Rights of passengers in bus and coach transport; cooperation between national authorities

2008/0237(COD) - 11/06/2009

During a public deliberation, the Council took note of the **Presidency progress report** on a draft Regulation on the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport. In addition, it held a policy debate focussing on the scope of this proposal on the basis of three questions suggested by the Presidency.

During the debate, all Member States reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening passenger rights travelling by bus and coach, in general, and, in particular, to facilitate travelling for disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility.

However, a vast majority of Member States have pointed out that they consider that the scope is not sufficiently adapted to the specificities of the bus and coach services industry and it needs to be clarified and adjusted.

- **Regarding the first option (limited scope with no further exemption)**, a clear majority of delegations favour this option and consider that the scope of the proposed Regulation should be limited to national long-distance and international regular bus/coach transport services, bearing in mind the need to protect the rights of passengers as well as to adopt provisions which are proportionate and feasible as regards bus and coach undertakings.
- **As for the second option (open scope with possible exemptions)**, some delegations consider that such an option is worth exploring: this would ensure that basic rights in selected areas would be guaranteed to all passengers, while leaving margin for possible national adaptations and exemptions taking into account the principle of subsidiarity as regards local transports.
- **Regarding the third option (wide scope with graduated provisions)**, it could be supported only by two or three delegations. This option seems to be too prescriptive and lacking the necessary flexibility to be applied in an effective way to the whole sector of bus and coach transport services.

The Council invited the competent bodies to pursue the examination of the proposal in order achieve significant progress under the forthcoming Swedish Presidency.

The Commission presented its proposal in December 2008. The European Parliament adopted its first-reading opinion in May 2009.