


# Procedure file

Basic information	
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1995/2213(COS)
Short sea shipping in Europe: prospects and challenges	Procedure completed
Subject	3.20.03 Maritime transport: passengers and freight

Key players				
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed	
	<b>TRAN</b> Transport and Tourism		23/05/1995	
		PSE <a href="#">SINDAL Niels</a>		
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed	
	<b>ECON</b> Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy		06/09/1995	
		PPE <a href="#">JARZEMBOWSKI Georg</a>		
	<b>ENER</b> Research, Technological Development and Energy			
	<b>REGI</b> Regional Policy		17/10/1995	
		ELDR <a href="#">VALLVÉ Joan</a>		
	<b>ENVI</b> Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date	
	<a href="#">Transport, Telecommunications and Energy</a>	<a href="#">2016</a>	17/06/1997	
	<a href="#">Transport, Telecommunications and Energy</a>	<a href="#">1893</a>	07/12/1995	

Key events			
05/07/1995	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1995)0317	Summary
18/09/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
07/12/1995	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
21/05/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
21/05/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary	<a href="#">A4-0167/1996</a>	
17/06/1996	Debate in Parliament		
18/06/1996	Decision by Parliament	T4-0329/1996	Summary
	End of procedure in Parliament		

18/06/1996			
08/07/1996	Final act published in Official Journal		
17/06/1997	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		

### Technical information

Procedure reference	1995/2213(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/4/06905

### Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(1995)0317	05/07/1995	EC	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion	<a href="#">CDR0019/1996</a> <a href="#">OJ C 129 02.05.1996, p. 0028</a>	17/01/1996	CofR	Summary
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	<a href="#">CES0093/1996</a> <a href="#">OJ C 097 01.04.1996, p. 0015</a>	31/01/1996	ESC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	<a href="#">A4-0167/1996</a> <a href="#">OJ C 181 24.06.1996, p. 0002</a>	21/05/1996	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T4-0329/1996 <a href="#">OJ C 198 08.07.1996, p. 0019-0044</a>	18/06/1996	EP	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0317	29/06/1999	EC	
Non-legislative basic document	<a href="#">COM(2004)0453</a>	02/07/2004	EC	Summary

## Short sea shipping in Europe: prospects and challenges

**OBJECTIVE:** the Commission communication seeks to outline the prospects for short sea shipping in Europe. **CONTENT:** the Commission emphasizes in this political document that short sea (i.e. non-ocean going) shipping has numerous advantages: it could help to relieve congestion on the roads; it has an advantage over other modes of transport as far as infrastructure requirements, energy consumption and environmental impact are concerned; the excellent quality/price ratio of services could help to develop islands and peripheral regions and its excellent safety record could help to develop European shipyards. However, despite its natural advantages, short sea shipping needs to tackle numerous obstacles which discourage users and which are often caused by ports, such as inadequate infrastructure, lack of access to the hinterland, red tape, restrictive working practices, social conflicts etc. The communication sets out a number of recommendations for the attention of the Member States, their regional and local authorities and the maritime industries themselves, in order to put short sea shipping on an equal footing with the other modes of transport. It also includes ideas for action which can best be taken at EU level with a view to stimulating political and public debate on the subject. The three main, specific areas of action proposed by the Commission are as follows: 1) improving the quality and efficiency of short sea shipping: this mainly means making short sea shipping a priority in the "transport" and "telematics applications" sections of the fourth RDT framework programme. Other specific programmes (e.g. marine science and technology, environment and climate, industrial and materials technologies) are important in this context, as are JRC remote sensing activities. Finally, high priority should be given to the introduction and promotion of electronic data interchange (EDI) in the maritime professions; 2) improving the infrastructure and efficiency of ports: the only way of making full use of short sea shipping is to ensure that ports operate efficiently and are integrated into the transport chain. This means that: maritime port projects of joint interest need to be included in trans-European network plans; the Commission needs to present guidelines on state aid to ports; round tables need to be organized in order to step up dialogue between port authorities (port and customs authorities), port service providers (handlers, terminal operators) and port users (shipowners, agents, shippers, forwarding agents); 3) preparing short sea shipping for the enlargement of the European Union, mainly by: highlighting the need to develop short sea shipping and sea routes with the EU in relations with certain third countries (Baltic and Black Sea states, third Mediterranean countries), favouring projects to develop short sea shipping in technical assistance programmes with CEECs and NIS, involving the Commission in working parties on the development of sea shipping in the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea. The Commission concludes that a great many obstacles still need to be overcome before this mode of transport can take its place in the multimodal transport system and considers that improving short sea shipping services involves both interventions of an administrative, technical and commercial nature as well as close cooperation between the industry, users and the public authorities.?

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION NOTES 1. the considerable advantages presented by short sea shipping for the European Union in comparison with land transport, in particular: a) the general availability of spare capacity in short sea shipping; b) lower energy consumption and lower levels of emission of pollutants into the atmosphere; c) potential contribution to the development of peripheral regions of the European Union; d) possibility to extend short sea shipping further with few infrastructure costs; 2. the reports and the agreed multiannual work programmes adopted by various Conferences on shipping in different areas, such as the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea; 3. the reports and proposals by the Maritime Industries Forum on the advisability of promoting short sea shipping as a viable alternative in economic, energy, safety and environmental terms, to land transport; STATES THAT the main objectives of short sea shipping policy are: 1. to achieve a balanced growth of this mode of transport; 2. positive and active integration of short sea shipping, including feeder services, into the intermodal transport chain; INTENDS TO pursue these objectives by encouraging the following actions: 1. developing further the environmental benefits of short sea shipping; 2. promoting, in the interest of the users, free and fair competition between modes of transport in which all modes bear their full costs, including external costs; 3. fostering of free and fair competition between Community ports and between shipping lines; 4. improving port efficiency in order to reduce the costs of, and time spent in, port operations; 5. making use of the combined transport for the development of short sea shipping; 6. promoting the confidence of shippers and transport undertakings in the possibilities of short sea shipping; 7. streamlining and, where appropriate, coordinating, harmonising and simplifying customs procedures and other related administrative formalities which arise in harbours; 8. encouraging initiatives by shipping undertakings involved in short sea shipping; 9. drawing up and implementing pilot projects concerning short sea shipping, where these do not distort competition between transport modes or between shipping companies or ports of all Member States, and disseminating the results; 10. supporting training, research and development in the area of short sea shipping and port activities; 11. supporting and expanding electronic data interchange (EDI); IN THE LIGHT OF THE ABOVE: 1. welcomes in general the action programme contained in the Communication by the Commission; 2. notes that the Commission will submit as soon as possible its Green Paper on the internalisation of external costs in transport; 3. notes that the Commission will develop as soon as possible guidelines on State aid to shipping and to ports and will consult the Member States and the maritime industries on these guidelines; 4. agrees that the promotion of short sea shipping should continue to be an important element in ongoing Community and Member States' activity such as the trans-European transport network plan and the Fourth Framework Programme on Research and Development; INVITES THE COMMISSION to propose to the Council or to develop, as soon as possible, the measures necessary to attain the objectives stated in part C taking into account its action programme and the subsidiarity principle, and in particular measures which: 1. prevent distortion of competition between ports; 2. promote the increased use of short sea shipping among its potential users; 3. simplify and streamline existing customs procedures and other related administrative formalities which arise in ports, with regard to short sea shipping; 4. encourage initiatives by shipping undertakings involved in short sea shipping; 5. support programmes of training, research and development in this transport sector; 6. encourage the use of information technology for the best development of this mode of transport; INVITES THE MEMBER STATES: 1. to support the objectives and the means stated in parts C and D; 2. to cooperate with the Commission in setting a Community framework to promote the short sea shipping sector; 3. to carry out actions to stimulate short sea shipping, taking into account the proposed action programme of the communication and to encourage their regional, local and port authorities and maritime industries to do likewise; 4. to promote practical consultations, for example through round tables such as those of the Maritime Industries Forum in which the maritime industries and regional, local and port authorities are represented.?

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In order to lend greater weight to the Commission's proposals, which though full of potential were still incomplete, a suitable initiative was needed to enable short sea shipping to play a much fuller role in European transport policy. The Committee of the Regions was prepared to associate itself with the Commission's views on this important subject and welcomed the reference made by the Commission to the principle of subsidiarity, expressing the hope that this principle would be applied to those areas coming within the competence of regional and local authorities. The CoR called for an end to the abuses based around the monopoly of port services and the gradual introduction of equality of competition. Short sea shipping policy had to be developed as an important asset for land-use planning. Local and regional authorities had to be consulted and would be called on to play an active role in the decision-making process in those areas under their charge, especially with regard to port infrastructure development, traffic management and environmental matters.

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While welcoming the Communication on short sea shipping, the ESC thinks that urgent attention must be given to the following: - enabling short sea shipping to compete on equal terms with the other transport modes through transparency of subsidies and future internalization of external costs; the role of the European Commission in defining and implementing this idea will be crucial; - full integration of short sea shipping in the trans-European networks as an equal partner with the other transport modes; - working out practical solutions to administrative problems affecting short sea shipping (e.g. customs/transit procedure); - upgrading the role of small and medium-sized ports to relieve congestion in large ports and main roads; - improving and expanding the study of the eight trade corridors; - a clearer image of short sea shipping as a commercially attractive alternative mode of transport; - continuing support for and coordination with the MIF Short Sea Panel and support for the work of the Round Tables; - concentration on the social dimension of the short sea sector (and especially on training). To achieve the above, it is necessary to draw up a list of priorities and introduce continuous monitoring of the relevant actions, with close cooperation between the Commission, the Member States and the MIF Short Sea Panel. Finally, the Committee hopes that the Communication will be followed up with concrete measures, and looks forward to receiving the expected Commission document on sea-transport strategy.?

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The Commission on Transport and Tourism adopted the report by Mr Niels SINDAL. The Committee fully supports the Commission's proposal

to promote short sea shipping in Europe in order to divert cargo from rail and road to sea by balancing the price advantages and subsidies enjoyed by road and rail transport and by eliminating the obstacles and hindrances which render short sea shipping more costly and/or more time-consuming. The Commission is also called on to include in its action plan a number of additional measures and incentives which will further promote the flexibility of sea transport and redress the imbalance between maritime transport and land transport. Therefore, the intra European sea transport should be completely liberalised and additional administrative requirements (e.g; by customs, port authorities etc) imposed on this mode of transport. Europe comprises approximately 35.000 kms of coastline, over 600 ports situated near industrial centres and a significant number of inland ports accessible to short sea and sea/river vessels. The Committee felt that this geographical reality could be better utilized to promote short sea shipping. This mode of transport has the following advantages: - the most economic mode in terms of consumption per kilometre/ton; - the most efficient mode of investment versus transport capacity; - the most appropriate mode to serve the peripheral areas in Europe, i.e; the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea; - the ideal instrument/basis for multimodal transport?

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In adopting the report by Mr Niels SINDAL (PSE, DK) on Short Sea Shipping in Europe, Parliament fully supported the Commission's position to promote short sea shipping in order to divert cargo from road and rail to sea. Consequently, it called on the Commission to include in its action plan a number of additional measures and incentives which will further promote the flexibility of sea transport and redress the imbalance between maritime transport and land transport, firstly by liberalizing completely intra-European sea transport and, secondly, by abolishing the additional administrative requirements imposed on this mode of transport. It stressed the importance of the introduction of advanced technologies for this mode of transport. Parliament believed that, within the port policy of the European Union, attention should be paid to the following elements: more transparency in port tariffs, improvement of administrative procedures, and only requiring shipping services to pay for services which they actually use and which are necessary. Parliament regretted the absence of any reference to social aspects in the Commission's communication, and urgently called for measures to support the education, training and recruitment of qualified seafarers in the European Union. Finally, Parliament called upon the Commission to request the Council to authorize it to begin negotiations with Russia with a view to guaranteeing free access to Russia's inland waterways network for the Union's river-and-sea-going vessels. ?