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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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15 November 1982

DOCUMENT 1-844/82

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Transport

on the role of ports in the common transport policy

Rapporteur: Mr A. CAROSSINO

PE 80.050/fin.



On 30 September 1981, a motion for a resolution on a Severn Estuary port zone (Doc. 1-544/81) was tabled by Mr Cottrell pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure. On 12 October 1981 the motion for a resolution was referred to the Committee on Transport for a report.

The committee decided to draw up a report not only on the question of the Severn Estuary but on Community port policy as a whole.

On 3 December 1981 the President gave the necessary authorization. On 29 January 1982 the Committee on Transport appointed Mr Carossino rapporteur.

On 3 May 1982 Mr Pininfarina tabled a motion for a resolution pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure on the improvement of port and road infrastructures in Liguria and Piedmont in a European perspective. This motion for a resolution was referred to the Committee on Transport. At its meeting of 25.6.1982 the Committee on Transport decided to deal with the part of the motion for a resolution relating to ports in its report on Community port policy.

The committee considered the subject at its meeting of 26-28 May 1982 in Athens on the basis of a working document submitted by Mr Carossino (PE 77.745).

The committee considered the motion for a resolution and the report at its meetings of 20 October and 4 November 1982, and adopted it on 4 November 1982 with one vote against.

The following took part in the vote: Mr Seefeld, chairman; Dame Shelagh Roberts, vice-chairman; Mr Carossino, vice-chairman and rapporteur; Mr Albers, Mr Ansquer (deputizing for Mr Junot), Mr Arndt (deputizing for Mr Gabert), Mr Buttafuoco, Mr Cardia, Mr Cottrell, Mr Key, Mr Klinkenborg, Mr Lagakos, Mr Loo (deputizing for Mr Ripa di Meana), Mr Martin, Mr Moreland (deputizing for Mr Moorhouse) and Mr Skovmand.

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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

on the role of ports in the common transport policy

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr Cottrell (Doc. 1-544/81) on a Severn Estuary port zone, and the motion for a resolution by Mr Pininfarina (Doc. 1-198/82) on the improvement of port and road infrastructures in Liguria and Piedmont in a European perspective,
  - having regard to the report on the common transport policy by Mr Carossino (Doc. 1-996/81),
  - having regard to the report by the Committee on Transport (Doc. 1-844/82),
- A. whereas ports, as the link between sea transport and land transport, play an important role in transport policy,
  - B. noting with great disappointment that despite Parliament's resolution of 17.4.1972<sup>1</sup> there has been no progress at all in the common seaport policy,
  - C. in view of the differences between the ports of the Community and the resulting difficulties for specific action on ports,
  - D. nonetheless convinced that in the present situation it is necessary and possible to take some important steps in this direction,

<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 46, 9.5.1972

1. Calls on the Commission to pay greater attention to ports than hitherto, and particularly, when submitting any proposals connected with the common transport policy, to take greater account than in the past of their effects on competition between ports, with particular reference to the following:
  - harmonization of specific taxes on transport (road taxes and taxes on mineral oils),
  - harmonization of social provisions in the transport sector,
  - harmonization of technical provisions, particularly of maximum permitted weights and dimensions in road transport,
  - a tariff system for infrastructure costs,
  - infrastructures policy,
  - tariff policy for transport by rail, road and inland waterways,
  - policy on road transport and inland navigation capacity,
  - abolition of border formalities;
2. Calls on the Commission, when allocating resources from the European Regional Development Fund or other Community funds for port investment, to take account of their effect on competition between ports and if necessary draw up an overall plan for these financial contributions in the context of proposals relating to all the ports either of a given region or coastline, or in the Community as a whole;
3. Calls on the Commission to pay special attention, when drawing up the Community programme of financial contributions for infrastructure projects, to the individual ports themselves and their road, rail and waterway links with the hinterland;
4. Reaffirms the principle it has upheld in the past that genuine competition between seaports should be maintained as a prerequisite for increased productivity;
5. Calls on the Commission, in view of the disparities between the administrative structures of ports, to continue to monitor the problem of contributions made to ports from the general fiscal revenue of the Member States and, where necessary, to initiate negotiations on the subject;

6. Reaffirms the call for the elimination of all discrimination in links between ports and the hinterland which is incompatible with the European Treaties;
7. Calls for account to be taken of the interests of ports and competition between ports when formulating the common shipping policy;
8. Calls for the introduction of an overall marine policy and in particular an environmental policy for the seas which surround the Community, with special reference to ports;
9. Calls on the Commission to set up a special service in its relevant directorate-general to study all aspects of port policy;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution and the attached report to the Commission and Council of the European Communities and the parliaments of the Member States.



EXPLANATORY STATEMENTIntroduction: The importance of ports and transport in the modern economy  
and the aims of the common transport policy

1. The report on the common transport policy, which was submitted to the European Parliament on 15 February 1982 on behalf of the Committee on Transport, gave a detailed description of the importance of transport for modern industrial societies and stressed the value of a transport policy for the functioning of the common market (see Doc. 1-996/81).
2. The abovementioned report shows clearly that the efficiency of a modern economy depends on the efficiency of its transport system and that an effective common market is inconceivable without an effective common transport policy.
3. In an economic area like the EEC, which, with its irregular geography and extensive coastlines, is more dependent than other continents on overseas trade to ensure its prosperity and vitality, shipping must inevitably form an integral part of any transport policy programme.
4. Ports are points of transition for the transfer of goods from sea to land transport and vice versa. A transport policy which neglected seaports would be unthinkable. Modern developments towards the creation of an unbroken network of door-to-door transport stretching across continents and seas have meant that the role played by ports in switching goods from one mode of transport to another is becoming an increasingly significant factor in the price, quality and speed of services.
5. In 1979 (the last year for which comparable statistics are available, see Eurostat, annual transport statistics, 1981, p.6) the Community ports, which at that time did not yet include Greek ports, landed 1,155.5 million tonnes of cargo and shipped out 383.9 million tonnes, an overall total of about 1,500 million tonnes.

By comparison with these figures, in the same year railways throughout the Community of Nine transported 930.7 million tonnes of goods. Comparable figures are not available for road transport<sup>1</sup> but it is estimated that 658 million tonnes of goods were transported by waterways. In other words, the ports handle a volume of merchandise more or less equal to the amount carried by railways and waterways put together.

6. These figures should be sufficient to show clearly that ports and shipping are not a peripheral element of the transport structure operating at the external frontiers of the Community, but one of the vital pillars on which the whole of our economy is based.

7. The aim of the common transport policy must be to provide low-cost, effective and rapid transport facilities for the internal market formed by the territory of the Community, but this cannot possibly be achieved without due consideration being given to seaports in every proposal submitted and every decision taken.

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<sup>1</sup> Estimated at about 7,600 million tonnes

I. Community port policy following the work undertaken between 1972 and 1980

8. Following a report by Mr Seefeld (Doc. 10/72 of 12.4.1972, resolution of 17.4.1972, OJ No. C 46/72) the European Parliament opened the way for Community action in the sector of port policy which had the merit of bringing greater clarity to this sector but has had little impact in practical terms.

9. In September 1977, under the auspices of the Commission, a report was completed on the 'current situation in the major Community seaports drawn up by the port working group' (Catalogue No. CB - 22 - 77 - 863).

A further 'report of the port working group' drawn up pursuant to the terms of reference given by the plenary meeting of the major ports of the Community on 9/10 June 1977 (Doc. VII/440/80), was never published. Neither were the studies on the distortions of competition in port hinterlands carried out by the Directorate General for Transport of the Commission. The working party on 'seaports' held further meetings in 1979 and 1980 and then suspended its activities<sup>1</sup>.

10. After this date the Commission's General Reports make no further reference to matters relating to ports.

11. Although Document VII/440/80 has not been officially published, it should be taken as a point of reference for the report since it has been made available to Members of Parliament. The same holds for Doc. PE 73.762 of 1.7.1981 in which the Commission informed the European Parliament of the conclusions it had reached following the work by the port working group.

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<sup>1</sup> Thirteenth General Report on the activities of the European Community, point 382

12. The surprising conclusion reached by the Commission is expressed in two contradictory statements. On the one hand it is said that: 'seven years of close cooperation between the Commission's services and the major Community ports have revealed that there was no requirement for a specific Community port policy'.

13. On the other hand, the report goes on to say that 'insofar as seaports are an essential link in the Community's transport chain, they will be covered by the general development of the common transport policy' (PE 73.762/Annex, p. 6).

14. The remarks which follow are intended to clarify this contradiction. A distinction must be made between, on the one hand, a specific port policy concerned with handling facilities, harbour basins, depths of channel, harbour railways, warehouses and the system of dues and charges connected with the use, financing and management of these installations, and, on the other, a port policy as an element of a general transport policy concerned with rail, road and waterway transport between ports and the hinterland and ocean-going shipping, and designed to monitor the effects of all the elements of the transport policy on seaports and the requirements imposed on that policy by the interests of seaports as regards sea and land transport.

15. It is a widely held view in Community circles that a specific policy on seaports is not a matter of any great urgency. The general provisions of the EEC Treaty are sufficient to eliminate any distortion of competition. Article 7 provides recourse against discrimination on grounds of nationality and the Treaty's rules of competition govern grants and subsidies. The Committee on Transport believes that competition should be fully protected as far as port investment policy is concerned and reaffirms the view expressed in previous reports that investment management at Community level or a controlled division of labour between ports are to be avoided.

16. On the other hand, the Committee on Transport firmly believes that it would be unfortunate if the authorities of those ports which do not consider a specific EEC port policy to be necessary, were out of mistrust to go further and reject any Community involvement in the problems of ports, in order to strengthen the validity of their case. This would be damaging to the Community, and to themselves and their ports.

17. The conclusions reached by the Commission show the influence of those who feel that it is too early to open the dossier on seaports, since there is still a long way to go before a genuine Community policy for land transport can be set in motion.

18. This once again brings up the issue of Community jurisdiction with regard to ports. Since ports provide the connecting link between road and sea transport, it should be stressed that if this issue cannot be settled conclusively the Community will be prevented from pursuing a coherent transport policy.

19. In this respect, it should be remembered that in a recent report on Community transport policy the European Parliament formally and unanimously stressed the need for a global Community transport policy to include all modes of transport.

20. Recent developments have underlined this need: the accession of Greece and the forthcoming accession of Spain and Portugal to the Community, rising energy costs, a decline in the competitiveness of European industry in the face of competition from America and Japan; all these factors call for coordinated action at Community level in the sphere of transport.

## II. Current developments in land, port and sea transport

21. The development of modern handling techniques, particularly the introduction of containers and other transport technologies for various types of goods, has produced radical changes in the organization of port services.

22. Transport is increasingly becoming a single process even where shipping is involved. The process of transporting goods, which begins at the exporter's warehouses, is only complete when the goods have arrived in the recipient's warehouses. The traditional roles of land transport, vessel and port are changing. This is particularly true of ports which, from being places where the handling, sorting, processing, packing and marketing of goods were performed, are increasingly becoming simple points of transit, links in a single chain which includes both land and sea transport.

23. The increase in energy costs has led to larger and more specialized vessels. The enormous investments which these changes involve and the need for more efficient use of ships have produced a concentration of traffic in those ports where the tariffs are lowest, the turn-round times shortest and the system for forwarding goods quickest.

24. These developments are not yet complete and it is impossible to assess what their final impact on the organization of the entire transport system will be.

25. Nevertheless, a number of trends are already beginning to emerge. Previously, the prospects for a port were largely determined by its natural geographical situation, its vicinity to places where goods are produced or used and the presence of specialized handling installations. Today, this is no longer the case, or at least these are no longer the only determining factors. A favourable location is no longer sufficient to guarantee a port's prosperity and it is becoming increasingly difficult to define the limits of a port's natural hinterland.

26. The new pattern of maritime transport, characterized by fierce competition, will inevitably push into decay those ports which fail to adapt to changes in the transport market with sufficient flexibility.

27. As a result, all the economic factors, both human and material, which together determine the level of performance and productivity of a port, are also subject to radical changes.

28. The nature of the services performed by ports call for a strategy involving the whole transport cycle and attitudes of those involved in the various individual stages of the transport operation, whether it is by sea or land.

29. In this connection it may be said that the best port policy the Community can develop is a general and genuine common transport policy in which the role of ports must of course be precisely defined.

### III. Cooperation between seaports: current situation

30. At the last meeting of the 'port working group' official representatives from the major Community ports decided to establish a system of cooperation which would not however be binding and would have no independent administrative apparatus, and they instructed the administrative authority of the port of Antwerp to oversee and coordinate the system.

31. In 1977 a number of ports established the European Port Data Processing Association (EVHA), with the participation of the Commission of the EC and on 26 November 1981 in Antwerp an initial data system was set up as a pilot project. Work is due to start in autumn 1982 on the final system.

32. In view of the voluntary and independent nature of the cooperation agreed upon by the representatives of Community ports in the creation of a permanent liaison committee, the nature and type of dialogue between this committee and the Commission are still to be determined.

33. It should be pointed out that the relationship which the Commission hopes to establish with the port authorities will be limited since the latter are locally-based public organizations while the Commission has no official contact with national governments in this sphere.

34. On its own initiative, the European Parliament has asked the Commission to promote joint action and coordination of the port policies of the Member States.

35. The Commission has stated that since it does not have adequate staff resources to cover all priorities in the transport sector it has decided during the reorganization of its services no longer to allocate officials to deal exclusively with port matters.

36. As I have already had occasion to indicate in a question tabled in the European Parliament, this is a serious decision since it reveals the lack of political will on the part of the Commission to contemplate a sound port policy. An increase in staff for DG VII - transport - and the reintroduction of a new service permanently assigned to port matters are urgent and indispensable requirements.

#### IV. Transport policy and links between ports and the hinterland

37. In view of the considerable delay in the formation of a Community transport policy, distortions of competition persist and have an important impact on competition between seaports.

38. The Committee on Transport believes that this is a serious shortcoming in Community policy and has therefore submitted a report by Mr Seefeld (Doc. 1-420/82), proposing that an action be brought before the Court of Justice against the Council of Ministers for failure to act in the transport sector.

39. However, it is worth noting that the Council of Ministers' failure to act is also due in part to the fact that the Commission submits proposals which fail to take proper account of their effect on competition between ports.

##### 1. Infrastructure

40. Some progress has been made over the last few years (although without aid from the EC) towards the objective of linking all the European seaports to the motorway networks, electrified railways and, where possible, to inland waterways navigable by the European standard vessel.

41. However, much remains to be done particularly as regards smaller ports at the regional level. The situation varies from country to country. In Italy, for example, although major motorways have been built, the railway network has been severely neglected for years with the result that inadequate rail links, the lack of marshalling yards and rolling stock have caused serious bottlenecks not only in small ports but particularly in the larger ones.



42. This is not the place to examine the situation in other countries but it appears that similar problems also exist in Greece.

43. The proposal for a Community system for granting aid to infrastructure of common interest could also have important consequences for ports.

44. The European Parliament has submitted a series of proposals for improving the links between the hinterland and various ports, particularly those along the Mediterranean coast. Mr Cecovini (Doc. 1-32/80) drew attention to the need to make better use of the Northern Adriatic by improving the links between Trieste and Monfalcone and the European transport network, in order to foster the development of southern Europe. Mr. Pininfarina (Doc. 1-198/82) stressed the need to give priority to strengthening the port infrastructures of the Ligurian coast and their road and rail links with Piedmont and the rest of Europe. In another motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-309/82) Mr Lagakos and others pointed to the possibilities that would be opened up by building a new port at Igoumenitsa and a motorway linking it to Volos across the whole of Greece. Mr Loo (Doc. 1-907/80) drew attention to the importance of the Rhine-Rhône canal.

These proposals stressed the strategic importance of the Mediterranean for the EEC, at the same time pointing out the existence in this area of serious problems connected with land and port infrastructures.

In the context of its study of 'Mediterranean programmes' and specific action on infrastructure, the Commission should devote particular attention to links with the Mediterranean ports and the improvement of the ports themselves.

## 2. Tariffs

45. Until there is some administrative standardization of major cost factors there can be no hope of achieving a tariff policy for the different modes of transport to eliminate distortions, discrimination and disparities in inland waterways freight to and from the ports.

### 3. Harmonization problems

#### (a) Fiscal sector

46. Harmonization of the taxes on mineral oils is still a long way off. An increase in duty-free allowances for fuel in vehicles' own tanks has hitherto proved impossible given the problems it would pose for the ports.

47. Attempts to harmonize road taxes on motor vehicles have reached deadlock due to the inability of the Council of Ministers to reach agreement on a standard taxable base.

48. The Commission has withdrawn its proposal - now outdated - for a Community tariff system for infrastructure costs, but has failed to submit a new one.

#### (b) Social sector

49. Social measures also have an impact on traffic between seaports and the hinterland in that they represent a sizeable cost factor. Measures relating to road transport are still incomplete and surveillance arrangements remain unsatisfactory. There are still no regulations on inland navigation and rail transport.

#### (c) Technical regulations

50. Divergencies between technical regulations create disparities and distortions of competition in the port transport sector, especially as regards the problem of maximum permitted weights and dimensions of lorries.

#### (d) State intervention in rail and road transport and inland navigation

51. The harmonization of state intervention in transport is an essential precondition for the elimination of distortions of competition including transport in the hinterland.

4. Access to the market

(a) Access to the profession

52. Regulations governing access to the profession determine the supply of services, especially with regard to inland navigation but also as regards road transport, and this affects traffic between seaports and the hinterland.

(b) Policy on capacity

53. Policy on road transport and inland navigation capacity has an important bearing on competition between seaports.

(c) Licences

54. The same can be said for problems concerning licences for transport including those related to Community quotas.

5. Port policy requirements within the framework of Community transport policy with regard to the hinterland

55. A Community port policy presupposes that the entire Community hinterland connected to the European seaports be considered as a genuinely internal market, both from the point of view of commercial policy and transport policy, in other words that the free movement of goods to and from all ports can be carried out on equal terms.

V. Port policy requirements within the framework of the common transport policy of the EEC

56. This section will deal with the ideas developed by the Committee on Transport on that part of the common transport policy defined above as a 'specific port policy'.

57. The report on the situation of the EEC ports in 1977 assembled a body of data sufficient to provide a basis for the first concrete steps towards a port policy. These data need to be regularly updated.

58. Nevertheless, the report also illustrates the difficulties facing any Community initiative. The structure of ports in the Member States of the Community varies considerably. Some Member States have encountered problems in implementing a national policy because the major ports, with their long and proud tradition of independence, are seeking to safeguard their autonomy of decision in relation to the measures seen as necessary to adapt to shifts in demand for goods transport. It is easy to appreciate the problems facing a Community policy.

59. The Committee on Transport would like to reaffirm that it is opposed to any restrictions on the autonomy of ports. The proposals for a European port policy are not a measure against ports but are intended to create the optimum conditions for ports to develop their own initiatives.

60. It will probably be necessary to proceed by stages and, by means of a realistic approach, to ascertain what possibilities can be opened up through voluntary collaboration between the main Community ports and the governments of the Member States of the EEC.

61. At the last meeting of the port working group on 23 March 1982 in Brussels, at which twelve individual ports and the British ports as a whole were represented, the following areas of possible collaboration were discussed:

- further development of port statistics on the basis of common principles,
- study of links with the hinterland to obtain a more detailed analysis of reasons for the choice of a particular port and mode of transport,
- rules of competition for shipping and their effects on ports (rules of competition for ports were not discussed),
- handling of noxious and dangerous goods,
- port state control,
- development of transport chains,
- informatics system for ports,
- problems caused by increased coal shipments.

62. If implemented, this programme would represent limited but useful progress in the field of port policy. The Commission would have to give assistance to the ports and, where appropriate, propose new initiatives.

However, the Committee on Transport would like to stress once again that it has absolutely no intention of making any proposals which would have unfavourable repercussions on the independence of ports autonomy or the social partners. The Community's only role is to consider whether it is possible or appropriate to lay down common rules of conduct.

The more independent initiatives the ports themselves take in the field of voluntary collaboration at European level, the less will be the need for the Community institutions to attempt to define such rules of conduct.

For the moment it is difficult to see what more specific action could be taken in the face of the present political difficulties. Nevertheless, in anticipation of better times to come, it is worthwhile making a number of remarks on competition between ports, port investment policy and labour problems.

#### 1. Competition between ports

63. The first point to be established concerns the definition of competition between ports in the light of the Treaties and the existing situation as described in the report by the working party.

64. In answer to written questions (No. 853/80, OJ No. C 288, 6.11.1980 and 854/80, OJ No. C 322, 10.12.1980), the Commission stated that it had not so far thought it necessary to adopt special provisions in respect of ports based on the rules of competition, but that the general provisions of the Treaty were certainly applicable to ports. In short, the Commission believes that it is premature at present to decide on the need to draw up special rules for ports, despite the fact that such rules have been laid down for air and sea transport.

(a) Organizational structures of Community ports

65. It has been rightly pointed out that the degree of autonomy of each port has a bearing on competition between ports. Although this is a political and economic question, the evaluation of which is the responsibility of the individual Member States, the Commission should encourage certain forms of decentralization and administrative autonomy for the large ports in order to promote harmonization of the conditions of competition between the ports themselves, where this does not already exist.

(b) systems of aid

66. Similar observations can be made with regard to Community action to encourage harmonization of the standards adopted in each Member State in relation to the various ports concerning the systems of direct and indirect aid for port infrastructure, organizational and administrative costs, tax arrangements, the dues ports are allowed to impose etc.

67. In this respect, mention should perhaps be made of Community efforts as regards transparency of the accounts and running costs of railway undertakings in the Community.

2. Investment policy for seaports

68. One of the reasons why the attitude of the port authorities towards a Community port policy has been extremely sceptical is that during the seventies the Commission of the EEC, among others, talked too much about the possibility of coordinating investment in ports.

69. The Committee on Transport wishes to stress that it has no intention of reducing the autonomy of seaports as far as their investment decisions are concerned. The independence of ports in relation to investment decisions must be safeguarded. But this does not conflict with the requirement that, in view of the substantial resources which have to be provided from the public purse to finance port infrastructures, policy as regards the supply of port services in each Member State should be geared to forecasts of economic development and demand. This also applies to the Community as a whole, particularly given its objectives of eliminating all obstacles at borders and of establishing freedom of movement for goods and transport. PE 80.050/fin.

(a) Transparency

70. Parliament has always maintained that there should be no centrally-directed Community division of labour between the seaports but that each port should be responsible for its own development plans. It is the responsibility of the Member States, within the framework of their respective legal systems, to decide on national port policy and to coordinate the initiatives taken by individual ports. The Community's task could be to see that information was made available so that in drawing up these plans account can be taken of plans being drafted by ports in neighbouring States. There may however prove to be bottlenecks in port operations which hinder Community transport, such as those found in certain Mediterranean ports; in such cases the Community must take action using its own financial resources as part of its transport infrastructure programmes.

(b) Regional consequences of port investments and intervention by the EIB and the ERDF

71. A port policy should not merely be limited to consideration of the major international ports. Because of its geographical structure, the European continent and its regions rely on a considerable number of small-scale ports.

72. Loans and subsidies from the EIB and the ERDF are granted on the basis of regional policy considerations particularly to smaller sized ports. There is an urgent need for port development to be considered in conjunction with transport policy too.

73. An important factor in evaluating the support given to regional ports is the need to take account of the competition between these ports and neighbouring ports, even if the latter are prospering. In this respect, the Community has already committed an error to which Mr Cottrell drew attention in his motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-544/81): it is not advisable for the Community to deny neighbouring ports equal access to EEC funds.

(c) Subsidies by the Member States

74. The seaports should be responsible for their own investments and finance them wherever possible from their own revenues. In cases where subsidies from the Member States are necessary for port development, such subsidies should neither be restricted nor prohibited, unless it can be

proved that they create distortions of competition. This assessment must be based on Community principles founded on the tenet of non-discrimination.

75. In this connection, reference can be made to the Directive of 25 June 1980 on the transparency of financial relations between States and public undertakings which, in a wider sense, could also be taken to include public port undertakings.

### 3. Labour in the ports

76. The problem of employment in ports has grown alarmingly as a result of the decline in traffic and the introduction of more modern techniques for loading and discharging cargoes which require fewer workers.

77. Increasing competition between ports is often used as a pretext for cuts in jobs and wages with the justification that this will make individual ports more competitive and encourage new traffic. But the question of costs cannot entirely be reduced to the problem of labour in ports. The Commission has regretted that the working group had difficulty in obtaining certain information from the private sector operating in the ports whose operations often play a significant part in the calculation of port costs. Without this information cost calculations cannot be properly broken down and it is more difficult to identify unnecessary administrative costs which should be eliminated.

78. In conclusion, the need should be stressed for a Community initiative for harmonization in the social sector which would eliminate job instability and improve the professional level and working conditions of port workers.

### VI. Seaports and the expansion of shipping policy

79. The accession of Greece conferred a new responsibility on the Community in the shipping sector. Up till now, the Community has only intervened in isolated cases to resolve ad hoc problems and has not yet formulated a common policy on shipping which would also take account of the specific requirements of ports.



## 1. Safety and IMO Conventions

80. The European Community could make a significant contribution to safety at sea by using its own resources to persuade the Member States to ratify international conventions (e.g. IMO) where they have not yet done so.

81. Port-state surveillance of ships and studies of shore-based maritime navigation aid systems are currently being discussed (within the framework of the COST programme), both of major importance for problems relating to seaports.

## 2. Competition and the UNCTAD code

82. The Commission has presented to the Council a proposal on the application of competition rules to maritime transport (OJ No. C 282, 5.11.1981). Discussion on the UNCTAD code is still under way. In 1981 a system was set up for monitoring the market in cargo liner services which has already yielded results. All these measures are of special relevance to the port policy.

## 3. Problems of the shipbuilding industry

83. The problems of the shipbuilding industry will also have an impact on port policy.

The Community scrap and build programme could create new demand and strengthen the position of ports as industrial centres for ship repair.

## VII. Seaports within the framework of an overall marine environment policy

84. It is misleading to hope that one day the sea could provide enough food for humanity. The oceans have already become vast sewage tanks. Preventing further pollution will certainly not suffice; unless we reverse the trend we may find the seas will one day die. This is an issue that directly relates to port policy.

## 1. Mediterranean policy

85. This conviction has made most headway among the littoral states of the Mediterranean. In March 1981 the Commission presented to the Council a communication 'on the participation by the EEC in the action plan for the Mediterranean' (Doc. COM(81) 98 final). This is a comprehensive plan for safeguarding the Mediterranean.

## 2. Atlantic coasts of the EEC

86. While there is increasingly close cooperation between Member States of the EEC bordering on the other coasts, this is not the case for the Atlantic coastline. Collaboration on the eastern coasts of the North Atlantic between France, Britain, Ireland and Greenland could be set up with Portugal and Spain after the accession of these countries if not sooner.

## 3. North Sea policy

87. It is in the interest of the Community to accede to the Bonn Agreement of 9 June 1969 on cooperation in dealing with pollution of the North Sea by oil (Fifteenth General Report, point 334).

88. With the protests which have come from the fishermen of the Elbe river, it has been clearly revealed that the North Sea is threatened by pollution from other chemical substances.

## 4. Baltic Sea policy

89. The Federal Republic of Germany and Denmark could call upon EEC aid for their cooperation on problems relating to the Baltic Sea, although some of the Baltic coastal states do not yet fully recognize the European Community as a partner in negotiations.

90. A common stance by the Member States on the outcome of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea could prove extremely valuable.

### VIII. Objectives of a Community port policy

91. The main objective of a European port policy should be to ensure the competitiveness of our continent in international trade. This clearly means an economical and highly specialized and rapid system of port operations.

92. The ports must organize their own expansion independently. The Member States are responsible for determining national port policy, within the framework of their own legal system. EEC policy should be limited to avoiding competition by aid and subsidies which might give rise to discrimination, by laying down common rules of conduct.

93. Another objective of the port policy should be to ensure that ports become humane places of work for all who work there.

94. The port policy of the EEC should contribute to the conservation or rehabilitation of the seas and coastlines of the world for mankind.

95. The major task of a Community port policy is the elimination of any form of discrimination in traffic between the ports and their hinterlands, through harmonization of the rail, road and inland waterway transport sectors.

96. On the basis of these considerations, the Committee on Transport calls for the above motion for a resolution to be adopted.

Motion for a resolution (Document 1-544/81)  
tabled by Mr Cottrell  
pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure  
on a Severn Estuary Port Zone

The European Parliament,

- observing the inequalities which currently apply with regard to the implementation of the Community's regional policy;
  - considering that in matters of port policy, aid given to one group of ports but not others who share the same estuary can lead to a distortion of competition;
  - considering that precisely such a case has arisen on the Severn Estuary in the United Kingdom, whereby ports in South Wales (which lies largely in a UK development area) receive assistance from the Regional Fund, but the competing ports of Bristol and Sharpness on the opposite side of the estuary do not, because they do not lie in a development area;
  - considering that a solution to such problems would lie in the creation of 'Port Zones', in which the port areas would all enjoy a status designed to give them equal access to all Community investment mechanisms;
  - considering that a 'Severn Estuary Port Zone' would be an ideal example of such a solution;
1. Calls upon the Commission to study the problems which are arising from unequal application of Community investment machinery in the case of ports, particularly those suffering from the geographical peculiarities which apply in the Severn Estuary; to consider, in association with the British Government, how best the particular problems of the Severn Estuary ports may be solved;
  2. Urges the Commission to recommend the creation of a 'Severn Estuary Port Zone' as a way of resolving this problem and ensure that all ports on the estuary enjoy equal access to Community investment;
  3. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission of the European Communities.

Motion for a resolution (Document 1-198/82)  
tabled by Mr Pininfarina  
pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure  
on the improvement of port and road infrastructures in Liguria and Piedmont  
in a European perspective

### The European Parliament

A. whereas the improvement of the port infrastructure of Liguria and the simultaneous completion of road and rail links between the Ligurian ports, Piedmont and Europe are becoming increasingly urgent as a priority option to promote the future development of the regions concerned, particularly in view of the critical position of the Community economy at present,

B. whereas the aforementioned improvement would complement the possible future construction of the Spluga rail link, because the strengthening of the infrastructure between Liguria and Piedmont would certainly benefit both the region of Lombardy and the new North-South European axis constituted by the Spluga link,

C. having regard to the scale of the work to be performed and its importance for the balanced development of the regions of Europe,

D. whereas a Community initiative in this area would be totally consistent with the criteria laid down in the Klinkenberg report concerning the priorities for European projects, particularly with reference to:

- main transport links within the Community
- local border crossings at the internal frontiers of the Community
- main air and sea links with third countries
- internal Community projects of importance for the Community's regional policy,

E. having regard to the numerous detailed parliamentary initiatives that have already been debated by the European Parliament, with the aim of encouraging the EEC to finance transport infrastructure (especially roads, motorways, tunnels, railways and airports), with particular reference amongst many others - to those by Mr Cot on the delays in the creation of access roads

to the Frejus tunnel; by Mr Bettiza on Community action for the relaxation of tariffs to help the port of Trieste; by Mr Ceccovini on the link between Trieste and Central Europe; by Mr Bonaccini, Mr Carossino, Mrs Cassamagnago, Mr Diana, Mr Giavazzi, Mr Leonardi, Mr Macario, Mr Ripa, Mr Sassano and Mr Travaglini on the Spluga rail tunnel; by Mr Carossino, Mr Cardia, Mr Fanti, Mr Ceravolo, Mr De Pasquale, Mr Gouthier and Mr Spinelli on the inclusion of ports and airports amongst the infrastructures which may be financed by the Community and, naturally, the Klinkenberg report by the Committee on Transport, which calls for the definition of a Community policy on transport infrastructure and for direct Community action in this important sector,

F. having regard to the position expressed by the European Parliament's Committee on Transport on the Commission's Memorandum, with regard to direct EEC intervention to finance transport infrastructure through the use of an ad hoc intervention instrument, with resources raised from the taxation of mineral oils and through the rational coordination of the existing Community instruments, including the ERDF, EIB, 'Ortoli facility' and EMS subsidies,

Having regard to the above considerations:

1. Stresses the priority importance of Community action in the regions of Liguria and Piedmont in the field of port, motorway, road, rail and trans-alpine infrastructures;
2. Calls therefore for substantial Community intervention to finance the necessary infrastructures, to be considered additional to any initiatives undertaken by the individual Member States, and ensuring that the practical implementation of existing programmes is speeded up to keep down construction costs and make the benefits deriving from the completion of port and road infrastructures rapidly available;
3. Points out that the current shortcomings of port structures in Liguria are an increasingly urgent problem in the light of the vital need for sea links on the routes between Europe and the Middle East, North Africa and Suez and in view of the development of industrialization along the Mediterranean coast of Africa.

4. In the light of the above:

Two fundamental considerations emerge from an analysis of the present and foreseeable development of the Ligurian port system:

(a) The Ligurian ports, together with Marseille and Livorno, can be seen as constituting the South-West coast of Europe, rather than belonging to particular individual countries; indeed, the volume of traffic they deal with is evidence of the essential role they play on behalf of the whole continent;

In 1977, 76.6 million tonnes of merchandise passed through the Ligurian ports. In the same period Livorno and Marseille handled 11.3 and 97.4 million tonnes respectively. Between them, these ports handled 23.2% of all the merchandise passing through European ports. Of the Mediterranean ports, Genoa in particular plays an important role in the field of dry cargo, from bulk goods to containers. This is a vital sector, given that Genoa handles 258 thousand units of cargo per year, the equivalent of 30% of all port traffic in the Northern Mediterranean. However, in order to retain this share of the market in the 1980s, it is clear that Genoa and Savona will have to raise their annual capacity, over and above their quota of ferry traffic, which will be possible only if the port structures are substantially improved.

(b) Whereas the trend for Marseille, and to a lesser extent Livorno, is one of constant growth, the development of the Ligurian ports has been held back by severe difficulties of organization and, in particular, infrastructure. There is a clear danger of causing serious regional imbalances in the economic system and infrastructure of South-West Europe.

5. In the light of the above considerations, the European Parliament believes it necessary to overcome a number of specific restrictions and obstacles in order to create the conditions for the genuine development of the Ligurian ports.

In the past these restrictions have occurred in two areas: organization and infrastructure.

(a) As far as organization is concerned, the problem is one of increasing the productivity of port operations to attain a sufficient degree of efficiency. To achieve this aim it is first of all necessary to reduce the present conflicts between the various public and private users. This is an internal problem in which direct Community intervention is of little use. However, in view of the political significance assumed by the issue, attention must be forcefully drawn to its existence.

(b) Secondly, action must be taken on infrastructures to create the basic conditions for the quantitative and qualitative improvement of work in the ports.

The most serious problem for the Ligurian ports is the lack of space in the immediate vicinity of the docks. A comparison with the ports of Northern Europe on this point produces alarming results: Genoa and Savona have 100 sq. m. of surface area available for every linear metre of quay, while Rotterdam has 400 sq. m.

Action must first of all be taken therefore to improve the capacity of the quays, giving due consideration to the possibility of using inland areas of Liguria and Piedmont;

6. Although an important role can be played in the first place by the regional and local public authorities of Piedmont and Liguria, particularly in defining joint regional planning programmes, it is within the framework of these programmes that a place can be found for specific projects financed by the Community instruments and aimed at strengthening port structures, completing road links with Europe and establishing intermediate centres to improve the organization of traffic and the transportation of goods;

7. A decisive step in the direction indicated above, as far as port structures are concerned, would be the completion of the Genoa-Voltri and Savona-Vado ports, on which work has been in progress for some time but has been continually held up by serious financial problems.



An idea of the true scale of the problem can be obtained from the following considerations:

(a) The pilot project for the Ligurian ports system, drawn up in 1980 by Italimpianti at the request of the Region of Liguria and the Ministry of Shipping, contains the following calculation of foreseeable costs for the completion of the Ligurian port structures programme: expenditure of around 620 thousand million lire, at 1980 prices, for the period 1980-1990, for the completion of work on docks I-II-III-IV (1150m.) at Voltri and Capo Vado (610m.), bulk goods docks I and II at Vado and docks I-II-III at Vado North (800m.), phases 1 and 2 at La Spezia and phases 1 and 2 (completion) of the port of Imperia.

(b) The finance actually granted has fallen far short of the requirements laid down, not least because of delays in the allocation of national funds.

The release of funds for the construction of port structures is governed by state laws, the last of which, Law no 843 of 22 December 1978, made provision for appropriations of 885 thousand million lire for the three-year period 1979-81, of which less than half was to be used for the Ligurian ports. This state aid has also been supplemented in recent years by appropriations in the order of 6-7 hundred million lire from the Region of Liguria;

8. In view of the lack of space for the movement of goods from which the Ligurian ports suffer - a deficiency due to the orographic features of the region and therefore irremediable - serious consideration should be given to the possibility of making proper use of intermediate ports and goods depots. The proposal to improve inter-port structures in the Tortona-Ovada-Alessandria triangle and the rapid completion of the intermediate goods centre in Turin are of particular importance in this connection. Infrastructures of this type could play an important role in linking and rationalizing the traffic of goods between Europe and the Ligurian ports, by organizing the forwarding of loads to and from the ports and acting as a valve regulating the flow of traffic and absorbing excesses or dealing with more complex operations involving the transition from one mode of transport (rail) to another (road);

9. Finally, it should be stressed that, in addition to the improvement of port infrastructures, the main rail links between the Ligurian ports and Piedmont need to be modernized and completed, particularly those situated on the main routes into Europe like Sempione, Mont Blanc, Frejus and the Ventimiglia pass.

In this connection, the realization of the following projects is of particular importance:

(a) Rail sector

- Rail link between Voltri and Rivarolo for port traffic, to connect initially with existing lines and in anticipation of the construction of a third pass;
- Extension of the Savona-S. Giuseppe rail line to Ceva and Alessandria to provide a direct link from the port of Savona to Turin and Domodossola;
- A third Giòvi rail pass to offset the reduced capacity of existing links between the Ligurian ports, particularly Genoa, and the rail routes towards Turin-Modane-Chambery and Novara-Domodossola-Briga;
- Development of the Genoa-Ventimiglia railway line beyond the Finale Ligure-San Lorenzo al Mare section, to provide a modern, high-capacity railway linking Piedmont and Liguria with Nice, Marseille and the western Mediterranean regions;

(b) Road sector

- Turin-Frejus link, providing a direct link for traffic between the Ligurian ports and the North of France;
- Voltri-Sempione motorway: completion of the section Stroppia-Gravellona Toce, providing a direct link between the port of Genoa, the new port at Voltri and the Sempione pass;
- Development of the Turin-Savona road link, to provide a direct link from the port of Savona, the capacity of which has been increased by the new docks at Vado, to Turin and Frejus;
- Carcare-Predosa link, to provide a direct connection for road traffic between the port of Savona-Vado and the main Novara-Sempione route;

- N.28 trunk road Imperia-Pieve di Teco-Ormea-Ceva, to provide a direct link between the port of Imperia and Turin and an alternative route between Turin, the Ventimiglia pass and the South of France;
- N.29 and 30 trunk road Savona-Acqui-Alessandria, to provide a direct link between the port of Savona and the highly-industrialized Po Valley area;

10. Believes firmly, therefore, that the action required to restructure the North-South transport system in Europe must involve rapid and substantial intervention in the North Mediterranean area (the Ligurian ports in coordination with Livorno on the one side and Marseille on the other) backed up by the completion of efficient motorway links and the alpine tunnel system;

11. Notes the urgent need for a Community regulation concerning financial support for infrastructure projects of not only national, but international interest;

12. Calls for the coordination of the necessary intervention at three levels - Italian Government, Italian local and regional authorities and Community institutions.