

REACTION OF THE INLAND NAVIGATION SECTOR ON THE GUIDELINES FOR STATE AID FOR CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENERGY 2022

The European Commission on 27 January 2022 formally adopted and published [the Guidelines on State aid for climate, environmental protection and energy \('CEEAG'\)](#).

The IWT sector has previously provided input to the consultation in preparation of the new guidelines. It welcomes that its pleas have been taken into account, leading to a new definition of clean vehicles and including transitional technologies rather than excluding them as of 2025 as foreseen in the draft. However, it regrets that for the calculation of the emissions a complicated methodology has been introduced, raising obstacles on the release and accessibility of new state aid programs.

Background and role of IWT to deliver the European Green Deal

The European Commission recognises that the realisation of its ambitions as laid down in the European Green Deal and the “Fit for 55” package requires huge investments both from public and private side. Therefore, it released the new guidelines for State Aid for climate, environmental protection and energy as of 2022.

The EU Green Deal and its follow up Smart and Mobility Strategy seek to increase the share of Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) by 25 % by 2030 and by 50 % by 2050. The European Commission in its policies underlines the importance of Inland Waterway Transport as sustainable mode to realize its future sustainability goals. Based upon the Green Deal a key objective is to deliver a 90% reduction in transport-related greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The IWT sector is supporting the European policy objectives, in particular reducing transport emissions by shifting a substantial part of the freight carried by road today to inland waterway transport (IWT). **IWT is an enabler to absorb much higher volumes and to deliver the ambitions of the EU Green Deal.** In line with the above the European Commission recently released its **NAIADES III Action Program, putting forward an ambitious ‘Inland Waterway Transport Action Plan 2021-2027’.**

The IWT sector is equally prepared to take the necessary steps in the transition towards zero emission and to take over much higher volumes of freight and passengers on the waterways if the right framework conditions are met.

Financial gaps to be bridged towards zero emission

However, to support the energy transition in the sector state aid programs are necessary to cope with the huge investment needs.

Recent studies prove that the financial gap to be bridged towards zero emission of inland vessels based on an average price scenario amount 5,22 bln €¹. The high environmental and societal benefit of the energy transition of the sector justifies public funding. The transition pathway is based upon the timelines as set out in the above policies, meaning a 55 % reduction of CO₂ in 2030 and almost zero reduction in 2050.

Therefore it is necessary to support the sector in its energy transition by dedicated and appropriate funding programs. The IWT Sector expects that the revision of the General Block Exemption Regulation will be modified in a targeted way that ensures that it supports this transition.

3 February 2022

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) as well as different international and national associations as corresponding members. 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

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

¹ 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