

Annual Report

Inland waterway transport A huge potential sector

2023
2024

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Preface

Inland waterway transport, a huge potential

Earlier this year European citizens elected a new European Parliament which together with the new European Commission will set the agenda for the coming years. As newly elected President of the EBU I will be pleased to build on a strong relationship and cooperation with the European and other international institutions.

The priorities of the EBU in the coming years will closely follow the EU policy agenda by voicing the needs of the IWT sector. Obviously, from a sector's perspective the implementation of the NAIADES III programme – laying down the general EU policies of the EU Green Deal and the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy – with the two core objectives, shifting more freight transport to inland waterways, and setting the sector on an irreversible path to zero-emissions is guiding. The EBU supports the proposed focus as well as the notion that the IWT sector needs to be reinforced to meet the Green Deal objectives in terms of modal shift and lower pollutants and Greenhouse Gas emissions.

Keeping already a very positive environmental record today the intended increase of the modal share of IWT will substantially contribute to an overall decrease of GHG emissions of transport in Europe. The IWT sector is prepared to take the necessary steps towards emission reduction and to take over much higher volumes of freight and passengers on the waterways if the right framework conditions are met. IWT is indispensable to keep Europe moving and offers huge opportunities in new areas of transport and economy, such as circularity and urban logistics.

Infrastructure therefore remains the backbone of transport. In this context the EBU welcomes the recently adopted Regulation revising the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), in particular the acknowledgement of the important role of Inland Waterway Transport in line with the EU Green Deal. The ambitious targets set in the new regulation however will require sufficient Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) funding under the new financial framework. If Europe is to strengthen its resilience, be a leader in the shift to net-zero and finally complete the Trans-European Transport Network, it must translate its words into deeds and reflect these ambitions in the new EU budget for transport.

Inland waterways transport has a huge modal shift potential with sufficient capacities on the network of European waterways and is an indispensable part of the future mobility solution. Human resources are in the core of our priorities. Our sector strongly depends on the crew which delivers its services 24/7/365 with huge professionalism while guaranteeing the safe character of the sector. Our association will be engaged in attracting a new generation for our business by providing interesting jobs and career perspectives.

In this spirit we offer you our annual report highlighting a number of key priorities our association worked on in the reporting period and the future agenda for IWT.

Matthieu Blanc
President

IWT & Ports Agenda 2024 Onwards

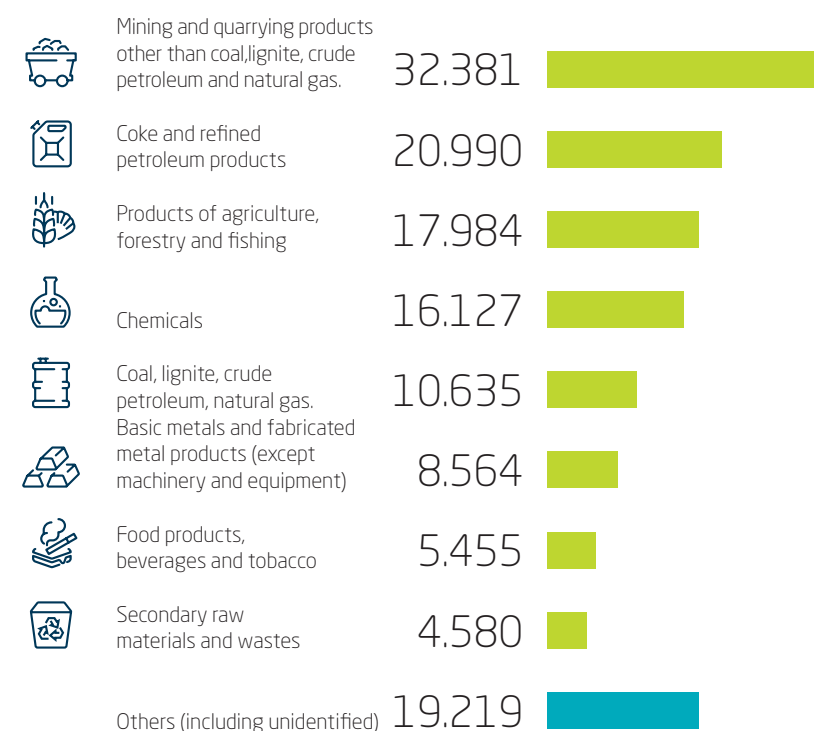
IWT is serving major industries in Europe. It has a huge modal shift potential with sufficient capacities on the entire network of European waterways.

It has a huge modal shift potential with sufficient capacities on the entire network of European waterways. The envisaged shift of freight off road towards inland waterways as such already substantially contributes to decarbonisation of transport. This is underlined by the EU policy framework according to which IWT is to take over much higher volumes of freight to be shifted from road. For this purpose, the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy seeks to increase the share of Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) by 25 % by 2030 and by 50 % by 2050.

In line with the forementioned strategy, the European Commission recently released its NAIADES III Action Program, putting forward an ambitious 'Inland Waterway Transport Action Plan 2021-2027'. NAIADES III focuses on two core objectives: shifting more freight transport to inland waterways, and setting the sector on an irreversible path to zero-emissions accompanied by a paradigm shift towards further digitalisation, as well as accompanying measures to support the current and future workforce.

Inland Waterway Freight Transport, Analysed by the type of goods transported

(Million-tonne-kilometres, EU, 2021)



Four types of goods dominated the freight transported along the EU's inland waterways in 2021:

1. Mining and quarrying products other than coal, lignite, crude petroleum and natural gas, mainly metal ores or stone, sand, gravel and similar (a 23.8% share of the total),
2. Coke and refined petroleum products, mainly liquid refined petroleum product (15.4%),
3. Products of agriculture, forestry and fishing, mainly cereals (13.2%)
4. Chemicals, mainly nitrogen compounds and fertilisers as well as basic organic or mineral chemicals (11.9%)

Collectively, these four largest categories accounted for two thirds (66.4%) of all goods transported on the EU's inland waterways in 2021.

IWT is the enabler to absorb much higher volumes and to deliver the ambitions of the EU Green Deal. To advocate the role of Inland Waterway Transport, the IWT & inland ports sector released its Agenda 2024 Onwards.

Source: Key figures on European Transport 2022 edition, Eurostat. (online data code: iww-go_atygo)

Inland Waterway Transport & Ports Agenda 2024 Onwards



The inland waterway transport and port sector is advancing towards climate neutrality and resilience. Ensuring climate safety presents a significant challenge, one that our sector is fully committed to with your support.

Simultaneously, our focus is on the digitalisation and automation of our infrastructure, equipment and vessels. This goes hand in hand with addressing labour shortages, creating sustainable jobs and upgrading skills. This will not only enhance the competitiveness and safety of the sector but also render it more attractive to newcomers, while facilitating seamless integration into multimodal supply chains.

Removing the remaining bottlenecks in inland waterway transport and ports extends benefits well beyond the sector's boundaries. A durable shift towards waterways promises to sustain Europe's mobility, alleviate urban traffic congestion, and reinforce the competitiveness of key European industries, spanning from agribusiness to chemicals and renewables.

We advocate for a sustainable investment climate alongside a legal framework that boost innovation. We therefore call upon the European Commission and Member States to collaborate with us for solutions on 5 key priorities:

1. **Ensuring predictable and substantial investment in infrastructure**, supported by CEF3 and national funding to strengthen reliable and climate-resilient waterborne supply chains, encompassing small and large projects.
2. **Implementing multimodal shift policies** to redirect cargo away from congested roads.
3. **Establishing a robust digitalisation and automation framework** to ensure seamless interoperability across borders and modes.
4. **Introducing a fleet innovation support program**, bolstered by transition funding, to prioritize a refueling network and the availability of sustainable and affordable fuels.
5. **Modernising legislation for crewing and professional qualifications** to align with the dynamic evolution of the sector and attract fresh talent.

We look forward to collectively addressing these priorities, paving the way for a sustainable, resilient, and thriving future for the inland waterway transport and port sector, contributing significantly to Europe's economic vitality and environmental stewardship.

www.ebu-umf.org • www.inlandports.eu • www.eso-oeb.org • www.inlandnavigation.eu • www.inlandwaterwaytransport.eu



Waterway Transport & Ports Agenda 2024 Onwards



40,000km navigable waterways
over **250** inland ports
connect major seaports, cities and industrial centres



1 SHIP vs 120 TRUCKS

Renewables, Building material, Recyclables, Cereals, Fruit, Medicine, Smartphones, Clothing, Cars

www.ebu-umf.org • www.inlandports.eu • www.eso-oeb.org • www.inlandnavigation.eu • www.inlandwaterwaytransport.eu



[Link to agenda](#)

IWT is the enabler to absorb much higher volumes and to deliver the ambitions of the EU Green Deal. To advocate the role of Inland Waterway Transport, the IWT & inland ports sector released its Agenda 2024 Onwards.

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Infrastructure needs of the IWT sector

Inland Waterways pivotal to supply European industry and consumers

The EBU welcomes the recently adopted Regulation revising the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), in particular the acknowledgement of the important role of Inland Waterway Transport in line with the EU Green Deal. The revised Regulation sets clear parameters for the waterways which need to be implemented by 2030 on the core network. The IWT sector strongly depends on properly maintained and future proof infrastructure to serve its client as a reliable partner.

More CEF funding urgently needed

The ambitious targets set in the new regulation however will require sufficient CEF funding under the new financial framework. The massive oversubscriptions of the current CEF transport budget underline once again that the ambitions and challenges of the transport sector are high, yet are not met with the necessary EU support.

While European waterways offer sufficient capacities to absorb much higher volumes, neglected waterway maintenance in the past years or even decades, together with the increasing impact of climate change on water levels endanger the reliability of inland waterway services. This calls for immediate action to address the current shortcomings and to prepare the infrastructure for the future. With small investments huge results can be realised by an effective rehabilitation of the waterways, leading to an efficient and resilient waterway network in the future.

Major industries and consumers are dependent on a well-functioning waterway network. This has been demonstrated during the COVID period where all essential goods including pharmaceutical raw materials have been carried smoothly on inland waterways. More recently, the Danube river has demonstrated to play a pivotal role in the export of grain and essential raw materials from Ukraine as part of the Solidarity

Lanes. Besides, in July the river Seine was in the full picture of the world when the opening of the Olympic games took place entirely on inland vessels.

Solidarity Lanes

Danube with its ports enabled UA to stay competitive in grain export and to ensure world food security. Between 05/2022 – 05/2024: UA exports of agricultural products (grains and oilseeds incl. oils & meals).

- In total about 134 mio tons (Solidarity Lanes, BSGI, Greater Odessa corridor)
- Via Solidarity Lanes (SL) about 77.6 mio tons
- Via UA Danube ports 36.9 mio tons (i.e. 58% of all SL and 28% of total)

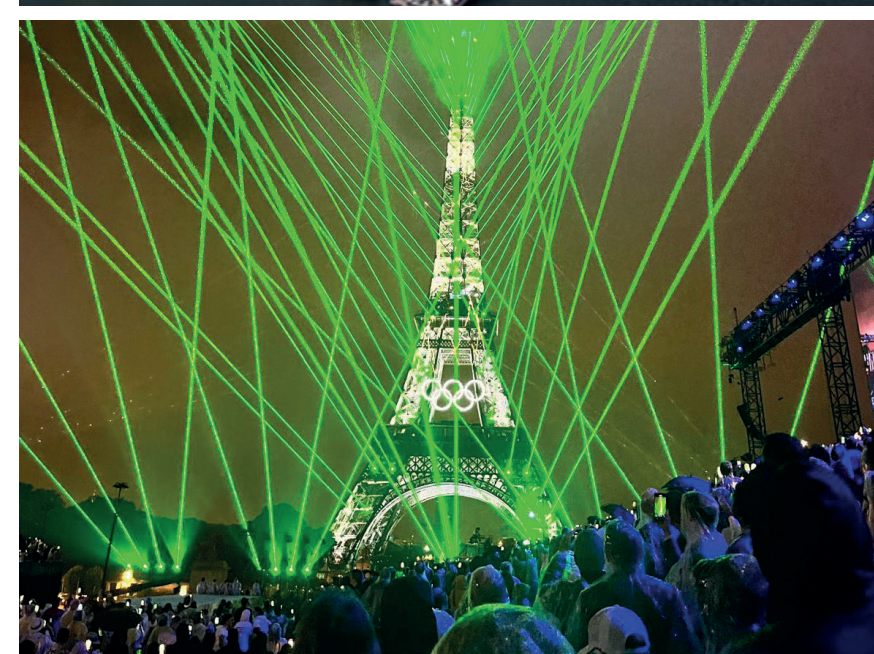
Source: Danube Commission 2024

EU Transport sector Europe more than ever in need of more EU budget for transport

EBU together with more than 45 European transport and related organisations, representing the key spectrum of Europe's transport network, joined forces in a **campaign** to urge the Council and the European Parliament to increase the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) budget for transport in the upcoming review of the Multi-Annual Financial Framework.

The EBU calls upon the Ministers of Finance of the Member States to allocate sufficient financial means for transport in preparation of the next Multi Financial Framework, as transport is the backbone of the European industry.

 **More EU budget for transport** The best Investment Plan for Europe



Article 23¹ | Transport infrastructure requirements for the core network

1. Member States shall ensure that the inland ports of the core network comply with Article 22(2) and meet the requirements set out in Article 22(1), points (a) and (b), by 31 December 2030 and in Article 22(1), point (c), by 31 December 2040.
2. Member States shall ensure that the inland waterway network, including connections referred to in Article 21(1), point (e), is maintained to enable efficient, reliable and safe navigation for users by ensuring minimum waterway requirements and minimum levels of service requirements laid down in paragraph 3 of this Article (Good Navigation Status). Member States shall prevent the deterioration of the Good Navigation Status, as well as prevent the deterioration of the current status of those parts of the network that already exceed those minimum requirements by 18 July 2024.
3. Member States shall by 31 December 2030 in particular ensure that:
 - (a) rivers, canals, lakes, lagoons, inland ports and their access routes provide a **navigable channel depth of at least 2,5 m and a minimum height under non-openable bridges of at least 5,25 m at specified reference water levels, which are exceeded at a defined number of days per year on a statistical average;**
 - (b) Member States shall publish on a website accessible to the public the number of days per year as referred to in point (a) during which the actual water level exceeds or does not achieve the specified reference water level for navigation channel depth, as well as the average waiting times at each lock;
 - (c) operators of locks shall ensure that locks are operated and maintained in such a way that waiting times are minimised; and
 - (d) rivers, canals, lakes and lagoons are equipped with RIS for all services in accordance with Directive 2005/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (50), so as to guarantee real-time information to users across borders.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 revising the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Regulation

Energy Transition in the IWT Sector

Innovation and energy transition are major challenges for the sector. The sector is committed to meet the EU and global climate goals. However, at this stage, it is lacking solutions in both the broad deployment of new technologies and sufficient availability of alternative fuels including the necessary infrastructure along the entire network of European waterways. Besides, there are hardly any business cases given the high investment costs and low return on investments.

Research in innovative concepts attempt is needed to prove the right solutions which would eventually lead to the future no regret investments for the sector. The EBU welcomes the research and deployment support provided by the Commission under its various funding programmes which aim to deploy future innovation paths and solutions for the sector.

Transition strategy

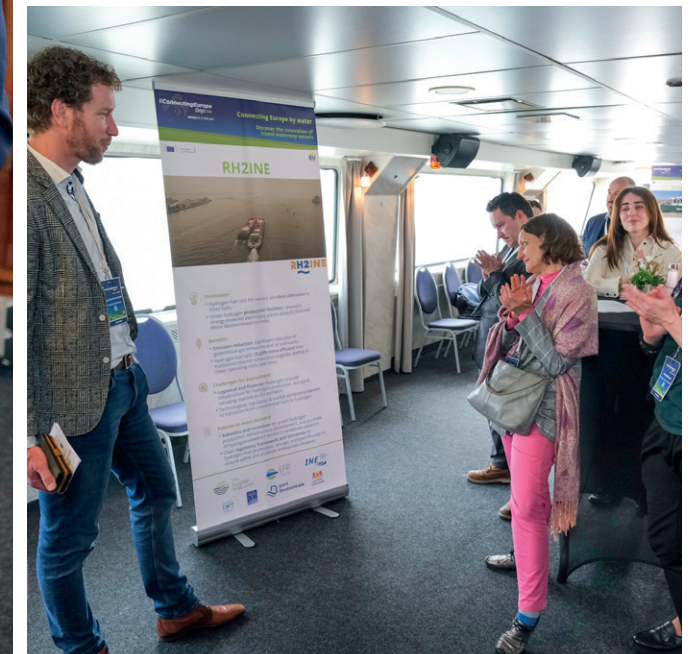
The transition pathway however will require huge investments to realise the energy transition in the entire IWT sector. Recent CCNR studies prove that the financial gap to be bridged towards zero emission of inland vessels based on an average price scenario amounts to €5,22 bln. Obviously, this requires a strategy to take the right and “no regret” investment decision on scientifically based technological developments. Such transition strategy should be accompanied by a clear timeframe for regulatory measures (such as taxation) to phase out traditional fuels and to support new technologies (such as tax exemptions) to meet the overall sustainability.

Dedicated support to accompany the Transition Strategy

To bridge the gap between the own investment capacity and the involved costs, not only commitment within the entire supply chain, but also funding support is crucial. Given the societal benefit of shifting freight and passenger transport from road to inland waterways in terms of emission reduction, public funding will be paramount to realise the modal shift goals together with the energy transition of transport.

The EBU therefore calls upon the decisionmakers at European and Member States level to underpin the Transition Strategy of the sector with;

- the best use of existing funding instruments for the short-term deployment needs
- the development of dedicated and sector tailored funding instruments for the long-term deployment of the transition of the fleet
- favourable state aid guidelines and tax incentives.



² Refers to the average total accumulated Total Cost of Ownership gap (total of 30 years between 2020 and 2050) of the two transition pathways considered in the CCNR Study report “Assessment of technologies in view of zero emission IWT Edition 2” p.51-52: https://ccr-zkr.org/files/documents/EtudesTransEner/Deliverable_RQ_C_Edition2.pdf This is meanwhile outdated given the increased prices of raw materials.

Digitalisation

Digitalisation as a broad concept is considered an important instrument to better integrate IWT into the logistics chain, to cut administrative burdens, to ease processes and interconnectivity with infrastructure managers and to attract people to the sector. In this context the EBU welcomes the recently adopted IWT Digitalisation Vision as well as the proposed revision of the European Directive on harmonised River Information Services.

Inland Waterway Transport Digitalisation Vision

In autumn 2023 the Inland Water Transport Digitalisation Vision was adopted by the NAIADES 3 Digital Inland Navigation Area (DINA) Expert Group.

It builds upon the DINA study from 2017 which states that it is imperative for the IWT sector to keep up with digital developments (both horizontal developments and developments in other modes of transport) to improve the sector's competitiveness and ensure that it becomes an active part of a broader multimodal chain.

Based on the results of the DINA study and the input of the members of the DINA Expert Group four main challenges have been identified that pose a threat to the competitiveness of the IWT sector. To meet the digitalisation challenges, the following vision for a digital inland waterway area in 2035 is put forward:

By 2035, inland waterway transport in the European Union is a competitive, resilient, attractive, innovative connected, cyber secure and digital by default mode of transport for freight and passengers which is fully harnessing the potential of digital technologies and emerging solutions, enabling seamless integration with other modes of transport as well as automation, by embracing the latest digital achievements and contributing to a better functioning of the Inland waterway single market. IWT will be part of the concept of Physical Internet. It will help overall time efficient, sustainable transport flows and support other modes to decongest. By 2035 the concept of smart shipping is expected to be fully fledged.

The European Commission meanwhile launched a CEF technical assistance project to develop closer public-private cooperation in IWT and facilitate the implementation of the IWT Digitalisation vision.

Revision of the harmonised River Information Services (RIS) on inland waterways in the Community

Implemented in 2005, the RIS Directive lays down a framework for the deployment and use of harmonised, interoperable and open RIS focusing on safety, efficient and environmental friendliness of IWT in the EU. Almost 20 years later now, the current Directive has been proposed for amendment.

The current Directive is of importance to the IWT sector which welcomes the Commission's endeavour to bring these services to a higher level. For this purpose, the Proposal adds new functionalities and responsibilities for the operation of the RIS platform. The IWT sector in particular welcomes the new complaints mechanism preventing abuse of RIS data, the data protection within the processing of the system, the increased effort for Member States to provide updates to the European Reference Data Management System (ERDMS) as well as the requirement to assess the extent to which personal data are concerned and ensuring that these data are processed in an appropriate way.

While the 2005 Directive primarily focused on setting basic principles and requirements for the system, the Proposal places greater emphasis on detailed technical specifications, real-time information, and data exchange.

The IWT sector endorses the need for further development but emphasises the precondition of its full implementation in all Member States within a certain timeframe. Currently, full harmonisation and interoperability of the 2005 Directive has not been achieved yet. While the Proposal is considered a good effort to solve some of the current shortcomings, it does not adequately address these aspects, which is outlined in the IWT sector position. It also points to the need of sufficient funding to support the proper implementation of the new RIS Directive as effectively and efficiently possible by the Member States. CEF-Projects (such as RIS COMEX, FENIX, FEDERATED) already are or could be the main driver for realising harmonised and integrated RIS.

EBU re-elected member of the Digital Transport and Logistics Forum (DTLF)

By Decision of 9 April 2015, the Commission set up an expert group on digital freight transport and logistics, called the Digital Transport and Logistics Forum. The DTLF provides a platform for structural dialogue, provision of technical expertise, and cooperation and coordination between the Commission, Member States and the transport and logistics sector. Its goal is to assist the Commission in the development and implementation of the Union's legislation, activities and programmes targeted at full-scale digital interoperability and data exchange in a shared, secured and trusted transport and logistics environment.

Over time, the DTLF has been instrumental in supporting the preparation and implementation of the Regulation on electronic freight transport information (eFTI), and in providing the necessary expertise in formulating design principles and technical specifications for the federation of digital platforms aimed at facilitating data sharing between all types of stakeholders in the transport and logistics sector. The EBU has been a member of DTLF since its establishment and has been re-appointed as member for the coming 5 years.



³ Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the council amending directive 2005/44/ec on harmonised river information services (ris) on inland waterways in the community

Labour Market and Social agenda

Human resources in the IWT sector and the social agenda are at the core of EBU's activities. IWT is facing shortages of qualified people and is therefore engaged in attracting people to the sector. To address all relevant issues, the EBU has for many years been closely cooperating with its social partners regrouped in the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF).

Future European Manning Regulations

In recent years, work has been carried out on a new European Manning Regulation, as a follow-up to the creation of the European Professional Qualifications. In the meetings held, the current regulations (such as the Rhine Navigation Personnel regulation (RPN)) were extensively examined and adapted or modernised where possible. In the CESNI/QP working group and underlying volunteering groups, and with input from our members, adaptations were proposed on various subjects e.g. crew tables.

The European Commission published a Call for Evidence in 2023, where feedback could be given on the initiative by the entire sector. In 2024 there will be a next step by Public Consultation via the European Commission's website.

Digital Tools

Not only is a new European manning rule being discussed, but digitalisation is also linked to this new rule in 2023. Where initially the Digital Tools were dealt with separately, these are now linked to the manning regime. The aim is to replace the paper versions of the ship's logbook and service record book of the crew members with digitally and automatically recorded data of crew, vessel and sailing and rest times. Combined with the new manning regime, EU-wide control and enforcement would be possible. The conditions of this digitalisation with reference to registration, access and storage have to be worked out, but topics such as data protection, cyber security and GDPR are of great importance.

In addition, the preconditions around accessibility, control and enforcement need to be discussed as well.

As regards the registration of working and rest times, for which the legal basis is lacking, this topic is still a point of discussion.

Professional Qualifications

After the Professional Qualifications Directive came into force in 2022, it was implemented in almost all European countries, although some countries are still lagging behind. Requests for recognition of the implementation of the Qualifications Directive were received from Czech Republic and Ukraine. Both countries are working on the implementation.

On a regular basis, CESNI/QP discusses the implementation and interpretation in the different countries. To ensure that the same rules apply in all implementing countries, a separate document is used to clarify the relevant topics. The IWT sector called for an adjustment of the current Directive already ahead of the evaluation scheduled, allowing more people to enter the IWT labour market. This would make it more attractive for seafarers, for example, to switch to inland navigation.

Labour market

The shortage of personnel is of huge concern to the IWT sector. It is a subject that needs constant attention, calling for short- and long-term initiatives. This has meanwhile led to the intended launch of a Branding and Recruitment initiative under the IWT Platform. In parallel there are attempts to make the training route for lateral entrants more attractive or to make a deckhand or apprentice deployable sooner.





Passenger transport and river cruising a high-level touristic sector

Passenger transport and river cruising are of increasing importance on the European waterways, in urban areas and in connecting regions. While in urban areas and regions ferries are used as means of public transport, day trip and river cruise vessels play a pivotal role in tourism on European waterways and cities. These segments are facing an incareasing demand for sustainability, as well as more luxury in terms of equipment, catering or ship design. To reduce CO2 emissions in inner cities the sector is able to switch to electric propulsion systems. As a result of its success, however, the sector is increasingly faced with the tightness in the labour market, especially concerning nautical staff.

River cruising

Recently, a joint agreement on river cruise operations was reached between the sector and its social partners ETF. This agreement between EBU on the one hand and IG RiverCruise on the other was officially signed in March 2024. The agreement had been under discussion since 2019, but due to Covid the process took longer. In the end, a nice result was achieved for the industry. A review of the agreement will take place at the end of 2025.

By 2023, the cruise industry reached the pre COVID evel and further growth was anticipated for the sector. This success however is challenging the capacity of some ports which consider ways to reduce tourist flows in general or that of river cruises in particular. This is done by levying taxes, reducing the number of berths and by imposing additional requirements, such as the Green Award Labels. As a result, the number of ships holding a Green Award Label has increased significantly.

Infrastructure concerns

The (overdue) maintenance of the waterways causes the sector increasing challenges. Where a breakdown at a lock or bridge can be dealt with during the voyage, for long-term maintenance planning often comes too late for the industry: plans have been made, agreements

Implementation of the Professional Qualifications Directive

The implementation of the Professional Qualifications Directive has led to different interpretations in the various Member States. This is particularly evident in the case of domestic ferry services: some European countries have introduced a separate training and certification programme for ferry crews, where in others ferry crews are covered by the Directive. In the latter case, this means additional pressure on the labour market. The right interpretation of the Directive is currently being discussed at European level in order to arrive at a uniform level of implementation.



In 2023

- 10'800 Crew members worked on river cruise ships
- 1.218.400 Passengers travelled on European waterways
- Most passengers - 515.000 Passengers - came from North America

Events & meetings

EBU Event

The European Barge Union (EBU) on 27 November 2024 hosted its annual event in Brussels, bringing together over 100 participants from EU decision-makers and stakeholders to discuss the strategic role of Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) in the EU's Mobility and Supply Policy. The event was a hub for insightful dialogues, led by industry experts, policymakers, and key stakeholders. The EBU welcomed Magda Kopczynska, the Director General of DG MOVE and Lydia Peeters, Minister of the Flemish Government in charge of Mobility and Public Works as key note speakers.



CE Days april 2024 and side event 'Discover the Innovation of Inland Waterway Vessels'

Green inland ships opened the Connecting Europe Days in Brussels. Three innovative vessels called at the port of Brussels to show technical developments in zero and low carbon navigation to high-level participants of the Connecting Europe Days under the Belgian Presidency of the European Union. These vessels and an exhibition with more examples demonstrate transition and zero-emission technologies such as battery-electric, gas-electric, and hydrogen. Next to that a number of new developments in terms of remote control and deployment of innovative technologies in inland waterway transport were highlighted.

The event also saw the launch of the "Inland Waterway Transport & Ports Agenda 2024 Onwards" which outlines the objectives of the sector's attempts and needs to achieve climate neutrality, increasing resilience, improving digitalisation and adopting automation. pictures



Belgian presidency - Smart Shipping Conference on Inland Waterway Transport

On May 16, the Belgian Presidency organised a pivotal Smart Shipping Conference focused on Inland Waterway Transport (IWT). The event aimed to explore the integration of IWT into the broader logistics chain, highlighting the sector's potential and future needs.

Theresia Hacksteiner, representing the IWT Platform and the European Barge Union (EBU), participated as a member of the first panel. She underscored the significant role of IWT in achieving the EU's mobility and sustainability goals. As IWT is poised to increase its modal share significantly, digitalisation emerges as a crucial tool to support this growth.

The conference also spotlighted the recent submission of the Inland Water Transport Digitalisation Vision by the NAIADES 3 Expert Group on Digitalisation. This vision anticipates that by 2035, smart shipping will be fully realised, encompassing various elements such as administration, vessels, data sharing, and infrastructure.



EBU board meets with CCNR Secretariat in Palais Du Rhin

EBU on 5 June gathered at the premises of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine in Strasbourg to hold its board meeting and Annual General Assembly. At this occasion it organised a dialogue with the Secretary General, Lucia Luijten, and her deputy, Jörg Rusche.

The meeting allowed an in-depth exchange regarding the CCNR Roadmap on energy transition as well as the human element and the shortage of qualified staff in IWT.



Inland Ports navigating climate change

The European Federation of Inland Ports (EFIP) on 6 June discussed with stakeholders the effect of climate change on inland ports. Where inland ports are preparing to become climate resilient, there are huge challenges to cope with and numerous uncertainties. In particular, droughts will affect inland waterway transport and port activities. In the past years, severe low water periods impacted navigation and the entire supply chain, resulting in huge costs for the industry. The EBU pointed to the needs of the IWT sector regarding adaptation measures to cope with climate change. Where reliability is pivotal to keep its role, the industry is dependent on and calling for much higher investments in infrastructure and a proper integration in the development of future drought management systems in the Member States.



Personal data

Farewell Paul Goris and André Auderset

The Board of Directors said farewell to Paul Goris and André Auderset, who both have been actively involved and very engaged in the association.

André Auderset became a Board member in 2008 and acted as President in 2011 and 2012.

Paul Goris was a Board member since 2017 and acted as president from 2018 until 2022. He also held the position of the first President of the IWT Platform since its establishment in 2018. In this capacity he largely contributed to the development of this organisation and very actively stimulated the role of this new executive body of EBU and ESO.

The EBU board expressed its sincere thanks to both board members for their huge engagement. Pictures Paul and André

New president and vice-president

The Board appointed **Matthieu Blanc**, Board member of the French association Entreprises Fluviales de France (E2F) and CEO of Compagnie Fluviale de Transport (CFT), SOGESTRAN group, as President for a period of 2 years.

Martin Staats, President of the German association Bundesverband der Deutschen Binnenschifffahrt e.V. (BDB) and Managing Director of MSG eG, was appointed as Vice-President.



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 (IWT). IWT is pivotal to guarantee European mobility. European waterways offer free capacity to absorb much higher volumes of freight and passengers and thus to decarbonise the transport system.

EBU's key objectives are:



To contribute to the right for IWT policy and framework conditions



To stimulate the market position of the sector



to guarantee a well-maintained and resilient infrastructure without bottlenecks and missing links



To increase the share of inland waterway freight and passenger transport



To promote IWT as the safest, sustainable and environmentally friendly mode of transport

To achieve these goals EBU closely cooperates with the European institutions, the River & River Protection Commissions, the UNECE as well as national administrations and stakeholders.

The association EBU members

 Austria



**Berufsgruppe Schifffahrt /
Wirtschaftskammer Österreich**

Wiedner Hauptstr. 63
1040 Wien
<https://wko.at/schifffahrt>

The 'Berufsgruppe Schifffahrt' is the legal representation of more than 450 members with a total fleet of some 100 vessels. It is located in Vienna and part of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce.

The members represent all market segments of inland navigation. Its aim is to keep and improve the market and competitive position of the Austrian inland navigation industry. Moreover it is aimed at integrating inland navigation into modern logistic chains and to accelerate the intermodal development of the Austrian ports. Berufsgruppe Schifffahrt/Wirtschaftskammer Österreich is a founding member of the European Barge Union.

 Belgium



**Unie der Continentale Vaart
V.Z.W.**

Axeldreef 9
B-9810 Nazareth
www.ucv-vzw.be

UCV is an association of Shipowners (companies) and Freight Forwarders, in charge of the interests of the members in all matters of inland waterway transport, representing the members in Belgium and Europe at all levels.

UCV is also a representative association of employers recognized by the Belgian government. UCV is a founding member of the European Barge Union.

 France



**Comité des Armateurs Fluviaux
(CAF)**

8, rue Saint Florentin
D-75001 Paris
www.entreprises-fluviales.fr

Entreprises Fluviales de France (E2F), ex-CNBA & CAF, is the professional representation of the French inland navigation enterprises as well as the sectors that are linked with the inland navigation industry, in the following way:

- Inland shipping companies, single barge owners and some fleets for the sector of industrial transport. They are also active internationally.
- Enterprises of the Inland Waterway Tourism sector who offer tours and cruises with overnight stay to French and foreign passengers in all the regions of France on rivers or lakes with a great range of possibilities. E2F is a founding member of the European Barge Union.



 Germany



**Bundesverband der Deutschen
Binnenschifffahrt e.V. (BDB)**

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D-47119 Duisburg
www.binnenschiff.de

The German Association of Inland Navigation, founded in 1974, is a national professional organisation representing the majority of the German inland navigation fleet. It was formed by the merger of regional associations. BDB is headquartered in Duisburg, (a few steps from) Europe's most important inland port. In addition, a permanent representation is located in Berlin which enables an active substantial exchange on national infrastructure and industrial policy with the ministries and other stakeholders. BDB's members come from all market segments of cargo and passenger shipping. BDB is the sole national organisation that represents both shipping companies and owner operators. BDB's objective is to strengthen the competitive position of inland barge operators and to represent their interests. For this reason the association pursues activities on national and international level. It actively supports issues of the industry in various fields such as infrastructure, fiscal and legal policy or nautical and technical conditions of vessel operation. BDB is a founding member of the European Barge Union.

The association EBU members

 Luxembourg



FEDIL Barging

7, rue Alcide de Gasperi
Luxembourg-Kirchberg

www.fedil.lu/en/sectoral-associations/

FEDIL Barging is a sectoral association hosted by FEDIL – The Voice of Luxembourg's Industry, a multi-sectoral business federation representing the industry, construction and business services sectors which's main objective is to defend the professional interests of its members and analyse all economic, social and industrial issues relating thereto

 Netherlands



Koninklijke Binnenvaart Nederland (KBN)

Vasteland 78
3011 BN Rotterdam

www.binnenvaart.nl

Koninklijke Binnenvaart Nederland (KBN), Royal Inland Waterway Transport Netherlands, is the trade association for inland shipping in the Netherlands with a significant European impact. KBN is the obvious voice on behalf of the industry and for its members for all governments and other organizations. KBN committed to the various membership groups and to the sector in general.

Royal Inland Waterway Transport Netherlands is active in the fields of sustainability, greening, Modal Shift, digitalization and safety. There is also a lot of attention for infrastructure, nautical and technical files, and there is also a lot of focus on employers' interests and the labor market. KBN not only works for, but also together with its members, stakeholders and governments on future-proof inland shipping. As the trade association of and for inland shipping with this wide constituency, this work is carried out expeditiously.

 Switzerland



Schweizerische Vereinigung für Schifffahrt und Hafenwirtschaft (SVS)

Südquaistrasse 14
CH-4019 Basel

www.svs-ch.ch

The Swiss Association of inland navigation and ports (SVS) represents the interests of the inland navigation industry and its stakeholders towards authorities and other associations. The association is a member of various national and international organisations and holds the secretariat of the 'Inland Navigation' parliamentary group. By the end of 2023 SVS counted some 162 members in the categories individual members (67), companies (84) as well as authorities, associations and organisations (11).

The SVS is directed by a Board consisting of fourteen members. The director is responsible for the daily business. SVS is a founding member of the European Barge Union.

 Romania



Romanian Association of Inland Ship Owners and Port Operators (AAOPFR)

St. Albatrosului 2,
RO-800029 Galati

Founded in April 1993, the 'Romanian Association of Inland Ship Owners and Port Operators' represents almost 90% of the Romanian inland navigation fleet capacity and 90% of the Romanian inland port operators. The original name was 'Romanian Association of Inland Ship Owners', but the membership was extended to include port operators, shipping companies, brokers, insurance companies etc that are acting in the Romanian inland navigation field.

AAOPFR has its head office in Galati, the biggest inland port in Romania, hosting the largest inland navigation fleet. The members of the Board of Directors are usually elected in such a manner that a large area of Romanian inland navigation waterways and ports (Galati, Braila, Constanta, Drobeta-Turnu Severin etc) is covered. The main objective of the association is to promote, nationally and internationally, the interest of their members. AAOPFR has been an observer member of EBU since 2007 and in 2008 applied for full membership.

The association Corresponding Members



IG RiverCruise

Nauenstraße 63A, Postfach,
CH-4002 Basel
www.igrivercruise.com

The IG RiverCruise was founded in 2000 as an interest group of the European-based river cruise lines. With 22 member cruise lines and more than 200 river cruise vessels, the IG RiverCruise represents more than two-thirds of the market share.

As a non-governmental organization it meanwhile is established as the voice for the European river cruise industry, representing common interests for the river cruise industry and matters of its members towards third parties. Duties and responsibilities of the IG River-Cruise are maintaining contact with organizations, institutions, umbrella associations and regulatory bodies engaged in the river cruise industry.

Lobbying at European and national levels as well as spreading operational information are other tasks. Above all, developing and promoting the image of the river cruise industry as one of the fastest growing sectors of tourism is another main target. On a better use of the short distance traffic on sea including the river-sea shipping. The ERSTU Danube Section has a strong focus on the Danube area.



Vereniging van Waterbouwers

Bezuidenhoutseweg 12
2594 AV Den Haag
www.waterbouwers.nl

The Vereniging van Waterbouwers is the Dutch Association of Dredging Constructors (DADC). Our 90 members engage themselves with all aspects of the dredging industry e.g. the construction & maintenance of waterways and ports, bank protection works, coastal defences, land reclamation and dredging.

With the execution of these activities sustainability and safety are highly valued. The dredging projects are carried out by a large and diverse (inland) fleet of (work) vessels, crafts and floating equipment. The DADC is proud to promote and look after the interests of this industry that has been globally renowned for its expertise for centuries. An international sector with a rich history and an valuable future for society. The dredging industry acts at the spectrum of both contracting and shipping. This makes the sector unique with a proactive mentality and a passion for expertise and also with big social awareness for water safety, water management and maritime infrastructure. DADC is also a member of EuDA and CEDA.

Corresponding Members



Fédération Belge d'Organisateurs de Transports Fluviaux Belgische Federatie van Transport- organisatoren in Binnenvaart (BFTB-FBOTF)

Brouwersvliet 33 Bus 1
2000 Antwerpen
www.bftb-fbotf.be

The BFTB-FBOTF is the sole Professional Union of transport organizers (freight forwarders and brokers) in inland navigation recognized by the Belgian National and Regional Authorities.

Its aim is to :

- defend the professional interests of her Members in general,
- study and promote all economical and social questions concerning inland navigation in general and the activities of the transport organizers in particular,
- intervene with regional, national and international authorities.

The BFTB-FBOTF was founded in march 1955.



KOTUG

Wilhelminakade 318
3072 AR Rotterdam, Netherlands
www.kotug.com

We are KOTUG. The leading international towage and maritime company. Driven by our passion 'Ahead in Maritime Excellence', we empower our clients and stakeholders with the complete portfolio. From designing, building, chartering and operating vessels to training people and providing innovative consultancy services on a worldwide scale.

With roots going back as far as 1911, KOTUG is a family-owned company and trusted voice and partner of leading companies within the Maritime Industry. We take an innovation-led, sustainable approach to help our clients invent their future. For the inland water transportation industry KOTUG combines a range of modular and scalable electric pusher tugs, the E-Pusher™ Series, powered by swappable energy containers with its smart AI-driven dispatch and route planning application OptiPort.

With zero-emission logistic solution, KOTUG aims to support the worldwide energy transition and the modal shift from road transport to waterways while meeting the growing demand for electric-powered vessels.

Corresponding Members



Zeeland Maritime Services

Oostelijke Kanaalweg 20
4424 NC Wemeldinge
www.zmsbv.com

ZMS builds inland ships with its own unique working and vision.

Each individual design is based on our modular programme. Based on a standardised (flexibly deployable) casco, a one hundred per cent custom-made barge is created by joint agreement. This provides the skipper/owner two major advantages from day one: a short delivery time and an attractive price. The basis for sustainable performance.

Energy consumption and emissions

Keeping a new generation of inland vessels operational requires more. That is exactly where ZMS seeks and finds the competitive edge: innovation. Not only in terms of technical facilities, but also in terms of embedding current and future standards for energy consumption and emissions. This explains at once why our vessels already comply with the strict CCNR 5 environmental standard.



EBU structure (as per July 2024)

EBU-Officials

- President, Matthieu Blanc
- Vice-President, Martin Staats
- Secretary General, Theresia Hacksteiner

Executive Committee

- President, Matthieu Blanc, Entreprises Fluviales de France (E2F), CFT Compagnie Fluviale de transport, SOGESTRAN group, Le Havre
- Vice-President, Martin Staats, Bundesverband der Deutschen Binnenschifffahrt e.V., Duisburg, MSG eG, Würzburg
- Leonard Cotiga, AAOPF, Galati
- Dr. Ph. Grulois, Unie der Continentale Vaart, Gent
- Maira van Helvoirt, Koninklijke Binnenvaart Nederland, Zwijndrecht
- Didier Leandri, Entreprises Fluviales de France (E2F), Paris
- Simon Oberbeck, SVS, Basel
- Jens Schwanen, Bundesverband der Deutschen Binnenschifffahrt e.V., Duisburg

Board of Management

Austria

- Norbert Baumann, Berufsgruppe Schifffahrt, Wien, Danu Transport GmbH
- Dipl. Ing. Wolfgang Mosser-Brandner, Berufsgruppe Schifffahrt, Wien, BRANDNER Schifffahrt GmbH, Wallsee
- Mag. Paul Blachnik, Berufsgruppe Schifffahrt, Wien (alternate member)

Belgium

- Dr. Philippe Grulois (President), Unie der Continentale Vaart, Gent
- Louis Sachs, Unie der Continentale Vaart, Gent

France

- Didier Leandri, Entreprises Fluviales de France (E2F), Paris



- Matthieu Blanc, (President) Entreprises Fluviales de France (E2F), CFT Compagnie Fluviale de transport, SOGESTRAN group, Le Havre
- Francois Boriot, Entreprises Fluviales de France (E2F), Paris (alternate member)

Germany

- Jens Schwanen, Bundesverband der Deutschen Binnenschifffahrt e.V., Duisburg
- Dr. Gunther Jaegers, Bundesverband der Deutschen Binnenschifffahrt e.V., Duisburg, Jaegers Shipping GmbH, Duisburg
- M. Staats (Vice-President), Bundesverband der Deutschen Binnenschifffahrt e.V., Duisburg, MSG eG, Würzburg (alternate member)

Luxembourg

- Philippe Heck, FEDIL - The Voice of Luxembourg's Industry
- Patrick Willemsen, Chemgas Luxembourg

Netherlands

- Ad Koppejan, Koninklijke Binnenvaart Nederland, Zwijndrecht
- Maira van Helvoirt, Koninklijke Binnenvaart Nederland, Zwijndrecht
- Heiko Evink, Eurokor Barging BV (alternate member)

Romania

- Leonard Cotiga, AAOPF, Galati
- Serban Cucu, AAOPF, Galati

Switzerland

- Simon Oberbeck, SVS Basel
- Daniel Buchmüller, SVS, Basel



European Barge Union

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Sanneke Rolloos

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