Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system

2011/2096(INI) - 15/12/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 523 votes to 64 with 37 abstentions, a legislative resolution following the Commission White Paper entitled 'Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system'.

Members welcome the 2001 White Paper but note that the major goals of the latter were achieved either only in part or not at all. They make the following recommendations:

- by 2013, the Commission should make specific proposals, based on the report on European road safety 2011-2020 and in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity, to reduce the number of deaths and severe injuries on the roads by 50% by 2020 in relation to 2010. These proposals should pay special attention to the most vulnerable road users and indicate, in each case, the results expected in terms of accident reduction;

- by 2014, the Commission should submit a proposal to provide for the internalisation of the external costs of all modes of freight and passenger transport in accordance with their specific nature, whilst avoiding double charging and market distortions. The revenue from this internalisation of external costs should be used to fund investment in safety, research, new technologies, climate protection and noise reduction in the context of sustainable mobility and in infrastructure.

The Commission is also asked to submit:

- a proposal on social and working conditions by 2013, in order to facilitate the creation of a genuinely integrated European transport market and, at the same time, enhance the attractiveness of the sector for workers. This proposal should be based on an in-depth analysis of the current situation with regard to social and working conditions in all transport modes and the degree of harmonisation between the laws of the Member States, and on an assessment of the impact of developments on the transport labour market over the period to 2020. It should increase employment and improve the situation of workers throughout the transport sector and take account of new technologies and logistical services which can be used to improve transport services in general and for disabled people in particular;

- by 2013 a coherent, quantitative analysis of the current situation with regard to the level of infrastructure, the density of the transport network and the quality of transport services in all EU Member States. This will provide an overview of the current situation in the EU27, highlight inequalities in the development of transport infrastructure between the Member States and their regions and outline the way transport infrastructure across all modes is currently funded and future investment priorities.

Resource-efficient transport system: Parliament approves the 10 goals for a competitive and resource-efficient transport system and the targets set in the White Paper for 2050 and 2030, but considers that more specific provisions are required for the period to 2020 with regard to funding and the general challenges facing transport. It calls on the Commission to draw up legal rules to achieve a 20% reduction

in emissions of CO2 and other GHGs from transport (by comparison with 1990 reference figures) and the following intermediate goals by 2020 (by comparison with 2010 reference figures), in accordance with the 20-20-20 targets:

- a 20% reduction in CO2 emissions from road transport,
- a 20% reduction in noise and energy consumption for rail transport,
- a 30% reduction in CO2 emissions from air transport across European airspace,
- an EU-wide uniform 30% reduction in emissions of CO2 and pollutants in shipping, to which the IMO agreements on the Energy Efficiency Design Index and the Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan will make a contribution.

These goals should be considered priorities, which should be checked every year.

Single European transport area: Members highlight the as yet insufficiently explored potential of transport in many areas, and insist on the importance of a single European transport area, with interconnection and interoperability, based on genuinely European management of transport infrastructure and systems achieved by eliminating 'border-effects' between Member States in all transport modes, in order to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of the entire EU. They stress the importance of territorial cohesion and, in particular, the accessibility problems facing the outermost regions, islands, landlocked and peripheral regions.

TEN-T networks: Members welcome the Commission's proposal on the 'Connecting Europe Facility' and the Project Bonds Initiative, and urge that:

- Member States commit themselves to eliminating the main known bottlenecks in every transport mode in the European transport area by 2020 and, if necessary, encourage their circumvention by establishing an intermodal infrastructure at the start and end points of a stretch, to prioritise cross-border projects between all the Member States, without neglecting connections to neighbouring countries, and to submit an approved funding plan by 2015;
- the Commission commits itself to increasing the stability of funding of TEN-T projects, in coordination with regional policy;
- the Commission commits itself to supporting alternative funding models and instruments, including project bonds, and to providing for increased use of that revenue to fund TEN-T projects when making proposals to internalise external costs;
- in order to ensure the long-term effectiveness and visibility of EU action in the framework of TEN-T, the definition of priorities must be seen in close connection with the conditions governing the use of regional structural funds and the Member States must be required to guarantee funding for these projects beyond the end of the EU's multiannual programmes;
- project priorities should only be maintained after 2015 if Member States have taken binding budget decisions to ensure the implementation of the projects and that EU co-funding should be based on the ‘use it or lose it’ principle;
- EuroVelo, the European long-distance cycle route network, should be included in the TEN-T network.

Renewable energy: Parliament stresses the importance of a coherent strategy for making the transition to alternative and renewable energies for transport and calls for the creation of incentives to choose sustainable physically active, safe and healthy means of transport and mobility. In this respect, Members propose that:

- the Commission and the Member States, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity, submit by 2013 proposals to develop initiatives that promote environmentally friendly public transport, walking and cycling, especially in towns and cities;

- by 2015, a proposal is presented on urban mobility in which, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity, support for projects is made conditional on the submission by local authorities of sustainable mobility plans for efficient passenger and goods logistics chains in urban and built-up areas.

Parliament believes that the basic rules on passengers' rights should be laid down in a Charter of Passengers' Rights covering all forms of transport, and therefore expects the Commission to put forward, at the latest at the beginning of 2012, a corresponding proposal. It also calls on Member States to support and work towards the establishment of a level playing field between all modes of transport in terms of energy taxation and value added tax (VAT).

Recommendations: lastly, the resolution makes a series of recommendations on the specific sectors of road transport, shipping, air transport, and rail transport.

Road transport: another review, by 2013, of the regulatory framework governing driving and rest periods in passenger and goods transport; (ii) the targets already set to be met and for fresh impetus to be given to the priority projects in the Trans-European Road Network; (iii) an overall 40% increase by 2020, as compared with 2010 figures, in the number of secure parking spaces for heavy goods vehicles on the Trans-European Road Network (TERN) and improvements in their quality (hygiene standards); (iv) support Member State initiatives to create a safe and environmentally-friendly fleet by means of tax incentives; (v) an improvement in the initial and further training of persons employed in the transport sector, including those providing transport-related services for passengers, and in access to the professions concerned, in order to improve working conditions and salaries and to boost the attractiveness of these professions.

Shipping: (i) a proposal to be put forward by 2013 on the 'Blue Belt'; (ii) introduction of a European policy for short and medium sea shipping; (iii) a proposal on a 20% increase in the number of multi-modal connections (platforms) for inland waterways, inland ports and rail transport by 2020, and corresponding financial support; (iv) under the next multiannual financial framework for the period 2014-2020, the allocation of at least 15% of TEN-T funding to projects that improve sustainable and multimodal connections between seaports, inland ports and multimodal platforms.

Air transport: (i) promote the implementation of the Single European Sky II, and by 2013 a proposal on the completion of a single European airspace through a reduction in the number of functional airspace blocks; (ii) service quality, and coordination with international standards, to be prioritised in further proposals on market liberalization; (iii) take all the steps required to ensure that European trading in emissions certificates is internationally accepted by 2012, thereby guaranteeing a level playing field internationally.

Rail transport: (i) the Commission take Member States' commitments in relation to local public transport and existing service levels into account when proposing further opening-up of the markets;(ii) greater promotion of technical harmonisation and interoperability between the Member States, and in particular harmonisation of the rules on the authorisation of vehicles by 2015; (iii) the Commission to submit, no later than on 31 December 2012, a proposal for a directive containing provisions on the relationship

between infrastructure management and transport operations and a proposal for opening-up the domestic rail passenger market which does not detract from the quality of rail transport services and safeguards public service obligations; (v) the Commission to evaluate the impact that the opening-up of the rail freight market has had on single wagonload traffic and, should it emerge that the volume of such traffic has declined, to submit, no later than 31 December 2012, a proposal to allow Member States to support this activity.