



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH

DIRECTORATE A

DIVISION FOR INTERNATIONAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

FACTSHEET

THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Chapter 9 - Transport Policy

1. The *acquis*¹

The *acquis* in this chapter is substantial and represents about 10% of the total. It is based on Article 70-80 EC and consists mainly of secondary legislation, i.e. several hundred regulations, directives and decisions covering, in particular:

- railways: the *acquis* has recently been extensively amended. Liberalisation of this sector will call for further opening of national markets;
- road transport: a vast area of social, technical, fiscal, safety and environmental requirements. Market integration is one of the most sensitive issues.
- air transport: issues of market access, safety and infrastructure organisation have to be addressed;
- maritime transport: enforcement of maritime safety *acquis* is a major challenge.

There is in all sectors an economic need to promote, develop and upgrade transport infrastructure in the candidate countries with the aid of EC financial assistance. On accession, the main infrastructures will form part of the enlarged trans-European transport network. As most countries have already completed the process of legislative adaptation, the main issue is that of monitoring, notably in the area of administrative capacity.

2. The negotiations

The chapter has been closed with ten countries and remains open with Bulgaria and Romania.

In **road transport** the EU proposes to grant access to the intra-EU road haulage market on accession, provided the candidate countries effectively implement the *acquis* and accept the EU position on any transitional periods requested (regulation (EEC) 881/92). Given sensitivities

¹ Information largely drawn from the European Commission, DG Enlargement
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/chapters/index.htm>

regarding the immediate opening of national cabotage markets on accession, the EU has proposed a transitional arrangement to phase in gradually in certain cases access to national markets for non-resident hauliers (regulation (EEC) 3118/93). This would involve reciprocal restriction of access to national markets between new and current Member States for a two or three-year period, extendable by two years and in certain cases by a further year. In the road transport sector, some requests for limited transitional periods have been accepted in the case of Cyprus, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Poland.

No country has requested a transitional period in respect of **maritime transport**. For **rail transport**, all countries for which provisional closure has been proposed are in a position to implement the railway *acquis* on accession, except Hungary and Poland which have been granted a limited transitional period for market access. Lithuania and Hungary have been granted limited transitional periods in respect of the **aviation sector** to allow them to phase out noisy aircraft from third countries.

Chapter opened: November 1999

Status: Closed December 2002

Transitional arrangements:

- access of non-resident hauliers to the national road transport market of other Member states to be phased in gradually

3. Latest Assessment of the European Commission¹

In its 1997 Opinion, the Commission concluded that the Czech Republic had made notable progress in the adoption of the *acquis* in the transport sector. Provided that it improved the operation of its domestic road haulage market (in particular on market access, safety rules and tax) and the financial transparency of the rail sector, the transport sector was unlikely to pose major problems as regards adoption of the internal market *acquis*. It would be necessary, however, to make sure that the resources needed to lay the foundations for the future trans-European transport network, extended to include the new member countries, were made available. It would also be advisable for the Czech Republic's administrative structures, and, in particular, bodies supervising areas such as safety, to be rapidly reinforced.

Since the Opinion, the Czech Republic has made steady progress in aligning with the *acquis*. Its legislation in the transport sector, in particular on road transport and air transport is now to a great extent in line with the EC *acquis*. Overall, administrative structures are partially in place and need further strengthening throughout the transport sector.

Negotiations on this chapter continue. The Czech Republic has not requested any transitional arrangements. The Czech Republic is meeting the majority of the commitments it has made in the accession negotiations in this field. However, delays have occurred on the setting up of an independent air accident investigation authority; this is being addressed.

In order to complete preparations for membership, the Czech Republic's efforts now need to focus on the implementation of the social *acquis* in the road sector, substantial further legislative alignment with the railways *acquis*, the completion and strengthening of the institutional

¹ European Commission: Regular Progress Report 2002, p.76:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2002/cz_en.pdf

framework throughout the transport sector and the development of transport infrastructure, in line with the Trans-European Transport Networks.

January 2003