

Newsletter

TRAN Committee meeting with remote participation of 10 May 2021

Editorial by Karima Delli

Dear colleagues and friends,

This first TRAN Committee of the month was devoted to important exchanges of views such as the presentation of the study on “Transport infrastructure in low-density and depopulating areas” which aimed to analyse the key challenges and trends concerning the provision of transport policies and infrastructure in low density and depopulating areas. Following that, we had the presentation of the ECA special report on “Electrical recharging infrastructure” where TRAN Members engaged in a lively debate with the rapporteur, highlighting its usefulness for future legislative works and sharing the ECA analysis and concerns on the progress of the charging infrastructure deployment.



We also had the opportunity to deal with a key file for our Committee: the “Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy”, which is an essential element in order to achieve the Green Deal’s objectives. Members generally recognised the need to be even more ambitious, the importance of transport safety, the necessity to increase investments in public transport, infrastructure, cross border and multimodal connectivity and innovative technologies on digitalisation, carbon neutrality and internalisation of external costs.

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Meeting on 10 May 2021

-) Exchange of views with European Coordinators for the TEN-T: Iveta Radičová (Mediterranean Corridor), Mathieu Grosch (Orient/East-Med Corridor), Pawel Wojciechowski (Rhine-Alpine Corridor)
-) Consideration of draft report on the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy
-) Consideration of draft opinion on a European strategy for offshore renewable energy
-) Presentation of the ECA special report on “Electrical recharging infrastructure”
-) Presentation of the study on “Transport infrastructure in low-density and depopulating areas”

Tourism Task Force participation in High-Level Forum on Sustainability and Tourism on 14 May

Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy

Consideration of draft report

- Rapporteur: Ismail Ertug (S&D)
- Vote in TRAN: tbc
- Vote in Plenary: tbc

In the TRAN Committee meeting on 10 May the Rapporteur made a presentation of his draft report responding to the Commission's sustainable and smart mobility strategy presented in December 2020. While welcoming the Commission's strategy, the Rapporteur stressed the need for more ambition in various areas, in particular in relation to deployment of zero-emission mobility in road transport, maritime and aviation, and proposed binding targets for public charging infrastructure. He underlined that the 'energy efficiency first' principle should be applied to the use of synthetic fuels and clean hydrogen. The Rapporteur welcomed the inclusion of the maritime sector in the EU ETS and the planned reduction of allowances allocated for free to the aviation sector, and recalled Parliament's rejection to the inclusion of emissions from road transport in the EU ETS. He proposed that carbon-neutral choices for scheduled collective travel should be available for travels up to 1000 km by 2030. The Rapporteur wanted to see an acceleration in the digitalisation of the transport sector (notably in rail).

In the ensuing discussion, some Members called for more ambition in particular in relation to social aspects and the importance of taking the needs of islands, peripheral and outermost regions into account. Others stressed the need for market-based solutions guided by technology neutrality and pointed out that measures should be coherent with policy measures adopted with the mobility package.

A European strategy for offshore renewable energy

Consideration of draft opinion

- Rapporteur: Giuseppe MILAZZO (EPP)
- Vote in TRAN: 16-17 June 2021
- Vote in lead Committee (ITRE): 15 July 2021

The draft opinion prepared by the Rapporteur, Mr Milazzo, is based on a dedicated approach to decarbonising the transport and tourism sector with the aim to achieve the Commission's target of attaining an offshore renewable energy capacity of 340 GW by 2050. The text contains clear references to the key role that seaports play, so there will be a need for infrastructure modernisation of existing ports

following the example of the Scandinavian countries, which are at the forefront in this area.

On the other hand, islands and coastal regions have enormous potential for exploitation in Europe. There are many remote locations in Europe, such as for example in the Mediterranean, where offshore renewable energy can create jobs and economic growth by supporting the creation of local small and medium-sized enterprises.

In this sense, even the outermost regions could benefit from investment in offshore renewable energy. It could help them to reduce their high dependence on fossil fuels; moreover, a move to sustainable energy could act as a driver for companies to set up on the ground, to create new jobs and boost the economy.

The growing energy needs of transport and tourism can be met in full compliance with the objectives of the EU strategy. We see the immense opportunities and it is crucial for the European economy to utilise them.

The Shadow Rapporteurs welcomed the proposed text and will contribute in the form of amendments.

Exchange of views with European Coordinators for the TEN-T

Exchange of views with Iveta Radičová (Mediterranean Corridor), Mathieu Grosch (Orient/East-Med Corridor), Pawel Wojciechowski (Rhine-Alpine Corridor)

The Committee had another scrutiny exercise of the implementation of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) with an exchange of views with the European Coordinators responsible for the Mediterranean Corridor, the Orient/East-Med Corridor and the Rhine-Alpine Corridor. The European Coordinators gave an update on the state of play and future development of their corridors towards 2020 together with the legal deadline for their completion. Members focused their attention on some problematic aspects, such as the insufficient deployment of ERTMS, lack of financing and political willingness to conclude important infrastructures, missing multimodal links and elimination of bottlenecks.

They also asked to identify the necessary actions needed to unify rail timeslots, increase interconnectivity and development of digital infrastructure as well as improvement of road safety

and involvement of private investments. TEN-T coordinators replied to the questions and specify that they meet regularly to streamline procedures and to share best practices.

Presentation of the ECA special report on “Electrical recharging infrastructure”

TRAN welcomed Mr Ladislav Balko, Rapporteur of the ECA special report on *Infrastructure for charging electric vehicles (EVs): more charging stations but uneven deployment makes travel across the EU complicated*.

Mr Balko started by indicating that the special report provided useful input to the forthcoming revisions of key legislation in particular the Directive on alternative fuels infrastructure (AFID) and the TEN-T Regulation. The audit examined the effectiveness of the Commission’s support for the deployment of an EU-wide publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure during the 2014-2020 period. The Rapporteur went on to explain that the ECA examined in particular the way in which the Commission adopts standards, at how it coordinates and supports Member States’ deployment of the charging infrastructure, and at how it manages the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) funding for electrical charging infrastructure.

Mr Balko stated that the ECA had found that the Commission had succeeded in promoting a common EU plug standard for charging EVs, and that users were gradually gaining more harmonised access to different charging networks. However, the EU was still a long way off its ambitious Green Deal target of 1 million publicly accessible charging points by 2025, and was still lacking an overall strategic roadmap for electro-mobility. The ECA audit also concluded that the availability of charging stations varied substantially between countries, and that travelling across the EU in an EV was still complicated by the absence of harmonised payment systems and adequate user information. Moreover, in the absence of a comprehensive infrastructure gap analysis, the Commission had been unable to provide sufficiently targeted EU funding. The Rapporteur indicated that the ECA’s main recommendations were that the Commission should propose minimum electrical charging infrastructure requirements across the TEN-T network, should prepare a strategic and integrated EU electro-mobility roadmap and develop and use infrastructure and funding gap analyses.

TRAN Members thanked Mr Balko for a very comprehensive report and highlighted its usefulness for legislative works to come. They expressed that they shared the ECA analysis and concerns on the progress of the charging infrastructure deployment. Many Members underlined the need for increased coordination at the EU level and more harmonisation of charging infrastructure requirements. They also supported the idea that the Commission should present its roadmap on electro-mobility soon and improve targeting of EU funding. Several Members insisted on the necessity to avoid infrastructure gaps between EU member states but also between remote, isolated regions and other parts of the Union.

Transport infrastructure in low-density and depopulating areas

Presentation of the study

Ms Malin Carlberg, Associate Director at VVA Brussels consultancy and Mr Ian Skinner, Director at TEPR (Transport and Environment Policy Research) consultancy presented a study on “Transport infrastructure in low-density and depopulating areas” which was commissioned by the Policy Department at the request of the TRAN Committee. The objective of this study is to analyse the key challenges and trends concerning the provision of transport policies and infrastructure in low density and depopulating areas with a special focus on border regions, outermost regions, mountain areas and island regions. It assesses transport policies and projects implemented in these areas and provides policymakers with various policy recommendations aimed at overcoming the identified challenges and gaps.

Experts stressed that road infrastructure in those regions receives the highest share of EU funding and that traditional modes of transport still have a significant weight in EU cohesion and regional policies and that transport policies usually focus on efficiency rather than on tailored strategies for such regions. They recommended among other actions to clearly mention specific needs and features of low density and depopulating areas in the Connecting Europe Facilities (CEF), to make the most of the proposed Digital Europe Programme’s reference to smart rural areas and to prioritise the revitalisation of existing infrastructure and the provision of links to the TEN-T in order to close the gap between low-density and depopulating areas and other regions. This should be done through substantial improvement of local infrastructure and by

focusing on local needs rather than favouring tourism and long-distance travel. Experts also recommended to introduce “equity” as a horizontal principle in transport policies instead of focussing on efficiency only.

Members broadly welcomed the outcomes of the study and insisted on the need to increase investments in sustainable transport in those depopulated areas. Some supported the introduction of an equity principle in transport policy, regretting that current criteria result in channelling funding to urban areas whereas some shared the view that private cars are currently very often the only available solution. They stressed the importance of developing tailor made alternatives in view of the climate challenges and CO2 taxes affecting populations dependent on cars, such as clean public transport alternative and online ticketing which allows the flexibility to adapt the offer based on needs, new train lines and electric vehicles.

Tourism Task Force update

TTF Members attended the High-Level Forum on Sustainability and Tourism on 14 May, organised by Portugal as the holder of the Presidency of the Council of the EU.

TRAN Vice-chair Mr István Ujhelyi represented the European Parliament at the plenary session on the theme of *How Can Europe Shape a European Agenda for Tourism?* He called for joint action towards developing real-life solutions contributing to efficiently jump-starting Tourism and Travel over the coming summer season, and urged the EU institutions to work towards bringing about a comprehensive European tourism policy.

Ms Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar, TRAN Member, contributed to the thematic panel on *How can skills enhance a better tourism?*, focusing on the need to make travel and tourism jobs more appealing. In her view, a multi-stakeholder approach, including governments and the private sector, is the key to creating opportunities and quality jobs. She proposed setting up an EU Tourism Academy - a hybrid

multilingual online platform that would associate universities, hospitality schools, educational and training institutions and all stakeholders within the tourism ecosystem, such as technological partners. The aim of such an Academy would be to improve the skills requisite for the development of new products, marketing, market intelligence, as well as more generally digital skills, and reaching out to unemployed seasonal workers from more remote areas, and enabling the inclusion of local communities.

Another two panels discussed the way forward for tourism in the digital transition and innovation, and how to foster the green and sustainability transition in various territories and regions.

Commissioner for the Internal Market, Thierry Breton, reiterated that the EU has already the right conditions in place for a “safe reopening” of tourism in the summer, despite an overall situation which still remains challenging. Looking forward, tourism businesses should seize the opportunities afforded by the green and digital transitions. The EU’s Recovery and Resilience Fund in the multi-year framework for 2021-2027 provides an opportunity for Member States’ tourism officials to strengthen the sector.

Host of the Forum, Ms Rita Marques, Portugal’s Secretary of State, indicated that sustainability essentially touches on three major issues: proper training of human resources, “the contribution that tourism can make to the green agenda, particularly in terms of resources efficiency”, and lastly, the digital transition, which includes sharing data to better manage tourism flows.

The Portuguese Presidency considers this event as a step towards drawing up the 2030/2050 Agenda for the Tourism sector, to which the EP Tourism Task Force Members are keen to contribute.

Next TRAN Committee meeting: planned draft agenda

Tuesday, 25 May 9.00-11.00, 11.00-12.00 (Coordinators), 13.45-15.45 and 16.15-18.15

-) Consideration of draft opinions:
 -) Single Market For Digital Services (Digital Services Act) and amending Directive 2000/31/EC
 -) Contestable and fair markets in the digital sector (Digital Markets Act)
 -) Resilience of critical entities
 -) Measures for a high common level of cybersecurity across the Union, repealing Directive (EU) 2016/1148
-) Consideration of amendments:
 -) Guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Regulation (EU) No 347/2013
 -) EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 – Recommendations on next steps towards "Vision Zero"
 -) Towards Future-proof Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) in Europe
-) Adoption of draft reports:
 -) Railway safety and signalling: Assessing the state of play of the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) deployment
 -) Conclusion of the Protocol to the Agreement on the international occasional carriage of passengers by coach and bus (Interbus Agreement) regarding the international regular and special regular carriage of passengers by coach and bus
-) Adoption of draft opinion on A new approach to the Atlantic maritime strategy
-) Exchange of views with Commissioner for the Internal Market Thierry Breton on the updated EU Industrial Strategy (Tourism Task Force meeting)

TRAN Committee meetings 2021

Please note that **all dates are still to be confirmed** depending on room and interpretation resources.

Wednesday 16/06/2021 13.45-15.45 and 16.15-18.15

Thursday 17/06/2021 9.30-12.30

Useful links

TRAN website: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/tran/home/highlights>

TRAN Calendar 2021: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/217289/TRAN-calendar-2021.pdf>

Policy Department Publication in the EP: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/supporting-analyses.html>

European Aviation Safety Agency newsletters: <http://easa.europa.eu/communications/general-publications.php>

European Railway Agency newsletters: <http://www.era.europa.eu/Communication/Newsletter>

European Maritime Safety Agency newsletters: <http://www.emsa.europa.eu/news-a-press-centre/newsletters.html>

SESAR Joint Undertaking news: <https://www.sesarju.eu/news>

Innovation & Networks Executive Agency: <http://ec.europa.eu/inea/en>

DG MOVE: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/home_en

Portuguese Presidency of the Council: <https://www.2021portugal.eu/en/>



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