

Trans-European railway transport: interoperability. 2nd package

2002/0023(COD) - 25/06/2003 - Council position

The Council adopted, by qualified majority, the "Second Railway Package", the Belgian, French and Luxembourg delegations voting against, establishing a single market for rail transport service. This package includes the following legal texts: - the Directive on the interoperability of the trans-European rail system; - the Directive on safety on the Community's railways; - the Directive on the development of the Community's railways (market access); - the Regulation establishing a European Railway Agency. The common position concerning the draft Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 96/48/EC and Directive 2001/16/EC on the interoperability of the trans-European rail system accepts 4 amendments proposed by the European Parliament. The main elements are as follows: - the Council's common position retains the principle of applying the provisions of the Directive to the entire railway network in the European Union. However, because of a number of financial and economic considerations, it provides for a more gradual introduction of the technical specifications for interoperability (TSI) than proposed by the Commission; - a first group of new TSI and/or TSI amendments should now be developed by 1 January 2009; - for the application of a specific TSI, further categories of lines and rolling stock have been added in Annex III, as well as the possibility to further subdivide these categories as required. This will allow the specific TSI to be applied in the most cost-effective way; - the common position expands the possibilities for exemptions from the application of the provisions of a TSI.