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## **EUSBSR Flagship EMMA boosts inland navigation in the Baltic Sea Region**

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EMMA pilot cruise in river Vistula *Photo by Rafal Modrzewski*

**EMMA** is a Flagship of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region aiming to enhance freight mobility and logistics by strengthening inland waterway and river-sea transport and by promoting new international shipping services. The container barge pilots in Poland and Sweden are noticeable examples of its outcomes so far.

The Flagship status of EMMA under the [Policy Area Transport](#) reflects the importance of further development of inland waterways in the Baltic Sea Region. Freight transport is expected to grow significantly in the next decades, which means more burden for the already congested roads and railways in the region. At the same time, greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced according to the climate policy goals of the European Union.

Under these circumstances, the potential for raising the modal share of inland waterway transport (IWT) - a sustainable, safe, economical and energy-efficient mode of transport - is significant,

especially as it currently represents only about 6 % of the total transport volume in the EU. The Commission considers IWT to be a competitive alternative to road and rail transport - a message that should be more widely spread.

With 21 partner organizations in five countries (from Germany, Sweden, Poland, Finland and Lithuania) EMMA creates a strong and joint voice for inland navigation. The project aims to raise the awareness of the potential of IWT, improve the competitiveness and increase the modal share of inland navigation in the BSR as well as foster a better integration of IWT in the transport chains and the EU Strategy for the BSR - thus contributing to a more sustainable logistics system in the region.

Sweden and Poland are good examples of markets where inland shipping potential could be lifted. In both countries, EMMA has contributed to transport pilots, which have demonstrated the IWT potential in the area as well as gained media attention for inland shipping.



*EMMA pilot cruise in river Vistula. Photo by Rafal Modrzewski.*

In Poland, two project partners (Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship and City of Bydgoszcz) organized a promotional and research container barge cruise from Gdańsk to Warsaw along the Vistula, the biggest river in Poland. Almost 500 guests participated in the events that were held on board as well as in ports and marinas along the 440 kilometres-long-route. The pilot cruise raised awareness of the economic use of rivers and demonstrated the transport potential of inland waterways to transport cargo from the seaports in Gdańsk and Gdynia towards the hinterland.

In Sweden, EMMA project partner Avatar Logistics accomplished a container barge pilot from Gothenburg along the Göta River up to Lake Vänern. This pilot demonstrated the feasibility of a new logistics concept with barge, proving the industry its potential to complement road and rail transport in the area.

As a next step, EMMA will organize an [Annual Joint Conference](#) on 21 February with the Chamber Union Elbe/Oder at the Nordic Embassies in Berlin. The conference will focus on perspectives for inland navigation and river-sea shipping markets. We look forward to meeting you in Berlin!

Further information about the upcoming conference and project EMMA in our website [www.project-emma.eu](http://www.project-emma.eu).



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