Railway transport of passengers: opening to international competition, Rail Market Access. 3rd package

2004/0047(COD) - 19/04/2005

The committee adopted the report by Georg JARZEMBOWSKI (EPP-ED , DE) amending the proposal under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure:

- the legislation should also cover national passenger services and not just international ones, as proposed by the Commission. International passenger services should be opened up to competition by 1 January 2008, rather than 1 January 2010 as stated in the proposal. Moreover, railway undertakings should be granted access to the infrastructure "for the purpose of operating all other types of passenger service" by 1 January 2012. When operating an international passenger service, railway undertakings should have the right to pick up and set down passengers at any station "between the points of departure and destination";

- Member States should also remain free to grant access rights at an earlier date to railway companies and international groups for national and international passenger transport services;

- the committee proposed a new Article 1a specifying that framework agreements should in principle be concluded for a period of 5 years but that, for services using specialised infrastructure (e.g. high-speed lines), such agreements could be of 10 years' duration. In this way, railway undertakings would be guaranteed the necessary degree of certainty when making the substantial and long-term investment needed for specialised infrastructure;

- whereas the proposal provided for the Commission to present just one report, by 31 December 2012, on the implementation of the provisions on granting access, the committee proposed that the Commission submit two reports, by 31 December 2009 and 31 December 2013 respectively: the first relating to international passenger services and the second to all other types of passenger service, including in each an assessment of the allocation of train paths and the effects on public service contracts.

Lastly, the committee said that its report, together with the other three reports on the third railway package, should not be voted on in plenary unless it was certain that the Council was going to deal with all four proposals and, moreover, was willing to submit a common position on the revision of the 1969 regulation on public service requirements.