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*****I** **REPORT**

on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 96/48/EC and Directive 2001/16/EC on the interoperability of the trans-European rail system
(COM(2002) 22 – C5-0045/2002 – 2002/0023(COD))

Committee on Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism

Rapporteur: Sylviane H. Ainardi

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
majority of the votes cast
- **I Cooperation procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- **II Cooperation procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- *** Assent procedure
*majority of Parliament's component Members except in cases
covered by Articles 105, 107, 161 and 300 of the EC Treaty and
Article 7 of the EU Treaty*
- ***I Codecision procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- ***II Codecision procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- ***III Codecision procedure (third reading)
majority of the votes cast, to approve the joint text

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the Commission)

Amendments to a legislative text

In amendments by Parliament, amended text is highlighted in ***bold italics***. Highlighting in *normal italics* is an indication for the relevant departments showing parts of the legislative text for which a correction is proposed, to assist preparation of the final text (for instance, obvious errors or omissions in a given language version). These suggested corrections are subject to the agreement of the departments concerned.

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PROCEDURAL PAGE

By letter of 24 June 2002 the Commission submitted to Parliament, pursuant to Article 251(2) and Articles 71 and 156 of the EC Treaty, the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 96/48/EC and Directive 2001/16/EC on the interoperability of the trans-European rail system (COM(2002) 22 – 2002/0023(COD)).

At the sitting of 27 February 2002 the President of Parliament announced that he had referred this proposal to the Committee on Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism as the committee responsible and the Committee on Legal Affairs and the Internal Market and the Committee on Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy for their opinions (C5-0045/2002).

The Committee on Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism had appointed Sylviane H. Ainardi rapporteur at its meeting of 21 February 2002.

It considered the Commission proposal and draft report at its meetings of 11 July 2002, 4 November and 27 November 2002.

At the last meeting it adopted the draft legislative resolution by 36 votes to 0, with 16 abstentions.

The following were present for the vote: Luciano Caveri, chairman; Rijk van Dam, Gilles Savary et Helmuth Markov, vice-chairmen; Sylviane H. Ainardi, rapporteur; Emmanouil Bakopoulos, Rolf Berend, Philip Charles Bradbourn, Felipe Camisón Asensio, Luigi Cocilovo, Danielle Darras, Jean-Maurice Dehousse (for Mark Francis Watts), Jan Dhaene, Den Dover (for Sérgio Marques), Garrelt Duin, Giovanni Claudio Fava, Jacqueline Foster, Mathieu J.H. Grosch, Catherine Guy-Quint (for John Hume), Konstantinos Hatzidakis, Ewa Hedkvist Petersen, Juan de Dios Izquierdo Collado, Georg Jarzembowski, Karsten Knolle (for Ingo Schmitt), Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Giorgio Lisi, Nelly Maes, Emmanouil Mastorakis, Erik Meijer, Francesco Musotto, James Nicholson, Camilo Nogueira Román, Josu Ortuondo Larrea, Karla M.H. Peijs, Giovanni Pittella (for Rosa Miguélez Ramos), Samuli Pohjamo, Bernard Poignant, Reinhard Rack, Carlos Ripoll y Martínez de Bedoya, Dana Rosemary Scallon, Agnes Schierhuber (for Christine de Veyrac), Brian Simpson, Renate Sommer, Dirk Sterckx, Ulrich Stockmann, Margie Sudre, Hannes Swoboda (for Wilhelm Ernst Piecyk), Roseline Vachetta (for Alonso José Puerta), Joaquim Vairinhos, Ari Vatanen, Herman Vermeer and Brigitte Wenzel-Perillo (for José Javier Pomés Ruiz).

The Committee on Legal Affairs and the Internal Market and the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy decided on 27 March 2002 not to deliver opinions.

The report was tabled on 29 November 2002.

DRAFT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

European Parliament legislative resolution on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 96/48/EC and Directive 2001/16/EC on the interoperability of the trans-European rail system (COM(2002) 22 – C5-0045/2002 – 2002/0023(COD))

(Codecision procedure: first reading)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2002) 22¹),
 - having regard to Article 251(2) and Articles 7 and 156 of the EC Treaty, pursuant to which the Commission submitted the proposal to Parliament (C5-0045/2002),
 - having regard to Rule 67 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism (A5-0418/2002),
1. Approves the Commission proposal as amended;
 2. Asks to be consulted again should the Commission intend to amend the proposal substantially or replace it with another text;
 3. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council and Commission.

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendments by Parliament

Amendment 1
RECITAL 7

(7) The entry into force of Directives 2001/12/EC [14], 2001/13/EC [15] and 2001/14/EC [16] has an impact on the implementation of interoperability. In particular, Directive 2001/12/EC provides for complete opening up of the rail network to international freight services in 2008. As in the case of other transport modes, the extension of access rights must be accompanied by the requisite harmonisation measures. It is therefore necessary to implement interoperability

(7) If the rail sector is to be revitalised, international traffic must be able to flow freely, something which can be achieved only through interoperability. Such interoperability can only be fully effective if it extends to all rail networks and permits full interconnection of the different parts of the networks. It is therefore necessary to implement interoperability on the whole network.

¹ OJ C 126 E, 28.5.2002, p. 312.

on the whole network by extending the geographical scope of Directive 2001/16/EC. It is also necessary to extend the legal basis of Directive 2001/16/EC to Article 71 of the Treaty, on which Directive 2001/12/EC is founded.

Justification

The aim must be to extend interoperability to the whole network as the only way of ensuring the free flow of traffic required throughout the European Union.

Amendment 2

ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 1

Article 1, paragraph 1, subparagraph 2 (Directive 96/48/EC)

These conditions concern the design, construction, putting into service, upgrading, renewal, operation and maintenance of the parts of this system put into service after the date of entry into force of this Directive, as well as the qualifications and health and safety conditions of the staff who contribute to its operation.

These conditions concern the design, construction, putting into service, upgrading, renewal, operation and maintenance of the parts of this system put into service after the date of entry into force of this Directive, as well as the qualifications and health and safety conditions of the staff who contribute to its operation **and maintenance**.

Justification

The aim is to correct an oversight. Reference to the maintenance of the parts of the system should automatically entail a reference to the staff responsible for it.

Amendment 3

ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 1

Article 1, paragraph 2, introductory part (Directive 96/48/EC)

2. The pursuit of this objective must lead to the definition of a **minimum** level of technical harmonisation and make it possible to:

2. The pursuit of this objective must lead to the definition of a **high** level of technical harmonisation and make it possible to:

Justification

For safety reasons in particular, the harmonisation vital in this area must be more than minimum.

Amendment 4
ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 2
Article 2, point (p a) (new) (Directive 96/48/EC)

(pa) “placing on the market” means the voluntary transfer, irrespective of title, of the product to another to dispose of or use. Dispatch to the recipient is sufficient.

The handing over of a constituent with a view to storage or scrapping or for (further) testing does not constitute placing on the market.

Justification

As the meaning of the term ‘placing on the market’ (as used in Articles 8, 9 and 12) is not fully apparent from the wording, possible problem areas (such as issues of liability, etc) should be ruled out from the start.

Amendment 5
ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 3, POINT a)
Article 5, paragraph 1 (Directive 96/48/EC)

“1. Each of the subsystems shall be covered by one or more TSIs. In the case of subsystems concerning the environment or users, TSIs will be drawn up only to the extent necessary. A supplementary TSI may prove necessary, in particular to promote the use of the high-speed rail system for the carriage of high value-added goods or for applications necessary in order to interconnect the high-speed rail system with airports.”

“1. Each of the subsystems shall be covered by one or more TSIs. In the case of subsystems concerning the environment or users, TSIs will be drawn up only to the extent necessary. A supplementary TSI may prove necessary, in particular to promote the use of the high-speed rail system for the carriage of high value-added goods or for applications necessary in order to interconnect the high-speed rail system with airports. ***In this case the provisions of this Article also apply to the part of the subsystem concerned.***”

Justification

Bringing Article 5 of Directive 96/48 into line with Article 5 of Directive 2001/16.

Amendment 6

ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 3, POINT c)
Article 5, paragraph 6 (Directive 96/48/EC)

“6. TSIs may make an explicit reference to European standards or specifications where this is strictly necessary in order to achieve the objectives of this Directive. In such case, these European standards or specifications (or the relevant parts) shall be regarded as annexes to the TSI concerned and shall become mandatory from the moment the TSI is applicable. In the absence of European specifications and pending their development, reference may be made to other normative documents; in such case, this shall concern documents that are easily accessible and in the public domain.”

“6. TSIs may make an explicit ***and dated*** reference to European standards or specifications where this is strictly necessary in order to achieve the objectives of this Directive. In such case, these European standards or specifications (or the relevant parts) shall be regarded as annexes to the TSI concerned and shall become mandatory from the moment the TSI is applicable. In the absence of European specifications and pending their development, reference may be made to other normative documents; in such case, this shall concern documents that are easily accessible and in the public domain.”

Justification

If the reference is dated, this means that only standards bearing the date of publication are valid, and not subsequent amended versions. Otherwise, the European Union would no longer have control over the content of the TSIs.

Amendment 7

ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 4
Article 6, paragraph 3 (Directive 96/48/EC)

3. The preparation, adoption and review of TSIs shall take account of the estimated ***cost*** of technical solutions by which they may be met, with a view to defining and implementing the most viable solutions. To that end, the Agency shall attach to each draft TSI an assessment of the estimated costs and benefits of those technical solutions for all the economic operators

3. The preparation, adoption and review of TSIs shall take account of the estimated ***economic costs*** of technical solutions by which they may be met, with a view to defining and implementing the most viable solutions. To that end, the Agency shall attach to each draft TSI an assessment ***of the expected benefits in terms of market share and traffic development, as well as the environment, safety and the social***

and agents concerned.

dimension, together with an assessment of the estimated costs and benefits of those technical solutions for all the economic operators and agents concerned.

Justification

It is important that the economic assessments should be performed in a rigorous manner to act as a proper guide for decisions and investments and to ensure that the necessary safety levels are provided and that account is taken of environmental and social concerns.

Amendment 8

ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 14

Article 21, paragraph 3 a (new) (Directive 96/48/EC)

3a. Should it prove necessary, the Committee may set up working parties to aid it in carrying out its tasks, in particular with a view to coordinating the notified bodies.”

Justification

No explanation is given for why this paragraph has been removed from the existing Directive and it is therefore proposed to reinstate it.

Amendment 9

ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 18 A (NEW)

Annex III, 2.4.3 a (new) (Directive 96/48/EC)

18a. The following point is inserted in Annex III:

“2.4.3a. Controls

Trains must be equipped with a recording device. The data collected by this device and the processing of the information must be harmonised.”

Justification

For reasons of safety and control, following the example of the road and air transport networks, trains must be equipped with a device to record operations undertaken during the journey. The data collected and the procedures for processing them must be harmonised.

Amendment 10

ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 18 B (NEW)
Annex III (Directive 96/48/EC)

18b. The following paragraph is inserted in Annex III:

“2.7.3a. Operational communications: Alignment of the rules and procedures used by the different networks and the development of a common code or vocabulary for operational communications for and between managers, traffic control and all railway staff performing safety tasks must be such as to ensure operating efficiency and safety on the trans-European high-speed rail system.”

Justification

The harmonisation of operational communications must be included under the ‘operation’ subsystem. It is an essential aspect, above all for cross-border journeys where it is important that the various parties concerned use a terminology or code to prevent misunderstandings.

Amendment 11

ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 1 A (NEW)
Article 1, paragraph 1 (Directive 2001/16/EC)

1a. In Article 1, paragraph 1 is replaced by the following:

“1. The aim of this Directive is to establish the conditions to be met to achieve interoperability within Community territory of the trans-European high-speed rail system as described in Annex I. These conditions

concern the design, construction, putting into service, upgrading, renewal, operation and maintenance of the parts of this system put into service after the date of entry into force of this Directive, as well as the qualifications and health and safety conditions of the staff who contribute to its operation and maintenance.”

Justification

The aim is to correct an oversight. Reference to the maintenance of the parts of the system should automatically entail a reference to the staff responsible for it.

Amendment 12

ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 1 B (NEW)

Article 1, paragraph 2, subparagraph 1 (Directive 2001/16/EC)

1b. Paragraph 2, first subparagraph, is replaced by the following:

“The pursuit of this objective must lead to the definition of a high level of technical harmonisation and make it possible to:”

Justification

See justification to Amendment 3.

Amendment 13

ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 2

Article 1, paragraph 3

3. With effect from 1 January 2008, the scope of this Directive shall be extended to the whole rail system, except for infrastructure and rolling stock reserved for a strictly local, historical or tourist use and isolated from the rest of the rail system.

3. With effect from 1 January 2008, the scope of this Directive shall be extended to the whole rail system, except for infrastructure and rolling stock reserved for a strictly local, historical or tourist use and isolated from the rest of the rail system.

Infrastructure and rolling stock reserved for a strictly local use shall also be excluded from the scope of the directive, even if they are not physically cut off from

the rest of the rail system.

Justification

According to the Commission proposal, exceptions to the application of the directive are possible only when all the conditions set out in Article 2(2) are met, in other words where infrastructure and rolling stock are reserved for a strictly local use and are isolated from the rest of the rail system. The proposal fails to take into account the fact that there are infrastructures and rolling stock which are reserved for strictly local or specific use but are not physically cut off from the rest of the rail system. Extending interoperability standards to these lines could jeopardise their viability, something which should be avoided.

Amendment 14

ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 3 A (NEW)

Article 2, paragraph (p a) (new) (Directive 2001/16/EC)

3a) The following paragraph (pa) is inserted in Article 2:

“(pa) “placing on the market” means the voluntary transfer, irrespective of title, of the product to another to dispose of or use. Dispatch to the recipient is sufficient.

The handing over of a constituent with a view to storage or scrapping or for (further) testing does not constitute placing on the market.”

Justification

As the meaning of the term ‘placing on the market’ (as used in Articles 8, 9 and 12) is not fully apparent from the wording, possible problem areas (such as issues of liability, etc) should be ruled out from the start.

Amendment 15

ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 4 (b)

Article 5, paragraph 7 (Directive 2001/16/EC)

“TSIs may make an explicit reference to European standards or specifications where this is strictly necessary in order to achieve the objectives of this Directive. In such case, these European standards or specifications (or the relevant parts) shall

“TSIs may make an explicit ***and dated*** reference to European standards or specifications where this is strictly necessary in order to achieve the objectives of this Directive. In such case, these European standards or specifications (or

be regarded as annexes to the TSI concerned and shall become mandatory from the moment the TSI is applicable. In the absence of European specifications and pending their development, reference may be made to other normative documents; in such case, this shall concern documents that are easily accessible and in the public domain.”

the relevant parts) shall be regarded as annexes to the TSI concerned and shall become mandatory from the moment the TSI is applicable. In the absence of European specifications and pending their development, reference may be made to other normative documents; in such case, this shall concern documents that are easily accessible and in the public domain.”

Justification

See justification to Amendment 6.

Amendment 16
ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 5
Article 6, paragraph 4 (Directive 2001/16/EC)

5. The drafting, adoption and review of each TSI (including the basic parameters) shall take account of the estimated costs and benefits of all the technical solutions considered together with the interfaces between them, so as to establish and implement the most viable solutions. The Member States shall participate in this assessment by providing the requisite data.

4. The drafting, adoption and review of each TSI (including the basic parameters) shall take account of the estimated **economic** costs and benefits of all the technical solutions considered together with the interfaces between them, so as to establish and implement the most viable solutions, **in terms of market share and traffic development, as well as the environment, safety and the social dimension.** The Member States shall participate in this assessment by providing the requisite data.

Justification

See justification to Amendment 7. (The numbering of the paragraphs in Article 6 is wrong, since paragraph 4 is missing. This amendment therefore uses the correct numbering).

Amendment 17
ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 5 A (NEW)
Article 7 (Directive 2001/16/EC)

5 a) In Article 7, the following new paragraph is inserted at the end:

“A Member State need not apply one or more TSIs, except those relating to rolling stock, for any project concerning the renewal or upgrading of an existing line which is not part of the trans-European conventional rail system.”

Justification

In the case of lines that are not part of the trans-European (TEN) network, the potential burden on Member States and the Commission of scrutinising all requests for derogations from the TSIs for infrastructure projects against specified common criteria is not justified by any broader interest in whether the case for making non-TEN lines more interoperable for international trains has been properly considered. The criteria should be left to Member States' discretion.

Amendment 18

ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 7 A (NEW)
Article 13, paragraph 2 (Directive 2001/16/EC)

7 a) Article 13, paragraph 2 is amended as follows :

“2. Where so required by the TSIs , assessment of the conformity or suitability for use of an interoperability constituent shall be carried out by the notified body with which the manufacturer or his authorised representative established in the Community has lodged the application.”

Justification

Aligns Article 13 paragraph 2 of Directive 2001/16 on Article 13 paragraph 2 of Directive 96/48, which stipulates that recourse to notified bodies for the assessment of conformity or suitability for use of an interoperability constituent is necessary if so required by the TSIs.

Amendment 19

ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 12 A (NEW)
Annex III, 2.4.3 (a) (new) (Directive 2001/16/EC)

12a) In Annex III, the following point is inserted:

“2.4.3a. Controls

Trains must be equipped with a recording device. The data collected by this device and the processing of the information must be harmonised.”

Justification

See justification to Amendment 9.

Amendment 20
ARTICLE 2, PARAGRAPH 12 B (NEW)
Annex III (Directive 2001/16/EC)

12b) The following paragraph is inserted in Annex III:

“2.6.3a. Operational communications: Alignment of the rules and procedures used by the different networks and the development of a common code or vocabulary for operational communications for and between managers, traffic control and all railway staff performing safety tasks must be such as to ensure operating efficiency and safety on the trans-European conventional rail system. The different requirements and needs of cross-border services (which cross linguistic borders) and domestic services must be taken into account in this connection.”

Justification

The harmonisation of operational communications must be included under the ‘operation’ subsystem. It is an essential aspect, above all for cross-border journeys where it is important that the various parties concerned use a code to prevent misunderstandings. A distinction must be drawn between international or cross-border services (which cross linguistic borders) and purely domestic services within an area where the same language is spoken. The communication problem does not arise in the latter case.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The rail transport sector is of crucial importance to Europe in the 21st century. Given the striking increase in the volume of freight transport, it is vital to improve rail transport in terms of both quantity and quality, if we really want to protect the environment and save energy, and live in a world where roads are not totally saturated. In other words, as the White Paper has highlighted, the future of transport in Europe, particularly if it is to be sustainable and in harmony with the way citizens live, depends to a large extent on revitalising rail transport.

Progress in developing international exchanges and interoperability in the rail sector has been slow. Widely differing and frequently incompatible national technical specifications and standards have held up the vital harmonisation of the whole European network. Each border crossing involves a change in reference standards and thus in staff, and hence produces delays. This is one of the reasons why rail freight is less competitive than road freight. The major disparities in external costs are another factor.

A further complication is that all the networks have been devised by operators which, because they have focused essentially on national requirements, have only belatedly taken on board the objective of international exchanges. Although cooperation between different national operators, invariably at bilateral level, has produced interesting results, capacity for interoperability needs to be given a significant boost.

To meet this requirement, the Community decided to move gradually towards the establishment of a European network, seeking to draw on cooperation with experts in the sector. Accordingly, two directives on interoperability were adopted, one concerning the high-speed network (98/48/EC) and one dealing with the conventional network (2001/16/EC). The approach was a flexible one, following an order of priority based on cost/benefit considerations.

Nevertheless, technical harmonisation in the rail sector having undergone a genuine revolution, it proved necessary first of all to develop new working methods and strike a fresh balance between the various actors involved. In particular, infrastructure managers, rail companies and the industry have come together within the European Association for Railway Interoperability (AEIF) and have worked together to produce draft TSIs (Technical specifications for interoperability). Refining these new procedures and new tools has extended the time needed to develop TSIs, initially estimated at three years, although the Commission hopes that the new high-speed lines and upgraded lines will meet the new standards by 2002.

High-speed trains

In order to avoid delays in the high-speed sector and, in particular, to ensure that new lines are not placed in service using standards incompatible with a European network, the Commission believes that the introduction of interoperability must be speeded up, which will require the new reference framework being developed in its 'second package'. It intends to focus on three priorities:

- improved coordination of investments by different Member States in cross-border projects: projects are more economically viable when infrastructures can be used at full capacity as soon as they are brought into service;

- applying TSIs to major maintenance and renewal work affecting high-speed lines already in service;
- providing financial support from the trans-European network's budget for the application of TSIs.

Conventional networks

The development of the conventional European rail system can benefit from the experience gained in high-speed sector. Indeed, the Commission did not await publication of the directive before beginning its preparatory work. AEIF experts are already working to identify crucial elements for interoperability.

While it is possible to draw on past experience, the problems relating to the adoption of TSIs for the conventional rail network should not be underestimated, since the system is not being built from scratch, but already exists. The technical and operational differences are greater and more numerous and the actors involved more diverse.

It is these reasons which have prompted the Commission to opt for a gradual adoption of TSIs, beginning with those likely to offer the best socio-economic performance.

New approach

Meanwhile, delays in introducing interoperability prompted the European Parliament, in its resolution of 17 May 2000, to call for revision of the 1996 directive (high-speed) on the basis of the new model adopted for the 2001 directive on the conventional railway system. Furthermore, the progress made with the 1996 directive and the problems encountered with the TSIs that had been developed led the Commission to propose changes to the two directives to enable them to operate more effectively.

Yet, leaving aside these factors, the idea of setting up a European Railways Agency, as proposed in the package, means that the situation has once again changed. Opening up a market where previously operators themselves laid down the technical standards and safety rules calls for central regulation and a joint supervisory authority capable of managing the introduction of interoperability and guaranteeing safety in a sector where accidents, although certainly less frequent than in other sectors, are more dramatic and make a greater impact on public opinion. It must be borne in mind that the introduction of interoperability throughout the network, thereby extending its geographical scope, is a pre-condition for developing this mode of transport.

Verdict on the proposed directive

Need for improvements

Clearly, the directive on interoperability is a positive development and an important step in revitalising the rail sector so as to help improve the prospects for the European transport sector as a whole in the coming decade, looking ahead to enlargement.

Having said that, we must remember the dual requirement – keenly felt by public opinion – that on the one hand the integration of national networks must not entail a levelling down of safety standards and, on the other, while acknowledging that centralisation of procedures will offer administrative savings and swifter harmonisation, that it will not lead to a doubling of powers and responsibilities, and thus of bureaucracy.

Need for democracy

The new approach to TSI management is seriously worrying the rail sector. Until now, the role played by the AIEF was able to ensure close cooperation at European level between the Community authorities, which were anxious to speed up the process as far as possible, and the railway sector. In the Commission's proposal, the sector's representatives find themselves excluded and, although the need to push ahead with integration is met by the central agency, transparency and representativeness will be sacrificed unless experts from the sector are involved. By the same token, it is also essential to involve the social partners in the drafting process.

Funding

Lastly, a solution must be found to the problem of the substantial extra costs generated by the need to adapt to new specifications. The measures proposed must be viable in the long term and should in no way reduce the competitiveness of the rail sector compared to other transport modes. In the present directive, however, there is no provision for funding interoperability. Falling back on the funding for the trans-European networks is not a satisfactory option and this question needs to be addressed directly.

In conclusion, it should be borne in mind also that, for a sector as specific as the railways, the contribution of those working in the sector is also vital when it comes to safety. In other words, the working environment must be taken into consideration, through the involvement of the social partners, as a crucial aspect of safety.