



Towards future-proof inland waterway transport in Europe

The Waterborne Technology Platform welcomes the resolution of the European Parliament on the future of inland waterway transport in Europe.

Brussels, 20 September 2021

Inland waterway transport plays an important role in the transport of goods in Europe. More than 37,000 kilometres of waterways connect hundreds of cities and industrial regions. Thirteen Member States have an interconnected waterway network. The potential for increasing the modal share of inland waterway transport is significant. However, this increase will depend upon the availability of cost-efficient technologies to accelerate the transformation into a zero-emission, digital, safe and competitive mode of transport.

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on 14 September 2021, which details the road to future-proof inland waterway transport in Europe. The resolution clearly stipulates the important role of Research, Development and Innovation regarding the transformation to climate-neutral solutions and the corresponding port infrastructure, green shipbuilding, as well as digital and autonomous waterborne transport. The Inland Waterway Transport sector itself increased its efforts in Research, Development and Innovation, by joining forces with the other actors in the waterborne transport sector, by joining the Waterborne Technology Platform.

The resolution in addition highlights the need for sufficient funding for Research, Development and Innovation, as well as the deployment of the technologies developed. The importance of the [Co-Programmed Partnership on Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport](#) in the framework of [Horizon Europe](#) is emphasized in the resolution.

Nik Delmeire, Board member of the Waterborne Technology Platform, says: *“It is encouraging that the European Parliament, on its own initiative, developed and adopted a resolution on the future of Inland Waterway Transport in Europe. It not only shows the strategic importance of the sector in terms of transport mode, it also clearly underlines the political support. As a member of the Board of the Waterborne Technology Platform, the reference to the importance of Research, Development and Innovation is encouraging. Increasing the market share of Inland Waterway Transport from 6% to 9 % by 2050 and this without any emissions – as set out by the European Commission, cannot be done without proper Research, Development and Innovation. Indeed, inland waterway transport as well as maritime transport, and the development of solutions for both segments, are in the heart of the Technology Platform. With the challenges upfront of us, and the average lifetime of the vessels, all support to speed up the development of innovative solutions will be key. Not only, to contribute to the achievement of policy objectives, but certainly to deliver solutions for the benefit of future generations”.*

Background:

WATERBORNE TP has been set up as an industry-oriented Technology Platform to establish a continuous dialogue between all waterborne stakeholders, such as classification societies, shipbuilders, shipowners, maritime equipment manufacturers, infrastructure and service providers, universities or research institutes, and with the EU Institutions, including Member States (www.waterborne.eu). The members of Waterborne TP comprise members as well as associated members from both maritime and inland navigation countries, representing about 18 Member States. In addition, the Associations member of the Waterborne Technology Platform represent the broader waterborne sector throughout the entire EU.

Enquiries concerning how to join and become more closely involved in the “Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport” partnership or other activities of the Waterborne TP can be sent to: Jaap Gebraad, Executive-director Waterborne TP, jaap.gebraad@waterborne.eu, tel: +32 493 835 626