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Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

Transport

Luxembourg, 8 October 2015

President **François Bausch**
Luxembourg's Minister for Sustainable Development and
Infrastructure

P R E S S

Rue de la Loi 175 B – 1048 BRUSSELS Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319 / 6319 Fax: +32 (0)2 281 8026
press.office@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press>

12936/15

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CONTENTS¹**ITEMS DEBATED**

ITEMS DEBATED	3
Railway market opening and governance	3
Transport White Paper	3
European fund for strategic investments and EU financing for transport.....	4
ANY OTHER BUSINESS.....	5
– Car emissions testing	5
– Promoting cycling	5

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED*none*

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

ITEMS DEBATED

RAILWAY MARKET OPENING AND GOVERNANCE

The Council agreed a **general approach** on two proposals **to liberalise domestic rail passenger services and strengthen the governance of railway infrastructure**. The proposals are part of the market pillar of the fourth railway package.

The new rules aim to improve the quality of rail services by making them more dynamic and customer-oriented. They should also encourage investment and innovation and ensure fair competition in the rail market.

For more information, see [Railway market opening and governance: Council agrees its position](#)

[Public service obligation and governance - full text of general approach](#)

TRANSPORT WHITE PAPER

The Council held a **policy debate on EU transport policy priorities and targets** in the context of the **2011 Transport White Paper**. The White Paper aims to build a competitive transport system, while significantly reducing Europe's dependence on oil and cutting greenhouse gas emissions. The Commission is currently taking stock of its implementation.

In general, member states considered that the overall objectives of the White Paper remained relevant. A few delegations, however, thought that some short- or mid-term objectives could be readjusted to make them more realistic.

Additional efforts should be made in order to reach the goals for decarbonisation. Intermodality should be encouraged, for instance by reducing waiting times. The potential of all modes of transport ought to be used, including cycling and walking.

Many ministers stressed the importance of a single European transport area. Some highlighted the challenge of viable connections to peripheral areas.

A large number of ministers called for better implementation of existing legislation instead of adopting more legislation. Several delegations underlined the need to take into account national circumstances.

The debate also highlighted the major role of transport in the economy. The need to invest in infrastructure was confirmed as a top priority.

Innovation, digitalisation and automated driving were mentioned as new elements that had emerged since the publication of the White Paper in 2011.

Many ministers mentioned social issues. There were calls both for good working conditions in all transport sectors and for greater harmonisation in enforcement.

The EU should also support fair conditions for EU operators in global competition. This concerns in particular aviation and the maritime sector.

Lastly, several delegations called for ambitious measures on road safety.

[White Paper policy debate background document](#)

EUROPEAN FUND FOR STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS AND EU FINANCING FOR TRANSPORT

Commission Vice-President Jyrki Katainen and European Investment Bank Vice-President Pim van Ballekom briefed ministers on new opportunities linked to the European fund for strategic investments (EFSI).

The **Commission** said EFSI had already been launched and was available for both public and private sector entities. There are no quotas for any sectors or countries, rather projects are selected on merit only.

The Commission has set up a one-stop shop called the Advisory Hub to help both public and private investors. It is also planning to launch a public web portal in January.

Investment in transport is extremely low at the moment, although the sector needs a great deal of investment. Compared to other sectors, transport projects tend to have longer lead times to maturity. This makes transport investments especially challenging and complex. Project assistance is therefore particularly important in this area.

It is important to blend grants, for example from the Connecting Europe Facility or the Structural Funds, with financial instruments.

The **EIB** said that the problem was not liquidity but a lack of risk-taking by investors and project promoters. It is crucial to make the links between investors and projects and bring in new investors such as pension funds and insurance companies. It also pointed out that EFSI was a guarantee mechanism, not a fund.

The relevance of a project to competitiveness and job and growth creation is at the heart of EIB appraisal. Good project preparation will be key to success.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

– *Car emissions testing*

Commissioner Bieńkowska briefed ministers on work underway to develop **new test procedures to measure real driving emissions** (RDE) from cars.

She stressed the importance of transparency in the whole automotive sector to regain public trust.

The Commission urged all member states to carry out the necessary domestic investigations and offered its full support for this process.

The Commission said it intended to adopt the RDE package by the end of October. Relevant changes would also need to be made to the type-approval system at a later stage.

– *Promoting cycling*

The presidency briefed ministers on the **outcome of the informal meeting of transport ministers** which was held in Luxembourg on 7 October 2015. The meeting was dedicated to promoting cycling. At the end of the meeting, ministers and secretaries of state attending the event endorsed a declaration on cycling as a climate friendly mode of transport. The declaration called on the Commission to recognise bicycles as a real transport mode, to develop an EU cycling strategy and to create a European focal point where member states and regional authorities could share best practices on cycling related issues.

[Presidency information on the outcome of the informal Transport Council](#)

[Luxembourg declaration on cycling as a climate friendly transport mode](#)