

Newsletter

TRAN Committee meetings of September 2020 (with remote participation)

Editorial by Karima Delli

Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

A heavy workload was awaiting the TRAN Committee after the summer break. The Members adopted the opinions on the Digital Services Act, on Establishing the InvestEU Programme and on the General budget of the EU for the financial year 2021, and the draft report on the Revision of the Trans-European Transport Network was presented.

At this crucial time, the TRAN Committee is very watchful of the impact of COVID-19 on the transport and tourism sectors. In this context, an insightful exchange of views with Eurocontrol took place, stressing the importance of a swift introduction of measures coordinated at the EU level. We also exchanged views with the Commission on the sustainable rail market file, adopted in plenary to introduce measures to lessen the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the rail sector.

The Tourism Task Force further exchanged views with various travel and tourism stakeholders, who presented a number of facts underscoring the dire situation the tourism sector currently faces. This strengthened our view that the tourism sector urgently needs EU-level coordination and substantial support, in order to give SMEs a chance at surviving the crisis. In the mid- and long-term outlook, the focus should be on opportunities to rebuild the tourism sector in a sustainable and resilient way.



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2 and 3 September

Digital Services Act: Improving the functioning of the Single Market

Vote

- Rapporteur: Josianne Cutajar (S&D)
- Responsible : IMCO
- Plenary : October II 2020

Result of the final vote: 41 in favour, 1 against, 5 abstentions

General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021 - all sections

Vote

Adoption of budget amendments

- Rapporteur: Marian-Jean Marinescu
- Responsible: BUDG

Amendments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 were adopted.

Revision of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) guidelines

Consideration of draft report

- Rapporteur: Jens Gieseke (EPP)
- Vote in TRAN 01/12/2020
- Plenary: January 2021 tbc

Presenting his draft report, the Rapporteur highlighted the importance of the TEN-T for bringing together Europe, strengthening competitiveness and cohesion throughout all regions of the EU. Building on the progress made already, an update of the TEN-T regulation should address the ongoing transformations in the transport sector, in particular regarding digitalisation, emission reduction, and ensuring connectivity across borders and regions. The further implementation of the TEN-T should thus focus on the timely completion of the core network and its corridors by 2030, deployment of alternative fuels in all transport modes, boosting multimodal transport and enabling innovative solutions for smart, sustainable, efficient and safe mobility which is affordable for citizens.

Members in the debate stressed the need for modernising the European transport infrastructure and called for stronger efforts to ensure that the TEN-T core and comprehensive network can also meet the needs of less developed or more remote regions and

islands in the EU. Speakers pointed out the importance of smooth transport flows across Europe for strengthening resilience, notably in times of crisis such as the current pandemic. Members furthermore called for a more efficient implementation of the networks, by strengthening the governance of the TEN-T, building on the work of the European coordinators, better aligning national transport plans with network priorities and streamlining administrative procedures. Several speakers underlined the role of maritime and inland waterway transport, including sustainable transport modes, which should be further integrated in the future development of the TEN-T. Finally, a number of Members pointed out the need for adapting the TEN-T to integrate the Western Balkans and improve connectivity in Central and Eastern Europe.

Establishing the InvestEU Programme

Consideration of draft opinion

- Rapporteur: Tom Berendsen (EPP)
- Responsible: BUDG/ECON
- Vote in TRAN 23/09/2020
- Vote in BUDG/ECON: 12 October
- Plenary: tbc

The Rapporteur highlighted the use the InvestEU programme as a tool to help boost public and private investments in the transport and tourism sector and to contribute to the sector's recovery, long-term competitiveness and resilience in light of the COVID-19 health and economic crisis. He underlined that the new additional policy window for strategic European investment should fully include the field of transport, in particular sustainable, smart and automated mobility and logistics. In the debate Members deplored the strong reduction in the budget for InvestEU foreseen by the European Council before the summer, which would greatly limit the potential of the programme. Members stressed the economic importance of the tourism sector and the need for InvestEU to support the sector when it comes to innovation, sustainable tourism and digitalisation.

While speakers generally acknowledged the envisaged contribution of InvestEU to the Green Deal objectives and meeting climate policy objectives, some called for a stronger climate mainstreaming ambition and corresponding conditions for investments under the programme.

Establishing a Recovery and Resilience Facility

Consideration of draft opinion

- Rapporteur: Roberts ZILE ECR)
- Responsible : BUDG-ECON
- Vote in TRAN: 12 October (tbc)
- Vote in BUDG/ECON: end October (tbc)
- Plenary tbc

During the TRAN Committee meeting on 2 September the Rapporteur gave a brief presentation of his draft opinion. He emphasised that the RRF should contribute to sustainable mobility and cross-border connectivity, in particular to the completion of the TEN-T Core Network, complementing funding from the CEF. Focus should be on mature projects supporting growth and creating jobs, with a lasting positive impact on the economy and society. He also proposed that the allocation key should eventually be adjusted to reflect labour force related internal migration flows between Member States.

In the ensuing discussion, Shadow Rapporteurs were generally supportive of the draft opinion. They indicated their intention to table amendments in order to further improve the text on various issues, such as European added value, support to SME's and micro-enterprises active in the tourism sector, the proposed execution period of the facility and need to strengthen the role of Parliament in the governance process.

Digital Services Act: Improving the functioning of the Single Market

Consideration of amendments

- Rapporteur: Josianne Cutajar (S&D)
- Responsible : IMCO

The rapporteur and the shadows presented the challenges that the forthcoming Digital Services Act proposal will need to tackle in the transport and tourism ecosystems. The legislative proposal to be published in December this year will replace the e-Commerce directive, which dates back from 2000 and remains the regulatory framework of online platforms.

Given the impact that digital platforms have had in the transport and tourist sectors (online booking, ride hailing), Members pleaded the Commission to come up as soon as possible with legislative proposal that can tackle the absence of clear, transparent and up-to-date

rules. They expressed the need for a new governance framework (Notice & Action procedure) to demand an obligation for platforms to verify the identity of service providers through documentation and the introduction of due diligence protocols. Members also asked the Commission to devise an appropriate data sharing strategy for the transport and tourism sectors with the objective of boosting innovation. The Commission agreed with the rapporteur and the shadows on the challenges ahead and took note of the points raised by the TRAN Members. The rapporteur thanked the shadows for their fruitful cooperation in this file.

Regulation establishing measures for a sustainable rail market in view of the COVID-19 pandemic

Exchange of views with Commission representatives

The EC presented the proposal establishing measures for a sustainable rail market, taken to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak.

This Regulation lays down temporary rules that introduce the possibility for Member States to authorise infrastructure managers to reduce, waive or defer the payment of the charges for accessing rail infrastructure for a limited period. Members welcomed this proposal and agreed to quickly approve the legislative text; they highlighted the importance of the rail sector, critical to the EU strategy for a more sustainable transport sector and able to efficiently connect citizens. They also noted that, due to the current lack of liquidity, this Regulation can complement the existing rail-related framework and allow national authorities and rail stakeholders to deal with a number of negative consequences of COVID. Members asked for clarifications about direct costs and state aid rules, demanding that if MS will be able to identify different market segments, the aid should be provided to all rail undertakings in accordance to competition rules. At the same time Members focused their attention on the long term perspective, reminding the EC of the need to complete rail freight corridors, preserve rail capacity, protect employees and foster innovation as well as engage in a European dialogue with all stakeholders.

Impact of Covid-19 on European air traffic, *Exchange of views with Eamonn Brennan, Director-General Eurocontrol*

The Director General of Eurocontrol, Mr Brennan, presented an analysis on the current state of the aviation sector following the last critical months. The debate with Members highlighted how Covid-19 affected all value chain related to aeronautics and the importance to give certainty to passengers and stakeholders with the introduction of prompt measures coordinated at EU level.



Mr Brennan in the TRAN Committee on 2 September 2020

Proposals on Rail safety and interoperability within Eurotunnel in the context of Brexit, *Presentation by the European Commission*

DG MOVE Director Ms Elisabeth Werner presented the proposals aiming at amending the Directive (EU) 2016/798 to maintain the intergovernmental commission created by the Treaty of Canterbury as the sole entity responsible for safety and interoperability within the Eurotunnel and to give mandate to France to negotiate a new bilateral agreement on behalf of the EU. She highlighted the fact that, following the consultations between legal services of the Parliament and the Council, the paragraph on arbitration tribunal, possibly requiring change to the status of the European Court of Justice, could be taken out of the proposal and considered separately, in order to speed up the adoption of the proposals and avoid legal problems of concern to the co-legislators.

TRAN Members responded positively to the proposals, praising them as reasonable and very urgent, given the fast approaching end of transitional period. With 25% of trade between the UK and continental Europe transported via Eurotunnel, Members underlined its importance to the economies on both sides of the Channel, with some calling it a "lifeline". They also considered it vital to preserve the intergovernmental

commission as the only body responsible for managing Eurotunnel rail traffic. The Commission reassured the Members that traffic in the Eurotunnel will continue after 2020 regardless of what sort of legal solution to dispute settlement is agreed. MEPs were assured that the system in place has always been working well and that the arbitration tribunal will be needed only in very exceptional cases, if at all. The proposals have to be adopted as soon as possible to leave French authorities necessary time to negotiate with their British counterparts.

23 and 24 September

General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021 -all sections

Vote

- Rapporteur: Marian-Jean MARINESCU (EPP)
- Responsible : BUDG
- Plenary : October II 2020

Result of the final vote: 35 in favour, 3 against, 11 abstentions.

Establishing the InvestEU Programme

Vote

- Rapporteur: Tom Berendsen (EPP)
- Responsible: BUDG/ECON
- Plenary: tbc

Result of the final vote: 37 in favour, 6 against, 6 abstentions.

Cohesion Policy and regional environment strategies in the fight against climate change

Consideration of draft opinion

- Rapporteur: Gheorghe FALCĂ (EPP)
- Responsible : REGI
- Vote in TRAN: 10/11/2020
- Vote in REGI: December (tbc)
- Plenary: tbc

In his draft opinion the Rapporteur highlights that environmental strategies should have a particular focus on mitigation measures for regions with carbon-intensive economic sectors, and points out that that

climate proofing of infrastructure will help to enhance the resilience of infrastructure to the impacts of climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Rapporteur calls for green infrastructure solutions to be implemented and notes that they are particularly important in urban environments.

European Year of Rail (2021)

Consideration of amendments

- Rapporteur: Anna DEPARNAY-GRUNENBERG (Greens/EFA)
- Vote in TRAN: 12/10/2020
- Plenary: November (tbc)

The rapporteur, Ms Deparnay-Grunenberg, thanked the Shadow Rapporteurs for their contributions to the report and reminded the importance of rail as sustainable, intermodal and safe mode of transport.

She encouraged improvement on the existing Union night train network and wishes double the budget foreseen for activities during the European Year of Rail. Finally she noted that trains and railways stations are part of Europe's cultural heritage.

The Shadow Rapporteurs largely welcomed the inclusive approach taken in the compromise amendments and stressed the role of rail to maintain crucial connections during the COVID-19 outbreak and to encourage social and economic inclusion. Several Members took the floor to express their support to build a positive image and to re-establish trust of citizens and passengers to the use of rail.

A new strategy for European SMEs

Consideration of amendments

- Rapporteur: João FERREIRA (GUE/NGL)
- Responsible: ITRE
- Vote in TRAN: 12/10/2020
- Vote in ITRE: 27/10/2020
- Plenary: November II (tbc)

The rapporteur presented his draft report which takes a stance on the Commission Communication on 'an SME Strategy for a sustainable and digital Europe' and its objective to support European SMEs in their transition to sustainability and digitalisation. During the debate, the rapporteur and the shadows gave a brief presentation of the compromises which call for measures to tackle the impact of COVID-19 crisis to

protect the solvency of SMEs in the transport and tourism sectors and to enhance structural public support at EU and national level. Members also highlighted the challenges and opportunities of SMEs in the transport and tourism ecosystems in the context of digitalisation and the future Digital Services Act.

The rapporteur and shadows thanked each other for the inclusive approach and the spirit of compromise during the negotiations and looked forward to reaching an agreement on the final text in the coming days.

Situation of the European Tourism sector following the Covid-19 crisis

Tourism Task Force meeting with stakeholders

The first part of the meeting was devoted to an exchange of views with various travel and tourism stakeholders from a number of organisations: Alessandra PRIANTE, UNWTO Director for Europe, Teodora MARINSKA, Head of Finance and Public Affairs, European Travel Commission (ETC), Lola UÑA CÁRDENAS, Vice President, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), Cristina NÚÑEZ CUESTA, Coordinator of NECSTouR, and Juan MARIN, Vice-president of the Regional Government of Andalucía.

The speakers presented a number of facts highlighting the impact of the crisis, which has led to the dire situation the tourism sector currently faces. For instance, international tourist arrivals in Europe went down by 66 % in the first half of 2020 over the same period last year, whilst over the summer season, bookings for international travel to Europe declined by a whopping 92%.

This is largely seen as the result of poorly coordinated travel restrictions, of travellers' dwindling confidence and waning consumer demand. This situation has left a hugely negative economic footprint, with an estimated loss of 6 million jobs and significant cut into countries' GDPs.

The need for *improved coordination* was cited most often during this exchange of views. The summer break, and the partial resumption of travel it entailed, was far from enough to put most of the struggling companies back on track. Both the stakeholders and

the Members concurred that the tourism sector stands in urgent need of:

- Direct and dedicated financial support;
- Consistent and transparent criteria to assess risks across the EU;
- EU-level and ideally worldwide coordination of travel restrictions, hygiene and health protocols;
- A common, structured and transparent process leading to clear and timely information being made public about any travel restrictions, wherever such are needed;
- A clear path towards a genuine EU policy on sustainable tourism.

The speakers called upon national and regional governments to help finance tourism recovery via the National Recovery and Resilience Plans 2021-2023 and Regional Programmes for REACT EU. They also urged using this crisis as an opportunity towards rebuild the tourism sector in a sustainable and resilient way, whilst taking into account the mid- and long-term perspective.



TRAN Chairwoman and tourism stakeholders in TRAN Committee meeting on 23 September

In this context, Members once again called on the Commission to put forward a strategy on sustainable tourism and, in particular, a specific budget line of € 300 million in the next long-term EU budget.

The European Tourism Convention due to take place on 12 October and organised by the Commission will be the next step in achieving the goals listed above.

Sustainable and smart urban transport

Presentation of a study by the Policy Department

The presentation of the study on “Sustainable and smart urban transport” commissioned by the Policy Department was well received by the Committee. Members focused their attention on the COVID-19 outbreak and its unprecedented impact on mobility, referring to the necessity to have a global strategy to rebuild trust on urban public transport. They highlighted the positive effect of home working on the reduction of air pollution and CO2 emissions but they also inquired on the untapped potential of modal shift between different transport modes, the increase on e-commerce and its approach to the last-mile distribution and the need to promote equality thanks to public transport, especially to protect the most vulnerable citizens.

Results of recent CEF transport calls

Presentation by the European Commission

The Commission presented the outcome of two competitive calls for proposals, the regular CEF Transport call and the CEF Transport Blending Facility call.

A total of 140 key transport projects are financed by around €2.2 billion: strong emphasis is placed on projects reinforcing railways, including cross-border links and connections to ports and airports. Inland waterway transport is boosted through better multimodal connections and in the maritime sector, priority is given to short-sea-shipping projects based on alternative fuels.

Members engaged in a lively debate inquiring about the financial amounts not spent yet, the state of play of ERTMS interoperability and deployment, particularly questioning the differences on TEN-T corridors and freight, the need to focus on multimodality, installation of charging points and deliver on the climate objectives set out in the European Green Deal. The Commission ensured that the financial amounts not spent are small and they are closely scrutinised and redistributed to other mature projects.

Tourism Task Force update

Exchange of views with DG GROW

On 20 July the Tourism Task Force held an extraordinary meeting exchanging views with Kerstin Jorna, Director-General of DG GROW, the European Commission.

The Members analysed the EP resolution on *tourism and transport in 2020 and beyond*, adopted on June 19, 2020, with the aim of devising a common approach towards what could be proposed to in order to motivate the Member States, to include tourism elements in their national recovery plans. This meeting helped to highlight the Parliament's priorities in this regard, and served as a welcome opportunity to develop a closer inter-institutional approach on EU tourism policy.

Some of the key points were as follows:

- Creation of an EU safety certification seal and clear and effective health protocols, guaranteeing that EU tourism facilities, travel establishments and operators meet the highest hygiene and safety standards.
- A common approach is sorely needed, such as on the issue of mandatory tests, which would be complementary steps to already existing individual Member States' measures.
- Fast, affordable and reliable screening methods should be made available; tests at airports and other transport hubs should be carried out as per common EC guidelines.
- A sustainable, responsible and social approach has to be taken when relaunching tourism

activities, with due attention paid to accessibility and the protection of passenger rights.

- A need to come up with a genuinely new EU tourism strategy, matched with an action plan with short, medium and long-term objectives with assessment metrics regarding the implementation of the strategy, including performance indicators allowing for a proper, ongoing assessment of results achieved.
- Financial Support within the EU budget has to be granted in a form of a dedicated budget line for sustainable tourism. Better use of current EU funding, including funds towards improving accessibility and travel infrastructures; the Commission's guidelines on access to EU funding would be helpful, especially for SMEs.
- An Innovative Roadmap for Sustainable Tourism is needed, promoting different forms of tourism (renewed use of night trains, cycling, and walking).

Next TRAN Committee meeting: planned draft agenda

Monday 12 October 9.00-11.00 and 13.45-15.45

- Votes:
 - European Year of Rail
 - Establishing a Recovery and Resilience Facility
 - A new strategy for European SME's
- Presentation on SES 2+ legislation by Commissioner Valean
- Exchange of views with the Commission on the progress in the EU-UK negotiations on transport related issues (tbc)
- Exchange of views with Space agency on Space as enabler for rail, road and inland waterways traffic management
- Consideration on draft opinion on Connectivity and EU-Asia relations (rapporteur: A. Dzhambazki (ECR))
- Report back on inter-institutional negotiations

TRAN Committee meetings 2020

Please note that **all dates are still to be confirmed** depending on room and interpretation resources

Wednesday 28/10/2020 13.45-15.45
Thursday 29/10/2020 9.00-11.00 and 13.45-15.45

Tuesday 10/11/2020 9.00-11.00 and 13.45-15.45

Monday 30/11/2020 13.45-15.45
Tuesday 01/12/2020 9.00-11.00 and 13.45-15.45

Useful links

TRAN website: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/tran/home/highlights>

Policy Department Publication in the European Parliament: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/supporting-analyses.html>

European Aviation Safety Agency newsletters: <http://easa.europa.eu/communications/general-publications.php>

European Railway Agency newsletters: <http://www.era.europa.eu/Communication/Newsletter>

European Maritime Safety Agency newsletters: <http://www.emsa.europa.eu/news-a-press-centre/newsletters.html>

SESAR Joint Undertaking news: <https://www.sesarju.eu/news>

Innovation & Networks Executive Agency: <http://ec.europa.eu/inea/en>

DG MOVE: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/home_en

Croatian Presidency of the Council: <https://eu2020.hr/>



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