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*Committee on Employment and Social Affairs*

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**2013/0303(COD)**

26.11.2013

## **DRAFT 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 of 29 March 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 6

##### *Text proposed by the Commission*

(6) The measures in Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 718/1999 concerning vocational training or retraining schemes are relevant to all crew members leaving the sector, including **owner-operators** and not only to those who are qualified as workers.

##### *Amendment*

(6) The measures in Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 718/1999 concerning vocational training or retraining schemes are relevant to all crew members leaving the sector, including **inland waterway transport operators** and not only to those who are qualified as workers.

Or. de

## Amendment 2

### Proposal for a regulation

#### Recital 7

##### *Text proposed by the Commission*

(7) Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 718/1999 provides for measures that encourage owner-operators to join trade associations, but not for measures that strengthen the **organisations** representing inland waterway transport at Union level, whereas stronger Union-wide **organisations** can help to mitigate fragmentation in the sector.

##### *Amendment*

(7) Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 718/1999 provides for measures that encourage owner-operators to join trade associations, but not for measures that strengthen the **social partners** representing inland waterway transport at Union level, whereas stronger Union-wide **social partners** can help to mitigate fragmentation in the sector.

Or. de

### Amendment 3

#### 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:

Or. de

### Amendment 4

#### 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,***

Or. de

### Amendment 5

#### 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

*Amendment*

– organise vocational training or retraining schemes ***and measures related to early***

industry,

*retirement pensions* for crew members leaving the industry **and provide appropriate information about these,**

Or. de

## Amendment 6

### 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 paid 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,***

Or. de

## Amendment 7

### 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 ***social partners*** representing inland waterway transport at Union level, ***while guaranteeing that their interests are independently represented at all times,***

Or. de

## **Amendment 8**

### **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 ***at work***,

Or. de