

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

2000/2004(COS) - 04/05/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report drafted by Mr Konstantinos HATZIDAKIS (EPP/ED), the European Parliament approves the resolution on the report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions entitled 'Trans-European Networks - 1998 Annual Report' pursuant to Article 16 of Regulation 2236/95 laying down general rules for the granting of Community financial assistance in the field of Trans-European-Networks. Firstly, the European Parliament highlights the need for public-private partnerships (PPP) as a key factor in the development of the TENs network, and at the same time noting the importance of other factors such as environmental issues in this respect. With respect to budgetary resources allocated for the development of a TEN-T which takes account of commercial, social, ecological and macroeconomic criteria, the Parliament considers it necessary to increase them as they are decidedly inadequate. The Commission should also specify in its future annual reports what funding has been provided by national, regional, and local public bodies, and by the private sector with a view to setting up the TEN-T. On the other hand, the European Parliament expresses its disquiet at the fact that 7 out of the 14 Essen projects are still facing difficulties to the extent that their funding is not totally guaranteed and no timetables have been drawn up for their implementation. It is essential for the Member States to honour the commitments endorsed by the Heads of Government at the Essen European Council of 9 and 10 December 1994 regarding the 14 specific TEN-T projects. In addition, the Commission is called upon, together with the governments of Germany, Austria and Italy, to develop a four-sided funding and execution plan, taking into account the use of private and public resources from all three countries and the EU for the Brenner base-level tunnel, in order to ensure that this priority trans-European project can be carried out as soon as possible. The European Parliament calls on the Commission to accord greater importance in the forthcoming revision of the TENs guidelines to improving access from Europe's islands, landlocked and peripheral regions to the central regions, concentrating particularly on the promotion of sustainable transport links. It also believes the Commission should assess the impact of TEN-T investment on the economy, employment and the environment and to provide appropriate justifications for all funding from the Community budget. As regards public contracts, the Parliament calls on the Member States and the Commission to endeavour to make legislation on them for infrastructure projects clear and flexible, since legal certainty is a fundamental precondition for the private sector's participation in the execution of the TEN-T. In conclusion, the European Parliament expresses concern at the fact that, if the revision of the TEN-T guidelines were to concentrate on existing bottlenecks, as announced by the Commission in its work programme for the year 2000, the revision would essentially concern the central regions of the Union, which are those mainly affected by congestion problems and would assign only secondary importance to the situation of the peripheral and outermost regions.