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Committee on Transport and Tourism

2011/2310(INI)

4.6.2012

OPINION

of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

for the Committee on Regional Development

on the EU Cohesion Policy Strategy for the Atlantic Area
(2011/2310(INI))

Rapporteur: Silvia-Adriana Țicău

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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. Emphasises the importance of integrating the Atlantic region more closely into the trans-European transport networks; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote, in the context of the future TEN-T guidelines and the Connecting Europe Facility, the development of a comprehensive multimodal transport system across the Atlantic region, focusing on both the north–south and the west–east axes, while taking account of the particular features of the outermost regions; stresses the need to give priority to sustainable modes of transport such as rail, inland waterways and motorways of the sea, with a view to alleviating congestion in road transport, to define precisely the areas of logistics and of modal interchange, and to undertake a cost-benefit analysis for the use of each type of infrastructure;
2. Stresses the need for effective crossborder coordination and cooperation for the construction and use of road and rail infrastructures, including high-speed train lines, airports, seaports, inland ports, hinterland terminals and logistics, with a view to developing a more sustainable and multimodal transport system; recalls the importance of air/maritime transport and peripheral airport/port infrastructures for the social and economic cohesion of the outermost regions of the Atlantic area; underlines also the need to facilitate mobility between the Atlantic and other seaboard, especially the Mediterranean, in order to ensure efficient transport links;
3. Recognises the importance of developing the EU’s Atlantic ports, including oil and gas terminals and intermodal transport arrangements; emphasises that such infrastructure should be built in strict compliance with the highest European and international standards for the protection of coastal regions, human health and security, and after performing all relevant environmental impact assessments;
4. Believes that particular priority should be given to coordination and cooperation between seaports and to their connection with islands and inland regions via inland waterways and improved hinterland connections, so as to ensure that all parts of the region can benefit from the growth of maritime transport; recalls, in this context, the importance of adopting an integrated approach to the management of maritime/coastal zones and the hinterland, in particular by encouraging projects promoting the land-sea interface;
5. Stresses the need to increase the volume, efficiency and competitiveness of short sea shipping in the Atlantic Ocean, as an innovative and environment-friendly way to improve and diversify the trans-European transport networks, stimulate the activity of small and peripheral ports, and contribute to the reduction of road congestion and emissions; underlines the importance of prioritising the development of motorways of the sea in the context of the future TEN-T guidelines and the Connecting Europe Facility; invites the Atlantic states and seaport authorities to conclude memorandums of understanding with a view to promoting the development of motorways of the sea across the Atlantic seaboard including third countries;

6. Encourages, for the sake of the sustainability of the motorways of the sea and in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy, the establishment of specific recommendations concerning vessels, with a view to promoting the inclusion of propulsion systems with low carbon emissions and the use of building criteria that are demanding in terms of efficiency, comfort, capacity, safety, location and telecommunications; stresses that such recommendations should focus on increasing the efficiency of this mode of transport, preserving the environment and facilitating its integration with other transport networks and modes;
7. Calls for the improvement of the existing vessel monitoring systems, immediate application of EMSA's strengthened powers, and the conclusion of data-sharing agreements between the competent authorities, in order to permit the identification and tracking of ships and fight threats such as crossborder crime, smuggling, illegal fishing and trafficking; stresses the importance of promoting the deployment and implementation of the European satellite navigation programmes (EGNOS and Galileo), in order to cover search and rescue support systems in the Atlantic; recalls the need to ensure long-term financing by the Union of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) programme, which contributes in particular to the prevention and management of maritime risks;
8. Recalls the benefits of creating a Single European Sky, with a view to strengthening territorial cohesion via increased traffic between regional airports within the Union, and therefore calls on the Commission to ensure the use of functional airspace blocks within the deadlines set to achieve this objective;
9. Believes that policy on airport infrastructures in the Atlantic area should take account of the particular nature of the Gibraltar airport, without prejudice to the respective legal positions of the Kingdom of Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland regarding the dispute over sovereignty of the territory in which that airport is located;
10. Emphasises the need for sustainable development of the main drivers of economic growth in the Atlantic area, in particular maritime transport, shipbuilding, fishing and aquaculture, tourism, and offshore wind, wave and tidal energy, as well as the need to promote research in the area of renewables and the diversification of the EU's energy sources and energy supply routes; underlines the importance of the EU Integrated Maritime Policy for the harmonious and coordinated further development of the aforementioned maritime economic sectors in the Atlantic area;
11. Highlights the potential of the outermost regions, which form part of the global dimension of the Atlantic Strategy, as testing grounds for the sustainable management of oceans, seas and coastal areas; stresses that their location provides an opportunity for exploration and experimentation in the areas of marine energy, combating climate change, food security, protecting biodiversity, promoting aquaculture, and exploring biotechnologies and minerals; calls, therefore, for the outermost regions, given their specific characteristics, to be taken into account in the development of maritime and air transport;
12. Underlines the importance of sustainable, responsible and high-quality tourism for the regeneration of the Atlantic area and the creation of high-value, all-year-round jobs;

stresses, therefore, the need to protect, and promote the attractiveness of, the Atlantic coastal areas, landscapes and cultural heritage, and to develop alternative and thematic tourism products, with a view to enhancing the region's profile as a tourist destination and ensuring a sustainable economy; calls for better use of the EU support programmes in favour of tourism and for action to raise awareness concerning available funding instruments;

13. Recalls that the attractiveness, competitiveness and dynamism of the Atlantic coastal areas depend on strengthening their tourism potential; underlines the importance, therefore, of extending tourist seasons and of diversifying products and client bases in order to eliminate the effects of seasonality, promoting the numerous assets of these areas by also encouraging nautical tourism, cruises, spa tourism and cultural tourism, and promoting actions to ensure the linking of activities in coastal and maritime areas with tourism products in the hinterland; stresses the need to mitigate the impact of tourism activities and infrastructures on the environment and to ensure the management of coastal areas and their hinterlands with a view to guaranteeing the sustainability of these areas and their fauna, flora and landscape;
14. Stresses the importance, when consolidating high-quality tourist facilities, of incorporating agri-food and fish processing, especially that sourced from traditional agriculture and fishing; advocates strengthening short marketing chains in order to help keep added value in the local area;
15. Insists on the need to restore the attractiveness of the maritime professions and of those related to the fishing, aquaculture and processing sectors, in order to offer young people more employment opportunities and retain maritime expertise in the Atlantic region;
16. Calls on the Commission to adopt an Action Plan for the Atlantic Strategy by the end of 2013, incorporating flagship projects with broad involvement of all relevant stakeholders, institutional and administrative levels, economic and social actors and regional partners, and using all available financial instruments; believes that the Commission should continue to carry out regular reviews of the execution of priority projects and provide, together with the Member States involved, the necessary financing for their more rapid implementation;
17. Asks the Commission to include in its Action Plan the objective of making the Atlantic Ocean a model region for clean shipping and maritime safety and security; considers these objectives to be crucial in maintaining and enhancing the region's potential for tourism;
18. Recalls that Article 349 TFEU recognises the need to take account of the specificities of the Union's outermost regions, which are located mainly in the Atlantic region and are characterised by their insularity and remoteness; calls on the Commission to recognise in its Atlantic Strategy the great importance of air and sea transport for the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the outermost regions;
19. Stresses the importance of developing the external dimension of the Atlantic maritime strategy and its internationalisation, taking advantage of the strategic position of the outermost regions and encouraging, where appropriate, the participation of the EU's transatlantic partners in the Atlantic Forum.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	31.5.2012
Result of final vote	+: 37 -: 3 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Magdi Cristiano Allam, Inés Ayala Sender, Georges Bach, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Antonio Cancian, Michael Cramer, Joseph Cuschieri, Philippe De Backer, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Christine De Veyrac, Saïd El Khadraoui, Ismail Ertug, Carlo Fidanza, Jacqueline Foster, Mathieu Grosch, Jim Higgins, Juozas Imbrasas, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Jaromír Kohlíček, Georgios Koumoutsakos, Werner Kuhn, Eva Lichtenberger, Gesine Meissner, Mike Natrass, Hubert Pirker, Dominique Riquet, Petri Sarvamaa, Debora Serracchiani, Laurence J.A.J. Stassen, Keith Taylor, Silvia-Adriana Țicău, Giommara Uggias, Thomas Ulmer, Artur Zasada, Roberts Zīle
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Andrea Cozzolino, Spyros Danellis, Sabine Wils, Janusz Władysław Zemke
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Patrizia Toia