

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(80) 582 final

Brussels, 21 October 1980

Draft for a

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

concerning priorities and the timetable for decisions
to be taken by the Council in the transport sector
during the period up to the end of 1983

(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

COM(80) 582 final

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

Priority business for a Council Working Programme
on Transport to end 1983

Priority Business for a Council Working Programme on Transport to end 1983

I. Introduction and setting

This Communication takes forward into a further phase, up to the end of 1983, the programming of priority action by the Community on transport.

2. In October 1973 the Commission presented to the Council a Communication (1) on the development of Community policy looking forward over the decades of the seventies and eighties. That Communication also set out a specific programme of action for the years 1974-76. To maintain progress, the Commission responded to an invitation from the Council's June 1977 session by presenting, in November 1977, a working programme listing priorities for Council action up to the end of 1980 (2). The Council took note of this during its session of 20/21 December 1977, and stated that it would take it into account, as practicable, in its ensuing work. During 1978/79 the Council reached decisions on half of the proposals made by the Commission within that programme : appreciable progress has been made on others.

3. The Parliament, in its plenary session of 16th January 1979, adopted a resolution (3) supporting the programme presented by the Commission to the Council, and invited the Commission to present "a programme of activity by the Council for the years after 1980" which the Council could adopt in the form of a resolution.

(1) Common transport policy; objectives and programme. EC Bulletin suppl. 16/73

(2) E.C. Bulletin No. 11-1977, page 113

(3) OJ No. C 39, 12.2.1979, page 16

4. In view of what the Parliament had resolved and the fact that the priority list for Council actions to end 1980 significantly improved the structure of action since Autumn 1977, the Commission now puts forward a further programme for priority action by the Council covering the period up to the end of 1983.

II. Character of the programme

5. The latest list of priority business is within the framework of the approach to Community policy for transport broadly stated in the Commission's 1973 Communication (1) and further defined since then. It takes account of economic and other changes affecting the Community over recent years and of progress made to date in Community transport policy. It has regard also to views expressed by the Council, the Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee. It emphasises the following objectives :

- realisation of a transport infrastructure network matching Community requirements,
- expansion of scope for flexible and productive transport services between Community countries, responsive to needs and at the lowest overall cost,
- healthy reforms and cooperation in a Community dimension between the railways,
- the wellbeing of merchant shipping in its world setting,
- development of opportunity for efficient air services,
- satisfactory treatment of all forms of transport and their users in wider international relations,
- rational use of energy,
- social considerations in transport policy.

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(1) Common transport policy; objectives and programme. EC Bulletin suppl. 16/73

6. Like the preceding priority programme, this one concentrates on what appears essential for advancing Community transport policy by measures demonstrably urgent to meet practical needs. In drawing it up, close regard has been had to realistic possibilities of action, taking account of the state of work on proposals presently under discussion, the time necessary for preparation of further proposals intended over the period, and that needed for their consideration by the other Community institutions. Experience has shown that, as stated in the November 1977 Communication (1) and as the Parliament has underlined (2), fulfilment by the Commission of its part in the programme is crucially dependent on resources engaged : lack of resources would delay and reduce what can be done.

7. The statement of priority actions in this list does not exclude action on other matters ; the list underlines priorities, and is not designed exhaustively to catalogue all work falling to be done. In several areas proposals already put forward and action already indicated need to be followed through. Changing circumstances may necessitate the introduction of unforeseen items, or the attribution of special priority to particular topics at the expense of others. Need for adaptation and adjustment will be kept in sight.

III. Contents of a priority working programme for the Council to the end of 1983

8. The annex to this communication sets out a list of measures, corresponding to the objectives stated in paragraph 5 above, on which the Council decisions will be sought over the period between now and the end of 1983. The following paragraphs explain the necessity and urgency of these measures : the order set out is determined by convenience of exposition, and does not imply any relative grading in importance or timing.

(1) E.C. Bulletin No. 11-1977, page 113
(2) OJ No. C 39, 12.2.1979, page 16

9. Transport infrastructures can frequently play a determinant role for transport activity. Their importance grows with changes in transport systems and in economic and social organisation. The high relative growth in exchanges between Member States imposes increasing demands on links, of all modes, to and across frontiers. Infrastructure planning has usually been the subject of discrete national programmes which have not been such as to pay regard to the overall requirements of Community traffic. Due weight for Community interests needs to be added in. An objective of Community action, as outlined in the Commission's memorandum on the Community role in development of infrastructure (1), is to expand the conceptual scope of national programmes and projects to cover also the evolving and prospective needs of Community traffic.

10. In this context, commencement of work by the Community Committee on infrastructure (2) has represented a welcome advance. The next essential move towards achievement of an adequate Community network requires adoption by the Council of the proposal before it for means of financial support for projects of high Community interest (3). The Commission had provided the further reports on bottlenecks and mechanisms (4) requested by the Council.

11. Satisfaction of Community needs involve some axes transiting third countries, for example in the case of landward movement between Greece, joining in 1981, and the rest of the Community. Hence the Commission has proposed that there should be ability to support key intra-Community links located in third countries (5) (and has suggested an approach allowing for a Community contribution towards the cost of a motorway across Austria -

(1) A transport network for Europe; Outline of a policy. E.C. Bulletin, suppl. 8/79

(2) OJ No. L 54, 25.2.1978, page 16

(3) OJ No. C 207, 2.9.1976, page 7; modified OJ No. C 249, 18.10.1977,

(4) COM(80) 323 final, 20.6.1980

p. 4

(5) OJ No. C 89, 10.4.1980, p. 4

the Innkreis-Pyhrnautobahn - as well as improved cooperation in other respects over transport of Community interest across that country (1)).

12. The bearing of infrastructure costs by users would aid sound decision making at all levels and encourage rational use. Lifting of the one remaining reservation by a Member State would permit enactment of the first directive on commercial vehicle taxation (2) and open the way for further moves towards a general system covering other transport modes and costs.

13. Recent years have seen a continuing deterioration in the financial situation of railway undertakings, and recent forecasts indicate that with unchanged policies, the railways' share of total traffic is likely to continue to fall.

On the other hand, taking account of recent economic trends and of the situation and prospects in relation to energy supply, the Commission is convinced of the necessity of maintaining the full range of transport modes.

There is need for a change of emphasis in Community railway policy over the coming decade. Decisions are required, new initiatives and actions have to be taken and fresh perspectives examined if present market and financial difficulties in railway operations are to be reversed. The Commission has examined the situation of railway undertakings and will place before the Council a paper which examines a range of proposals and options for a new Community railway policy. The new policy will mark a change of emphasis, building on the positive elements of foregoing Community achievements. One of its main objectives will be the development of a framework permitting railway enterprises to attune their operations to present and future market requirements.

It will deal with the setting of dates and conditions for attainment of financial balance by railway enterprises. It will contain a new examination of public service obligations. It will advocate more vigorous cooperation between railways and closer coordination of suitable activities. The paper will be followed closely by suitable legislative proposals relating to the achievement of financial balance.

(1) COM(80) 86 final, 11.4.1980

(2) OJ No. C 95, 21.9.1968, p. 41

14. Development of combined transport fits the impartially multi-modal approach stated in the 1973 Communication (1) and continued since. Two relevant measures meriting priority are :

- negotiation with third countries to clear the way for such traffic with them (2) (concurrence in the basis for these negotiations is awaited from one Council member), and
- proposals which the Commission will make this year for further practical action to develop use of combined transport.

15. To enable inland surface transport services, especially between Member States, to respond to users' needs readily, flexibly, economically and efficiently, further practical measures should be taken towards achieving the free functioning of markets for goods services advocated in the Commission's Communication of 1973 (1) and 1975 (3). Reforms which appear necessary for the purpose include :

- freedom for various categories of movement,
- progressive adaptation of Community quotas (as well as taking Community factors into account in fixing bilateral quotas, for which legislation already exists),
- modernisation of regulatory and authorisation arrangements in markets, where they exist, in the interests of technical advance and productivity, and
- improvement of knowledge of the state and trends of demand and supply.

(1) Common transport policy; objectives and programme. E.C. Bulletin suppl. 16/73

(2) COM(75) 188 final, 30.4.1975

(3) OJ No. C 1, 5.1.1976

16. The system of observation of markets (1) is a necessary tool in the action just mentioned (and for the safety net in case of grave disequilibria). Its initial three year experimental period expires at the end of December 1981. The Council will be requested to provide for continuation of this action in good time before then.

17. Other actions needed to avoid or reduce obstacles to ease of intra Community movements include decisions on the Commission's proposals for weights (2) and dimensions of commercial road vehicles, and on technical standards for inland waterways vessels, as well as agreement on common dates for ending summer time (3) (to complete the simplification of all kinds of transport operations, begun by the agreement reached on common starting dates). Ease of transit across countries en route is vital to many long-distance movements. The Commission will shortly present a Communication setting out the present position regarding transit and proposing improvements, which the Council will be invited to discuss in depth. The Commission will also, insofar as resources allow, pursue work to reduce and eliminate unnecessary administrative formalities delaying frontier-crossing.

18. In inland transport, benefits could come from greater cooperation between groups of enterprises, for such purposes as acquisition of material and sharing of technical and marketing facilities (e.g. maintenance, return loads, operating and revenue pools for traffic that could thereby be better served). Such developments could have particular point for the health of inland waterway transport, improving the quality of services offered, through modernisation of material and improvement of managerial decision-making with improved and better shared knowledge.

(1) OJ No. C 1, 5.1.1976

(2) OJ No. C 16, 18.1.1979

(3) OJ No. C 36, 17.2.1976

19. Community action on merchant shipping will need to deal both with safety and with factors influencing economic opportunity for commercial shipping and the carriage of seaborne trade. As regards safety, the Commission seeks adoption by the Council of the proposed Community arrangements for verifying that ships in Member States' ports fulfil international standards (1). On the economic side, priority tasks include pursuit of Community policy towards the code of conduct for liner conferences (2) and features of Community concern in multilateral and bilateral relations with third countries.

20. The Community could contribute towards resolving difficulties encountered in several transport modes stemming from some practices of state trading countries' governments and their enterprises. While, for inland waterway transport, a first step has been taken by adoption of the additional protocol to the revised convention for Rhine navigation, there is a need for follow-up measures of specific practical effect. For road, rail and inland waterway transport, the setting up of a system of consultation regarding dealings and agreements between Member States and third countries will add usefully to what can be done by Community means to deal with objectionable uncommercial practices. In sea transport, pursuit and, if necessary, extension of the monitoring system already in operation will permit the Community to be informed of the impact of uncommercial activities by ships flying state trading country flags and to judge the necessity for and nature of possible remedies.

21. Activity concerning air transport should concentrate on execution of the priority programme adopted by the Council on 12th June 1978 (3). Particular attention will be given to improving scope for interregional air services, developing more flexible procedures for authorisation of regular services, simplification of formalities

(1) COM(80) 360 final, 25.6.1980

(2) OJ No. L 121, 17.5.1979, p. 1

(3) Air transport : a Community approach. E.C. Bulletin, suppl. 5/79, annex 1

(facilitation) and progress regarding tariffs, among Community countries.

22. Appropriate modalities for the application of competition rules to sea and to air transport should be defined during the period.

23. Full and effective application of the existing provisions for social working conditions in road transport will be sought (1). The Commission considers that the balance of the proposals already presented in March 1976 (2) should be dealt with, and that the proposal (3) as amended (4) on social working conditions in inland waterway transport should be adopted. The reasons which originally inspired action in this field remain valid.

24. Given the recognised importance of planned programming ahead of Community action in transport, the Council is invited to adopt the attached draft resolution, containing a list of priorities for its action, year by year, from now until the end of 1983. In the light of events and within the limits of its resources, the Commission will present, in due time, additional proposals necessary.

(1) OJ No. L 77, 29.3.1969, p. 49; modified on several occasions
OJ No. C 73, 17.3.1979, p. 1 (codified version)

(2) OJ No. C 103, 6.5.1976, p. 2; modification OJ No. C 249, 18.10.1977,
p. 6

(3) OJ No. C 259, 12.11.1975, p. 2

(4) OJ No. C 206, 16.8.1979, p. 3

Draft

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

concerning priorities and the timetable for decisions to be taken by the Council in the transport sector during the period up to the end of 1983.

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community ;

Having regard to the draft submitted by the Commission¹ ;

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament (2) of ;

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee (3) of

Whereas on 25 October 1973 (4) the Commission submitted a Communication to the Council concerning the development of the Common Transport Policy which contained a working programme for the years 1974 to 1976 on which the European Parliament gave its opinion on 25 September 1974 (5) and the Economic and Social Committee on 28 March 1974 (6) ;

Whereas on 28 November 1977 (7), following the Council's invitation, the Commission presented it with a working programme including a list of priority actions to be adopted by the Council during the period of 1978-1980, of which the Council took note on December 1977 and of which it declared it would endeavour to take account as far as possible ;

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(2)
(3)
(4) Bulletin of the European Communities ; suppl. 16/73
(5) OJ C 127 , 18.10.1974
(6) OJ C 126, 17.10.1974 and OJ C 286, 15.12.1975
(7) Bulletin of the European Communities No. 11-1977, p. 113

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Whereas the European Parliament in its Resolution of 16 January 1979 (1) invited the Commission to present a programme of activities for the years after 1980 in the form of a draft Council resolution;

Whereas it is useful and appropriate in such a programme to define priority actions and to place the accent in particular on the measures to be adopted in the fields of transport infrastructure, improvement of the economic situation of the railways, the achievement of a more adequate framework permitting the introduction of intra-Community transport services which better meet needs, the development of new actions in the marine transport sector, and the creation of appropriate conditions allowing more efficient airline services to be offered, and on the measures to take account of the interests of transport in the context of relations with non-member countries, as well as a more rational use of energy ;

Whereas this programme should take account of the interests of users in general, of carriers and transport workers and at the same time take account of the public interest;

- approves the list of priorities and the timetable for decisions set out in the Annex which are to be taken during the period up to the end of 1983 and, for this purpose, will examine the Commission's proposals within the appropriate time limit ;
- notes that in its communication the Commission declares that it will, in due time, submit the necessary proposals for accomplishing this programme, insofar as these latter have not yet already been submitted to the Council.

Done at Brussels

By the Council

The President

(1) OJ C 39, 12.2.1979

List of priority matters for decisions on transport
by the Council before the end of successive years up to end 1983

(Items within each period have not been listed with a view to
establishing any particular order between them)

Up to end 1981

- Formation of prices for international transport of goods by rail
- Negotiations with third countries on combined rail/road transport
- First directive on commercial vehicles' tax system
- Regulation on financial support for transport infrastructures of Community interest
- Market observation system on transport of goods by rail, road and inland waterway between Community countries
- Framework for advancing development of combined road/rail transport (second stage)
- Modification of first directive on common rules for road transport to harmonise with corresponding ECMT resolutions
- Access to inland waterway markets: conditions of participation in the transport by inland waterway of the Member States ("genuine link")
- Technical standards for inland waterways goods vessels
- Relations on transport with Austria
- Setting deadlines and conditions for achievement of financial equilibrium by railways
- Monitoring activity of certain third countries in sea transport and application, at need, of counter-measures

- Verifying fulfilment of international safety standards by ships in ports of Community countries
- Bringing Community interests to bear in Member States' relations on shipping with third countries
- Improvement of scope for interregional air services

1982

- New arrangements for road goods tariffs
- Modification of first directive (on roads goods carriage) to "neutralise" the intermediate territory of third states for execution of intra-Community transport arrangements
- Cooperative facilities and other modernising measures for health of inland waterway transport
- Simplification of formalities in air transport (facilitation)
- First steps over tariffs for air services between Community countries
- Community aspects of state aids to sea shipping
- Modalities for application of competition rules to maritime transport
- Participation of operators of certain third countries in Community traffic (inland waterways)

1983

- First outline of transport infrastructure network of Community interest
 - Elimination of obstacles to cooperation among railway enterprises
 - Modernisation of arrangements and improved cooperative facilities in road transport markets improving scope for productivity
 - Driving licences (second phase)
 - Social working conditions in sea transport
 - Improved opportunities for regular air services between Member States
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Other priority matters to be dealt with at appropriate time over the period until end 1983, not specified for a particular year

- Pursuit of action towards health of railways, on the basis of the Commission's memorandum
- Weights and dimensions of commercial road vehicles - decision as soon as possible
- Summer time (common ending date) - decision as soon as possible
- Social working conditions in inland waterway transport, and balance of action on proposals already made on working conditions in road transport
- Annual adaptation of Community quota for road haulage
- Modalities for application of competition rules to air transport.
