



Donaukommission – Commission du Danube – Дунайская Комиссия – Danube Commission

Austria Bulgaria Croatia Germany Hungary Moldova Romania Serbia Slovakia Ukraine



DANUBE COMMISSION

Expert Meeting on Development of Ports and Port Operations

Topic 2.1– Update on policy framework relevant for Danube ports



European and national port policy - main goals of EM PORTS

- Monitor port policies of the European Union and the DC member states as well as related documents;
- Contribute to the process of preparation of port policy documents on European level, providing feedback in public consultations, information exchange with DC member states;
- Provide and exchange information among the members of the expert group on port policies, good practices in port development and port operations, in cooperation with professional organisations for the port sector;
- Facilitate and monitor studies and projects related to port development, greening and digitalization of inland ports.



European and national port policy - key documents (1)

- Different definitions of term “port” in DC member states
- The definition of "port" of the Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/1084 of 14 June 2017 could be used in order to harmonize the definition of ports:
 - *"A port is an area of land and water equipped with facilities for the mooring of vessels for the purpose of cargo-handling, supply and protection. Ports provide for the reception of waterborne vessels, their loading and unloading, the storage of goods, the receipt and delivery of those goods and the embarkation and disembarkation of passengers, crew and other persons and any other infrastructure necessary for transport operators in the port."*
- Convention regarding the regime of navigation on the Danube (Danube Convention)
- European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN)
- Regulation (EU) 2017/352 of the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers establishing a framework for the provision of port services and common rules on the financial transparency of ports
- European Green Deal, December 2019
- The Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy, December 2020



European and national port policy- key documents (2)

- Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 - **Revision process of TEN-T**
 - The new TEN-T Regulation, which entered into force on 13 June 2024, contains a number of significant improvements concerning the Danube ports.
 - There are stricter requirements for inland ports regarding standards for multimodal connectivity, digitalisation, and climate resilience, aligning with the European Green Deal objectives;
 - The TEN-T study on climate change adaptation and related cross-border investments is under development and will be finalised by the end of 2025.
- Commission Notice C(2021) 5430 - Technical guidance on the climate proofing of infrastructure in the period 2021-2027
 - Climate proofing will need to be demonstrated before and during implementation of infrastructure projects, at least for optional financing from CEF in 2022;
 - From 2023 onwards - call for proposal, climate proofing becomes a requirement (according to the work programme). Topic of the METEET workshop held on 6 June 2023;
- NAIADES III – thirty-five actions out of which two actions explicitly address ports
 - Study on Enabling Sustainable Management and Development of Inland Ports, has been contracted by EC/DG MOVE end of 2022 (Ecorys) and has a timeframe from November 2022 to November 2025;
 - Request the European Standardisation Organisation for harmonised standards for alternative fuels infrastructure for inland waterways and ports; ES-TRIN 2025 (entry into force in January 2026);
- Transport Block Exemption Regulation (TBER) proposal by DG Competition aims to simplify and modernise state aid rules for sustainable transport.
 - The European Commission opened a feedback period on a proposal in period 6 March 2024 - 3 April 2024. Following this, and receiving 23 responses, the European Commission has launched a public consultation inviting all interested parties to comment on its draft rules for land and multimodal transport as well as on its new Transport Block-Exemption Regulation until 20 September 2024
- EU Taxonomy Regulation EU 2020/852

The first “EU Taxonomy Climate Delegated Act”, entered into force on 1 January 2022 and sets down the technical screening criteria which must be satisfied for an economic activity to be considered as contributing to the environmental objective of climate change mitigation or climate change adaptation. A separate delegated act, which set down the technical screening criteria for the remaining four environmental objectives identified under the EU Taxonomy framework, was finalized in 2022 and entered into force on 1 January 2023. The Commission adopted on 13 June 2023 a new sustainable finance agenda. The Delegated act - Environmental and climate was adopted on 27 June 2023 with implementation from January 2024 . The criteria for inland freight and passenger vessels were defined in the Taxonomy regulation from 2025 onwards. The EU taxonomy stakeholder request mechanism was established at the end of 2023. The mechanism is intended to address suggestions from stakeholders regarding activities in the EU taxonomy.
- EUSDR Action Plan/PA1a Action 1 - Contribute to improve waterway and port infrastructure & management plan; Interreg/Danube Transnational Program 2021-2027
- Horizon Europe/Waterborne Transport/Co-programmed partnership „Zero Emission Waterborne Transport (ZEWT)
 - The PLATINA4Action coordination and support project was initiated to support the IWT policy of the European Commission, notably supporting the evaluation of the NAIADES III activities. The project started in January 2024 and will continue until end of 2026.



European and national port policy - contribution of EM Ports

- Contribute to the review of Directive 2014/94/EU on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (the AFIR) with the aim to facilitate the use of alternative fuels. On 14 July 2021, EC published a proposal on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure and repealing Directive 2014/94/EU. Implementation of the AFIR; the greatest challenges for the roll-out of alternative fuels infrastructure for waterways and ports: issues of demand, incentives and technical regulations;
- On 13 July 2023, the new EU regulation of Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR) was concluded. This also concerns inland ports, as by 2030 all inland ports within the TEN-T network must have onshore electricity infrastructure. This allows for a clear definition of when inland ports should realise Onshore Power Supply (OPS) in their territories, while leaving room for flexibility in achieving this goal. The AFIR is scheduled to be revised in 2026 to take into account the development of OPS and hydrogen fuel cells in inland ports. With regard to the AFIR Regulation, each EU Member State is requested to prepare and submit to the EC, by 31 December 2024, a draft national policy framework for the development of the market for alternative fuels in the transport sector and the deployment of the relevant infrastructure;
- CINEA has announced on 1 March 2024 amount of €1 billion investment through the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility (AFIF) with submission deadlines in 2025. Up to 2024 352 million euro was awarded to 26 projects including hydrogen refuelling stations and port electrification initiatives.
 - June 11, 2025, at 17:00 (CET)
 - December 17, 2025, at 17:00 (CET)
- RED III (Renewable Energy Directive, EU/2023/2412) entered into force on 20 November 2023, national implementation of legislation should be completed by 21 May 2025. Every EU country has to come up with its own implementation road map including the IWT sector by 2030. Danube navigation has to contribute to this goal with a short-term solution by 2030 using alternative fuels (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oils, HVO);
- Implementation and the revised ETS directive (Emission Trading System). As a new element in the revised ETS directive under Fit-for-55, the fuel supply to Inland Waterway Transport can optionally be placed under the ETS2 as an opt-in (such as planned by The Netherlands).



European and national port project and policy - contribution of EM Ports

- Contribute to the implementation of EU regulation on electronic freight transport information (eFTI); **Regulation on electronic freight transport information (adopted on 20 August 2020, completion of documents in July 2024, full application from August 2026). DTLF completed the first phase of work (2018-2023). The second phase of work of DTLF continues in 2024 and 2025 (the DTLF Plenary meeting took place on 18 October 2024, the next DTLF Plenary meeting planned to take place on 9 April 2025);**
- Feed into work of EC-Digital Transport and Logistics Forum (DTLF) and CESNI/TI;
- **On 26 January 2024, the European Commission adopted a new proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2005/44/EC on harmonised river information services (RIS) on inland waterways in the Community. In June 2024 the EU Council adopted its General Approach on the Commission proposal for the revised RIS Directive. On 17 October 2024, the CESNI Committee has adopted the standard ES-RIS 2025/1 is due to enter into force on 1 January 2026, in the legal frameworks of the CCNR and the EU;**
- Contribute to the Rhine Danube Corridor Work Plan, **20th Meeting of the RD Core Network Corridor Forum meeting was held on 18 November 2024; The 2024 CEF Transport call for proposals made available EUR 1.08 billion for projects targeting new and improved European transport infrastructure including waterway and port infrastructure. Opening date was on 24 September 2024 with deadline date 21 January 2025;**
- Contribute to the amending of the Combined Transport Directive 92/106 since 2022. **The European Commission opened a feedback period on a proposal to amend Council Directive 92/106/EEC on 7 November 2023 for the period up to 5 February 2024. The current status is “Awaiting committee decision” ;**
- Support “Fit for 55 package” implementation;



European and national port project and policy activities - contribution of EM Ports

- The Secretariat of the Danube Commission has also actively involved on the Action plan for EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes with a key role of the Danube ports, since May 2022. Numerous activities with the EC, representatives of Romanian, Ukrainian and Moldovan state authorities as well as other stakeholders and visits to the Danube ports in that area were organised. During the previously period, activities within EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes have resulted in many tangible results;
- Bi-weekly situation reports on the Danube and seaports in the region were produced and a contact and information point ("Danube Cargo Information Desk") was established and operated to facilitate inland waterway cargo flows by connecting market actors and matching cargo demand with port and fleet operator services;
- The total throughput of Ukraine's Danube ports amounted to 32.01 million tonnes in 2023 while the result in 2024 was 17.396 million tonnes. In 2023, the total number of ships in operation (including barges) was 14,031(according to USPA data); The Danube region is an important producer and exporter of grain, with further potential for growth;
- There are complex requirements of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), which enters into force on 5 January 2023 and requires companies to report on the environmental and social impacts of their activities and on the verification (assurance) of the reported information. The first companies will have to apply the new rules for the first time in the 2024 financial year, for reports published in 2025. Some non-EU companies will also have to report if they generate over EUR 150 million on the EU market.



Questions & Answers / Discussion

- Additional topics of interest
- Priority should be given to
- Next EG Ports meeting should focus / present / investigate ...
- Any other comments



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Thank you for
your attention!

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