

# Freight transport in Europe

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The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted an own initiative report by Michael **CRAMER** (Greens/EFA, DE) on Freight transport in Europe, in response to four European Commission communications on 'The EU's freight transport agenda: Boosting the efficiency, integration and sustainability of freight transport in Europe'.

The report stresses that Europe's freight transport systems must meet pressing challenges to **increase effective integration and sustainability of freight transport in Europe**, making a greater contribution to improving mobility, energy efficiency, reducing oil consumption, polluting emissions, and external costs. The report encourages the Commission, the Member States and industry to support in future a freight transport policy which is more sustainable in terms of mobility, by promoting the use of more efficient logistics systems and the user and polluter pays principles for all modes of transport.

Noting that the EU's powers and resources for improving freight transport markets are limited, MEPs call on Transport Ministers responsible for the main European Corridors to take up the issue of infrastructure investments and at least agree on coordinating their National Investment Plans in relation to their respective corridors.

MEPs look to the Commission to define the '**green corridors**' as exemplary mobility and inter-modality projects, to shift to environmentally friendly modes to reduce overall accidents, congestion, noise, local toxic and non-toxic pollution, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, landscape and energy consumption and to increase the use of renewable sources and the intelligent transport systems. The Commission and Member States are called upon to offer stronger incentives to boost the environmental performance of all modes of transport.

The Commission should also allocate **at least 40% of EU transport infrastructure appropriations to the railways** and give priority to freight to reduce road transport needs. MEPs call on the Commission to concentrate EU co-financing on the efficiency, interoperability and upgrading of rail infrastructure, intermodal hubs as well as all other modes of freight transport.

MEPs also suggest that the Commission proposes, **no later than the end of 2008**, a programme for strengthening cooperation between the Member States responsible for projects in the area of urban freight transport, and that it facilitates and assesses solutions to the current blockages, with particular attention to goods transport.

In order to improve the transport system, the committee stresses the need to **standardise and to simplify the administrative procedures** of the authorities involved in the freight transport market, together with simplified customs rules and procedures at borders. MEPs welcome the decision to establish a European maritime space without barriers and urge the Commission to ask the appropriate international associations and organisations to develop a single intermodal document.

The report stresses the utmost importance of interoperable road charging for efficient freight transport in Europe. MEPs also insist on the importance of quickly adopting a worldwide standard for intermodal loading units. They call on the Commission to support projects concerning the differential use of high-speed lines e.g. for light freight transport.

Lastly, the Member States are called upon to give absolute priority to higher **education** and further education in the logistic and freight transport sector.