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# PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

FEDERATION EUROPEENNE DES TRAVAILLEURS DES TRANSPORTS

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## COMMISSION PURSUES PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS IN INLAND NAVIGATION

The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) welcomes the European Commission's adoption of a proposal for a Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications in inland navigation on Thursday, 18 February 2016. It aims to facilitate labour mobility in the sector, to enhance its attractiveness and to put an end to illegal practices that threaten the level playing field.

For many years the sector has been facing persistent labour shortages and the demographic forecast provides a worsening situation in this area. The sector no longer attracts new and young workers. This has been one of the major obstacles for making full use of the sector's potential and its strategic and sustainable importance to the EU's social and economic development. European social partners addressed the harmonisation of professional qualifications and competencies within the first Platina project that afterwards was picked up by the European Commission in order to modernise inland navigation professions.

**Nick Bramley, ETF President of the Inland Waterways Section** comments: *"This is another important building block on the way to a modern and standardised sector offering quality training and employment."*

Once adopted by the European Parliament and Council expected by the end of this year, the Directive will replace Directives 91/672/EEC and 96/50/EC that deal with the recognition and harmonisation of national boat masters' certificates for the carriage of goods and passengers by inland waterway. The European social partners always considered the existing arrangement as a patchwork that hampers the attractiveness of the profession hindering the development of the sector.

*"The ETF will now closely monitor the further legislative process to avoid the proposal gets watered down and to ensure a Directive will be put in place that makes skilled and trained workforce available and allows the sector to take up its role as a sustainable and safe transport mode,"* **Nick Bramley** concludes.

For more information, please contact Myriam Chaffart, ETF Political Secretary for Inland Waterways, E-Mail: [m.chaffart@etf-europe.org](mailto:m.chaffart@etf-europe.org), Mobile: +32 475 34 36 51

The ETF represents more than 3.5 million transport workers from more than 230 transport unions and 41 European countries, in the following sectors: railways, road transport and logistics, maritime transport, inland waterways, civil aviation, ports & docks, tourism and fisheries.