

Inland Water Transport

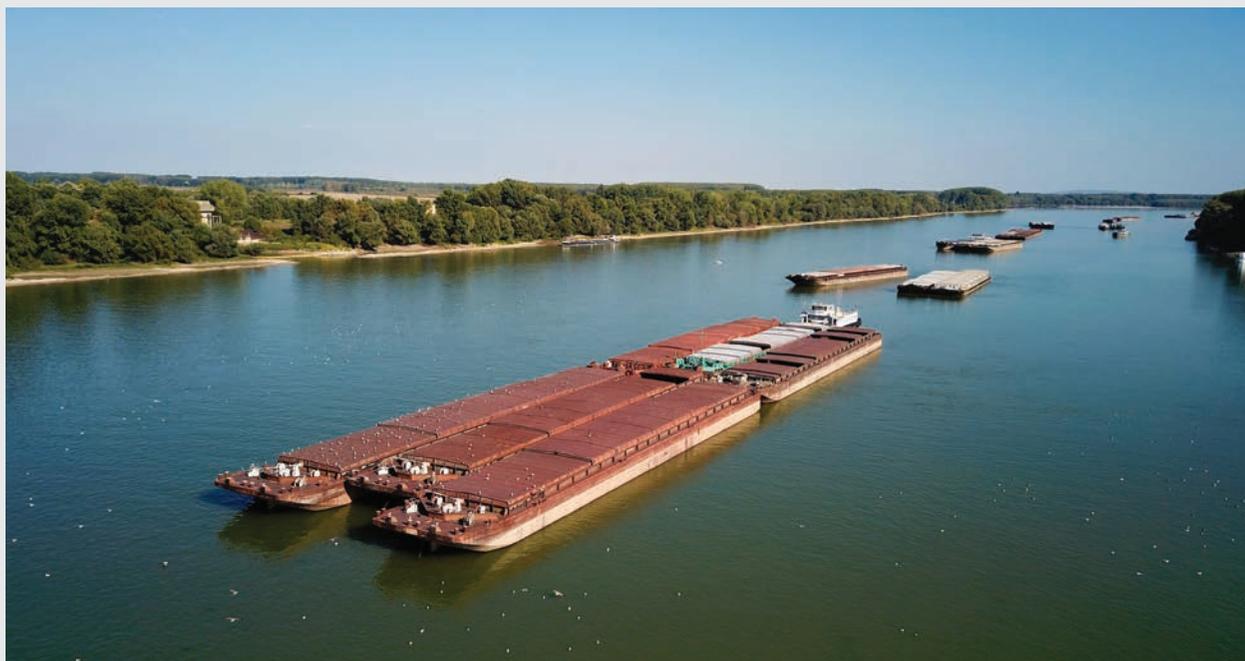


INLAND WATER TRANSPORT TODAY

European inland waterway network of international importance spans more than 29,300 km and includes over 400 important ports and terminals. Inland waterways can provide a sustainable complement to the shipping of goods by road and rail.

Transport by water is beneficial in terms of improving safety, reliability, reducing congestion and better environmental performance. The comparative advantages of inland water transport are sustainability, and cost-efficiency in terms of overall transport costs, the energy consumption per ton-kilometre and a low rate of accidents. Inland water transport remains a cost-effective and sustainable mode of transport with still untapped capacities and potential for growth and could improve the multinational trade-based economic area that is the ECE region.

The ongoing work in the sector and priorities for the coming years are modernization and greening of the fleet, resilience to climate change, smart shipping and automated navigation, digitalization, the development of River Information Services and other information technologies, harmonization of education and training standards and responding to other challenges in the European inland water transport sector.



Regulating and Promoting Inland Water Transport

Since 1956, UNECE through its various technical and policy bodies, has been working towards sustainable and efficient inland water transport across the UNECE region.

The Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) meets once a year to discuss measures to promote the development of inland waterway infrastructure, monitor the implementation of the legal instruments, regularly update resolutions, guidelines and recommendations pertinent to inland water transport and the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3) meets twice a year to discuss the navigation rules, technical prescriptions for vessels, prevention of pollution, River Information Services and other technical and safety-related issues.

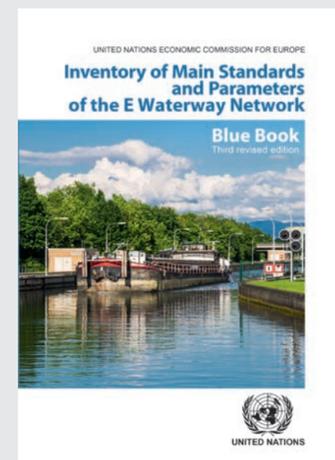
The Working Parties bring together renowned experts in inland navigation, including those of the European Union, River Commissions, non-governmental organizations, as well as concerned industries and academia.

Infrastructure development and traffic safety

UNECE maintains and regularly updates the Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network (Blue Book), which also contains the list of bottlenecks and missing links and the list of E ports. The Blue Book database is available on the UNECE website at <https://unece.org/blue-book-database>.

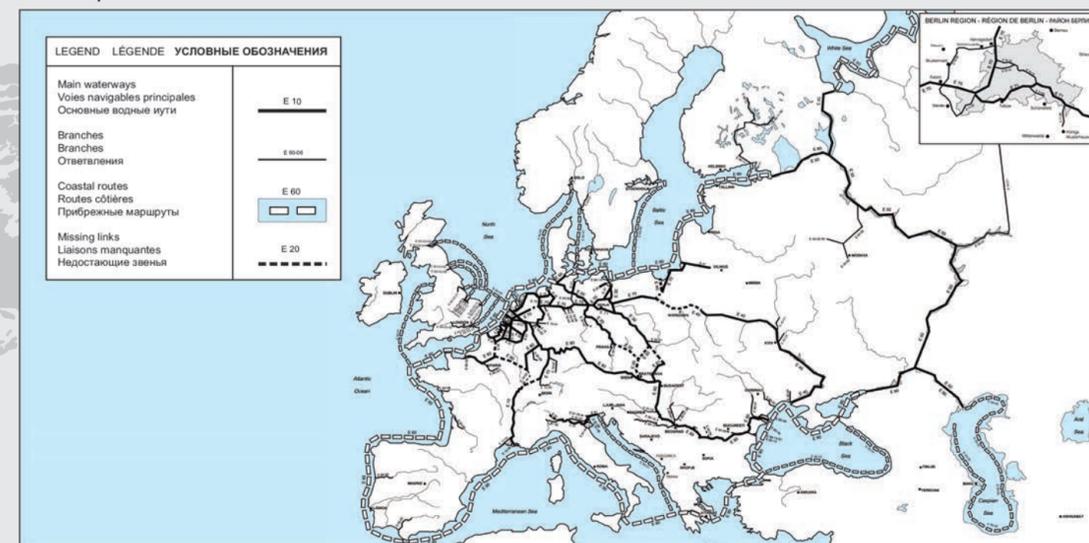
The European Code for Inland Waterways (CEVNI) is the core rules applicable to traffic on inland waterways in the UNECE region. These harmonized rules constitute the legal and technical basis for the navigation rules in UNECE member States. The sixth revised edition of CEVNI was adopted in 2021.

CEVNI is supported by the European Code for Signs and Signals on Inland Waterways (SIGNI), adopted in 2018.



Legal instruments

There are 12 international agreements and conventions in the field of inland water transport under the UNECE purview.



European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN) of 1996 establishes a coordinated plan for the development and construction of E waterway network and covers inland waterways, coastal routes and ports of international importance.

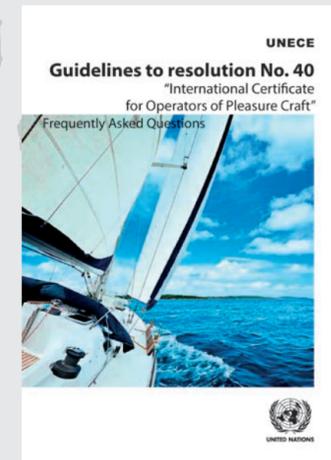
Other most relevant conventions are: Convention relating to the Unification of Certain Rules concerning Collisions in Inland Navigation of 1960, Convention on the Registration of Inland Navigation Vessels of 1965 and Convention on the Measurement of Inland Navigation Vessels of 1966.

Budapest Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterway (CMNI) has been jointly prepared by the Central Commission for the Navigation on the Rhine, the Danube Commission and UNECE.

Promotion of recreational navigation

The International Certificate for operators of pleasure craft (ICC) issued in accordance with UNECE resolution No. 40 provides its holder with evidence of competence in an internationally recognizable format which can be presented to officials in foreign countries if required.

ICC is recognized by more than 20 countries both within and outside the UNECE region. In many countries the administration and companies including chartering companies require ICC, and skippers being nationals or residents of countries that accepted resolution No. 40 use this advantage. The UNECE database of ICC models is available at <https://unece.org/icc-resolution-no-40>



Inland water transport policy

Since 1996, UNECE regularly issues policy papers on the current situation, trends and challenges in inland water transport in the UNECE region.

The White Paper on the progress, accomplishment and future of sustainable inland water transport endorsed by ITC in February 2020 describes the current status of the E Waterway Network, highlights the ongoing and planned major infrastructure projects, the evolution of the institutional and regulatory framework for inland navigation, developments and challenges in European inland water transport.

The White Paper provides an overview of UNECE activities aimed at the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on inland waterways, identifies eight priority areas to make inland water transport in the ECE region more sustainable and competitive, and comes up with policy recommendations for UNECE actions for each of them for the decade to come.

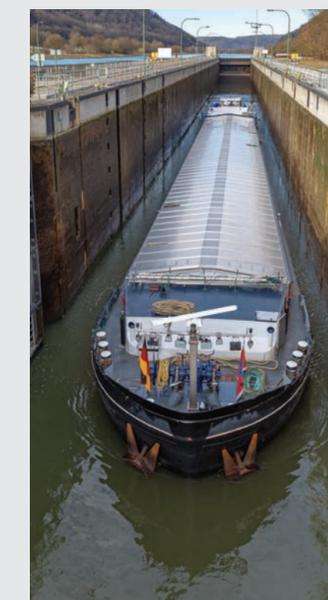


Unification of standards and norms, promoting River Information Services and automation in inland navigation

SC.3 works on the harmonization of technical prescriptions for inland navigation vessels by maintaining and regularly updating the Recommendations on Harmonized Europe-Wide Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels (resolution No. 61, revision 2), Ship-Borne Barges (resolution No. 15) and the Guidelines for Passenger Vessels also Suited for Carrying Persons with Reduced Mobility (resolution No. 69).

UNECE resolutions on RIS are: resolution No. 48, Recommendation on Inland ECDIS (resolution No. 48), Guidelines and Recommendations for River Information Services (resolution No. 57), Guidelines and Criteria for VTS on Inland Waterways (resolution No. 58), International VTT Standard (resolution No. 63), International Standard For Electronic Ship Reporting In Inland Navigation (resolution No. 79) and International Standard for Notices to Skippers (resolution No. 80).

Since 2018, SC.3 has been working on the promotion of automation in inland navigation in Europe. In 2019, SC.3 adopted resolution No. 95 "Enhancing international cooperation to support the development of automation in inland navigation" with the road map on forging international cooperation in this field.



Inland Water Transport

HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

Sessions of the UNECE Working Parties concerned with inland navigation (SC.3 and SC.3/WP.3) and its informal expert groups are open to all UNECE and other United Nations member States and competent inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations.

For more information on how to get involved, please contact the UNECE secretariat.

Further information on this and much more is available at:
<https://unece.org/transport/inland-water-transport>

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations
CH - 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Telephone: +41(0)22 917 12 34
E-mail: unece_info@un.org
Website: <http://www.unece.org>