

PRESS RELEASE

European Commission releases its GREEN DEAL with an ambitious action program. IWT considered as important corner stone to deliver the GREEN DEAL.

EBU welcomes the release of the Green Deal to the European Parliament and the Council which aims to reduce transport emissions by shifting 75 % of the freight carried by road today to inland waterway transport (IWT) and rail. IWT disposes over free capacities on the European network of waterways and already today has very low CO2 emissions compared to road. It thus substantially can contribute to realise the Green Deal.

Inland Waterway Transport is known as an energy efficient, safe and sustainable alternative to other modes and contributes to decongesting overloaded road and rail networks for goods and people. A better integration of inland navigation into transport chains improves the efficiency of the entire European transport network. Europe's new industrial future and circular economy - with heavy and chemical industry - heavily relies on inland waterway transport as a transport mode. By shifting higher volumes to inland waterway transport it can substantially contribute to realise the Green Deal.

Reliable infrastructure and multimodal transport chain

EBU in particular welcomes the Commission's proposal to better manage the capacity of inland waterways which should lead to a reliable, safe, cost-effective and climate resilient infrastructure network. This requires an integrated water policy, in which inland navigation is fully recognised as a valuable water use.

IWT is an important part of the multimodal transport chain. EBU therefore supports the efforts to revise the proposal for a Directive on Combined Transport that should enhance the multimodal integration of all transport modes.

More funding needed

Where the Commission acknowledges the huge investment needs that go hand in hand with its proposal, EBU calls for a robust programme of funding within a new implementation strategy for IWT. This should be a joint effort by the European Commission, Member States, River Commissions, International Organisations and other stakeholders realised under the umbrella of a follow up to the NAIADES action programme. The inland navigation sector itself is committed to decrease its carbon footprint, already being the lowest compared to other modes.

“The proposed Green Deal supports the sector’s aim in increasing its modal share to the benefit of the entire European Community. We therefore welcome the proposal and look forward discussing the future needs with all parties involved in order to fully realise the ambitious goals of the European Union” EBU’s President Paul Goris underlines the position of the IWT sector.

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Additional information

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The European Barge Union (EBU) is the European association representing a majority of the inland navigation freight and passenger carrying industry on a Pan-European level. Its members are the national associations of barge owners and barge operators as well as (international) associations in the field of inland navigation and related areas.

EBU’s mission is to contribute to the development of a sustainable and efficient Pan-European transport system via a larger share of inland waterway transport.