Basic information

2007/2092(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Airport capacity and groundhandling: towards a more efficient policy **Subject** 2.60 Competition 3.20.01 Air transport and air freight 3.20.01.01 Air safety	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
TRAN Transport and Tourism	JENSEN Anne E. (ALDE)	26/03/2007

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs	PURVIS John (PPE-DE)	22/05/2007
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	MANN Thomas (PPE-DE)	21/03/2007
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
REGI Regional Development	JANOWSKI Mieczysław Edmund (UEN)	07/06/2007
LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	BRADBOURN Philip (PPE-DE)	11/06/2007

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2821	2007-10-01

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Energy and Transport	BARROT Jacques

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
24/01/2007	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2006)0819	Summary
26/04/2007	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/09/2007	Vote in committee		Summary
27/09/2007	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0349/2007	
01/10/2007	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
11/10/2007	Decision by Parliament	T6-0433/2007	Summary
11/10/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
11/10/2007	Debate in Parliament		
11/10/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2007/2092(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/6/48857

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE390.495	20/06/2007	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE388.599	02/07/2007	
Committee opinion	ECON	PE391.968	12/07/2007	
Committee opinion	REGI	PE388.678	18/07/2007	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE392.032	18/07/2007	
Committee opinion	LIBE	PE390.613	20/07/2007	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0349/2007	27/09/2007	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0433/2007	11/10/2007	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2006)0819	24/01/2007	Summary
For information	COM(2006)0821	24/01/2007	
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2006)1686	24/01/2007	
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2006)1687	24/01/2007	

Airport capacity and groundhandling: towards a more efficient policy

2007/2092(INI) - 11/10/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted an own-initiative report drawn up by Anne E. **JENSEN** (ADLE, DK), in response to the Commission's communication on an action plan for airport capacity, efficiency and safety in Europe. Parliament pointed out that globalisation and rapid economic growth would result in the EU, in a growth in demand for air travel (traffic without airport constraints) averaging at least 4.3 % per annum, and most probably as much as 5.2 % per annum. Adequate airport capacity and efficient ground handling and use of capacity were vital to the European economy and must be ensured. The report welcomed the Commission's proposals and stressed the importance of air transport in ensuring territorial, economic and social cohesion in the Union. It considered that the 14 measures suggested by the Commission represented a consistent approach for improving the use of current capacities, but requested the Commission to set more concrete deadlines for their implementation and insisted on those deadlines being respected.

The main points of the report are as follows:

- building new capacities: Members proposed to introduce a survey of actual demand for infrastructure, which would improve any future comprehensive European airport capacity plan and could become an accepted EU-wide air transport forecasting mechanism. They requested the Commission to report to Parliament before 2009 on a **master plan** for enhanced airport capacity in Europe. This report should lay down a cohesive approach for Member States in order to promote and coordinate any national and cross-border initiative for building new airport capacities dedicated to international traffic and make better use of existing capacities. Members stressed that the hubs and the regional airports, through point-to-point travel, could each in their own way and according to specific constraints of the various Member States respond to the environmental problems, to congestion problems and challenges facing accessibility. Only the cohabitation of various airport models according to national specificities would enable the EU to fulfil its needs in this field. They also stressed the economic importance of airports for job creation, particularly at regional level. The report invited Member States and regional and local authorities to take account of environmental factors when deciding where to locate airports, including noise, emissions, road traffic density in the vicinity of the airport, the proximity of fuel tanks, and of meteorological factors.

- promoting environmentally-friendly growth: Parliament stressed that the objective of the industry is to cut emissions by a further 50% by 2020. Nevertheless, despite this progress, the growth in air traffic had resulted in a sharp increase in the total volume of greenhouse gas emissions produced by this sector (+100% compared to 1990, according to estimates by the European Environment Agency), and airport congestion was contributing significantly to this. Parliament welcomed the Commission initiative to incorporate aviation into the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS). It pointed out that the effectiveness of measures designed to reduce the environmental impact of air transport also depended on the policies pursued by countries at global level and stressed the need to establish joint programmes with third countries. Members considered that the issue of greenhouse gas emissions should be tackled with more vigour at both European and international levels with a view to improving the competitiveness of a more sustainable EU air transport sector. They called on the Commission and the Member States to use all available means to reach an agreement on this issue at international level. They particularly insisted on the need to develop regulatory and financial schemes in order to encourage the retrofitting and renewal of fleets and promote the environmental performance of engines, the corollary of which is to render them quieter, more energy efficient and less polluting.

- ensuring the correct implementation and adaptation of the regulatory framework: Parliament considered that the increase in air traffic will require a fuller implementation of the legal framework applicable to air transport. It asked the Commission to check the full implementation of Regulation 95/93, as amended by Regulation No 793/2004, on common rules for the allocation of slots at Community airports and to provide more guidance and clarification as regards the text. It particularly insisted on the need to ensure a better coordination of, and matching between, the allocation of slots by Air Traffic Flow Management (AFTM) and airport slots, and on the need to harmonise the definitions, tolerances and the way airport and AFTM slots are awarded. The Council was asked to lay down a time-frame and deadlines in order to enhance cooperation between civil aviation authorities of neighbouring Member States so as to guarantee a significant step forward before 2008 as regards the building of functional airspace blocks.

- **enhancing cooperation on capacity between airport regions**: Members were of the opinion that an increase in airport capacity would not be possible without efficient and thorough collaboration between airport authorities and the relevant regional and local administrations, provided that any such

collaboration does not contravene Community competition rules. They called on the Commission and the Member States to facilitate the exchange of best practice concerning the public management of those airport regions and to support financially pilot projects and research programmes connected with the issue of the impact that airports have on surrounding territories and their residents.

- **ground handling services**: the report invited the Commission to carry out a new impact analysis on the implementation of Directive 96/67/EC, its final benefits and/or disadvantages for users, employees and passengers, before making any proposal that would lead to further liberalisation. It recommended that any new attempt to amend the Directive should first concentrate on the quality of ground handling services and on the quality of employment in ground handling. It particularly invited the Commission to: (i) examine the possibility of establishing minimum quality and social standards that should be taken into account in the selection procedure and inserted in contracts between the airline and the service provider; (ii) frame the use of subcontracting by ensuring a minimum level of safety/quality levels for providers in order to secure fair competition and require the prior identification of any subcontractors; (iii) define and clearly establish the conditions under which an airport can provide ground handling services, especially when a sufficient number of independent service suppliers is willing to provide these services; (iv) consider that the minimum number of service providers admitted at airports (currently two) should be reviewed by the Commission and be increased particularly in the case of large airports; (v) put in place a licensing procedure at Member State level in order to guarantee that a minimum level of quality become mandatory for providers; (vi) ensure that providers guarantee an adequate level of training and social protection for their employees; (vii) ensure the appropriate level of security and safety for all users, passengers and cargo.

Airport capacity and groundhandling: towards a more efficient policy

2007/2092(INI) - 24/01/2007 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to present an action for airport capacity, efficiency and safety in Europe.

CONTENT: the liberalisation of the European air transport sector is a major success. Concrete measures have been taken by the European Community in order to sustain this growth whilst maintaining a high level of safety and efficiency: (i) the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) was created in 2002 in order to rationalise European activities in the field of air worthiness; (ii) the Single European Sky legislative package adopted in 2004 aims at comprehensively reforming of the Air Traffic Management sector, with a view to increasing the safety and efficiency of the European sky.

If demand for air traffic continues in line with current trends, it will double in 20 years. This will clearly have serious environmental implications.

After liberalising the air transport market by the creation of the internal market and addressing the "saturation of the skies" through the Single European Sky initiative, the Commission will now focus on airports. Capacity will not be able to match demand and risks becoming the most constraining factor on air transport. The knock-on network effects of this weakest link threatens the efficiency of the whole air transport chain. Since air transport is seen as a 'motor' for economic growth, this in turn risks undermining the overall competitiveness of the European economy.

This communication on **airport capacity, efficiency and safety in Europe** provides a comprehensive action plan detailing a coherent strategy for responsibly tackling congestion at European airports.

The expected "capacity crunch": airport capacity is a function of both runway and ground infrastructure. Given the expected traffic evolution, Europe will face an ever growing gap between capacity and demand. This is referred to as the "capacity crunch". If current capacity levels are not drastically increased, it is estimated that over 60 European airports will be heavily congested and the top 20 airports will be saturated at least 8-10 hours per day by 2025. Such congestion is likely to have a severe impact on airlines' ability to maintain their schedules, especially at hub airports, and will therefore result in a less efficient European air transport industry. Congestion will also result in environmental and safety costs, since the density and complexity of operations will reach an unprecedented level.

The capacity crunch at airports poses a threat to the safety, efficiency and competitiveness of all actors involved in the air transport supply chain.

How to deal with capacity crunch?: there is no "golden bullet" solution available for such a complex issue. Beyond the multiplicity of actors and the very technical nature of operations, planning horizons in the airport sector are also a challenge:

- it takes up to 5 to 10 years or more to provide new infrastructure;

- 1 to 5 years are needed in order to plan and optimise the use of existing runways, including the surrounding airspace.

Between mid-September 2005 and early 2006 the Commission consulted stakeholders to seek possible solutions to address the airport capacity shortfall. Responses from government agencies, airlines, airport operators, pilots, air navigation service providers, experts, private citizens and environmental organisations all provided valuable input. A main finding of the consultation was that there was a **broad consensus as to the existence of the problem and the need to find market-driven and environmentally sustainable solutions**. Many contributors highlighted the necessity for improved collaboration and information sharing between all actors involved in the operational chain at airports. Discussions on the capacity issue took place during the high level meetings of the Directors General of Civil Aviation under the UK Presidency in 2005 and in Salzburg under the Austrian Presidency in May 2006. As a result of this consultation, a number of actions are listed:

- the need for a **more efficient use of existing runways** and **support for new infrastructure**;
- an appropriate balance between market-led solutions (**market mechanisms for slot allocation**) and **regulatory measures** (Single European Sky and airport safety oversight) must be sought;
- the European Community could also support the airport sector through its financial instruments: TEN-T, European Cohesion Policy's programmes through European Regional Development and the Cohesion Funds (according to the Community Strategic Guidelines for Cohesion and the priorities defined in each programme), or through initiatives such as SESAR (Single European Sky ATM Research);

- in order to promote safety binding Community rules are needed in particular on the safety for the aerodrome air side, including not only the infrastructure, but also operations and management;
- **aviation security** must be a paramount consideration when seeking to increase airport capacity;
- **regional airports** are important to the development of an integrated European air transport network. In this respect, it would be desirable to unlock existing latent capacity at regional airports provided that Member States respect Community legal instruments relating to state aids. Global Navigation Satellite Systems could play a significant role for increasing capacity and flexibility of operations at those airports without increasing the cost of local infrastructure. Member States should endeavour to improve the accessibility of such airports by rail and road to allow them to act as reliever airports.

Given these elements, the Commission will develop five key actions:

1. make better use of existing airport capacity;
2. a consistent approach to air safety operations at aerodromes;
3. promote “co-modality”, the integration and collaboration of the transport modes;
4. improve the environmental capacity of airports and the planning framework for new airport infrastructure;
5. develop and implement cost efficient technological solutions.

The stakeholder consultation confirmed the urgent need for co-ordinated action. This paper proposes a list of concrete actions which could be best taken at EU level. The European Commission shall monitor progress made by setting up an observatory.

The Commission is prepared to take up the challenge of the expected “capacity crunch”. Following intense consultation an action plan is proposed in this paper. This action plan (detailed below) has been designed to strike a balance between legislative proposals, financial support and the promotion of more co-ordinated planning. All actors should collaborate to meet the challenge to further build a more efficient, safe and environmentally sound air transport system in Europe that complies with the ambitious goals of the Lisbon strategy.

The **proposed action plan and calendar of events** are as follows:

- **Early 2007**: the Commission will issue a mandate to Eurocontrol to develop harmonized airport capacity and assessment methodology tools.

- **2007**: an observatory on airport medium term capacity planning under the aegis of the Commission will improve awareness and information on regional capacity needs by delivering an annual report.

- **Quarter 1 2007 for mandate results – 2008 for adaptation of legislation**: the mandate given to Eurocontrol on ATFM measures will propose solutions to ensure consistency between airport slots and flight plans, with the required modifications of relevant legislation.

- **Early 2008**: a legislative proposal on the extension of EASA to airport operations.

- **From 2008**: the Commission will enable the certification of the EGNOS/Galileo signal in space and include GNSS exploitation in the European Radio-Navigation Plan.

- **2007**: a comprehensive inclusion of GNSS into ATM operational processes is expected from the SESAR programme.

- **From 2007 onwards**: funding from the TEN-T, European Cohesion Policy's programmes through the European Regional Development and the Cohesion Funds for eligible co-modality projects.

- **Early 2007**: the Commission intends to encourage integrated air-rail ticketing and will publish a consultation paper on the subject.

- **2007 – 2008**: prepare a report on the implementation of the Noise Directive with a view to amending legislation, if so required.

- **2007**: best practice guidelines and simplification of procedures to be developed to promote coordination of airport plans.

- **From 2007 onwards**: early implementation of mature technologies such as A-SMGCS surveillance and control functions throughout European airports.

- **2007- 2013**: the SESAR programme will further develop new tools and systems that will significantly increase airport capacity.

- **From mid 2007 onwards**: the Commission will also consider the findings and potential impact of the 2007 implementation of the Single European Sky report on airport operations.

- **2008**: the Commission will issue a mandate to Eurocontrol to develop implementing rules on the introduction of Airport-CDM at European airports.