Keep Europe moving: sustainable mobility for our continent

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The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted an initiative report by Etelka **BARSI-PATAKY** (EPP-ED, HU) on Keep Europe moving - Sustainable mobility for our continent. In so doing, the Parliamentary committee stresses the need for pragmatic and cooperative interconnection in the field of transport and in other national or Community policy areas such as energy, environment and innovation. It emphasises that these policies must incorporate the requirements of climate protection as well. It considers that only an integrated approach could achieve positive results in reducing casualties and emissions and improving safety and environment, as it was laid down for example by CARS 21. Moreover, it points out the out the importance of providing targeted information for citizens in their capacity as transport users and to encourage them to behave more responsibly; proposes that transport policy should be fully integrated into the Lisbon Strategy and taken into account in the assessment and recommendations put forward each year by the Member States in their national plans in order to measure and compare progress.

On the other hand, it deplores the conditions under which the Union's transport policy is being implemented by the Council and calls strongly for decisions to be taken more quickly under the legislative procedure and for swifter and better coordinated transposal into national law. It calls on the Commission to do all in its power to achieve this goal.

The resolution notes that Community funds for financing trans-European transport projects remain limited, and the added value of the TEN-T programme cannot be attained unless the entire network is completed, emphasises the financing of infrastructures (especially where congestion problems are significant), the cross border sections and transport hubs. It considers that priority investment progress is slower than expected and emphasises that the key TEN-T projects need to be selected according to their financial feasibility and in particular according to the financial willingness of the Member States concerned and their regions, and furthermore by their level of operational feasibility and of the progress of their technical planning. It highlights that the role of the EIB, which must, however, be made compatible with the wider involvement of the European banking and financial system in infrastructure and transport projects. It is noted that there is a there is a significant risk to European economic growth from continued financial inaction as regards infrastructure, therefore the committee calls on the Commission to make proposals about the possible extension of new alternative and innovative ways of financing – taking into account also the report on the future of the European Union's own resources – and also extra resources for transport and the related researches too during the review of the European 7-year budget in 2008.

While continuing the accomplishment of the TEN-T projects, points out that the conventional measures are reaching their limits. The committee therefore emphasises the potential of intelligent transport systems, technological innovations, investments in telematics in order to enhance traffic efficiency, reduce congestion, and improve safety and environmental performance. It points out that the benefits of intelligent systems and technological innovations (SESAR, ERTMS, RIS, Galileo, etc) should be realised; emphasises that the main task - both of the Community and of industry - is to support the market for new innovative solutions, and to create an appropriate legal and technical environment, including facilitated applications of the new technologies through public procurement.

The importance of the "Motorways of the see" projects has been emphasised as has the wish for the Galileo Programme and ERTMS to be sped up.

In addition, the Parliamentary committee:

- looks forward to a generally applicable, transparent and comprehensible model by the Commission in 2008 for the assessment of all external costs to serve as the basis for future calculations of infrastructure charges, which model shall be accompanied by an impact analysis of the internalisation of external costs for all modes of transport and a strategy for the implementation of the model for all modes of transport;
- calls on the Commission to increase its efforts to fully implement Directive 2004/52/EC on the interoperability of electronic road toll systems in the Community and asks the Commission to come up with a report on the implementation of this Directive before the end of 2007;
- calls for a feasibility study - in line with the report on the future of the EU's own resources - to be carried out so as to provide secure and lasting funding;
- emphasises that priority should be given, when implementing the Seventh Framework Programme, to projects and programmes concerning intelligent transport systems and logistics, including road safety, urban transport and clean-engine technology;
- calls for EU-wide quality and interoperability standards for bio fuels to be ensured;
- underlines the need for the energy efficiency road plan;
- emphasises the importance of the Green Paper on urban transport, and hopes that specific means will be provided to help urban public transport move towards modal integration, developing traffic management systems, and creating conditions enabling users to be rewarded for their decision to make use of alternatives;
- underlines the importance of taking further measures in favour of sustainable transport in mountainous as well as densely populated areas, following the signature, by the Transport Council on 11 December 2006, of the Transport Protocol to the Alpine Convention;
- suggests that a Green Paper on European tourism be submitted and that a specific impact assessment of legislation which has a clear influence on European tourism be carried out;

The committee fully agrees that Community legislation - in line with the principle of Better Regulation and the principle of subsidiarity - should focus on new areas such as urban transport. European legislation should focus on fields where it is necessary and policy measures should be taken at EU-level only where it would bring clear added value. The Commission and the Member States are called upon to ensure the implementation and enforcement of the existing European transport legislation, further calls are made on the Commission to carry out regular monitoring to observe the effectiveness of measures seeking to achieve the objectives set and, where necessary, to make corrective changes.

Lastly the Commission is called upon to immediately start work on a well-prepared European transport policy after 2010, which can meet the new challenges in a sustainable manner.