



COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT



PRESS RELEASE

5333/93 (Presse 36)

1647th Council meeting

- TRANSPORT -

Brussels, 15 March 1993

President: Mr Helge MORTENSEN,

**Minister for Transport
of the Kingdom of Denmark**

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The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Jan DE BOCK Deputy Permanent Representative

Denmark:

Mr Helge MORTENSEN Minister for Transport
Mr Kurt LYKSTOFT State Secretary for Transport

Germany:

Mr Günter KRAUSE Federal Minister for Transport

Greece:

Mr Theodoros ANAGNOSTOPOULOS Minister for Transport
Mr Alexandros PAPADOGONAS Minister for Merchant Shipping

Spain:

Mr Manuel PANADERO Secretary-General at the Ministry of Transport

France:

Mr Jean-Louis BIANCO Minister for Transport
Mr Charles JOSSELIN State Secretary for Maritime Affairs

Ireland:

Mr Brian COWEN Minister for Transport
Mr Gerry O'SULLIVAN Minister of State, Department of Transport

Italy:

Mr Giancarlo TESINI Minister for Transport

Luxembourg:

Mr Robert GOEBBELS Minister for Transport

Netherlands:

Mrs Hanja MAIJ-WEGGEN Minister for Transport and Public Works

Portugal:

Mr Jorge ANTAS State Secretary for Transport

United Kingdom:

Mr John MacGREGOR Secretary of State for Transport
The Earl of Caithness Minister of State, Department of Transport

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For the Commission:

Mr Abel MATUTES Member

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT POLICY

The Council held an initial exchange of views on the Commission's white paper on the future development of the common transport policy.

The Commission is considering what measures are needed to ensure the mobility of Community citizens and goods under optimum conditions throughout the Community, without jeopardizing their safety, damaging the environment or bringing into question achievements in the social field.

On the basis of an analysis of the current situation and trends in the sector, the white paper provides for a gradual replacement of all existing modal policies by a global approach aimed at optimizing the transport system by evening out the differences between modes of transport and creating trans-European networks.

This approach concerns all modes of transport, their effects, their shortcomings and ways of correcting them by implementing a series of economic, fiscal, technical, research and other measures.

The white paper emphasizes that users will have to bear not only the costs of using transport infrastructures but also the external costs such as those connected with the environment, safety or social protection. It also proposes a series of priorities for the common transport policy in the external relations sphere.

During the exchange of views, delegations expressed a broadly favourable attitude to the Commission's approach.

The Permanent Representatives Committee was instructed to continue examining the communication so that the Council could take a decision on the matter at its June meeting.

AIR TRANSPORT**- Air transport relations with third countries - the Council conclusions****"The Council:**

- has proceeded to a first general debate on the Commission's communication on air transport relations with third countries, which includes an amended proposal (COM(92) 434 final, p. 31) on a consultation and authorization procedure for agreements concerning aviation relations between Member States and third countries;
- recalls that Council legislation on relations with third countries in the field of aviation has constantly been based on Article 84(2) of the Treaty, which constitutes the proper basis for an operational development of an external aviation policy;
- recalls the orientations expressed at the informal meeting of Transport Ministers on 5 and 6 July 1991, in Rotterdam, concerning external action by the Community in the air transport sector;
- believes that the complex problems concerning external relations must be approached in a pragmatic way, within the framework of a coherent policy based on guidelines to be established;
- agrees that rules concerning procedure to be used in relations with third countries must gradually be established, in the light of the experience gained;
- recognizes the need to take due account of existing obligations under the Treaty including the third aviation package (OJ No L 240 of 24.8.1992) when Member States are conducting bilateral negotiations with third countries;
- stresses, having in mind the rights and obligations of Member States arising out of these agreements, the need not to contest the validity of existing bilateral Air Services Agreements;
- agrees that Member States, being informed about other Member States' interests at their initiative, shall remain fully responsible for their relations with third countries in the field of aviation unless and until action has been taken by the Council;
- stresses that negotiations with third countries should be conducted at Community level when the Council has agreed that there is a clearly defined common interest among Member States and when at the same time a thorough analysis has shown that in such cases there can realistically be reached a better result for all Member States concerned

with negotiations at Community level compared to bilateral negotiations conducted by Member States;

- emphasizes in this context the importance that such Community negotiations shall be individually authorized by the Council;
- agrees that further work on external relations in the fields of aviation shall be based on the following guidelines:
 - (a) to pursue work to prepare for decisions in order to set up effective procedures on relations with third countries on the basis of the abovementioned considerations and the existing rules in Council Decision 80/50;
 - (b) to convene in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Council a Group meeting regularly, composed of representatives from Member States and the Commission, with the purpose of creating an appropriation framework for the handling of external relations in the aviation sector;
 - (c) to use this Group i.a.
 - to exchange information on a mandatory basis and to consult each other on relations with third countries, provided commercial confidentiality is duly respected;
 - to study areas of potential conflict between Community law and bilateral agreements as well as of potential conflict of interests between Member States and to consider any appropriate approach;
 - to identify areas of common interest for Member States with a view to having, on a case by case basis, Community negotiations authorized by the Council."
- Air traffic management equipment and systems

The Council held a policy debate on the proposal for a Directive on the definition and use of compatible technical and operating specifications for the procurement of air traffic management equipment and systems.

The proposal is aimed at gradually harmonizing and at integrating in the short term the air traffic management equipment of the twelve Member States by making it mandatory for Member States to introduce technical specifications developed by EUROCONTROL, in particular for

- communication systems;
- navigation systems;

- surveillance systems,
- systems providing automated assistance to air traffic control.

This initiative is the start of a series of measures to alleviate congestion in Community air space.

It is designed to make air traffic control systems compatible and should bring about an improvement in capacity and safety and hence a reduction in the time lost by civil aircraft and passengers.

Discussion in the Council indicated a generally favourable view of the proposal.

The Council accordingly instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to reconsider the matter once Parliament had delivered its Opinion, so that the Directive could be adopted as soon as possible.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

- Action programme in the field of transport infrastructure

The Council held an exchange of views on the draft Regulation for an action programme in the field of transport infrastructure with a view to the completion of an integrated transport market.

The discussion revealed that the Council was generally in favour of the content of the Regulation. As the European Parliament had requested application of the conciliation procedure, the Regulation would be formally adopted at a later date.

The aim of the Regulation is to extend Regulation No 3359/90 for a two-year transitional period (1993-1994), with certain amendments concerning the objectives and infrastructure

projects, pending more comprehensive measures to be taken later with regard to trans-European networks in the context of the Treaty on European Union.

The Regulation contains a clause stipulating that it will cease to apply if the Council adopts a new instrument on trans-European networks before the date of its expiry.

An amount of ECU 325 million is estimated to be necessary to implement the programme.

Community contributions would take the form either of financial support through loans or of financial support under other financial instruments.

The Regulation determines the conditions for conferral of the declaration of European interest which is due to be issued by the Commission for each project eligible for Community financial aid following consultation with the Member States directly affected.

In this connection the text lays down that Community action will concern any study covering land transport infrastructure and the following major projects:

- = contribution to the high-speed rail network;
 - . links: Paris-London-Brussels-Amsterdam-Cologne and connecting lines to other Member States;
 - . links:
 - (a) Madrid-Barcelona-Lyons-Turin-Milan-Venice and from there to Tarvisio and Trieste;
 - (b) Oporto-Lisbon-Madrid;
- = the Alpine transit route (Brenner route);
- = contribution to the combined transport network of Community interest;
- = the trans-Pyrenean road links;

= the Scanlink;

= the strengthening of land communications within and with Greece, Ireland and Portugal.

- Outline plans for networks

The Council held an exchange of views on the proposals for Council Decisions concerning the creation of outline plans for trans-European networks in the road, combined transport and inland waterway sectors.

The initiative forms part of the completion of the single market and is the Community's contribution to the establishment and development of trans-European networks, as provided for in the Treaty on European Union.

The purpose of Community action in this sphere is to promote the interconnection and interoperability of national networks and access to such networks, bearing in mind the need to link island, landlocked and peripheral regions with the central regions of the Community.

The outline plans are seen as the principal means of setting up the trans-European networks. They identify the projects of Community interest which may qualify for Community financial support. They are also one of the factors drawing the Cohesion Fund into the financing of trans-European networks in connection with transport infrastructure.

At the close of the discussion the Council emphasised the importance of the outline plans and expressed a favourable view of the work already done in this respect. It instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine the European Parliament's Opinion and to reconsider the outstanding matters with a view to adoption of the decisions as soon as possible.

LAND TRANSPORT**- Taxation of road transport**

Following an in-depth discussion exploring the scope for reaching a compromise on the harmonization of road transport taxation, the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue discussing the matter in preparation for the June Council meeting.

- Goods cabotage by road

The Council held an exchange of views on the question of liberalizing goods cabotage by road in connection with the discussion on the harmonization of transport taxation.

- EEC/Slovenia Agreement in the field of transport

The Council decided to sign, subject to conclusion at a later date, the Agreement between the Community and the Republic of Slovenia in the field of transport. This instrument is accompanied by a Financial Protocol in the framework of the economic and commercial co-operation agreement between the Community and Slovenia. In theory all three instruments are to be signed at the same time.

The aim of the Agreement in the field of transport is to promote co-operation between the two sides, particularly with regard to transit traffic, and to ensure for this purpose that transport between and through the territories of the Contracting Parties is developed in a co-ordinated manner.

The scope of co-operation covers transport, in particular road, rail and combined transport, and the relevant infrastructure. It concerns in particular:

- = transport infrastructure in the territory of one or other party to the extent necessary to achieve the objective of the agreement;
 - = market access, on a reciprocal basis, in the field of road transport;
 - = essential legal and administrative supporting measures including commercial, taxation, social and technical measures;
 - = co-operation in developing a transport system which meets environmental needs;
 - = a regular exchange of information on the development of the transport policies of both parties, with particular regard to transport infrastructure.
- Relations with third countries in connection with the carriage of goods and passengers by road

The Council took note of the presentation by the Commission of a recommendation for a Decision on the opening of negotiations between the Community and certain third countries concerning the carriage of goods and passengers by road.

The recommendation is intended to authorize the Commission to open negotiations for the conclusion of one or more transport agreements with certain third countries.

The aim is to introduce common arrangements outside the Community with a view, in particular, to establishing freedom to provide road transport services between the Community and various third countries.

- Transport of dangerous substances

Following discussion of a memorandum from the French delegation on improving safety in the transport of dangerous substances at Community level, the Council emphasized the importance attributed to the promotion of safety in this sector and asked the Commission to submit proposals on the matter as soon as possible.

MARITIME TRANSPORT

The Council took note of the presentation by the Commission of a communication on a common policy on safe seas.

The communication reviews the main causes of accidents at sea with a view to identifying the areas in which urgent action is needed at international, Community, national, regional or local level.

It suggests increasing safety and preventing pollution of the sea by banning from Community waters companies, vessels and crews which do not meet the required standards, irrespective of the flag they are operating under.

The action programme contained in the communication consists of a set of measures intended to:

- harmonize implementation of existing international rules in the Community;
- tighten control of vessels by port States i.e. ensure uniform enforcement by coastal States of the international rules and standards in respect of vessels of all flags when they are operating in Community waters;
- promote coherent and harmonized development of navigational aids and traffic surveillance infrastructure bringing maritime safety into the electronic age, with specific attention

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being given to traffic measures in environmentally sensitive areas;

- support international organizations enabling them to strengthen their primary role in international standard-setting.

The text also provides for measures designed to contain the problem of human error, which is still the main cause of accidents. In the Commission's view, an intensive and re-oriented research programme could also contribute to greater maritime safety.

Following an exchange of views the Council expressed satisfaction at the quality of the Commission communication and instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to expedite this matter so that this whole issue could be given fresh impetus in June, as had been agreed at the joint Environment/Transport Council meeting on 25 January 1993.

