

# Inland waterway transport: River Information Services (RIS)

2024/0011(COD) - 26/01/2024 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE:** to modernise the existing directive on river information services with a view to improving the efficiency and reliability of inland navigation and traffic management across Europe's rivers.

**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 2005/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishes a framework for the deployment and use of harmonised river information services (RIS) in the Union. The deployment of RIS on inland waterways supports the safety and efficiency of transport by inland waterways, and ultimately its sustainability, by increasing the efficiency of inland waterways operations.

Since the entry into force of Directive 2005/44/EC, the inland waterway sector has benefited from the provision of harmonised RIS. However, the level of harmonisation between Member States varies, while the process of introducing the necessary specifications has proved to be lengthy.

At the same time, the European Green Deal calls for the further development of an automated and connected multimodal mobility, and RIS should be adapted to address those new challenges. Furthermore, the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy proposes the revision of Directive 2005/44/EC among its measures to achieve the objective of promoting the creation of a truly smart transport system, efficient capacity allocation and traffic management.

Revisions of the legal framework on RIS would aim to help **close existing harmonisation and interoperability gaps** with other transport modes, and contribute to **improved data availability, reuse and interoperability of digital systems**, in line with the European Data Strategy. Those changes and developments as well as the experience gained in the implementation of Directive 2005/44/EC should be taken into account when adapting RIS.

**CONTENT:** this Commission proposal seeks to **modernise river information services in EU**. It should improve traffic management on the EU's rivers and canals.

The proposed amending directive:

- establishes a framework for the deployment and use of harmonised river information services (RIS) in the Union in order to support inland waterway transport with a view to **enhancing its safety, efficiency and sustainability and to facilitating interfaces with other transport modes;**
- provides a framework for the establishment and **further development of technical requirements**, specifications and conditions to ensure harmonised, interoperable and open RIS on the Union inland waterways and ensure continuity with other modal traffic management services, in particular maritime vessel traffic management and information services;
- applies to the implementation and operation of RIS on **all inland waterways and inland ports** of the Member States which are part of the trans-European transport network

The specific provisions of the proposal are as follows:

### ***Setting-up of RIS and technical guidelines and specifications***

The proposal updates both the way that services will be provided under RIS and the type of services that will be provided. The requirement for Member States to provide data on navigation and voyage planning is strengthened and refined, and a new requirement to provide information to the European Reference Data Management System (ERDMS) is introduced to improve the overall quality and timeliness of the information provided to RIS users.

In addition, to improve the exchange of information and multimodality of inland waterway transport, requirements are introduced for the exchange of information with other systems and platforms used in the transport sector.

### ***RIS platform***

The proposal also lays down the structure for the **digital architecture** of RIS, by laying down a single digital platform (the RIS platform) as the main digital backbone for the provision of RIS, through which all RIS should be developed and provided. The Commission is empowered to decide on the functional and technical specifications of the RIS platform through implementing acts.

### ***Competent authorities and handling of complaints***

The proposal describes the role and the main elements of the procedure that should be followed in handling the complaints. Member States are responsible for developing and applying this procedure and are required to regularly report on its performance to the European Commission. This would provide for improved monitoring and faster handling of issues in the implementation of the Directive.

### ***Rules on privacy, security and the re-use of information***

The amending directive updates the requirements on privacy, security and the re-use of information.