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49. Proposes that the topic of professional qualifications and lifelong training be addressed together with the social partners within the future European social dialogue committee;
50. Urges the Commission to promote the exchange of good practice in the port sector in general and with regard to innovation and the training of workers in particular in order to improve the quality of services, competitiveness and the level of investment attracted;
51. Welcomes the introduction of the European maritime day, on 20 May, and in particular supports the introduction of an 'open day' which could help the public gain a better understanding of the work and importance of the port sector;
52. Urges the Commission, in line with Parliament's resolution of 8 May 2008 on the Transatlantic Economic Council ⁽¹⁾, to continue its efforts to ensure that the US regulation to scan 100 % of US-bound cargo is changed to ensure cooperation based on the mutual recognition of 'authorised economic operators' and of security standards agreed by the World Customs Organisation (C-TPAT, SAFE) framework; calls on the Commission to evaluate the potential costs to business and to the EU economy of scanning 100 % of US-bound maritime cargo containers, as well as its potential impact on customs operations;
53. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

⁽¹⁾ Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2008)0192.

Freight transport in Europe

P6_TA(2008)0409

European Parliament resolution of 4 September 2008 on Freight transport in Europe (2008/2008(INI))

(2009/C 295 E/19)

The European Parliament

- having regard to the Commission communications entitled 'The EU's freight transport agenda: Boosting the efficiency, integration and sustainability of freight transport in Europe' (COM(2007)0606), 'Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan' (COM(2007)0607), 'Towards a rail network giving priority to freight' (COM(2007)0608) and 'Multi-annual contracts for rail infrastructure quality' (COM(2008)0054),
- having regard to the Commission communication entitled 'Freight Transport Logistics in Europe — the key to sustainable mobility' (COM(2006)0336),
- having regard to the Commission communication on the deployment of the European rail signalling system ERTMS/ETCS (COM(2005)0298),
- having regard to the Conclusions of the Council of 29-30 November and 3 December 2007 on the Commission communication on the Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan, and of 7 April 2008 on the Commission communication entitled 'Towards a rail network giving priority to freight',
- having regard to the Commission Green Paper entitled 'Towards a new culture for urban mobility' (COM(2007)0551),
- having regard to its resolution of 5 September 2007 on Freight Transport Logistics in Europe — the key to sustainable mobility ⁽¹⁾,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 187 E, 24.7.2008, p. 154.

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- having regard to its resolution of 9 July 2008 on ‘Towards a new culture of urban mobility’⁽¹⁾
 - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (A6-0326/2008),
- A. whereas the transport sector is responsible for almost 30 % of CO₂ emissions in the EU — as much as 40 % in cities — and, despite some efforts made in respect of technical improvement and innovation, CO₂ emissions grew by 26 % between 1990 and 2005, while in other sectors they were cut by 10 % due to substantial investments (running into billions of Euros),
- B. whereas sustainable and efficient freight transport in Europe plays a vital role in having a successful and competitive economy, in meeting consumer demands and in creating a considerable number of jobs and wealth for European citizens,
- C. whereas freight transport is expected to grow by some 50 % (in tonne-kilometres) between 2000 and 2020, in line with forecasts in the Commission White Paper entitled ‘European transport policy for 2010: time to decide’ (COM(2001)0370), and whereas it grew some 30 % faster than GDP between 1995 and 2005; whereas, furthermore, growth in freight transport as a whole has mainly been the result of an increase in road and air transport relative to other modes of transport,
- D. whereas solutions aimed at more sustainable and efficient logistics and freight transport systems and at intermodal integration of all modes of transport not only lead to improvements in the economy and in security, but also meet the EU’s objectives in the fields of climate change and energy savings to be achieved by 2020,
- E. whereas, in order to meet these challenges, the EU and the Member States should, in the current context of inadequate budgetary resources, set themselves specific coordinated priorities, concentrate their resources on a limited number of measures favouring sustainability and intermodality in freight transport, and take account of sensitive regions,
- F. whereas the European corridor network should be better developed, starting from the existing network and existing structures and technologies, and should also incorporate ‘green’ corridors for all modes of freight transport, with ambitious sustainable environmental criteria,
- G. whereas the aim of the abovementioned Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan must be to facilitate freight transport operations in Europe and beyond for the benefit of all European companies and for European competitiveness as a whole,
1. 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, and reducing oil consumption, polluting emissions, and external costs, and therefore welcomes the abovementioned Commission communications and Council conclusions; encourages 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, in an enlarged European Union, of more efficient logistics systems as part of the gradual integration of priority cross-border rail freight corridors, hubs and conventional networks, and by promoting the user and polluter pays principles for all modes of transport;
 2. Supports the view of the Commission that co-modality and intermodality remain key factors in creating sustainable and efficient freight transport in Europe;
 3. Notes, however, that the EU’s powers and resources for improving freight transport markets are limited; notes that key parts of the network are already being used at full capacity; therefore urges 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;

⁽¹⁾ Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2008)0356.

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4. Is convinced that urban freight logistics require a specific approach; hopes that the debate on the abovementioned Green Paper on Urban Mobility, together with the Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan, can result in an exchange of good practices between towns in order to find sustainable ways of transporting supplies to towns;
5. Requests therefore, that the Commission proposes, no later than the end of 2008, a programme for strengthening cooperation between the Member States responsible for projects in this area, and that it facilitates and assesses solutions to the current blockages, with particular attention to goods transport, taking due account of the added value of the logistics factor;
6. Supports the idea of dedicated goods transport networks, which should exploit existing conventional traffic networks which are being freed up as a result of the progress being made with high-speed trains;
7. Stresses that the rail freight network should be based on the most 'market-relevant' freight corridors taking into account the existing ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System) corridors and TEN-T (Trans-European Transport) network, (i.e. extended as necessary to include specific areas generating heavy volumes of traffic, e.g. ports); considers that 'high level corridor coordinators' should be appointed, wherever this has not yet been done; calls upon the European Railway Agency, as the ERTMS authority, to ensure that these routes become interoperable;
8. Looks 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 (particularly wind and solar energy) in accordance with EU legislation, its objectives and the intelligent transport systems;
9. Urges the Commission and the Member States in this regard to offer stronger incentives to boost the environmental performance of all modes of transport and to support the most efficient combinations of modes of transport with a view to achieving the lowest possible impact on the environment, especially in the 'green' corridors;
10. Proposes that support be given to the integration of regional planning, production processes and market structures — including the avoidance of unnecessary transport — and to shortening distances and adjusting speeds in freight transport; takes the view that time-consuming and energy-intensive 'stop-go' freight transport should be avoided by means of computerised speed adjustment;
11. Regards it as a priority to improve proper implementation and strengthening of existing legislation regarding the transport of hazardous and polluting goods;
12. Urges the Commission and Member States to press forward with the exchange of best practice in sensitive cross-border areas (mountainous areas and conurbations), as well as in cities, taking account of the recommendations included in its abovementioned resolution on urban mobility and of the experience gained from the Civitas programme on cleaner and better transport in cities, by enhancing the logistics aspect;
13. Calls on the Commission to concentrate EU co-financing on the efficiency, interoperability and upgrading of rail infrastructure, intermodal hubs as well as all other modes of freight transport;
14. Calls also on the Commission and Member States, pending the overhaul of the European Union's budget expected in 2009, already to consider the position of transport in that budget, in order to avoid any repetition of past errors and to ensure sufficient future investment in strategic infrastructure in order to attain the objectives which the Union has set for itself with regard to sustainable development and emission reduction;
15. Stresses the utmost importance of interoperable road charging for efficient freight transport in Europe;

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16. Considers better links from maritime and inland ports to their hinterland rail and road network to be an important element in transport infrastructure; highlights the important role of internal platforms and dry docks;
17. Is convinced of the potential of inland waterways regarding freight transport and urges the Commission to ensure proper implementation of the Naiades action programme on promoting inland waterway transport in Europe;
18. Stresses that investments in hinterland terminals can be put into effect flexibly and rapidly, thereby eliminating bottlenecks in the intermodal chain as a whole;
19. Calls for the compliance with, and/or introduction of, stable intermodal standards for the dimensions and weight of vehicles, containers and loading equipment, to be considered as being of strategic importance with a view to shifting freight transport to rail and sustainable waterways, thereby reducing infrastructure costs;
20. Notes that various horizontal techniques which would help simplify the transfer of freight not only from lorries to rail but also between differing rail gauges are often insufficiently standardised; therefore urges the international and European bodies to standardise these technologies in particular with a view to greater efficiency and cost reduction; stresses in this regard the importance of quickly adopting a worldwide standard for intermodal loading units;
21. Calls on the Commission to draft its guidelines for environmental and railway subsidies in such a way as to simplify investments in sustainable rail freight transport; stresses in this regard the strategic importance of co-financing noise reduction, including at source (retrofitting of goods trucks), such as already exists for the fitting of rolling stock with ERTMS;
22. Is convinced that infrastructure management and the provision of services must take place on a cross-border, non-discriminatory and transparent basis with a view to achieving efficient, interoperable and smooth-running freight transport logistics; stresses in this respect the importance of the further completion of the internal transport market for all modes of transport; welcomes in this regard the Commission proposal for the establishment of a 'European maritime transport space without barriers' and supports the idea of a single transport document and 'single points of interface' for all modes of transport;
23. Stresses that an internal market in road haulage which functions effectively could help to make transport more efficient and reduce the number of unladen journeys; calls on the Commission to strictly enforce EU legislation on international road haulage and cabotage; recognises that Member States are permitted to restrict cabotage under certain conditions, but calls on the Commission, as guardian of the Treaty, to take rigorous action against disproportionate restrictions and penalties which a number of Member States are imposing on foreign carriers in this regard;
24. Calls on the Commission, in multi-annual contracts for rail infrastructure quality, to draw up framework conditions for minimum quality standards throughout Europe; proposes that the Member States link the availability of appropriations for rail infrastructure construction, extension and maintenance to these quality standards and treat them as indivisible packages, thus contributing to increased efficiency and financial savings;
25. Calls on the Commission to monitor and promote effective and consistent application of best practice on multi-annual contracts for infrastructure quality; invites the Commission, on the basis of its abovementioned Communication COM(2008)0054, to develop a format for benchmarking infrastructure services in close collaboration with infrastructure managers, including publication of key performance indicators;

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26. Calls on the Commission to present stronger recommendations on multi-annual contracts for infrastructure quality and capacity (based on the transparent monitoring of the current implementation of Article 6 of Directive 2001/14/EC ⁽¹⁾); in that respect, calls on the Commission to urge Member States to implement these multi-annual funding frameworks in order to guarantee to rail infrastructure managers financial stability in respect of their maintenance and renewal needs (entailing adequate public funding);

27. Calls on the Commission to support projects concerning the differential use of high-speed lines e.g. for light freight transport;

28. Urges the Commission to carry out a survey of freight trucks equipped with satellite navigation in the EU with a view to testing the cross-border interoperability or compatibility of such systems with existing technology, to ensure the fitting of inter-operable satellite navigation systems for new freight trucks and promote the retrofitting of existing trucks; advocates the adoption of best practice in loading techniques, thereby structuring the intermodal chain from the beginning to the end of the transfer and unloading process in such a way as to boost the efficiency of the whole sector;

29. 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; welcomes in particular the decision to establish a European maritime space without barriers; urges the Commission to ask the appropriate international associations and organisations to develop a single intermodal document;

30. Stresses that there is a lack of good logistics education delivered by universities and therefore calls on the Member States to give absolute priority to higher education and further education in the logistics and freight transport sector;

31. Urges the Commission to support projects and research, and to work towards standard information flows to ensure the integration and interoperability of modes at data level;

32. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2001/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2001 on the allocation of railway infrastructure capacity and the levying of charges for the use of railway infrastructure and safety certification (OJ L 75, 15.3.2001, p. 29).

Mid-term review of the European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010

P6_TA(2008)0410

European Parliament resolution of 4 September 2008 on the mid-term review of the European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010 (2007/2252(INI))

(2009/C 295 E/20)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee on the mid-term review of the European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010 (COM(2007)0314),

— having regard to its resolution of 23 February 2005 on the European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010 ⁽¹⁾,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 304 E, 1.12.2005, p. 264.