Short-distance sea transport : an effective alternative in a sustainable transport chain. 2nd report

1999/2164(COS) - 07/07/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report drafted by Mrs Karla M.H. PEIJS (EPP/ED, Nl) on the resolution in response to the Commission's second two-yearly progress report on the development of short sea shipping. The resolution calls on the Commission and the Council to take steps to increase the contribution of this form of shipping to the European transport system. The European Parliament calls on the Commission to consider more closely the question of the links between short sea shipping and river transport or other means of transport such as railways or infrastructures for access by land, so as to ensure that both the industrial and commercial sectors enjoy the infrastructures necessary to sustain their economic activities properly. With regard to the environment, the Commission is called upon to take appropriate measures in the near future to eliminate the environmental shortcomings of short sea shipping, i.e. emissions of NOx and SO2; such measures could include a directive on the permitted emission values of new ship's engines or a directive on minimum quality standards for bunker oil used in old(er) ships' engines. Moreover, the Parliament calls upon the competent authorities of the Member States and ports to exempt short sea shipping from charges for waste disposal at port reception facilities if it can be demonstrated that they are able to dispose of the waste at another port and to lay down relevant rules in such a way that routes which are in the process of being established and which are not yet used on an entirely regular basis are still able to benefit. It is also provided for to standardise loading units by the competent international committees, to seek in future the standardisation of containers used in deep-sea transport. In addition, the Parliament calls for joint investment programmes to be drawn up in the Mediterranean area, in the Adriatic and in the ports of the Canary Islands, the Azores and Madeira, taking account in particular of: - incentives for short-sea shipping lines; - simplification of customs and embarkation procedures. In conclusion, the European Parliament calls on the Commission and the Member States to submit a uniform European framework so that, once experience of the capitain has been verified, the exemption of short sea shipping from pilot services may be requested, and calls on the competent authorities of the Member States and ports to implement this swiftly in accordance with the prevailing conditions.