

# Transport of dangerous goods by railway

1994/0284(SYN) - 23/07/1996 - Final act

**OBJECTIVE:** Harmonization of the rules applicable to national and intra-Community transport of dangerous goods by rail in order to ensure a high level of safety and the creation of a single market for such transport services within the Union. Such harmonization should eliminate obstacles to the free movement of goods between the Member States in respect of transport equipment (vehicles, bottles, tanks, packaging, safety devices). **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Council Directive 96/49/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States with regard to the transport of dangerous goods by rail. **SUBSTANCE:** The Directive establishes national safety rules at a high level, i.e. the level of international standards laid down in the Convention concerning international carriage by rail (COTIF). It takes account of the potential risks inherent in the transport of goods by rail, having regard to the fact that such goods are frequently carried through urban areas and that accidents are liable to happen during operations in marshalling yards which are often located in town or city centres. Moreover, with a view to the progressive opening up of the transport market by rail, the Directive establishes a harmonized package of national safety rules, which would prevent distortions of competition between the various modes of transport of dangerous goods. The Directive provides for the possibility of imposing more stringent provisions for the transport of dangerous goods via the Channel Tunnel or tunnels with characteristics similar to the Channel Tunnel, which would be the case, according to currently available information, with the tunnel under the Great Belt in Denmark and the Sound Tunnel between Denmark and Sweden. **DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 17 September 1996 **DEADLINE FOR TRANSPOSITION INTO NATIONAL LEGISLATION:** 1 January 1997.