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From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

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Subject: Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on
a European Year of Rail (2021)

– Outcome of proceedings

Delegations will find, attached, the negotiation mandate as endorsed by the Permanent
Representatives Committee on 24 June 2020.

Proposal for a
DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL
on a European Year of Rail (2021)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 91 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee¹,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions²,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure,

Whereas:

¹ OJ C , , p. .

² OJ C , , p. .

- (1) In its Communication of 11 December 2019¹, the Commission set out a European Green Deal for the European Union and its citizens. The European Green Deal is a new growth strategy that aims to transform the Union into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use.
- (2) In its conclusions of 12 December 2019², the European Council endorsed the objective of achieving a climate-neutral European Union by 2050.
- (3) In its resolution of 15 January 2020³, the European Parliament welcomed the Commission's communication on 'The European Green Deal' and called for the necessary transition to a climate-neutral society by 2050 at the latest.
- (4) In line with the objectives set out in the Commission Communication on the European Green Deal, there is a need to transform the Union economy and to rethink policies, in particular in the field of transport and mobility, which implies accelerating the shift to sustainable and smart mobility. Transport accounts for a quarter of the Union's greenhouse gas emissions, and still growing. To achieve climate neutrality, a 90% reduction in transport emissions is needed by 2050. Achieving sustainable transport means putting users first and providing them with more affordable, accessible, healthier and cleaner alternatives to their current mobility habits. The European Green Deal implies to accelerate the shift to sustainable and smart mobility to address these challenges. In particular, a substantial part of the 75% of inland freight carried today by road should shift onto rail and inland waterways.

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 11 December 2019 on the European Green Deal (COM/2019/640 final)

² European Council conclusions of 12 December 2019

³ European Parliament resolution of 15 January 2020 on the European Green Deal (2019/2956(RSP))

- (5) Rail has a significant role to play as a game changer to achieve the climate neutrality objective by 2050. It is one of the most environmentally friendly and energy-efficient transport modes. Rail is largely electrified and emits far less CO₂ than equivalent travel by road or air, and is the only mode that has consistently reduced its greenhouse gas emissions and CO₂ emissions since 1990. In addition, rail has decreased its energy consumption between 1990-2016¹ and increasingly uses renewable energy sources.
- (6) By connecting the Union's main transport routes with its peripheral regions and territories, the rail sector contributes to social, economic and territorial cohesion ***on continental, national, regional and municipal level.***
- (7) While the share of passenger rail in the Union land transport has only slightly increased since 2007, the share of freight has decreased. Many obstacles remain to achieve a true Single European Rail Area [...]. Overcoming these obstacles together with cost reduction, ***the study of Union schemes to supplement national mechanisms for non-discriminatory support for rail operators*** and accelerated innovation will allow rail to realise its full potential. Rail therefore needs a further boost to become more attractive to travellers and businesses alike.
- (7a) Ministers from a majority of Member States have expressed their commitment to support a European agenda for international passenger rail in a political statement on the development of international rail passenger transport presented at the informal video conference of EU transport ministers on 4th of June 2020.***
- (7b) Achieving the Single European Rail Area without borders with increased mobility for citizens and goods, as well as seamless mobility and accessibility for all users is essential for reaching transport policy objectives and for improving safe cross-border transport of freight, thus facilitating the supply of critical commodities such as food, medicines and fuels also in exceptional circumstances.***

¹ DG MOVE Statistical Pocketbook 2019 "EU transport in figures" (source: Eurostat)

- (8) In order to promote rail transport in line with the objectives set out in the Commission Communication on the European Green Deal, including with regard to sustainable and smart mobility, the year 2021 should be designated as European Year of Rail. 2021 will be an important year for the Union rail policy, it will be the first full year where the rules agreed under the Fourth Railway Package will be implemented throughout the Union, namely on the opening of the market of domestic passenger services and on reducing costs and administrative burden for railway undertakings operating across the Union. There is a growing public interest in railways, including in night trains, in a number of Member States, as also illustrated by the popularity of #DiscoverEU. Moreover, the international arts festival ‘Europalia’ will dedicate its 2021 edition to the influence of railways on the arts and highlight the role of rail as a powerful promotor of social, economic and industrial change.
- (9) *Since the objectives of this Decision, namely to promote rail transport as a sustainable, innovative and safe mode of transport and as an important element of the relations between the Union and neighbouring countries, to highlight the European, cross-border dimension of rail, to enhance the contribution of rail to Union economy, industry and society, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States given the need for transnational exchange of information and Union-wide dissemination of good practice, but can rather be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, as set out in Article 5 TEU. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that Article, this Decision does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve those objectives,*

HAVE ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Subject matter

The year 2021 shall be designated as the ‘European Year of Rail’ (hereinafter referred to as the ‘European Year’).

Article 2

Objectives

The objective of the European Year shall be to encourage and support the efforts of the Union, the Member States, regional and local authorities, and other organisations to increase the share of passengers and freight moving by rail. In particular, the European Year shall

- (a) promote rail as a sustainable, innovative and safe mode of transport, in particular by highlighting the role of rail as a game changer to help reaching the Union’s climate neutrality objective by 2050 and by reaching out to the wider public, especially youth, ***also as a career opportunity***;
- (b) highlight the European, cross-border dimension of rail, that brings citizens closer together, allows them to explore the Union in all its diversity, fosters ***social, economic and territorial*** cohesion and contributes to integrate the Union internal market, ***in particular ensuring better connectivity within and of its geographical periphery***;
- (c) enhance the contribution of rail to Union economy, industry and society, covering in particular aspects related to regional development, industrial competitiveness, sustainable tourism, innovation, employment, education, youth and culture, and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities;
- (d) contribute to promoting rail as an important element of the relations between the Union and neighbouring countries, in particular in the Western Balkans ***and in the Eastern Partnership countries***, building on the interest and needs in partner countries and on [...] expertise in rail transport ***both within and beyond the Union***;

- (e) *promote the key role of railways in international passenger transport within the Union;*
- (f) *promote the key role of railways in sustainable end-to-end mobility, connecting hubs and allowing attractive and smart transfer between modes of transport;*
- (g) *contribute to the implementation of the Fourth Railway Package and raising awareness of the measures required to establish the Single European Rail Area.*
- (h) *stimulate discussion on how to modernise rolling stock and to further develop railway infrastructure and increase its capacity in order to enable broader use of passenger and freight transport by rail;*
- (i) *distribute information on the rights of rail passengers and stimulate cooperation of all actors on overcoming current challenges, such as provision of information and ticketing, including offer of through-tickets.*

Article 3

Content of measures

1. The measures to be taken to achieve the objectives set out in Article 2 shall ***be closely coordinated with on-going activities promoting rail transport and shall*** include the following activities at Union, national, regional or local level linked to the objectives of the European Year:
 - (a) initiatives and events to promote debate, raise awareness and facilitate citizens, businesses and public authorities' engagement to attract more people and goods to rail as a means to combat climate change, through multiple channels and tools, including events in Member States;
 - (b) information, exhibitions, inspiration, education and awareness-raising campaigns to encourage changes in passenger, consumer and business behaviour and to stimulate an active contribution of the general public to achieving the objectives of more sustainable transport;

- (c) sharing experience and good practices of national, regional and local authorities, civil society, business and schools on promoting the use of rail and on how to implement behavioural change at all levels;
- (d) the undertaking of studies and innovative activities and the dissemination of their results on a European or national scale; and
- (e) the promotion of projects and networks related to the European Year, including via the media, social networks and other on-line communities.
- (f) *promotion of projects and activities aiming at raising awareness of sustainable end-to-end mobility and sustainable and smart logistics;***
- (g) *promotion of projects and activities fostering the awareness on and importance of the Single European Rail Area, notably as regards on-going implementation and actions facilitating international railway journeys.***
- (h) *promotion with a view to the realisation of an extended, modernised and interoperable railway infrastructure as well as rolling stock.***

1a. *The Commission shall consider initiating, during the European Year, a study on the feasibility of creating a European label to promote goods and products transported by rail and to encourage businesses to switch their transport to rail. The Commission shall inform of its plans the European Parliament and the Council at the latest by 31 March 2021.*

2. The Union institutions and bodies, as well as the Member States, at Union and national level respectively, may refer to the European Year and make use of its visual identity in promoting the activities referred to in paragraph 1.

Article 4

Coordination at Member State level

The organisation of participation in the European Year at national level is a responsibility of the Member States. [...] **They** shall ensure the coordination of relevant activities at national level **and the participation in the coordination at Union level.**

Article 5

Coordination at Union level

1. The Commission shall regularly convene meetings of **representatives of Member States** [...] in order to coordinate the running of the European Year. Those meetings shall also serve as opportunities to exchange information regarding the implementation of the European Year at national and Union level [...].
2. The coordination of the European Year at Union level shall have a transversal approach with a view to creating synergies between the various Union programmes and initiatives that fund projects in the field of rail transport or that have a rail dimension.
3. The Commission shall convene regular meetings of stakeholders and representatives of organisations or bodies active in the field of rail transport, including existing transnational networks and relevant NGOs, as well as of youth organisations and communities, to assist it in implementing the European Year at Union level.

The Commission may, budget allowing, organise calls for proposals and projects that can receive support for their outstanding contribution to the objectives of the year.

Article 6

International cooperation

For the purpose of the European Year, where necessary, the Commission shall cooperate with competent international organisations, while ensuring the visibility of the Union's participation.

Article 7

Monitoring and evaluation

By 31 December 2022, the Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the initiatives provided for in this Decision. ***For the evaluation of the initiatives, the Commission shall establish key performance indicators. Those performance indicators shall be recorded in the report to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. For the purpose of the report, Member States shall provide information to the Commission on the activities they have been responsible for.***

Article 8

Entry into force

This Decision shall enter into force on the [...] *fifth* day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament
The President

For the Council
The President
