



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

2013/0303(COD)

13.2.2014

OPINION

of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 718/1999 on a Community-fleet capacity policy to promote inland waterway transport (COM(2013)0621 – C7-0265/2013– 2013/0303(COD))

Rapporteur: Jutta Steinruck

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SHORT JUSTIFICATION

In an effort to reduce tonnage and modernise the European inland waterway fleet, further measures must be taken to help to improve the working conditions of crews and, in particular, to encourage a withdrawal from inland waterway transport.

The rapporteur welcomes the proposal to adapt the directive concerning recourse to the EUR 35 million available in the Reserve Fund. In order to improve the social and financial situation of crew members leaving the profession, it is necessary to broaden the definition of those eligible to make a claim by including a specific reference to paid crew members.

The modernisation of the internal waterway fleet requires technical modernisation on the one hand and, on the other, highly-qualified crew operating and working on the ships who are capable of using the latest technology. For this reason, the rapporteur proposes clearer wording concerning the social and professional aspects of all employment relationships in the internal waterway transport sector.

In order to ensure the equal treatment of all involved players, it is important that not only inland waterway transport operators but also crew members should be eligible for early retirement measures.

A number of compulsory modernisation measures in the areas of safety and environmental protection will be introduced for ships used in the inland waterway sector in the near future. In order not only to consider these measures from a technical point of view but also, in particular, to prepare crew members for potential new requirements, the rapporteur proposes the broadening of professional qualifications in this area too.

For all proposed measures, the relevant information ought to be disseminated in order to ensure that as many businesses and crew members as possible find out about the opportunities available to them and are able to make use of them.

Furthermore, the sponsored membership of organisations representing inland waterway transport should not be available to owner-operators alone. The term owner-operator clearly refers only to undertakings which operate up to three ships. Small undertakings which operate more than three ships should also receive help to join organisations.

Strengthening the role of the social partners in the implementation of the regulation is essential if the allocated funds are to serve their purposes. The affected shipping associations and the trade unions representing paid workers in the inland waterway transport sector have a better understanding of the problems and needs than others.

The improvement in working conditions should be extended to occupational health and safety, so as to enable inland waterway transport operators to be in a position to cover the costs of guaranteeing compliance with the highest standards in working conditions and health protection.

AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as the committee responsible, to take into account the following amendments:

Amendment 1

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 2

Text proposed by the Commission

(2) In connection with the modernisation and restructuring of the fleets, social measures should be envisaged to help workers who wish to leave the inland waterway industry or to retrain for jobs in another sector, together with measures to encourage the establishment of groupings of undertakings, improve operators' skills and promote the adaptation of vessels to technical progress.

Amendment

(2) In connection with the modernisation and restructuring of the fleets, social measures, ***including early and preventive measures***, should be envisaged to help workers who wish to leave the inland waterway industry or to retrain for jobs in another sector, together with measures to encourage the establishment of groupings of undertakings, improve operators' skills and promote the adaptation of vessels to technical progress.

Amendment 2

Proposal for a regulation

Article 1

Regulation (EC) No 718/1999

Article 8 – introductory phrase

Text proposed by the Commission

Without prejudice to Article 3(5), any Member State may take measures in particular to:

Amendment

Without prejudice to Article 3(5), any Member State may take measures ***in conjunction with the social partners*** in particular to:

Amendment 3

Proposal for a regulation

Article 1

Regulation (EC) No 718/1999

Article 8 – indent 1

Text proposed by the Commission

– make it easier for inland waterway carriers leaving the industry to obtain an early retirement pension or to transfer to another economic activity,

Amendment

– make it easier for inland waterway carriers leaving the industry to obtain an early retirement pension or to transfer to another economic activity **by providing comprehensive information, among other measures,**

Amendment 4

Proposal for a regulation

Article 1

Regulation (EC) No 718/1999

Article 8 – indent 2

Text proposed by the Commission

– organise vocational training or retraining schemes for crew members leaving the industry,

Amendment

– organise vocational training or retraining schemes for crew members leaving the industry **and provide appropriate information about those schemes,**

Amendment 5

Proposal for a regulation

Article 1

Regulation (EC) No 718/1999

Article 8 – indent 3

Text proposed by the Commission

– improve skills in inland navigation in order to safeguard the development and future of the profession,

Amendment

– improve skills **among actors especially employees and operators** in inland navigation in order to safeguard the development and future of the profession **where modernisation is foreseeable and required by legislation,**

Amendment 6

Proposal for a regulation

Article 1

Regulation (EC) No 718/1999

Article 8 – indent 4

Text proposed by the Commission

– encourage **owner-operators** to join trade associations and strengthen the organisations representing inland waterway transport at Union level,

Amendment

– encourage ***inland waterway transport operators*** to join trade associations and strengthen the organisations representing inland waterway transport at Union level,

Amendment 7

Proposal for a regulation

Article 1

Regulation (EC) No 718/1999

Article 8 – indent 5

Text proposed by the Commission

– encourage adaptation of vessels to technical progress in order to improve working conditions and promote safety,

Amendment

– encourage adaptation of vessels to technical progress in order to improve working conditions and ***health protection and*** promote safety,

PROCEDURE

Title	Proposal for a regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No 718/1999 of 29 March 1999 on a Community-fleet capacity policy to promote inland waterway transport		
References	COM(2013)0621 – C7-0265/2013 – 2013/0303(COD)		
Committee responsible Date announced in plenary	TRAN 8.10.2013		
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	EMPL 8.10.2013		
Associated committee(s) - date announced in plenary	12.12.2013		
Rapporteur Date appointed	Jutta Steinruck 26.11.2013		
Discussed in committee	17.12.2013	22.1.2014	12.2.2014
Date adopted	13.2.2014		
Result of final vote	+: -: 0:	34 3 0	
Members present for the final vote	Regina Bastos, Heinz K. Becker, Phil Bennion, Pervenche Berès, Philippe Boulland, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Derek Roland Clark, Minodora Cliveti, Andrea Cozzolino, Frédéric Daerden, Karima Delli, Sari Essayah, Richard Falbr, Nadja Hirsch, Stephen Hughes, Danuta Jazłowiecka, Jean Lambert, Patrick Le Hyaric, Verónica Lope Fontagné, Thomas Mann, Anthea McIntyre, Csaba Óry, Konstantinos Poupakis, Elisabeth Schroedter, Gabriele Stauner, Jutta Steinruck		
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Georges Bach, Philippe De Backer, Edite Estrela, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Paul Murphy, Antigoni Papadopoulou, Gabriele Zimmer		
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Timothy Kirkhope, George Lyon, Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa		