



Council of the
European Union

043289/EU XXV. GP
Eingelangt am 24/10/14

Brussels, 24 October 2014
(OR. en)

14652/14

Interinstitutional File:
2013/0157 (COD)

TRANS 487
MAR 162
FIN 775
CODEC 2075

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	14034/14 TRANS 466 MAR 154 FIN 721 CODEC 1969
No. Cion doc.:	10154/13 TRANS 272 MAR 62 FIN 300 CODEC 1234
Subject:	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing a framework on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports (First reading) - General approach

Delegations will find attached the final consolidated text of the general approach, including the recitals as examined and approved by the Shipping Working Party at its meetings on 15 and 20 October 2014.

The General Secretariat has made the editorial changes necessary to align the text with the rules on references to Union legislation.

Proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

establishing a framework on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 100 (2) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee¹,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions²,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure,

¹ OJ C 327, 12.11.2003, p. 111.

² OJ C 114, 15.4.2014, p. 57.

Whereas:

- (1) The full integration of ports in seamless logistic and transport chains is needed to contribute to growth and a more efficient use and functioning of the trans-European transport network and the internal market. This requires modern port services contributing to an efficient use of ports and a climate favourable to investments to develop ports in line with current and future transport and logistics requirements.
- (2) In the Communication on the Single Market Act II Together for new growth³, the Commission has recalled that the attractiveness of maritime transport is dependent on the availability efficiency and reliability of port services and the necessity of addressing questions regarding the transparency of public funding and port charges, administrative simplification efforts in ports and reviewing restrictions on the provision of services at ports.
- (3) Facilitating access to the port services market and introducing financial transparency and autonomy of maritime ports will improve the quality and efficiency of service provided to port users and contribute to a climate more favourable to investments in ports, and thereby help reduce costs for transport users and contribute to promoting short sea shipping and a better integration of maritime transport with rail, inland waterway and road transport.
- (3a) The establishment of a clear framework of transparent, fair and non-discriminatory provisions relating to funding and charging of port infrastructures and port services plays a fundamental role in ensuring that national port policies, as well as individual ports' commercial strategy, fully comply with competition rules. In particular, the transparency of financial relations will allow a fair and effective control of State aid, hence preventing market distortion. To that end, as recorded in the Council conclusions of 5 June 2014, the Commission is called upon to adopt State aid guidelines for maritime ports, with the aim of ensuring fair competition and a stable legal framework for port investment.

³ COM(2012) 573 final (3.10.2012).

- (4) The overwhelming majority of Union maritime traffic transits through the maritime ports of the trans-European transport network. In order to achieve the aim of this Regulation in a proportionate way without imposing any unnecessary burden on other ports, this Regulation should apply to the ports of the trans-European transport network, each of which plays a significant role for the European transport system either because it handles more than 0.1% of the total EU freight or the total number of passengers or because it improves the regional accessibility of island or peripheral areas. However, this Regulation should leave Member States the possibility to decide not to apply this Regulation to maritime ports of the comprehensive trans-European transport network located in the outermost regions or to introduce derogations aiming to avoid disproportionate administrative burdens for those maritime ports of the comprehensive trans-European transport network whose annual traffic does not justify the full application of this Regulation. Deep sea pilotage services do not have a direct impact on the efficiency of ports as they are not used for the direct entry and exit of ports and therefore do not need to be included in this Regulation.
- (5) The objective of Article 56 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) is to eliminate restrictions on freedom to provide services in the Union. In accordance with Article 58 of the TFEU, that objective should be achieved within the framework of the provisions of the Title relating to transport, more specifically Article 100(2) TFEU.
- (6) The self-provision of service which entails shipping companies or providers of port services to employ staff of their own choice and to provide themselves port services is regulated in a number of Member States for safety or social reasons. The stakeholders consulted by the Commission when preparing its proposal highlighted that imposing a generalised allowance of the self-provision of service at Union level would require additional rules on safety and social issues in order to avoid possible negative impacts in those areas. It appears therefore appropriate at this stage not to regulate this issue at Union level and to leave it to the Member States to regulate or not the self-provision of port services. Therefore, this Regulation should only cover the provision of port services for remuneration.

- (7) In the interest of efficient, safe and environmentally sound port management, the managing body of the port or the competent authority should be able to require that providers of port services can demonstrate that they meet minimum requirements to perform the service in an appropriate way. Those minimum requirements should be limited to a clearly defined set of conditions in so far as those requirements are transparent, objective, non-discriminatory, proportionate, and relevant for the provision of the port service. The minimum requirements should not be used to introduce market barriers.
- (8) [...]
- (9) The procedure to grant the right to provide port services when compliance with minimum requirements is required should be transparent, objective, non-discriminatory and proportionate and should allow the providers of port services to start the provision of their port services in a timely manner.
- (10) Since ports are constituted of limited geographical areas, access to the market could, in certain cases, be subject to limitations relating to the scarcity of land or waterside space, the characteristics of the traffic or the need to ensure safe, secure or environmentally sustainable port operations.
- (10a) A limitation of the number of providers of port services should be allowed when the financial compensation for the public service obligation leads to a clear disadvantage to the competitiveness of the port due to the imposition of disproportionate port charges necessary to cover the financial compensation.

- (10b) Article 34 of Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council⁴ provides that certain contracts to be carried out shall not be subject to that Directive if the Member State or the contracting entities can demonstrate that, in the Member State in which it is performed, the activity is directly exposed to competition on markets to which access is not restricted. The process for establishing whether this is the case should be that set out in Article 35 of Directive 2014/25/EU. Consequently, if it is established through this procedure that a port sector or subsector, together with its port services is directly exposed to such competition, it should not be subject to the rules framing the market access limitations under this Regulation.
- (11) Except where a competitive market derogation applies, any intention to limit the number of providers of port services should be published in advance by the managing body of the port or the competent authority and should be fully justified, in order to give the interested parties the opportunity to comment.
- (11a) If a managing body of a port or a competent authority provides port services itself or through a legally distinct entity which it directly or indirectly controls after, measures should be taken to avoid conflicts of interest and to ensure a fair and transparent market access to port services when the number of providers of port services is limited. Such measures can be, inter alia, entrusting the adoption of the decision limiting the number of providers of port services to a relevant national authority which is independent from the managing body of the port or the competent authority.
- (11b) The possibility left to impose minimum requirements and limit the number of providers of port services should not prevent Member States from ensuring an unrestricted freedom to provide services in their ports.

⁴ Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 243).

- (12) The procedure to choose providers of port services and its result should be made public and should be non-discriminatory, transparent and open to all interested parties.
- (13) [...]
- (14) The recourse to public service obligations leading to a limitation in the number of providers of port services should only be justified for reasons of public interest in order to ensure the accessibility of the port service to all users, the availability of the port service all year long, the affordability of the port service to certain category of users, the safety, security or environmental sustainability of port operations and territorial cohesion.
- (14a) While public service obligations are defined and designated by national authorities, a general obligation set by national or European legislation for a port to accept any vessel physically capable of entering and mooring without discrimination or hindrance should not be understood to be a public service obligation for the purposes of this Regulation.
- (15) [...]
- (16) This Regulation does not preclude the possibility of competent authorities to grant compensation for the accomplishment of the public service obligations provided that it complies with the applicable State aid rules. Where public service obligations qualify as services of general economic interest, compliance should be ensured with Commission Decision of 20 December 2011 on the application of Article 106(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to State aid in the form of public service compensation granted to certain undertakings entrusted with the operation of services of general economic interest⁵, Commission Regulation (EU) No 360/2012⁶ and the European Union framework for State aid in the form of public service compensation⁷.

⁵ OJ L 7, 11.1.2012, p. 3.

⁶ Commission Regulation (EU) No 360/2012 of 25 April 2012 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid granted to undertakings providing services of general economic interest (OJ L 114, 26.4.2012, p. 8).

⁷ OJ C 8, 11.1.2012, p. 15.

- (17) Where there are multiple providers of port services, the managing body of the port or the competent authority should not discriminate between providers of port services, in particular in favour of an undertaking or a body in which it holds an interest.
- (18) A managing body of a port or a competent authority should have the choice to decide to provide port services itself or to entrust the provision of such services directly to an internal operator. In the case that a managing body of a port or a competent authority decides to provide the service itself, this may cover the provision of services through agents employed or commissioned by the managing body of a port or the competent authority. When a limitation of the number of providers of port services exists, the provision of port services by the internal operators should be confined only to the port or ports for which those internal operators were designated, except where a competitive market derogation applies.
- (19) Member States should retain the power to ensure an adequate level of social protection for the staff of undertakings providing port services. This Regulation should not affect the application of the social and labour rules of the Member States. In cases of limitation of the number of providers of port services, where the conclusion of a port service contract may entail a change of port service operator, it should be possible for the competent authorities to ask the chosen service operator to apply the provisions of Council Directive 2001/23/EC⁸.
- (19a) While this Regulation provides that the managing body of the port or the competent authority may require that the rights under Directive 2001/23/EC be granted to staff previously taken on by the outgoing provider, these rights should remain optional and there is no obligation imposed on Member States with regard to such cases.

⁸ Council Directive 2001/23/EC of 12 March 2001 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of undertakings or businesses (OJ L 82, 22.3.2001, p. 16).

- (20) In many ports, the market access for providers of cargo-handling and terminal passenger services is granted by means of public contracts. For other types of contracts used by public authorities for granting market access to cargo handling and terminal passenger services, the Court of Justice of the European Union has confirmed that the competent authorities are bound by the principles of transparency and non-discrimination when concluding these contracts. Therefore, Member States should remain free to decide to apply the rules of Chapter II to these two services or to keep their existing national legislation on market access with regard to cargo handling and passenger services while respecting the main principles in the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union.
- (20a) Recognising that pilotage is a particular service due to reasons such as safety and public service considerations, Member States should remain free to decide not to apply Chapter II to pilotage through national derogations, provided that the Commission is informed accordingly.
- (20b) Without prejudice to EU competition rules, this Regulation should not interfere with the right of Member States, where applicable, to regulate charges in order to avoid over-charging of port services, in cases where the situation of the market of port services is such, that effective competition cannot be achieved.
- (21) Financial relations between maritime ports in receipt of public funds and providers of port services on the one hand, and public authorities on the other should be made transparent in order to ensure a level playing field and to avoid market distortions. In this respect, this Regulation extends to other categories of addressees the principles of transparency of financial relations as set out in Commission Directive 2006/111/EC⁹ without prejudice to the scope of that Directive.

⁹ Commission Directive 2006/111/EC of 16 November 2006 on the transparency of financial relations between Member States and public undertakings as well as on financial transparency within certain undertakings (OJ L 318, 17.11.2006, p.17).

- (22) It is necessary to impose on the managing body of the port in receipt of public funds, when it is also acting as a service provider, an obligation to keep separate accounts for activities carried out in its capacity as managing body of the port from those carried out on a competitive basis in order to ensure a level playing field, transparency in the allocation and use of public funds and to avoid market distortions. In any case, compliance with State aid rules should be ensured.
- (22a) With a view to ensuring transparency, when a port or another entity provides dredging within a port area, the accounts of dredging should be kept separate from the accounts of other activities.
- (23) Port service charges applied by providers of port services under public service obligations which are not designated in accordance with an open, transparent and non-discriminatory procedure may entail a higher risk of price abuse in cases where monopoly power exists. For those services, arrangements should be established to ensure that the charges are set in a transparent, objective and non-discriminatory way and shall be proportionate to the cost of the service provided.
- (24) In order to be efficient, the port infrastructure charges of each individual port should be set in a transparent and autonomous way in accordance with national ports policy and/or that port's own commercial and investment strategy.
- (24a) This Regulation should not interfere with the rights, where applicable, of the ports and their customers to agree commercially confidential discounts. This Regulation is not intended to require the disclosure to the public or to third parties of any such discounts. However, the managing body of the port or the competent authority should at least publish standard charges before any price differentiation.

- (25) The variation of port infrastructure charges should be allowed in order to promote short sea shipping and to attract waterborne vessels having an environmental performance or energy and carbon efficiency of the transport operations, notably the off-shore or on-shore maritime transport operations, that is better than average. This should help to contribute to the environmental and climate change policies and the sustainable development of the port and its surroundings notably by contributing to reducing the environmental footprint of the waterborne vessels calling and staying in the port.
- (25a) The variation of port infrastructure charges may result in rates being set at zero for certain categories of users, depending on the national port policy, the economic strategy of the port, port spatial planning policy or port commercial practices. Such categories of users could include, among others, hospital ships, vessels in scientific, cultural or humanitarian missions, tugs and floating service equipment of the port.
- (25b) The Commission, in cooperation with Member States, should elaborate guidance on common classification criteria for vessels for the purpose of voluntary environmental charging, taking into account internationally agreed standards.
- (26) The managing body of the port should consult, when appropriate, port users and other stakeholders on key issues related to the sound development of the port, its charging policy, its performance and its capacity to attract and generate economic activities such as the coordination of port services within the port area and the efficiency of the connections with the hinterland and of the administrative procedures in ports as well as environmental issues. This is without prejudice to any other specific competence on the aforesaid issues, as well as to the possibility for Member States to hold such consultations also at a national level.
- (27) In order to ensure the proper and effective application of this Regulation every Member State should ensure that an effective mechanism is in place to handle complaints.
- (28) Member States should exchange information on their work and cooperate in order to facilitate a uniform application of this Regulation.

- (29) [...]
- (30) [...]
- (31) Since the objectives of this Regulation, namely ensuring the modernisation of port services and the appropriate framework to attract necessary investments in all the ports of the trans-European transport network, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States because of the European dimension, international and cross-border nature of port and related maritime business and can therefore, by reason of the need for a European level playing field, be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that Article, this Regulation does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve those objectives.
- (32) This Regulation respects the fundamental rights and observes the principles recognised in particular by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

CHAPTER I – Subject matter, scope and definitions

Article 1

Subject matter and scope

1. This Regulation establishes:
 - (a) a framework for market access to port services;
 - (b) common rules on financial transparency and on port service and port infrastructure charges.
2. This Regulation shall apply to the provision of the following categories of port services, either inside the port area or on the waterway access to and from the port:
 - (a) bunkering;
 - (b) cargo handling;
 - (c) [...]
 - (d) mooring;
 - (e) passenger services;
 - (f) collection of ship-generated waste and cargo residues;
 - (g) pilotage, and
 - (h) towage.
- 2a. Article 12(2) shall also apply to dredging.

3. This Regulation shall apply to all maritime ports of the trans-European transport network, as listed in Annex II of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁰.
- 3a. Member States may decide not to apply this Regulation to maritime ports of the comprehensive network located in the outermost regions as referred to in Article 349 TFEU. When Member States decide not to apply this Regulation to such maritime ports, they shall notify their decision to the Commission.
4. Member States may also apply this Regulation to other maritime ports. When Member States decide to apply this Regulation to other maritime ports they shall notify their decision to the Commission.

Article 2

Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation:

1. "bunkering" means the provision of solid, liquid or gaseous fuel or any other energy source used for the propulsion of the waterborne vessel as well as for general and specific energy provision on board of the waterborne vessel whilst at berth;
2. "cargo handling" means the organisation and handling of cargo between the carrying waterborne vessel and the shore be it for import, export or transit of the cargo, including the processing, transporting and temporary storage of the cargo on the relevant cargo handling terminal and directly related to the transporting of the cargo, but excluding, unless otherwise determined by Member States, warehousing, stripping, repackaging or any other value added services related to the handled cargo;

¹⁰ Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network and repealing Decision No 661/2010/EU (OJ L 348, 20.12.2013, p. 1).

- 2a. "competent authority" means any public or private body which, on behalf of a regional or national level, is entitled to carry out under national law or instruments activities related to the organisation and supervision of port activities, in conjunction with or alternatively to the managing body of the port;
3. "dredging" means the removal of sand, sediment or other substances from the bottom within the port area which falls into the legal competence of the managing body of the port, including the disposal of the removed materials, in order to allow waterborne vessel to have access to the port and comprises both the initial removal (capital dredging) and the maintenance dredging in order to keep the waterway accessible;
4. [...]
5. "managing body of the port" means any public or private body which, whether or not in conjunction with other activities, has as its objective under national law or instruments or is empowered by such law or instruments to carry out, at a local level, the administration and management of the port infrastructures, port traffic, the coordination and, where appropriate, the control of the activities of the operators present in the port concerned;
6. "mooring" means the berthing and un-berthing services required for a waterborne vessel operated in the port or in the waterway access to the port;
7. "passenger services" means the organisation and handling of passengers, their luggage and their private vehicles between the carrying waterborne vessel and the shore and also includes the processing of personal data and transporting the passengers inside the relevant passenger terminal;
8. "pilotage" means the guidance service of a waterborne vessel by a pilot or a pilotage station in order to allow for a safe entry or exit of the waterborne vessel in the waterway access to the port or safe navigation within the port;

9. "port infrastructure charge" means a charge levied for the direct or indirect benefit of the managing body of the port or the competent authority for the use of facilities and services, including the waterways giving access to those ports, as well as for access to the processing of passengers and cargo, but excluding land lease rates and charges having equivalent effect;
10. "collection of ship-generated waste and cargo residues" means the receipt into any facility, which is fixed, floating or mobile and capable of receiving ship-generated waste or cargo residues as defined in Directive 2000/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council¹¹;
11. "port service charge" means a charge levied for the benefit of the provider of port services and paid by the users of the relevant service;
12. "port service contract" means a formal and legally binding contract or any other act of equivalent effect between a provider of port services and a managing body of the port or a competent authority having as its subject-matter the provision of one or more port services as defined in Article 1(2), without prejudice to the form of designating providers of port services;
13. "provider of port services" means any natural or legal person providing, or wishing to provide, for remuneration, one or more categories of port services listed in Article 1(2);
14. "public service obligation" means a requirement defined or determined in order to ensure the provision of those port services or activities of general interest that an operator, if it were considering its own commercial interests, would not assume or would not assume to the same extent or under the same conditions;
15. "short sea shipping" means the movement of cargo and passengers by sea between ports situated in geographical Europe or between those ports and ports situated in non-European countries having a coastline on the enclosed seas bordering Europe;

¹¹ Directive 2000/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2000 on port reception facilities for ship-generated waste and cargo residues (OJ L 332, 28.12.2000, p. 81).

16. "maritime port" means an area of land and water made up of such works and equipment so as to permit, principally, the reception of waterborne vessels, their loading and unloading, the storage of goods, the receipt and delivery of those goods and the embarkation and disembarkation of passengers and any other infrastructure necessary for transport operators within the port area;
17. "towage" means the assistance to a waterborne vessel by means of a tug in order to allow for a safe entry or exit of the port or safe navigation within the port by providing assistance to the manoeuvring of the waterborne vessel;
18. "waterway access to a port" means water access to the port from the open sea, such as port approaches, fairways, rivers, sea canals and fjords, if such waterway falls into the legal competence of the managing body of the port.

CHAPTER II – Market access

Article 3

Freedom to provide services

1. Freedom to provide services in maritime ports covered by this Regulation shall apply to the providers of port services established in the Union under the conditions set out in this Chapter.
2. The terms of market access to facilities, installations and equipment of the port shall be fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory.

Article 4

Minimum requirements for the provision of port services

1. The managing body of the port or the competent authority may require that providers of port services comply with minimum requirements to perform the corresponding port service.
2. Without prejudice to any general requirements which apply to all bona fide service providers established in the Union, the minimum requirements provided for in paragraph 1 may only relate to one or several of the following subject-matters:
 - (a) the professional qualifications of the provider of port services, its personnel or the natural persons who effectively and continuously are managing the activities of the provider of port services;
 - (aa) the financial capacity of the provider of port services;
 - (b) the equipment needed to provide the relevant port service in normal and safe conditions and the capacity to maintain this equipment at the required level;
 - (c) the compliance with requirements on the maritime safety or the safety and security of the port or access to it, its installations, equipment and persons;

- (d) the compliance with local, national, Union and international environmental requirements;
- (da) the availability of the port service to all users;
- (dc) the availability of the service without interruption during the day, the night, the week and the year;

3. The minimum requirements shall:

- (a) be transparent, objective, non-discriminatory, proportionate, and relevant to the category and nature of the port service concerned;
- (b) be complied with until the right to provide a port service expires; and
- (c) not be used to introduce market barriers.

4. [...]

5. In the cases provided for in paragraph 1, the minimum requirements referred to in paragraph 2 and the procedure for the granting of the right to provide port services under those requirements shall have been published by the managing body of the port or by the competent authority within ...[•] or, in the case of minimum requirements being applicable after that date, at least three months before the date on which those requirements would become applicable. Providers of port services shall be informed in advance of any change in the criteria and of the procedure.

• OJ: Please insert date: 24 months after the date of entry into force of this Regulation.

Article 5

Procedure to ensure compliance with the minimum requirements

1. The managing body of the port or the competent authority shall treat providers of port services in a transparent, objective, non-discriminatory and proportionate manner.
2. The managing body of the port or the competent authority shall grant or refuse the right to provide port services on the basis of the minimum requirements established in accordance with Article 4 within a reasonable time, and in any event not exceeding four months, from receiving a request for the granting of such a right and the necessary documents.
3. [...]
- 3a. Any limitation to the duration of the right to provide a port service shall be duly justified and in accordance with paragraph 1. Furthermore, any refusal shall be justified on the basis of the minimum requirements of Article 4(2).
- 3b. Any termination of the right to provide a port service shall be duly justified and in accordance with paragraph 1.

Article 6

Limitations of the number of providers of port services

1. By way of derogation from Article 3, the managing body of the port or the competent authority may limit the number of providers of port services for a given port service for one or several of the following reasons:
 - (a) the scarcity or reserved use of land or waterside space provided that the limitation is in accordance with the decisions or plans as agreed by the managing body of the port and where appropriate any other public competent authorities according to the national legislation;

- (b) the absence of limitation obstructs the performance of the public service obligations as provided for in Article 8;
- (ba) the absence of limitation leads to a financial compensation for the public service obligations which is excessively high for the managing body of the port or the competent authority, or for the port users;
- (bb) the absence of limitation obstructs the need to ensure safe, secure or environmentally sustainable port operations;
- (bc) the characteristics of the traffic do not enable multiple providers of port services to operate in economically satisfactory conditions in the port;
- (bd) where it has been established pursuant to Article 35 of Directive 2014/25/EU that a port sector or sub-sector, together with its port services, within a Member State carries out an activity directly exposed to competition in accordance with Article 34 of that Directive. In such case, paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article shall not apply.

This paragraph does not preclude the possibility for Member States to impose public service obligations in case of unlimited access to port services.

2. The managing body of the port or the competent authority shall publish any proposal to apply paragraph 1 at least three months in advance together with the grounds justifying it, giving any interested party the opportunity to comment within a reasonable period.
3. The managing body of the port or the competent authority shall publish the adopted decision.
4. When a managing body of a port or a competent authority provides port services itself or through a legally distinct entity which it directly or indirectly controls, the Member State shall take necessary measures to avoid conflicts of interest. In the absence of such measures, the number of providers shall not be less than two, unless any of the reasons listed in paragraph 1 justifies a limitation to a single provider.

- 4a. Member States may decide that their ports of the comprehensive network which do not meet the criteria in point (b) of Article 20(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 may limit the number of service providers for a given port service. In such case, paragraphs 1a to 7 of Article 7 of this Regulation shall not apply and the Member States shall inform the Commission thereof.

Article 7

Procedure for the choice of providers of port services in case of limitation of their number

1. In the case of limitation of the number of providers for a port service in accordance with Article 6, the managing body of the port or the competent authority shall follow a procedure to choose providers of port services which shall be open to all interested parties, non-discriminatory and transparent.
 - 1a. The procedure shall fulfil the following conditions:
 - (a) A port service contract notice, containing at least information on the port service to be provided, the award criteria, indications of how the relevant document can be accessed and the address and time limit for the submission of tenders, shall be published in the Official Journal of the European Union.
 - (b) The minimum time limit for receipt of tenders shall be 30 days from publication of the notice.
 - (c) All technical and functional requirements shall be communicated to interested parties.
 - (d) The award criteria shall not confer an unrestricted freedom of choice on the managing body of the port or the competent authority.
 - (e) The duration of the port service contract shall be limited on the basis of the nature of, the purpose of and the investments necessary for the service to which the contract relates.

2. [...]

3. [...]

4. [...]

5. For the purposes of this Regulation, a substantial modification of the provisions of a port service contract during its term shall be considered as the conclusion of a new port service contract and shall require a new procedure as referred to in paragraph 1.

This covers cases when the modification renders the contract materially different in character from the one initially concluded, including when the scope of the port service contract is considerably extended.

6. Paragraphs 1, 1a and 5 of this Article shall not apply in the cases referred to in Article 6(1)(bd) and Article 9.

7. This Regulation is without prejudice to Directive 2014/23/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council¹², Directive 2014/25/EU and Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council¹³.

¹² Directive 2014/23/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on the award of concession contracts (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 1).

¹³ Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3/2014, p. 65).

Article 8
Public service obligations

1. Member States may decide to impose public service obligations related to port services on providers in order to ensure one or several of the following:
 - (a) the availability of the service without interruption during the day, the night, the week and the year;
 - (b) the availability of the service to all users;
 - (c) the affordability of the service;
 - (ca) the safety, security or environmental sustainability of port operations;
 - (cb) territorial cohesion.
2. The obligations referred to in paragraph 1 shall be clearly defined, transparent, non-discriminatory, verifiable and shall guarantee equality of access to all providers of port services established in the Union.
3. Member States may entrust the right to impose public service obligation to a managing body of the port or a competent authority.
4. [...]
5. If a Member State decides to impose public service obligations, for the same service, in all its maritime ports covered by this Regulation, it shall notify those obligations to the Commission.

6. In the event of a disruption of port services for which public service obligations are imposed or when an immediate risk of such a situation occurs, the authority designated in accordance with paragraph 3 may take an emergency measure. The emergency measure may take the form of a direct award so as to attribute the service to a different provider for a period up to two years. During that time period, that authority shall either launch a new procedure to select a provider of port services in accordance with Article 7 or shall apply Article 9.

Article 9

Internal operator

1. The managing body of the port or the competent authority may decide to provide a port service itself or through a legally distinct entity over which it exercises a control similar to that exercised over its own departments.
2. The managing body of the port or the competent authority shall be considered as exercising a control of a legally distinct entity similar to that exercised to its own departments only if it exercises a decisive influence over both the strategic objectives and the significant decisions of the controlled legal entity.
3. In the cases provided for in Article 6(1), with the exception of point (bd), the internal operator shall be confined to perform the assigned port service only in the port or ports for which the assignment to provide the port service has been attributed to him.
4. [...]
5. [...]

Article 10

Safeguarding of employees' rights

1. This Regulation shall not affect the application of the social and labour rules of the Member States.
2. Without prejudice to national and Union law including collective agreements between social partners, the managing bodies of the port or the competent authority may require the designated provider of port services appointed in accordance with the procedure established by Article 7, in the case where this provider is different from the outgoing provider of port services, to grant staff previously taken on by the outgoing provider of port services the rights to which they would have been entitled if there had been a transfer within the meaning of Directive 2001/23/EC.
3. Where managing bodies of the port or competent authorities require providers of port services to comply with certain social standards as regards the provision of relevant port services, tender documents and port service contracts shall list the staff concerned and give transparent details of their contractual rights and the conditions under which employees are deemed to be linked to the port services.

Article 11

Exemptions

This Chapter and the transitional provisions of Article 24 shall not apply to cargo handling and passenger services.

Article 11a

National derogations

Member States may decide not to apply this Chapter and the transitional provisions of Article 24 to pilotage. Member States shall inform the Commission thereof.

CHAPTER III – Financial transparency and autonomy

Article 12

Transparency of financial relations

1. The financial relations between public authorities and a managing body of a port, or other entity that provides port services on its behalf, in receipt of public funds shall be reflected in a transparent way in the accounting system in order to clearly show the following:
 - (a) public funds made available directly by public authorities to the managing bodies of the port concerned;
 - (b) public funds made available by public authorities through the intermediary of public undertakings or public financial institutions; and
 - (c) the use which these public funds have been attributed for.
2. Where the managing body of a port in receipt of public funds provides port services or dredging, within the port area which falls into the legal competence of the managing body of the port, itself, or other entity provides port services or dredging, within the port area which falls into the legal competence of the managing body of the port, on its behalf, it shall keep the accounts of that publicly funded port service activity or dredging separate from the accounts of its other activities, in such a way that:
 - (a) all costs and revenues are correctly assigned or allocated on the basis of consistently applied and objectively justifiable cost accounting principles; and
 - (b) the cost accounting principles according to which separate accounts are maintained are clearly established.

3. The public funds referred to in paragraph 1 shall include share capital or quasi-capital funds, non-refundable grants, grants only refundable in certain circumstances, award of loans including overdrafts and advances on capital injections, guarantees given to the managing body of the port by public authorities, the granting of financial advantages by forgoing profits and recovery of sums due or any other form of public financial support.
4. The managing body of the port, or other entity that provides port services on its behalf, shall keep the information concerning the financial relations as referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article for five years from the end of the fiscal year to which the information refers.
5. The managing body of the port, or other entity that provides port services on its behalf, shall, upon request, make available to the relevant national authority the information referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 and any additional information that they deem necessary in order to complete a thorough appraisal of the data submitted and to assess compliance with this Regulation in line with competition rules. Such information shall be made available to the Commission by the national authority upon request. The information shall be transmitted within three months from the date of the request.
6. The managing body of the port, or other entity that provides port services on its behalf, that has not received public funds in previous accounting years but which start benefitting from public funds shall apply paragraphs 1 and 2 from the accounting year following the transfer of the public funds.
7. Where public funds are paid as a compensation for a public service obligation, they shall be shown separately in the relevant accounts and may not be transferred to any other service or business activity.
- 7a. Member States may decide that paragraph 2 shall not apply to their ports of the comprehensive network which do not meet the criteria in point (b) of Article 20(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 in case of disproportionate administrative burdens, provided that any public funds received, and their use for providing port services, remain fully transparent in the accounting system. In such case, the Member States shall inform the Commission thereof in advance.

Article 13

Port service charges

1. In the cases referred to in Article 6(1)(b) and (ba), including as regards pilotage, the charges shall be set in a transparent, objective, and non-discriminatory way and shall be proportionate to the cost of the service provided.
2. The payment of the port service charges may be integrated in other payments, such as the payment of the port infrastructure charges. In this case, the provider of port services and, where appropriate, the managing body of the port shall make sure that the amount of the port service charge remains easily identifiable by the user of the port service.
3. The provider of port services shall, upon request, make available to the relevant national authority any relevant information on the elements serving as a basis to determine the structure and the level of the port service charges that falls under the application of paragraph 1 of this Article.

Article 14

Port infrastructure charges

1. Member States shall ensure that a port infrastructure charge is levied. This shall not prevent providers of port services which are using port infrastructures from levying port service charges.
2. The payment of the port infrastructure charges may be integrated in other payments, such as the payment of the port service charges. In this case, the managing body of the port shall make sure that the amount of the port infrastructure charge remains easily identifiable by the user of the port infrastructure.
3. In order to contribute to an efficient infrastructure charging system, the structure and the level of port infrastructure charges shall be determined according to national ports policy and/or the individual port's commercial strategy and investment plan and comply with competition rules, where applicable.

4. Without prejudice to paragraph 3, port infrastructure charges may vary in accordance with the port's economic strategy and the port's spatial planning policy, related inter alia to certain categories of users, or in order to promote a more efficient use of the port infrastructure, short sea shipping or a high environmental performance, energy efficiency or carbon efficiency of transport operations. The criteria for such a variation shall be relevant, transparent, objective and non-discriminatory. Port infrastructure charges may vary also in accordance with commercial practices.
5. [...]
6. The managing body of the port or the competent authority shall ensure that port users and the representatives or associations of port users are informed about the nature and level of the port infrastructure charges. The managing body of the port or the competent authority shall ensure that users of the port infrastructures are informed of any changes in the nature and level of the port infrastructure charges at least two months in advance.
7. The managing body of the port shall, upon request, make available to the relevant national authority the information referred to in paragraphs 4 and 6. Such information shall be made available to the Commission by the national authority upon request.

CHAPTER IV – General and final provisions

Article 15

Consultation of port users and other stakeholders

1. Without prejudice to the competence on the issues listed in points (-a) to (ca) of this paragraph, the managing body of the port shall when appropriate consult representatives of port users, providers of port services and other relevant stakeholders at least on the following:
 - (-a) the charging policy;
 - (a) [...]
 - (b) measures to improve the connections with the hinterland and where appropriate measures to develop and improve the efficiency of rail and inland waterways connections;
 - (c) the efficiency of the administrative procedures in port and where appropriate possible measures to simplify them, as well as the proper coordination of port services within the port area;
 - (ca) environmental issues.
2. [...]

Article 16

[...]

1. [...]
 - (a) [...]
 - (b) [...]
 - (c) [...]

Article 17

Handling of complaints

1. Member States shall ensure that an effective mechanism is in place to handle complaints arising from the application of this Regulation for all the maritime ports covered by this Regulation on the territory of each Member State.
2. The handling of complaints shall be carried out in a manner which excludes conflicts of interest and which is functionally independent of any managing body of the port or providers of port services. Member States shall ensure that there is effective functional separation between the handling of complaints on the one hand and the ownership and management of ports, provision of port services and port use on the other hand. The handling of complaints shall be impartial and transparent and shall duly respect the right to freely conduct business.
3. Member States shall ensure that port users and other relevant stakeholders are informed of where and how to lodge a complaint, including, an indication of the authorities responsible for the handling of complaints and relevant national authorities referred to in Articles 12(5), 13(3) and 14(7).
4. [...]
5. [...]
6. [...]
7. [...]
8. [...]
9. Member States shall inform the Commission about the mechanism for handling of complaints and shall indicate the authorities referred to in paragraph 3 by ...^{*} at the latest and subsequently any modification thereof. The Commission shall publish and update such information on its website.

^{*} OJ: Please insert date: 24 months after the date of entry into force of this Regulation.

Article 18

Cooperation between Member States

1. In order to facilitate a uniform implementation of this Regulation, Member States shall as and when appropriate exchange general information about the activities referred to in Article 17 and the Commission may participate in and support such cooperation.
2. Member States shall cooperate for the purposes of mutual assistance in the activities required to handle cross-border complaints.
3. [...]
4. [...]
5. [...]

Article 19

Appeals

1. Any party with a legitimate interest shall have the right to appeal against the decisions or individual measures taken under this Regulation by any relevant national authority to an appeal body which is independent of the parties involved. This appeal body may be a court.
2. Where the appeal body referred in paragraph 1 is not judicial in character, it shall give reasons in writing for its decisions. Its decisions shall also be subject to review by a national court.

Article 20

Penalties

Member States shall lay down the rules on penalties applicable to infringements of the provisions of this Regulation and shall take all measures necessary to ensure that they are implemented. The penalties provided for must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive. Member States shall notify those provisions to the Commission by ...* at the latest and shall notify it without delay of any subsequent amendment affecting them.

Article 21

[...]

1. [...]
2. [...]
3. [...]
4. [...]
5. [...]

Article 22

[...]

1. [...]
2. [...]

* OJ: Please insert date: 24 months after the date of entry into force of this Regulation.

Article 23

Report

No later than ...*, the Commission shall present a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the functioning and effect of this Regulation, accompanied, if appropriate, by relevant proposals.

Article 24

Transitional measures

1. Port service contracts and acts of equivalent effects concluded before ...* which are limited in time shall continue to be valid until their expiry.
2. Port service contracts and acts of equivalent effects concluded before ...* which are not limited in time or have similar effects shall be aligned to this Regulation by 1 July 2025.

* OJ: Please insert date: 72 months after the date of entry into force of this Regulation.
* OJ: Please insert date: date of adoption of this Regulation.
* OJ: Please insert date: date of adoption of this Regulation.

Article 25

Entry into force

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply with effect from ...^{*}.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament

For the Council

The President

The President

^{*} OJ: Please insert date: 24 months after the date of entry into force of this Regulation.