Transport of goods by inland waterway: freedom to provide services

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The Committee has adopted the report of Mr. Fernand LE RACHINEL (F, NI) on the proposal for a Council Regulation on common rules applicable to the transport of goods or passengers by inland waterway between Member States with a view to establish freedom to provide such transport services. Before joining the EU, Austria has concluded bilateral agreements with Germany and the Netherlands, which make access to the inland waterway transport more difficult for transport operators established in other Member States. Such agreements, said the rapporteur, are implicitly incompatible with the principle of freedom to provide services and discriminate on the basis of nationality. Two amendments, tabled by the EPP, asking for a transitional period of 5 years, were rejected.