

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

4936/88 (Presse 30) 433

1227th meeting of the Council

- Transport -

Brussels, 14 March 1988

President: Mr Jürgen WARNKE

Federal Minister for Transport
of the Federal Republic of Germany

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

Belgium:

Mr Herman de CROO
Minister for Transport
and Foreign Trade

Denmark:

Mr F. Noer CHRISTENSEN
Minister for Transport and
Public Works

Mr Joergen HALCK
State Secretary,
Ministry of Public Works

Germany:

Mr Jürgen WARNKE
Federal Minister for Transport

Mr Wilhelm KNITTEL
State Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Transport

Greece:

Mr Costas BADOUVAS
Minister for Transport and
Communications

Spain:

Mr Abel Ramon CABALLERO
ALVAREZ
Minister for Transport,
Tourism and Communications

France:

Mr Jacques DOUFFIAGUES
Minister attached to the Minister
for Infrastructure, Housing,
Town and Country Planning and
Transport with responsibility
for Transport

14.III.88

Ireland:

Mr John WILSON Minister for Tourism and Transport

Italy:

Mr Calogero MANNINO Minister for Transport

Luxembourg:

Mr Thierry STOLL Deputy Permanent Representative

Netherlands:

Mr Ch. R. VAN BEUGE Deputy Permanent Representative

Portugal:

Mr Oliveira MARTINS Minister for Public Works,
Transport and Communications

United_Kingdom:

Mr Paul CHANNON Minister for Transport

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For_the_Commission:

Mr Stanley CLINTON DAVIS Member

ACCESS TO THE MARKET FOR THE CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY ROAD

The Council made a detailed examination of the proposal on access to the market for the carriage of goods by road on the basis of a compromise proposal from the Presidency.

Following the discussions, the President recorded the agreement of the great majority of delegations. He then asked the Commission to consider whether it could go along with the Presidency's proposal so that the Council could act.

WIDTH OF REFRIGERATED VEHICLES

The Council reached agreement on an amendment to Directive 85/3/EEC on the weights and dimensions of certain road vehicles, viz. refrigerated vehicles.

The aim of this amendment is to allow a derogation from the maximum permissible width of 2,50 metres laid down by Directive 85/3/EEC and permit refrigerated vehicles to have a width of up to 2,60 metres, so as to enable two pallets of standard international dimensions to be accommodated side by side in vehicles with lateral insulated walls not less than 45 millimetres thick.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to finalize the texts so that the Directive could be adopted as soon as possible.

FIXING OF RATES FOR THE CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY ROAD

Pending receipt of the European Parliament's Opinion, the Council recorded a favourable position on the part of most Member States to the proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 3568/83 on the fixing of rates for the carriage of goods by road.

It asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to finish examining this proposal as soon as the European Parliament's Opinion was known.

UNIFORM IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY SOCIAL LEGISLATION IN THE CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY ROAD

The Council took note of the Commission's preliminary draft for the adoption of a Directive on the uniform implementation of Regulation (EEC) No 3820/85 on the harmonization of certain social legislation relating to road transport and Council Regulation (EEC) No 3821/85 on recording equipment in road transport. It requested the Permanent Representatives Committee to expedite its discussions on this matter so as to enable the Council to adopt a Directive on the uniform implementation of Community social legislation in June 1988.

It also requested the Commission to submit to it without delay a situation report comparing Community social legislation with the AETR provisions and the related problems of supervision. The Council also requested the Commission to initiate exploratory talks on the adaptation of the AETR to Community social legislation and to submit a draft of a suitable mandate to the Council by its June meeting.

CHARGING OF TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS TO HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES

The Council held a general exchange of views on the proposal for a Council Directive on the charging of transport infrastructure costs to heavy goods vehicles.

In concluding its discussions, the Council asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to expedite examination of the Commission proposal so that the Council could discuss it in greater depth at its next meeting in June.

WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS

The Council took note of progress to date with proceedings on the provisions concerning, on the one hand, the weight of certain categories of heavy goods vehicle intended for the transport of goods and, on the other, the weights and dimensions of coaches and buses.

It asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to expedite proceedings so as to allow the Council to reach a decision on the dossier at its meeting in June 1988.

COMMISSION REPORTS

The Council took note of a set of Commission reports on:

- the negotiations between the EEC and transit countries (interim report on negotiations with Austria, Switzerland and Yugoslavia);

- the medium-term transport infrastructure programme.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine the new Commission proposal as soon as it was received, in the light of delegations' comments;

- air transport

= proceedings of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) in the field of market access and scheduled inter-regional services;

= amendment of the Directive concerning the authorization of scheduled inter-regional air services;

- the conditions for admission to the occupation of road haulier.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine the new Commission proposal as soon as it was received, in the light of delegations' comments.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Control of transfrontier movements of hazardous waste

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, a Decision authorizing the Commission on behalf of the Community, to negotiate within the OECD an International Agreement on the Control of Transfrontier Movements of Hazardous Wastes.

The draft International Agreement provides in particular for a series of identification, notification, authorization and accompanying procedures without which all imports, transit journeys or exports of hazardous wastes would be prohibited.

Fisheries

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, Regulations

- opening, allocating and providing for the administration of Community tariff quotas for certain fishery products;
- opening and providing for the administration of Community tariffs for certain fishery products;
- opening, allocating and providing for the administration of a Community tariff quota for certain eels (1 July 1988 - 30 June 1989).

(See Press Release 4738/88 Presse 21, page 4).

ECSC

The Council gave the consultation requested by the Commission on the basis of a Commission memorandum on the financial aids granted by the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Belgium and the United Kingdom to the coal industry in 1986; it agreed with the Commission's conclusions that these aids were compatible with Decision 528/76/ECSC and with the proper functioning of the common market.

Brussels, 11 March 1988

NOTE BIO (88) 89 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC: AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE PORTE-PAROLE

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RENDEZ-VOUS DE MIDI - 11.3.88

Preparation Transport Council - 14.3.88 (M. Berendt)

The emphasis of this Council will be on road transport. Ministers will continue their negotiations on Commission proposals for the elimination of quantitative restrictions on road transport as from 1992, coupled with a 40 per cent annual increase in the number of Community quotas. They will also be able to give their first reaction to recent Commission proposals on the taxation of trucks and coaches, amendments to the drivers' hours regulations and access to the profession of road haulier.

The Commission's views on the need to phase out bilateral quotas on road transport from 1992 have been explained fully in our Memo 30/88, which shows the discriminatory nature of these national quantitative restrictions and the way in which they work. The memo also sets out the numbers of journey licences allocated by each member state in the bilateral negotiations.

In the December meetings of the Council, an attempt to reach a decision on the Commission proposals by use of a qualified majority was blocked by three member states, Germany, France and Italy. At next week's meeting the Presidency may well propose a simple 40 per cent increase in Community quotas for two or three years without any legal commitment to removing restrictions in 1992. This is not acceptable to the Commission and a unanimous decision of the Council would be necessary for such a proposal to be adopted.

The proposals for the taxation of vehicles were adopted by the Commission at the end of 1987. Their main purpose is to ensure that heavy goods vehicles meet some of the costs of the roads which they are using outside their country of origin, so replacing the principle of nationality with the principle of territoriality. They would also minimise the substantial differences which currently exist in heavy vehicle tax rates in different member countries.

The Commission is proposing a transitional measure under which the basis of calculation of tax rates would be harmonised as from 1990. Meantime the Commission would make proposals for a long-term system such as a Community vignette as the simplest possibility and electronic charging as the most sophisticated.

Most member states have reserved their position on these proposals.

The Council will also be discussing proposals concerning the fixing of rates for the carriage of goods by road. A Community regulation which expires at the end of 1988 allows member states to fix a forchette rate for road haulage charges. France, the Netherlands and the UK wish to see all rates fixed under free market conditions, but the

Commission is proposing a one year renewal of the regulation while discussions continue on the establishment of a single market in road transport. Although the reference rates are not binding on member states, Germany uses them to fix tariffs in both internal and intra-Community trade.

A qualified majority vote is expected to allow adoption of Commission proposals for fixing the width of refrigerated vehicles travelling between member countries. A decision is needed because the existing Community standards for lorry dimensions provide for 2.5 mètres maximum width, whereas these specialist vehicles or containers are frequently wider. The Commission proposes 2.6 metres.

Matériel distribué

- IP 140 La Commission autorise ARBED à acquérir la totalité du capital de Flamm-Stahl GmbH
- IP 141 La Commission autorise le contrôle en commun de Dortmunder Shredder GmbH par Eisen und Metall AG, Hznz R. GmbH et Hoesch R. GmbH
- IP 142 La Commission autorise Hoogovens BV à acquérir 50% du capital-actions de Thumann S. Service GmbH et de Hille & Müller KG
- IP 143 La Commission autorise United Engineering Steels Ltd. à acquérir les activités de FH Lloyd & Co.
- IP 144 Intervention de M. Cheysson devant le PE
- IP 125 Nouvelle aide d'urgence de 42 MECU à l'Éthiopie.
- MEMO 38 Incompatibilité des aides d'état à l'industrie du verre plat
- MEMO 39 Préparation Conseil Transports
- Discours de M. Sutherland "The new proposals of the Commission on concentration control".

Regards,


C.D. Ehlermann

Brussels, 15 March

NOTE BIO (88) 89 (suite 1) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC: AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE PORTE-PAROLE

TRANSPORT COUNCIL March 14 1988 (M.F.Berendt)

Although there was considerable progress in yesterday's Transport Council, the Presidency's proposals for the liberalisation of the Community's road transport market did not contain the legal commitment to the abolition of quantitative restrictions which the Commission was demanding and the Council ended without agreement.

In the discussions on a first compromise proposal, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the UK, Belgium and Denmark refused to agree to the text put forward. After further modifications to the proposal, providing more generous arrangements for the bilateral quotas, only the British minister opposed the compromise. This was still enough to deny the Presidency the unanimous agreement necessary in the absence of Commission support.

The Presidency's final compromise proposal provided that the Council would adopt provisions no later than October 1 1992 for implementing rules 'based on qualitative criteria' as from January 1 1993 governing access to the market. All quotas would be abolished 'accordingly' from that moment. In the view of the Commission this formula does not represent a legal commitment to the abolition of quotas, since it requires a further decision of the Council before 1993.

The increase in the numbers of bilateral licences which would result from the Presidency compromise would make it all the more essential, in the view of the Commission, to have a formal commitment to abolishing quotas in 1992.

As anticipated, the Presidency also proposed 40 per cent increases in the Community quotas for 1988 and 1989.

The issue of market access is now expected to be taken by the Council at its June session.

Among the other issues discussed at the Council were the Commission proposals for a new system of heavy vehicle taxation in the Community which would reflect the use made by lorries of roads in member states other than the country of registration. Ministers were cautious in taking a firm position on this, several delegations conscious of finance ministers' interest in this matter. The new Commission proposals for more consistent implementation of the social regulations received a sympathetic response; these will also be on the table at the June Council.

All member countries except Denmark were able to accept a decision setting the maximum width of refrigerated lorries at 2.6 metres. This will go to a further Council for formal adoption.

Regards, 
G. ANOUIL