Certain aspects of railway safety and connectivity with regard to the cross-border infrastructure linking the Union and the United Kingdom through the Channel Fixed Link

2020/0347(COD) - 17/12/2020 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 684 votes to 3, with 2 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on certain aspects of railway safety and connectivity with regard to the cross-border infrastructure linking the Union and the United Kingdom through the Channel Fixed Link.

Parliament adopted its position at first reading in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, taking over the Commission's proposal.

At the end of the transitional period established by the agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU, Union law will no longer be applicable to the part of the Channel fixed link under the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom. In view of the economic importance of the Channel Fixed Link for the EU, it is essential that the operation of the Channel Fixed Link continues after 1 January 2021.

The proposed Regulation aims to ensure the continuity of cross-border rail services with the United Kingdom after the end of the transitional period mentioned in the agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU. It lays down transitional arrangements for certain safety certificates and safety approvals issued under Directive 2004/49/EC and for certain licences of railway undertakings issued under Directive 2012/34/EU.

In concrete terms, the proposal:

- extends the validity of safety authorisations of the infrastructure manager by two months and the validity of safety certificates and licences of railway undertakings by nine months;

- also extends by nine months the validity of the operating licences issued by the United Kingdom under Directive 2012/34/EU in order to allow railway undertakings to continue to operate up to the Calais-Fréthun border-crossing station and thus ensure connectivity between the Union and the United Kingdom.