Trans-European energy networks: guidelines

2003/0297(COD) - 06/07/2006 - Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading

The Commission can accept in full all 17 amendments adopted by the European Parliament. They are the result of a compromise package agreed between the European Parliament and the Council for the second reading. The amendments re-insert key elements of the Commission's proposal, namely the category of "projects of European interest" and the "European coordinator". The conclusion of the compromise package has been facilitated by the recognition that relevant and up-to-date information is in the hands of companies executing such projects rather than Member States; the draft Decision therefore places an obligation on Member States to ensure the flow of information on, and transnational coordination of, projects of European interest.

The amendments to the common position refer mainly to:

- the re-insertion of the category of "**projects of European interest**" (Articles 1 (1), 5 (a), 6 (5) and (8));

- a differentiation in the **degree of priority access to funding** according to the source of cofinancing, by giving "appropriate priority" for funding under Council Regulation 2236/95/EC while giving "particular attention" to projects declared to be of European interest for funding under other Community cofinancing funds (Art. 8(2) and (3));

- **transnational coordination** between Member States if there is a significant current or prospective delay in the progress on one of the projects declared to be of European interest, the Commission may then ask the Member States concerned to ensure that reasons for the delay are provided within three months (Article 8(6));

- the Member States insisted to delete the provision that in case of delays the Commission may decide to **withdraw the declaration of European interest**, since they have only limited influence on the construction phase carried out by private companies. In view of the progress made concerning coordination and monitoring this position is acceptable for the Commission;

- the re-insertion of the **European coordinator** to be designated by the Commission, in agreement with the Member States concerned, and after having consulted the European Parliament, in cases where a project declared to be of European interest encounters significant delays or implementation difficulties (Article 10(1));

- the specification of **reporting requirements**: Member States shall, using as a basis a draft timetable provided by the Commission, submit to the Commission an updated and indicative timetable for the completion of projects of European Interest. The Commission shall present biennial reports on the progress such projects; in cases where a European coordinator is appointed for the project in question, the European coordinator would assume this task (Article 9(1) and (2)).