



Press Release

European Social Partners welcome the Inland Waterway Transport Directive on recognition of professional qualifications

13 November 2017

The European Barge Union (EBU), the European Skippers Organisation (ESO) and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) express their satisfaction on the adoption of the Directive on recognition of professional qualifications for European Inland Waterways Transport (IWT). Today, the Employment and Social Affairs Council adopted the Commission's proposal, thereby taking a significant step towards a European labour market for IWT professionals as well as harmonised working and living conditions in this international transport sector.

Joris Kerkhofs, ETF President of the IWT Section, comments: *“This is another mile stone achievement for the European IWT sector. Main aim was to streamline and develop a legal framework that would do away with the complexity of the existing system, by establishing European norms and safeguarding professional standards. Main aim was to achieve a European Union certification of qualification based on competencies.”*

“The adoption of the present directive brings another step towards legal certainty and establishes a specifically adjusted framework to meet the needs of the sector. It will enhance labour mobility and contribute significantly to the attractiveness of the work on more than 14,000 vessels in European IWT.” states **Theresia Hacksteiner, Secretary General EBU**.

“Fair play and a level playing field are the core demands of the sector, and these can only be achieved through European legislation,” says **Christiaan Van Lancker, President ESO**.

The IWT Social Partners want to express their thanks to all who contributed to this success, especially to the European Parliament which expressed its unanimous opinion in favour of the directive already in a very early stage.

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