Trans-European networks: rules for granting financial assistance (Regulation (EC) No 2236 /95). 1998 annual report

2000/2004(COS) - 15/09/1999 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : To present the 1998 Annual Report on Trans-European Networks. CONTENT : 1998 was a year of consolidation. It was also a year in which the Commission published several important reports and proposals assessing the progress made and suggesting changes for the future. The report gives details of the guidelines, reports and reviews carried out in this field. In the framework of Agenda 2000, the Commission adopted a proposal to set up an instrument for structural policies for pre-accession (ISPA) destined to help finance transport TENs. With regard to financing, the Commission has proposed revising the TEN financial regulation and the Council adopted its common position on 21.12.1998. The Report sets out the progress achieved on specific projects: Energy : the progress of the ten priority projects identified by the Essen European Council is assessed. All the natural gas projects have advanced well, and the report cites the Iberian and Greek Gas projects. The majority of electricity projects, however, have experienced authorisation problems, which generally arise from the opposition of local environmental protection bodies. Telecommunications: 25 Euro-ISDN projects have been completed by the end of 1998, whilst most of the others are progressing satisfactorily. Transport: Significant progress was made on all 14 specific transport projects identified by the Essen European Council: three of the projects are close to completion, all are under construction or at an advanced state of preparation, and most are likely to be completed by around 2005. Special mention is made regarding positive developments in the HST /combined transport North-South link. Noticeable progress has been made on all sections of the PBKAL. With regard to HST South, work has been launched on several sub-sections of the Madrid-Barcelona section. An intergovernmental conference has been set up for the international section. Construction is expected to start in HST East in 2000/2001 On the PATHE (North-South axis in Greece), work has been accelerated on several sections. On the East-West axis, new sections have been put out for tender. The first phase of Malpensa airport opened in October 1998. The Construction of the Oresund fixed link will be completed in 2000. The Nordic Triangle Multimodal Corridor saw E18 road upgrading projects near Turku and the Helsinki ring near completion. A report is given of the progress of studies on the Newry-Dundalk corridor (Northern Ireland-Ireland) the West Coast Main Line (UK).