


Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2006/2228(INI)	Procedure completed
Freight transport logistics in Europe, the key to sustainable mobility		
Subject 3.20 Transport policy in general		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	TRAN Transport and Tourism		05/09/2006
		PSE AYALA SENDER Inés	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
Council of the European Union	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy		04/10/2006
		Vers/ALE HASSI Satu	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2791	22/03/2007
	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2772	11/12/2006
	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2754	12/10/2006
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Energy and Transport	BARROT Jacques	

Key events			
28/06/2006	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2006)0336	Summary
28/09/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
12/10/2006	Debate in Council	2754	Summary
11/12/2006	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
22/03/2007	Debate in Council	2791	Summary
12/07/2007	Vote in committee		Summary
20/07/2007	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0286/2007	
04/09/2007	Debate in Parliament		

05/09/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
05/09/2007	Decision by Parliament	T6-0375/2007	Summary
05/09/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2006/2228(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/6/40589

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2006)0336	28/06/2006	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		SEC(2006)0818	28/06/2006	EC	
Committee opinion	ITRE	PE382.381	28/03/2007	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE390.418	08/06/2007	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0286/2007	20/07/2007	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0375/2007	05/09/2007	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2007)5401	18/10/2007	EC	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2007)5402	24/10/2007	EC	

Freight transport logistics in Europe, the key to sustainable mobility

PURPOSE: to present a Communication on 'Freight Transport Logistics in Europe: the key to sustainable mobility'.

CONTENT: liberalisation and harmonisation has shaped the current transport system in the EU. The fast growth of freight transport contributes to growth and employment but it also causes congestion, accidents, noise, pollution, increased reliance on imported fossil fuels and energy loss. Infrastructure resources are limited and any disruption in the supply chain has negative impacts on the whole of the EU economy. Transport logistics can play a key role in ensuring sustainable mobility as well as contributing to meeting other EU objectives such as a cleaner environment and reducing the amount of energy consumption. Logistics can increase the efficiency of individual modes of transport resulting in fewer units of transport. Logistics are indispensable for maintaining and increasing European competitiveness and prosperity. Shifts to more environmentally friendly modes must be achieved on long distance modes of transport, in urban areas and on congested corridors.

More specifically speaking, logistics involves organising and carrying out transport and storage activities to make the goods supply chain efficient. The global logistics industry is estimated at roughly EUR 5.4 trillion. Annual expenditure on logistics in Europe amounts to around EUR 1 billion. On average, logistics accounts for 10 -15% of the final cost of finished goods - this includes both transportation and storage. Although the development of transport logistics is a matter for industry, public authorities can help create a framework in which industrial activity can expand. The areas, in which the Commission is becoming involved include:

- Setting up a group of Member State/industry focal points. These forums can help identify the obstacles to improved freight transport logistics - the so called 'bottlenecks exercise' as was successfully pioneered with short sea shipping. Apart from solving bottlenecks, they could share know-how, provide best practice and give input to policy developments.
- Seeking improved, inter-operable information technologies for the purpose of enhanced tracking and tracing. Common standards, which have industry support, are key to making logistics more efficient. Thus, development should be geared towards common messaging within an open architecture. ITS-readiness should be incorporated in the original design of equipment or infrastructure to avoid costly add-ons at a later stage. Freight Transport Logistics, therefore, must remain a 7th framework priority given that modern technological innovation can open up new avenues for the sector.

- Helping to build logistics terminals and to improve their efficiency. Constructing new infrastructure is not an objective in itself. Current infrastructure use can be optimised by deploying efficient and sustainable logistical solutions. This includes fleet management, rail and inland waterway infrastructure management, complete utilisation of loading capacity etc. The efficiency of transshipment facilities, including seaports and airports is crucial for logistics performance. Attracting and securing additional private investments is essential and European rules must provide the appropriate legal framework.
- Optimising the use of infrastructures such as a dedicated rail freight network. Currently, rail transport suffers from the priority given to passenger trains on lines with mixed traffic. Action is therefore needed to enhance interoperability and reduce the delays generated by mixed traffic. The Commission intends to propose an action plan to encourage the emergence of a rail freight-orientated network allowing for dedicated freight corridors. Such corridors should help to achieve higher levels of reliability, performance and competitiveness of international rail freight services.
- Improving the training and certification of logistics providers and other personnel involved in the management of logistics flows.
- Harmonising transport documents.
- Harmonising the different liability regimes in the multi-modal chain.
- Promoting multi-modal transport solutions.
- Devising indicators for assessing logistics performance in Europe.
- Devising labels of excellence for those involved in the transport and supply chain.
- Researching and implementing common European standards for loading units. This will help in the seamless flow of cargo. Rules on vehicle and loading units should meet the needs of modern logistics. This proposal arises from the current multitude of different configuration of these units, which creates friction costs and delays in handling operations between modes. European industry needs a better system of loading units for intra-European transport to reduce costs and improve competitiveness.

To conclude, advanced quality solutions are needed for Europe if it is to maintain and improve upon its global logistics position. Being a centre of logistics excellence would help economic, social and environmental sustainability in Europe. Co-modality and high efficiency in the transport system are also indispensable for Europe to manage the increasing flow of goods. This Communication presents a set of ideas for a possible strategic framework. In 2007 the Commission intends to prepare an Action Plan for Freight Transport and may, which may if appropriate, be accompanied by further proposals.

Freight transport logistics in Europe, the key to sustainable mobility

The Council took note of information provided by the Commission on its Communication on Freight Transport Logistics in Europe - the key to sustainable mobility.

The Finnish Presidency gave a report to the Council on the Logistics Seminar that it organised together with the Commission in Brussels on 5 October. The participants in the Seminar, who represented a broad range of stakeholders in both the private and the public sector, exchanged views on the areas of action proposed in the Communication, the most prominent being the identification of bottlenecks in logistics, the need for adequate statistics and the role of information and communication technology and logistics training.

The Presidency intends to adopt conclusions on Freight Transport Logistics at the December ?Transport, Telecommunications and Energy? Council. These conclusions will give political guidance to the Commission in preparing in 2007 a logistics framework strategy and a logistics action plan.

Freight transport logistics in Europe, the key to sustainable mobility

On the basis of a Presidency questionnaire, the Council held a public exchange of views on sustainable transport policy and climate protection.

The debate was conducted in the light of the European Council meeting of 8 and 9 March, which focused among other points on reducing energy consumption and strengthening climate protection.

The intention of the exchange of views was to gather opinions of Transport Ministers on concrete actions for reducing energy consumption and emissions in all transport modes. In general, Ministers underlined that transport should play an active role in questions related to energy efficiency and climate protection.

The debate focused first of all on the consumer side and on how consumers can be stimulated to change their driving behaviour in a more environmentally friendly way. In discussing means to promote a more environmentally friendly transport behaviour, several proposals were brought forward. It was recognised that consumers should be better informed, in particular by using awareness raising campaigns, promoting eco driving and labelling energy efficient cars and environmentally-friendly fuels, such as alternative fuels. Furthermore, Ministers underlined the effectiveness of financial incentives for using cleaner vehicles or fuels.

The Council addressed the development of energy consumption emissions in maritime transport, inland navigation and rail transport. While highlighting their energy efficiency compared to road transport, Ministers underlined the need to further improve the environmental performance of these modes of transport. Concrete measures that were put forward included stimulating technological innovations, devising quality standards for fuels and engines and establishing emission norms, where needed taking due account of the international context.

The Presidency intends to organise a follow-up to this discussion on sustainable transport and climate protection at the TTE Council in June.

Freight transport logistics in Europe, the key to sustainable mobility

The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Ines AYALA SENDER (PES, ES) in response to the Commission communication on "Freight Transport Logistics in Europe ? the key to sustainable mobility".

The report supports the intention of the Commission to present an Action Plan for freight logistics in Autumn 2007. It recognises the interest of the link made by the Commission between logistics and comodality by means of defining it as looking at each mode individually and their integration in logistics chains, and that all transport modes should be encouraged to perform up to a competitive and sustainable standard.

Simplification of administrative burden: the report recognises the importance of developing "one stop administrative" shopping in the sector to increase efficiency, cut red tape and reduce costs. It welcomes the intention of the Commission to examine the details and added value of establishing a single transport document, as an EU model, for all carriage of goods, irrespective of mode; considers, however, that such a document must provide transport undertakings with clear legal certainty and replace the large number of existing transport documents. The committee advocates additional proposals for inland waterways under the NAIADES initiative and calls for a European coordinator to be appointed in the near future to deal with the Motorways of the Sea, which are included among the TEN-T priority projects.

Intelligent transport systems: the report notes the importance to logistics of advanced information and communication systems and the development of "intelligent transport" notably through Galileo and other EU initiatives, e.g. SESAR (European Air Traffic Management System), ERTMS (European rail signalling system), RIS (River Information Services), and SafeSeaNet, as well as innovative tracking and tracing systems. MEPs highlight the importance of intelligent transport systems (ITS) for improving the efficiency of all modes of transport and encourages the use of these systems as a matter of priority within the EU, while paying particular attention to their full interoperability and ensuring equal access to them, especially insofar as SMEs are concerned.

Infrastructures and Investment policy: the Commission is urged to devise and develop a dedicated rail system and to put forward initiatives aimed at bringing it about. It asks the Commission to ensure the dissemination of best practice in financing logistics as part of the Action Plan, for example, various initiatives using private-public co-financing, European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund possibilities and structural instruments.

Training and attractiveness of logistics professions: the report welcomes the fact that the Commission recognises training and life-long training as a priority and insists that the current lack of qualified personnel in logistics at all levels could be overcome by offering suitable training and, accordingly, enhancing the attractiveness of the profession.

Urban transport: the report supports the intention of the Commission to adopt a Green Paper on Urban Transport and calls for the inclusion of a chapter on urban logistics with particular emphasis on the dissemination of best practice.

Standardisation: MEPs call for an in-depth study to be prepared by the Commission on the appropriateness of various weights and measures standards in the freight transport sector in the light of technological change and current circumstances. It insists that the Action Plan for Logistics should support innovative logistics, co-modality, and safer and sustainable mobility; proposes that the use of 60 t goods vehicles should only be allowed for certain routes by the Commission at the request of, and within a Member State .

Security: the report insists that the actions to be taken should ensure the highest level of security while balancing the relationship between security procedures and free movement of goods. It insists that actions should be taken to fight organised crime, especially in cross-border areas and in international freight transport involving third countries.

Planning: the report calls on the Member States to prepare national action plans for freight logistics within the overall framework of the EU Action Plan. It calls for close and permanent cooperation among all relevant stakeholders in transport and logistics at both national and European level to deal, inter alia, with the practical elimination of existing bottlenecks. It supports the Commission proposal to set up "focal groups" to address bottlenecks. but stresses that this activity must not be confined to examining modes separately and without a developed overview.

Statistics: the Commission is invited to make progress as rapidly as possible in developing an updated and efficient statistical database for EU logistics which is confined to effective and essential data and does not involve any unnecessary effort on the part of the undertakings concerned and, in so doing, to take care not to impose additional reporting requirements on European industry. It is also asked to increase its efforts to encourage proper implementation and enforcement of existing regulations and directives.

Freight transport logistics in Europe, the key to sustainable mobility

The European Parliament adopted by 577 votes in favour to 52 against with 51 abstentions the own-initiative report drawn up by Ines AYALA SENDER (PES, ES) in response to the Commission communication on "Freight Transport Logistics in Europe ? the key to sustainable mobility". In a compromise reached by the EPP-ED and PES groups, Parliament suggested that the use of ?mega-liners? should only be allowed for certain routes by the Commission. An evaluation of the requests would have to respect factors such as the existing infrastructures and safety aspects. The use of mega-liners should, consequently, be permitted under strict conditions only.

The report begins by welcoming the Communication, and recognising the value of the link made by the Commission between logistics and co-modality. Parliament insisted that priority be given under the new Lisbon Strategy to transport, to logistics and to the development of the trans-European networks, and called on Member States to ensure that the national plans to be submitted at the forthcoming spring 2008 European Council reflect that priority.

Simplification of administrative burden: the report recognised the importance of developing "one stop administrative" shopping in the sector to increase efficiency, cut red tape and reduce costs. It welcomed the intention of the Commission to examine the details and added value of establishing a single transport document, as an EU model, for all carriage of goods, irrespective of mode. However, such a document must provide transport undertakings with clear legal certainty and replace the large number of existing transport documents. Parliament also called on the Commission to intensify its efforts to simplify short sea shipping procedures and make the concept of the Motorways of the Sea more operational, and similarly, advocated additional proposals for inland waterways under the NAIADES initiative. It called for the appointment of a European coordinator to deal with the Motorways of the Sea, which are included among the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) priority projects.

Intelligent transport systems: MEPs encouraged the use of these systems as a matter of priority within the EU, while paying particular attention to their full interoperability and ensuring equal access to them, especially insofar as SMEs were concerned.

Infrastructures and investment policy: Parliament deplored the impact of the Council's position on TEN-T funding on the development of freight transport logistics in the EU. The 2008-2009 debate on financing EU policies must be seen as an opportunity to resolve definitively the perpetual problem of the under-financing of the common transport policy, especially as regards TENs and ITS projects. The report proposed that the added value of the logistics component be taken into account in future TEN-T funding decisions. It went on to state that the serious bottlenecks which still impede free movement on account of the historical lack of adequate passes through major cross-border mountain ranges (as is the case in the Alps and the central Pyrenees) must be relieved by means of the requisite Community infrastructure (a low-level rail tunnel).

In order to boost the revitalisation of European railways, the Commission was urged to devise a dedicated rail system focusing especially on cross-border corridors and the development of intermodal hubs. Furthermore, Parliament drew attention to the urgent need for co-modal infrastructure to be developed and for transshipment points and facilities (in particular between inland waterways and railways) and also dry ports away from coasts to be established, with a view to promoting internal European logistics. It also advocated the strengthening (inter alia) of the relationship between railways and airports in order to maintain capacity and competitiveness in the air-transport sector as regards both intra-Community flights and long-haul flights outside the EU, with particular attention to be devoted to cargo. It called on the Commission to ensure as part of the Action Plan the dissemination of best practices in financing logistics.

Training: the report welcomes the fact that the Commission recognises training and life-long training as a priority and insists that the current lack of qualified personnel in logistics at all levels could be overcome by offering suitable training and, accordingly, enhancing the attractiveness of the profession.

Standardisation: MEPs called for an in-depth study to be prepared by the Commission on the appropriateness of various weights and measures standards in the freight transport sector in the light of technological change and current circumstances. They insisted that the Action Plan for Logistics should support innovative logistics, co-modality, and safer and sustainable mobility. Parliament proposed that the Commission only allow the use of 60 tonne goods vehicles on certain routes at the request of, and within, a Member State. It felt that, when evaluating such requests, due regard must, in particular, be paid to factors such as existing infrastructure and safety.

Security: the report insisted that the actions to be taken should ensure the highest level of security while balancing the relationship between security procedures and free movement of goods. Action should also be taken to fight organised crime, especially in cross-border areas and in international freight transport involving third countries.

Planning: the report called on the Member States to prepare national action plans for freight logistics within the overall framework of the EU Action Plan. There should be close and permanent cooperation among all relevant stakeholders in the transport and logistics sector at both national and European levels to deal, inter alia, with the practical elimination of existing bottlenecks. Parliament called on the Commission to discuss the future challenges and possible solutions to problems pertaining to freight transport logistics in Europe at an annual European logistics forum.

Statistics: the Commission must develop an updated and efficient statistical database for EU logistics which is confined to effective and essential data and does not involve any unnecessary effort on the part of the undertakings concerned and, in so doing, take care not to impose additional reporting requirements on European industry. It must increase its efforts to encourage proper implementation and enforcement of existing regulations and directives.