



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH
DIRECTORATE A
DIVISION FOR INTERNATIONAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

FACTSHEET

Estonia

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: acquis* recently 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/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 (provisionally closed in March 2002)

Transitional arrangements:

- Access of non-residents hauliers to the national road transport market of other Member States to be phased in gradually.

3. Position of the European Parliament

In its resolution of 20 November 2002¹, Parliament hopes that, in spite of the many problems that have occurred in connection with the privatisation of the Estonian railways, the final result will be an increasing supply of attractive rail transport services and that Estonia will fully harness the potential for receiving substantial EU funding in this area through the ISPA programme and, after accession, from the Cohesion Fund.

4. Latest assessment of the European Commission ²

In its 1997 Opinion, the Commission concluded that Estonia had made significant progress in adapting its transport legislation to the *acquis*. Provided efforts were made, and legislation was actually implemented, in road haulage (access to the sector, weights and dimensions), the maritime sector (safety) and, to a lesser extent, air transport, and provided financial transparency was improved in the rail sector, transport should not pose major difficulties as regards the adoption of the internal market *acquis*. The Commission added that it would also be necessary to make sure that the resources were available to lay the foundation for extension of the future Trans-European transport network to the acceding countries, and that Estonia's administrative structures should be reinforced, including the supervisory bodies, e.g. road safety.

Since the Opinion, Estonia has made steady progress in aligning legislation. Its legislation in the transport sector is now to a great extent in line with the *acquis* and only a limited amount of secondary legislation remains to be implemented. Estonia has also gradually reinforced its administrative capacity, but further strengthening is needed in some sectors.

¹ Resolution on the progress of the candidate countries towards accession, § 64: [A5-0371/2002](#)

² European Commission, Regular Report on Estonia 2002, p. 70:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2002/ee_en.pdf

Negotiations on this chapter have been provisionally closed. Estonia has not requested any transitional arrangements. Estonia has agreed to a transitional arrangement put forward by the EU concerning the gradual reciprocal access to the cabotage market in the road haulage sector. Estonia is generally meeting the commitments it has made in the accession negotiations in this field.

In order to complete preparations for membership, Estonia's efforts now need to focus on the implementation of the social *acquis* in the road sector and the further legislative alignment in the rail sector, notably regarding the infrastructure and rail interoperability issues. Particular attention will need to be paid to the continuous improvement of the maritime safety record by considerably improving the flag state performance of the Estonian fleet.

January 2003