

INLAND WATERWAY
TRANSPORT INDUSTRY
DECLARATION VIENNA
10 OCTOBER 2018

EBU and ESO, the European associations representing the Inland Waterway Transport industry, endorse the following declaration:



HIGHLIGHTING THAT

INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT IS A KEY PLAYER TO ADDRESS MOBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY GOALS IN EUROPE

Disposing over 40.000 km of navigable waterways and over 250 inland ports Inland Waterway Transport IWT carries some 550 million t of goods a year and is of increasing importance in the field of cruising and passenger transport. Contrary to the congested roads the network of European waterways still disposes over free capacity, offering a huge modal shift potential.

TRANSPORT IS AN ENABLER OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

Major industries in Europe are depending on a seamless transport of their goods via waterways. As part of the entire logistic chain it ensures the flow of goods from more than 11 million EU industries to their customers. It keeps business and trade up and running, enables the completion of the internal market, and enhances tourism. Transport bridges the gap between the different regions of Europe. Urban nodes in particular are an integral part of the Trans-European Transport (TEN-T) core network and their development can contribute to providing sustainable and clean mobility solutions. If transport investment stops, the economy stops.

Given the free capacity on the European rivers and canals a much higher share can be absorbed by inland waterway transport and thus contributing to a sustainable economic growth.

INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT AND PORTS CREATE JOBS AND OFFER CAREER PERSPECTIVES

Inland Waterway Transport is a people's business. Over 42.000 people are employed on board of inland vessels and are offered exciting and interesting career perspectives. Young captains and boatmasters are offered interesting jobs on board of vessels sailing all over Europe. Sector specific agreements contribute to the strengthening of the social conditions and mobility of workers.

INFRASTRUCTURE IS KEY TO DELIVER ON MAJOR EU POLICIES

Transport is the best investment plan for Europe. We need to invest in better and more innovative transport which largely depends on proper infrastructure: Europe faces enormous challenges to remain a competitive, mobile and attractive place to live and invest in for the years to come. Moving towards a greener, truly integrated, digital, accessible-to-all, safer, more secure transport system which is socially sustainable requires enormous investments and funding.

75% of inland waterway transport is cross-border. seamless infrastructure is essential for green & smart services as part of the EU decarbonisation strategy.

INVESTING IN CLIMATE-FRIENDLY MOBILITY IS A PRIORITY

The decarbonization agenda and the Paris agreement targets can only be met if all transport modes continue to invest in greener technologies and in a more efficient and smart logistic chain. With the EU goal to shift freight by 30% from road to rail and water by 2030 and by 50% by 2050 to ensure sustainable mobility, the long-term goal is to turn inland waterway transport into a synchro-modal partner in the hinterland of seaports and in continental. It is crucial to improve access to innovation programmes for small and medium sized business. Greening of inland waterway transport also has to be considered a common responsibility of the entire logistics chain.

Given the high societal benefit public authorities at all levels need to step up their support in the greening of the inland navigation sector.

TAKING FULL ADVANTAGE OF DIGITALISATION AND INNOVATION IS NECESSARY IN THE COMING DECADES

The transport and logistics sector is based upon an innovative spirit which seeks to deliver rapid and efficient service to its customers, simultaneously benefiting the economy and society. Transport needs to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by digital technologies. The digitalization of transport will improve transport management in the whole supply chain, leading to savings in terms of time, cost and emissions. It will also lead to a better use of existing capacity and increase the efficiency of the entire transport- and logistics chain.

Innovation in clean and safe technology and board and ashore will contribute to mitigate the impact of transport on society.

STRONG GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE IS NEEDED TO DELIVER

A strong cooperation at institutional level is an enabler to strengthen the sector. European and international institutions as well as River Commissions are involved in the regulatory and policy framework of Inland Waterway Transport and ports. A strong governance structure as well as cooperation with the parties involved is key to deliver.

The industry is committed to move forward in order to modernise, innovate and contribute to a cleaner, more efficient, save, sustainable and digitalised sector. To materialize the full potential of Inland Waterway Transport and ports an ambitious action plan is required as follow up of NAIADES II supported by substantial means for the industry out of MFF and its underlying funds such as CEF, research and innovation, single market and competitiveness and cohesion and regional funds.

CALL UPON THE EUROPEAN DECISION MAKERS

to launch and support a follow up program of NAIADES II for the period until 2030. In this program a holistic approach should address the following topics with sufficient support in terms of investment, governance & coordination and where necessary legislation:

1. INFRASTRUCTURE: RELIABLE AND CLIMATE RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE IS KEY

- More budget for Inland Waterways and inland ports in terms of maintenance, rehabilitation and upgrade: due to inadequate infrastructure IWT could not materialise its full potential in the past years.
- Inland Waterway Transport projects offer a high societal return but do often not generate the necessary return on investment. Therefore grants are essential for their realization and must remain a vital financial instrument.

Where today congestion costs society 130 billion € a year, with very little investments in waterway infrastructure the problem could be solved to a high extent.

2. INNOVATION & GREENING:

- Realising suitable funding by public authorities at all levels to accelerate greening of the fleet and its transition to lower emissions and highest operational efficiency.
“A 3 billion funding scheme for clean vessels would reduce external costs by 22 billion, a win-win for society and industry”.
- Realising explicitly dedicated topics for Inland Waterway Transport in the upcoming research and innovation programmes to support the industry’s Strategic Research and Innovation agenda.
- Considering greening as joint responsibility of the entire transport and logistics chain
- Supporting studies to investigate into all areas of innovation and its technical, economic and legal feasibility.

3. HUMAN AGENDA

- Adoption of standards for professional qualifications allowing a higher mobility of workers in inland waterway transport
- Increasing the visibility of attractiveness of the sector offering interesting jobs and career perspectives
- Enhancing the social conditions on board by introducing a social security system at European level: Proposal for a single social security rule for international transport in all EU Member States with navigable waterways based on the vessel operator’s seat.
- Modernisation of the crewing requirements.

4. DIGITAL AGENDA

- RIS upgrade to take it to the next generation with standardization of information flows
- Research into automation and all related legal and technical topics
- Ensuring connectivity and full integration of Inland Waterway Transport in the entire transport chain to optimize cargo and passenger flows.
- Introduction of e-tools to facilitate the compliance and enforcement of IWT legislation

5. GOVERNANCE AND COOPERATION

- Strong governance structure on a structural basis taking appropriate account of the intensified cooperation within CESNI
- Strong cooperation between inland waterway institutions and the sector ensuring a strong support of the industry’s needs in terms of policy and financial backing.
- Support of the sector in its competitiveness by providing the right policy support and tools such as a market observatory.