Transport, Energy, Infrastructure and Information Society
Did you know this?

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is an advisory body set up by the Rome Treaties in 1957 and represents the various economic and social components of organised civil society at European level. It is made up of 353 members, split into three groups: the “Employers” group, the “Employees” group and the “Various Interests” group.

The EESC has six specialised sections whose work is to draw up the EESC’s opinions, advising the three major institutions – the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission.

The TEN section is responsible for drawing up Committee opinions in the fields of transport, energy, the information society, infrastructure and services of general interest. The EESC’s opinions play an essential role in policy- and decision-making at European Union level: they reflect a considerable level of expertise and a consensus bringing together the different interests of organised civil society.
Transport

Engaging civil society in transport-related policy-making is arguably one of the longest-standing goals of the TEN Section. Work is mainly being undertaken in the context of the 2011 European Commission White Paper “Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system”. A permanent study group was created to propose innovative, participative decision-making processes based on early availability of open data and a two-way dialogue between European Institutions and civil society. Such dialogues will improve the quality and efficiency of decisions, and provide concrete added value to the attainment of the White Paper goals, such as reducing transport greenhouse gas emissions in 2050 by 60% compared with 1990 levels, phasing-out conventionally-fuelled cars in cities by the same date, and shifting 50% of medium-distance intercity passenger and freight journeys from road to rail and waterborne transport.

Energy

The TEN section seeks to promote a competitive and sustainable energy policy whilst ensuring the security of energy supplies. All energy sources may have a role to play, provided transparency is ensured on costs, risks and benefits. In this context, it sees a stronger coordination among Member States and a Europeanisation of energy policy through a European Energy Community as the best way to achieve a consistent and efficient policy. The TEN section believes an efficient and balanced energy policy can be best achieved through extensive engagement of all stakeholders, including citizens. It therefore promotes an inclusive pan-European energy dialogue to look at all aspects of energy policy. This European energy dialogue should discuss the trade-offs and implementation of the energy transition process and encourage concrete measures and convergence at EU level.
Information society

**TEN section** work in this area is based on an in-depth analysis of information and communication technologies (ICT) and their impact on society, taking into account the expectations of European civil society organisations. The section is critically reviewing the implementation of the European Commission’s strategy in this domain, currently expressed in the “Digital Agenda for Europe” (one of the flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy), stressing the need for infrastructure deployment and the necessary skills for an all-inclusive information society; improvement of the regulatory framework to ensure a single and investment-friendly European digital space; and a safer internet for everybody, by improving consumer protection, security and privacy in electronic communications, notably for the most vulnerable members of society, such as children and less experienced users.
Services of general interest and infrastructure

The EESC permanent study group will continue to identify and promote the expectations of organised civil society as regards services of general interest, which, whether economic or non-economic, do much to promote the social and territorial cohesion of the European Union. This group helps to take forward the debate at European level to ensure that there are services of general interest and that they are accessible, affordable and of good quality for all.
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