

# Statistics of goods transport by inland waterways

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The Commission presents a report on [experience acquired in the application of Regulation \(EC\) No 1365/2006 on statistics of goods transport by inland waterways](#). This report outlines the background, objectives and policy context of the legislation. It then discusses issues linked to its implementation and describes the main results achieved. The final section presents conclusions and possible future developments.

The Regulation was designed to provide the Commission, other EU institutions, national governments and the general public with comparable, reliable, harmonised, regular and comprehensive statistical data on the carriage of goods by inland waterways in the European Union. Transport by inland waterways plays an important relevant role (about 5 to 6 % in tonne-km) in inland goods transport in Europe. Community inland waterways statistics are used when framing, monitoring and evaluating EU transport policies, as well as EU policies on other topics such as the functioning of the internal market. Collecting data also helps to promote transport by inland waterways and to integrate it in the intermodal logistics chain.

Regulation 1365/2006 applies directly and in its entirety to all Member States. It does not have to be transposed into national legislation.

Under the requirements of the Regulation, 13 Member States (BE, BG, CZ, DE, FR, LU, HU, NL, AT, PL, RO, SK and UK) are obliged to provide data. Although not required by the Regulation, three Member States (FI, IT and LT) provide data on a voluntary basis. Furthermore six Member States (BE, BG, CZ, LU, HU and RO) also supply optional data (vessel traffic, transport of dangerous goods and number of accidents) on a voluntary basis. For reference year 2008 Croatia (candidate country) provided all data requested by the Regulation and, on a voluntary basis, data on transport of dangerous goods.

The report shows that the Regulation led to an increase in detailed information on European freight transport by inland waterways and improved data quality and timeliness. Member States have made efforts to meet the requirements of the Regulation and most are providing all requested data by the deadlines specified.

The experience gained and the results obtained with the implementation of Regulation 1365/2006 can be considered, in general, as positive:

- the adoption of the Regulation, the work done and the resources allocated to setting up the structures needed at both national and Eurostat level, have permitted rapid production of comparable and high-quality results;
- data provision in the two subsequent years has improved, although there are still outstanding problems, particularly regarding the comparability, completeness and timeliness of the datasets delivered;
- most of the issues linked to the interpretation of the Regulation, data collection, compilation, transmission and validation have been addressed. The Regulation has led to greater availability of information on the sector and a reduction in the burden for reporting countries;
- regarding the use of the data, the results obtained have an immediate application for policy-making, particularly for the development, implementation and monitoring of inland waterways transport policies at national and EU level;
- data dissemination through various public means has helped to give visibility to the whole process and to provide a return on the investment of resources in it.

**In the short term (one to two years)**, efforts should be concentrated on the following issues:

- further improvement of data quality for certain elements. Reporting countries need to make additional efforts to reduce the differences highlighted by the mirror checks and to improve the provision of transit transport data. Results can be obtained in this field with improved collaboration between reporting countries;
- enlargement of the EU to include Croatia. Eurostat will assist this candidate country in complying with the EU legislation on inland waterways transport statistics.

**In the long term**, and although the Regulation is quite recent, it is already possible to identify some developments:

- the quality of the data collected may benefit from the progressive introduction of a European register for inland waterways vessels and extensive use of River Information Services;
- collection of new or more detailed variables may be considered, depending on the needs of data users and the potential burden on respondents. Two points of particular interest are: further extension of data provision on 'transport of dangerous goods' and the collection of a more detailed level of data on 'type of goods' (NST 2007 classification);

extension of the geographical coverage of statistics, possibly due to future EU enlargements and voluntary involvement of non-EU countries and/or international organisations through cooperation agreements.