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on strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy
until 2018
(2009/2095(INI))

Committee on Transport and Tourism

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CONTENTS

	Page
MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION	3
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	7

MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

**on strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy until 2018
(2009/2095(INI))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 'Strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy until 2018' (COM(2009)0008),
 - having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 'An Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union' (COM(2007)0575),
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (A7-0000/2010),
- A. whereas European ship owners make an important contribution to the European economy but have to compete in a global environment,
- B. whereas therefore measures to preserve a thriving maritime sector in Europe are important but must nonetheless be adopted in accordance with the rules governing the internal market,
- C. whereas maritime transport is a relatively environmentally sound mode of transport, which nonetheless still has much potential to become even cleaner than it already is,
- D. whereas safety is very important for all concerned and for the environment,
- E. whereas decisions should be taken at the right administrative level, which means at global level where possible and at European level where necessary,

General

1. Welcomes the Communication from the Commission on maritime transport policy until 2018;
2. Stresses the importance of the maritime sector for the European economy as a carrier of passengers, raw materials and products but also as the core of a wider cluster of maritime activities such as logistics, research and education;
3. Emphasises that the EU's maritime policy should take account of the fact that the maritime sector faces competition not only within the Community but above all globally;

The market

4. Calls on EU Member States therefore to encourage the use of their flag, for example by providing fiscal facilities such as tonnage taxation and reduced taxation of seafarers;
5. Considers that, like any other sector of transport, the maritime sector ought in principle not to receive any State aid, although State aid may exceptionally be permitted for specific cases provided that it is made available temporarily and in a clear, transparent manner;
6. Calls on the Commission to submit the promised new rules on State aid by August 2010;
7. Calls on the Member States to speedily sign, ratify and implement the UN Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea, known as the 'Rotterdam rules', which lays down the new maritime liability system;

Social aspects

8. Welcomes initiatives by Member States and the Commission to make maritime occupations more attractive to young EU citizens; advocates, to this end, linking work and multiannual training in the maritime sector; advocates also that more information on the sector be provided at schools and that more traineeships be made available;
9. Stresses that seafarers from third countries must comply with satisfactory training requirements and calls on ship owners and national inspectorates to guarantee and enforce this, where necessary assisted by EMSA;
10. Underlines that a reasonable balance between the employment conditions of EU seafarers and the competitiveness of the European fleet should be found in order to facilitate labour mobility in the maritime industries throughout Europe and to ensure a fully functioning internal market without barriers and without unjustified restrictions to provide services;
11. Stresses that inspections must be specific and risk-based and must not generate any superfluous regulatory pressure on the industry;
12. Hopes that it will be investigated where and to what extent technological developments can compensate for the declining availability of seafarers, but warns against introducing untried technology too hastily;

The environment

13. Acknowledges that considerable progress is still possible with a view to reducing emissions of SO_x, NO_x, particulates (PM10) and CO₂ in shipping;
14. Stresses that these reductions must be agreed in global fora in order to limit disparities in competitive conditions;
15. Calls on Member States to make more use of the option - where possible in conjunction with neighbouring countries - of designating maritime emission control areas, particularly for NO_x;

16. Calls on the Commission and Member States also to work on alternative instruments such as the introduction of a levy on bunker fuel, preferably geared to the quality and environmental performance of the fuel, or the concept of 'green ports', where clean vessels are dealt with more quickly and/or pay reduced harbour dues;
17. Notes in this connection the breakthrough in inland shipping technology which has made it possible to reduce emissions from existing ships' engines substantially, and calls on the Commission to investigate whether these techniques can also be used in seagoing vessels;
18. Deplores the fact that the Copenhagen Climate Summit did not succeed in reaching any conclusions with regard to reducing emissions from seagoing vessels, but stresses that intensive efforts must continue, both in the post-Kyoto process and in the IMO, to agree global measures to bring about such reductions;
19. Stresses the importance of interoperable technical facilities for the supply of electricity from shore to ship in European ports, which can considerably reduce pollution;

Safety

20. Appreciates the adoption of the Third Maritime Safety Package, and calls on Member States to implement the package speedily;
21. Advocates stringent checks on shipbuilding, including the quality of the steel used, and vessel maintenance, as provided for inter alia in the amended legislation on classification societies;
22. Supports the change of course in the Paris MOU (on port state control), which entails replacing regular inspections with risk-based inspections, so that precisely those vessels which display numerous shortcomings are tackled effectively;
23. Calls on Member States and ship owners to seek to be placed as high as possible on the Paris MOU list; calls on Slovakia, in particular, to make an extra effort in this regard;
24. Calls on national inspectorates and other national authorities to cooperate more closely in exchanging data on vessels and their cargoes, so as to reduce regulatory pressure but increase the effectiveness of inspections;
25. Is aware of the danger of piracy on the high seas and calls on all ship owners to cooperate with government initiatives such as Atalanta which can protect them against piracy;

Miscellaneous

26. Stresses that shipping is a global industry and that agreements ought, for preference, to be concluded on a global scale; considers the IMO to be the most appropriate forum for this; calls on Member States to make more effort to ratify and implement quickly IMO conventions which they have signed;
27. Acknowledges fully, moreover, the role of the European Union in the transposition of international rules into EU law and in the implementation of and support for maritime policy, for example by EMSA;

28. Calls on the Commission to submit without delay its promised roadmap supplementing its Communication with the necessary details;
29. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Background to the proposal

The Communication from the Commission on 'Strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy until 2018' is a follow-up to the Commission's Communications 'Keep Europe moving - Sustainable mobility for our continent' and 'An Integrated Maritime Policy' (Blue Paper), and is partly based on independent opinions, studies and dialogue with the industry and on Parliament's response to the Blue Paper.

Summary of the Commission proposal

The Commission communication covers a wide range of subjects relating to European maritime transport policy. At the same time, the document is not of a particularly prescriptive character and allows maritime transport stakeholders ample scope and initiative to realise the strategic objectives and recommendations.

In brief, the communication covers six topics:

1. The value and competitive position of European maritime shipping in a global market: the European maritime transport sector operates on a global market, in which it plays a very important role: 41% of the total global fleet is European-owned. However, the competitive position of the European fleet is increasingly coming under pressure from the increase in and development of State aid in the maritime transport sectors of third countries. For this reason, the Commission supports the development of fair international maritime trade conditions in the WTO and favours maintaining and improving the existing Community framework for tonnage taxation, income tax and State aid.
2. Employment in the maritime sector: the European maritime industry is suffering from a growing shortage of skilled crews. Consequently, much expertise and relevant knowledge is being lost. This is not conducive to the competitive position of European maritime transport. The Commission therefore proposes promoting seafaring by providing better information at an early age and better career prospects. Administrative burdens should also be reduced and working conditions and terms of employment improved.
3. The quality of European shipping: in recent years European maritime shipping and the supervisory authorities have made a substantial contribution to safer and cleaner maritime shipping. However, more is needed: the sector should therefore contribute more to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Commission will seek to develop emission standards within the IMO in order to safeguard Europe's competitive position. It is of particular importance to reduce emissions of sulphur oxides and nitrogen oxides, and it should be investigated which European sea areas ought to be considered for designation as emission control areas. In addition, in view of the anticipated increase in the number of vessels, which moreover are growing bigger all the time, safety will become a far more important issue. The Commission will therefore ensure swift and correct implementation of the Third Maritime Safety Package and has made it one of its targets to ensure that by the end of 2012 all EU Member States are on the 'White List' of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MOU). In addition, in view of the persistent

threat of terrorist acts, security of maritime transport is a priority. The Commission proposes a firm response to piracy and increasing the protection of crew members, inter alia by introducing early alert systems.

4. International cooperation: as the European maritime transport sector has to operate on a global market, the European Union has long advocated supporting the work of such international organisations as UNCLOS¹, the WTO and the IMO (International Maritime Organisation). Within the IMO, especially, the Commission wishes Member States to enhance the recognition and visibility of the EU by formalising the EU coordination mechanism and granting formal observer status to the EU within that organisation. In addition the Commission proposes in particular ensuring swift ratification of IMO conventions at world level and the establishment of a system for actual enforcement of internationally agreed rules by all flag and coastal states in the world.
5. European maritime transport as part of the European economy and as a driving force behind economic integration: maritime transport in the Member States is expected to increase from 3.8 billion tonnes in 2006 to 5.3 billion tonnes in 2018. This means that the European infrastructure and port capacity will need to be prepared for this increase within 10 years. At all events, port productivity will have to rise substantially. The EU should contribute to this by establishing a 'European maritime transport space without barriers' and stepping up the EU's 'Motorways of the Sea' strategy. Administrative burdens must also be reduced and suitable conditions created to attract investment in the ports sector. The Commission will also draw up guidelines for the application of Community environmental legislation to port development. In addition, the Trans-European Transport Network projects and the Marco Polo project will be used to respond to the growth of maritime transport and at the same time render it sustainable.
6. Europe as a world leader in maritime research and innovation: Europe is currently the world leader in the field of maritime research and innovation. This position must be retained, because it affords opportunities for growth and efficiency on the part of Europe's industry (particularly its maritime transport industry). Particularly as regards environmental performance, there are many potential opportunities and advantages because 'greening' the industry is increasingly becoming a source of competitive advantage. The EU must therefore continue to seek to improve vessels' safety and their environmental performance. The resultant sustainable mobility should help to make the whole transport chain more efficient.

Summary of the rapporteur's point of view

The rapporteur is favourably impressed by the Communication from the Commission. As the document deals with numerous subjects, his report is confined to a few priority points.

The rapporteur primarily considers that the importance of the maritime sector cannot be stressed too much. Europe's maritime sector makes a clear and vital contribution both to the Community's internal economy and to Europe's transport system. The interests of the European maritime transport sector must therefore be assigned high priority in establishing

¹ United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

general European transport policy. It must be realised that the European maritime sector mainly operates and competes on a global market.

This global market also means that policy needs to be made to measure for maritime transport. The risk of reflagging, with all its adverse consequences for the environment, the quality of shipping and the maritime cluster, must not be underestimated. The rapporteur therefore considers that the Member States should do their utmost to encourage the (existing) use of their flags, for example by providing tax facilities for tonnage taxation and reduced taxation of seafarers. The rapporteur looks forward to the new rules on State aid which the Commission has promised. He calls on the Commission to submit them by August 2010.

As regards employment and working conditions, the rapporteur considers that maritime occupations should become more attractive for young EU citizens. Particularly if maritime transport is to grow as expected, demand for crew members will only increase. It is therefore important that young people of all ages should receive information about the sector. It is also necessary to hold out attractive career prospects to seafarers, both at sea and on shore. At the same time, it must not be made impossible for ship owners to hire third-country nationals for their maritime transport operations, although of course it is important that such employees meet the training requirements and have the requisite professional qualifications. The rapporteur also considers that the legislation adopted in the ILO must be supported, ratified and adequately enforced worldwide to keep the working conditions of all seafarers up to scratch.

The maritime transport sector faces major challenges with regard to the environment. The primary task is to improve the environmental performance of seagoing ships substantially, and emissions of SO_x, NO_x, particulates (PM₁₀) and CO₂ must be reduced. In this connection it is very important that agreements on the subject should be reached at global level in order to combat the risk of reflagging to non-participating countries. The rapporteur advocates the development of emission control areas in European waters. To this end, he calls on the Member States, where possible with neighbouring countries, to designate such areas, particularly with the aim of limiting NO_x emissions. The Commission and Member States must also devise alternative measures to improve environmental performance. These might include a levy on bunker fuel geared to the quality and environmental performance of the fuel used, and the concept of Green Ports. Under such a 'bonus/penalty' system, cleaner vessels would be dealt with in port more quickly than more polluting vessels and/or would receive a discount on their harbour dues. The rapporteur also has high hopes of the technological development of seagoing ships. In recent years, inland waterway vessels have made great progress in their environmental performance thanks to the development of new fuels and better engines. The Commission should investigate whether these technological developments can also be applied to maritime shipping. Finally, the rapporteur considers that electricity supply facilities should be established in sea ports to reduce emissions in ports.

In the field of safety, the rapporteur is very curious about the practical details of the Third Maritime Safety Package. Member States are therefore called upon to implement the package quickly and correctly. The rapporteur also takes a favourable view of the decision by the Paris MOU to switch to risk-based inspections. This will prevent unnecessary inspections, increase the effectiveness of monitoring and reduce the red tape for those subject to inspections. Lastly, on the closely related subject of security, the rapporteur wishes to express his

unconditional support for the Atalanta mission which is protecting seagoing vessels against piracy around the Horn of Africa. Ship owners ought, in addition, to take up the security options available from Atalanta and other international cooperation bodies against piracy. As soon as possible, arrangements must also be agreed for appropriate trials of pirates who have been caught. The fact that in some cases apprehended pirates are currently released because they cannot be tried anywhere is hard to accept.

Finally, as maritime transport operates on a global market, primary legislative responsibility rests with the IMO. Within the IMO, the European Union should play a proactive role with a view to securing the drafting and ratification of new rules. The EU also, of course, plays a very important role in transposing IMO rules into the Community acquis and implementing them. Particularly at the implementation stage, EMSA should play the role appropriate to it. Inspections and supervision should be performed at Member State level in close consultation with the Paris MOU. The rapporteur also looks forward to the Road Map for Maritime Policy until 2018 which the Commission has promised to submit.