



# QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

JANUARY – MARCH 2019

## Harmonised Standards: Strengthening the single market **Standardisation**

At the end of 2018, the European Commission published a Communication on “Harmonised standards: Enhancing transparency and legal certainty for a fully functioning Single Market” ([COM\(2018\) 764 final](#)). This results from a request of the European Council in March 2018 to assess the state-of-play, as well as the remaining barriers and opportunities for a fully functioning Single Market.

The Commission will take a set of dedicated, immediate actions to further enhance the transparency and efficiency of the European standardisation process. This will reinforce the legal certainty for stakeholders and users and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the different actors.

In particular, the Commission will elaborate over the next months in consultation with stakeholders, a guidance document on practical aspects of implementing the Standardisation Regulation.

## Inland Navigation: State of play **Standardisation**

### **NIAIDES III: Parliament discusses the future of the Programme**

On December 3, the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (a configuration of the Council of the European Union made out of Transport Ministers from Member States) met in Brussels. One of the outcomes was the adoption by the council of the [conclusions](#) on inland waterway transport, which are in line with the Commission's current activities and foreseeable further actions in the area and call for a continuation of the NIAIDES II programme after 2020. Following-up on this, on February 14 the European Parliament adopted a [motion for resolution](#) on inland waterway transport. In the resolution, the Parliament notes how by 2050 it is estimated that 80% of the EU population will live in urban areas, increasing the demand for public transport and improved city logistics. Given the difficulties in expanding the land infrastructure and the fact that many cities are located near waterways, the potential for inland navigation to supply the Continent with a cleaner and sustainable mean of transportation is key to reach de-carbonization goals set out in the Paris Agreement. The parliament urges the Commission to update and renew the NIAIDES programme with a more holistic approach that includes the progress made in the digital, technological and environmental sectors,

At the Transport Council of December 3, another outcome was the so-called Danube Declaration. The transport Ministers of the EU participating countries, with the exception of the Hungarian Minister, signed the Danube Ministerial Conclusions, which envisioned a shared future for the Danube such as good navigation status, harmonised control forms, digitalisation, rehabilitation of strategically important lock facilities, reduction of administrative barriers and greening of the inland fleet.

### **Professional Qualifications**

On November 6 and 7 of 2018, the Working Group on Professional Qualifications of the European committee for drawing up common standards in the field of inland navigation (CESNI) met in Prague together with the Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic. The group reports on the actions following the entry into force of [Directive \(EU\) 2017/2397 on the recognition of professional qualifications in inland navigation](#) (QP-Directive), in particular on the initiative on e-tools, which saw

the signing of a contractors to provide technical assistance to carry out an impact assessment. The study shall take place until the end of July 2019, the key milestones being intermediate and final reports. Moreover, a meeting took place on 21 September 2018. The main point of the agenda was the preparation of the delegated act on the database which is foreseen under Article 25(2) of the QP-Directive. The European Commission has prepared a first draft of the delegated act in order to start the discussion on the architecture of the database and other requirements related to the database. The delegated act should be adopted by January 2020 in order to prepare for the operation of the crew database as from the end of the transposition period for the QP-Directive in January 2022.

## Trade: USA and Europe close ties Economy

INTA Members (European Parliament Committee for International Trade) discussed draft resolution concerning recommendations for the opening of trade negotiations between the EU and the US. On 18 January 2019, the European Commission has adopted its proposals for negotiating directives for trade talks with the United States: one on conformity assessment that would help address the objective of removing non-tariff barriers, by making it easier for companies to prove their products meet technical requirements on both sides of the Atlantic ([Negotiating directive for EU trade talks with the US: conformity assessment](#)), and one on the elimination of tariffs for industrial goods ([Negotiating directive for EU trade talks with the US: the elimination of tariffs for industrial goods](#)).

As reported by IBI, Beneteau also noted that the trade tariffs introduced since July 2018 by the EU and Canada on the motorboats produced in the US are having a negative impact on international sales and leading to increased competition in the United States' domestic market.

EBI has now been officially accepted as a civil society organisation, granting the right to be more active in the work of DG TRADE. EBI will attend on 19 March the Trade Civil Society Dialogue with Jean-Luc Demarty, Director General of DG Trade, who will provide an update and exchange views with civil society organisations specifically on the EU-US trade relations.

## Digital Single Market: Agreement reached on Digital Europe programme for 2021-2027

On February 13, the Parliament and the Council of the European Union reached a provisional agreement on the first-ever Digital Europe programme. This programme, proposed in June 2018, aims at investing in five key digital sectors, namely artificial intelligence; high-performance computing; cybersecurity; advanced digital skills and the deployment of digital technologies, all in order to strengthen European industrial leadership. The focus of the programme is to create critical mass in investments in sectors where no single Member States alone can guarantee success. Andrus Ansip, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, welcomed the agreement: *"The Digital Europe programme will invest in large-scale digital capacity and infrastructure building in the EU, helping its citizens, companies and regions to thrive in today's hyper-connected world and ensuring Europe remains competitive globally. Now that this agreement has been reached, it is essential to advance quickly with the negotiations on the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework in order to start this programme on time and with a dedicated budget."* Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, echoed his words: *"This first pan-European digital programme is a major milestone for strengthening Europe's world leadership in the digital era. We will invest in key strategic digital capacities and, as is the case with all our digital initiatives, European citizens will stay at the heart of this programme. The Digital Europe Programme will have an essential role and help succeed the digital transformation of both our economies and societies."* More information about the Digital Europe programme can be found in this [factsheet](#).

## Online platforms: improving transparency and fairness for EU businesses **Economy**

The European Parliament has proposed a legislation to ensure a transparent and fair relationship between businesses, users and platforms hosting online intermediation services. These rules would cover rankings, ratings, disclosure of sponsorships, treatment of data and more. Online platforms are playing an increasingly important role for both businesses and consumers. Therefore, our aim is to ensure a level playing field without any unfair trading practices. Christel Schaldemose, Danish Member of Parliament and rapporteur of this proposal, said: *“This regulation will definitely make the relationship between the platforms and the businesses more fair and more transparent, which ultimately will be to the advantage of the consumer”*. The mandate to start negotiations with the EU Council was approved in the committee and the proposal is now awaiting first reading in the European Parliament plenary session. This will be the first piece of legislation at EU level to address platform-to-business relations, a growing and increasingly more important sector, which EBI follows and monitors closely.

## Adoption of the Clune Report on European Maritime Single Window Environment **Standardisation**

On December 3, The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (a configuration of the Council of the European Union made out of Transport Ministers from Member States), reached a General Approach on Regulation establishing a European Maritime Single Window Environment, to increase efficiency of maritime operations by ensuring reporting procedures are the same for all port calls. By adopting common standards, the whole sector and the logistic chain will benefit from a more efficient sharing of data and information flow.

On January 10, the Transport and Tourism Committee of the European Parliament (TRAN) adopted the [Clune Report](#) on the draft Regulation for a European Maritime Single Window Environment. The draft Regulation that has been proposed by the European Commission replaces the previous [Directive \(2010/65\) on reporting formalities for ships \(RFD\)](#). The report focuses on the harmonisation of data elements and data sets, and supports the cooperation between customs and maritime authorities at both national and Union level. Interinstitutional negotiations concluded on February 7. After being endorsed by the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER), the agreed text needs to be formally adopted both by the Parliament and the Council.

## Seafarers: Interinstitutional negotiations have concluded **Standardisation**

On December 3, The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (TTE) reached a general approach on minimum training of seafarers. Next to changes to the procedure of recognition of a third country, it suggested that the withdrawal of recognition of a third country should be re-examined (not done automatically) after seven years (not five as proposed by the Commission) and that the transposition period for the Directive should be extended 36 months (instead of 12). Interinstitutional negotiations have concluded on February 11, where during a second inter-institutional negotiation meeting ('trilogues'), representatives of the European Parliament and the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union reached a provisional political agreement. The agreement now needs to be endorsed by Member States' representatives in the Council and then, after a legal and linguistic revision, adopted both by the Parliament's plenary and the Council. The reform will align EU rules with the recently updated [STCW Convention](#), which has been adopted by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). It will ensure that seafarers working on-board the EU fleet have top quality knowledge and skills and step up the efficiency of the centralised system used to recognise certificates for seafarers issued by third countries.

On this issue, the European Commission has approved the Danish seafarer support scheme. Under the amended scheme, which will run for ten years, seafarer from shipping companies registered in the

Danish International Register of Shipping (DIS) will benefit from exemptions from income tax. The Commission found that the scheme will contribute to the competitiveness of the EU maritime transport sector while boosting employment and ensuring a level playing field.

### Water framework directive: Implementation report shows lights and shadows **Environment**

The Commission has published the 5<sup>th</sup> Implementation Report on February 26, showing that despite the positive trend, many bodies of water in the European Union are not on track to reach the goal of good quality status by 2021. Karmenu Vella, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said: “EU water law is a considerable success, reversing a long-standing trend of decline. But there is still much to do – most of Europe’s 130 000 water bodies are falling short of the high standards we need. I am calling on Member States to step up their efforts and ensure we deliver the quality that citizens need and nature requires, as soon as possible”. In the report, the Commission highlights successes and shortcomings, assessing that despite good progress made in urban wastewater treatment and in the agriculture sector, many problems remain with chemical pollution (on this point, the Commission produced on March 11 [a communication](#) for a strategic approach on the issue) over-abstraction of water and obstacles to the natural flow of rivers. The path towards full compliance with the objectives of EU water legislation before the final 2027 deadline is now very challenging. Reporting shows that, although further measures will be taken until 2021, many others will be needed beyond that date. On this issue, the EU Water Framework Directive Navigation Task Group of which European Boating Industry is part of, submitted the answer to the [consultation](#) for the fitness check of the Water Framework Directive and the Floods Directive.

Please find the full report [here](#), together with the [annex with the recommendations](#) to member States.

