Trans-European transport network: financing projects by public-private partnerships

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By adopting Alessandro DANESIN's (EPP, I) report on public-private partnerships in trans-European transport networks, the Committee pointed out that the EU will fail to make significiant progress in the realisation of these networks unless private investment is made available. The level of funding from the Union fell visibly short of what was required for the needs and challenges arising from the creation of the TENs. The financial reference amount for Community aid of the TENs was ECU 1800m for the financial period 1995-1999 and the financial perspectives submitted for the period 2000-2006 proposed only the allocation of ECU 5bn. At national level, the persisting problems of financing the TENs were caused by restrictions affecting public investment. The Committee took the view that private public partnerships (PPPs) should be used as a key instrument for the creation of the TENs. But the success of PPPs required a genuine alliance and a clear and suitable division of project risks between the two sectors on the basis of the necessary equilibrium between commercial and socio-economic criteria. It was essential to establish, at both national and Community level, a suitable framework for the mobilisation of the private sector in the area of infrastructure, in particular by creating conditions of legal security. This was vital if the participation of private capital was to be encouraged. The Committee called on the member states to devote at least 1,5% of their budget resources to the TENs, especially in view of the multiplier effect of such investment for the economy and jobs. Finally, the Commission should submit proposals for forms of long-term funding and should, together with the EIB and the EIF, examine the possibility of improving the existing Community resources.