

Road transport, national and international traffic: maximum dimensions and weights

2000/0060(COD) - 12/09/2000

The committee adopted the report (codecision procedure, first reading) by Kostas HATZIDAKIS (EPP-ED, GR) approving, subject to three technical amendments, the proposal on maximum authorised dimensions and weights for certain road vehicles. The committee welcomed the fact that the proposal would allow buses of 15 metres in length to operate throughout the EU, on both commercial and environmental grounds. Longer buses could take more passengers and, as cabotage and free movement of long buses would now be possible, this would generate considerable market opportunities for bus transport. Bigger buses should also mean fewer buses on the roads in total, so there would be environmental benefits. The committee concluded that the proposal struck a reasonable balance between commercial and competition considerations on the one hand and infrastructure, legislative and safety constraints on the other. One of the amendments adopted called for the transitional period, allowing for the use within national territory of older buses longer than 12 metres which do not comply with the directive, to be extended to 31 December 2015. It felt that the transitional period laid down in the proposal (ending in 2009) was too short and would severely limit the service life of such buses, thereby imposing financial penalties on businesses which had introduced the vehicles in good faith before the entry into force of the directive.