

PRESS RELEASE

EBU EVENT 21 JUNE 2021 - INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT (IWT) KEY TO DELIVER THE GREEN DEAL AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUSTAINABLE AND SMART MOBILITY STRATEGY

Some 200 participants joined the EBU 2021 hybrid event, at which the hosts for the first time after the COVID 19 lockdown welcomed representatives of the European institutions, river commissions, industry representatives and stake holders in Brussels.

Commissioner Valean announces ambitious actions to support IWT

In their key note speeches both Commissioner for Transport Adina Valean ([video](#)) and Director General of DG MOVE Henrik Hololei ([speech](#)), pointed to the very important role of IWT in the framework of the recent EU policies. In acknowledging the high modal shift potential they emphasised that even though inland navigation is one of the most CO₂ efficient modes per transported tonnes of goods, one of the big challenges for the sector is to move further towards the zero emissions vessels. In its Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (SSMS) the Commission seeks to increase the share of Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) by 25 % by 2030 and by 50 % by 2050. “The Commission will put forward an ambitious action plan, NAIADES 3, to focus on these targets” Commissioner Valean announced in her speech. NAIADES 3 will look to future challenges and opportunities meaning that the Commission is working on a busy agenda for IWT in the coming years.

Call for right framework conditions

EBU’s President **Paul Goris** in his [speech](#) emphasised that the sector is supporting the objectives of the Green Deal and awaiting the announced NAIADES 3 action plan. “IWT is prepared to take the necessary steps towards 0 emission and to take over much higher volumes of freight on the waterways if the right framework conditions are met” he stated. That means

- more investment in infrastructure by the Member States and much more funding out of CEF for waterways
- an increased share of Inland waterway transport by a full integration in the multimodal chain, creating the right regulatory framework and correcting imbalances such as the long lasting port congestion
- Supporting the energy transition of the sector via tailor made funding for the large scale deployment of green technologies for the fleet, reliable alternative fuels and digitalisation”

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Both Director General **Henrik Hololei** and **Daniel Mes**, member of the cabinet of Commissioner Timmermans of DG CLIMA confirmed to be well aware of the specificities of the sector that needs a tailor-made approach. For this purpose financial opportunities should be facilitated by public authorities at regional and national levels, by the river commissions, as well as at EU level to make the business case.

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The European Barge Union (EBU) is the European association representing the inland navigation freight and passenger carrying industry on a Pan-European level. Its members are the national associations of barge owners and barge operators as well as (international) associations in the field of inland navigation and related areas. 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. www.ebu-uenf.org

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