

Inland Waterways Seminar
16-17 October 2017
Dubrovnik, Croatia

Summary and conclusions of the meeting

A total of **24 participants from 7 countries** took part in the 2017 ETF Inland Waterways Seminar and discussed the topic of **Apprentices in the Inland Navigation Sector**. Branko Berlan (ITF), Rob Van Reem from EDINNA and Jörg Rusche from CESNI participated as speakers to the Seminar.

The following topics were identified and discussed:

- **Employers should not consider apprentices as cheap extra crewmembers:** how to control this and avoid abuses;
- Role & responsibility of **Trainer/tutor** on board and training programme;
- Attractiveness of the sector for apprentices: what matters to get young people wishing to work in the sector ;
- **Funding** of apprenticeships and financial compensations for apprentices: national practices and solutions;
- Challenge of **increasing automation** in the sector: its impact on the qualifications and attractiveness for apprentices;
- Similarities and differences with maritime sector;

Participants worked in 3 Working Groups, which discussed the following topics:

1. Why does the Inland Waterways sector need apprentices?
2. Where do apprentices fit in? Are they part of the regular crew?
3. What conditions do we need to provide to attract apprentices to the sector?

Important side discussions were touched during the Seminar:

- Automation: its implementation and consequences in inland navigation.
- CESNI: its role and its future as a permanent neutral European body for inland navigation.

The **conclusions** of the Seminar were:

1. The ETF believes that strengthening the presence of apprentices in the IWT sector is essential. This should be done:
 - With a **clear distinction** between the role of apprentices and the one of the rest of the crew;
 - Not to the detriment of crewmembers and their working conditions;
 - With clear **job perspectives** for the apprentices;
 - According to clear rules on **funding** of apprenticeships and with a **financial compensation** for the apprentice not left to the good will of the employer.
2. A possible topic for next years' seminar could be **automation and digitalisation in IWT**, due to interest showed by the participants. The Russian delegation invited the ETF to hold its 2018 Seminar in Russia.
3. A **questionnaire** on the national situation of apprenticeships in IWT will be circulated after the Seminar to collect better and more detailed information on possible problems in the respective countries.