



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



7272/07 (Presse 51)

PRESS RELEASE

2791st Council meeting

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

Brussels, 22 March 2007

President **Mr Wolfgang TIEFENSEE**
Federal Minister of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs of
Germany

P R E S S

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7272/07 (Presse 51)

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Main results of the Council

*The Council approved a draft **air transport agreement** reached by **EU-US** negotiators on 2 March 2007.*

*The Council adopted conclusions on the status of the concession contract negotiations in respect of the global navigation satellite system **Galileo**. It also adopted a Decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations with **non-EU countries on their participation** in the Galileo Supervisory Authority.*

*In addition, the Council reached political agreement on a proposal for a Decision on the signature and provisional application of an agreement with Russia on **Siberian overflights** payments.*

Without debate, the Council adopted:

- a common position on a draft Regulation aimed at amending, for the 2007-13 period, the rules for the granting of Community aid for the financing of **trans-European transport and energy networks**;*
- a Regulation providing for the accelerated phasing-in of **double-hull** or equivalent design requirements for single-hull **oil tankers**.*

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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.

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PARTICIPANTS

The governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Renaat LANDUYT Minister for Mobility

Bulgaria:

Mr Petar MUTAFCHIEV Minister for Transport

Czech Republic:

Mr Aleš REBIČEK Minister for Transport

Denmark:

Mr Flemming HANSEN Minister for Transport and Energy

Germany:

Mr Wolfgang TIEFENSEE Federal Minister for Transport, Building and Urban Development

Mr Jörg HENNERKES State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development

Estonia:

Mr Tiit NABER Deputy Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Martin CULLEN Minister for Transport

Greece:

Mr Mihail-Georgios LIAPIS Minister for Transport and Communications

Spain:

Mr Fernando PALAO TABOADA Secretary General for Transport, Ministry of Development

France:

Mr Dominique PERBEN Minister for Transport, Infrastructure, Tourism and the Sea

Italy:

Mr Alessandro BIANCHI Minister for Transport

Cyprus:

Mr Haris THRASSOU Minister for Communications and Works

Latvia:

Mr Ainārs ŠLESERS Minister for Transport

Lithuania:

Mr Algirdas BUTKEVIČIUS Minister for Transport and Communications

Luxembourg:

Mr Georges FRIDEN Deputy Permanent Representative

Hungary:

Mr Balázs FELSMANN State Secretary (with special responsibility), Ministry of Economic Affairs and Transport

Malta:

Mr Censu GALEA Minister for Competitiveness and Communications

Netherlands:

Mr Camiel EURLINGS Minister for Transport, Public Works and Water Management

Austria:

Mr Werner FAYMANN Federal Minister for Transport, Innovation and Technology

Ms Christa KRANZL State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology

Poland:

Mr Jerzy POLACZEK Minister for Transport

Portugal:

Mr Mário LINO

Minister for Public Works, Transport and
Communications

Romania:

Mr Constatin DASCALU

State Secretary, Ministry for Transport, Construction and
Tourism

Slovenia:

Mr Janez BOŽIČ

Minister for Transport

Slovakia:

Mr Ľubomír VÁŽNY

Minister for Transport, Post and Telecommunications

Finland:

Ms Susanna HUOVINEN

Minister for Transport and Communications

Sweden:

Ms Åsa TORSTENSSON

Minister for Communications, Ministry of Enterprise,
Energy and Communications

United Kingdom:

Mr Douglas ALEXANDER

Secretary of State for Transport

.....
Commission:

Mr Jacques BARROT

Vice President

ITEMS DEBATED**INTERMODAL QUESTIONS AND NETWORKS****GLOBAL NAVIGATION SATELLITE SYSTEM (GALILEO)****– *Stocktaking of the concession contract negotiations - Council conclusions***

In relation to the status of the concession contract negotiations with the bidding consortium for the global navigation satellite system (GNSS) and its impact on the development of the Galileo project, the Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL:

- notes with concern the report from the President of the Council and the letter from Vice President Barrot of the European Commission concerning the status of the concession negotiations;
- recalls the conclusion of the Nice European Council to implement Galileo as a public-private partnership;
- urges the bidding consortium, by 10 May 2007, to ensure the conditions for the resumption of negotiations with the GNSS Supervisory Authority (GSA) by implementing its commitments and especially the agreement of 5 December 2005, and to continue these negotiations without delay;
- expects substantial progress to be achieved in the negotiations, so that by June 2007 the Council has adequate assurance that the concession negotiations are going ahead successfully, in particular on the basis of a credible roadmap to come to contractual conclusions as soon as possible;
- invites the European Commission to assess and report by the June Council on overall progress of the Galileo project, including the outstanding issues listed by the bidding consortium as summarised in the Presidency's report and including the project cost and financing thereof, with a view to the swift progress of the project;

- invites the European Commission to submit as soon as possible for discussion possible solutions for securing the long-term public financial obligations, as requested in the Council conclusions of October 2006, including a scenario for the earliest possible provision of EGNOS satellite navigation services as precursor to Galileo, and to report to the June Council;
- requests the European Commission, assisted by GSA and ESA, to assess progress in the concession negotiations and to submit alternative scenarios, also assessed for costs, risk and affordability, for the forthcoming June Council meeting."

– *Third country participation in the European GNSS Supervisory Authority*

The Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to negotiate with non-EU countries with a view to concluding agreements on their associated membership for participation in the European GNSS Supervisory Authority (GSA).

The main objective of this decision is to provide for a harmonised approach concerning all non-EU countries by clearly defining the modalities of their participation within the GSA.

On 8 December 2006, the Commission submitted to the Council a recommendation for negotiations with non-EU countries on their associated membership within the GSA. The possibility of participation by third countries in the GSA is provided for in Regulation No 1321/2001 establishing the GSA and in various cooperation agreements on Galileo signed with non-EU countries.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT POLICY AND CLIMATE PROTECTION

On the basis of a Presidency questionnaire (6858/07), the Council held a public exchange of views on sustainable transport policy and climate protection.

The debate was conducted in the light of the European Council meeting of 8 and 9 March, which focused among other points on reducing energy consumption and strengthening climate protection, and took as a basis the Council conclusions on the contribution of the transport sector to the Lisbon Strategy, adopted on 19 February 2007.

The intention of the exchange of views was to gather opinions of Transport Ministers on concrete actions for reducing energy consumption and emissions in all transport modes. In general, Ministers underlined that transport should play an active role in questions related to energy efficiency and climate protection.

The debate focused first of all on the consumer side and on how consumers can be stimulated to change their driving behaviour in a more environmentally friendly way. In discussing means to promote a more environmentally friendly transport behaviour, several proposals were brought forward. It was recognised that consumers should be better informed, in particular by using awareness raising campaigns, promoting eco driving and labelling energy efficient cars and environmentally-friendly fuels, such as alternative fuels. Furthermore, Ministers underlined the effectiveness of financial incentives for using cleaner vehicles or fuels.

Secondly, the Council addressed the development of energy consumption emissions in maritime transport, inland navigation and rail transport. While highlighting their energy efficiency compared to road transport, Ministers underlined the need to further improve the environmental performance of these modes of transport. Concrete measures that were put forward included stimulating technological innovations, devising quality standards for fuels and engines and establishing emission norms, where needed taking due account of the international context.

Written contributions by delegations can be found in the addenda to 6858/07.

The Presidency intends to organise a follow-up to this discussion on sustainable transport and climate protection at the TTE Council in June.

AVIATION

EU-US NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT

1. The Council welcomes the results of the negotiations between the European Community and its Member States and the United States of America on a first stage comprehensive air services agreement.
2. The Council approves the agreement which will be endorsed at the forthcoming EU-US Summit on 30 April in Washington.
3. The Council also reiterates its ultimate objective of a fully liberalised open aviation area covering the EU and the US in accordance with the mandate agreed by the Council in June 2003. It underlines the importance of reaching a second stage agreement in order to pursue the benefits of liberalisation on both sides of the Atlantic. It calls upon the Commission to engage robustly with the United States Government so as to secure this goal as quickly as possible.
4. The Council instructs COREPER to proceed without delay with the necessary formalities for the signature of the agreement. In this respect, the Council confirms that:
 - (a) the provisional application of the agreement will take place from 30 March 2008. The Commission was asked to secure agreement of the United States to confirm their agreement to reflect this;
 - (b) if no Stage 2 agreement has been reached within 12 months of the start of the review mentioned in Article 21 (3), any Member State may notify to the Commission which traffic rights in relation to its own territory it wishes to suspend. Such traffic rights may not include any rights specified in the agreements mentioned in Annex 1 to the Agreement. The President of the Council on behalf of the EC and its Member States shall then give notice of the suspension of such rights to the US in accordance with Article 21 (3).

However, the Council, acting by unanimity on a proposal from the Commission, may decide not to give notice of suspension or subsequently to withdraw it.
5. The Council requests the Commission to draw up provisions to that effect for insertion in the draft Council Decisions on signature and conclusion of the EU-US air transport agreement.

SIBERIAN OVERFLIGHTS

The Council reached political agreement on a proposal for a Decision on the signature and provisional application of an agreement on agreed principles of the modernisation of the existing system of utilisation of the Transsiberian routes with Russia.

The agreement is to be signed in the margins of the EU-Russia Summit on 18 May 2007.

The Decision will be accompanied by an equalisation mechanism set up by Member States aimed at avoiding possible distortion of competition on Transsiberian routes between the Community air carriers during the transitional period, until December 2013. The agreement will apply provisionally from 1 September 2007.

In March 2006 the TTE Council adopted a Decision mandating the Commission to negotiate with Russia in order to resolve the specific issue of Siberian overflight payments. The Commission reached the agreement in the margins of the EU-Russia summit, held in Helsinki on 24 November 2006.

OTHER BUSINESS

Extension of the trans-European transport axes to the neighbouring countries

The Council took note of the Commission's presentation of a communication on "Extension of the major trans-European transport axes to the neighbouring countries" and "Guidelines for transport in Europe and neighbouring regions". It took note of the interventions of several delegations concerning the extension of the axes proposed (6115/07).

The communication is presented in the framework of the broader European Neighbourhood policy, whose main objective in the transport sector is to ensure that legislation, standards and technical specifications of our main trade partners are compatible with those of the EU. The overall aim of this communication is to facilitate and stimulate trade and traffic between the EU and the neighbouring countries through efficient transport connections, which would foster economic growth and regional development.

Implementation of the SESAR programme

The Commission presented to the Council a communication on the state of progress with the project to implement the new generation European air traffic management system (SESAR) (7525/07).

The objective of the communication is to report to the Council and the European Parliament on the state of progress with SESAR and in particular industry's participation in the project development phase.

The Council will continue the examination of this item at its TTE meeting in June.

Russian Federation's tariff policy on international railway cargo transportation

The Council took note of information provided by the Commission on the state of play in its negotiations with Russia on the tariff policy applied to railway traffic and of interventions by the Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish delegations.

EVENTS IN THE MARGINS OF THE COUNCIL

The following signatures took place in *the margins of the Council*:

- signature of an Agreement on certain aspects of air services with Malaysia;
- signature of the Euro Contrôle Route Administrative Arrangement by Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Spain, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Romania and the United Kingdom.

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Over dinner, on 21 March, Ministers discussed the development of a European energy strategy for the transport sector and over lunch, on 22 March, they discussed the Commission's proposal on including the aviation sector into the European emissions-trading scheme.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**TRANSPORT****Phasing-in of double-hull or equivalent design requirements for single-hull oil tankers**

The Council adopted a Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 417/2002, which provides for the accelerated phasing-in of double-hull or equivalent design requirements for single-hull oil tankers, in order to reduce the risk of accidental oil pollution in European waters (*PE-CONS 3670/06*).

The Greek delegation abstained from voting.

The Regulation is amended by prohibiting the carriage of heavy grades of oil in all single-hull tankers flying the flag of a Member State irrespective of the jurisdiction governing the ports, offshore terminals or the maritime area in which they operate. In addition, no oil tanker carrying heavy grades of oil, irrespective of its flag, shall be allowed to enter or leave ports or offshore terminals or to anchor in areas under the jurisdiction of a Member State, unless such tanker is a double-hull oil tanker.

Trans-European transport and energy networks

The Council, on the basis of a political agreement reached at its meeting on 11 and 12 December, adopted a common position on a draft Regulation aimed at amending, for the 2007-13 period, the rules for the granting of Community aid for the financing of trans-European transport and energy networks (*17032/06 + ADD 1*).

The Council's common position will be sent to the European Parliament for a second reading under the Parliament-Council codecision procedure.

The draft Regulation provides for an increase in the level of Community cofinancing of transport and energy networks, in particular for cross-border projects, transit projects or projects crossing natural barriers. Amending Council Regulation No 2236/95, it is aimed at enabling better use of existing networks, as well as the removal of bottlenecks and the completion of missing links.

The text provides for a financial reference amount of EUR 8 168 million for the seven-year period, of which EUR 8 013 million for transport networks and EUR 155 million for energy networks.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Strategy for a secure information society in Europe

Following legal linguistic revision the Council adopted a Resolution on a Strategy for a Secure Information Society in Europe (16708/06, 6253/07).

The Resolution will be published in the Official Journal of the EU.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Drugs

In their Joint Report, EMCDDA and Europol noted that the health and social risks caused by the use of, the manufacture of, and traffic in, BZP, as well as the involvement of organised crime and possible consequences of control measures, could be thoroughly assessed through a risk assessment procedure as provided for in by Article 6 of Council Decision 2005/387/JHA (OJ L 127, 20.5.2005, p.32).

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Agreements with Moldova and Ukraine - EU enlargement

The Council adopted decisions approving the signing and provisional application of protocols to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with Moldova and Ukraine in order to take account of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU. The Council will ask for the opinion of the Parliament on these protocols with a view to their subsequent conclusion.

RESEARCH

Cooperation agreement on intelligent manufacturing systems

The Council adopted a Decision authorising the conclusion of an Agreement renewing and modifying the Agreement on research and development activities in the domain of intelligent manufacturing systems (IMS) between the European Community and Australia, Canada, Norway, Korea, Japan, Switzerland and the United States of America (5749/07).

The IMS scheme is an international and multilateral cooperation scheme in which participants work cooperatively to boost industrial competitiveness, solve problems facing manufacturing worldwide, and develop advanced manufacturing technologies and systems to benefit humanity.

The IMS agreement, which expired in April 2005, will be renewed for a duration of 10 years.

HEALTH

Health programme

The Council adopted a Common Position with a view to the establishment of a second programme of Community action in the field of health, (2007-2013) (16369/1/06). The text will be sent to the European Parliament as a basis for the second reading.

The programme aims at promoting health, improving citizen's health security and at generating and disseminating health information and knowledge.

Its objective is to prevent major diseases and contribute to reducing their incidence as well as the morbidity and mortality caused by them.

The financial envelope allocated to the programme is EUR 365 600 000 for the period specified.

SOCIAL POLICY

European system of integrated social protection statistics

The Council adopted at first reading, accepting all the amendments suggested by the European Parliament, a Regulation setting up the European system of integrated social protection statistics (ESSPROS) (PE-CONS 3672/06).

The new system permits the production of harmonised data, by providing:

- a methodological framework based on common standards, definitions, classifications and accounting rules to be used for compiling statistics on a comparable basis for the benefit of the Community; and
- time limits for the transmission of statistics compiled in accordance with ESSPROS.

INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Joint declaration on the Community co-decision procedure

The Council approved the text of a Joint Declaration by the Parliament, the Council and the Commission on practical arrangements for the co-decision procedure (7061/07).

The Joint Declaration clarifies working methods and practical arrangements between the three institutions with a view to making even more effective use of the full scope of the co-decision procedure as established by the EC Treaty (Article 251). It replaces the 1999 Joint Declaration.

APPOINTMENTS

Committee of the Regions

The Council adopted Decisions appointing to the Committee of the Regions (7251/07, 7133/07) for the remainder of the current term of office, which runs until 25 January 2010:

(a) as members:

- Ms Emilia MÜLLER to replace Mr SINNER,
- Ms Uta-Maria KUDER, Justizministerin des Landes Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, to replace Mr HOLTER,

and

(b) as alternate members:

- Mr Edmund STOIBER, Ministerpräsident des Freistaates Bayern, to replace Ms MÜLLER,
- Mr Detlef MÜLLER, Mitglied des Landtages von Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, to replace Ms BRETSCHNEIDER,
- Mr Petru FILIP, Mayor of Municipality Oradea, to replace Mr Andrei CHILIMAN.
