



# **Directive (EU) 2017/2397 - general overview State of play of implementation including the candidate countries**

29<sup>th</sup> January 2026  
Danube Commission Expert Group Meeting

*Kristijan Lezaic, SNE*  
*D3 Unit - "Ports & Inland Navigation"*  
*European Commission – DG MOVE*

# Directive 2017/2397

DIRECTIVE (EU) 2017/2397 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

of 12 December 2017

on the recognition of professional qualifications in inland navigation and repealing Council  
Directives 91/672/EEC and 96/50/EC

(Text with EEA relevance)

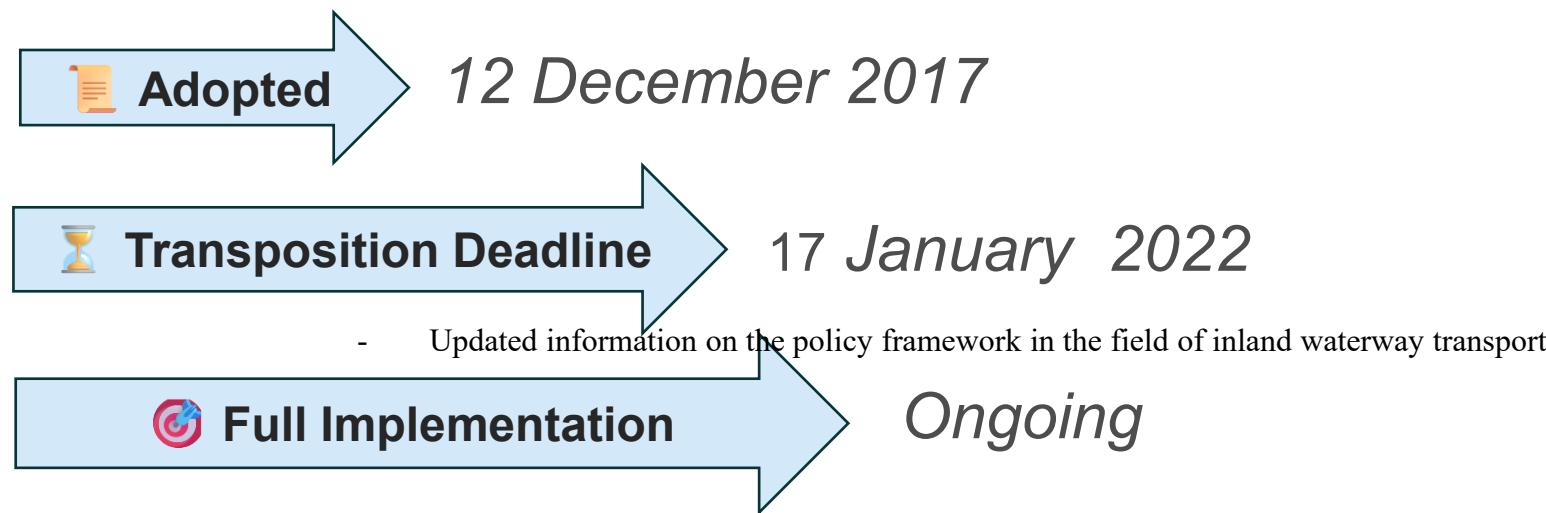
## Purpose:

- Establishes a common framework for recognizing professional qualifications
- Ensures mobility of skilled inland navigation personnel
- Promotes safety and efficiency in European waterways

## Key Objectives:

- Mutual recognition of certificates
- Harmonization of training standards
- Facilitation of cross-border employment

# Implementation Timeline & Danube Region Relevance



## Danube Region Importance

- Critical for Rhine-Danube corridor operations
- Affects Serbia, Ukraine, Moldova as candidate countries
- Supports EU enlargement and regional integration

# Directive 2017/2397 - Article 39 (General Rule)

## ➤ Core Obligation:

- Member States had to transpose the Directive into national law by 17 January 2022
- A directive shall be binding, as to the result to be achieved, upon each Member State to which it is addressed, but shall leave to the national authorities the choice of form and methods

## ➤ Notification & Reference:

- Member States must inform the European Commission immediately after adoption
- National measures must:
  - include a reference to the Directive, or
  - be accompanied by such a reference upon official publication

## ➤ Transparency requirement:

- Member States must communicate the main national provisions adopted under the Directive to the Commission, Compliance table preferred as a tool for cross checking

# EC Task in Transposition checks

**Assessment of the completeness and conformity of the transposition in the Member States - Verification of the transposition in the legislative framework of the Member States:**

- This included two phases:
  - a '**completeness check**' : verification if all provisions of the Directive have been transposed into Member States' national orders (**complete/incomplete/missing**)
  - a '**conformity check**' : verification whether the national implementing measures are correctly transposed in compliance with the Directive (**YES/NO**)

# Transposition requirements per MS

<b>Group 1</b> Inland waterway navigation possible and linked to the navigable network of at least another Member State	<b>13 Member States:</b> Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Slovakia	<b>Full transposition</b> of the three Directives
<b>Group 2</b> Navigation possible exclusively on national inland waterways that are not linked to the navigable network of another Member State.	<b>6 Member States:</b> Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal and Sweden  <b>Spain</b> does not consider the transposition necessary	<b>Partial transposition</b> of Directive (EU) 2017/2397: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Arts. 7, 8, 10</li><li>▪ Art. 14(2) and (3)</li><li>▪ Art. 22(1) 2<sup>nd</sup> subpar. and (2)</li><li>▪ Art. 26(1)(d) where applicable and (e)(h), 26(2)</li><li>▪ Arts. 29, 30, 38 except for the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph</li></ul>
<b>Group 3</b> Inland waterways not linked to the navigable network of another Member State and exclusively for limited journeys of local interest or seasonal navigation.	<b>6 Member States:</b> Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Latvia and Slovenia  <b>Denmark</b> (no notified measures)	<b>Limited transposition</b> of Directive (EU) 2017/2397  Articles 10, 15 and 38
<b>Group 4</b> Navigation on inland waterway not technically possible.	<b>2 Member States:</b> Cyprus and Malta	<b>No transposition</b>

# Transposition status in DC (EU MS)

- Austria – ongoing
- Bulgaria – completed
- Croatia – ongoing
- Germany – ongoing
- Hungary - completed
- Romania - completed
- Slovakia - completed

# ES – QIN 2024

**COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) 2026/118 amending Delegated Directive (EU) 2020/12 supplementing Directive (EU) 2017/2397 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the updated standards for competences and corresponding knowledge and skills, for the practical examinations and for the approval of simulators**

[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L\\_202600118](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202600118)

- **This edition incorporates various amendments, in particular concerning the following areas:**
- Strengthening certain competences at management level for navigation in the vicinity of sea-going ships;
- Update of the references to ES-TRIN (European Standard laying down technical requirements for inland navigation vessels);
- Update of the references to ES-RIS (European Standard for River Information Services);
- Terminology and editorial clarifications.



**State of Play  
on the process of mutual recognition  
of professional qualifications  
in inland navigation (for Serbia and Ukraine)**

# Recognition of certificates, service record books or logbooks in line with Art. 10 (4) of Directive 2397/2017

- Any third country may submit to the Commission a request for recognition of certificates, service record books or logbooks that have been issued by its authorities. The request shall be accompanied by **all information necessary to determine** whether the issuing of such documents is subject to requirements that are identical to those laid down in this Directive

## Step-by-step approach

- The assessment was designed to be implemented within several phases and carried out in several stages
- Decision to de-couple the paths as per the Directive for flexibility: First step with practical exams and the approved training programs to be examined on a later stage (Reasoning: administrative examinations can be organised at short notice, whereas ATPs are more complex procedures)
- This makes it possible to recognise certificates for which procedures have already been established, without slowing down the entire procedure but applying the necessary modifications in legislation

# METHODOLOGY FOR THE ASSESSMENT

- 1. LIST OF SHORTCOMINGS**, based on a table of concordance
- 2. CHECK-LIST**, to ensure a good common understanding of items that may be of relevance in practical transposition
- 3. WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE** to clarify procedures
- 4. INTERVIEWS**, including direct exchanges with members of the exam commission etc. to clarify potentially open items
- 5. ON THE SPOT CHECK** - to verify compliance of the overall system with dry runs
- 6. PROCESS OF FULL ALIGNMENT OF FINDINGS**, several iterations and in depth scrutiny
- 7. IMPLEMENTING ACT** - granting recognition in the Union to the certificates, record books or logbooks issued by a third country, subject to that third country is recognising within its jurisdiction Union documents issued pursuant to the Directive 2017/2397

## 7. IMPLEMENTING ACT (Art. 10 of 2027/23097 Directive, paragraphs 5- 9 )

5. Upon receiving a request for recognition pursuant to paragraph 4, the Commission shall carry out an assessment of the certification systems in the requesting third country in order to determine whether the issuing of the certificates, service record books or logbooks specified in its request is subject to requirements that are identical to those laid down in this Directive.

If those requirements are found to be identical, the Commission shall adopt implementing acts granting recognition in the Union to the certificates, record books or logbooks issued by that third country, subject to that third country recognising within its jurisdiction Union documents issued pursuant to this Directive.

When adopting the implementing act referred to in the second subparagraph of this paragraph, the Commission shall specify to which documents, referred to in paragraph 4 of this Article, the recognition applies. That implementing act shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 33(3).

6. When a Member State considers that a third country no longer complies with the requirements of this Article, it shall notify the Commission immediately, giving substantiated reasons for its contention.

7. Every eight years, the Commission shall assess the compliance of the certification system in the third country referred to in the second subparagraph of paragraph 5 with the requirements laid down in this Directive. If the Commission determines that the requirements laid down in this Directive are no longer met, paragraph 8 shall apply.

8. If the Commission determines that the issuing of documents referred to in paragraphs 2 or 3 of this Article is no longer subject to identical requirements to those laid down in this Directive, it shall adopt implementing acts suspending the validity on all Union inland waterways of the certificates of qualification, service record books and logbooks issued in accordance with these requirements. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 33(3).

The Commission may at any time rescind the suspension, if the identified shortcomings as regards the standards applied have been resolved.

9. The Commission shall make the list of third countries referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 publicly available, together with the documents which are recognised as valid on all Union inland waterways.

# The overview of the process regarding recognition of certificates, service record books or logbooks issued in Serbia



- The Republic of **Serbia submitted request for recognition** of certificates of qualification, service record books and logbooks according to Article 10(4) of Directive (EU) 2017/2397 on **16 December 2022**
- Multiple **online meetings held for clarifications** of documentation in 2023, 2024 and 2025
- Preconditions for Implementing act ready from EC side
- Preparation of Implementing act and convening of IWT Committee – **Q1/Q2 2026**
- **Connection to ECDB needed** for full functionality of the system (need for administrative arrangement)

# The current status regarding recognition of certificates, service record books or logbooks issued in Ukraine

- The Republic of Ukraine submitted request for recognition of certificates of qualification, service record books and logbooks according to Article 10(4) of Directive (EU) 2017/2397 on 30 October 2023
- Multiple exchange of letters for clarifications of submitted laws in 2024-2025
- Over 10 online meetings held in 2024 and 2025 - to be continued in 2026
- Tables of concordance being finalized for all legal acts ( Directive included)
- On site check planned for 2026 taking into account the security circumstances
- Implementing act expected in 2027
- Connection to ECDB needed for full functionality of the system (need for administrative arrangement)

# Current status regarding transposition of the Directive 2017/2397 in Moldova



- Moldova did not so far **submit request for recognition** of certificates of qualification, service record books and logbooks according to Article 10(4) of Directive (EU) 2017/2397
- Continuous participation in TCT Waterborne Technical Committee and other relevant for IWT events **in 2024 and 2025**
- **Very good working relations established with EC**
- **Gradual progress on transposition of Directive**
- Status of transposition in 2025 – not yet transposed

# Thank You!

[kristijan.lezaic@ec.europa.eu](mailto:kristijan.lezaic@ec.europa.eu)

**Unit D.3 Ports and Inland Navigation**