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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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15 May 1981

DOCUMENT 1-187/81

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Transport

**on the amended proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-812/80) for a regulation on a system for observing the markets for the carriage of goods by rail, road and inland waterways between Member States**

**Rapporteur: Mr J.L.JANSSEN van RAAY**

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On 1 October 1975 the Commission submitted a proposal to the Council for the introduction of a system for monitoring the markets for the carriage of goods by rail, road and inland waterways between the Member States (Doc. COM(75) 490 final). The European Parliament delivered an opinion on this (Doc. 324/75/VIII) on the basis of a report by Mr Mitterdorfer (Doc. 350/76) (OJ No. C 293, 13.12.1976). The Council took no final decision but approved the allocation of appropriations to the Commission for such a system for observing the markets for a trial period of three years. On 5 December 1980 the Commission submitted a report on the establishment of a system for observing internal transport markets and a proposal for a Council Decision on such a system for observing markets (Doc. COM(80) 785 final). By letter of 9 January 1981 the Council consulted Parliament again although the Commission proposal was submitted in the form of an amendment in accordance with the second paragraph of Article 149 of the EEC Treaty.

The Commission proposal appeared as working document 1-812/80 and was referred to the Committee on Transport on 16 January 1981 for a report.

At its meeting of 30 January 1981, the Committee on Transport appointed Mr Janssen van Raay rapporteur.

The committee considered the proposal and the report at its meetings of 19 and 20 March and 23 April 1981.

The motion for a resolution was adopted unanimously on 23 April 1981.

Present: Mr Seefeld, chairman; Mr Carossino, vice-chairman; Mr K.H. Hoffmann, deputizing for the rapporteur; Mr Albers, Mr Buttafuoco, Mr Doublet, Mr Gabert, Lord Harmar-Nicholls, Mr Helms, Mr Klinkenborg, Mr Moorhouse, Mr Moreland, Mr Ripa de Meana and Mr Voyadzis.

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

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the amended proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation on a system for observing the markets for the carriage of goods by rail, road and inland waterways between the Member States

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the amendment to this proposal in accordance with the second paragraph of Article 149 of the EEC Treaty and the report on the establishment of a system for observing the transport markets (COM(80)785 fin.),
- having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 75 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 1-812/80),
- having regard to the report drawn up by Mr Janssen van Raay on behalf of the Committee on Transport (Doc. 1-187/81 ),

1. Draws attention to the report by Mr Mitterdorfer on the original Commission proposal (Doc. 350/76) and the resolution adopted by the European Parliament on the basis of this report<sup>2</sup>;
2. Considers the compilation of more precise statistics on trends in the volume of goods carried, transport capacity and prices in rail, road and inland waterway traffic between the Member States an essential prerequisite for a common transport policy, but draws attention to the limitations of the proposal and asks the Commission to submit a proposal in which the market observation system is extended to the carriage of goods within the Community by air and sea;
3. Takes the view that a market observation system will be extremely important for current policy in many areas such as licensing, Community quotas, energy-saving measures, price policy and capacity policy in the transport sector and that this is the only method of recognizing potential crises in advance;

<sup>1</sup>OJ No. C 1, 5.1.1976, p. 28

<sup>2</sup>OJ No. C 293, 13.12.1976

4. Therefore takes the view that the annual expenditure of 800,000 EUA is justified as the system represents a genuine contribution to rationalizing the transport sector;
5. Agrees with the Commission that the experience gained during the trial period has already shown that such a market observation system is feasible and can supply the data required;
6. Supports the Commission's concern for continuity and urges that steps be taken to avoid a vacuum following the trial period;
7. Approves the Commission proposal and the suggested amendments, in particular the change in the legal form from a Regulation to a Decision;
8. Regrets that no report is to be made on bankruptcies as originally proposed, and considers that the observation of social problems should be improved;
9. Welcomes the fact that information is now to be presented quarterly instead of only annually as in the original proposals, since this will considerably enhance the value of the system as a means of ongoing market observation;
10. Calls on the Member States to lend the Commission every support in the development of the market observation system;
11. Takes the view, however, that it is not enough simply to observe the market, and that the Council of Ministers must therefore create and further develop instruments to influence the market as well;
12. Calls on the Commission to incorporate in its proposal, pursuant to Article 149, second paragraph, of the EEC Treaty, the amendment appended below;
13. Approves the whole of the amended Commission proposal.

Proposal for a

Council Decision concerning a system  
for observing the markets for the carriage of goods by  
rail, road and inland waterways between the Member States

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Recitals unchanged

Article 1

unchanged

Article 2

1. The analysis of the markets shall involve the appraisal of the situation in the transport markets and the identification of the trends therein by means of a number of indicators, including:
- the relationship between supply and demand for the carriage of goods, unchanged
  - the economic situation of transport undertakings, unchanged
  - energy saving measures,
  - social developments in the transport sector unchanged

(rest of Article 2 unchanged)

Articles 3 - 10 unchanged

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTGeneral comments

1. One of the main obstacles to the introduction of a common European transport policy is the lack of information in a number of areas. Those responsible for European transport policy have little or no information on prices, costs, capacity and planning in transport undertakings. Unfortunately the assumptions made occasionally vary considerably.
2. It is therefore essential as a matter of urgency to gain better information on the market. This is needed not only for basic decisions on European transport policy but also for ongoing measures.
3. The market observation system proposed by the Commission is extremely flexible and economical in that it intends to conduct sample and inquiry surveys of those directly affected rather than to compile exhaustive statistics.
4. The amount of 800,000 EUA therefore seems both adequate and justified. This sum can be justified to the taxpayer by pointing out that it represents a contribution towards rationalizing an import sector of the economy. The economy as a whole benefits from this rationalization. By the same token, if a false European transport policy were to be pursued because of a lack of information this would involve major costs for the economy as a whole.
5. The Committee on Transport concludes that the system proposed by the Commission on the basis of the experience gained during the trial period is feasible. It is neither too expensive nor too perfectionist but at the same time appears likely to provide the necessary data.

Comments on the amendments to the 1975 proposal

6. The Committee on Transport considers it expedient to adopt the market observation system in the form of a Decision and not in the form of a Regulation as originally proposed.
7. The following may be observed in relation to the recitals:
  - the Committee on Transport welcomes the fact that the aim of the system has been formulated less ambitiously, viz. 'to promote' the smooth running of the market,
  - the Committee on Transport agrees with the Commission that the feasibility and usefulness of the observation system has been demonstrated during the experimental period,

- the Committee on Transport welcomes the proposal that there should only be one committee in which all those concerned work together rather than several committees.

8. Article 1: see comments above on the recitals.

9. Article 2: the following indicators in the original proposal are to be dropped:

- jobs available and the level of employment
- the average rate of use of transport capacity
- the number of bankruptcies
- unemployment figures.

The Committee on Transport regrets that the number of bankruptcies has been dropped completely from the list of indicators, as this is an important statistic for recognizing crises. The committee does not however regard this issue as crucial. The following are intended to replace the indicators which have been dropped:

- social developments in the transport sector
- price and cost indices calculated from data gathered by sample surveys.

The Committee on Transport welcomes the fact that the more flexible method includes cost indices and in particular that it will enable quarterly reports to be made instead of annual reports as originally envisaged.

10. Article 3: the distinction between quarterly and annual reports and medium-term forecasts is to be welcomed, as this will provide sufficient information both for policy planning and for any crisis management measures which prove necessary.

11. Articles 4 and 5: no comment.

12. Article 6: the comments in relation to the recitals have already referred to the expediency of there being only one committee.

13. Article 7: no comment.

14. Article 8: the Committee on Transport approves the fact that the Commission no longer provides for sanctions in view of the greater degree of voluntary participation in the more flexible method. The Committee on Transport assumes that the report mentioned in paragraph 3 of this article will also be made available to the European Parliament.

15. Article 9: as noted above, the Committee on Transport regards the estimated costs of 800,000 EUA as appropriate and justifiable.

16. Article 10: no comment.

### Concluding remarks

17. The Committee on Transport supports the efforts of the Commission to ensure that there is no vacuum following the trial period. It therefore welcomes the early submission of the amended proposal and calls on the Council of Ministers to adopt the system before the experimental period expires.

18. The Committee on Transport is pleased to note that the Commission's efforts hitherto have encountered a positive and even enthusiastic response from those concerned and their associations and sees this as a sign that all those involved believe that for the first time there will be a clear view of the markets for the services of road, rail and inland waterway transport undertakings throughout Europe, which can provide a more objective basis for discussions of transport policy and reduce the present risks attaching to legislative measures.

19. The Committee on Transport, however, takes the view that it is not enough simply to observe the market and that the Council of Ministers must therefore create and further develop instruments to influence the market. If no progress is made beyond simply monitoring trends, the costs of the observation system will ultimately be a waste of money.

20. On the other hand, the Committee on Transport wishes to oppose the view that those who seek to introduce a statistical observation system could be tempted in the long run to seek to control the market by means of restrictive and dirigiste measures. This is not the case, or at any rate not the intention. The market control instruments should be just as flexible as the observation system and above all it is to be hoped that, given better information and in particular quarterly reports, the undertakings in this sector will be better able to adjust voluntarily to market trends.

21. The Committee on Transport therefore requests the adoption of its motion for a resolution.