

Freight transport in Europe

2008/2008(INI) - 04/09/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 541 votes to 6, with 15 abstentions, a resolution on freight transport in Europe, in response to four European Commission communications on 'The EU's freight transport agenda: Boosting the efficiency, integration and sustainability of freight transport in Europe'.

The own initiative report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Michael **CRAMER** (Greens /EFA, DE) on behalf of the Committee on Transport and Tourism.

Challenges of integration and sustainability: the resolution stresses that Europe's freight transport systems must meet pressing challenges to increase effective integration and sustainability of freight transport in Europe, making a greater contribution to improving mobility, energy efficiency, reducing oil consumption, polluting emissions, and external costs. MEPs encourage the Commission, the Member States and industry to support in future a freight transport policy which is more sustainable in terms of mobility, the environment, climate, the economy, security and social interests, by promoting the use of more efficient logistics systems and the user and polluter pays principles for all modes of transport.

Strengthening cooperation: noting that the EU's powers and resources for improving freight transport markets are limited, MEPs call on Transport Ministers responsible for the main European Corridors to take up the issue of infrastructure investments and at least agree on coordinating their National Investment Plans in relation to their respective corridors. Furthermore, MEPs suggest that the Commission proposes, no later than the end of 2008, a programme for strengthening cooperation between the Member States responsible for projects in the area of urban freight transport, and that it facilitates and assesses solutions to the current blockages, with particular attention to goods transport.

Green corridors: MEPs look to the Commission to define the 'green corridors' as exemplary mobility and inter-modality projects, to shift to environmentally friendly modes to reduce overall accidents, congestion, noise, local toxic and non-toxic pollution, CO₂ emissions, landscape and energy consumption and to increase the use of renewable sources and the intelligent transport systems. The Commission and Member States are called upon to offer stronger incentives to boost the environmental performance of all modes of transport and to support the most efficient combinations of these modes of transport. MEPs stress that the rail freight network should be based on the most 'market-relevant' freight corridors.

Interoperability: the resolution also stresses the utmost importance of interoperable road charging for efficient freight transport in Europe. The Commission is invited, in multi-annual contracts for rail infrastructure quality, to draw up framework conditions for minimum quality standards throughout Europe. MEPs stress the importance of quickly adopting a worldwide standard for intermodal loading units. They also call on the Commission to support projects concerning the differential use of high-speed lines e.g. for light freight transport.

Simplify administration: in order to improve the transport system, the resolution stresses the need to standardise and to simplify the administrative procedures of the authorities involved in the freight transport market, together with simplified customs rules and procedures at borders. MEPs welcome the decision to establish a European maritime space without barriers and urge the Commission to ask the appropriate international associations and organisations to develop a single intermodal document.

Logistic training: MEPs call on the Member States to give absolute priority to higher education and further education in the logistic and freight transport sector.