



TRANSPORT AND TOURISM

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# TRAN NEWS

Newsletter from the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism



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29 June 2015



## EXCHANGES OF VIEWS

### with the General Rapporteur for Budget, José Manuel Fernandes (EPP, PT)

Mr Fernandes' general priorities for the 2016 budget are the internal and external aspects of solidarity. Members touched on the agreement on the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and its impact on the Connecting Europe Facility. Parliament's main objective when negotiating the EFSI was to minimise its impact on CEF and Horizon 2020. To achieve this, it was necessary to use a higher proportion of budgetary margins for EFSI. This will limit margins for other actions in 2016.

Members focused on investment in infrastructure and the smooth running of Agencies as Committee priorities for 2016. In particular, sufficient resources should be allocated to the European Railway Agency which is assigned new tasks in the recent agreement between Parliament and Council. The Committee is drawing up a budget opinion with a vote foreseen on 31 August.

### with the Commission on the Romanian rail system

The Commission representatives Vittoria Alliata-Di Villafranca (Director DG REGIO) and Olivier Onidi (Director DG MOVE) provided information about the Romanian General Transport Master Plan, the development of its rail system and EU financial and administrative support for this system.

They underlined that this Plan is a national strategic document defining the major priorities and goals for future investment. It is a dynamic document that will be updated periodically. Ms Alliata-Di Villafranca noted that Romania has a very extensive railway network. However, it is not economically sustainable and strategic decisions will be necessary.

Mr Onidi described the draft Plan as a good document. He considered Romania to be a solid partner in the development of the European rail network and rail regulations. Romania proposes a fundamental review of its rail system to reflect the needs of its citizens.



Members believed that sustainable development of the rail network was important all over Europe. EU funds should increase the rail system's competitiveness and improve services for passengers. They asked about the Commission's role in the preparation of the Plan and whether any EU-financed rail line was expected to be closed.

The Commission representatives explained that the Master Plan does not foresee any such closure. They also insisted that the Master Plan was a strategic document necessary for the adoption of the EU transport infrastructure financing programmes.

Member States are responsible for determining transport priorities. However, their strategies have to comply with certain EU rules. The Commission does not decide national transport priorities but checks whether these decisions were prepared according to the rules.



## with Executive Director of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and European Commission representative on the follow-up to the Germanwings crash

Patrick Ky and Filip Cornelis explained that EASA and the Commission were working in parallel to the on-going safety investigation by the French authorities. In May, the French investigation body published its preliminary report. EASA had set up a Task Force to look into the report's findings, particularly relating to the cockpit door locking system, cockpit access and exit procedures as well as the medical monitoring of pilots.

The Task Force will submit its recommendations to the Commission this summer. Members asked about the status of the future recommendations, which could be made mandatory by legislation. They insisted that the conclusions drawn from this tragedy should adopt a holistic approach, to avoid creating new hazards by modifying some rules in only one area.

Questions were raised about the presence of two crew members in the cockpit at all times as well as improved communication of medical issues between competent authorities, while preserving medical secrecy. Other Members underlined that the responsible national and European authorities should give appropriate support to grieving families.

## with DG COMP on State aid in transport infrastructure

Mr Soukup (Director DG Competition) explained the main principles underlying the control of state aid for transport infrastructure. He highlighted the differences applying to airports, ports, railways and motorways. Commission investigations aimed to ensure that subsidies would not: (1) harm competitors, (2) overcompensate infrastructure costs or (3) provide a selective advantage to

some categories of users. These investigations had only led to a few negative decisions; all concerning regional airports.

Members stressed that public funding was essential to building transport infrastructure and that consistent public subsidy rules should apply in the Union. They also expressed concern about the financing of regional airports that mainly benefit low-cost airlines.

Some asked whether public financing would be taken into account when internalising external costs. Others referred to kerosene not being taxed; this was not considered to be state aid. They were surprised by the low number of negative decisions taken by the Commission, in particular with regard to aid to regional airports, which had proven to be commercially unviable and/or were close to each other.

## **NEXT TRAN COMMITTEE MEETING, BRUSSELS**

### **Planned draft agenda - To be confirmed**

Monday, 13 July 2015, afternoon

- Energy Union Package - Framework Strategy & Paris Protocol - consideration of amendments/ Virkkunen/ Eickhout
- Budget 2016 - presentation of draft opinion/ Salini/
- Brian Simpson, European Coordinator for Motorways of the Seas

Tuesday, 14 July 2015, morning

- White Paper on Transport - vote/ Van de Camp
- Energy Union Package - Framework Strategy - **vote**/ Virkkunen
- Energy Union Package - Paris Protocol - **vote**/ Eickhout
- Presentation by LU Minister for Transport, Mr Bausch of LU Presidency priorities
- Remotely piloted aircraft systems - presentation of draft report/ Foster



Tuesday, 14 July 2015, afternoon

- Pat Cox, European Coordinator for the Scandinavian Mediterranean Corridor
- Kurt Bodewig, European Coordinator for the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor
- Visa Package - presentation of draft opinions/ Ujhelyi
- Presentation by the CoA of SR 1/2015 on 'Inland Waterways'

Meeting room: JAN 4Q2

## **TRAN COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2015, BRUSSELS**

Monday, 31 August, 17h00-18h30

Monday, 14 September, 15h00-18h30

Tuesday, 15 September, 9h00-12h30

Tuesday, 15 September, 15h00-18h30

Monday, 12 October, 15h00-18h30

Tuesday, 13 October, 9h00-12h30

Tuesday, 13 October, 15h00-18h30

Monday, 9 November, 15h00-18h30

Tuesday, 10 November, 9h00-12h30

Tuesday, 10 November, 15h00-18h30

Thursday, 3 December, 9h00-12h30

Thursday, 3 December, 15h00-18h30

Monday, 21 December, 15h00-18h30

Tuesday, 22 December, 9h00-12h30



## USEFUL LINKS

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TRAN website:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/TRAN/home.html>

Policy Department Studies in the European Parliament:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/studies/searchPerform.do>

European Aviation Safety Agency newsletters:

<http://easa.europa.eu/communications/general-publications.php>

European Railway Agency newsletters:

<http://www.era.europa.eu/Communication/Newsletter/Pages/home.aspx>

European Maritime Safety Agency newsletters:

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

SESAR Joint Undertaking news

<http://www.sesarju.eu/newsroom/all-news>

Innovation & Networks Executive Agency:

<http://inea.ec.europa.eu/>

DG MOVE newsletter:

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/newsletter/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/newsletter/index_en.htm)

Luxembourg Presidency of the Council:

<http://www.eu2015lu.eu/>

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