Resolution on road transport in the European Union

2017/2545(RSP) - 18/05/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on road transport in the European Union, tabled by the Committee on Transport and Tourism.

Recalling that the road transport economy in the EU accounts for **5 million direct jobs** and contributes close to 2 % of the EU's GDP, Members considered that the Commission should put forward, as a matter of urgency, **legislative proposals** concerning the road haulage market, with the aim of identifying and addressing the challenges that the sector is facing.

Improving competitiveness and innovation in the road sector: Parliament considered that the road initiatives should provide a much-needed **boost for a more sustainable, safe, innovative and competitive European road sector** and further develop European road infrastructure.

These initiatives should:

- foster technological development of vehicles,
- promote alternative fuels,
- increase interoperability of transport systems and modes,
- ensure access to the market for transport SMEs.

When drafting road initiatives, the Commission shall take into account: (i) Parliament's resolution of 9 September 2015 on the implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport; (ii) Parliament's resolution of 14 September 2016 on social dumping in the European Union.

Members called on the Commission to:

- develop **communications infrastructure** both 'vehicle to vehicle' and 'vehicle to infrastructure' to improve road safety;
- increase harmonisation in **passenger transport and transport of goods**, and in particular for electronic tolling systems in the EU.

Facilitating cross-border mobility on road: Parliament urged the Member States to implement relevant EU rules more thoroughly and on the Commission to monitor such implementation more closely.

Member States are called upon to **step up checks**, particularly in relation to compliance with driving and rest times and cabotage rules, and to use effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions.

Members urged the Commission to:

- speed up the mandatory use of **digital devices on board** such as smart tachographs and the use of electronic consignment notes (e-CMR) to improve the monitoring of compliance with relevant EU rules;
- further harmonise existing rules for **mandatory safety equipment** in light and heavy duty vehicles such as warning triangles, reflective jackets, spare lamps or breathalysers;
- examine possibilities to **reduce the bureaucratic and financial burdens** of different national legislations in order to facilitate the freedom to provide transport services across the EU;
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- propose a **revision** of the European Electronic Toll Service (EETS) Directive, which should include an external cost element based on the 'polluter pays' principle, be fully interoperable.

Parliament stressed that a coherent, fair, transparent, non-discriminating and non-bureaucratic **road charging system** implemented in the EU and proportionate to the use of the road and to the external costs generated by lorries, buses and cars (the 'user pays' and 'polluter pays' principles).

Improving social conditions and safety rules: Parliament expressed its concerned about socially problematic business practices that also present a risk in terms of road safety, related mainly to cabotage rules and to the so-called 'letterbox' companies.

Members insisted on the need to:

- review the requirements on the **right of establishment** in order to eradicate 'letterbox' companies in the road transport sector;
- address issues relating to driver fatigue, including ensuring that any investment in road infrastructure includes improving facilities for drivers;
- clarify the rules governing access to road transport occupation, and to improve their implementation, in order to effectively tackle **fraud and abuse**;
- clarify the application of the provisions of the Posting of Workers Directive in the road transport sector;
- address the **quality of work** in the road transport sector, with respect in particular to training, certification, working conditions and career development;
- create an '**electronic and integrated operator file**' for all operators operating under the Community licence;
- set up a plan for constructing/providing capacity and user-friendly, safe and secure **rest areas** with a sufficient number of parking spaces, sanitary facilities and transit hotels.

Promoting low-emission road transport: Parliament called for effective national policy frameworks to stimulate the wider uptake of vehicles using alternative fuels (e.g. electricity, hybrid, hydrogen, compressed natural gas), and called for the rapid deployment of the necessary refuelling/recharging infrastructure.

Members called on the Commission to:

- come up with ambitious proposals for **CO2 standards** for trucks and buses in order to reduce GHG emissions from the road sector;
- speed up the transition away from traditional fossil-fuel-powered road vehicles to **sustainable electric-powered vehicles**, such as those using hydrogen fuel cells;
- stimulate the development and use of **Intelligent Transport Systems** and promote innovations.