

TRANNEWS

Newsletter from the European Parliament
Committee on Transport and Tourism
Number 86, 9 September 2011

questions & subscription:
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The TRAN website can be found [here](#).

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TRAN Committee meeting 8 September 2011, Brussels

Adoption of draft report

Air services agreement between the EU and the Republic of Cape Verde **Rapporteur: Dominique Riquet (EPP, FR)** **Consent procedure**

The agreement brings existing bilateral air service agreements in line with EU law, especially by guaranteeing non-discriminatory access to all EU air carriers and their owners. The Rapporteur underlined the importance of the agreement for Cape Verde because its economy is primarily based on tourism.

The Committee unanimously recommended concluding the agreement.

The report was adopted by 31:0:0.

Timetable foreseen:

- Vote in plenary: October 2011.

Adoption of draft opinion

Future of VAT **Rapporteur: Markus Ferber (EPP, DE)** **Opinion to ECON Committee**

A harmonised standard or reduced VAT rate for all intra-EU cross-border travel regardless of the mode of transport and a harmonised regulation of VAT deductibility are two of the main requests adopted by the Committee in its opinion on the future of VAT.

It points to several problematic aspects of the current rules regarding VAT in the passenger transport sector. These rules are highly complex, unfair and hamper the proper functioning of the

internal market as well as the achievement of the emission reduction objectives for transport.

They exempt international transport by sea and air, which includes intra-EU cross-border transport, from VAT in all Member States, whereas the situation regarding other modes varies across Member States. In addition, international air and sea transport providers can purchase some goods and services free of VAT.

The opinion also supports a lower or zero rate for urban, suburban and regional public transport and the taxation of passenger transport at the place of departure. Regarding tourism, it calls upon the Council to adopt the proposal for a Directive on the special VAT scheme for travel agents and highlights the opportunity this presents for a reduced VAT rate on tourism to be progressively harmonised across the Member States.

The opinion was adopted by 28:3:1.

Timetable foreseen:

- Vote in ECON Committee: September 2011.

Presentation of draft reports

White Paper on the Future of Transport **Rapporteur: Mathieu Grosch (EPP, BE)** **Own-initiative report**

The Rapporteur believed intermediate objectives, to be reached by 2020/2030, were needed while there should be a very clear signal regarding the internalisation of external costs. He deplored the way that progress towards transport policy objectives was often hampered by incorrect implementation by Member States. Reducing "frontier effects" was necessary and possible in the short-term. He considered the opening of markets to be important but not something to be done at any price.

Regarding TEN-T, he proposed focusing on bottlenecks, prioritising cross-border projects, supporting alternative funding models and maintaining priorities only if Member States take binding decisions to ensure the implementation of projects.

For urban areas, he proposed making support for projects conditional upon the submission of urban mobility plans and called for incentives to choose sustainable means of transport. He stressed that efficient co-modality (measured in terms of economic efficiency, environmental protection, social and employment conditions and safety aspects) should be the guiding idea and that dogmatic debates about precise distance thresholds should be avoided. Finally he proposed regular monitoring towards the achievement of the objectives.

In the following exchange of views Members generally welcomed the draft report. Comments were made on numerous issues including the internalisation of external costs, the vision of zero fatalities in road transport, social conditions, co-modality and kilometre-thresholds, speed limits,

integrated ticketing, a European high-speed rail network, the differences between European regions as well as the importance of research and intelligent transport systems. Several Members were critical about the Rapporteur's call for a proposal on port services.

Mr Michel Delebarre, Chair of the Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy, presented the Committee of the Regions' opinion on the Commission's White Paper.

The Commission's representative welcomed the overall support given to the White Paper. She suggested making reference to the proposal for the Connecting Europe Facility regarding TEN-T funding and putting more emphasis on smart pricing and the maritime blue belt. She criticised the idea of a European rail regulator and setting new objectives for 2020.

Regarding the legislation on drivers' rest and driving time, the Commission preferred to start by seeking better enforcement of the rules rather than changing them. The Single European Sky objectives might be reached even earlier than requested by the Rapporteur. She announced that the Commission is working on indicators to monitor progress.

Timetable foreseen:

- **Deadline for amendments: 20 September**
- Consideration of amendments in TRAN Committee: 11 October
- Vote in TRAN Committee: November 2011.

Common Aviation air agreement between the EU and Georgia **Rapporteur: Thomas Ulmer (EPP, DE)** **Consent procedure**

Against the background of the EU neighbourhood policy, the purpose of the agreement is the establishment of an EU/Georgia Common Aviation Area. The existing bilateral agreements on air traffic services between EU Member States and Georgia are to be superseded by the new agreement and the current legislation on aviation security, safety and air traffic management will be applied.

As a result, the new agreement will facilitate reciprocal market opening to all economic stakeholders on a non-discriminatory basis. As for all agreements of this kind, its conclusion is subject to Parliament's consent.

The Rapporteur and the Shadow Rapporteurs all supported the conclusion of the agreement.

Timetable foreseen:

- **Deadline for amendments: 20 September**
- Vote in TRAN Committee: October
- Vote in plenary: November 2011.

Euro-Mediterranean aviation agreement between the EU and Jordan **Rapporteur: Olga Sehnalová (S&D, CZ)** **Consent procedure**

The agreement allows EU airlines to operate direct flights between any location in the EU and Jordan. It pursues the following objectives: gradual market opening, non-discrimination and the harmonisation of rules on safety, security and air traffic management.

Along with all other Members who spoke, the Rapporteur supported granting Parliament's consent.

Timetable foreseen:

- **Deadline for amendments: 20 September**
- Vote in TRAN Committee: October 2011
- Vote in plenary: November 2011.

Presentation of draft opinion

Competition policy **Rapporteur: Marian-Jean Marinescu (EPP, RO)** **Opinion to ECON Committee**

The Committee held an exchange of views on the Commission's Report on Competition Policy 2010 during which the general line of the draft opinion was supported.

The following issues were raised: debt cancellation in the railway sector, state support to low-cost air carriers, the allocation of slots, passenger rights, financing of seaport structures and the liberalisation of the market for postal services.

Speakers intended to introduce amendments on public service financing and unfair tax exemptions, market opening, cost transparency and competitiveness in international transport.

The Commission representative welcomed the draft opinion and, in particular, the request for transparency of all costs and charges in the transport sector. However, Member States were not obliged to report all data so the Commission could not get a complete picture. As far as the continuation of debt cancellation in the railway sector is concerned, the Commission stressed that it did not intend to modify the existing guidelines.

Timetable foreseen:

- **Deadline for amendments: 20 September**
- Vote in TRAN Committee: October 2011
- Vote in ECON Committee: 22 November 2011.

Exchange of views

with Commissioner Kroes on eCall

Neelie Kroes, Commissioner responsible for the Digital Agenda, presented the Commission's plans to make eCall mandatory in all new type-approved vehicles by 2015. The Commission considers eCall, an electronic safety system which automatically

alerts the emergency services in the case of a serious accident, to be a high priority with the potential to reduce the number of road fatalities by at least 4% and severe injuries by at least 6%.

Following the Communication "eCall: Time for Deployment" (COM(2009)434) the Commission found that regulatory action would be necessary as the system of voluntary implementation had led to only 0.5% of cars being equipped with eCall.

Three regulatory measures would be necessary for the deployment of eCall. On 8 September the Commission adopted a Recommendation to Member States to ensure that mobile network operators support the transmission of eCalls. Member States have to make sure that eCalls will be processed by mobile network operators and given the same service level as any other 112 call. This will be followed by a proposal for a Regulation under the vehicle type-approval legislation – to deal with the in-vehicle aspects – and the adoption by the Commission, within the framework of the ITS Directive, of specifications on the necessary equipment and upgrading of the Emergency Call Response Centres.

Ms Kroes also described the eCall system as a catalyst for the deployment of other types of service, such as navigation, roadside assistance or hands-free calling. It was a clear example of what ICT research can do to solve a societal challenge.

Members' questioned how the Commission would finally ensure the introduction of eCall this time as it was far from being a new issue. They also raised the cost of eCall, the possibility of public awareness campaigns, fitting older cars and heavy vehicles such as trucks or buses with eCall, data protection and the obligatory nature of eCall.

Ms Kroes replied that many players had been involved in preparing the Commission's decision. She was confident of achieving mandatory introduction by 2015. An awareness campaign would be launched while the Commission was looking into the issue of retrofitting old cars.

The Commission was very concerned about data protection. However the device in the vehicle would only communicate its location in case of an accident. The costs were estimated to be below €100 per car.

TRAN Committee meeting 10-11 October, Brussels

Provisional agenda:

Monday, 10 October, afternoon

- Single European Railway Area / Serracchiani
- Regulation on European Maritime Safety Agency / Fleckenstein
- Competition policy / Marinescu
- Passenger Name records / Lichtenberger
- Space strategy / Zasada

Tuesday, 11 October, morning

- Single European Railway Area / Serracchiani **(vote)**
- Regulation on European Maritime Safety Agency / Fleckenstein **(vote)**
- Common Aviation air agreement Georgia **(vote)** / Ulmer
- Euro-Mediterranean aviation agreement Jordan / Sehnalová **(vote)**
- Athens Convention / Simpson **(vote)**
- Passenger Name Records: / Lichtenberger **(vote)**
- Competition policy / Marinescu **(vote)**
- Space strategy / Zasada **(vote)**

Tuesday, 11 October, afternoon

- Exchange of views with FAB Coordinator
- Memorandum of Cooperation with ICAO / Simpson
- White Paper on future of Transport / Grosch
- Taxation of energy products and electricity / Wils

TRAN Committee meetings 2011, Brussels

Monday, 21 November, 15.00-18.30
 Tuesday, 22 November, 9.00-12.30
 Tuesday, 22 November, 15.00-18.30
 Wednesday, 23 November, 9.00-12.30
 Wednesday, 23 November, 15.00-18.30

Monday, 19 December, 15.00-18.30
 Tuesday, 20 December, 9.00-12.30
 Tuesday, 20 December, 15.00-18.30
 Wednesday, 21 December, 9.00-12.30
 Wednesday, 21 December, 15.00-18.30

TRAN Committee meetings 2012, Brussels

Monday, 23 January, 15.00-18.30
 Tuesday, 24 January, 09.00-12.30
 Tuesday, 24 January, 15.00-18.30
 Wednesday, 25 January, 09.00-12.30

Monday, 6 February, 15.00-18.30

Monday, 27 February, 15.00-18.30
 Tuesday, 28 February, 09.00-12.30
 Tuesday, 28 February, 15.00-18.30
 Wednesday, 29 February, 09.00-12.30
 Wednesday, 29 February, 15.00-18.30

Monday, 26 March, 15.00-18.30
 Tuesday, 27 March, 09.00-12.30
 Tuesday, 27 March, 15.00-18.30

Monday, 23 April, 15.00-18.30
 Tuesday, 24 April, 09.00-12.30
 Tuesday, 24 April, 15.00-18.30
 Wednesday, 25 April, 09.00-12.30