

Statistical returns in respect of carriage of passengers, freight and mail by air

1995/0232(COD) - 30/09/2002 - Council position

Following the agreement reached by the UK and Spain at the beginning of 2002 on Gibraltar airport, the proposal for a regulation was re-tabled for discussion by the Council. Now that the Council has endorsed the general structure and main provisions of the proposal, the common position, which has been unanimously adopted, is basically consistent with the Commission's initial proposal. The Council approves of the objective of the proposed measure, which is to produce harmonised statistics on the transport of passengers, freight and mail by air comparable to those for other modes of transport. Considering inter alia the strong growth in air traffic and the growing importance of inter-modality, such statistics have become increasingly important to ensure the proper functioning of the European Union's transport system. The Member States will be responsible for the data collection and methods used, and data should, where possible, be compatible with international data provided by ICAO. In addition to the "Gibraltar" clauses, which have been incorporated, the main modifications as compared to the Commission proposal can be summarised as follows: - the Council considered it appropriate not to include the "airline code" in the transmission of data to EUROSTAT. This term has been replaced with "airline information", to collect information such as the country of licensing of the airline or whether the airline is based in the EU. A declaration by the Commission, which considers the information on "airline code" as essential for decision making and as a means to control information quality, will be entered in the Council Minutes; - thresholds and transition periods for reporting, as provided in Article 3, have been modified to take account of the fact that, for certain airports, statistics corresponding to those specified in Annex I are not yet collected, and that, as a consequence, the introduction of a new data collection system may prove difficult. The deadline for complete transmission to EUROSTAT has been set to end of September 2006; - article 11 now provides that the Statistical Programme Committee will be subject to the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission, set up by Council Decision 1999/468/EC, and that the Committee will be of a regulatory nature; - the Council introduced an amendment concerning the definition of "passenger unit" as "either one passenger or 90 kilograms of freight and mail". With regard to the new provisions introduced by the Council, the Council had to take account of a new feature - namely application of the codecision procedure - and of the changes made to the legal framework governing Community statistics since 1995.