



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 8 May 2014

9352/14

(OR. en)

PRESSE 248

Council adopts updated Community fleet capacity rules

The Council today adopted an updated regulation on a **Community fleet capacity policy to promote inland waterway transport** ([PE-CONS 67/14](#)).

Today's final adoption of the legislative act by the Council follows an agreement reached at first reading with the European Parliament. The Parliament held its vote at the plenary session on 15 April 2014.

New uses of Inland Waterway Funds

The new regulation **broadens the scope of the reserve funds called Inland Waterway Funds**, set up under [Council regulation 718/1999](#), by amending its Article 8. While the measures provided for in the old regulation concern only social matters and the safety of the working environment, other types of support measure are now introduced to encourage innovation and environmental friendliness. This includes using the funds to adapt engines to future stricter European emission standards.

The measures concerning vocational training or retraining schemes will cover all crew members leaving the sector, including owner-operators, and not only those who are qualified as workers. Owner-operators who work and live with their families on the vessels operate roughly 80% of the fleet.

P R E S S

Rue de la Loi 175 B – 1048 BRUSSELS Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319 Fax: +32 (0)2 281 8026
press.office@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press>

9352/14

Measures to encourage owner-operators to join trade associations were already possible under the old rules, but the new text also provides for measures to strengthen the organisations representing inland waterway transport at EU level. The sector currently suffers from fragmentation, and stronger Union-wide organisations can help to mitigate this.

Member states may also encourage ways of leveraging the use of the reserve funds in conjunction with available financial instruments, including, where appropriate, under Horizon 2020 and the Connecting Europe Facility, and financing instruments from the European Investment Bank.

The creation and current size of Inland Waterway Funds

Council regulation 718/1999 established an EU fleet capacity policy for vessels used to transport goods on inland waterways in the member states. In order to address the issue of fleet overcapacity on the EU inland waterway market, it provided, among other things, for the setting up of reserve funds by member states with inland waterways linked to those of another member state and a total fleet tonnage of over 100 000 tonnes.

These Inland Waterway Funds consist of financial contributions from the inland waterway transport industry. The cumulative value of the various member states' funds currently amounts to around EUR 35 million. However, due to their restricted scope, these funds have never been used. The new regulation is expected to change this situation to the benefit of the sector, the people working in it, the environment and the entire economy.

Naiades II to boost inland waterway transport

The fleet capacity regulation is part of the Naiades II programme presented by the Commission in September 2013. Naiades II focuses on making long-term structural changes in the inland waterway transport sector to enable it to contribute fully to the Europe 2020 growth strategy.

Entry into force

The regulation will enter into force twenty days after its publication in the EU Official Journal.

See also:

- [Inland waterways: Naiades II](#)