ANNUAL REPORT

2018

Working together for more & better waterway transport
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A European platform of waterway authorities and organisations promoting more transport by water. We bring key waterway players together to actively advocate EU initiatives that support moving more goods and people by water in EU regions and cities.

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Our agenda

Europe’s network of navigable rivers and canals links up ports, urban and industrial centres. With more and better waterway transport, we want to strengthen an effective alternative for congested transport.

We strongly believe in a multimodal Europe with waterways as backbone to make mobility & logistics less carbon-intensive at the service of European industry and society.

Our policy agenda covers
• a quality network of waterways which is reliable, climate proof and well connected
• effective digital inland waterway services to facilitate seamless, sustainable and safe transport & logistics
• facilitation of a long-term policy rewarding future-oriented innovation

What we do

• exchange national, & regional knowledge & best practice and launch common projects
• discuss EU policies and proactively advocate EU initiatives and measures which make waterways more attractive and easier to use
• provide access to an extensive network of EU and national contacts
• promote and demonstrate the economic and societal benefits of waterway transport
• listen to and consult users, clients & stakeholders of waterway transport in Europe on needs & concerns and cooperate around topics of common interest

Our plans

We team up with all European waterway authorities and stakeholders
• for reliable funding and financing to remove critical bottlenecks in the waterway network
• for a fit-for-future waterway network adopting a life-cycle and climate responsive approach
• for digitisation and automation that makes waterways easier to use
• for a long-term view and strategy on innovation
• for a better visibility and understanding of inland waterways’ role in the development of regions and communities

Our achievements

• a specific EU policy supporting the development of waterway transport (Naïades 1 & 2) and a call by the European Parliament and Council to renew the action programme beyond 2020
• a strategic research agenda for inland waterway transport and ports
• all dedicated EU international waterways designated as EU core infrastructure to ensure good infrastructure quality by 2030
• integration of good navigation status in TEN-T to ensure a better performance of existing infrastructures
• EU co-financing up to 50% for waterway infrastructure works and RIS
• a framework directive to harmonise the cross-border deployment of River Information Services (RIS)
• EU co-financing up to 50% to ensure introduction of low-sulphur fuel for waterway vessels
• extension of ‘de minimis’ rule to inland waterway transport to facilitate state aid

Brussels’ Office

Karin de Schepper
Caroline van de Leur
general management & public affairs
office & communications management
Members

Full Members

- Administration dos Portos do Douro, Leixões e Viana do Castelo – Portugal
- De Vlaamse Waterweg nv – Belgium
- Ministry of Transport & Construction (Slovak Republic)
- Ministry of Transport & Construction (Romania)
- Ministerstwo Gospodarki Morskiej i Zeglugi Srodkladowej – Poland
- Ministry of Transport & Construction (Slovak Republic)
- Ministry of Transport & Construction (Romania)
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- Ministry of Transport & Construction (Slovak Republic)
- Ministry of Transport & Construction (Romania)

Corresponding Members

- Haven Brussel – Port Bruxelles (Belgium)
- Kammerunion Elbe/Oder (Germany)
- Pro Danube International (Austria)
- RSOE - National Association of Radio Distress Signalling and Infocommunications (Hungary)

Ministry of Transport & Construction (Slovak Republic)

The Water Transport Division of the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic is involved in the development of inland navigation, waterways and ports in the Slovak Republic.

Aiming to modernise waterways and the public ports on the Danube river, it actively works on a more significant connection of water transport to intermodal transport, and also ensures a modern and environmentally friendly waterway infrastructure in the Slovak Republic.

The Division of Water Transport seeks to broaden positive thinking about inland waterway transport and achieve modern, eco-friendly water transport accessible for everyone.

River Administration of the Lower Danube (AFDJ)

AFDJ is a Romanian legal entity and operates as an autonomous administration under the coordination of the Ministry of Transport. Its main responsibility is to assure navigation conditions on the Romanian Danube sector by carrying out hydrological surveys, dredging works, marking activity, RIS data provision, hydro-technical works for waterway infrastructure as well as fulfilling the obligations assumed by Romania in compliance with international conventions and agreements.

AFDJ cooperates at international level, on the basis of bilateral agreements, with waterway administrations from the Republics of Serbia and Bulgaria as well as Ukraine, for the purpose of ensuring safe navigation conditions on the common Danube sectors and with all Danube river administrations within the common projects and forums.

River Administration of the Lower Danube - AFDJ (Romania)

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About waterway transport

2017 figures - outlook for 2018
Inland waterways shipped in total more than **558 million tonnes** in 2017 or 6 million tonnes more than in 2016. Both national and international transport increased by +1.2% and +1%, respectively. Transport performance stayed more or less stable at 147 million tonne-km. Waterborne tourism is growing fast. 2018 however, resulted in less transport by water following a prolonged dry summer period with low water levels.

Shipped commodities in 2017
At EU level, the main types of goods transported in 2017 were metal ores, coke and refined petroleum products and products of agriculture. This top 3 accounted for more than half of all goods transport on EU inland waterways. Behind stable overall figures profound changes are taking place over the years. While traditional commodities such as coal and petroleum products are stagnating, the shipped volumes of containers, chemicals and agribulk are increasing. Transport performance of containers saw an upwards swing of almost 5% pointing to a transition towards an energy-efficient and low-carbon economy on the one hand and the increasing integration of inland waterway transport in the supply chain on the other.

Detailed figures can be found on www.inland-navigation-market.org

## Summer drought in 2018
Water levels affect the transport of inland waterways. 2018 was a difficult year with a prolonged drought period for most of Europe’s navigable waterways. In the German Rhine area, industrial production was affected by low water levels causing disruptions of logistics chains which could not be backed up by road and rail transport. While the summer of 2018 is not considered an anomaly in the Rhine statistics, we expect a further increase in drought periods and flash floods due to global warming. In our vision, we elaborate on climate change and how to address it.

### Industry trends
- Chemicals
- Containers
- Agribulk
- Building materials
- Petroleum products
- Coal

Source: INE members, Eurostat & CCNR

## Transport performance in Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2016 (Tkm)</th>
<th>2017 (Tkm)</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>2016 (Tkm)</th>
<th>2017 (Tkm)</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<td>1,962</td>
<td>2,022</td>
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<td>5,477</td>
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<td>Croatia</td>
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<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td>365,786</td>
<td>+1.23</td>
<td>48,798</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>108</td>
<td>99</td>
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Source: Eurostat

## Detailed figures
Detailed figures can be found on www.inland-navigation-market.org

### Modal share of inland navigation by country

Source: Eurostat
EU Naiades programme (2014-2020) mid-term

In September 2018, the Commission presented a mid-term evaluation of the EU inland waterway transport action programme and listed ongoing actions to implement NAIADES up to 2020. The EU adopted a regulation to reduce air emissions from existing engines, a directive on technical standards for vessels, and a directive on the recognition of professional qualifications. A new approach has been taken to state aid in inland port infrastructure investment. As a directive on the EU inland waterway transport action programme and listing its future priorities. INE is happy to see that the Parliament calls for better integration of inland waterways in urban, port and digital policies and to fully exploit its potential for decarbonisation. The Council of transport ministers has adopted Council conclusions on the recognition of professional qualifications. A new approach has been taken to state aid in inland port infrastructure investment. As the European Committee of experts (CESNI) now draws up standards for vessels, information technology and crew to which the EU inland shipping to relieve heavily congested transport corridors. It co-finances research inter alia into transport, digitalisation, climate change and decarbonisation including for waterway transport. It supports inland waterways to invest in cross-sector and cross-border innovation pilots, pre-normative research and coordination actions. The Horizon2020 programme ends in 2020 and will be followed by the HorizonEurope programme (2021-2027) with the largest ever budget.

Calls for new inland waterway action plan (2021-2027)

In the Naiades Expert group, INE has pointed to the importance of preparing a timely strategy and action plan beyond 2020. Important challenges such as climate change, green digitalisation require specific steps for developing inland waterways. The Parliament follows suit with a motion for resolution listing its future priorities. INE is happy to see that the Commission continues with a study on crew requirements and further work in the field of infrastructure and digitalisation.

Moving more by water

75% of EU waterway traffic crosses borders, underlining the unique European character of inland shipping

WHAT IS NAIADES AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT

- It is the EU waterway transport policy aiming for a better use of inland shipping to relieve heavily congested transport corridors.
- It is the EU action programme to develop waterway transport. The 1st Naiades programme ran from 2006 until 2013. The 2nd runs from 2014 until 2020.
- Waterway transport is also supported through the funding and financing programmes Connecting Europe Facility, Horizon2020, LIFE and the EU Structural and Investment Funds.

WHAT IS HORIZON AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT

- It is the current EU programme which supports research as well as innovation pilots, pre-normative research and coordination actions.
- It co-finances research inter alia into transport, digitalisation, climate change and decarbonisation including for waterway transport. It supports inland waterways to invest in cross-sector and cross-border innovation.
- The Horizon2020 programme ends in 2020 and will be followed by the HorizonEurope programme (2021-2027) with the largest ever budget.

Policy recommendations up to 2020

- Preparation by the European Commission of the EU Naiades 3 action programme in close cooperation with public and private stakeholders
- Full integration of inland waterway transport in multimodal and decarbonisation policies
- Integration of dedicated innovation topics for inland waterways in the EU research and innovation programme HorizonEurope building on the work of the Strategic Research Agenda for Inland waterway transport and Ports
- Robust pre-normative research and innovation rewarding legislation

Investing in fit-for-future innovation

Under Horizon2020, a number of projects like Prominent, Novitrans enabled investment in innovation for inland waterway transport. Together with Seaeurope, INE has worked towards joining forces between the inland waterway sector and the Waterborne Technology Platform to identify joint waterborne interests and bring them to a higher political level. INE appreciates a closer cooperation with the Waterborne Technology Platform and the Logistics Technology Platform ALICE. INE has brought a group of stakeholders together to write up a Strategic Research Agenda for Inland waterway transport and ports, outlining a vision towards 2050 and the 1st range of activities to achieve this vision. As nobody knows what the world will look like in 2050, it is a work in progress open for further contributions. As a multi-disciplinary exercise, it provides input for the next EU research and innovation programme HorizonEurope (2021-2027).
Infrastructure works

North Sea-Baltic
1. Albert canal bridges
2. Ghent-Temse canal lock
3. Reyes lock
4. Aussig Newfoundland lock
5. Meuse deepening
6. Monsen weir
7. Seine-Scheldt
   a. Upper Seine
   b. Upper Seine-Belgium border
   c. Lower Seine
7. Canal Amstel-Rhine
   a. Zwijndrecht-Eindhoven
   b. Upper Seine-Western Scheldt
   c. Mergaam Canal-Amsterdam
   d. Brussels-Kortrijk
   e.PosX
   f. Lower Seine navigation
8. Albert canal bridges
9. Albert canal bridges
10. Albert canal bridges
11. Albert canal bridges
12. Albert canal bridges
13. Albert canal bridges
14. Albert canal bridges
15. Albert canal bridges
16. Albert canal bridges
17. Albert canal bridges

North Sea-Med
1. Albert canal bridges
2. Albert canal bridges
3. Albert canal bridges
4. Albert canal bridges
5. Albert canal bridges
6. Albert canal bridges
7. Albert canal bridges
8. Albert canal bridges
9. Albert canal bridges
10. Albert canal bridges
11. Albert canal bridges
12. Albert canal bridges
13. Albert canal bridges
14. Albert canal bridges
15. Albert canal bridges
16. Albert canal bridges
17. Albert canal bridges
18. Albert canal bridges

Rhine-Alpine
20. Future vision West
21. San Remo locks upgrade
22. Decommissioning

Rhine-Alpine
20. Future vision West
21. San Remo locks upgrade
22. Decommissioning

Rhine-Danube
60. Upper Main
61. Straubing
62. Linz-Donau locks
63. Donau East of Vienna
64. Gablonitzer lock upgrade
65. Lock upgrade in Serbia
66. Capital dredging Romania

Orient East-Med
70. Extension navigability Vltava
71. Prague-Brno-Milotska Lock chamber
73. Lock Pilsen
74. Lock Olomouc

Atlantic
90. Douro navigability

Mediterranean
50. Missing link Milano-Cremona
51. River Po regulation
52. Fissero-Tartaro canal Bianco upgrade
53. Ferrari Waterway
54. Canal du Rhône à Sète

Other projects
100. Other projects

Attention: non-exhaustive list - subject to changes
Quality infrastructure

From capacity upgrades to a performant network
A higher co-financing rate for trans-European waterways will be of strong support to create quality infrastructure network by 2030. Next to capacity upgrades, waterway authorities work towards a reliable network with continuity of navigation and high service levels, in addition to recurrent maintenance. When INE coined the term ‘good navigation status’ in 2012, the objective was to put the users at the centre with fit-for-future quality infrastructure. Not only the quantity (capacity upgrades) is important, the quality and service of the infrastructure should be at the core of the debate with attention for a life-cycle approach and regeneration. For INE, this is a crucial element when revising the EU guidelines for the trans-European networks for Transport.

A changing climate
Another important reason to focus on quality is climate change which will affect waterways, their surrounding communities and industries. Waterway authorities work towards climate resilient waterway infrastructure which requires an integrated approach with a long-term perspective. As waterway authorities, we have to be able to work at the crossroads of transport, water management, spatial and regional planning, recreation, energy and nature. This demands particular flexibility of EU programmes. The advantage is that we meet several EU goals, so it will provide the right return on investment.

CEF2 co-financing rates for inland waterways
Co-financing rates for inland waterways are steadily increasing showing their political importance. The co-financing rates for cohesion countries are higher.

More EU budget for transport
With a transport coalition of over 40 transport organisations, authorities, cities, industries, including INE, we campaigned for a higher transport budget. In May, the European Commission proposed a new framework for the Connecting Europe Facility (2021-2027) and a budget without notable increase. We continue to make the case towards the European Parliament and Council to increase the budget. Furthermore, it is very important that the CEF budget for projects in cohesion countries is not reduced. Inland waterways receive more funding in CEF than via the Cohesion Fund. Finally, the first good news is that European Parliament insisted on up to 50% co-financing rate for inland waterways.

Another important reason to focus on quality is climate change which will affect waterways, their surrounding communities and industries. Waterway authorities work towards climate resilient waterway infrastructure which requires an integrated approach with a long-term perspective. As waterway authorities, we have to be able to work at the crossroads of transport, water management, spatial and regional planning, recreation, energy and nature. This demands particular flexibility of EU programmes. The advantage is that we meet several EU goals, so it will provide the right return on investment.

What are trans-European networks (TENs) and why are they important
- They aim to establish and develop EU cross-border networks in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy, in order to help develop the EU internal market, reinforce economic and social cohesion, and ultimately connect Europe.
- The EU trans-European policy for transport (TEN-T) aims at removing infrastructure bottlenecks by supporting investments in building new transport infrastructure or rehabilitating and upgrading the existing ones, including waterways, with 9 corridors as backbone.

What is the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and why is it important
- CEF is the EU investment instrument to achieve trans-European networks.
- CEF Transport will have co-financed projects with a total budget of 24.05 billion euros in 2014-2020. 7% has been allocated to inland waterways in 2014-2018. CEF also enables investment in the implementation of new technologies and innovation. And it supports synergies between transport, telecommunications, and energy, which is relevant for digitalisation and decarbonisation of transport.

Policy recommendations up to 2020

LEGISLATION
- Use the revision of the TEN-T guidelines to redefine quality infrastructure covering capacity and performance upgrades, with focus on life cycle management to meet users requirements for seamless navigation and adapt to a changing climate

INVESTMENT
- Increase the budget of the future Connecting Europe Facility
- No reduction of the Cohesion envelope in the future Connecting Europe Facility
- Quantify the societal benefits of investing in waterways with inland waterway managers

COORDINATION
- Provide a long-term predictable and reliable funding framework, so planning, budgeting and execution of complex projects can be guaranteed
Digital transport

Digitalisation as a tool
digitalisation is a buzzword today and sometimes it is forgotten it is a tool and not an aim in itself. In the end, we all want to realise easy-to-use and reliable mobility & logistics. Digital tools can be of great help if we enable secure sharing on the basis of common standards with proper access rights. Today, we are working on improving the sharing of data between vessel operators and infrastructure managers through the RIS COMEX project. The RIS directive from 2005 is being evaluated by the Commission and an impact assessment is taking place to create e-tools for crew and vessels. Tomorrow, we aim to share data between inland waterway transport and the entire logistics and mobility chain to make inland navigation easier-to-use and help achieve climate goals.

What is DINA and why is it important
- DINA stands for the EU Digital Inland Waterway Area and addresses digitalisation in inland waterway transport.
- It covers inter alia River Information Services (RIS) which aim to streamline the information exchange between public and private parties to improve the safety, sustainability and efficiency of inland waterway transport. RIS are the inland waterway transport equivalent of ITS, SESAR, ERTMS, and e-Navigation.
- Further to the European DINA study of 2017, the DINA Expert Group of the Commission aims to deal with all digital developments from navigation and traffic management, integration in logistics processes and administrative formalities, including costs involved in complying with and enforcing legislation.

What is DTLF and why is it important
- The EU Digital Transport and Logistics Forum (DTLF) is a group of transport and logistics experts, including public and private players from the inland waterway sector. Together, they work on a common vision and roadmap for digital transport and logistics focusing on smart shipping for better communication. EU draft regulation on e-freight recognizes the interoperability obstacles between systems and modes.

Policy recommendations up to 2020

LEGISLATION
- A timely revision of the RIS directive of 2005 to keep up with current needs and developments
- Define a roadmap towards permanent operation and governance of a EU wide RIS corridor system data sharing platform integrated with the EU federated platform of networks as proposed by DTLF
- Define cross-border data interoperability of existing information systems so information is securely available with proper access rights on a single digital gateway and user data are provided ‘once only’
- Start the design of an EU framework for the development and deployment of smart shipping including regulation and investment
- Extend digital services and Mobility as a Service (MaaS) towards inland waterway transport applications in the field of tourism and public transport
The Commission decided with the Member States the road map starting the European CEF financing of the project up to 2030 and the delivery dates of the various sections of the 1,100 km long network including the Seine-Nord Europe Canal by 2028 and the cross-border sections on Condé-Pommeroeul and cross-border Lys.

The modernisation of the Gabcikovo locks aiming at the innovation and revitalization has started to ensure continuous and safe shipping. The current locks on the Danube between Slovakia and Hungary are at the end of their life cycle.

In Luxembourg, a photovoltaic park has been built near the Greenmachener lock with the objective of generating renewable energy. The park extends over 10,000 sqm and consists of 1868 solar panels with a total capacity of 500 kW. It will save 6250 tonnes CO2 within 20 years.

An increasing amount of operators are preparing for clean propulsion starting with innovative hybrid propulsion vessels, which can be transformed into fully clean energy driven ships. Solutions gear towards battery ships and hydrogen propulsion in cooperation with energy and chemical companies active in clean energy.

By building a biomass and bioenergy logistics belt, Danube stakeholders work together towards an increased use of environmentally friendly biomass-transport on the Danube to initiate a reduction of emissions, establishment of a low-carbon transport system and improvement of the environmental performance along the entire bioenergy value chains.
Our vision on fit-for-future waterways

Expansion of the existing land infrastructure is challenging and expensive to meet the increasing demand for public transport and city logistics. Rivers and canals have been arteries for trade and commerce since centuries, connecting ports with inland centres of industry and consumption. Investment in the waterway infrastructure and transshipment facilities helps to decrease costly congestion in and around cities. At the same time waterways are much more than transport corridors. The waterfront is a shared and climate responsive space where it is good to live, work, enjoy and trade and burst of activities co-exist.

Quality infrastructure
• A life cycle approach and performance upgrades of the infrastructure ensure the quality of the network.
• Reliable navigation conditions guarantee punctual arrivals and swift transfer to other modalities.
• Free capacity on waterways relieve clogged land routes.

Modal Shift
• Inland ports serve as smart multimodal hubs leading to the most climate friendly freight transport solutions.
• Clean waterbuses, watertaxis and cruises enhance sustainable mobility for people.
• Inland shipping swiftly connects to other modes of transport.
• Full network approach based on the most efficient mode of transport.

Green fleet & clean energy
• All ships, from large to small and for freight and passengers sail on zero-emission sources/carriers.
• Clean waterbuses, watertaxis and cruises enhance sustainable mobility for people.
• New locks are standardly equipped with hydropower turbines ensuring zero-emission lock operations.
• Inland ports produce, store and supply clean fuels to all modes of transport.
• The waterway network links up with energy grids and vessels contribute to equalize the energy grid.
• Inland ports, floating wind farms and locks provide renewable energy to surrounding households and industry.

Circular economy
• Waterway port areas are eco-industrial sites and recycling hubs attracting innovative circular economy based industry.
• Circular processing ensures that products and materials are put back into the chain.
• Creating closed loops facilitated by water transport solutions.
• Ships are 100% recyclable.

Climate change & integrated water management
• Water bodies provide drinking water to citizens and water availability affects, nature, navigation, hydro-electricity, tourism, industry and agriculture.
• Climate-resilient design protects people and businesses against floods and droughts.
• Water basins and wetlands store water to regulate water levels in dry and high water periods.
• Locks are equipped for efficient use of water and help to regulate water levels.
• Integrated water management covers a package of infrastructure measures dealing at the same time with the requirements for reliable navigation, water supply and protection, habitat and water quality.

Connectivity & quality of life
• A life cycle approach of the infrastructure keeps up the quality of the network.
• Better use of uncongested waterways has improved air quality, safety, living and working conditions.

Wildlife & biodiversity
• Estuaries, wetlands, rivers, lakes and canals host a rich fauna and flora.
• Smart infrastructure such as fish passes ensure the migration of fishes upstream and downstream.
• Renatured riverbanks and parallel channels are home to a wide variety of species.

Recreation & tourism
• The city waterfront is an exciting area of freight and leisure activities. People live and stroll around and enjoy the cityscape.
• In the countryside, fishers, cyclers and sailors enjoy the rich waterfront heritage and beautiful water environment.
Our vision on smart and connected

Collection and sharing of high quality information have enabled digitalisation and automation improving door-to-door trips. Freight and passenger solutions are user-centric, adaptive and integrated across modes while respecting data privacy and ensuring cybersecurity. They also optimise sustainable transport, 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 optimise the rehabilitation and regeneration of infrastructure and assets in a life cycle approach.
- The network is equipped with fast mobile broadband coverage.
- The smart infrastructure network is planned, managed and organised using open data.

Smart vessels
- Smart vessels connect with smart ports and smart infrastructure.
- Data flows, self-diagnosis and swift machine interaction allow a progressive and safe increase in automation and autonomy.
- Vessels are designed so that they 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
- Inland waterway transport is sailing paperless.
- Data are interoperable across transport modes on a “one record, once only” basis making inland waterway transport easy-to-use in synchronous-modal operations.
- For freight, inland waterway transport and ports are fully integrated in interconnected logistics solutions.
- People commuting into and within urban conurbations over water swiftly switch to other transport modes to reach their end destinations on a multimodal single ticket.

Safe and secure
- Inland waterways are a precious resource and an asset with multiple values, providing vital services.
- Its digital environment which is connected to other systems provides a safe and secure space for data sharing protecting sensitive public and private data.
- A cyber resilience strategy is in place to safeguard continuity of service.
Our mission

Inland waterway authorities within INE manage and develop navigable waterways into a strong network to contribute to the welfare and wellbeing of Europe.

More and better transport by water

With annual congestion costs exceeding 100 billion euro and carbon emissions in transport growing, making transport by water clean and easy-to-use for goods and people is a top priority. We actively work towards optimising the waterway network into a seamless link in an all-in-one multimodal network, so customers can make the optimal mobility and logistics choice. By investing in innovation, we provide space to entrepreneurship on and along the water, be it for new transport concepts, circular economy, smart technology or clean energy.

Going beyond transport

Waterways determine and give character to our landscapes. Waterway authorities are fully committed to the multi-functionality of our waterways. We invest in flood protection and also offer solutions for shipping and water supply in the event of water shortages. We produce energy from hydropower at locks, offer space for recreation and tourism and constantly focus on increasing the quality of the environment.

Our vision

The EU plans to go climate neutral and climate resilient by 2050 and so will inland waterways

Expansion of existing land infrastructure is challenging and expensive to meet increasing demand for public transport and city logistics. For centuries, rivers and canals have been arteries for trade and commerce, connecting ports with inland centres of industry, agriculture and consumption. Clean and smart inland shipping decreases costly congestion in and around cities. At the same time waterways are much more than transport corridors. The waterfront is a shared and climate responsive space where it is good to live, work, enjoy and trade and where burst of activities co-exist.