



# Inland Waterway Transport Rivers of opportunities to deliver



# The inland waterway transport sector and its mission



## 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, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania and Switzerland).

[www.ebu-uenf.org](http://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](http://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](http://www.inlandwaterwaytransport.eu)

## Their mission

To contribute to the development of a sustainable and efficient Pan-European transport system via an increased share of inland waterway transport. Their key objectives are:

- to develop the right framework conditions for the sector
- to stimulate the market position of the sector
- to guarantee a well maintained infrastructure without bottlenecks and missing links
- to increase the share of the inland waterway freight and passenger transport on the (Pan-) European waterways
- to promote inland waterway transport as safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly mode of transport

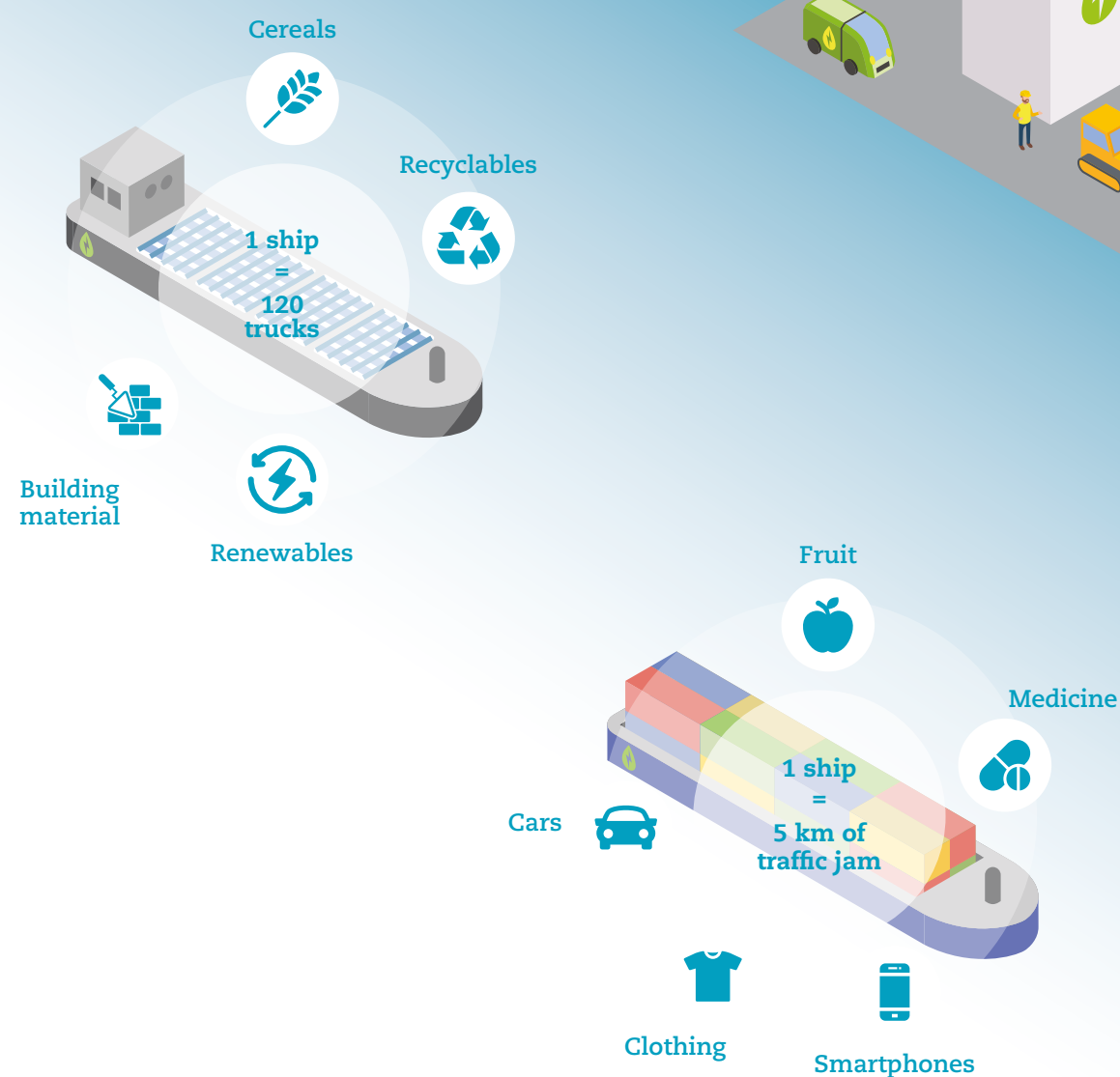
To achieve these goals the associations closely cooperate with the European institutions, the River Commissions, the UN ECE as well as national administrations and relevant stakeholders.

# Inland Waterway Transport potential

Annual congestion costs reach 1% EU GDP and the GHG emission share of transport continues to rise instead of decreasing. Inland Waterway Transport can substantially increase its modal share and is an important corner stone to deliver the European Commission's Green Deal.

With over 40,000 km of navigable waterways and 250 inland ports, inland waterway transport carries some 550 million tonnes of goods per year and is of increasing importance in the field of cruising and passenger transport. Societies and major industries in Europe are depending on a seamless supply of their goods via waterways.

Contrary to the congested roads, European waterways dispose of free capacity, offering a significant modal shift potential. Fostering clean and reliable transport solutions by waterway transport can enable more economic growth in Europe's waterborne regions and increase prosperity and quality of life.



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# Smart and connected shipping

Digitalization and automation will have a major impact on inland waterway transport and offer huge possibilities. They have improved door-to-door trips by making them user-centric, adaptive and integrated across modes while respecting data privacy and ensuring cybersecurity. They also optimize safe operation of assets, capacity use of available space and infrastructure, i.e. the whole life cycle management of assets and equipment by constant monitoring, thereby enhancing business and policy decision making.

## Smart infrastructure

- Dynamic traffic management provides in-advance and real-time information in an integrated way to logistics and mobility users
- Blue wave operation of locks and bridges guarantees fluid and clock-proof shipping traffic on waterways across borders
- Smart sensors support continuous monitoring and diagnosis and optimize the rehabilitation and regeneration of infrastructure and assets in a life cycle approach
- The network is fully equipped with fast mobile broadband coverage



## Smart vessels

- Smart vessels connect with smart ports & smart infrastructure
- Data flows, swift interaction allowing a progressive and safe increase in automation and autonomy
- Vessels can be continuously updated with the latest digital technologies throughout their lifecycle
- Connectivity and automation increase operations performance, capacity use, safety and the energy-efficiency of inland navigation

## Multimodal connectivity

- Public authorities facilitate and provide all necessary infrastructure details via River Information services next generation
- Data are interoperable across transport modes on a “one record, once only” basis making inland waterway transport easy-to-use in synchro-modal operations
- For freight, inland waterway transport and ports are fully integrated in interconnected logistics solutions
- Inland Waterway Transport is sailing paperless

# Future Inland Waterway Transport agenda for Europe

The sector together with other stakeholders calls for a new Inland Waterway Transport Agenda for Europe focusing on the following challenges in order to successfully address climate change and fulfil Europe's transport related, economic, environmental and societal goals:

## Moving more transport to inland waterways

**CREATING SMART, SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY** by making inland waterway infrastructure and shipping fit-for-future and by integrating inland navigation into multimodal mobility of people and freight so inland waterway transport unfolds its full potential. This shall ultimately lead to an increase in the modal share of inland waterway transport, a reduction of road congestion, safer and more reliable transport, quality jobs and a more sustainable transport system as a whole.

## Zero-emission inland navigation

**CONTRIBUTING TO EUROPE'S ZERO-EMISSION AND DECARBONISATION AMBITION** embedded in a coordinated transport and energy policy to pool resources among energy and transport actors to operate on renewables and supply clean fuel to transport, households and industries. Inland navigation is ideally placed to do so, as it is most energy-efficient, a pre-requisite for decarbonised and zero-emission systems.

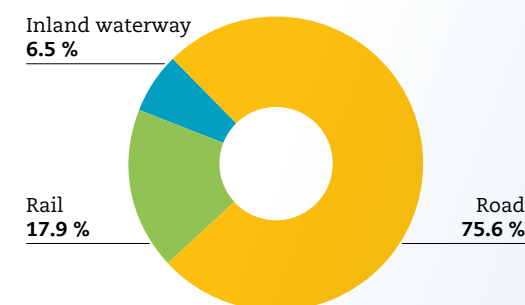
The main action areas in which to tackle the core challenges mentioned above are:

**PEOPLE** — create an attractive work place with high social, qualification, safety and security standards;  
**FLEET** — enable the transition towards zero-emissions and decarbonisation of the fleet while safeguarding competitiveness and safety;  
**INFRASTRUCTURE** — achieve the continuous and reliable navigability of the trans-European inland waterway network and ensure swift links to other modes while assuring sustainability of infrastructure, protecting the environment and adapting to climate change;  
**DIGITALISATION** — develop and use digitalisation as an instrument to support the developments towards smart and sustainable jobs, fleet and infrastructure connected to other transport modes and sectors.

## Sufficient funding and support

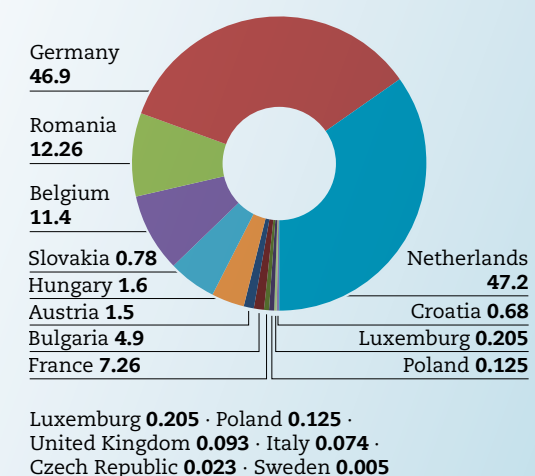
**MATERIALISING THE SECTOR'S POTENTIAL AND CONCRETISING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE GREEN DEAL** to reduce transport emissions by shifting a substantial part of the freight carried by road today to inland waterway transport (IWT) and rail. IWT has free capacities on the European network of waterways and already today has significantly less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than road transport.

### MODAL SPLIT (2017)



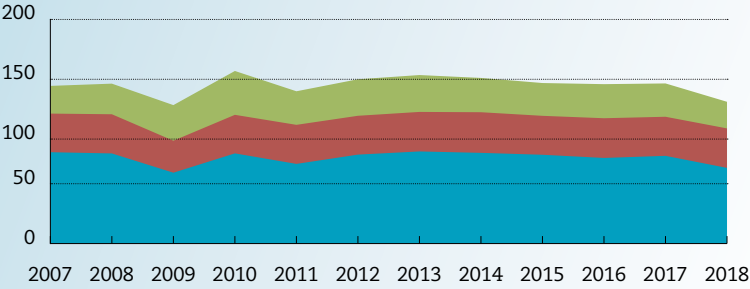
Source: Eurostat

### MODAL SHARE OF INLAND NAVIGATION BY COUNTRY (in billion tkm in 2018)

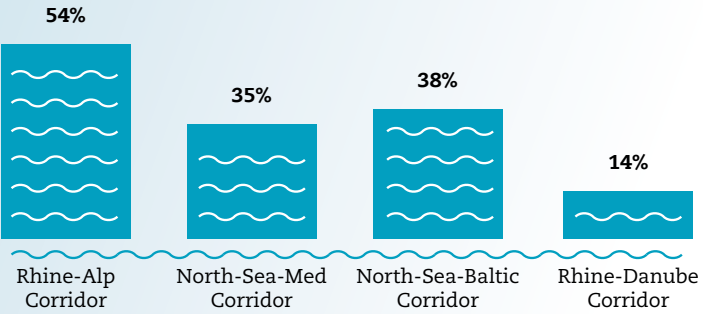


# Facts and figures

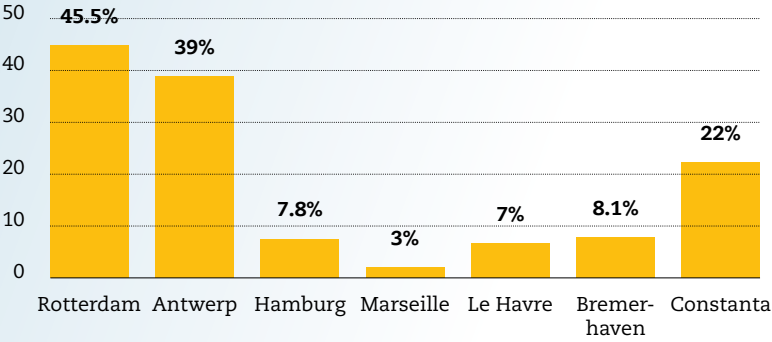
YEARLY INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT PERFORMANCE  
IN THE EU (in billion tkm)



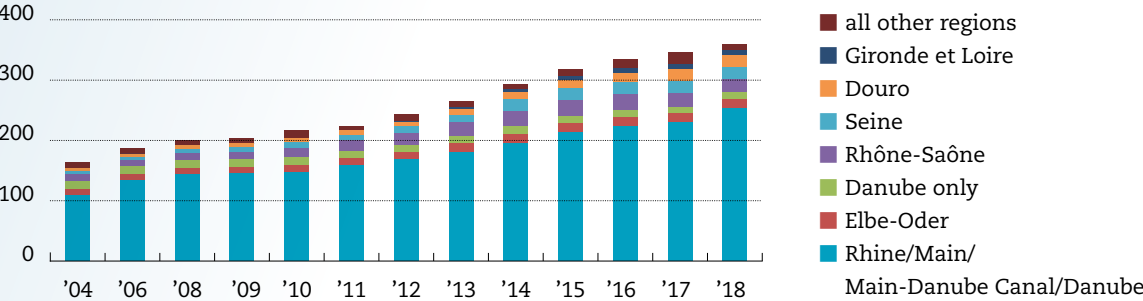
SHARE WATERWAYS TRANSPORT IN CROSS-BORDER FREIGHT FLOWS



INLAND WATERWAYS TRANSPORT SHARE IN SEAPORTS



NUMBER OF RIVER CRUISE VESSELS IN THE EU  
BY REGION OF OPERATION (2004–2018)





# Inland waterways in action



Today **over 42,000 people** are employed on board vessels in Europe. They are offered an **exciting** and **rewarding** career perspective.

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