

Newsletter

of TRAN Committee meeting of 22nd and 23rd November 2017

Editorial by Karima Delli

Dear friends,

A new step forward has been taken this week in our understanding of Brexit. This week, transport representatives were given the floor to assess the impact of Brexit on their sector. Whether they are Irish, British or from the mainland, the prevailing feelings among carriers are worry and uncertainty.

On the one hand, restoration of the external borders will have predictable effects on the increase in administrative burdens, check times and congestion of trucks at the customs line. While there are still many unknown effects about extra costs and social standards for workers in the post-Brexit period. Some categories of carriers also appear to be more exposed to all of these risks, such as Irish SMEs, which will have to cross four borders before arriving in the European's mainland. If the railway sector shares all the concerns about the border crossing, it has shown that these problems would be increased tenfold when crossing the Channel Tunnel. Not to mention the question of common technical standards, construction lines and railway R&D that have been largely Europeanized until then. So many aspects that are vital for our rail industry!



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The next MFF: Preparing the Parliament's position on the MFF post 2020

Consideration of amendments and vote

- Rapporteur: Marian-Jean Marinescu (EPP)
- Opinion to BUDG
- Vote in BUDG: 22February 2017
- Vote in Plenary: tbc

In its Opinion, the Committee underlines the strategic importance of the MFF for the transport sector and the long-term investment in its infrastructure. TRAN Members call for an increase in EU funding in the next MFF, including structural and investment funds, for the completion of the TEN-T core network, as well as for the deployment of alternative energy solutions.

The Opinion invites the Commission to present an updated Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), which should cover all transport modes and needs, including road infrastructure, digital solutions, modal shift and clean transport, and focus on interconnections and network completion in peripheral areas.

The Committee's opinion also stresses that grants must remain the prime instrument of the next CEF, and calls for an optimization of synergies between grants and financial instruments. Moreover, coordination of support for transport infrastructure investment across different EU funds should be strengthened, with DG MOVE being more actively involved. The Opinion, adopted with 38 votes in favour, 3 against and 0 abstentions, will now feed into the deliberations in the BUDG Committee.



Accelerating clean energy innovation *Consideration of amendments and vote*

- Rapporteur: Isabella De Monte (S & D)
- Own initiative procedure
- Opinion to ITRE
- Vote in ITRE: 22-23 January 2018
- Vote in Plenary: tbc

The Commission communication focuses on new, wide-reaching measures to accelerate Europe's transition towards a competitive, low-carbon economy, by improving the regulatory and business environment, and boosting investment in clean-energy research and innovation (R&I).

The Rapporteur and the Shadow Rapporteurs worked in close cooperation to reach an agreement and consensually approve a report aimed at encouraging consumer confidence, finding financial resources to support SMEs and start-ups, creating synergies

between research and industry, and tackling climate change. The main goal will be to find the correct balance between clean ways of transport and industry competitiveness. The vote went smoothly, and a large majority of the political parties supported the compromise amendments.

Amended proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of the Air transport Agreement between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the United States of America, of the other part

Vote

- Rapporteur: Theresa Griffin (S & D)
- Non-legislative, consent procedure

The draft recommendation was adopted with 38 votes in favour, 0 against and 3 abstentions.

Public hearing on BREXIT and the impact on land transport

Like the previous hearing on Brexit in Aviation, TRAN's second instalment of public hearings on the impact of Brexit was very well attended. The hearing, with two panels of experts, consisting of representatives of land and rail sectors, spoke to TRAN Members about risks related to Brexit and potential consequences that the UK's departure from the EU might have on their business, operations, legal structures and development plans. The discussion, sometimes quite emotional and at times dramatic, revealed that there is no plan "B" for both sectors.

In their reactions to MEPs' questions, rail experts expressed their hopes that mutual recognition of standards will allow trains to continue passing through the Channel. On the other hand, representatives of the haulage industry said they are in an arguably worse situation, as likely queues at the Irish and British borders and lack of necessary space for clearance purposes could literally kill the business if there are no smart and quick decisions on a long transition period and bilateral cooperation in the future. The Committee's next hearing on Brexit is on maritime transport and tourism sectors, and will happen in early 2018.

Public hearing on Mobility package

An extensive public hearing on the mobility package took place over two meeting days. The first part was on the social and market opening issues, and the second on road charging proposals. The hearing spanned about 4,5 hours in total, with 13 external experts, including representatives from hauliers' associations, trade unions, NGOs, haulage companies, control bodies, toll system operators, infrastructure operators and academia. The hearing was lively and animated, also due to the so-called "ping-pong" principle used for the questions and answers sessions, leading to more effective use of time and to a more focussed and content rich debate.

Market/social aspects

Many topics were raised and discussed during the hearing, including driving and rest times, posting of drivers, cabotage, international transit rules, usage of tachographs and new technology, road charging concepts and enforcement of the rules. Also, more specific answers were sought from the experts on possible measures to be taken in order to address so-called "letterbox companies", the differences in wages and labour conditions in different parts of Europe, the lack of safe and secure parking places and of suitable accommodation, the most appropriate rules on "cabotage", the need and possibilities for a quick roll-out of "smart tachographs", the importance of maintaining a properly-functioning internal market in the haulage sector, and the need and possibilities for proper enforcement of the rules.

Road charges

The second part of the hearing was dedicated to road charges. Members exchanged views with representatives of the sector, NGO's and representatives of the railway sector. With regard to road charging, the Rapporteur insisted on the fundamental principles of "polluter pays" and "user pays" as the backbone of charging. In this respect, some Members expressed concern with regard to the exemption of tolls for bus and coaches. There were diverging views regarding the application of discounts for clean vehicles, including electric cars. Why should such an incentive not also apply in the rail sector for electric trains? In order to avoid that part of the traffic would be diverted to rural roads. There were some

questions as to whether there should be road charges for all main roads.

Members also had questions about the potential economic impact of road charging, in particular for remote regions, and subsidiarity. They made the point that charging should be seen within a more global perspective of vehicle and fuel taxation. There were diverging views expressed on the earmarking of revenues: should these be allocated only to road maintenance, or to compensate environmental costs, or should member States be free to allocate them the general budget of the state?



With regard to interoperability of the European Electronic Toll System (EETS), the Rapporteur indicated that he was in favour of the proposal of the Commission to modify the list of technologies by delegated acts. He also enquired about the possibility to use other frequencies in relation to microwave technology, and whether two ranges, 5.8 GHz and 5.9 GHz, could coexist. Some Members enquired whether it would be preferable to allow only one EETS system. They pointed out the need to consider the costs to ensure the interoperability of several systems. Members enquired whether there could be a technical link between digital tachographs and the EETS. They also asked whether Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) could be a valid system to enforce payment of tolls.

Exchange of views on Africa and aviation with DG MOVE and EASA

The European Commission and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) jointly presented EU actions to improve aviation safety and security in Africa. To this end, the EU has a number of tools at its disposal, such as ramp inspections (former Safety Assessment of

Foreign Aircraft (SAFA) programme), third country operator authorisations, the air safety list (also known as "Black list") affecting either foreign states or airlines.

The Commission stressed that the aviation safety and security situation in Africa is gradually improving, though more needs to be done. Indeed, it has to be noted that since 2015, the number of African countries and African airlines on the air safety list is decreasing – the list obviously fulfils one of its purposes as a "wake-up call". In addition, EU ramp inspections allow EU Member States to inspect foreign aircraft landing at their airports.

In order to ensure the highest level of aviation safety, it is essential that African national aviation authorities are independent and have all the necessary means to ensure proper oversight.



EASA presented its activities in Africa, which also include EASA TCO authorisations issued after a thorough assessment of the company concerned. This is of particular interest to African carriers since these EASA authorisations are valid in all 32 EASA Member States. Today, 63 African air carriers from 19 African countries hold an EASA TCO. Furthermore, EASA is providing tailor-made technical assistance, taking full account of the capacities in different African regions, to North Africa and the Middle East, Central Africa and Zambia. Technical assistance to the Sub-Saharan and Western regions is also under discussion.

The European Parliament Rapporteur on the EASA regulation/common aviation safety rules proposal, Mr Marinescu, welcomed the presentation. He wondered how the Commission/EASA can assess the situation in

Africa, since ramp inspections are carried out only in the EU. The Commission explained that it receives significant feedback from European carriers when flying to African countries as well as other partners. In reply to his question regarding the use of EGNOS (European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service, a pan-European satellite navigation system augmenting the US GPS satellite navigation) in Africa, the Commission and EASA stressed that the EU is financing a project aimed at enhancing the use of EGNOS in Africa.

As future challenges ahead, the Commission and EASA mentioned issues such as air traffic growth, cybersecurity, drones and satellite navigation.

Next TRAN Committee meeting: planned draft agenda - To be confirmed

Monday 4th December, (15h00 – 18h30)

- Opinion to ENVI on CO² emissions from heavy-duty vehicles – vote
- Infrastructure funding in the sharing economy – Presentation of a PolDep study
- Presentation by DG MOVE of the outcome of the 2017 CEF Blending Call
- Scrutiny: Presentation by the Commission of the draft delegated act related to technical requirements for inland waterways vessels

Meeting room: JAN 6Q2

Useful links

TRAN website: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/TRAN>

Policy Department Publication in the European Parliament:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/supporting-analyses.html>

European Aviation Safety Agency newsletters: <http://easa.europa.eu/communications/general-publications.php>

European Railway Agency newsletters: <http://www.era.europa.eu/Communication/Newsletter>

European Maritime Safety Agency newsletters: <http://www.emsa.europa.eu/news-a-press-centre/newsletters.html>

SESAR Joint Undertaking news: <http://www.sesarju.eu/newsroom/all-news>

Innovation & Networks Executive Agency: <http://ec.europa.eu/inea/en>

DG MOVE newsletter: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/media/newsletter_en

Estonian Presidency of the Council: <https://www.eu2017.ee/>



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