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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND  
THE COUNCIL**

**on experience acquired in the application of Regulation (EC) No 1365/2006 of the  
European Parliament and of the Council of 6 September 2006 on statistics of goods  
transport by inland waterways**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regulation (EC) No 1365/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on statistics of goods transport by inland waterways<sup>1</sup> specifies in Article 8 that, by 15 October 2009 and after consulting the European Statistical System Committee (former Statistical Programme Committee), the Commission must submit a report on the implementation of the Regulation to the European Parliament and the Council. The purpose of this report is to comply with that requirement.

This report outlines the background, objectives and policy context of the legislation. It then discusses issues linked to its implementation and describes the main results achieved. The final section presents conclusions and possible future developments.

The Regulation led to an increase in detailed information on European freight transport by inland waterways and improved data quality and timeliness. Member States have made efforts to meet the requirements of the Regulation and most are providing all requested data by the deadlines specified.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Data on goods transported by inland waterways started to be collected in 1982 following Council Directive 80/1119/EEC. This old Directive had several shortcomings that prevented proper monitoring of this mode of transport. Regulation (EC) No 1365/2006 addressed these shortcomings and laid down common rules for inland waterways transport statistics.

The Regulation was designed to provide the Commission, other EU institutions, national governments and the general public with comparable, reliable, harmonised, regular and comprehensive statistical data on the carriage of goods by inland waterways in the European Union.

The main requirements of Regulation 1365/2006 can be summarised as follows:

- only Member States in which the total volume of goods transported annually (by inland waterways) exceeds one million tonnes need supply the requested data;
- the observation periods are quarterly and yearly; in order to reduce the burden on Member States no monthly data are requested;
- reduced data collection is defined 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, at national level, exceeds one million tonnes;
- there is a simplified classification of vessel types, and a new information field to separate loaded/empty vessels and containers;

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1365/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 September 2006 on statistics of goods transport by inland waterways, OJ L 264, 25.9.2006, p.1.

- freight data are also collected for container transport;
- geographical origin/destination data must be provided at NUTS2 level.

## 1.2 POLICY CONTEXT

Transport by inland waterways plays a relevant role (about 5 to 6% in tonne-km) in inland goods transport in Europe.

The main characteristics of transport by inland waterways in Europe are:

- availability of a vast network of waterways (more than 37 000 km); 20 Member States have inland waterways and 12 of them have an interconnected waterways network;
- reliability, safety and low environmental impact;
- high degree of safety; this is particularly important for the transport of dangerous goods;
- high energy efficiency; the energy consumption per tonne-km is approximately 17% that of road transport and 50% that of rail transport.

The potential for increasing the modal share of inland waterways is significant; this is especially relevant in view of the frequent congestion and capacity problems with other modes of transport. Further development of inland waterways transport can help to reduce congestion on the overloaded road network in densely populated areas.

To develop the Common Transport Policy, we need the best possible knowledge of the extent and situation of inland waterways transport. The White Paper *European transport policy for 2010: time to decide*<sup>2</sup> defined the objective of the Common Transport Policy: to help provide Europeans with efficient and effective transport systems. This objective was maintained in the *Mid-term Review* of the White Paper<sup>3</sup>, despite being more oriented towards ensuring sustainable mobility in Europe. Community inland waterways statistics are used when framing, monitoring and evaluating EU transport policies, as well as EU policies on other topics such as the functioning of the internal market. Collecting data also helps to promote transport by inland waterways and to integrate it in the intermodal logistics chain.

## 1.3 IMPLEMENTING RULES

Regulation 1365/2006 confers implementing powers on the Commission, exercised via the comitology procedure as set out in Articles 9 and 10. Eurostat has used this procedure to adopt a set of rules on various aspects of implementation. The rules are adopted in the form of Commission Regulations, after consulting the European Statistical System Committee.

So far, two implementing Commission Regulations have been adopted.

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<sup>2</sup> COM(2001) 370 of 12 September 2001.

<sup>3</sup> COM(2006) 314 of 22 June 2006: 'Keep Europe moving — Sustainable mobility for our continent. Mid-term review of the European Commission's 2001 Transport White Paper'.

Commission Regulation 425/2007<sup>4</sup> provides a comprehensive set of implementing arrangements, including an exhaustive list of definitions, explanations and data reporting guidelines. It also gives a detailed description of the data files requested and the transmission medium.

Commission Regulation 1304/2007<sup>5</sup> is mainly aimed at establishing NST 2007 as the unique classification for transported goods.

## **1.4 COVERAGE OF MEMBER STATES AND OTHER COUNTRIES**

Regulation 1365/2006 applies directly and in its entirety to all Member States. It does not have to be transposed into national legislation.

Under the requirements of the Regulation, 13 Member States (BE, BG, CZ, DE, FR, LU, HU, NL, AT, PL, RO, SK and UK) are obliged to provide data. As stated in Article 2 of the Regulation, the United Kingdom is subject only to reduced data provision.

Although not required by the Regulation, three Member States (FI, IT and LT) provide data on a voluntary basis. Furthermore six Member States (BE, BG, CZ, LU, HU and RO) also supply optional data (vessel traffic, transport of dangerous goods and number of accidents) on a voluntary basis.

As for candidate countries, Croatia provided quarterly data and the reduced E1 dataset for reference year 2007. For reference year 2008 Croatia provided all data requested by the Regulation and, on a voluntary basis, data on transport of dangerous goods.

## **2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGULATION**

### **2.1 ISSUES ENCOUNTERED**

#### *2.1.1 Compliance with legal obligations*

Compliance with the data provision obligations defined in the Regulation has improved in the period in question. All Member States delivered all mandatory datasets and only in some cases did they miss the deadline stipulated by the Regulation. Delays are due mainly to the introduction of new procedures to satisfy the requirements of the Regulation, and are expected to disappear in the near future.

Table 1 shows data delivery for the period 2007-2008 by dataset and periodicity. Datasets D1 and D2 are quarterly, all other data sets are annual.

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<sup>4</sup> Commission Regulation (EC) No 425/2007 of 19 April 2007 implementing Regulation (EC) No 1365/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on statistics of goods transport by inland waterways, OJ L 103, 20.4.2007, p.26.

<sup>5</sup> Commission Regulation (EC) No 1304/2007 of 7 November 2007 amending Council Directive 95/64/EC, Council Regulation (EC) No 1172/98, Regulation (EC) No 91/2003 and (EC) No 1365/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council with respect to the establishment of NST 2007 as the unique classification for transported goods in certain transport modes, OJ L290, 8.11.2007, p.14.

**Table1: Compliance with the Regulation requirements: dataset delivery by year**

	2007							2008						
	Quarterly		Annual					Quarterly		Annual				
	D1	D2	A1	B1	B2 <sup>(1)</sup>	C1	E1	D1	D2	A1	B1	B2 <sup>(1)</sup>	C1	E1
Belgium	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Bulgaria	x	x	x	x	:	x	x	x	x	x	x	:	x	x
Czech Republic	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Denmark														
Germany	x	x	x	x	:	x		x	x	x	x	:	x	
Estonia														
Ireland														
Greece														
Spain														
France	x	x	x	x	:	x		x	x	x	x	:	x	
Italy <sup>(1)</sup>							x							
Cyprus														
Latvia														
Lithuania <sup>(1)</sup>							x							x
Luxembourg	x	0	x	x	x	0	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Hungary	x	0	x	x	:	0	x	x	0	x	x	x	0	x
Malta														
Netherlands	x	x	x	x	:	x	x	p	p	p	p	:	p	p
Austria	x	x	x	x	:	x	x	x	x	x	x	:	x	x
Poland	x	x	x	x	:	x	x	x	0	x	x	:	0	x
Portugal														
Romania	x	x	x	x	:	x	x	x	x	x	x	:	x	x
Slovenia														
Slovakia	x	x	x	x	:	x		x	x	x	x	:	x	
Finland <sup>(1)</sup>							x							x
Sweden														
United Kingdom <sup>(2)</sup>							x							p
Croatia <sup>(1)</sup>	x	0					x	x	0	x	x	:	0	

<sup>(1)</sup> Data provision on voluntary basis

<sup>(2)</sup> Only annual dataset E1 has to be provided

: Not provided

x Data provision finalised

p Provisional

0 No file sent because there is no container transport for the period concerned

Not obliged by the Regulation to provide this data

Some problems remain for certain Member States. The main issues are providing complete transit data and meeting the deadline of T+5 months required by the Regulation. Some countries are already taking corrective measures or have plans to improve their systems to ensure full compliance with the legal requirements. However, efforts should continue in order to tackle those issues efficiently.

### 2.1.2 Burden on reporting countries for implementation and regular data provision

In the majority of the reporting countries, complying with the Regulation has required existing processes to be extended or adapted. In other countries, a completely new data collection and compilation process was needed. In very few

cases, no relevant measures had to be taken, as the existing processes were sufficient to meet the requirements. It should be mentioned that Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania benefited (within the Multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation programme 2006) from methodological support to deliver statistics on transit traffic on the Danube.

For regular data provision, the workload is considered acceptable by the vast majority of reporting countries. Some countries consider the reporting of transit data to be a major burden.

In terms of cost, Regulation 1365/2006 was designed with the specific objective of reducing the burden on Member States. These efforts are evident from the description of the main features of the Regulation (point 1.1).

### *2.1.3 Data collection, compilation and validation process*

The data collection and compilation processes differ between reporting countries, but follow a traditional bottom-up flow of information. The data suppliers also differ from country to country but the most frequent sources are the port and lock authorities. Countries complete their data with information received from a wide range of sources including custom offices, neighbouring countries, private operators, firms and agencies.

Most Competent National Authorities (CNA) apply validation checks before sending the information to Eurostat, using internally developed checking procedures. The validation rules cover many aspects of the process including data format, codification, internal consistency of each dataset, consistency between datasets and variables, time series consistency, etc.

About half of the reporting countries are planning to use data obtained from the River Information Service (RIS) in the near future, but only a very limited number of them already use RIS data.

All reporting countries make direct or indirect use of the data collected at national level, either for policy purposes or for dissemination.

### *2.1.4 Methodological issues*

The methodological arrangements of Commission Regulations 425/2007 and 1304/2007 have provided a common framework to ensure harmonised data collection and the production of comparable results.

During the period in question, Bulgaria asked for clarifications on the reporting of vessels used for ferry purposes.

No other major methodological issues have been raised.

## **2.2 RESULTS**

### *2.2.1 Data transmission and validation*

Article 5 of Regulation 1365/2006 requires the data to be transmitted no later than five months after the end of the period of observation. During the period in question,

most Member States complied with this deadline, and further improvements are expected in the near future.

Regarding the technical arrangements for data transmission, a high level of standardisation has been achieved. Data are transmitted electronically to Eurostat using the requested structure for data files and record format. This allows rapid integration of the information into the Eurostat production database and early detection of basic errors and unknown codes.

Once data have been loaded in the Eurostat production database, detailed validation procedures are applied to control the quality of transmitted data. The validation covers the internal consistency of the datasets, consistency over time, coherence between datasets and a comparison of the results between partner reporting countries (mirror checks).

The overall level of data quality can be judged as acceptable, but efforts are still required, especially to reduce the asymmetries highlighted by the mirror checks and to improve the reporting of transit data.

### 2.2.2 Methodological guidance

Eurostat has produced a *Reference Manual on Inland Waterways Transport Statistics* that provides guidance to Member States in the implementation of the Regulation. The Reference Manual is updated annually to include the most recent information, documentation or guidelines relevant to the collection of these statistics.

### 2.2.3 Data dissemination

Data collected under Regulation 1365/2006 are not confidential and no special constraint exists on data dissemination.

Eurostat releases the data collected through its dissemination database, which is freely accessible from the Eurostat web site. There are 18 tables filled in with the data collected under Regulation 1365/2006 and, where possible, also with data collected under Council Directive 80/1119/EEC.

Eurostat also disseminates this information through specific publications such as the series *Statistics in Focus* that provides a first analysis of the data for the media and the general public.

Table 2 contains some key figures on European inland waterways transport, collected on the basis of this Regulation.

**Table 2: Freight inland waterways transport by country: 2008 data and growth 2007-2008.**

	1000 Tonnes		Mio TKM	
	2008	Growth 2007 – 2008	2008	Growth 2007 – 2008
<b>Belgium</b>	130350	-3.2 %	8746	-2.9 %
<b>Bulgaria<sup>(5)</sup></b>	10956	+65.4 %	2890	+185.9 %
<b>Czech Republic</b>	752	-34.1 %	28	-23.7 %
<b>Denmark</b>	-	-	-	-

<b>Germany</b>	245674	-1.3 %	64 056	-1.0 %
<b>Estonia</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Ireland</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Greece</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Spain</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>France</b>	72807	-4.2 %	8910	-3.2 %
<b>Italy <sup>(1)</sup></b>	:	-	:	-
<b>Cyprus</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Latvia</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Lithuania <sup>(1)</sup></b>	146	+15.7 %	12	+16.1 %
<b>Luxembourg</b>	10984	+9.9 %	367	+6.6 %
<b>Hungary</b>	8829	+5.0 %	2250	+1.7 %
<b>Malta</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Netherlands <sup>(2)</sup></b>	333202	-3.8 %	44 979	-1.9 %
<b>Austria</b>	11209	-7.4 %	2359	-9.2 %
<b>Poland</b>	6101	-5.3 %	277	+9.7 %
<b>Portugal</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Romania</b>	30295	+3.0 %	8 687	+6.0 %
<b>Slovenia</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Slovakia</b>	8371	+4.5 %	1 101	+9.7 %
<b>Finland <sup>(1)</sup></b>	335	-28.9 %	80	-20.9 %
<b>Sweden</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>United Kingdom <sup>(3)</sup></b>	3415	-3.6 %	149	-8.3 %
<b>EU-27 <sup>(2)(4)</sup></b>	<b>511 442</b>	<b>-2.7 %</b>	<b>144 891</b>	<b>+0.1 %</b>
<b>Croatia <sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>880</b>	<b>-40.0 %</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>-27.9 %</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> Data provision on voluntary basis

<sup>(2)</sup> Estimated and Provisional data

<sup>(3)</sup> Only annual dataset E1 has to be provided

<sup>(4)</sup> 2007 Italian data not taken into account for the calculation of the growth rate

<sup>(5)</sup> The relevant increase is due to BG starting reporting transit data in 2008

:

- Not applicable

### 3 CONCLUSIONS

The experience gained and the results obtained with the implementation of Regulation 1365/2006 can be considered, in general, as positive. The adoption of the Regulation, the work done and the resources allocated to setting up the structures needed at both national and Eurostat level, have permitted rapid production of comparable and high-quality results.

Data provision in the two subsequent years has improved, although there are still outstanding problems, particularly regarding the comparability, completeness and timeliness of the datasets delivered.

Most of the issues linked to the interpretation of the Regulation, data collection, compilation, transmission and validation have been addressed. The Regulation has led to greater availability of information on the sector and a reduction in the burden for reporting countries.

Regarding the use of the data, the results obtained have an immediate application for policy-making, particularly for the development, implementation and monitoring of inland waterways transport policies at national and EU level. Data dissemination through various public means has helped to give visibility to the whole process and to provide a return on the investment of resources in it.

### **3.1 SHORT-TERM DEVELOPMENTS**

In the short term (one to two years), efforts should be concentrated on the following issues:

- further improvement of data quality for certain elements. Reporting countries need to make additional efforts to reduce the differences highlighted by the mirror checks and to improve the provision of transit transport data. Results can be obtained in this field with improved collaboration between reporting countries;
- enlargement of the EU to include Croatia. Eurostat will assist this candidate country in complying with the EU legislation on inland waterways transport statistics.

### **3.2 LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENTS**

Regulation 1365/2007 is quite recent, but it is already possible to identify some possible developments:

- the quality of the data collected may benefit from the progressive introduction of a European register for inland waterways vessels and extensive use of River Information Services;
- collection of new or more detailed variables may be considered, depending on the needs of data users and the potential burden on respondents. Two points of particular interest are: further extension of data provision on 'transport of dangerous goods' and the collection of a more detailed level of data on 'type of goods' (NST 2007 classification);
- extension of the geographical coverage of statistics, possibly due to future EU enlargements and voluntary involvement of non-EU countries and/or international organisations through cooperation agreements.