

PRESSRELEASE**INLAND WATERWAYS – A VITAL PART OF THE CORE NETWORK**

EBU welcomes the Commission's proposal for new TEN-T guidelines together with the related financial instrument, the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and the ambitious plans as set out in them. The aim to remove major bottlenecks and barriers in key areas of transport infrastructure as Inland waterway transport (IWT) is expected to contribute to quality waterway infrastructure. EBU shares the Commission's view that a future approach has to concentrate on projects that benefit the entire transport system in economical and ecological terms. Significantly increasing IWT's modal share will lead to a major contribution to the de-carbonisation goal of the European policy. Now the Member States and the European Parliament are at expected to turn this new approach into a success and to benefit from substantial co-financing rates to top their national budgets.

Methodology and Legal Instrument

EBU welcome the chosen methodology and legal instrument which presumes the commitment by the Member States in the realisation of the TEN-T. A realisation of the networks within the timeframe foreseen is crucial to guarantee European mobility. The dual layer approach, comprising a core network and a comprehensive network seems appropriate to realise the aims as set out in the guidelines.

The establishment of core network corridors and corridor platforms as an instrument to facilitate the coordinated implementation of the core network needs to guarantee a coordinated approach. It is however also considered as a huge challenge to bridge the gap between the scarcity of financial means available and the number of priority infrastructure projects.

Funding Framework

The "Connecting Europe Facility" which is intended as new instrument to finance the priorities will allocate 21,7 billion EURO to transport infrastructure in Europe. Additional financial instruments out of the Cohesion Fund for related transport infrastructure are expected to support this facility by 10 billion EURO for the period 2014-2020.

The general funding rates for inland waterways being 20% of the eligible costs may be increased to 30 % for actions addressing bottlenecks and to 40 % for actions concerning cross-border sections.

EBU thus expects that Inland Waterways as major part of the core network which are linking East and West, old and new Member States will be sufficiently supported to benefit from its positive effects. With funding rates up to 40 % for infrastructure EBU believes that member states should fully benefit from this support in times of tight national budgets and calls upon the member states to back the Commission proposal in the benefit of the entire European transport system.

The position paper can be downloaded from www.ebu-uenf.org

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european barge union



EBU - UENF European Barge Union - Union Européenne de la Navigation Fluviale - Europäische Binnenschiffahrts Union - Europese Binnenvaart Unie

The European Barge Union (EBU) represents the majority of the inland navigation industry in Europe. Its members are the national associations of barge owners and barge operators of meanwhile 9 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 and efficient European transport system.

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