

National and international inland waterway transport: systems of chartering and pricing

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OBJECTIVE: to establish common provisions at Community level for the whole of the inland waterway market so that the undertakings concerned can benefit fully from the opportunities offered by the single market. The organization of chartering by rotation needs to be adjusted so as to move towards greater commercial flexibility and a system of totally free transactions by 1 January 2000. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** proposal for a Council directive on the systems of chartering and pricing in national and international inland waterway transport in the Community. **CONTENT:** * in the national and international inland waterway freight transport sector in the Community, contracts are concluded freely between the parties involved and prices are negotiated freely; * by way of exception, the Member States may, under certain circumstances, maintain a system of minimum compulsory tariffs and systems of chartering by rotation for a limited period up to 1 January 2000; * the scope of chartering by rotation systems is limited during the transitional period to general freight; * during the transitional period, the Member States will take the steps needed to make chartering by rotation systems as flexible as possible; * Member States will take measures within two years of the date on which the directive enters into force so that shippers have a free choice between three types of contract: time-based contracts, including charter parties, tonnage-based contracts and single or multiple voyage contracts using the chartering by rotation system; * in the event of serious disturbance on the inland waterway transport market, the Commission may, on its own initiative or at the request of a Member State, take measures designed to prevent any new increase in the transport capacity on offer on the market in question.