Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 1084 (1996)[1]

European transport policies (reply to the 40th and 41st annual reports of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT))

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly has taken note of the 40th and 41st annual reports of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) (Docs. 7211 and 7452) covering 1993 and 1994 respectively.

2. The Assembly welcomes the expanding circle of ECMT member states, now standing at thirty-one, as well as associate members and observers. The Assembly, in recognition of the primordial importance of transport for economic development, hopes that the ECMT may soon bring together all European countries in a quest for joint strategies.

3. With the overcoming of the divisions between Europe's different parts, the continent has a unique opportunity to seek pan-European solutions to its transport problems. The Assembly welcomes the ECMT's efforts to work closely with the European Union towards this end. Such co-operation must ensure adequate transport links with and among countries at present outside the European Union, including north-south routes in central and eastern Europe.

4. The Assembly considers that the organisation should accord particular priority to the improvement of the transport systems in central and eastern Europe and their integration with those of the rest of the continent; the reconciliation of transport needs with the protection of the environment and the quality oflife; and the easing of congestion in road traffic through greater use of other modes of transport, such as collective urban transport, railways, inland waterways and maritime transport, especially short-distance sea shipping.

5. Despite governments' pledges and promises to diversify transport, road transport is continually increasing. The Assembly therefore believes that, in freight transport, it is essential to make a policy commitment to priority development and to making better use of rail and short-distance sea shipping and existing navigable waterways.

6. The Assembly regrets that investment by ECMT member countries in transport infrastructure has, for many years, been insufficient to meet rising demand, and fears that this may already negatively affect economic growth. This holds not only for congestion on roads but also for the railways, which merit as much support as other modes of transport and where an efficient pan-European passenger and freight network presupposes a bolder co-operation among national authorities.

7. The Assembly encourages the ECMT to explore Europe's possibility of exploiting fully its potential for water transport - inland water ways, short-distance sea shipping and maritime transport - thereby reducing the burden of land transport, especially on roads.

8. Recognising the overall lack of co-ordination of European land, water and air transport policies, the Assembly calls for the closest possible co-operation between the ECMT and, in particular, the European Union, the European Civil Aviation Conference and sea and inland water transport authorities concerned,

---

1. Assembly debate on 23 April 1996 (11th Sitting) (see Doc. 7506, report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, rapporteur: Mr Pavlidis; and Doc. 7515, opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, rapporteur: Mr Staes) Text unanimously adopted by the Assembly on 23 April 1996 (11th Sitting).

especially regarding the areas of interface between various modes of transport, such as connections at airports and ports or in the development of high-speed trains. However, it is important not to lose sight of the overriding requirement of developing a national network that is both effective and attracts users.

9. The Assembly strongly supports the ECMT's special efforts to assist countries of central and eastern Europe in building up and modernising their transport system.

10. The Assembly welcomes the ECMT's efforts to limit the damage caused by transport to the environment and the quality of life, including the special case of the Alpine region. In particular it considers that the transport investments made or planned to protect the Alpine environment point the way to a more harmonious, global and environmentally sound integration of different modes of transport.

11. The Assembly specifically welcomes the ECMT's recommendation for limiting transport-related pollution, especially CO2 emissions, and recalls the urgency of policies designed to halt global warming. Here it is essential that there be concerted political action at European level to stabilise and reduce CO2 emissions by introducing appropriate measures.

12. The Assembly welcomes the co-operation between the Council of Europe and the ECMT in many practical projects relating to road safety, the most recent being the 1994 Joint Conference on Road Safety Education for Young Children and Teenagers. In this connection it is keen to see a ban on all advertising which encourages aggressive behaviour on the roads, particularly advertising aimed at the young.

13. More specifically, the Assembly calls on ECMT and Council of Europe member states to:

13.1. implement ECMT recommendations to enhance road safety, including better school education as emphasised in the above-mentioned 1994 Council of Europe-ECMT conference on road safety, and to require that anyone who has behaved dangerously or aggressively several times on the roads attend a course of instruction in road safety and tolerance, which could also be given by children;

13.2. speed up the introduction of electronic data processing to assist traffic management, and in particular to ensure "inter-operability" between different national systems and different transport systems;

13.3. harmonise working conditions in the transport sector in all ECMT countries, in the interest of traffic safety and fair competition - in particular as concerns lorry and bus transport - and to examine the possibility of a joint ECMT-Council of Europe project concentrating on the social aspects of this issue;

13.4. work together in favour of the implementation, as a matter of priority, of transport projects to which the European Union is already committed and which have been established in close co-operation with the ECMT, on the understanding that they are to serve Europe as a whole