

## Challenges for IWT Danube operators

IWT is a mode of transport fundamental for the economy and society. It is clear that IWT plays a very important role where high quality ports and waterway connections are available in combination with high transport demand and industrial activities.

The key problems and challenges for IWT with regard to the performance of this mode of transport is that the modal share is decreasing as opportunities are not exploited in the new markets and the integration of this mode of transport in logistics chain.

One of the main non-market factors determining the quality level of IWT operations is the waterway infrastructure quality. The specific situation for Danube Transport operators is that both cost and quality factors are strongly determined by the state of the infrastructure and fairway conditions. Fairway conditions directly determine cost levels per unit (vessel utilization, load factors) as well as level of service (transport speed, on-time reliability). Maintenance such as dredging is very important because the availability depth determine the possible load rate as well as the reliability of transport and stability of freight prices.

In terms of multimodal supply chains the Danube transport still has a limited role in multimodal supply chain for consumer goods because of a lot of barriers such as:

- the transport operators are mainly active in traditional bulk sectors;
- the quality of the existing waterways and inland ports is limited;
- poor fairway conditions;
- missing links in European waterway networks;
- lack of support for development and implementation transport logistics information services;
- lack of knowledge level and awareness on opportunities of IWT of potential customers;
- lack of support cooperation between IWT operators and with operators from the other modes of transport etc.;
- lack of qualified human resources in IWT knowledge in transport logistics education;
- lack of logistics education in IWT education and training courses
- lack of door-to-door thinking and awareness among IWT operators
- lack of skilled human resources to provide IWT logistics solutions.

For improving market conditions for operators and users of IWT along the Danube corridor it is needed to implement measures with direct impact on the modal share, such as:

- improve general knowledge and information on IWT on the Danube and support solutions for lack of qualified staff by improving and implementing education and training programmes related to safety and logistics, development of Inland ports infrastructure and waterway management;

In this directions the first steps are done through the European project implementation with direct contribution on this measure, namely:

- **NELI and HINT** financed by SEE Programme, implemented by CERONAV as lead partners together with partners from Danube riparian countries with direct contribution to information sharing about IWT on the Danube River, development of education and training courses focused on logistics knowledge and skills and also by **Danube SKILLS** project which will

contribute on the implementation of new EU Directive on the recognition of qualification in inland navigation into education and training system from the Danube riparian countries

- **Strategic Development Plan of Galati Port** financed by POS-T and implemented by APDM Galati with direct contribution to establish the strategic management of port future development in order to be integrated in multimodal logistics chain and for planning of investments in port infrastructure
- **Development of multimodal platform in Galati Port** financed by CEF and POIM programmes and implemented by APDM, METALTRADE and Port of Duisburg with direct contribution to infrastructure port development in order to remove major bottlenecks and making connections to multimodal transport corridors.
- **Fairway Danube** financed by CEF programme and implemented by AFDJ Galati together with partners from AT, HU and SK focused on the implementation of the "Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan of the Danube and its navigable tributaries". The aim of the Master Plan is to reach and ensure good navigation conditions throughout the year by providing a minimum level of service.
- **Improving navigation conditions on the Danube between Calarasi and Braila, km 375-km 175**, financed by CEF and implemented by AFDJ Galati focused on the improvement of fairway navigation conditions through modification of debit distribution during the period small and medium waters level.
- **FAST DANUBE** financed by CEF and implemented by River Administrations from Romania and Bulgaria, focused on identification the technical solutions to be implemented , in order to ensure navigation conditions on the Romanian- Bulgarian common sector of the Danube and safely conducting the transport activities on Danube throughout the entire year, in accordance with the recommendations of the Danube Commission