

Workshop: Moving towards a European Maritime Single Window environment – what road to take?

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Discussion paper

In 2010, the Reporting Formalities Directive was adopted with the aim to simplify and harmonise administrative procedures for maritime transport. The Directive introduced National Single Windows (one single reporting entry point for each Member State) for reporting, in electronic format, on a set of 14 agreed procedures.

The preliminary results of an evaluation of the Directive show that the legislation has not delivered the expected results. Harmonisation has not been achieved and the administrative burden on shipping operators remains high.

To address these issues and meet the expectations of the industry and Member States, an impact assessment is therefore performed to assess options for the way forward. This workshop provides an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss some aspects of the impact assessment and to contribute with information, inputs and ideas.

The shortcomings of the current framework

The evaluation of the Reporting Formalities Directive identified three main shortcomings of the current legislation:

- *Insufficient harmonisation*: maritime operators do not have the possibility to report in an identical way throughout the EU. Having to adapt to a multitude of different reporting formats/procedures creates unnecessary costs and administrative burden on shipping companies.
- *Limited scope of reporting formalities*: the current Directive only covers a small part of all reporting requirements faced by shipping operators; the benefits of the National Single Windows are thus not fully exploited since diverse reporting requirements remain.
- *Insufficient re-use of data*: the “reporting only once” principle is not applied and ships are requested to submit the same data to several authorities. Legal and other obstacles block the possibility of making data available for e.g. multimodal transport or more efficient and smart logistics chains.

The revision of the current framework could include proposals of solutions to these three identified shortcomings e.g. by setting out measures for increased harmonisation of reporting standards/procedures/interfaces, by increasing the scope of formalities covered by the legal framework and/or by creating a new governance set-up for addressing the aspects concerning e.g. data use and data sharing.

Possible solutions on insufficient harmonisation

An objective of the initiative is to support the creation of a harmonised and future-proof digital reporting environment for maritime transport in the EU. Increased harmonisation of reporting standards, reporting procedures and interfaces, could reduce the administrative burden for the shipping industry. It should reduce their need to buy multiple software solutions or spend excessive staff-hours on cumbersome administrative tasks.

Port Community Systems and National Single Windows already play an important role in bringing together information and enabling data flows via easily accessible common interfaces/entry points. Still, these instruments have so far primarily supported harmonisation and simplification on national level whereas the evaluation of the Reporting formalities directive show that in practice no harmonisation on EU level has been seen at all so far.

- **Question for discussion:** What would be needed to facilitate the connection of various PCSs and NSWs into a complete and harmonised European Maritime Single Window environment? Could such a decentralised system realistically solve the problems of insufficient harmonisation – or would a centralised system be needed/more effective instead?

Possible solutions on limited scope of reporting formalities

According to the preliminary assessment of the Commission, there is potential for higher added value, notably for maritime operators, if the scope of the legal framework would be broadened to cover all reporting obligations. This includes e.g. the e-Manifest for cargo or national requirements. The objective would be to optimise data submission and enable further reduced administrative burden for ships.

- **Question for discussion:** What added value would there be from increasing the scope of the European Maritime Single Window environment to cover more of the current reporting requirements? Would this help reduce burden on ship crews, or could it risk increasing administration?

Possible solutions on better data-sharing and modern multi-modal services

Complex data access and data protection rules have been pointed out as an obstacle to the implementation of the current directive and an obstacle to optimised data use for wider benefits. There is already technology to better share and re-use data, e.g. by allowing data to be pushed/pulled between ports to avoid ships having to report same data twice. Lack of clarity on impacts on data protection and data security aspects have however hampered large-scale exploitation of such data-sharing across the EU.

Enabling data sharing and wider access to relevant data could also benefit the development of future-oriented services in efficient logistics, multimodal transport, etc.

- **Question for discussion:** What is needed to enable a future-oriented framework where data is sufficiently accessible to support also multi-modal services, better logistics chains or new ICT-based solutions? What main tools, rules and mechanisms must be included in a new framework to create fertile ground for such developments, for those who wish?

Follow-up

The results of these discussions and the views shared in the workshop will be summarised in a workshop report and become part of the consultation inputs for the on-going impact assessment. Other consultation activities will also take place, offering further opportunities for sharing your views and your information. We encourage you especially to take advantage of the on-line Public Consultation, published by end of October 2017.

More information can be found here:

- Directive 2010/65/EU on reporting formalities for ships arriving in and/or departing from ports of the Member States: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32010L0065>
- Inception Impact Assessment and more information on the revision process: https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2017-3807523_en
- DG MOVE website on European Maritime Single Window environment: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/maritime/digital-services/e-maritime_en
- On-line public consultation (as from end October): https://ec.europa.eu/transport/media/consultations_en