

Measure 35: Training of seafarers

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<p><i>Policy package:</i> 4D: Safety, quality and the environment</p>
<p><i>Measure 35:</i> Training of seafarers: introduce a system of Community wide recognition of labour-supplying third countries.</p>
<p><i>What is the problem being addressed ?</i> This measure aims to revise current rules concerning recognition of seafarers from non-EU countries. The objective is to simplify procedures, prevent duplication, a lot of administrative work and set uniform minimum standards. Especially in the light of recent maritime disasters it is believed that this measure may reduce human errors and therefore enhance safety at sea. At present individual recognition of non-EU personnel certificates by Member States takes place. This system should be replaced by a community-wide system. The measure therefore also contributes to harmonization in the market (notice a lot of the crew on-board of EU-ships originates outside the EU) and level playing field policies. Communication between vessels and shore-based authorities must take place in English, unless those concerned speak another common language.</p>
<p><i>Measure's costs and/or benefits:</i> The measure has cost consequences for the Community budget. The involved actions shall be implemented by the Commission assisted by the EMSA assigned personnel, as well as with the possible involvement of the Member States concerned. At a first period a staff of seven is foreseen for carrying out these tasks in the Agency. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the Measure should save Member States costs, evaluation and inspections of third countries will be centralised.</p>
<p><i>Legislative implementation at the EU level:</i> The legislative implementation took place by means of the Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and the Council amending European Parliament and Council Directive 2003/103/EC on the minimum level of training of seafarers. Member States implementation should take place in 2005.</p>
<p><i>What are the objectives ?</i> The Community wide recognition of third labour supplying countries is intended to ensure that Non-EU seafarers employed on board ships flying the flag of a Member State and trained and certified at least according to the minimum requirements of the STCW Convention. The new procedure should improve the overall quality of crews and enhance maritime safety.</p>
<p><i>Interactions with other WP measures:</i> This measure is positively related to other measures to improve safety in maritime transport. It is also positively related to other measures in the field of harmonization and liberalization (e.g. the (rejected) Ports Directive: Measure 29).</p>

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Output indicators:

In view of the growing number of non-EU sailors being employed within the EU, the Commission proposal aims to ensure minimum skills of seafarers from countries outside the Union. Therefore, the key output indicator is:

- Total number of trained and certified sailors, with the distinction between EU and non-EU sailors

Outcome indicators: intermediate impacts on transport markets

Key market impacts expected for this measure are:

- Higher mobility of non-EU seafarers in the labour market
- Lower costs and price levels (less labour market frictions, higher labour market supply)
- Increased competition in the market

Outcome indicators: final impacts on transport users and non users

The key outcome indicator for this measure is the number of maritime accidents, which is expected to decrease. However, as far as the port is concerned, due to strict obligations to use pilots and towage services, the number of accidents on the maritime entrance is reduced to an absolute minimum. In the lock to berth area, again, pilotage and towage usage obligation causes the number of accidents to be very low. Moreover, in the lock to berth area, speed is limited severely anyway, so that damages are usually minor, even in the rare case that an accident happens. Considering port activities only, most probably the benefits in terms of more safety do not outweigh the cost of better trained (and therefore more expensive) personnel. However, it is assumed that this balance is to shift dramatically once at sea.