

EBU'S REACTION ON THE WHITE PAPER AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON A FOLLOW-UP TO THE NAIADES ACTION PROGRAMME

The European Barge Union (EBU) represents the majority of the inland navigation industry in Europe.

Members of the association are the national associations of barge owners and barge operators of meanwhile 8 leading European inland navigation countries.

EBU's main objective is to represent the interests of the inland shipping industry at a European and international level and to contribute to the development of a sustainable European transport policy. EBU thus promotes the development of inland shipping and of the transport by inland navigation vessels.

1. WHITE PAPER

ROADMAP TO A SINGLE EUROPEAN TRANSPORT AREA – TOWARDS A COMPETITIVE AND RESOURCE EFFICIENT TRANSPORT SYSTEM

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

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 inland waterway transport. The prioritisation and rebalance of cargo flows must lead to a better use of the existing resources in a more efficient and effective way.

EBU therefore welcomes the European Commission's White Paper that recognised the importance and potential of IWT.

IWT serves huge industries and offers a huge potential for modal shift, certainly not restricted to long distances over 300 km! It is able to support the visions of the White Paper for a competitive and sustainable transport system and realising the goals for a competitive and resource efficient transport system by

- combining growth of transport on the untapped potential of the European waterways and reaching the 60 % emission reduction target
- taking over volumes from the congested roads which benefits the entire European society and economy
- increasing its share for long as well as short distances such as in congested city and port areas
- deploying new and sustainable fuels and propulsion systems
- optimising the performance of the logistic chain through the development of multimodal nodes and a better integration of inland waterway transport

Mailaddress:

PO Box 23210 • 3001 KE Rotterdam • The Netherlands

Address:

Vasteland 12e • 3011 BL Rotterdam • The Netherlands • T +31 (0)10 4116070 • F +31 (0)10 4129091
Email: info@ebu-uenf.org • Internet: www.ebu-uenf.org

2. FOLLOW UP TO THE NAIADES PROGRAMME

In the White Paper the Commission recognises that NAIADES has created a momentum for a common European policy. We are pleased that the Commission will ensure the continuity of the implementation measures and intends to follow up the existing programme which is regarded as the appropriate framework to cope with the future development of Inland Waterway Transport within the realisation of a sustainable transport policy. The full integration of IWT into the logistic chain requires a number of specific measures that are needed under a follow up programme for which appropriate financial support must be guaranteed. The following problems and issues need to be addressed by dedicated policy measures.

2.1. INFRASTRUCTURE – A CONDITIO SINE QUA NON

The navigable waterways in Europe, which mostly are existing natural rivers, dispose over capacity to absorb a much higher volume of transports. In connection with the positive effects in terms of external costs and energy efficiency a switch to inland navigation offers huge advantages. Given the scarcity of free infrastructure and the de-carbonisation goals, choices of transport modes in the future will be based more upon energy efficiency, reliability, capacity and flexibility.

Financial sources must be canalised towards infrastructure that meets the principles of de-carbonisation, network optimisation and enhancing the overall effectiveness of the network. Taking into account the cost-benefit relation it is favourable to support waterborne transport with substantial financial means to remove the existing bottlenecks and to realise the missing links in the European waterway system.

Infrastructure is the backbone of transport! Given the high return in investment in inland waterway infrastructure this calls for

- **making the inland waterway system part of the core network which is of relevance to the realisation of the aims within the European Transport policy and supporting the “Europe 2020” strategic objectives.**
- **dedicating at least a threefold of the actual share of the TEN-T budget to IWT infrastructure in order to adapt the waterways to the needs of the industry as well as to remove the existing bottlenecks and to realise the missing links.**
- **guaranteeing reliability of the waterways by a proper maintenance of the existing infrastructure with sufficient financial support at national level.**
- **Decrease of administrative burdens for co-financing procedures**

2.2. INNOVATION

In terms of **sustainability** IWT is characterized by its energy and cost efficiency, environmental friendliness and safety. However different measures need to be taken in order to maintain this leading position in the field of sustainability.

Mailaddress:

PO Box 23210 • 3001 KE Rotterdam • The Netherlands

Address:

Vasteland 12e • 3011 BL Rotterdam • The Netherlands • T +31 (0)10 4116070 • F +31 (0)10 4129091
Email: info@ebu-uenf.org • Internet: www.ebu-uenf.org

Where the life cycle of inland vessels is very high this needs a specific approach to address the combination of the sustainability of the vessels as such with the innovative challenges ahead.

Support must be provided for further **research and development with a focus on market take up and implementation** in the field of green and safety technologies (combination of technologies) such as emission control devices, retrofit, new vessel designs and materials, hybrid propulsion (diesel-electric and LNG-diesel) for larger vessels, batteries for small vessels, advanced navigation support and design. This means an easy access to research and development programmes with a strong focus on market transfer (pilots and demos) and broad implementation. All relevant innovation programmes should give due attention to inland navigation market specifics: small businesses and shallow water.

This calls for

- **Dedicated IWT research strategy taking into account the SME character of this industry**
- **Dedicated IWT innovation strategy and funding.**
- **Dedicated implementation strategy and funding. Various technologies are in different stages of market readiness and penetration for which sufficient financial support is needed.**
- **Adequate access to capital**
- **State aid guidelines**

2.3. HUMAN RESOURCES

Recently the negotiating parties involved in the sectoral Social Dialogue Committee in inland navigation achieved a sectoral agreement regarding the organisation of working time. They have also succeeded in formulating adequate provisions with regard to seasonal work in the passenger transport industry, which is regarded as a major step forward.

While the draft text for the working time agreement is currently under juridical examination it is expected to be adopted shortly by the social partners. The partners are also striving for more harmonisation in the field of professional profiles and - qualifications on a Paneuropean scale. Another important issue in the sectoral Social Dialogue is equal treatment of crew members on board and reliable social security rules. That is why EBU together with ESO and ETF proposes a EU wide extension of the rules stipulated in the agreement based on article 16 of EC regulation 2004/883 of 23rd December 2010.

With regard to the constantly growing need for qualified personnel, mobility of crews and boat masters throughout Europe, CCNR has improved the recognition of boat masters' licenses and service books for crewmembers from several EU member States. Beyond the effort for more flexibility of personnel based on practical experience, **Standards for Training and Certification in Inland Navigation (STCIN)** need to be elaborated. This concept would allow for international standards in professional competencies and aims at improving quality standards in training. It will also enable career changers to access the sector more swiftly.

Mailaddress:

PO Box 23210 • 3001 KE Rotterdam • The Netherlands

Address:

Vasteland 12e • 3011 BL Rotterdam • The Netherlands • T +31 (0)10 4116070 • F +31 (0)10 4129091
Email: info@ebu-uenf.org • Internet: www.ebu-uenf.org

Harmonisation of professional qualifications, as is being further elaborated by a Joint Working group of social partners, EDINNA and representatives of the Secretariates of the River Commissions of the Rhine, Danube and Sava basin in the PLATINA project, is expected to take another two years. STCIN in itself will however need further research especially when it comes to certification of learning content, learning materials and methods.

Last but not least modal shift needs to take place in decision makers minds, too. That is why EBU advocates the integration of IWT in general logistic education. Intermodality only became an option if future decision makers who organise a logistic chain have sufficient knowledge of the potentials of IWT. A way forward to reach the goals of the 2011 White Book on transport could be EU grants for intermodal education or awards for good practise in member states or at EU level.

IWT offers huge possibilities for the future employment of people in the sector and therefore needs to raise its attractiveness. The above mentioned initiatives which are expected to increase the competitive position of inland waterway call for

- **Acceptance of the sectoral agreement regarding the organisation of working time**
- **Establishment of EU-wide rules to determine the applicable social security law in a reliable and predictable way as advocated by the social partners**
- **Elaboration of Standards for Training and Certification in Inland Navigation (STCIN)**
- **Modular high quality education for entrepreneurship, logistics and shipping (standards and tools eLearning)**
- **Information and recruitment campaigns in relevant EU member States**
- **Dedicated advanced IWT simulators**
- **Better integration of IWT in general logistic education**

2.4. MARKET AND LOGISTICS

Choices of transport modes often are based on traditional patterns. To make full use of accessible capacities, the alternatives to the traditional transport systems still are under discovered. The improvement of **awareness** in this field is an important starting point and can lead to shift to more environmentally friendly modes, mainly inland waterway transport.

For a better integration of modes **ports** are estimated to play a major role in the TEN-T policy. Both the seaports and inland ports will increasingly contribute to the distribution of the cargo flows and the interconnectivity (*enhance overall effectiveness of the network*). The TEN-T policy therefore must be directly connected to the European transport policy in order to reach the overall policy aims. This will enhance the effectiveness of the network and lead to a more integrated approach as well as complementarities between the different policy area.

Mailaddress:

PO Box 23210 • 3001 KE Rotterdam • The Netherlands

Address:

Vasteland 12e • 3011 BL Rotterdam • The Netherlands • T +31 (0)10 4116070 • F +31 (0)10 4129091
Email: info@ebu-uenf.org • Internet: www.ebu-uenf.org

To ensure accessibility and sustainable growth, major seaports such as Antwerp and Rotterdam have already put in place strong modal split targets up to 45% for container movements by barge. They invest in efficient nodes, “extended gates” in the hinterland served by inland ships to bundle freight volumes and avoid congestion. At the same time, this will reduce costs, waiting times, carbon emissions and pollution.

At EU level the focus must lie with the enhanced interconnectivity of IWT at inland ports. This calls for

- **Development of existing and new ports as intermodal ports**
- **guaranteeing a better interconnectivity and offering the possibility of smooth operations and handling of cargo from or on inland vessels and providing sufficient and good connections with road and rail.**
- **Increasing the efficiency of port infrastructure and guaranteeing excellent fairway conditions, a.o. sufficient height of bridges along the rivers and canals which largely determine the efficiency of intermodality and freight logistics.**
- **Ensuring accessibility by setting modal split targets.**
- **Market integration**

RIVER INFORMATION SERVICES

To exploit the full potential of inland waterway transport it must dispose over optimized interfaces, also in terms of electronic information flows and transport management solutions. Intelligent Transport Systems can enhance the efficient use of infrastructure. In inland navigation concrete results have been obtained by introducing the River Information Services (RIS).

The implementation of RIS in inland navigation is considered to contribute significantly to the efficiency of transports carried out on waterways. This calls for

- **Full deployment of RIS (River Information Services) which is supposed to create intelligent infrastructure and vessels.**
- **Integration of RIS into eFreight**

3. POLICY MEASURES

The – non limitative - measures as described above are needed to further integrate IWT into the economy. 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 and the EU 2020 Strategy.

Mailaddress:

PO Box 23210 • 3001 KE Rotterdam • The Netherlands

Address:

Vasteland 12e • 3011 BL Rotterdam • The Netherlands • T +31 (0)10 4116070 • F +31 (0)10 4129091
Email: info@ebu-uenf.org • Internet: www.ebu-uenf.org

As it was widely acknowledged in the Mid term review of NAIADES the lack of dedicated resources turned out as disadvantage for the implementation of the programme, which could only to a limited extent be compensated for by PLATINA. PLATINA is limited in time and will expire before the end of the NAIADES programme. In order to ensure the continuity of the measures and to keep the momentum created the programme needs to be continued and **supported with sufficient financial means**.

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.

4. EFFICIENT POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

An efficient implementation of the policy measures calls for a supportive legal framework. Within this framework strong cooperation and coordination is required. Structures follow strategy! After having defined for the first time an inland navigation policy within the EU its implementation must be embedded in a strong legal framework which guarantees a good cooperation between the EU, the river commissions and other stakeholders.

August 2011

Mailaddress:

PO Box 23210 • 3001 KE Rotterdam • The Netherlands

Address:

Vasteland 12e • 3011 BL Rotterdam • The Netherlands • T +31 (0)10 4116070 • F +31 (0)10 4129091
Email: info@ebu-uenf.org • Internet: www.ebu-uenf.org