Council of the European Union

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LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Subject:	COUNCIL DECISION on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the European Committee for drawing up standards in the field of inland navigation and within the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine concerning the adoption of the European Standard laying down Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation vessels, the European Standard for River Information Services and a draft amendment to the Rhine Vessel Inspection Regulations

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2026/…

of …

on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the European Committee for drawing up standards in the field of inland navigation and within the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine concerning the adoption of the European Standard laying down Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation vessels, the European Standard for River Information Services and a draft amendment to the Rhine Vessel Inspection Regulations

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 91(1), in conjunction with Article 218(9) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

(1) The Revised Convention for Rhine Navigation of 17 October 1868, as amended by the Convention amending the Revised Convention for the Navigation of the Rhine, signed in Strasbourg on 20 November 1963 (the 'Convention'), entered into force on 14 April 1967. The Convention maintains the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine ('CCNR') and the regime for inland navigation of the Rhine established in 1815. The European Committee for drawing up standards in the field of inland navigation ('CESNI') was created on 3 June 2015 in the framework of the CCNR in order to develop technical standards for inland waterways in various fields, in particular as regards vessels, information technology and crew.

(2) Directive (EU) 2016/1629 of the European Parliament and of the Council[1] refers to edition 2025/1 of the CESNI standards laying down technical requirements for inland waterway vessels, namely the European Standard laying down Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation vessels ('ES-TRIN'). The CCNR also refers to the latest standards in its Rhine Regulations. Pursuant to Article 22 and 23 of the Convention, the CCNR may adopt binding resolutions establishing technical requirements for inland waterway vessels in relation to the inland navigation of the Rhine. The technical standards to be adopted by CESNI will be binding once the relevant binding resolutions of the CCNR make reference to those technical standards.

[1] Directive (EU) 2016/1629 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2016 laying down technical requirements for inland waterway vessels, amending Directive 2009/100/EC and repealing Directive 2006/87/EC (OJ L 252, 16.9.2016, p. 118, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2016/1629/oj).

(3) Directive 2005/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[2] refers to the latest CESNI standards laying down uniform technical specifications and standards in order to support river information services ('RIS') and ensure their interoperability ('ES-RIS'). Under the Convention, the CCNR may modify the regulatory framework related to RIS by referring to the technical standards adopted by CESNI and making those technical standards mandatory in the framework of the application of the Convention.

(4) CESNI is to adopt the updated European Standard laying down Technical Requirements for Inland Navigations vessels 2027/1 ('ES-TRIN 2027/1') and the European Standard for River Information Services 2027/1 ('ES-RIS 2027/1') during its session on 16 October 2026. Following the adoption of those standards, the CCNR intends to adopt resolutions amending its regulatory framework, to refer to ES-TRIN 2027/1 and ES-RIS 2027/1, during its plenary session on 3 December 2026. ES-TRIN 2027/1 and ES-RIS 2027/1 are to replace ES-TRIN 2025/1 and ES-RIS 2025/1, respectively.

(5) ES-TRIN 2027/1 lays down uniform technical requirements necessary to ensure the safety of inland waterway vessels. It includes provisions regarding shipbuilding, fitting out and equipment for inland waterway vessels, special provisions regarding specific categories of vessels such as passenger vessels, pushed convoys and container vessels, provisions regarding the automatic identification system equipment, provisions regarding vessel identification, a model of certificates and register, transitional provisions as well as instructions for the application of the technical standard.

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[2] Directive 2005/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on harmonised river information services (RIS) on inland waterways in the Community (OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 152, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2005/44/oj).

(6) It is appropriate to establish the position to be taken on the Union's behalf within CESNI, as ES-TRIN 2027/1 will be capable of decisively influencing the content of Union law. Articles 31 and 32 of Directive (EU) 2016/1629 require the Commission to adopt delegated acts which refer to the latest version of the ES-TRIN standard and to set the date of its application, provided that Union interests are not compromised by changes in the decision-making process of CESNI.

(7) ES-RIS 2027/1 lays down uniform technical specifications and standards in order to support RIS and ensure their interoperability. The technical specifications and standards laid down in ES-RIS 2027/1 provide specifications for electronic chart display and information systems for inland navigation, electronic ship reporting, notices to skippers, vessel tracking and tracing systems and the compatibility of the equipment necessary for the use of RIS.

(8) It is appropriate to establish the position to be taken on the Union's behalf within CESNI, as ES-RIS 2027/1 will be capable of decisively influencing the content of Union law, namely in Annex III of Directive 2005/44/EC, which directly refers to the latest edition of the ES-RIS adopted by CESNI as technical specifications applicable to RIS.

(9) The CCNR, during its upcoming plenary session in 3 December 2026, is expected to adopt resolutions that will amend its Rhine Regulations to include references to ES-TRIN 2027/1 and ES-RIS 2027/1. Such amendment will be binding under international law in accordance with Articles 1 and 22 of the Convention. Therefore it is also appropriate to establish the position to be taken on the Union's behalf within the CCNR.

(10) It is also envisaged that, during its upcoming plenary session, the CCNR will amend the Rhine Vessel Inspection Regulations ('RVIR'), in order to align the Rhine regulatory regime with Article 19 of Directive (EU) 2016/1629. This amendment is expected to introduce obligations requiring the transmission to the European Hull Database, maintained by the Commission, of relevant data relating to vessels holding certificates issued in accordance with the RVIR and will, if adopted, produce legal effects for the Member States that are parties to the Convention. Therefore, it is also appropriate to establish the position to be taken on the Union's behalf within the CCNR.

(11) To facilitate the highest level of safety in inland navigation, to follow the technical evolution in that sector and to ensure compatibility of requirements for vessels and compatibility of RIS in Europe, it is important that the technical requirements for vessels and RIS are as harmonised as possible under the various legal regimes in Europe. In particular, Member States that are also members of the CCNR should be authorised to support decisions harmonising CCNR rules with the rules applied in the Union.

(12) The Union is neither a member of the CCNR nor of CESNI. The Union's position should therefore be expressed by the Member States that are members of those bodies, acting jointly in the interest of the Union,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

1. The position to be taken on the Union's behalf within the European Committee for drawing up standards in the field of inland navigation ('CESNI') with regard to the adoption of ES-TRIN 2027/1 and ES-RIS 2027/1 shall be to agree to their adoption and that their date of application shall be that of 1 January 2028.

2. The position to be taken on the Union's behalf within the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine ('CCNR') shall be to support:

   (a) all proposals aligning the CCNR Regulations with ES-TRIN 2027/1 and ES-RIS 2027/1; and

   (b) the amendment to the RVIR aligning it with provisions of Article 19 of Directive (EU) 2016/1629.

Article 2

1. The position set out in Article 1(1) shall be expressed by the Member States that are members of CESNI acting jointly in the interest of the Union.

2. The positions referred to in Article 1(2) shall be expressed by the Member States that are members of the CCNR, acting jointly in the interest of the Union.

Article 3

Minor technical changes to the positions set out in Article 1 may be agreed upon without further decision of the Council.

Article 4

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at …, …

For the Council
The President