Measures for a sustainable rail market in view of the COVID-19 pandemic

2020/0127(COD) - 17/09/2020 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 678 votes to 3, with 5 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing measures for a sustainable rail market in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The proposal for a Regulation is intended to complete the existing rail-related framework in order to allow national authorities and rail stakeholders to deal more easily with a number of negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to respond to the urgent needs of the railway sector as long as those consequences persist.

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure by amending the Commission proposal as follows:

Reduction, waiver or deferral of charges for the minimum access package and of reservation charges

Member States may authorise infrastructure managers to reduce, waive or defer the payment of charges for the minimum access package, and for access to infrastructure connecting service facilities, where appropriate according to the market segments identified in their network statements, in a transparent, objective and nondiscriminatory way, where such payment has or will become due during the reference period.

Member States shall inform the Commission of the measures taken under this Article no later than three months from the date of entry into force of this Regulation, and shall inform the Commission of subsequent measures or changes thereof. The Commission shall make this information publicly available.

Extension of the reference period

The proposed measures cover a reference period from 1 March 2020 to 31 December 2020 for which the pricing may be modified, by way of derogation from Article 27 of Directive 2012/34/EU.

By 1 November 2020, infrastructure managers shall provide the Commission with data on the usage of their networks categorised by market segments, in accordance with Article 32(1) of Directive 2012/34 /EU, for the periods from 1 March 2019 until 30 September 2019 and from 1 March 2020 until 30 September 2020.

Members clarified that where the reference period is extended, the infrastructure managers shall provide the Commission with a new set of data when half of the prolongation of the reference period has elapsed, in order to allow the Commission to assess the development of the situation during the prolongation of the reference period.

The amended text underlines that the Commission shall continuously analyse the economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on that sector and the Union should be in a position to prolong without undue delay the period during which the measures provided for by this Regulation apply if the adverse conditions persist.