RESOLUTIONS

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Sustainable European transport policy

P6_TA(2008)0087

European Parliament resolution of 11 March 2008 on sustainable European transport policy, taking into account European energy and environment policies (2007/2147(INI))

(2009/C 66 E/01)

The European Parliament,


— having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Communication on a European Ports Policy’ (COM(2007)0616),

— having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Towards a rail network giving priority to freight’ (COM(2007)0608),

— having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan’ (COM(2007)0607),

— having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘The EU’s freight transport agenda: Boosting the efficiency, integration and sustainability of freight transport in Europe’ (COM(2007)0606),

— having regard to the Commission Green Paper entitled ‘Towards a new culture for urban mobility’ (COM(2007)0551),

— having regard to the Commission Green Paper on market-based instruments for environment and related policy purposes (COM(2007)0140),


— having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Results of the review of the Community Strategy to reduce CO₂ emissions from passenger cars and light-commercial vehicles’ (COM(2007)0019),

— having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Limiting Global Climate Change to 2 degrees Celsius — The way ahead for 2020 and beyond’ (COM(2007)0002),

having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Renewable Energy Road Map — Renewable energies in the 21st century: building a more sustainable future’ (COM(2006)0848),


— having regard to its resolution of 24 October 2007 on the Community Strategy to reduce CO₂ emissions from passenger cars and light-commercial vehicles (1),

— having regard to its resolution of 5 September 2007 on freight transport logistics in Europe — the key to sustainable mobility (2),

— having regard to its resolution of 12 July 2007 on keeping Europe moving — sustainable mobility for our continent (3),


— having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism and the opinions of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (A6-0014/2008),

A. whereas sustainable development — an EU objective applying across the board — is intended to bring about continuing improvement in the quality of life and in the well-being of our planet for present and future generations,

B. whereas about a third of total energy consumption in EU 25 is linked to the transport sector, excluding shipping and pipelines, and whereas road transport, accounting as it does for 83 %, is the mode that uses up the largest volume of energy,

C. whereas the transport sector accounts for 70 % of the demand for oil in EU 25; whereas the sector relies on fossil fuels for 97 % of its power supplies, leaving a figure of just 2 % for electricity (much of which is nuclear generated) and as little as 1 % for biofuels,

D. whereas the energy efficiency of the different modes of transport has been greatly enhanced in recent years and whereas this has enabled the corresponding CO₂ emissions per km to be reduced substantially; whereas these improvements are, however, being counteracted by the effects of ever growing demand in the transport sector,

E. whereas, therefore, emissions in the transport sector, taken as a whole, are continuing to rise: in 2005 alone the transport sector accounted for 24.1% of the total greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂, CH₄, N₂O) in EU 27 and according to Commission forecasts its demand for energy will increase by at least 30 % between now and 2030,

F. whereas the noxious emissions produced by road transport have lessened as a result of technological innovations and the extensive efforts of the motor industry; whereas this outcome has been achieved specifically through the introduction of catalytic converters, fine particle filters, and other technologies which have helped to cut NOx and polluting particulate emissions by between 30% and 40% over the past 15 years; whereas, however, despite these improvements, the CO2 emission reduction targets stemming from the motor manufacturers’ voluntary agreement have been met only in part,

G. whereas urban traffic generates 40% of CO2 emissions and 70% of other pollutant emissions from vehicles and whereas road congestion, concentrated mainly in the big cities, entails a cost to the EU equivalent to about 1% of GDP,

H. whereas 70% of the priority trans-European transport projects approved in 2004 relate to railway and shipping transport, which are recognised as being less polluting modes of transport,

I. whereas in the abovementioned European Council Presidency Conclusions the EU committed itself firmly and unilaterally to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% compared with 1990 levels,

1. Believes that mobility has been one of the greatest achievements and challenges of the 20th century and that sustainable transport should strike a fair balance between different and often conflicting interests while seeking to reconcile mobility, a basic right that citizens enjoy, the importance of the transport sector in economic and employment terms, the responsibility for the local and global environment and the right of citizens to safety, quality of life and health;

2. Stresses that the transport sector must also meet the EU goals of reducing oil consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% over 1990 levels by 2020;

3. Points to the importance of the transport sector for employment, growth, and innovation, and considers safe and affordable guaranteed mobility to be a sine qua non of our lifestyle; consequently believes — with regard to the priority that should be accorded to the requirements of sustainable mobility from an environmental point of view — that citizens are likely to support measures that guarantee their mobility in the long term (1);

4. Is of the opinion that, to achieve the aim of making European transport sustainable in energy and environmental terms, it is necessary to combine a range of mutually supportive and corrective policies, thus securing the involvement of more and more stakeholders representing the transport sector, government, and citizens; is convinced that only by applying the right combination of measures will it be possible both to mitigate the adverse effects of individual actions and to help persuade citizens to accept those actions;

5. Considers that a policy mix of this kind should encompass the following in particular:

(a) technological developments (measures to increase energy efficiency, new standards/regulations for engines and fuels, use of new technologies and alternative fuels);

(b) market-based instruments (charges/fees based on environmental impact or congestion, tax incentives, Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) allowing for the specific features of the different modes of transport); and

(c) flanking measures to enable means of transport and infrastructure to be used as efficiently as possible and encourage companies and citizens to change their ways.

6. Maintains that the EU and the Member States need to focus their efforts on the key elements of the system, namely:

(a) congested large cities and urban areas, where most movements take place;

(1) See ‘Attitudes on issues related to EU Transport Policy’, Flash Eurobarometer No 206b, EU Transport Policy.
(b) the main European intercity corridors, the routes for the highest proportion of EU internal and international trade; and

(c) environmentally sensitive areas (the Alpine region, the Baltic Sea, etc.);

7. Stresses the importance of the signing of the Transport Protocol to the Alpine Convention by the Council in December 2006; underscores the fact that, because of ratification of that protocol, tangible implementing measures to promote sustainable transport in sensitive mountain regions and densely populated areas must be immediately launched by the Commission;

8. Maintains that market-based instruments should likewise be employed to promote vehicles with low fuel consumption and low emissions, making use of, for example, tax exemptions, reform of vehicle excise duties to take account of pollutant emissions and fuel consumption efficiency, incentives to scrap highly polluting vehicles and buy low-emission new cars; considers these to be important measures that would also help motor manufacturers to recoup the cost of compliance with the obligations imposed under the new legislative framework;

9. Urges the Council and the Member States, therefore, to match the determination shown at the European Council meeting of 8 and 9 March 2007 by

(a) adopting the abovementioned proposal for a directive on passenger car-related taxes in order to link car-related taxation to pollutant emissions and fuel consumption efficiency; and

(b) reforming their tax systems, without further delay, in such a way as to provide more substantial incentives in favour of cleaner vehicles;

10. Endorses the question raised by the Commission in the abovementioned Green Paper on market-based instruments for environment and related policy purposes, regarding the option of using a coordination procedure and exchange of experience and best practice in order to promote, while bringing more active scrutiny to bear on, national reforms of transport charging systems and environmental taxation; calls on the Commission to take steps to achieve that end;

11. Calls on the Council and the Member States to step up their investment in infrastructure and intelligent transport systems (ITSs), in particular with a view to:

(a) completing the trans-European network priority projects as soon as possible, since these are vitally important for freight transport logistics and a sustainable European transport policy;

(b) tackling congestion in urban areas and along corridors in sensitive areas; and

(c) improving intermodal transport;

12. Urges the Commission to submit by June 2008 at the latest, a comprehensible, transparent, generally applicable model for assessing the external costs of all modes of transport, on which to base future calculation of the charges to be paid for the use of infrastructure; observes that, under the Eurovignette Directive, that model must be accompanied by an analysis of the impact of internalising external costs for all modes of transport and by a strategy for phasing in the model for all modes of transport; looks to the Commission, alongside the above initiative to produce legislative proposals, starting with the revision of the Eurovignette Directive;

13. Is convinced that the problem of urban congestion, which causes 40% of CO₂ emissions and 70% of other pollutant emissions from vehicles, needs to be tackled more ambitiously, without infringing the subsidiarity principle, by applying a Europe-wide cooperation and coordination strategy;

14. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to analyse the way in which transport infrastructure and the tariffs applied to it influence urban development and future demand for transport services;
15. Is of the opinion that an effective urban mobility policy should take into account the transport of persons as well as of freight and must therefore be based on as fully integrated an approach as possible, bringing together the solutions best suited to each individual problem; firmly believes that urban areas have economically sound potential to offer for further modal shift policies in favour of public transport, walking, and cycling and for a new approach to urban logistics; considers it essential in this connection to focus on technological innovation (wider use of ITSs), better exploitation of existing infrastructure, especially by means of demand management measures (congestion charges and road pricing), and innovative solutions for the optimum integration of urban freight flows; and, lastly, new ways to optimise the use of private cars such as car-sharing, carpooling and arrangements for working at home;

16. Points to the importance of light measures in attaining the goal of more sustainable transport and considers it important that citizens should be able to make informed choices about means of transport and driving behaviour; calls for better consumer information and for more active education and promotion campaigns in support of more sustainable means of transport or transport models;

17. Believes that rail transport — a mode with lower energy consumption and CO₂ emissions — has considerable untapped potential not just where freight transport logistics are concerned, but also as regards short to medium-haul passenger transport;

18. Calls on the Commission, the Member States, and the rail industry to:

(a) complete a single European railway area or rail market as soon as possible;

(b) with that end in view, eliminate the technical obstacles and move towards a single European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) and interoperable solutions; and

(c) improve freight and passenger transport services and the quality of service;

19. Considers that, although airlines have cut their fuel consumption by 1%-2 % per passenger-kilometre in the last 10 years and noise emissions have been greatly lowered, the overall environmental impact of civil aviation has risen on account of the substantial expansion in traffic; calls, therefore for:

(a) air transport to be included in the ETS and greater use to be made of the new-generation European air traffic management system (SESAR — Single European Sky ATM Research);

(b) emissions-based differential take-off and landing charges at airports;

(c) the establishment of the ‘Clean Sky a Joint Technology Initiative’ that aims at reducing CO₂ and NOₓ emissions and noise pollution;

(d) an end to the fragmentation of European airspace through the speedy creation of a real Single European Sky;

(e) practical steps to be taken to relieve airport congestion; and

(f) ensuring better co-modal and logistics integration of airports, facilitating their access to railways;

20. Notes that cost reflectiveness in air transport and air ticket price transparency are most important in terms of passenger interests and fair competition in the transport sector, and therefore gives the Commission backing to take further initiatives in this connection;

21. Notes that emissions from shipping are continuing to increase and recommends in particular that:

(a) CO₂, SOₓ, nitrogen oxide, and other emissions from ships be reduced;

(b) the use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power be started and encouraged;
(c) vessels that come to anchor to be fuelled from land-based sources;
(d) the use of emission allowance trading to contain emissions be treated as a possibility deserving careful
consideration, without punishing this mode of transport which is the most environmentally friendly
(together with inland waterways) nor favour other modes which impose a heavier burden on the envir-
onment; and
(e) an integrated European rivers policy to be agreed and therefore endorses initiatives such as Naiades (An
Integrated European Action Programme for Inland Waterway Transport), which further improve inland
waterway transport and the environmental performance of inland waterway transport;

22. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to invest in the modernisation of port facilities both
for the EU’s seaports and for those located on internal waterways, in order to permit the swift transfer of
goods and passengers from one transport system to another, thereby enabling a reduction in energy
consumption in the field of transport;

23. Considers it essential to improve logistics, load factors in freight transport and intermodal transport;
therefore advocates full completion of the internal market in transport and urges the Commission to build
as soon as possible on its abovementioned action plan for freight transport logistics in Europe, placing par-
ticular emphasis on developing the concept of ‘green corridors’;

24. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to invest more in research in the field of transport,
to enable more energy-efficient and CO₂-emission-reducing technologies to be developed; calls on the
Commission in the 2009 review of the multi-annual financial framework to increase significantly the overall
financial effort towards R&D concerning the environment, energy and transport;

25. Gives the Commission backing for initiatives which interlink sustainable transport and tourism more
effectively, such as the use of more environmentally friendly means of transport, e.g. combining public-
transport use and cycling;

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

Early warning in major emergencies

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Declaration of the European Parliament on early warning for citizens in major emergencies

(2009/C 66 E/02)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas it is important to have efficient early warning (EW) for citizens in case of imminent or devel-
oping major emergencies, with a view to reducing suffering and the loss of human life,

B. whereas the establishment of EW and alert systems has been repeatedly requested by Parliament and is
provided for in several existing and upcoming legislative acts,

C. whereas EW systems involve warning authorities by means of regional networks for the prevention of
risks (natural, technological, social) and alerting citizens via telecommunications networks (radio, TV,
sirens, mobile phones, etc.),