

Impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the European inland water transport, lessons learned and next steps

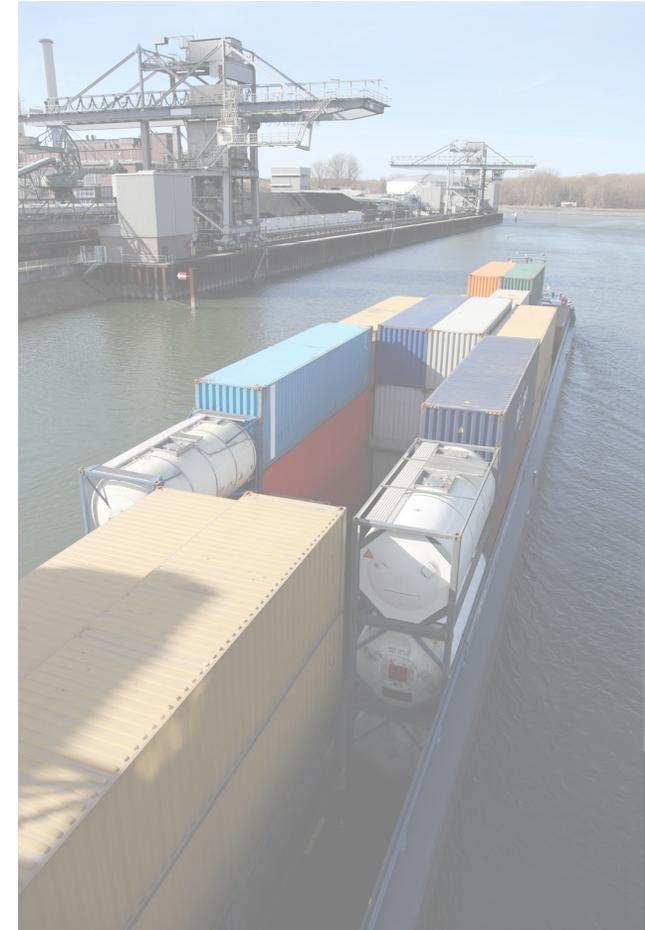
UNECE Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics
Informal Multidisciplinary Advisory Group on Transport Responses to the COVID-19 Crisis
Third meeting, 29 June 2021

Mr. Sim Turf, Chair of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport

COVID response: Impact on IWT and Lessons Learned

at the sessions of SC.3 and SC.3/WP.3 in 2020

- Virtual informal meeting of SC.3/WP.3 (29-30 June 2020)
- Fifty-seventh session of SC.3/WP.3
- Sixty-fourth session of SC.3
 - Information on the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on Impact on inland navigation
 - Exceptional measures applied in the sector
 - Lessons learned
 - Actions that might be undertaken by the Working Party on Inland Water Transport
 - Report “Intermodal Transport in the Age of COVID-19: Practices, Initiatives and Responses”

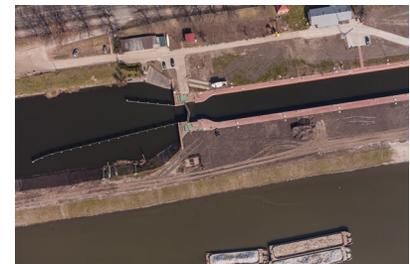


Impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on IWT in Europe

Severe economic impact on IWT, cargo and passenger transport

Identified critical issues:

- The suspension of passenger traffic and river cruises
- Reduced cargo volumes transported by inland waterways
- The impact on cargo operations in ports and the operation of bridges and locks
- The validity of vessels' documents, certificates, attestations and other documents of crews
- The replacement of crew members on board vessels
- Safety and the health protection of the staff



Extraordinary measures implemented in the sector

- Joining a multilateral UNECE agreement to compensate for the cancellation of refresher training sessions for Dangerous Goods Safety Advisers and ADN experts
- Temporary measures for the extension and renewal of ship certificates and certificates of crew members
- Special procedures to facilitate the replacement of crew members in foreign ports
- Procedures for urgent vessel repairs
- Individual protective measures for crews and other staff in the sector and urgent actions in case of infection among the crew members

Lessons Learned

- Coordination between countries and national transport authorities
- Collecting information and improving coordination and cooperation at the international level
- Well-organized cross-border consultation on introducing practical measures to ensure a good functioning of cross-border navigation
- Adapting the existing practice to effectively respond in case of natural disasters
- Digitalization of vessels' papers and professional certificates
- The establishment of communication platforms, where infrastructure services, users and the economy come together

Recommended actions for SC.3

- Make an assessment of the conventions and agreements under the UNECE purview relevant to inland water transport and UNECE resolutions in terms of preparedness for similar situations and propose modifications where necessary
- Prepare information for the Inland Transport Committee on the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on inland navigation and the measures undertaken in the sector
- Continue collecting information on this issue and address this at sessions of SC.3

Digitalization in inland navigation

- Need for a common information and exchange system, electronic transport documents, eliminating administrative and legislative bottlenecks (Workshop on digitalization in IWT held in October 2018 at the sixty-second session of SC.3)
- Digitalization of vessels' papers and professional certificates of crew members
- River Information Services (RIS) are crucial for informing the sector on special measures, the working hours of locks and bridges for the attention of crews and administrations by the Notices to Skippers
- Online training courses, refresher training sessions and certification of IWT staff

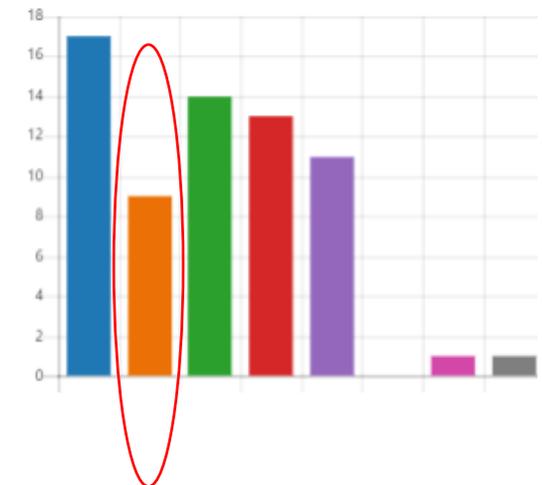
Workshop “Building up a solid international regulatory framework aimed at increasing the efficiency and safety of inland water transport”

- The workshop “Building up a solid international regulatory framework aimed at increasing the efficiency and safety of inland water transport” was held at the fifty-ninth session of SC.3/WP.3 (23-25 June 2021)
- In line with the ITC Strategy until 2030
- Resilience to pandemics and other emergency situations in the context of improving the existing international regulatory framework for IWT

In your opinion, does the existing international regulatory framework require further improvement? / По Вашему мнению, требует ли существующая международная нормативно-правовая база дальнейшего совершенствования?

[More Details](#)

● Yes, in terms of recent develo...	17
● Yes, in terms of resilience to p...	9
● Yes, in terms of further harmo...	14
● Yes, in terms of elimination of ...	13
● Yes, in terms of prevention of ...	11
● Yes, for other purposes / Да, д...	0
● No / Нет	1
● I have no answer / Нет ответа	1
● Other	0



45% of respondents

Proposed next steps and actions

- Incorporate the IWT sector in the scope of activities of the Informal Multidisciplinary Advisory Group and take note of the specific features and needs of IWT

Detailed information is available in the UNECE report “Intermodal Transport in the age of COVID-19 – Practices, initiatives and responses – Building pandemic resilient transport systems”

- Take note of the lessons learned in the IWT sector
- Possible analysis of the international regulatory framework in relation to resilience to pandemics and other emergency situations
- To this end, developing a stress test mechanism would be desirable as a future tool to assess the relevant legal instruments. This could include a critical transport network, safety of transport, crews and passengers, ensuring the necessary mobility of crew members for international traffic, prevention of pollution etc.

Thank you for your attention!

Mr. Sim Turf
Chair of SC.3

UNECE

29 June 2021, Geneva