

Community financial aid in the field of the trans-European transport and energy networks, 2007-2013

2004/0154(COD) - 26/10/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Mario **MAURO** (EPP-ED, IT) and made several amendments to the Commission's proposal:

-The text does not refer to projects crossing natural borders (please see the preceding summary). Parliament stated instead that for priority projects in the field of transport, a maximum of 30% of the total eligible costs of the works; exceptionally, cross-border sections of projects included in the TEN-T programme as well as the deployment of European interoperable rail signalling systems may benefit from a maximum grant rate of 50% of total eligible costs, provided that the process of their implementation has begun before 2010 and that the Member States concerned have presented a plan to the Commission giving all the guarantees necessary regarding the financial support from the Member State and the timetable for the implementation of the project.

- The criteria for eligibility should include compliance with Community policies and laws on health protection, sustainable development and multimodal linkage of networks including inland, coastal and maritime navigation, inland waterways and short sea shipping;

-The Community should recognise cross-financing of TEN projects by way of toll supplements as a further means of speeding up the completion of other TEN projects and should be careful to comply with the detailed arrangements laid down by the European Parliament and the Council.

-Projects to be given priority should include those which "contribute to the elimination of bottlenecks and to an increase in long-distance transport connections, particularly in cross-border railway transport". Also to be given priority are the Programmes for the deployment of traffic management systems for rail, in particular European rail signalling systems (ERTMS/ETCS), and its components as well as traffic management systems in the field of air, maritime, inland waterway and coastal transport that provide for interoperability.

-Parliament deleted Article 8(3) of the proposal which would not have allowed cofinancing for sections of projects which already receive other Community financing.

-The financial reference amount for 2007-2013 should be EUR 20 490 million, (as opposed to the Commission's proposal of EUR 20 690 million), of which EUR 140 million should be earmarked for energy rather than EUR 340 million. The original allocation of EUR 20 350 million to transport was therefore left unchanged;

-The multi-annual programme should be adopted under the codecision procedure, rather than under the comitology procedure as proposed. The annual programmes (which will be adopted under comitology procedure) should be submitted to Parliament in good time before their adoption so that Parliament could deliver its opinion where appropriate;

-The Commission should retain a right of initiative as regards inspections of project sites, given its budgetary responsibility.

-Parliament as well as the EIB will be represented on the committee.

-Transport projects which are, or are part of, a cross-border segment may be the subject of a Commission grant decision subject to the existence of a bilateral agreement between the Member States concerned on completing the cross-border project within their respective national territories.

-Every year the Commission shall present to the European Parliament, together with the preliminary draft budget, a report on the financial implications arising from the existence and the activities of the European Coordinators introduced by Article 1(10) of Decision 884/2004/EC.

Parliament added that the European Union should seek to encourage public-private forms of financing, whether institutional or contractual, which have proved to be effective, by means of legal guarantees which are compatible with competition law and the internal market, and by endeavouring to spread good practice among the Member States.