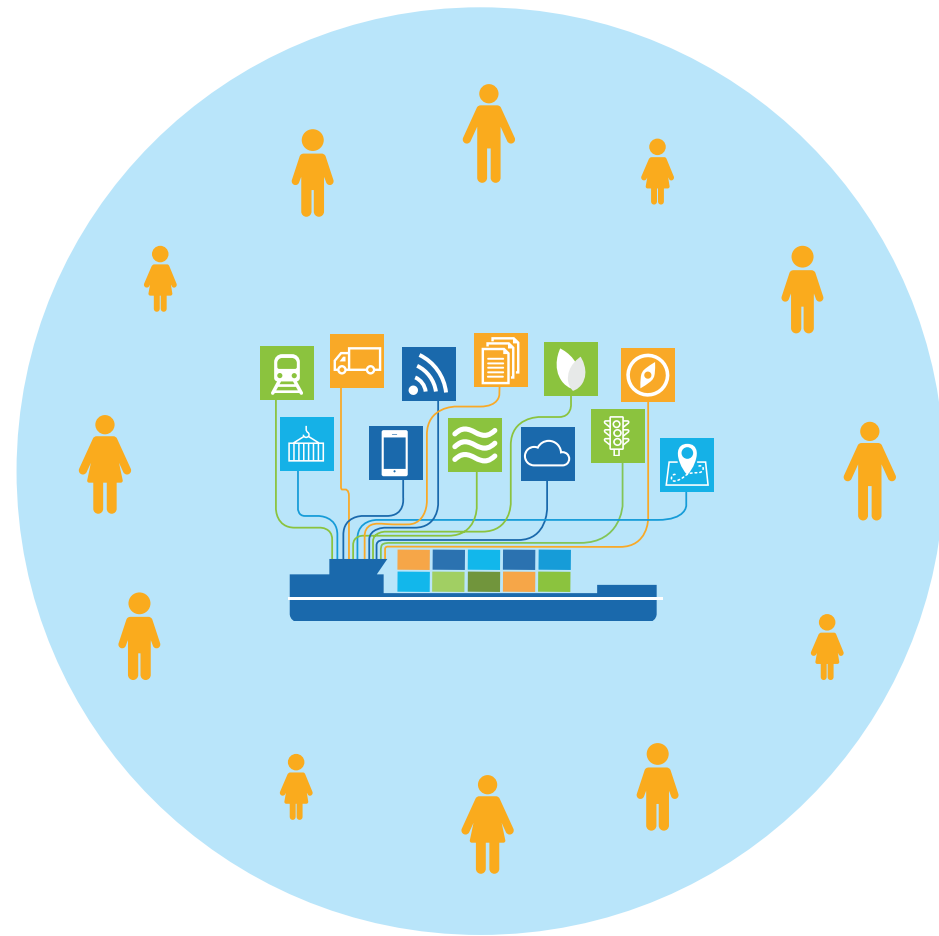


Inland waterways & ports in action



40,000km
navigable waterways
over **250**
inland ports

connect major seaports, cities and industrial centres
where the majority of the EU population lives



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Our vision towards 2030

Expected Benefits

Thriving circular and bio-based economy



Inland waterways are green corridors for transporting renewables and recyclables. Inland ports boost the circular and bio-based economy and are crucial for greening the last mile as multimodal logistics hubs near urban nodes.

The inland waterways and ports network creates

- logistics network capacity for innovative industrial clusters
- competitive cross-sector value chains



Abundant green transport capacity



Waterfront cities, agriculture and industry benefit from uncongested waterways on their doorsteps. People take the water taxi and waterbus. Goods, from bulk and outsized cargo to parcels and waste, will be shipped in and out by green, smart and modular vessels of all sizes.

Green waterway transport

- solves limited road and rail capacity
- reduces traffic jams without additional land take



Smart & connected multi-modal transport



Ship and shore exchange real-time and forecast information with each other, other transport modes and nodes. Digital communication increases safety, reduces fuel consumption, improves load capacity and optimises the use of the transport infrastructure.

Digitalisation

- saves time and energy
- makes multi-modal inland waterway logistics solutions as easy-to-use as single mode transport



Business of people



The inland waterway and port sector is a backbone for the single market by keeping traffic flowing for people and industry and creating jobs in Europe. People on board and on shore enjoy lifelong learning, high social security and job mobility.

A well developed network of waterways and multi-modal ports creates

- high quality jobs on board and ashore
- increased workers' mobility
- career perspectives in the sector and beyond



Much more than transport



Waterways are EU arteries for sustainable and safe transport and logistics, but not only. They also provide clean energy, secure water supply, conserve wildlife and boost tourism and leisure.

Cross sectoral cooperation

- fuels cross-regional development
- creates a socio-economic multiplier for EU investments



Our common vision of green, smart and congestion-free transport and logistics servicing a circular and bio-based economy will only materialise tomorrow if we build a solid policy strategy and equip our people with effective implementation tools today and tomorrow.

To turn this vision into reality, we need

Investment



75% of inland waterway transport is cross-border - seamless infrastructure is essential for green & smart services as part of the EU decarbonisation strategy

- public investment plans to create bottleneck-free EU waterways amount to 15 billion.
- this requires a long-term and stable EU investment framework to create good navigation status and boost greening and digitalisation
- a 3 billion funding scheme for clean vessels would reduce external costs by 22 billion
- EU grants are a vital ingredient to enhance investments with a high EU added value and strong socio-economic return

Coordination



Inland waterway transport is the fastest grower after road transport.

Let's keep it growing with:

- an ambitious Inland Waterways & Ports Agenda for Europe with effective actions towards 2030 as successor to the NAI/DES 2014-2020 action plan
- integration of inland waterways and ports in all relevant EU cross-sectoral policies to maximise various synergies
- Strong cooperation between inland waterway institutions, creation of a knowledge platform and a permanent basis for CESNI

Legislation



Regulation can facilitate and accelerate decarbonisation and digitalisation with a good mix of high standards and innovation rewards:

- harmonised, non-conflicting EU waste legislation enabling safe use of waste in the EU and its swift transport across borders
- take RIS to the next stage with a standardisation of information flows and secure data sharing to remove digitalisation barriers such as the use of electronic information exchange across borders and modes
- eliminate technical and administrative barriers hindering internal market and innovation by withdrawing superfluous legislation and improving access to funding schemes
- ensure a strong backing of greening and innovation in the CEF Regulation

Innovation



Inland shipping is carbon-efficient and over 95% of commercial vessels are digitally connected - let's take it to the next level:

- explicitly dedicated topics for inland waterways infrastructure, ports and vessels in the next research and innovation programme
- continued regional innovation facilitation support to improve access to innovation programmes for microsize and small size businesses and promote market uptake
- an incentive scheme to stimulate shippers to choose for green. Making greening of inland waterway transport a joint responsibility of the entire logistics chain

Let's connect Europe by water with an ambitious EU policy action plan and continuity in funding!