



STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN INLAND NAVIGATION SECTOR ON THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR THE FUELEU-MARITIME – GREEN MARITIME SPACE INITIATIVE

The IWT sector represented by EBU, ESO and the IWT Platform wants to contribute to the public consultation for the FUELEU Maritime – Green Maritime Space Initiative, more in particular to the question addressed to Inland Waterway Transport (Q6). The European Green Deal (EGD) communication emphasized the need to accelerate the transition to a low-emission and climate-neutral economy including through the shift to sustainable mobility. This initiative will be an important element of the Strategy on Sustainable and Smart Mobility.

Although this initiative primarily focuses on the Maritime sector it also raises the question in how far this initiative should be complemented with policy measures dedicated to inland navigation (provision of on-shore power supply, uptake of new sustainable alternative fuels for inland waterway vessels in operation, etc).

The IWT sector strongly supports the aim of a new EU Strategy on Sustainable and Smart Mobility. Sustainability and a focus on modes that deliver these goals in line with the EGD is a prerequisite for future mobility. **Inland navigation is key to deliver the Green Deal.** In its position on the Green Deal the sector emphasised its commitment and needs to address the future challenges.

ZERO-EMISSION INLAND NAVIGATION - Contributing to Europe's zero-emission and decarbonisation ambition

Alternative fuels

In line with the Green Deal and national programmes the IWT sector is investigating into new alternatives to cut emissions. By doing so it aims for a coordinated transport and energy policy to pool resources among energy and transport actors. At such it is largely depending on the availability of alternative fuels. While the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (AFID) only addresses the availability of LNG it is crucial to support a technology neutral approach to provide the necessary alternative fuels along the network of waterways.

Already underway to reach a substantial emission reduction by quick-win solutions like biofuels, the IWT sector is depending on the availability and market readiness of alternative fuels on a broad scale to cut its emissions in line with the policy aims of the Green Deal.

A technology-neutral approach ensures that the most suitable technologies are deployed in a safe manner. Amended technical standards should give room for safe testing and applying of new technologies, innovation and adaptation to such technologies in consideration of the long life-time of vessels and infrastructure.



On shore power supply (OPS)

Directive 2014/94/EU on the deployment of infrastructure for alternative fuels also sets an important deadline: *“Shore-side electricity supply shall be installed as a priority in ports [maritime and inland] of the TEN-T Core Network, and in other ports [maritime and inland], by 31 December 2025, unless there is no demand and the costs are disproportionate to the benefits, including environmental benefits”.*

For the IWT sector it is of increasing importance to have a clean on-shore power supply and refuelling infrastructure along the network making use of smart solutions at locks, transshipment sites, berths and ports, both for passenger and freight vessels.

For this purpose the waterway infrastructure should be integrated in the energy grid, reliably generate its own renewable energy for navigation and provide excess power to the grid. Ports should be considered as energy hubs that produce, store and supply clean fuels to all modes of transport.

Energy taxation

As part of this strategy energy taxation is considered an important tool to be used in promoting the development of sustainable alternative energy sources for inland navigation and ensuring an energy transition to a zero-emission IWT sector.

The creation of tax exemptions for alternative energy sources, including electricity, and enabling low emission and zero emission inland waterway vessels' propulsion, as well as on shore power supply for vessels at berths is essential to support the energy transition.

The evaluation of directive 2003/96/EC (the “Energy Taxation Directive”) of 11 September 2019 proved that the directive does not contribute to the European Union’s political objectives on climate change. It does not create any link between minimum levels of taxation on energy sources, their energy content and CO2 emissions. Furthermore, the discrepancies between national levels of taxation on energy sources may result in fragmentation of the internal market and, consequently, precludes fair competition, whether between energy sources or different modes of transport. This problem is exacerbated by the widespread prevalence of optional tax exemptions. The evaluation concluded that the overlaps, gaps and inconsistencies observed in the directive are a considerable impediment to the European Union’s objectives in the energy, environment, climate change and transport fields. In addition, its recent

Where the European Green Deal reasserts the essential need for taxation to be aligned with climate objectives we are looking forward to the consultation on the revision of this Directive.



SUFFICIENT FUNDING AND SUPPORT

National and European funding instruments remain key to realise the sustainability goals and the transition of the sector towards zero emission. This refers to both the fleet and the infrastructure elements with regard to alternative fuels and on shore power electricity in this respect.

Inland waterway transport seriously was affected by the **COVID-19 pandemic**. The socioeconomic impact of the crisis is vast and will have a long-term impact on the sector. IWT at the same time is in full transition to attract new market segments and adapt to climate change. This requires a lot of flexibility, creativity and financial effort from the sector. On top of this, the pandemic led the passenger sector (day trip and cruising) into a full collapse and it is estimated that freight activities will be heavily affected. A possible reduction of transport activity of at least 25 % is estimated, based on GDP forecasts for the EU for 2020.

The recent developments certainly will lead to a paradigm shift. Society and industry will have to face the impact of the pandemic in relation to the objectives of the Green Deal and climate change and take responsibility in each part of the chain. Decision makers are expected to facilitate this development with appropriate and long-term oriented measures.

The sector calls for a strong support out of the **RECOVERY PLAN AND MULTIANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK (MFF) FOR 2021-2027** to accelerate the development and deployment of greening solutions in IWT. This requires funding for the large scale deployment of green technologies for the fleet. Besides mobile equipment should become eligible for EU funding.

9 September 2020

EBU

The European Barge Union (EBU) represents the inland navigation industry in Europe. Its members are the national associations of barge owners and barge operators of 9 European inland navigation countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Romania and Switzerland). www.ebu-uenf.org

ESO

The European Skippers Organisation is the voice of the independent Inland Waterway Transport entrepreneurs. ESO looks after the interests of the barge owners at European level with representatives from six European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, UK and Poland) www.eso-oeb.org

European IWT platform

As an executive body of EBU and ESO, the European IWT platform aims at a stronger positioning of Inland Navigation in European and national transport policies by an intensified contribution to various governing bodies, working parties and standard setting committees like CESNI and ADN www.inlandwaterwaytransport.eu