

Guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network

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The committee adopted the report by Philip BRADBOURN (EPP-ED, UK) broadly approving the proposal under the codecision procedure (1st reading), subject to a number of amendments. It welcomed the Commission's proposed interim revision of the TENs guidelines and did not propose any changes to Annex III containing the list of specific projects. However, to ensure that Member States implemented the projects within a reasonable time-scale, it proposed that projects should be removed from the list if they had not been completed within 15 years. The committee was also concerned to ensure that the Trans-European Network did not focus too much on certain modes of transport (such as rail transport and inland waterways) which were not economically viable in some Member States because of geographic and demographic factors. It therefore adopted a number of amendments aimed at achieving a balance. For example, it stressed that multi-modality required a recognition of the role of road networks, where appropriate, in the process of integration of all modes of transport. It also wanted particular attention to be paid to the development of regional airports and inter-regional air services, thus helping to make the regions more accessible while at the same time easing congestion at major airports. Moreover, the committee adopted several amendments aimed at ensuring that sea transport (long-distance shipping as well as short-sea shipping) would also be fully integrated into an interoperable network. Other recommendations in the report included reinforcing environmental protection and developing links between the EU's neighbouring countries and the Member States to prevent bottlenecks from forming at the EU's external borders. Lastly, the committee wanted the Commission to report to Parliament every two years on the implementation of the guidelines.