



PRESS RELEASE
EUROPEAN PORT POLICY/FREIGHT LOGISTICS/MOTORWAYS OF THE
SEA/EUROPEAN MARITIME SPACE WITHOUT BARRIERS
18 October Communications – Comments from ECSA

COMMISSION COMMUNICATION ON A EUROPEAN PORTS POLICY

The Commission issued on 18 October a Communication on a European Port Policy. The Communication follows the consultation process with 6 Workshops to which ECSA actively contributed. It is useful that the main views expressed by stakeholders during the consultation process are attached to the Communication.

It is evident that the Commission Communication needs further study and analysis. ECSA has noted that the necessity of extension and investments in ports and hinterland connections, as brought forward by all stakeholders as a priority, has been taken on board. It now remains to be seen how present procedures can be improved.

ECSA notes that, as already suggested in the Blue paper on Maritime Policy of 10 October, Guidelines concerning funding of ports will be issued in 2008 and that the Transparency Directive will be applied.

A soft law approach as suggested by the vast majority of stakeholders has been followed. It must however be clear that further improvement in efficiency, modernisation of services and ensuring the relevance of services remains a necessity for all services including technical-nautical services. In this respect existing legislation particularly the four freedoms of the Treaty and the Competition Rules should be properly applied. This is confirmed in the Communication. The reference to Pilot Exemption Certificates and an enhanced use of technological innovation is appreciated.

ECSA will after detailed study give the appropriate follow up to the Commission Communication. It speaks for itself that ECSA wants to be directly involved in all future discussions with stakeholders and the EU Institutions on the application of the European Port Policy.

COMMISSION COMMUNICATION OF THE EU's FREIGHT TRANSPORT AGENDA

Also on 18 October a Commission Communication on "Freight Transport" was issued including two Commission staff working documents respectively on a European Maritime Space without Barriers and a report on Motorways of the Sea.

The report on Motorways of the Sea (MOS) is helpful. Having played an active role in the promotion of short sea services ECSA has noted the new initiatives to broaden the concept of the MOS and will actively contribute to the consultation process.

European Community Shipowners' Associations

The initiative on a maritime space without barriers should be used to do away with all superfluous and cumbersome administrative procedures. High political support should force a breakthrough towards a full simplification of procedures for intra EU cargoes transported by sea. ECSA will continue to contribute to this exercise.

As a follow up to its contribution to the bottleneck exercise on logistics ECSA will give further input to the Commissions Freight Logistics action plan

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If you would have any questions regarding this press release, please contact Alfons Guinier on the following number: +32 475 28 40 89 or per e-mail: Guinier@ecsa.eu