



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Transport and Tourism

2009/2230(INI)

24.3.2010

OPINION

of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

for the Committee on Regional Development

on the European Union strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the role of
macro-regions in the future cohesion policy
(2009/2230(INI))

Rapporteur: Werner Kuhn

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Transport and Tourism calls on the Committee on Regional Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Considers enhanced connections, involving all modes of transport, to represent an essential contribution to the development of a stronger, more cohesive economy in the Baltic Sea Region;
2. Regards the inclusion of all coastal states as highly desirable in order to promote an efficient, interoperable pan-European transport area which uses and improves existing infrastructure, in particular for rail freight, sea and inland water transport and sustainable means of transport;
3. Stresses the specific situation of the Baltic States, which to a large extent are currently isolated from the European transport network, and takes the view that this strategy should, inter alia, help to address the lack of appropriate infrastructure and accessibility, as well as low interoperability between various national transport networks owing to different technical systems and administrative barriers, in order to develop a comprehensive multimodal transport system across the Baltic Sea Region;
4. Emphasises the importance of integrating the Baltic Sea Region more closely into the TEN-T priority axes, in particular with regard to the Motorways of the Sea (TEN-T 21), extending the rail axis from Berlin to the Baltic coast (TEN-T 1), improving the rail axis from Berlin to the Baltic coast in combination with the Rostock-Denmark Seaway connection, and making more rapid progress in upgrading and using the Rail Baltica axis (TEN-T 27); also emphasises the need to complete the interconnections between the Baltic Sea Region and other European regions via the Baltic-Adriatic corridor;
5. Emphasises the need for the development of a transport system in the Baltic Sea Region in order to create conditions for the region's accessibility and appeal and to connect the Baltic Sea Region to the European transport network; believes that the Commission should continue to carry out regular reviews of the execution of priority projects, as well as to provide the necessary finances for their more rapid implementation;
6. Underlines that one of the common goals of the European Ports Policy is to make European sea ports more competitive, as they often face unfair competition from non-EU ports as well as discriminatory measures adopted in the relevant regional markets by countries adjoining the EU, and notes the situation of the Baltic Sea ports in this regard;
7. Stresses that it is important to enhance the Baltic Sea Region's transport capacity towards the east, in particular in order to promote transport interoperability, especially for railways, and to speed up freight transit at the borders of the European Union;
8. Believes that particular priority should be given to connections between harbours and inland regions, including by means of inland waterways, so as to ensure that all parts of the region can benefit from the growth of maritime cargo transport;

9. Stresses, in this regard, the need for effective cross-border coordination and cooperation between rail, seaports, inland ports, hinterland terminals and logistics in order to develop a more sustainable intermodal transport system;
10. Underlines the importance of short sea shipping in the Baltic Sea and its contribution to an efficient, environmentally-friendly transport network; points out that the competitiveness of short sea shipping links must be promoted in order to ensure efficient use of the sea; believes for this reason that the Commission needs to provide the European Parliament, as quickly as possible, but by the end of 2010 at the latest, with an impact assessment of the effects of the revised Annex VI to the MARPOL Convention, limiting sulphur in marine fuel oil to 0.1% from 2015 in the areas of the North Sea and the Baltic Sea where sulphur emissions are being monitored;
11. Emphasises that, in this region too, shipping must be made more environmentally friendly by applying stricter standards to local and global ship emission levels, while improving ships' engines and the quality of their fuel;
12. Welcomes the inclusion, in the Commission's action plan, of the objective of making the Baltic Sea a model region for clean shipping and a world leader in maritime safety and security; considers these objectives to be crucial to maintaining and enhancing the region's potential for tourism;
13. Recognises the need for specific measures in support of this objective, including the appropriate use of nautical pilots or demonstrably experienced seafarers for the most challenging straits and ports and the establishment of reliable financing schemes for research and development on the sustainable operation of ships;
14. Recognises that the geographical location of the Baltic Sea Region is exceptional, and that such a location provides opportunities to more actively develop ties with the EU and neighbouring external countries, and also stresses the importance of tourism to the regional economy and the scope for expansion; welcomes the declaration adopted at the 2nd Baltic Sea Tourism Forum, which referred to common promotional activities, efforts to find new international markets and infrastructure development;
15. Underlines the unique opportunity for sustainable tourism offered by the attractiveness of the Hanseatic cities in the Baltic Region; supports, furthermore, the promotion of cross-border cycle tourism, thereby creating win-win effects for the environment and for small and medium-sized enterprises ;
16. Considers themes such as water sports, wellness and spa tourism, the cultural heritage and landscapes to offer great potential for developing the region's profile as a tourist destination; stresses, therefore, the need to protect natural coastal areas, landscapes and the cultural heritage as a resource for ensuring a sustainable economy in the Baltic Sea Region in the future;
17. Regards improvements in transport links and the elimination of bottlenecks to be of no less importance, and notes that border-crossing difficulties at checkpoints on the EU's eastern border with the Russian Federation, which cause long queues of lorries and pose threats to the environment, social harmony, traffic safety and drivers' safety, could be

solved via this strategy in order to ensure the smooth flow of goods through the Baltic Sea Region;

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	23.3.2010
Result of final vote	+: 36 -: 1 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Magdalena Alvarez, Inés Ayala Sender, Georges Bach, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Michael Cramer, Christine De Veyrac, Saïd El Khadraoui, Ismail Ertug, Carlo Fidanza, Knut Fleckenstein, Jacqueline Foster, Mathieu Grosch, Georgios Koumoutsakos, Werner Kuhn, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Gesine Meissner, Hella Ranner, Vilja Savisaar, Olga Sehnalová, Brian Simpson, Dirk Sterckx, Silvia-Adriana Țicău, Georgios Toussas, Giommara Uggias, Thomas Ulmer, Peter van Dalen, Dominique Vlasto, Artur Zasada, Roberts Zīle
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Zigmantas Balčytis, Philip Bradbourn, Isabelle Durant, Tanja Fajon, Adam Kósa, Dominique Riquet, Laurence J.A.J. Stassen, Sabine Wils, Janusz Władysław Zemke