



2015/2350(INI)

30.5.2016

DRAFT REPORT

on unleashing the potential of ferries in coastal areas and inland waterways: a contribution to multimodal passenger transport
(2015/2350(INI))

Committee on Transport and Tourism

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on unleashing the potential of ferries in coastal areas and inland waterways: a contribution to multimodal passenger transport (2015/2350(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) of 1974, as amended,
- having regard to the International Maritime Organisation Protocol of 1978 Relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships of 1973,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2006,
- having regard to the Commission White Paper of 28 March 2011 entitled ‘Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system’ (COM(2011)0144),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 21 January 2009 entitled ‘Strategic goals and recommendations for the EU’s maritime transport policy until 2018’ (COM(2009)0008),
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network and repealing Decision No 661/2010/EU¹,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010²,
- having regard to its resolution of 5 May 2010 on strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy until 2018³,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 September 2015 on the implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport: taking stock and the way forward towards sustainable mobility⁴,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 concerning the rights of passengers when travelling by

¹ OJ L 348, 20.12.2013, p. 1.

² OJ L 348, 20.12.2013, p. 129.

³ OJ C 81 E, 15.3.2011, p. 10.

⁴ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0310.

sea and inland waterway and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004¹,

- having regard to Directive 2009/45/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 May 2009 on safety rules and standards for passenger ships²,
 - having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1090/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 amending Directive 2009/42/EC on statistical returns in respect of carriage of goods and passengers by sea³,
 - having regard to Council Directive 98/41/EC of 18 June 1998 on the registration of persons sailing on board passenger ships operating to or from ports of the Member States of the Community⁴,
 - having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 3051/95 of 8 December 1995 on the safety management of roll-on/roll-off passenger ferries (ro-ro ferries)⁵,
 - having regard to Directive 2012/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 amending Council Directive 1999/32/EC as regards the sulphur content of marine fuels⁶,
 - having regard to the Commission report of 16 October 2015 entitled ‘REFIT Adjusting Course: EU Passenger Ship Safety Legislation Fitness Check’ (COM (2015)0508),
 - having regard to the Commission report of 31 March 2016 entitled ‘REFIT Evaluation of Directive 2000/59/EC on port reception facilities for ship-generated waste and cargo residues’ (COM (2016)0168),
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (A8-0000/2016),
- A. whereas Europe’s geography, with its long coastlines and many islands and rivers, offers extraordinary opportunities for sustainable waterborne passenger transport;
- B. whereas waterborne passenger transport in the fields of coastal (short sea) shipping, inland and maritime ferries, urban mobility, cruises and tourism offers great potential for using available excess capacity in terms of both infrastructure and vessels;
- C. whereas the integration of waterborne passenger hubs into European policy on interconnecting infrastructure, as already implemented through Regulations (EU) No 1315/2013 and (EU) No 1316/2013 on the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), respectively, will provide further European added value;

¹ OJ L 334, 17.12.2010, p. 1.

² OJ L 163, 25.6.2009, p. 1.

³ OJ L 325, 09.12.2010, p. 1.

⁴ OJ L 188, 2.7.1998, p. 35.

⁵ OJ L 320, 30.12.1995, p. 14.

⁶ OJ L 327, 27.11.2012, p. 1.

- D. whereas the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the proposal for the European Accessibility Act provide a sound basis for the future review of Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010 within an intermodal context, including barrier-free accessibility for passengers with disabilities or reduced mobility;
- E. whereas several tragic accidents have occurred in the past in the waterborne passenger transport sector, including those involving the *Estonia*, the *Herald of Free Enterprise* and the *Costa Concordia*;
- F. whereas in its maritime transport policy strategy to 2018 the EU sets out its goal of becoming the world leader in maritime research and innovation, with a view to improving energy efficiency in ships, reducing their environmental impact, minimising the risk of accidents and providing better quality of life at sea;
- 1. Takes the view that waterborne passenger transport (WPT) must be put higher on the transport policy agenda of the EU and of its Member States; considers, therefore, that they should work towards a ‘single area for waterborne passenger transport’, for instance through simplifying the administrative burden arising from cross-border passenger shipping;

Competitiveness

- 2. Encourages the Member States and the Commission to give consideration to WPT, and especially to improve the associated infrastructure within the TEN-T and the CEF by strengthening its interconnection with hinterland infrastructure;
- 3. Calls on the Commission to publish an annual overview of WPT projects co-funded by the EU within the framework of cohesion, structural, regional, Interreg, Horizon 2020, CEF and TEN-T funds and the European Fund for Strategic Investments;
- 4. Stresses the key relevance of European statistical data for formulating plans and policies for the waterborne transport sector, particularly as regards the number of cross-border maritime and inland waterway services provided by both ferries and cruise ships;
- 5. Believes that the integration of WPT into urban public transport networks could considerably enhance mobility efficiency, environmental performance, quality of life, affordability and comfort in cities;
- 6. Emphasises that WPT should be better integrated into information, booking and ticketing systems in order to improve the quality of public services and further develop the tourism sector;
- 7. Points out that practices whereby freight vessels also deliver passenger services and vice versa, for instance in the case of ferries, should be promoted, as they offer potential for ships to achieve better occupancy rates and greater financial efficiency;
- 8. Welcomes the efforts of the WPT sector to switch to cleaner ships, developed as part of a European framework aimed at making waterborne transport greener; believes that this will lead to cheaper solutions that are sustainable, more attractive and thus economically more competitive, making the sector ‘cheaper, cleaner, greener’ overall;

9. Is convinced that the EU passenger ships industry must remain a key competitive player, while reducing its environmental footprint;

Environmental sustainability

10. Calls on the Commission to integrate WPT into its strategy and to take steps to reduce CO₂ emissions in line with the COP 21 agreements and minimise external costs;
11. Encourages the Commission and the Member States to improve environmental standards with a view to reducing air pollution, along the lines of the Baltic Sea standards for sulphur emissions limits, fuel quality and more fuel-efficient engines;
12. Supports the Commission in its promotion of non-fossil alternative fuels, electric and hybrid systems based on renewable sources, and solar and wind energy for maritime vessels, and encourages it to tailor research and innovation with a particular focus on practicability for the WPT sector;
13. Welcomes the Commission's REFIT initiative for port reception facilities and encourage its plans for new legislation under the ordinary legislative procedure, including a good information system on waste managed in different Member States, both on ships and in ports;

Safety and security

14. Recalls that the prevention of pollution and accidents is key to the role of the European Maritime Safety Authority in improving the safety of cross-border maritime ferries and cruises;
15. Stresses that, when it comes to the further development of information systems such as conventional radar, SafeSeaNet, Galileo and the River Information System (RIS), the focus should be on improving safety, security and interoperability;
16. Invites the Commission to propose a clear framework allocating responsibilities and costs, with a view to improving security; urges the Commission, furthermore, to address staff training;
17. Points out that a significant number of rivers constitute borders and encourages the authorities responsible to ensure cooperation and well-integrated and efficient safety, security and emergency systems that operate from both sides of the border;
18. Emphasises that, when international maritime ferries operate in EU territorial waters, EU and Member State legislation must apply;

Service quality and accessibility

19. Encourages the Commission to integrate the principles of Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010 into its proposal on intermodal passenger rights, including aspects of barrier-free accessibility for people with disabilities or reduced mobility;
20. Stresses the importance of the WPT sector in developing sustainable tourism, in particular in remote regions of the Union such as coastal and island regions; considers,

furthermore, that SMEs should be a focal point for the promotion of tourism services;

21. Highlights the potential and desirability of integrating WPT into a multimodal mobility framework for both commuters and tourists; considers, in this connection, that further improvements are needed in order to develop integrated ticketing schemes, to enhance reliability, comfort, punctuality and frequency and to achieve faster boarding times in order to attract passengers;

Miscellaneous

22. Proposes that a European inland navigation agency be established to bring about the 'single area for waterborne passenger transport' and to strive to converge the governance and regulatory systems that already exist for the Rhine, the Danube and other inland waterways;

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23. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Waterborne passenger transport, including maritime ferries, inland ferries, barges and cruises, plays a crucial role in achieving a more sustainable and efficient European transport sector, assisted by policies that address safety, environmental standards, cross-border cooperation and competitiveness as well as service quality, passenger rights and barrier-free accessibility.

A large number of commuters in Europe travel by road, creating bottlenecks, congestion and delays on Europe's urban routes. Making better use of available capacity of waterborne passenger transport could not only help reduce congestion and CO₂ emissions, but also improve air quality and provide better transport services overall.

Europe's geography features many rivers, waterways, estuaries, long coastlines and islands, and therefore offers extraordinary opportunities for waterborne transport. There are many areas in Europe where travelling by ferry or cruise ships would be more sustainable, easier and quicker, increasing the region's social and economic welfare alongside the protection of Europe's environment and the health of its citizens. Waterborne passenger transport is used not only in inland navigation; due to congested or more difficult land transport connections, there is an increasing tendency to transport passengers along coasts and shores. In this respect, the provision of statistical data on waterborne transport, particularly on the number of cross-border ferry, cruise and maritime services, would be crucial.

Furthermore, excess capacity of waterborne passenger transport vessels and infrastructure should be considered in the field of tourism, with regard to both ferry services and cruise ships. Apart from the potential of shuttle ferries - as a component of cities' public transport networks - to considerably enhance efficiency, environmental performance, quality of life and comfort in busy urban areas, they could also provide lifeline services for remote communities and areas as well as revitalise their tourism potential. To this end, coherent provisions on interconnectivity with other transport modes, integrated ticketing and information systems are needed, taking into account the needs and rights of all travellers, including people with reduced mobility, commuters and tourists.

Passenger ships play an important role for the mobility of EU citizens - more than 400 million people pass through EU ports every year, with 120 million passengers transported between ports of the same Member State. The EU passenger ship safety legislation has been put in place over a period of 15 years and mainly in response to accidents. It resulted in improved safety of life on passenger ships sailing in EU waters and facilitated search and rescue operations. It also ensured that the majority of passengers transported by domestic passenger ships travel on ships complying with common EU safety standards. Nevertheless, there is further scope to step up the enforcement of existing rules, and simplify the current regulatory framework in order to remove outdated or overlapping requirements.

Even though waterborne transport is already one of the most sustainable ways to travel, there is further potential to make vessels cleaner and more energy efficient through investment in research and innovative technologies, for example with regard to solar and wind energy, onshore electricity and alternative fuels, while applying the principle of technology neutrality. Connected to this is the availability and use of EU funding such as the cohesion, structural, regional, INTERREG, Horizon 2020, CEF, TEN-T and EFSI funds.