# Recognition of professional qualifications in inland navigation: transitional measures for the recognition of third countries certificates

2021/0039(COD) - 18/02/2021 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to amend the transitional provisions of Directive (EU) 2017/2397 on the recognition of professional qualifications in inland navigation to cover certificates of qualification, service record books and logbooks issued by third countries.

PROPOSED ACT: Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: Directive (EU) 2017/2397 lays down transitional measures concerning the certificates of qualification, service record books and logbooks issued before 18 January 2022 (the day following the expiry of the period for the transposition of the Directive). In general, the documents concerned remain valid on the EU inland waterways for which they were valid before that date, for a maximum of 10 years.

However, apart from the Rhine navigation licences referred to in Directive 96/50/EC, those transitional measures do not apply to the certificates of qualification, service record books and logbooks issued by third countries that are currently recognised by Member States under their national requirements established before the entry into force of the Directive or their international agreements.

Consequently, from 17 January 2022, third country documents will be recognised in the EU only once the Commission has adopted an implementing act under the Directive granting recognition in the EU to the documents issued by that third country.

Given that the procedure for recognition of third country documents is based on the assessment of the certification systems in the requesting third country, it is unlikely that the recognition procedure will be completed before 17 January 2022.

The Commission therefore considers it necessary to introduce transitional provisions applicable to third country documents recognised in certain Member States before 18 January 2022, in order to ensure a smooth transition to the system of recognition of third country documents provided for in Directive (EU) 2017/2397 and to avoid any disruption of the labour market in the inland waterway transport sector.

CONTENT: the proposal provides for the possibility for Member States to continue to recognise third country documents based on their national requirements established before the entry into force of Directive (EU) 2017/2397 (16 January 2018). The recognition should be limited to inland waterways situated in the territory of the Member State concerned and should not apply beyond 17 January 2032. The scope of this transitional measure could only cover documents issued by a third country before the cut-off date (18 January 2023).

The proposed amendment clarifies that certificates of qualification issued by a third country in exchange for the certificates covered by the transitional arrangements should be valid on all inland EU waterways,

provided that the third country concerned has obtained recognition in accordance with Directive (EU) 2017 /2397 and that the requirements for the exchange applied by that third country have been found to be identical to those laid down in the Directive with regard to the Member States.