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## The future of multimodal inland navigation

By Mike Reardon | Published February 13, 2018

Inland navigation could have a crucial role in the sustainable, multi-modal transport system in the Baltic Sea Region. Perspectives for inland navigation and river-sea-shipping markets are discussed at the Nordic Embassies in the heart of Berlin on Wednesday the 21st of February.

Increasing the modal share of inland navigation within the European transport system would help to handle the expected growth in transport volumes in a sustainable way. Using environmentally friendly inland shipping for freight transport is a means to save transport costs, reduce emissions and decongest roads. Even though the potential of inland waterway transport is high, it currently has only 8 % share of freight volume in the European Union.

International cooperation is necessary to improve inland waterways, since international and inter-modal transport chains have lots of potential for development. The Interreg Project EMMA has joined forces from Germany, Poland, Sweden, Lithuania and Finland to enhance inland navigation in the Baltic Sea region. EMMA is funded by the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020 and is a flagship project of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in the Policy Area Transport.

The Conference in Berlin is organized jointly by project EMMA and the Chamber Union Elbe/Oder, providing representatives of politics, industry and inland navigation a great possibility to exchange knowledge and experiences during the conference.

The keynote speeches focus on inland navigation and the importance for a sustainable transport system in the Baltic Sea Region and Europe. The event will be opened by Per Thöresson, Ambassador of the Swedish Embassy in Berlin. Among the keynote speakers is Kurt Bodewig, European Coordinator for Baltic-Adriatic Core Network Corridor TEN-T and Mandate Innovative Financing Instruments at DG MOVE. In moderated panel discussions, the status quo, challenges and opportunities of inland navigation and river-sea-shipping will be debated. The discussions will focus for instance on development of infrastructure and technical solutions to overcome challenges for inland shipping in the region, the modernisation of existing fleet, and the new propulsion system technology which can contribute to greening of the fleet. Furthermore, funding support instruments for inland navigation will also be touched upon.

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