



Press Release

European Social Partners welcome the Inland Waterway Transport Council Directive on working time

11 December 2014

The European Barge Union (EBU), the European Skippers Organisation (ESO) and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) express their satisfaction on the adoption of the Commission's proposal for a Council Directive implementing the European Social Partners' Agreement (SPA). That agreement has been concluded on 15 February 2012 and arranges certain aspects of the organisation of working time in Inland Waterway Transport (IWT).

Today, the Employment and Social Affairs Council adopted the Commission's proposal, thereby taking a significant step towards realising harmonised working and living conditions in this international transport sector.

Nick Bramley, ETF President of the IWT Section, comments: *"This is a tailor-made SPA answering to the needs of all sides of the industry. Freight, tourism, annual and seasonal work. It is the result of intense negotiations and demonstrates the importance of European Social Dialogue in providing the necessary social conditions for a sector working in a complex reality, such as: a vessel owned by a German company, registered in Malta, crewed with contracts from a Swiss company under the laws of Cyprus, sailing in Belgium and the Netherlands."*

"The adoption of the SPA brings legal certainty and introduces a specifically adjusted framework to meet the needs of the sector. It will contribute significantly to the attractiveness of the work on more than 14,000 vessels in European IWT." states **Theresia Hacksteiner, Secretary General EBU**.

"Fair play and a level playing field are the core demands of the sector, and these can only be achieved through European legislation," says **Christiaan Van Lancker, President ESO**.

The IWT Social Partners want to express their thanks to all who contributed to this success, especially to the European Parliament which expressed its unanimous opinion in favour of transposing the agreement into a Council Directive on 23 October 2014.

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