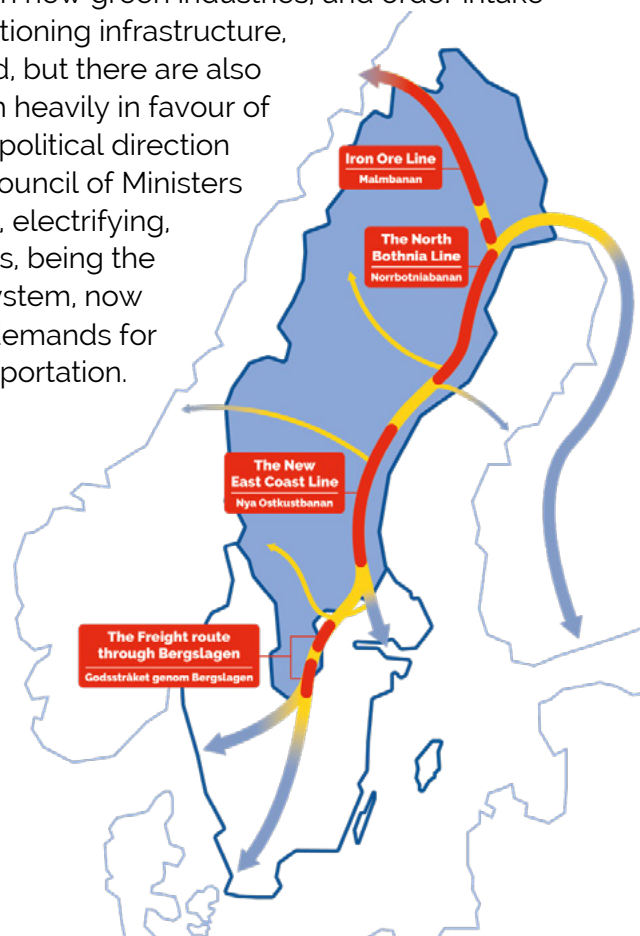


The Almedalen Declaration 2024

Nordic cooperation and new financing solutions have never been more important than they are now. The Nordic infrastructure system is vast and extensive, yet there are significant deficiencies. Railways, ports, airports, and roads must be interconnected in an efficient manner to create a cohesive, robust, and competitive transport system. At the same time, the new geopolitical situation and Sweden's NATO membership, along with the green industrial transition, place entirely new demands on our transport infrastructure. To meet today's and tomorrow's needs, increased financial resources are required.

The Bothnian Corridor is a collaboration between the seven northernmost regions for the expansion of the Iron Ore Line, the North Bothnia Line, the New East Coast Line, and the Freight Route through Bergslagen with connecting cross routes. The recently adopted TEN-T Regulation strengthens our position by prioritising several important ports, nodes, and terminals within our geography. The Bothnian Corridor, which is part of the European transport corridor Scandinavia–Mediterranean, already connects Sweden, Norway, and Finland through a few cross-border connections. The Nordic perspective is clearly reflected in our work.

Industry is making substantial investments in new green industries, and order intake is reaching new record levels. Without functioning infrastructure, green industrial development is jeopardized, but there are also significant security policy factors that weigh heavily in favour of increased investment in infrastructure. The political direction for the Swedish presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers emphasises the importance of streamlining, electrifying, and digitising the transport system. Railways, being the world's most proven electrified transport system, now need further development to meet future demands for climate-smart, fast, and high-capacity transportation.



- The Bothnian Corridor, the New East Coast Line, and the North Bothnia Line Group welcome the ambition in the Narvik Declaration for deepened Nordic cooperation to secure robust and resilient infrastructure for both military mobility and civilian benefits – dual use.
- The Nordic countries should intensify their cooperation in the planning and implementation of cross-border connections, particularly railways. This can be achieved through increased coordination between the Swedish Transport Administration, Bane NOR, and the Finnish Transport Infrastructure Agency to provide better decision-making support for their respective governments.
- Platform North can become an important tool for joint planning of cross-border infrastructure and for finding financing solutions for joint infrastructure projects, for example, through increased co-financing from the EU.
- The European transport plan, TEN-T, should be the blueprint for national planning to ensure the implementation of the core network by 2030 and the comprehensive network by 2050.
- The Nordic countries already have extensive experience with alternative financing and implementation models. We urge the Nordic Transport Ministers to leverage and further develop this experience.
- The Bothnian Corridor collaboration has developed a proposal for a comprehensive financing package for the Iron Ore Line, the North Bothnia Line, the New East Coast Line, and the Freight Route through Bergslagen. The aim is to accelerate the establishment of necessary and functioning routes and to strengthen cross-border connections.
- The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) strengthens cooperation around the Baltic Sea, and at the annual forum in Visby on October 30-31, further steps can be taken to better enhance collaboration in the Nordic region.

