

Duration of the reference period for the application of temporary measures concerning the levying of charges for the use of railway infrastructure

2021/0437(COD) - 16/02/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 678 votes to 5, with 11 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2020/1429 as regards the duration of the reference period for the application of temporary measures concerning the levying of charges for the use of railway infrastructure.

Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure by taking over the Commission proposal.

In order to counteract the negative economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and support railway undertakings, Regulation (EU) 2020/1429 of the European Parliament and of the Council enabled Member States to authorise infrastructure managers to reduce, waive or defer charges for accessing rail infrastructure. That possibility was granted for a reference period from 1 March 2020 until 31 December 2020 and was further extended by Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/1061 until 31 December 2021.

The Commission proposal aims to **extend the reference period** for the application of temporary measures concerning railway infrastructure charging **until 30 June 2022**, in order to respond to the emergency situation created by the COVID-19 outbreak.

The proposal also empowers the Commission to adopt delegated acts to further extend this period until 31 December 2023 if it finds, on the one hand, that the drop in the level of rail traffic compared to the level of the corresponding period of the previous years persists and is likely to persist and, on the other hand, on the basis of the best available scientific evidence, that this situation is the result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is also proposed that the delegation of power should end on 31 December 2023.

All other provisions of the current Regulation should remain unchanged.