

Rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterway; coordination between national authorities

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During a public deliberation, the Council took note of the Presidency progress report on a draft Regulation concerning the rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterway. In addition, it held a policy debate focusing on the scope of this proposal on the basis of a Presidency questionnaire.

During the debate, all member states welcomed the Commission proposal and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening passenger rights.

Three issues were examined:

(1) Type of passenger services: a majority of delegations considered that the scope of the proposed Regulation should include all types of services with the exception of tourist and sightseeing services.

(2) Territorial application: a majority of delegations considered that the draft Regulation should apply to passenger travelling between Community ports as well as to those travelling between Community and third country ports.

(3) Type of ship: a majority of delegations stated that the proposal should not apply to ships operated mainly for the carriage of cargo.

The Council invited its preparatory bodies to continue work on this proposal with the aim of reaching an agreement in June 2009.

The Commission presented its proposal in December 2008. The European Parliament should adopt its first-reading opinion in April 2009.