

European Communities

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Document 1-996/81

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Transport  
on the common transport policy

Rapporteur : Mr A. Carossino

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On 5 November 1979 Mr Baudis tabled a motion for resolution on transport policy (Doc. 1-462/79), which was on the same day referred to the Committee on Transport.

On 1 February 1980 the Committee on Transport appointed Mr Carossino rapporteur.

On 29 October 1981 Mr Hoffmann and others tabled a motion for resolution (Doc. 1-672/81) on which a report has been drawn up.

The subject of the report was considered on 15 October 1980, 25 September, 27 October and 3 December 1981. On 29 January 1982 the motion for a resolution was adopted with one vote against and two abstentions.

Took part in the vote: Mr Seefeld, chairman; Mr Carossino, vice-chairman and rapporteur; Mr Albers, Mrs von Alemann, Mr Baudis, Mr Bonaccini (deputizing for Mr Cardia), Mr Cottrell, Mr Gabert, Mr Gendebien (deputizing for Mr Skovmand), Lord Harmar-Nicholls, Mr Janassen van Raay (deputizing for Mr Hoffmann), Mr Key, Mr Klinkenborg, Mr Martin, Mr Moorhouse and Mr Nikolaou (deputizing for Mr Ripa di Meana)

## C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
A. MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION .....	5
B. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT .....	7
I. <u>The importance of transport in modern industrial society</u> .....	9
1. The importance of the transport sector in quantitative terms .....	10
2. The transport system as a condition of improved productivity .....	11
3. The energy factor .....	12
4. Transport and the economic crisis .....	13
II. <u>The importance of transport policy for the operation of the Common Market</u> .....	14
1. Free movement of transport across frontiers .....	14
2. Equitable charging of transport costs to users .....	15
III. <u>The importance of the transport system for Community integration</u> .....	18
1. Transport policy and the integration of all the Community regions .....	18
2. Transport policy and the accession of Greece, Portugal and Spain to the Community .....	19
IV. <u>Present state of the common transport policy</u> .....	21
1. The aims of the common transport policy .....	21
2. The Council's failure to act .....	23
3. The Commission's failure to act .....	25
V. <u>How to break the stalemate</u> .....	27
1. Modification of the decision-making procedures in the Council of Ministers .....	27
2. Closer consultation by the Council and the Commission with the directly-elected Parliament .....	28
3. Closer consultation with the national Parliaments .....	30
4. Mobilizing public opinion and overcoming the resistance of sectional interests .....	30
5. The problem of resources and of the reform of the Community budget .....	32
6. Need to increase staff dealing with transport policy .....	33
VI. <u>Further proposals for a systematic transport policy</u> .....	33
1. Abandon the policy of small steps .....	34
2. The Commission's triennial plan and its limitations .....	34
3. Need for further proposals in view of the changed situation in the Community .....	36
4. The role of infrastructures .....	36

	<u>Page</u>
5. Removing the imbalance between liberalization and harmonization .....	37
6. Cooperation among railways .....	38
7. Road transport .....	39
8. Inland waterway vessels .....	40
9. Air transport .....	40
10. Maritime transport and ports .....	41
VII. <u>Proceedings against the Council and the Commission for failure to act</u> .....	42
- <u>Conclusions</u> .....	43
- Annex I: Proposals submitted by the Commission to the Council (before the Council but not yet adopted).	45
- Annex II: Legal and procedural questions relating to proceedings against the Council and the Commission for failure to act .....	49
- Annex III: Motion for a resolution tabled by Mr BAUDIS on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure on transport policy .....	60



A.

The Committee on Transport hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the common transport policy

The European Parliament

- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Baudis (Doc. 1-462/79),
  - referring to Mr Seefeld's report on 'the present state and progress of the common transport policy' (Doc. 512/78) and to the opinion of the Legal Affairs Committee annexed thereto,
  - mindful of the scant progress made in the area of the common transport policy,
  - having regard to the report drawn up by Mr Carossino on behalf of the Committee on Transport (Doc. 1-996/81),
1. Reaffirms yet again that a common transport policy should constitute one of the foundations of the European Communities;
  2. Deplores the fact that Articles 74-84 of the EEC Treaty have still not been fully implemented;
  3. Insists on the danger inherent in the fact that the lack of a common transport policy must inevitably result in obstructing further advances in building the Community, and in the long run will even jeopardize the achievements already attained;
  4. Urges the council to take without delay positive decisions on the many important Commission proposals which have received a favourable parliamentary opinion;
  5. Invites the Commission to implement the common transport policy provided for under Title 4 of the EEC Treaty and, with this aim in view, requests the Commission to take action by the end of 1982 to revise, complete and extend until 1984 the programme for priority action in all branches of the transport sector presented in October 1980 for the period 1981-1983, and to submit to the Council the relevant formal proposals at the appropriate time;
  6. Calls upon the Commission, in drawing up this programme, to take account of the different circumstances prevailing in the ten Member States, but also to make every effort to do whatever is necessary to develop the Community, maintain the Common Market and fulfil the principles set out in Article 75(3) of the Treaty establishing the EEC;
  7. Calls on the Commission to include in the draft Community budget the necessary appropriations for the measures contained in this programme;

8. Requests the Council to forego the systematic use of the principle of unanimity, except for decisions in those cases for which Article 75(3) specifically provides; further requests the Council, whenever it intends exceptionally to restore this procedure, to state its reasons in advance when consulting Parliament;
9. Invites the Council to define without further delay the framework for a common transport policy as provided for under Article 74, and the transport system referred to in Article 75(3), and to take a decision on the Commission proposals upon which Parliament has already delivered an opinion;
10. Instructs its Committee on Transport to follow progress on transport policy and keep the actions of the Commission and the Council under review; decides to prepare to open the procedure for infringement against the Council as laid down in Article 175 of the Treaty for the reasons stated in the motion for resolution<sup>1</sup> tabled by Mr Hoffmann;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution and the report on which it is based to the Council and the Commission and, for information, to the Court of Justice of the European Communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 1-672/81



EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. A very large majority of members of the European Parliament's Committee on Transport, who represent all the political groups, are thoroughly dissatisfied with the present state of the European Community's common transport policy.
2. Indeed, the Committee on Transport is not prepared to admit that a common transport policy exists at this time.
3. Community legislation in the matter so far has been a disjointed and unsystematic jumble of isolated measures, and in no way can it be claimed that the transport sector operates within the framework of a common transport policy.
4. Studies by the Committee on Transport reveal that the Council of Transport Ministers has so far predominantly functioned as an instrument used by the Member States to defend their own traditional transport systems against the Commission's proposals and aims and that the most they will reluctantly accept within that body are such measures as cannot be avoided and will require the minimum of adjustment in the national legislations.
5. The Council is not fulfilling the duty imposed on it by the Treaties which, in the words of Article 3(e) of the EEC Treaty is 'the adoption of a common policy in the sphere of transport'. The Council should be reminded by the European Parliament of this obligation.
6. As for the Commission, after more than two decades of largely fruitless efforts, it has resigned itself to a policy of 'small steps', which - euphemistic labels such as 'pragmatism' or 'realism' notwithstanding - merely consists in submitting to the Council only those proposals which are felt in advance to have some prospect of acceptance. It follows from this that the Commission does not oblige the Council to face up fully to its responsibilities. The consequences of such a policy are particularly grave for Parliament, since it seriously undermines its function of control vis-à-vis the Council: in the absence of proposals emanating from the Commission, Parliament cannot call the Council to account for rejecting any such proposals.
7. In the present report the Committee on Transport proposes to put forward some suggestions for resolving this deadlock.

8. Ever since the Community was created in 1958, in fact since 1957, the representatives of the peoples of Europe have repeatedly stressed the importance of this sector of European policy and called for legislation that would be really systematic.
9. The basic reports on the subject which have been tabled in the European Parliament are by no means outdated even today, and your rapporteur will be making express reference to the following among them:
- the 1957 Kapteyn report, Doc. 6/1957-58  
(adopted by what was then the Common Assembly of the ECSC)
  - the 1961 Kapteyn report, Doc. 106/1961-62
  - the 1961 Müller-Hermann report, Doc. 18/1962-63
  - the 1974 Mursch report, Doc. 215/74
  - the 1979 Seefeld report, Doc. 512/78.
10. In calling the reader's attention to these documents your rapporteur will seek to avoid repetition of what is contained in them and will confine himself to quoting only as much as is necessary to make clear that Parliament, now emerged from direct elections, maintains in its present composition the views of its predecessors.
- (a) There is surely a profound significance in the fact that whereas the elected representatives of the peoples of the European Community insistently demand a common transport policy, as expressly envisaged in the Treaties, the Commissioners in charge proceed with extreme caution, while in the Council of Ministers serious political differences have so far prevented any substantial agreement on the main lines of a transport policy.
- (b) In the face of these delays and defaults by the Commission and Council in the performance of their functions, the European Parliament - without in any way seeking to arrogate these to itself - has the right and the duty, in fulfilling its proper role of stimulant and proponent, to take the initiative towards resolving what has become an intolerable situation.
- (c) Its resolve to do so has been strengthened by economic developments in the Community which make it even more urgent to adopt a common transport policy comprehending all the means of transport.

11. The first three sections of the present report will therefore stress clearly once again the vital role played by transport.

I. The importance of transport in modern industrial society

12. One of the factors constituting the particular strength of the European continent is its highly efficient and densely reticulated transport system. But, beyond this, the future of Europe in economic terms will depend on its ability to maintain this transport system permanently at the highest level of efficiency and rationalization.

13. We should bear in mind that the transport sector differs in one important particular from other economic sectors: in industry, all the factors of production can be imported - raw materials, energy, machinery, labour, technology; even in agriculture, all the factors of production, with the obvious exception of land itself, can be imported; and if the land is insufficient, it is always possible to bring all the agricultural produce from outside. In the transport sector, on the other hand, there is little that can be imported from outside. A modern industrial state needs its own transport system to be able to function.

14. Transport, in its double aspect, i.e. as an industry (producing means of transport that create new demand ) and as a service (providing a link between producers and consumers) represents an essential department of the overall economic process.

A modern transport policy, therefore, must first of all be integrated within the overall economic context and must, moreover, be based on principles which apply to every mode of transport.

1. The importance of the transport sector in quantitative terms

15. In quantitative terms alone<sup>1</sup> the need for a European transport policy is abundantly clear.
16. In 1979 the percentage of the active population employed in the transport sector in the Member States of the Community of the Nine amounted to between 5.5% and 7.7%, or 6.2% for the Community as a whole. It can thus be estimated that of the 260 million or so inhabitants of the Community of the Nine, some 16.6 million directly depend on the transport sector for their livelihood.
17. The transport sector accounts for between 5.1% and 9% of the GNP (at market prices):

France	5.1	Ireland	6.9
Luxembourg	5.2	Greece	7.1
Italy	5.5	Belgium	7.5
Federal Republic of Germany	5.8	United Kingdom	8.2
Netherlands	6.8	Denmark	8.3

These figures, which are for 1975, are similar to those for 1979.

18. In external trade, for the Community of the Nine in 1977 the transport sector accounted for equal shares of revenue and expenditure, 6.5% and 6.2% respectively and, in 1979, 6.2% and 5.5%. These overall figures conceal, however, very considerable differences from country to country, as the following table, based on data for 1977 shows:

Country	Revenue from transport services as % of overall revenue from exports of goods and services		Expenditure on transport services as % of overall expenditure on goods and services	
	1977	1979	1977	1979
Federal Republic of Germany	4.1	4.2	4.8	2.7
France	6.9	5.8	7.1	6.1
Italy	5.0	4.7	6.4	6.3
Netherlands	8.0	9.9	4.4	7.4
Belgium/Luxembourg	5.7	5.4	5.1	4.7
United Kingdom	9.8	8.9	9.6	8.4
Ireland	5.0	-	1.8	-
Denmark	11.9	11.4	7.5	7.5
Greece	13.6	10.1	5.3	4.8

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, data appearing in the remainder of the text have been drawn from Statistical Yearbook - Transport, Communications, Tourism, Luxembourg 1981

19. In 1979 the revenues of Community countries of the Nine from the export of transport services amounted overall to 35,212 million EUA and expenditure on the importation of transport services to 30,919 million EUA. Greece's revenues in 1979 were 566 million and expenditure 415 million EUA.

2. The transport system as a condition of improved productivity

20. The purely quantitative description in the preceding section gives an incomplete view of the importance of the transport system for our general economy and indeed for our lives in a modern industrial society. As pointed out earlier, transport is a system on which other systems depend.

21. On the efficiency of the transport sector depends the degree of specialization and of industrial division of labour which a modern economy can attain. It is the efficiency of the transport sector which determines whether a country can make the best possible use of its mineral and all other natural resources. On the degree of efficiency of the transport sector depends the nature and quantity of what the country can export.

22. By whatever means Europe succeeds in maintaining its position in a world where competition is growing, its success will depend on the efficiency of its transport economies and on the density of its communications network.

23. Whether the European Community will be able to contribute to the maintenance of Europe's role as a first-class economic power, to preserving our competitiveness on the world markets, and to the maintenance of our living standards, will depend in no small measure on its ability to create a rational transport system unhampered by obstacles at the national frontiers intersecting our continent. Only if the transport system is freed of all the obstacles at the frontiers and unhindered by the many difficulties and distortions stemming from divergences in the Member States' legislations and policies, can we have a large Common Market, and only then will its operation be satisfactory.

### 3. The energy factor

24. In the midst of the present energy crisis it would be a serious error to overlook the importance of the transport sector in the sphere of energy policy.
25. Out of the 750.7 million toe used up by the Community of the Nine in energy consumption in 1977, 18.0% went to the transport sector. In 1979 the percentage was 18.1% of 812 million toe. There is certainly no evidence of a downward trend. Such a substantial share of the total has naturally led to appeals from several quarters for energy saving in transport. The European Parliament's Committee on Transport itself took initiatives to this effect. But in view of the totally conflicting views being expressed as to the possibility of energy saving in this sector, and of the lively debate on the relative energy requirements of different modes of transport, the committee decided first of all to hold a hearing on the subject, the results of which have been presented by Mr Albers in an exhaustive report<sup>1</sup>.
26. It can nevertheless be said already at this point that transport of every type involves considerable energy consumption and that, unfortunately, ways of saving energy conflict with other aims. For instance, engines which are less noisy and emit fewer noxious exhausts, consume more fuel, so that noise abatement and efforts to prevent atmospheric pollution conflict to some extent with the desire to save energy.
27. One of the results of the hearing of experts is of especial importance for the purposes of the present report: it is that any energy savings that can be obtained by technical improvement of existing means of transport and even from new technologies, are insignificant compared with the substantial savings that would derive from improved organization of the transport sector and the regulation of traffic flow. Thus, improvements to a motor can produce an energy saving of perhaps 10-15%; but if an empty run can be avoided, the saving is 100%.
28. Increased energy costs, therefore, raise the issue not only of technology, but also, and perhaps to a greater extent, of transport policy.
29. The Community and each individual European country will have to persuade users to save energy primarily by obliging those who consume energy to pay its full price.
30. In addition to this, however, the European Community has another and specific task to perform: it is to make a serious contribution to energy saving by speeding up the establishment of free movement across frontiers and preventing delays at crossing point, and by improving the organization of transport so as to eliminate unnecessary journeys and empty runs.

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<sup>1</sup> Report drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Transport on ways and means of effecting energy savings in the transport sector (Doc. 1-249/81 - rapporteur: Mr W. Albers). See OJ C 287 of 9.11.1981 for the resolution adopted by Parliament on the basis of this report.

#### 4. Transport and the economic crisis

31. The current economic crisis can be described in various terms. It is experienced as inflation, as sluggish investments, as rising costs, as reduced competitiveness, as monetary instability - all factors which in recent years have contributed to the slowing down of the process of economic growth.

In a Community perspective we also have to consider the deeper causes of the current crisis in Europe, which lie in the incompatibility of Member States' policies with the aims of harmonization and convergence of the economies, as laid down in the Treaties. It is this that has prevented a real Community coming into being. And the consequences are serious, because today Community Europe is finding great difficulty in working out a joint position on important decisions which used to be made in the face of changes occurring in the market and in the world economy.

Difficulties in adapting productive structures are increasing, as illustrated by what is happening in the steel industry, in textiles, in shipbuilding etc.; the countries are moving apart, regional imbalances are becoming more acute.

32. Unemployment has reached absolutely unacceptable levels; all that prevents a total economic crash is that, unlike during the crisis of the 1930s, those out of work, thanks to unemployment benefits, are able, to some extent at least, to continue buying goods. If the slump appears less serious than in the thirties, it is nevertheless proving much harder to reverse the trend, since all the short-term measures which have been tried so far conflict with anti-inflationary policies.
33. In a crisis situation affecting important Community industries, and in the face of all the efforts that undertakings and governments have to make to effect structural adjustments to deal with the crisis, the Community cannot confine its role to that of umpire in the free-competition game, but must set itself the task of generating a genuine policy of industrial cooperation, so that sporadic and often conflicting measures introduced by individual States do not jeopardize the prospects of growth for the Community economy as a whole. Against this background the key role that a common transport policy can play in determining the prospects of the Community's economic integration becomes abundantly clear.
34. In transport, since 1975, there has been a considerable reduction of the volume of traffic, but mainly on rail and waterway, i.e. in the heavy freight sector. Road and air transport have been much less affected by the recession. The effects of the rise in petrol prices on road transport have also been much less severe than might have been expected. This explains why, despite the oil crisis, there has been no diversion of traffic to rail and waterway.

35. If the Governments of the Member States and of the Community were to take active steps to combat unemployment and the general economic recession, the transport sector would be likely to occupy a priority place in any list of investments that could in the long-term help overcome the present-day reluctance to invest which is the fundamental reason behind the current crisis.

II. The importance of transport policy for the operation of the Common Market

36. The previous section dealt with the general importance of the transport sector. To bring out its importance for the functioning of the Common Market, we must add some further considerations, since there are still many people who have not understood that a common transport policy is a necessary pre-requisite for the existence of a common market.

1. Free movement of transport across frontiers

37. The purpose of a common market is to improve the standard of living in the individual countries, each of which had previously constituted a separate market, protected to a greater or lesser extent from other such markets. This aim can be achieved by rationalizing the entire economy and by switching to mass production for a larger market.

38. Everyone has been persuaded by now that to achieve this end, there must be free movement of goods and factors of production across the frontiers of the Common Market member countries, and it is also generally accepted that, if there is to be free movement, duties and quantitative restrictions on trade must be abolished. Neither is it contested that labour and capital must be able to move freely across frontiers, nor is there any opposition to the freedom of establishment. Why, then, do so few people understand that free movement of transport across frontiers is of a particular importance? Why do we see such opposition from many quarters to a common policy on transport, or, to put it another way, why is there so little understanding of the need for it? In one of the first reports prepared by the European Parliament it was rightly observed that restrictions in the transport sector are more harmful than customs duties. A customs duty merely places a restraint on trade. On the other hand a ban on traffic, the lack of a communications link across a frontier, the refusal of a transport licence obstruct trade completely.



39. Establishment of free movement of transport across frontiers is thus a necessary pre-requisite for the existence of the Common Market.
40. To avoid misunderstandings, it should be made clear that what is envisaged here is obviously not total freedom of international movement of transport, which would exist if internal transport regulations were not applicable to international traffic. However, regulation of international transport should not be more restrictive than that for internal traffic. A paradigm has been coined in Community circles to describe this situation: 'throughout the Community territory conditions similar to those in an internal market should obtain'.

## 2. Equitable charging of transport costs to users

41. Another aspect of which those who fail to grasp the importance of a transport policy for the Common Market seem to be unaware is that of the charging of transport costs to users. This is a problem entirely unrelated to that of international traffic. Transport costs are an important factor of overall costs for all industrial and agricultural undertakings, as well as for many firms which provide services. Transport costs are to a very large extent determined by the transport policies of the Member States. If, for instance, railways are heavily subsidized in one country, but not in another, this means in effect that the first country is subsidizing the second country's industries - a situation hardly compatible with the principles of the Common Market, since it distorts competition.
42. The existence of such interdependence requires that, in the interests of the Common Market, those cost factors which may not be directly related to international traffic should be harmonized as well. It may well happen that those affected by a particular measure cannot understand why Brussels wants them to change their well-established habits. The reaction then is: 'Brussels is harmonizing for the fun of it!' and accusations of 'centralism' and 'Eurocratic rule' are flung about. Why should lorries in Sicily, which never leave the island and will thus never come to Brussels, be equipped with a tachograph and conform to rules on working hours issued from Brussels? Simply because working hours are translated into labour costs and, through transport costs, become a cost factor for industry and for agriculture; also because industry and agriculture in every area of the Community should be part of the same Common Market. We cannot have the benefits of the Common Market without also assuming the burden of its rules.

43. It is understandable that countries which do not border other Community countries and are not as closely interlinked by road and waterway transport as are the countries of the Benelux, the Federal Republic of Germany and France, find it difficult to understand the necessity for harmonizing legislation on transport. For Denmark and Italy (at any rate northern Italy) links with the above-named countries are still closer than for Ireland and the United Kingdom. The problem will be of especial relevance to Greece. There, too, it will be asked why rules and regulations which apply 2,000 kilometers away should be adopted. Efforts will perhaps be made to restrict such rules and regulations to international traffic to other Community countries.
44. But that would be to misconceive the nature of the Common Market and to see only one aspect of transport policy: a European common transport policy does not merely mean eliminating impediments to international traffic and establishing fair conditions of competition for undertakings active in the field of international transport. It also means accomplishing an equally important task, one that is, in fact, essential of harmonization of legislations on transport in order to eliminate discriminatory charging of transport costs to industry and agriculture (and, of course, to all services which include a transport element).
45. Introduction of free movement and harmonization should proceed hand in hand in parallel stages. The Commission should see to it that a certain amount of balance is maintained between these two series of measures. It is not a question of 'first this' (freeing transport movement), 'then the other' (harmonization of legislation). The 'two-speed' policy has not been promoting the process of integration because it has provided arguments and pretexts to all those who, for a variety of reasons, do not want to see the Community Treaties put into effect.
46. This is a crucial problem, because the fact that balanced progress has not been maintained has aroused understandable worries among the representatives of the Governments and the industries of the countries with weaker economies, that if liberalization alone is pursued, the result might be to favour the stronger economies and to perpetuate and exacerbate the existing disequilibria.

47. The Committee on Transport therefore demands that the harmonization measures which are necessarily required for freedom of movement be applied without delay. It nonetheless wishes to emphasize unequivocally that harmonization must never be an end in itself. Intervention for the purposes of harmonization is justified only if undertaken to approximate the conditions of competition and to facilitate freedom of movement.

48. The above summary description serves to illustrate the problems and conflicts, the veritable blind alley into which the Community has gradually driven itself by failing to implement a coherent transport policy.

49. Indeed, the Commission itself in its Communication to the Council on the development of transport policy has stressed the need for some kind of parallel progress between monetary unification, on the one hand, and the convergence of economic policies and of regional, structural and social measures on the other. It has warned that, at all events, transition to economic and monetary union will not be possible unless simultaneously an effective common transport policy is put in place.

It goes without saying that transport policy, while retaining its specific character, should be directed towards closer links with the other policies.

### III. The importance of the transport system for Community integration

50. The Community's Member States can achieve integration in a genuinely 'common' market, and the Community can lead to 'an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe' (as the Preamble to the EEC Treaty so aptly puts it) only when all its regions are regularly linked by an appropriate transport system.

51. The essential objective of a Community policy in the transport sector aimed at eliminating the existing distortions and bottlenecks, at the integration of national transport networks and their development and rationalization, must be to contribute, equally with the other structural policies, to the gradual elimination of the imbalances which have arisen in the course of historical processes between different regions of Community Europe, between the North and the South.

#### 1. Transport policy and the integration of all the Community regions

52. The Community is still a long way from approaching this end: at the borders between its Member States there are obvious discontinuities in the railway, waterway and road networks - the results of infrastructure policies practised by each State on its own.

53. Filling these gaps in the transport network is an important task for the common transport policy. Mr Klinkenborg's report discusses this matter in detail<sup>1</sup>.

54. But another important task for transport policy is to establish regular links between all the Community's regions and the long-distance transport network and to provide adequate regional networks. This is a sphere in which transport policy and regional policy should dovetail. Overall, planned development of infrastructures should contribute to improving the situation of the regions which have been disadvantaged until now and also to decongesting overpopulated regions.

55. Admittedly, the creation of a modern transport network cannot by itself undo the backwardness of underdeveloped regions: it may, indeed, happen that improved communications lead to an exodus of the population from a particular region. Regional policy, therefore, cannot rely solely on transport policy measures, but should always

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<sup>1</sup> Report on behalf of the Committee on Transport on the Commission Memorandum on the role of the Community in the development of transport infrastructure (Doc. 1-601/80 - rapporteur: Mr J. Klinkenborg). See OJ No C 144 of 15.6.1981 for the resolution adopted by Parliament on the basis of this report.