

Railway transport: development of the Community's railways. 2nd package

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The committee adopted the report by Georg JARZEMBOWSKI (EPP-ED, D) amending the Council's common position under the 2nd reading of the codecision procedure. The committee restated Parliament's view, as expressed at 1st reading, that the entire rail network should be opened up as swiftly as possible to rail freight services of all kinds and to both national and international passenger services in order to counteract the constant increase in heavy goods vehicles and the expanding car and air traffic in the EU. MEPs therefore called for rail networks in all EU countries to be opened up by 1 January 2006 for rail freight and combined transport goods services, and by 1 January 2008 for rail passenger services. Member States which so wished could grant access rights for all these services at an earlier date. The committee added, as Parliament had also stated at 1st reading, that the right of access to the network should include the right of undertakings to schedule their own train paths, as network access rights would otherwise be meaningless. Moreover, to ensure efficient use of rail transport, persons other than licensed railway undertakings (for example, consignors and forwarders) must be able to apply for the allocation of railway infrastructure capacity, and the definition of "applicant" in Directive 2001/14/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.