



BUNREACT NA ÉIREANN
CONSTITUTION OF IRELAND



Tithe an
Oireachtais
Houses of the
Oireachtas

An Comhchoiste um Iompar agus Cumarsáide
Tuarascáil ar thuras an Choiste chun na Bruiséile, 24-25 Bealtaine 2023

Iúil 2023

Joint Committee on Transport and Communications
Report of the Committee's trip to Brussels 24-25 May 2023

July 2023

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1. Introduction

A delegation of the Committee travelled to Brussels from 24-25 May 2023. On 30 March 2023, the Committee received an invitation from the Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Transport and Tourism for an Oireachtas Member to address an Interparliamentary Committee Meeting (ICM) on "Reaching the transport objectives of Fit for 55 at national level - opportunities and challenges" on 25 May. The invitation and ICM programme are included in Appendices I and II.

The Committee agreed to send a delegation to attend the ICM in Brussels, and that Senator Gerry Horkan would address the meeting on behalf of the Oireachtas. The delegation travelled on 24 May and met with other relevant stakeholders - Irish MEPs, officials from the European Commission, and representatives of EUROCONTROL.

Further details on the trip itinerary are outlined in Section 3.

This travel report was considered and agreed by the Joint Committee at its meeting of 11 July 2023.

Gerry Horkan

Senator Gerry Horkan
Leas-Chathaoirleach of the Committee
12 July 2023

2. Context

Decarbonisation of the transport sector is an ongoing work item for the Committee. In July 2021, the European Commission published a set of legislative proposals referred to as the "Fit for 55" package. The aim of these proposals is to reduce the EU's GHG emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, and for the bloc to be climate-neutral by 2050¹.

The Committee considered the "Fit for 55" proposals relevant to its transport remit in October 2021². The six proposals concerned alternative fuels infrastructure (aviation, maritime and road transport) and emissions reduction (including the application of the ETS to the aviation

¹ [Fit for 55 - The EU's plan for a green transition - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)

² [Joint Committee on Transport and Communications debate - Thursday, 21 Oct 2021 \(oireachtas.ie\)](#)

sector). Following this, it was agreed to draft a Reasoned Opinion to the EU Institutions on the basis that insufficient information was provided on how the “Fit for 55” package applied to Ireland in the context of national legislation; the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

In addition to the Committee’s consideration of the “Fit for 55” package, it has also considered the related topics of sustainable mobility, electric vehicles, and sustainable aviation.

In April and May 2023, the Committee met with the Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan TD³, and the Chairperson of the Climate Change Advisory Council⁴ to discuss Ireland’s progress towards achieving its sectoral emissions targets for transport. The Committee also held an informal briefing session with Department of Transport officials on 22 May, to inform Senator Horkan’s intervention to the ICM.

3. Trip Details

The following Committee Members attended:

- Senator Gerry Horkan (Leas-Chathaoirleach)
- Deputy James O’Connor

The delegation was accompanied by the Clerk to the Committee, Iqra Zainul Abedin.

Itinerary for the Committee’s visit to Brussels 24-25 May 2023	
Wed 24 May	<p>6:50am – depart Dublin Airport</p> <p>9:40am – arrive at Brussels Airport</p> <p>10:30am – arrival at hotel</p> <p>11am – meeting Irish National Parliamentary Representative Paul Conway at hotel to walk to European Parliament (EP)</p> <p>11:30am – meeting with MEPs in the EP</p> <p>1:30pm – lunch in EP canteen</p> <p>2:30pm – leaving for meeting with EUROCONTROL</p>

³ [Joint Committee on Transport and Communications debate - Wednesday, 17 May 2023 \(oireachtas.ie\)](#)

⁴ [Joint Committee on Transport and Communications debate - Wednesday, 26 Apr 2023 \(oireachtas.ie\)](#)

	3pm – meeting with EUROCONTROL 5pm – end of itinerary for the day
Thurs 25 May	9am – TRAN ICM meeting in the European Parliament 1pm – lunch 2pm – meeting with European Commission, DG MOVE 3pm – meeting with Commissioner Mairead McGuinness 5pm – end of itinerary for day 6:45pm –travel to airport 10:55pm – depart Brussels Airport

3.1. Wednesday 24 May

Meeting with Irish MEPs

The delegation met with a number of Irish MEPs for an informal engagement where aviation and maritime policy was discussed. A number of key initiatives and recent developments in these areas was discussed, and the Committee wishes to thank the MEPs for their time and engagement on these important issues.

Meeting with EUROCONTROL

The delegation met with EUROCONTROL and received a briefing on technical developments in the area of aviation. EUROCONTROL as the main European R&D centre was discussed along with their route charges system. The organisation's civil-military role was discussed, along with airspace restructuring. The reduction of taxi-time and emissions were also discussed, specifically single-engine operations, taxibot and optimised routing. The organisation proceeded to provide the delegation with a detailed presentation on ATC systems and their digital transformation journey. Drone activity was also discussed with C-UAS standards development.

3.2. Thursday 25 May

European Parliament Interparliamentary Committee Meeting (ICM)

The delegation attended the European Parliament Interparliamentary Committee Meeting (ICM) on “reaching the transport objectives of Fit for 55 at national level – opportunities and challenges.” Welcome remarks were made, followed by a debate and general discussion with Members of the TRAN Committee and Members from National Parliaments.

The first session focused on decarbonising road transport and the roll-out of alternative fuel charging infrastructure. The second session focused on “decarbonising the hard-to-abate sectors (shipping and aviation): how to boost the uptake of sustainable fuels and maintain affordability and competitiveness?” The Leas-Chathaoirleach, Senator Horkan, spoke as part of this session and re-iterated Ireland’s support for the Fit for 55 package. He spoke about Ireland’s enactment of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act, and highlighted some of the key developments in the maritime and aviation sectors.

Meeting with representatives of the European Commission DG MOVE

The Committee met with Members of Cabinet of European Commissioner for Transport, Adina Vălean, to discuss key elements of aviation policy, decarbonisation, and active travel policy. The delegation posed a number of questions to the Members of Cabinet, who provided an overview of the European Commission’s priorities and key developments in this regard.

Meeting with European Commissioner Mairead McGuinness

The Committee met with Mairead McGuinness, European Commissioner for Financial services, financial stability and Capital Markets Union, and discussed a number of items relating to aviation policy and active travel.

APPENDIX I – Invitation from the European Parliament Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN)

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND TOURISM
THE CHAIRWOMAN



TRAN/D/2023/12325

D 303698 30.03.2023

Mr Gerry HORKAN
Member of the Joint Committee on Transport and Communications
Seanad Éireann

Subject: Invitation to an Interparliamentary Committee meeting on “Reaching the transport objectives of Fit for 55 at national level - opportunities and challenges” - Brussels, 25 May 2023, from 9.00 to 12.00

Dear Mr Horkan,

In my quality of Chairwoman of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) of the European Parliament, I would like to invite you to the Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on ***“Reaching the transport objectives of Fit for 55 at national level - opportunities and challenges”***. The meeting will take place on Thursday 25 May 2023, from 9.00 to 12.00 in the European Parliament's premises in Brussels, room József Antall 4Q1.

The aim of this meeting is to gather experiences on the preparatory work for the achievement and implementation of the transport objectives of the Fit for 55 package, at national level. TRAN Members would be interested to learn about challenges and opportunities, from various national perspectives and realities.

We would value your contribution during the 2nd session on *“Decarbonising the hard-to- abate sectors (shipping and aviation): how to boost the uptake of sustainable fuels and maintain affordability and competitiveness?”*. We would be interested to hear about the experiences and challenges so far in Ireland, in particular in the maritime and aviation sectors, which are crucial for the country's connectivity.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to accept my invitation. All the relevant practical details on this meeting, as well as an updated draft programme, will be forwarded in due course to your Parliament's services for relations with the European Parliament.

Yours sincerely,



Karima DELLI

Encl. ICM draft programme

B-1047 BRUSSELS – TEL.: 32/2.284.53.62 – FAX: 32/2.284.93.62
F-67000 STRASBOURG – TEL.: 33/3.88.17.53.62 – FAX: 33/3.88.17.93.62

APPENDIX II – European Parliament ICM Programme

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Thursday, 25 May
2023, 9.00-12.30

Opening session:

- Welcoming remarks by **Karima Delli**, Chairwoman of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN)

09:15-10:40 - Session I - Decarbonising road transport: the roll-out of alternative fuel charging infrastructure

Opening of panel

- **Ismail Ertug**, EP Rapporteur on AFIR

Speakers from national Parliaments

- **Saskia Kluit**, Member of the Standing committee on Economic Affairs and Climate policy/ Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and of the Standing committee on Infrastructure, Water management and the Environment, Dutch Senate
- **Andrea Caroppo**, Member of Committee IX on Transport, Post and Telecommunications, Italian Chamber of Deputies
- **Kacper Płażyński**, Chair of the EU Affairs Committee of the Polish Sejm
- **Ignacio López Cano**, Chair of the Committee for Transport, Mobility and the Urban Agenda, Spanish Congress of Deputies

Exchange of views with Members of national parliaments and Members of the TRAN committee

10:40-11:00 Coffee break

11:00-12:20 - Session II - Decarbonising the hard-to-abate sectors (shipping and aviation): how to boost the uptake of sustainable fuels and maintain affordability and competitiveness?

Opening of panel

- **Jörgen Warborn**, EP Rapporteur on FuelEU Maritime
- **José-Ramon Bauzá Díaz**, EP Rapporteur on RefuelEU Aviation

Speakers from national Parliaments

- **Gerry Horkan**, Member of the Joint Committee on Transport and Communications, Irish

Senate

- **Alexandru Răzvan Cuc**, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure, Romanian Senate
- **Maria Stockhaus**, Member of the Committee on Transportation and Communication, Swedish Riksdag
- **Kim Buyst**, Member of the Transport Committee and of the Energy Committee,

Belgian Federal Parliament Exchange of views with Members of national parliaments and

Members of the TRAN committee

Closing remarks by:

- **Karima Delli**, Chairwoman of the TRAN Committee

Organised with the support of the Directorate for Relations with national Parliaments. The hearing can be followed online: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live>

APPENDIX III – Committee Membership

Joint Committee on Transport and Communications



Joe Carey TD
(Cathaoirleach)
Fine Gael



Cathal Crowe TD
Fianna Fáil



Alan Dillon TD
Fine Gael



Martin Kenny TD
Sinn Féin



Michael Lowry TD
Regional Group



Steven Matthews TD
Green Party



James O'Connor TD
Fianna Fáil



Darren O'Rourke TD
Sinn Féin



Duncan Smith TD
Labour Party



Senator Lynn Boylan
Sinn Féin



Senator Gerard
Craughwell
Independent



Senator Timmy Dooley
Fianna Fáil



Senator Regina Doherty
Fine Gael



Senator Gerry Horkan
(Leas-Chathaoirleach)
Fianna Fáil

APPENDIX IV – Orders of Reference

Standing Orders 94, 95 and 96

Scope and context of activities of Select Committees

94. (1) The Dáil may appoint a Select Committee to consider and, if so permitted, to take evidence upon any Bill, Estimate or matter, and to report its opinion for the information and assistance of the Dáil. Such motion shall specifically state the orders of reference of the Committee, define the powers devolved upon it, fix the number of members to serve on it, state the quorum, and may appoint a date upon which the Committee shall report back to the Dáil.

(2) It shall be an instruction to each Select Committee that—

(a) it may only consider such matters, engage in such activities, exercise such powers and discharge such functions as are specifically authorised under its orders of reference and under Standing Orders;

(b) such matters, activities, powers and functions shall be relevant to, and shall arise only in the context of, the preparation of a report to the Dáil;

(c) it shall not consider any matter which is being considered, or of which notice has been given of a proposal to consider, by the Joint Committee on Public Petitions in the exercise of its functions under Standing Order 125(1)¹; and

¹ Retained pending review of the Joint Committee on Public Petitions.

(d) it shall refrain from inquiring into in public session or publishing confidential information regarding any matter if so requested, for stated reasons given in writing, by—

(i) a member of the Government or a Minister of State, or

(ii) the principal office-holder of a State body within the responsibility of a Government Department or

(iii) the principal office-holder of a non-State body which is partly funded by the State,

Provided that the Committee may appeal any such request made to the Ceann Comhairle, whose decision shall be final.

(3) It shall be an instruction to all Select Committees to which Bills are referred that they shall ensure that not more than two Select Committees shall meet to consider a Bill on any given day, unless the Dáil, after due notice to the Business Committee by a Chairman of one of the Select Committees concerned, waives this instruction.

Functions of Departmental Select Committees.

95. (1) The Dáil may appoint a Departmental Select Committee to consider and, unless otherwise provided for in these Standing Orders or by order, to report to the Dáil on any matter relating to—

(a) legislation, policy, governance, expenditure and administration of—

(i) a Government Department, and

- (ii) State bodies within the responsibility of such Department, and
- (b) the performance of a non-State body in relation to an agreement for the provision of services that it has entered into with any such Government Department or State body.
- (2) A Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall also consider such other matters which—
 - (a) stand referred to the Committee by virtue of these Standing Orders or statute law, or
 - (b) shall be referred to the Committee by order of the Dáil.
- (3) The principal purpose of Committee consideration of matters of policy, governance, expenditure and administration under paragraph (1) shall be—
 - (a) for the accountability of the relevant Minister or Minister of State, and
 - (b) to assess the performance of the relevant Government Department or of a State body within the responsibility of the relevant Department, in delivering public services while achieving intended outcomes, including value for money.
- (4) A Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall not consider any matter relating to accounts audited by, or reports of, the Comptroller and Auditor General unless the Committee of Public Accounts—
 - (a) consents to such consideration, or
 - (b) has reported on such accounts or reports.
- (5) A Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order may be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann to be and act as a Joint Committee for the purposes of paragraph (1) and such other purposes as may be specified in these Standing Orders or by order of the Dáil: provided that the Joint Committee shall not consider—
 - (a) the Committee Stage of a Bill,
 - (b) Estimates for Public Services, or
 - (c) a proposal contained in a motion for the approval of an international agreement involving a charge upon public funds referred to the Committee by order of the Dáil.
- (6) Any report that the Joint Committee proposes to make shall, on adoption by the Joint Committee, be made to both Houses of the Oireachtas.
- (7) The Chairman of the Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall also be Chairman of the Joint Committee.
- (8) Where a Select Committee proposes to consider—
 - (a) EU draft legislative acts standing referred to the Select Committee under Standing Order 133, including the compliance of such acts with the principle of subsidiarity,
 - (b) other proposals for EU legislation and related policy issues, including programmes and guidelines prepared by the European Commission as a basis of possible legislative action,
 - (c) non-legislative documents published by any EU institution in relation to EU policy matters, or

(d) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the relevant Council (of Ministers) of the European Union and the outcome of such meetings,

the following may be notified accordingly and shall have the right to attend and take part in such consideration without having a right to move motions or amendments or the right to vote:

- (i) members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland,
- (ii) members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and
- (iii) at the invitation of the Committee, other members of the European Parliament.

(9) A Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order may, in respect of any Ombudsman charged with oversight of public services within the policy remit of the relevant Department consider—

(a) such motions relating to the appointment of an Ombudsman as may be referred to the Committee, and

(b) such Ombudsman reports laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas as the Committee may select: Provided that the provisions of Standing Order 130 apply where the Select Committee has not considered the Ombudsman report, or a portion or portions thereof, within two months (excluding Christmas, Easter or summer recess periods) of the report being laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas.²

2 Retained pending review of the Joint Committee on Public Petitions.

Powers of Select Committees.

96. Unless the Dáil shall otherwise order, a Committee appointed pursuant to these Standing Orders shall have the following powers:

(1) power to invite and receive oral and written evidence and to print and publish from time to time—

(a) minutes of such evidence as was heard in public, and

(b) such evidence in writing as the Committee thinks fit; 6

(2) power to appoint sub-Committees and to refer to such sub-Committees any matter comprehended by its orders of reference and to delegate any of its powers to such sub-Committees, including power to report directly to the Dáil;

(3) power to draft recommendations for legislative change and for new legislation;

(4) in relation to any statutory instrument, including those laid or laid in draft before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas, power to—

(a) require any Government Department or other instrument-making authority concerned to—

(i) submit a memorandum to the Select Committee explaining the statutory instrument, or

(ii) attend a meeting of the Select Committee to explain any such statutory instrument: Provided that the authority concerned may decline to attend for reasons given in writing to the Select Committee, which may report thereon to the Dáil, and

(b) recommend, where it considers that such action is warranted, that the instrument should be annulled or amended;

(5) power to require that a member of the Government or Minister of State shall attend before the Select Committee to discuss—

(a) policy, or

(b) proposed primary or secondary legislation (prior to such legislation being published),

for which he or she is officially responsible: Provided that a member of the Government or Minister of State may decline to attend for stated reasons given in writing to the Select Committee, which may report thereon to the Dáil: and provided further that a member of the Government or Minister of State may request to attend a meeting of the Select Committee to enable him or her to discuss such policy or proposed legislation;

(6) power to require that a member of the Government or Minister of State shall attend before the Select Committee and provide, in private session if so requested by the attendee, oral briefings in advance of meetings of the relevant EC Council (of Ministers) of the European Union to enable the Select Committee to make known its views: Provided that the Committee may also require such attendance following such meetings;

(7) power to require that the Chairperson designate of a body or agency under the aegis of a Department shall, prior to his or her appointment, attend before the Select Committee to discuss his or her strategic priorities for the role;

(8) power to require that a member of the Government or Minister of State who is officially responsible for the implementation of an Act shall attend before a Select Committee in relation to the consideration of a report under Standing Order 197; 7

(9) subject to any constraints otherwise prescribed by law, power to require that principal office-holders of a—

(a) State body within the responsibility of a Government Department or

(b) non-State body which is partly funded by the State,

shall attend meetings of the Select Committee, as appropriate, to discuss issues for which they are officially responsible: Provided that such an office-holder may decline to attend for stated reasons given in writing to the Select Committee, which may report thereon to the Dáil; and

(10) power to—

(a) engage the services of persons with specialist or technical knowledge, to assist it or any of its sub-Committees in considering particular matters; and

(b) undertake travel;

Provided that the powers under this paragraph are subject to such recommendations as may be made by the Working Group of Committee Chairmen under Standing Order 120(4)(a).