

## PRESS RELEASE

**Council conclusions “Inland waterway transport – exploiting its full potential” adopted on 3 December 2018 together with [Conclusions on effective waterway infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance on the Danube and its navigable tributaries](#) by the Ministers of Transport of the Danubian countries.**

EBU welcomes the adoption of these conclusions. They take note of a.o. [the Industry Declaration of EBU and ESO](#), recently handed over to the Austrian Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Transport and the European Commission, calling for an increased political and financial support for IWT by means of a follow up programme of NAIADES II.

The conclusions acknowledge the significant contribution that this **efficient, safe and sustainable** mode of transport can make towards mitigating the negative effects of the transport sector as a whole. The conclusions stress the **need for further efforts** to exploit the full potential of inland waterway transport, and call on the Commission to develop a follow-up programme to NAIADES II. This should be launched by the end of 2020.

The Ministers of Transport emphasised the importance of IWT as part of the entire logistic chain and underlined that further action and support is needed to unlock the full potential of inland waterway transport as an efficient, safe and sustainable transport system and the development of the environmental performance of the fleet while preserving the competitive advantages of inland waterway transport.

### **Infrastructure is key to deliver on major EU policies**

Infrastructure remains the backbone of the industry. EBU therefore warmly welcomes the signing of conclusions on effective waterway infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance on the Danube and its navigable tributaries by the Ministers of Transport of the Danubian countries in the framework of the council meeting.

The proper maintenance of the Danube is of particular concern to EBU. In the past years different sections in the river suffered from a lack of maintenance leading to unreliability of the sector and huge losses for both the freight and passenger carrying industry. Where 75% of inland waterway transport is cross-border, seamless infrastructure is essential for green & smart services as part of the EU decarbonisation strategy.

With the EU goal to shift freight by 30% from road to rail and water by 2030 and by 50% by 2050 to ensure sustainable mobility, the long-term goal is to turn inland waterway transport into a synchro-modal partner in the hinterland of seaports and in continental transports.

4 December 2018

The European Barge Union (EBU) is the European association representing a majority of 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.