

Trans-European network for transport: the Court of Auditors' special report No 6/2005

2006/2238(INI) - 14/02/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drawn up by Margarita **STARKEVICIUTE** (ADLE, LT), and welcomed the close and constructive cooperation between the Commission and the Court of Auditors on the programme for a TEN-T. Parliament regretted the meagre increase in the appropriations available for TEN-T, and was concerned about the slow speed of implementation of the priority TEN-T projects. The new 2007-2013 financial framework would have a considerable impact on the TEN-T, as the amount agreed upon was approximately 40% of that contained in the original Commission proposal of 14 July 2004. The latter had proposed an amount of EUR 20 350 million for TEN-T for the period 2007 to 2013, whereas the financial framework made only EUR 8 013 million available. Parliament believed that, as a consequence, selecting, prioritising and ensuring efficient implementation of the projects would become even more important. In the current financial environment, preference should be given to cross-border sections of priority projects with high Community added-value and to certain major "bottlenecks" in order to contribute significantly to the completion of a trans-European, interconnected and interoperable transport network. In this context, Parliament welcomed the cooperation agreement with the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Parliament was also of the opinion that the Commission had further to improve cooperation with Member States when priority projects at national and EU level were selected. It was important for projects which were not completed on schedule to be subject to more stringent checks, with a possibility for subsidies under the multi-annual indicative programme to be transferred to projects which are progressing more rapidly.

Parliament called on the Member States to develop an integrated transport network policy to ensure the proper functioning of the trans-European transport network and the efficiency of national networks and to support a European added-value approach rather than fighting for the principle of "fair share".

Urging the Commission to establish a clear and transparent division of institutional responsibilities, Parliament wanted it to define a framework for the coordination of activities between DG REGIO and DG TREN with a view to avoiding double-financing of the same projects. It was good practice to have clear agreements in place between the Member States and the Commission on the separation of funding from different EU sources. Parliament advocated a single entity for managing projects by focusing on the main activity, in the process maintaining centralised information, facilitating better monitoring by the Commission and improving the coordination of the different legal, administrative and technical issues between the Member States involved. Such a single entity responsible for managing projects could reduce the risk of double funding.

Noting that payments from the Commission have taken excessive time to reach the final beneficiary, Parliament called therefore for money to be paid out swiftly and efficiently. In this context, a direct payment flow from the Commission to the beneficiary could be a better solution.

Lastly, Parliament considered the coordination of TEN-T projects to be essential, particularly in the case of cross-border projects. It hoped that the establishment of the TEN-T Executive Agency, which had now been announced by the Commission, might contribute to the implementation of the TEN-T projects.