COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 12 October 2010

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INFORMATION NOTE

From: Commission
To: Council

Subject: Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a single European railway area (Recast)  
– Commission presentation

Delegations will find annexed a note from the Commission on the above mentioned subject, which will be dealt with under "any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Transport, Telecommunications and Energy) on 15 October 2010.
ANNEX

Information note from the European Commission

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a single European railway area (Recast)

The objectives of the Commission proposal presented by Vice-President Kallas are to (1) increase competition (and thus service quality and efficiency) in the rail sector (2) strengthen regulatory oversight and (3) create more favourable conditions for public and private investments in rail.

Regarding competition issues, the recast would improve transparency of rail market access conditions and improve - in certain cases guarantee - access to rail-related services (for example station and freight and maintenance facilities) for both freight and passenger trains, with explicit rules on conflicts of interest and discriminatory practices.

As far as regulatory oversight is concerned, the adoption of the proposal would extend the competences of the national regulatory bodies, their independence and their powers. It would also provide for increased cooperation between regulators on cross-border issues.

Finally, the recast proposal foresees the development of a harmonised "financial architecture" offering more certainty to investors and adapting charging rules to stimulate investments in green and interoperable technologies.

This legislative proposal is part of a comprehensive strategy for the creation of a genuine European Single Railway Area.