OPINION

of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

on internet connectivity for growth, competitiveness and cohesion: European Gigabit Society and 5G
(2016/2305(INI))

Rapporteur: Kosma Złotowski
SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Transport and Tourism calls on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:


2. Insists that within the current international technological race, achieving a dynamic European Gigabit Society is indispensable in order to maintain the competitiveness and prosperity of the EU, as well as to unleash the potential for innovation and transformation in the transport sector;

3. Points out that in order to remain competitive, the European transport sector will have to quickly adapt to new challenges presented by globalisation, changing mobility patterns, digitalisation and increasing consumer expectations; agrees that deployment of 5G networks is a necessary condition for developing existing, new and innovative business models and creating economic and social opportunities, while fostering inclusion and creating opportunities for less developed areas of the EU in the transport and tourism sectors; in this regard, recalls the need to raise further public awareness of the benefits of internet use for passengers;

4. Underlines that effective use of the potential of very high-capacity and seamless internet networks, including cross-border networks, is key to the process of digitisation of transport and tourism services, the deployment of integrated ticketing and the wide use of innovative means of transport for people and goods, such as increasingly connected and autonomous vehicles or drones; notes that 5G networks could also contribute to developing new entertainment models and thus diversifying the EU tourism offer and making it more attractive; notes that 5G will enable new high-quality services and will improve passenger experience for digital users, such as those using online platforms in relation to transport and tourism services;

5. Expresses concern that the EU is lagging behind North America and parts of the Asia-Pacific region when it comes to 5G take-up; further voices its concern at the fact that, as evidenced by the data currently available, none of the 28 Member States has achieved the Digital Agenda target of 100 % high- and ultra-high-speed coverage; points out that average next-generation-access coverage currently stands at below 25 % in some Member States;

6. Regrets that the current generation of 4G is still lagging behind expected deployment, especially in rural areas; notes that the Commission’s action plan for the deployment of 5G infrastructure should provide the tools to avoid past mistakes;

7. Takes the view that information and communication technologies (ICT), and the pace at which they are developing, have had an overwhelming impact not just on the economy but on society as a whole; believes that ICT and digital technologies offer great potential, since they can improve people’s access to public services such as transport; considers it important, however, not to disregard the huge and unavoidable challenges that progress in
these areas poses for society as a whole, particularly in terms of the organisation of work, labour rights and people’s security;

8. Calls on the Member States to consider the 5G Action Plan as a guide towards establishing the Electronic Communications Code (ECC), particularly concerning cooperation in spectrum management and further investment in network infrastructure; stresses that any significant progress towards building a European Gigabit Society can only be made with appropriate high levels of investment in network infrastructure in all the Member States so as to ensure a robust, safe and reliable digital infrastructure for all transport modes regardless of size or location; doubts whether financing models based only or primarily on investment funds will be sufficient to upgrade infrastructure where necessary or help fill existing gaps in the level of development of network infrastructure and even out differences in the availability of high-capacity internet connections in border, outlying and outermost regions and in non-urban areas;

9. Calls for more funding for the deployment of an ambitious and coherent 5G financing strategy and for full utilisation of the potential and synergies of existing funds to encourage new investments; welcomes the Connecting Europe Broadband Fund, and calls on the Commission to ensure, maintain and develop further the financing for the 5G Action Plan within the horizon of the next MFF 2020-2027;

10. Considers that the best way of developing the network infrastructure is by means of a fair and effective competitive environment; observes that all frequency bands available must be put to effective use; stresses the importance of the 5G-PPP (public-private partnership) initiative and the urgent need to find new sources of private investment to support both the EU’s competitiveness on the global market and new opportunities for innovation in the fields of transport and tourism;

11. Calls for greater use to be made of cohesion policy funds to aim at greater uniformity in connections between EU regions; emphasises the need to find incentives not just for the supply side, but also for the demand side in order to increase citizens’ interest in transport and tourism services over 5G and fostering take-up; agrees with the key objectives of promoting internet connectivity for growth, competitiveness and cohesion; notes the value of pursuing a technology-neutral approach which can serve to maximise the scope for innovation, infrastructure competition and cost reduction in emerging transport technologies and infrastructure;

12. Encourages the Commission to pay more attention, in the development of the European Gigabit Society, to the issues of data privacy, cybersecurity and cybercrime and their specificities in the transport sector; notes that no progress can be made in this area without giving adequate priority to the security of users of digitised transport systems and at the same time drawing up rules to manage those technologies, so as to prevent disputes over competitiveness on the market;

13. Encourages the Commission to consider adjusting the provisions of Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 TFEU, and on the basis of state-aid rules, in order to facilitate the construction of high-speed internet networks and to pay particular attention to the outermost regions as enshrined in Article 349 TFEU, in view of their remoteness and the costs associated with 5G-compliant
network infrastructures;

14. Calls on the Commission to ensure that each Member State maps its network so as to be able to identify the digital exclusion zones, with a view to ensuring blanket 5G coverage;

15. Recommends that the Commission should do all in its power to secure a European Gigabit Society that is in keeping with the principle of economic, social and territorial cohesion;

16. Acknowledges the dense network infrastructure required to guarantee high capacity and low latency needs for a 5G network; notes the benefits of combining projects and plans to build new network infrastructure in the 5G standard with the already planned construction and modernisation of road and rail routes within the Member States in addition to urban infrastructure projects, given, for example, the possibilities for connected and autonomous vehicles in terms of improving mobility in the urban environment; agrees that such rational combining of construction works will help to save resources, make those works more viable, and speed up the construction and provision of the necessary high-speed infrastructure;

17. Underlines the fact that denser networks using a larger number of radiation-emitting devices need to undergo proper testing and approval, as no risks to public health may be admitted;

18. Notes the potential of the development of the following services in EU cities: smart traffic management based on real-time information, parking and toll systems; calls on operators to invest more in infrastructure in order to improve connectivity and extend 5G coverage in all EU areas, urban, peripheral and rural;

19. Stresses that, in parallel with the development of 5G, the general introduction of the internet of things will have a major impact, inter alia, on goods transport and logistics, including postal activity and more generally material exchanges (letters and parcels);

20. Notes that once networked, vehicles are consistently safer (with fewer accidents), greener (with less emissions) and contribute to more predictable travel patterns; therefore supports the idea of introducing an EU-wide target for all vehicles available on the EU market to become 5G-enabled and to feature on-board ITS equipment; strongly supports the goal of 5G-enabling base-station networked ambulances and other emergency vehicles (police cars, fire engines) for ongoing and uninterrupted coverage during interventions;

21. Strongly supports efforts towards ensuring access to the 5G network along intermodal journeys on the basis of public transport networks linked to the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and the trans-European transport networks (TEN-T) by 2025, and expects that full access throughout the EU will follow, in both urban and rural areas and at major tourist centres and attractions;

22. Notes the important role of internet technology and the internet of things for the development of multimodal, user-friendly and safe infrastructure and transport services, but also for the development of on-board e-call technology; highlights the need to take into account all the interacting elements from a variety of sectors, such as electronics, telecommunications, transport and tourism;
23. Welcomes the Commission’s initiative ‘WIFI4EU’; notes that publicly available and free Wi-Fi connections in strategic public areas such as transport hubs can allow all European citizens to access and benefit from digitalised tools on an equal basis;

24. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to come up with initiatives similar to the WiFi4EU programme to incentivise all passengers to use the new technologies, irrespective of socio-economic background or age, in an effort to eliminate any digital divide between people and/or generations; underlines the added value these developments will bring to the tourism sector, boosting the attractiveness of Europe for businesses and visitors;

25. Emphasises that ensuring internet access and guaranteeing high-speed, reliable, low-latency and low-jitter internet connectivity are essential for digitising processes and the value chain in the tourism sector, as well as for the development and deployment of transport technologies such as Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems (C-ITS), River Information Services (RIS) and European Rail Traffic Management Systems (ERTMS);

26. Points out that the development of systems such as the above will help foster the process of digitisation and automation of both mobility and transport, which in turn will improve safety, optimise resources, allow for better use of existing capacities, enhance efficiency, accessibility and energy-saving, improve environmental performance and boost the competitiveness of SMEs in the tourism sector; recognises that, in line with the wider process of digitisation across European industry, many companies will have to underpin their transformation strategies with mobility, affording significant opportunities for SMEs and start-ups in the transport sector, a development which should be supported;

27. Notes the benefits of reliable and uninterrupted 5G coverage for road safety, enabling connected and digital means of control, such as smart tachographs and e-documents, for heavy goods vehicles.
**INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION**

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| **Result of final vote** | +: 40  
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0: 3 |
| **Substitutes present for the final vote** | Jakop Dalunde, Kateřina Konečná, Matthijs van Miltenburg |
| **Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote** | John Stuart Agnew, Jiří Maštálka |
# FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

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<td>Georges Bach, Deirdre Clune, Andor Deli, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar, Markus Pieper, Salvatore Domenico Pogliese, Massimiliano Salini, Claudia Schmidt, Elissavet Vozenberg-Vrionidi, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Wim van de Camp, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska</td>
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Key to symbols:
+ : in favour
- : against
0 : abstention