

Why invest in inland waterways & ports?

Economic growth picks up again, but climate change, dwindling natural resources and rising congestion remain real important concerns for long-term and sustainable welfare. Over 70% Europeans live in city regions with a commensurate growth in traffic, making seamless logistics a paramount concern. Part of the search for sustainability has to include developing different solutions to these challenges.

7 excellent reasons to invest in inland waterways and ports:

- ### 1 Reduce the congestion bill

Today's congestion costs us 130 billion a year. Waterways link up cities and centres of commerce, industry and agriculture and can offer a powerful sustainable answer to expensive road congestion. Every barge takes on average 100 trucks creating space on the road without additional land take, backed by smart information services that optimise transport.
- ### 2 Because major industries can't do without

Major industries situated in the EU are competitive partly because of the availability of low transport costs of raw materials, agricultural produce and outsized goods by waterway transport. They depend on inland waterway transport to supply society and to create turnover, employment and profits. In turn this creates added value to other businesses such as chemical, food, automotive and construction industries.

Waterways provide the backbone for new circular economy hubs emerging in inland ports. EU's most important waterways cross cities providing the opportunity to ship finished goods inbound and waste outbound entering the new cycle. Transport cost is a major issue for the industry in Europe. Inland waterway transport is energy- and thus cost efficient. Rather than racing to the bottom with a fragmented transport offer causing congestion and climate costs, a low transport cost can be achieved with a better capacity use and low carbon footprint through bundling of cargo on multimodal corridors and last mile delivery by green vehicles.
- ### 3 Increase our quality of life

Thanks to economies of scale, the carbon footprint of waterways is low and 30% can be further saved with smart steaming. In addition, reducing air pollution by 85% in the near future will save society 23 billion euro. Meanwhile, the first electrical ships have entered our cities offering zero-emission transport, providing new solutions for people and cargo to move around.
- ### 4 Increase the competitiveness of EU ports

Europe's seaports located on waterways increasingly use inland shipping because of rising congestion and lack of rail capacity. In Antwerp and Rotterdam, more than 40% of all seagoing trade is shipped by inland waterway transport. The availability of waterways allows Rotterdam for instance to avoid 100,000 truck movements a day.
- ### 5 Waterways don't stop at borders

75% of waterway transport is cross-border. In the Rhine-Alp corridor 54% of all cross-border transport is shipped by inland waterways, 38% in the North-Sea Baltic corridor and 35% in the North-Sea Mediterranean corridor, making waterways a backbone for trans-European transport. By lifting capacity and clearing navigability bottlenecks, we enhance the use of existing public infrastructure assets and create a safe and low-carbon transport network of high EU added value.
- ### 6 Create jobs and develop regions

Globalisation and economic changes are leading to increasing job certainty. Job security is one of people's top concerns and the inland waterway transport and port sector has jobs on offer. Ports connect waterways to other transport modalities through networks of multimodal platforms. Thriving and attractive inland ports are the essential link in the core network corridors. Acting as hubs, they take trucks off the road, reduce tonnes of CO2, optimise logistics costs. But they do much more. Creating the clean energy hubs of tomorrow, housing the logistics centres for clean urban delivery and setting up ecosystems for the circular economy, they are at the forefront of our new economy creating sustainable jobs.
- ### 7 Because it goes beyond transport

Rivers and canals do much more than transport, they are catalysts for regional and nature development, they are actors in water supply and flood protection, they foster leisure and tourism. That's how transport investment can be turned into integrated development and yields important societal return on investment for communities across regions.

Facts & Figures

- 40,000km** EU waterways
- 75% of traffic** cross-border
- 250** inland ports
- 550m tonnes** shipped every year



Industry trends

- chemicals
- containers
- building materials
- agribulk
- petroleum products
- coal

No traffic jams

- 60-80% less fuel
- 60-80% less carbon
- 50-75% less noise

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This graphic illustrates the efficiency of waterway transport by showing that 100 small trucks are equivalent to a single large barge in terms of cargo capacity.

TEN-T waterway infrastructure works



Attention: non-exhaustive list, subject to changes