

## PRESSRELEASE

### **EBU CALLS FOR STRONG SUPPORT OF INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT AT THE HIGH LEVEL CONFERENCE “THE INTEGRATION OF INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT INTO THE ECONOMY, NAIADES”, ESZTERGOM, 7 APRIL 2011**

*The Hungarian Presidency of the European Union together with the Vice-President of the European Commission organized on 7 April 2011 a High Level Conference on the integration of IWT into the economy. In the conference conclusions the participants called for a follow-up framework programme NAIADES II for which sufficient financial means need to be provided.*

*The Hungarian Presidency intends to have these conclusions adopted at the meeting of the Transport Council in June.*

#### **Mid- term progress report of the implementation of NAIADES**

Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) plays an important role for the transport of goods **and** passengers in Europe. It pays an important contribution to the transport demands within the European policy.

On 4 April the European Commission released its second Mid-term progress report on the implementation of the NAIADES Action Programme and concluded that NAIADES for the first time established a comprehensive European inland waterway transport policy framework and created a universally acknowledged momentum in the sector to raise it high on the political agenda of all stakeholders. Where on an operational level a wide range of valuable and tangible results has been delivered it is however widely acknowledged that the lack of dedicated resources turned out as disadvantage for the implementation of the programme.

#### **IWT serves huge industries and offers a huge potential for modal shift**

EBU's secretary General Theresia Hacksteiner in her plead for a strong support a of inland waterway transport highlighted the overall benefits of a full integration of IWT into the economy. IWT serves huge industries in Europe and is leading in the carriage of many goods. It offers a huge potential for modal shift as the existing infrastructure can absorb a much higher volume of transport.

NAIADES is regarded as the appropriate framework to cope with the future development of IWT within the realisation of a sustainable transport policy as described in the recent WHITE PAPER. To further integrate IWT into the economy she highlighted a number of measures that are needed under this programme for which a dedicated financial support must be foreseen.

As a matter of fact the environmental and social challenges as expressed in the White Paper can be much better addressed by making full use of environmentally friendly modes and potentials such as inland waterway transport. In addition the prioritisation and rebalance of cargo flows must lead to a better use of the existing resources in a more efficient and effective way.

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IWT offers tremendous possibilities for a sustainable future for transport. The full potential of this mode recently has been highlighted in “SETTING THE COURSE”, a joint publication of INE, EBU and ESO

Esztergom,  
7 April 2011

The European Barge Union EBU was founded on 14 December 2001 and represents the interests of the inland navigation industry on a pan European level. Its major aim is to deal with all questions, arising out of the future development of inland waterway transport.

To realise this aim EBU a.o. is active in the field of

- the development of a sustainable European transport policy
- the improvement of the economic position of inland navigation
- the structural cooperation with national and international institutions
- the exchange of information and experience between the parties involved

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