

Statistics of goods transport by inland waterways

2005/0150(COD) - 08/08/2005 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to establish common rules for the production of Community statistics concerning inland waterways transport.

PROPOSED ACT : Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT : The promotion of inland waterways transport is an important part of the Common Transport Policy, on the grounds both of economic efficiency and of reducing the energy consumption and the environmental impacts of transport.

The collection of good quality statistics on inland waterways transport is important for the following reasons:

- Development and monitoring of community actions also on quarterly basis to promote inland waterways transport as set out in the white paper.
- Evaluation of impact of investment in inland waterway infrastructure.
- Participation of foreign-owned vessels in national transport matters.
- Harmonisation with other international data collection.
- Reducing the workload for the reporting countries and Eurostat.

Statistics on inland waterways transport are collected under Council Directive 80/1119/EEC, but this act has some shortcomings:

- it covers only freight transport by vessels, whereas Community actions on inland waterways transport also require data on container transport;
- the statistics to be compiled do not correspond to the present needs in this domain;
- significant quality problems have been identified in these statistics;
- there is no provision for adaptation of the Directive via a committee procedure;
- with implementing new IT technologies the workload of reporting Member States could be reduced.

These shortcomings have made it necessary to propose a replacement for the Directive.

The proposal sets out to define a set of common rules for inland waterways transport statistics together with a set of annexes specifying a set of statistical tables. The rules cover definitions, provisions for data collection, transmission and dissemination, and a committee procedure for the adoption of implementing measures and for later adaptation of the Regulation. They also include provisions for maintaining the quality of the statistics, for evaluation and for reporting to the European Parliament and the Council. Furthermore, the Regulation includes provisions relating to the coverage of inland waterways transport by the Regulation.

The data to be collected are specified in Annexes A-E (Article 4). The proposal includes the following main differences compared to the data collection specified under Council Directive 80/1119/EEC:

- the periods of observation are quarters and years and no monthly data is requested to reduce the burden on the Member States;
- a new set of Community statistics on container transport by inland waterways collected quarterly and annually;
- the data on the transport by type of good follow the NST 2000 classification of goods;
- a simplified classification of the type of vessels;
- a new field of information to separate loaded and empty vessels and containers;
- the identification of the regions of loading and unloading is requested according to the NUTS2 classification;
- a reduced data collection for those Member States where there is no international or transit inland waterways transport but where the total volume of goods transported annually by inland waterways as national transport exceeds one million tonnes.