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Committee on Transport and Tourism

2010/2211(INI)

26.1.2011

OPINION

of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

for the Special committee on the policy challenges and budgetary resources for a sustainable European Union after 2013

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(2010/2211(INI))

Rapporteur: Brian Simpson

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Transport and Tourism calls on the Special committee on the policy challenges and budgetary resources for a sustainable European Union after 2013, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

Introduction

1. Recalls that transport underpins Europe's economic and social activity, that the transport sector represents 4.6% of the European Union's GDP, while employing 9.2 million individuals, and that, as well as allowing communication between individuals and communities and providing the network enabling growth in intra-European trade and then completion of the single market, the sector is significant in terms of its potential contribution to ensuring social, economic and territorial cohesion boosting employment and trade and enhancing the tourism sector, together with the contribution an efficient and reliable transport system can make to reduced accidents, carbon emissions and oil dependency, pollution and congestion;

2. Notes the importance of the transport sector in EU industrial policy, both in terms of its contribution to Gross Domestic Product and in terms of jobs; considers the European Union, moreover, to be the industrial leader in transport technology (aeronautics industry, high-speed rail travel, intelligent transport management systems, advanced control, safety and interoperability systems, ERTMS, SESAR, safe and sustainable infrastructure engineering, etc.), and that the EU should therefore adopt a financial framework enabling it to maintain and strengthen its leadership in that industrial sector; believes that the next financing period should give the EU transport sector the opportunity to consolidate its leadership in green, safe and intelligent technologies that contribute to further economic development and greater economic and social cohesion;

3. Considers it evident that, from the point of view of policy challenges and budgetary resources for the period after 2013, almost all the EU's adopted objectives, whether expressed in terms of Europe 2020 or in other frameworks, depend on an efficient, sustainable and environmentally acceptable as well as accessible transport sector;

4. Notes that the EU 2020 Strategy seeks to achieve intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth through knowledge and innovation, energy efficiency apt to create a green – and yet competitive – economy, and the promotion of territorial and social cohesion as cross-cutting guidelines directly linked to support for the transport and tourism sectors;

5. Insists that, viewed particularly from a financial efficiency standpoint, the need to ensure real added value from EU budgetary expenditure on transport policy items is paramount; notes that, while duplication or displacement of investment and expenditure better undertaken at national and regional level must be avoided, it is essential not to miss the opportunities for facilitating sustainable growth which the added value of EU transport expenditure at national, regional and cross-border level alone can provide;

6. Stresses the paramount role of the agencies in the integration of transport systems in terms of security, interoperability and functioning; is concerned at the growing gulf

between their responsibilities and the budgetary resources allocated to them;

7. Endorses the Commission's view that cross-border infrastructure is one of the best examples of where the EU can plug gaps and deliver better value results; considers that targeted financial support at EU level can help to kick-start other important projects, which often have great commercial potential in the long term; notes that countries are now launching huge, ambitious infrastructure investment drives, that maintaining competitiveness means that Europe has a particularly strong strategic interest in effective infrastructure, to lay the foundations for long-term economic growth, and that the result would be a European core transport network ensuring a more energy-efficient transport sector**,** which could include shifting freight and passenger flows towards more sustainable and accessible transport modes; observes that such support needs to be targeted on key priorities – removing bottlenecks on strategic trans-European axes, encouraging their extension and building cross-border and intermodal connections;

8. Calls on the Commission and Member States to consider developing an integrated EU policy for inland waterways – bearing in mind the benefits of transport by ship on Europe's integrated river and canal network, and the fact that the EU has over 37 000 waterways linking hundreds of cities and industrial regions and that 20 of the 27 Member States have inland waterways – and for suitable support to be granted for this from the EU and Member State budgets;

9. Emphasises the need – in view of the potential of eco-efficient transport for generating new jobs – to support, through EU policies and financial instruments, the development of the requisite infrastructure for electric vehicles and their integration into a Europe-wide intelligent energy network which would also be able to use energy generated locally from renewable energy sources;

Trans-European Networks

10. Draws particular attention to the added value of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), whose priority projects are all transnational and whose added value is particularly evident in the context of development of an efficient, multimodal and comprehensive EU transport network, in addressing the issue of lack of accessibility and low interoperability between various parts of the EU, including hinterland connection with ports, in cross-border sections of projects and in the leverage effect which EU investment has in encouraging private and public funding of strategic projects;

11. Recalls that the funding requirements for TEN-T projects for 1996-2020 are estimated at €900 billion, of which €500 billion remain to be financed, and €395 billion for the 30 current priority TEN-T projects, of which €270 billion remain to be financed;

12. Notes in this context that for the TEN-T priority projects, excluding Galileo, a total EU expenditure of €47.4 billion (30.8%) gives rise to investment of €106.6 billion from other sources for those same projects over the period of the current Financial Perspective, and that the equivalent figures for the TEN-T network as a whole are €105 billion (27%) and €285 billion (73%);

13. Recalls that the main funding contributors to the TEN-T are the Member States, the Regions and the Union, the latter through the TEN-T budget and the Cohesion and Structural Funds, that in the current budgetary period (2007-2013), 15% of the investment needed to complete the works which were due to take place during this timeframe is being funded and that, as the costs of implementing large infrastructure projects are likely to increase, the overall envelope available for transport investments in the post-2014 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) will be critical for the implementation of the TEN-T;

14. Notes in particular that in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy, which is focused on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, there are provisions for the TEN-T:

- ...‘*to mobilise EU financial instruments (TENs among others) as a part of a consistent funding strategy that pulls together EU and national public and private funding’,*

- ...‘*(to) accelerate the implementation of strategic projects with high European added value to address critical bottlenecks, in particular cross-border sections and intermodal nodes (cities, ports, logistic platforms)*’;

15. Calls therefore for an increase in overall funds, as well as increased coordination between the funds available for TEN-T and the cohesion funding for transport projects (currently 23.7% of cohesion resources) and for the dedication of this amount from the cohesion fund to be contingent upon the observation of general principles of European transport policy and for TEN-T funding to be made conditional upon the concentration of national funding on, and the systematic application of the tools of Directive 2008/96/EC to, the TEN-T core and comprehensive networks;

16. Calls for the development of other funding instruments for TEN-T, particularly via the allocation of own resources derived from transport activities (earmarking), the use of specific instruments from the EIB and the improvement of PPP mechanisms together with aids to the engineering of such mechanisms;

17. Considers that revenue from the internalisation of the external costs should be earmarked particularly for mobility and thereby facilitate the PPPs, inter alia in transport projects;

18. Underlines that the cohesion funding for transport projects should be continued within the new Financial Perspective with clear commitments from the Member States to cofinance and implement these transport projects, that cohesion policy remains crucial for countries seeking to comply with the convergence criteria, and that the successful implementation of transport projects in these countries largely depends on the availability of cohesion funding;

19. Notes that only half of one percent of the TEN-T budget for the period 2007-2013 remains unallocated but insists that the EU commitment to funding cannot be open-ended for those projects which do not progress because the necessary matching funding from national budgets is not made available before 2015;

Marco Polo

20. Recalls that the Marco Polo programme aims to free Europe's roads of an annual volume

of 20 billion tonne-kilometres of freight, the equivalent of more than 700 000 trucks a year travelling between Paris and Berlin, by freight transfer to other modes; notes its importance for a transition to a low-carbon economy, a transition which will require considerable and well coordinated funding; recalls further that in a programme budget for 2007-2013 of €450 million, social and environmental benefits equivalent to approximately €10 are generated for every euro spent and that no immediate equivalent of the Marco Polo programme exists at Member State level;

21. Recommends exploring the possibility of introducing loan guarantees as an instrument in the Marco Polo programme;

22. Points out that the Marco Polo II Regulation approved by Parliament in 2009 is designed to make access to the programme's funding easier for small and medium-sized enterprises and that funding criteria have been adapted to market conditions;

Galileo

23. Insists that Galileo is a project of major strategic importance for the European Union, especially in view of the commitment to invest in similar systems from national military budgets shown by other economies, such as China, India and Russia, and that a scenario where European business is unable to benefit from the multiple economic, environmental, innovative, research and employment opportunities offered by Europe having its own satellite navigation system is not desirable; considers moreover that, should a service be reduced or switched off, the potential disruption to business, banking, transport, aviation, communication etc., to name but a few, would be very costly (e.g. in terms of revenues for business, road safety etc.); recalls that the budgetary authority recognised this when it increased the ceilings for Heading 1A within the current Financial Perspective to accommodate continued investment in the Galileo programme;

24. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to consider increasing dramatically GNSS application research funding in order to give European industry, SMEs and all the stakeholders a chance to increase their level of uptake in the global GNSS market and to ensure the EU's independence in a sector on which more than 6% of the whole EU GDP relies;

25. Notes that the development and practical application of intelligent transport systems and Global Navigation Satellite Systems will be major beneficiaries of Galileo;

26. Insists that, given the long lead times that projects such as Galileo or the Single European Sky, with its technological component SESAR, entail and the levels of capital investment already committed to these projects, it is necessary for sufficient and consistent financial commitment over financial planning periods to be made to ensure their successful implementation and spin-off benefits and specifically to ensure the deployment of SESAR, as a condition for the full completion of the Single European Sky;

27. Notes that the accelerated implementation of the Single European Sky project and more specifically the deployment of its technological component SESAR, to begin in 2014, have been defined as a key priority to achieve an efficient and sustainable air transport system in Europe and that the SESAR project will make it possible to cut air traffic

management costs by 50%, improve safety records by a factor of 10 and reduce by 10% the environmental impact of each flight;

ERTMS

28. Notes the importance of the ERTMS project for railway interoperability and making modal shift a reality; believes that the rolling-out of the ERTMS has, like many other transport infrastructure projects, recently been suffering the consequences of the economic recession, in terms of the rate and volume of public sector investment; acknowledges the European dimension and added value of the project, and therefore calls for the ERTMS, and in particular its cross-border sections, to be made an EU budgetary priority in the coming years;

Maritime policy

29. Considers that the Integrated Maritime Policy must be pursued and geared towards tackling the challenges faced by coastal zones and maritime basins and supporting blue growth and a sustainable maritime economy in line with the EU 2020 Strategy; insists that the appropriate budgetary means be put at the disposal of this policy;

New funding instruments

30. Calls for the development of new funding instruments, both by reviewing the policy of the European Investment Bank to allocate more loans to innovative transport projects, and by using revenue from the taxation of heavy vehicles and the auctioning of CO_2 emission quotas from the aviation sector, in order to fund joint projects aimed at reducing the environmental footprint of these modes of transport;

Tourism

31. Recalls the importance of tourism to the European economy, to the European natural and cultural heritage and to particular countries and regions where it is an economic and social mainstay; draws attention to the significance of the new provision on tourism that is now included in the Lisbon Treaty, giving Parliament legislative powers in the field of tourism for the first time, and to the need to exercise those powers to make the sector more competitive; reiterates its concern that no budget line to assist in the development of tourism has been established to reflect this new challenge and insists that in future adequate levels of EU support for tourism must be provided through the establishment of a dedicated budget line for sustainable economic development, industrial heritage and protection of the natural and cultural heritage, aided where appropriate by the Structural Funds and other funds.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	25.1.2011
Result of final vote	+: 36 –: 0 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Inés Ayala Sender, Georges Bach, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Antonio Cancian, Michael Cramer, Christine De Veyrac, Saïd El Khadraoui, Ismail Ertug, Carlo Fidanza, Jacqueline Foster, Mathieu Grosch, Jim Higgins, Juozas Imbrasas, Ville Itälä, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Georgios Koumoutsakos, Werner Kuhn, Eva Lichtenberger, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Hella Ranner, Vilja Savisaar-Toomast, Olga Sehnalová, Brian Simpson, Dirk Sterckx, Keith Taylor, Silvia-Adriana Ţicău, Giommaria Uggias, Thomas Ulmer, Dominique Vlasto, Artur Zasada, Roberts Zīle
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Philip Bradbourn, Spyros Danellis, Anne E. Jensen, Petra Kammerevert, Guido Milana, Dominique Riquet, Peter van Dalen, Janusz Władysław Zemke