Logistics in the EU and multimodal transport in the new TEN-T corridors

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The European Parliament adopted by 520 votes to 68, with 79 abstentions, a resolution on logistics in the EU and multimodal transport in the new TEN-T corridors.

Members recalled that **modern efficient transport and logistics** are essential for the effective functioning of the EU's internal market and important for ensuring competitiveness, creating new business and employment opportunities and achieving the Union's climate goals and the objectives of the COP 21 Paris Agreement.

The third goal of the Commission's White Paper on Transport aims to **shift 30 % of road freight over 300 km to more sustainable modes such as rail and waterborne transport by 2030**, and more than 50 % by 2050, requiring also the development of appropriate infrastructure.

The resolution addressed the following key issues:

EU freight logistics strategy: Parliament highlighted the need to formulate a renewed EU strategy for freight logistics which should:

- take account of the new TEN-T infrastructure policy,
- further **reduce regulatory, operational and technical barriers**, designed to ensure optimal use of resources,
- apply and implement **new technologies** that will strengthen the sector's performance and accelerate the shift towards a secure and low-carbon transport system,
- **increase connectivity and develop infrastructure** in areas where it is missing,
- **promote and support the European rail supply industry** as well as boosting a European rail **reindustrialisation** policy, with the win-win perspective of making EU logistics more sustainable and obtaining a better competition position for rail products on the global market,
- take into account from the outset **drones** as a future mode of transport,
- promote continued development of academic **research** and **education** in the area transport and logistics,
- present an **independent scientific study** detailing: (i) the extent to which road freight could be transferred to rail and inland waterways by 2030 and by 2050, the costs associated with this, and; (ii) the extent to which environmental damage such as noise and air pollution can be avoided.

Promoting multimodality: the implementation of the TEN-T network, **with particular emphasis on cross-border connections** and within the time-frames laid down and completed by 2030, shall reduce bottlenecks, improve interoperability between the various modes of transport.

Parliament called for increased involvement of multimodal platforms in Member States' planning and in the further development of routes. It also stressed the importance of investments in **urban nodes**, as well as of the promotion of rail connections with industrial plants and **improved interconnectivity of rail** with seaports, inland ports and hinterland hubs.

The Commission is asked to prioritise these investments in the 2017 review of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

Strengthening coordination: regretting that Member States' national infrastructure plans are too often decided without reference to the TEN-T objectives, Members stressed the need to **increase the coordination** between the two levels of planning. The Commission is called upon to **strengthen the sphere of action of the TEN-T European coordinators** to look beyond the geographical scope of the corridors under their respective responsibility, and to cover horizontal policy issues such as multi-modality and efficient freight logistics

Improved simplification and a new framework for digitalisation: the resolution stressed the urgency of greater simplification of **documents and administrative and customs procedures** across all modes and across the different stages in logistics chains. The Commission is called upon to propose, by the end of 2017, a **digital framework for electronic information exchange** and transport management in multimodal transport (efreight) with a view to facilitating a simplified, paperless, seamless, transparent, secured and trusted information flow between businesses, customers and authorities, building on established services (such as SafeSeaNet, etc).

Investing in the European Transport System with logistics as a focal point: Parliament underlined the need to ensure enough EU funding for the implementation of the TEN-T beyond the present MFF. The Commission is expected to:

- propose a streamlining of measures and resources for the implementation of the priority projects in good time;
- urge Member States to make the requisite investments in order to finalise the connections of the EU' s core corridors;
- take fully into consideration **automation and its impact in its logistic strategy** and devise a new strategy that guarantees that **drones** can be efficiently integrated into the TEN-T programme.

Urgent and more efficient integration of transport modes: Parliament insisted on the need to concentrate major efforts on the revitalisation of railways and on the strengthening of inland waterways (IWW) as a priority for the EU's sustainable transport strategy. It called on the Commission to come forward with specific solutions to ease access to European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) funding for **European Rail**

Traffic Management System (ERTMS) deployment in favour of both infrastructure and locomotive installations.

In view of **reducing CO2 emissions** in general, the Commission is asked to introduce stronger and more effective measures and incentives to encourage rail companies to **tackle freight-rail noise**, given the adverse health effects of noise pollution. It is also encouraged to:

- foster the development of **electric modes of transport** and the necessary infrastructure along the whole TEN-T network, and, especially in town centres;
- foster the development of **innovative transport schemes** involving, for example, the use of electric vehicles and renewable energy sources;
- the development of **alternative fuels** and the necessary infrastructure.

Given the role that the digitalisation of services has to play in encouraging more environmentally friendly transport solutions, Members called on the Commission to facilitate, also through a **coherent legislative approach at EU level**, the access to and sharing of data concerning traffic flows along the corridors and the use of multimodal transport, especially for SMEs, and to secure greater involvement of local operators and public authorities in this sector.

Better training and job conditions to attract new professionals: working and living conditions of the workforce in the logistic chain have deteriorated substantially in the past years, making this sector less attractive for new generations, in particular for mobile workers.

The Commission and the Member States are called upon to:

- **identify training and learning needs** at EU level and to propose, as a matter of urgency, measures to make it more attractive to young people and to future generations;
- provide sufficient and **safe parking space** in the TENT-t corridors to avoid increasing security issues with mobile transport workers;
- take into consideration Parliament's recent recommendations on social-economic aspects in the transport sector and on **combating unfair practices in the labour market**.

Lastly, the Commission is called upon to work with stakeholders to develop an **EU-wide framework for multimodal transport and logistics statistical data**, including developing new indicators that better reflect real freight trends.