

# **Terms of Reference of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport**

**Approved by the Working Party on Inland Water Transport on 5 November 2021 (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/215, paragraph 97)  
Adopted by the Inland Transport Committee on 25 February 2022 (ECE/TRANS/316, paragraph 27)**

1. The Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) and its subsidiary body, i. e. the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3), act within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and the Economic Commission for Europe (hereafter ECE), under the general supervision of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and in conformity with the Terms of Reference (ToR) of ECE (E/ECE/778/Rev.5).

2. SC.3 will operate in accordance with the UNECE Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of Working Parties within UNECE as approved by the ECE Executive Committee at its fourth meeting on 14 July 2006 (ECE/EX/1). These guidelines refer to its status and characteristics, including the review of its mandate and extension every five years, its membership and officers, its methods of work and its secretariat provided by the ECE Sustainable Transport Division.

3. In support of the objective of the ECE transport subprogramme to facilitate the international movement of persons and goods by inland transport modes and improve safety, environmental protection, energy efficiency and security in the transport sector to levels that contribute effectively to sustainable transport. SC.3, assisted where appropriate by SC.3/WP.3, will carry out activities aimed at making inland water transport more sustainable, green and resilient to climate change. These activities also aim to support the implementation of the ITC Strategy until 2030, in particular, related to tasks such as (a) servicing and administering legal instruments related to inland water transport, (b) fostering and supporting the introduction of new technologies and innovations in inland water transport, (c) promoting sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity and mobility and (d) supporting capacity building activities on legal instruments under the ITC purview and resolutions relevant to Inland Water Transport (IWT).

4. Given this general context, more specifically SC.3 will carry out the following activities:

## **1. Organize a pan-European policy dialogue on the inland water transport issues**

(a) Provide an inclusive and representative forum for exchange of experiences and best practices and providing guidance on how to address challenges in inland water transport (IWT) development;

(b) Prepare studies on the situation and trends in inland navigation in order to provide Governments with up-to-date basic information and data concerning the inland water transport mode;

(c) Regularly publish updates of its strategy and policy papers (white papers, inventories of obstacles, etc.) on IWT to ensure sustainability of IWT and its coordinated development, enhance the visibility and availability of ECE documents relevant to IWT.

## **2. Promote a coordinated development of modern, sustainable and resilient E waterway network**

(a) Monitor, review and update the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN), adopt amendments to the lists of

inland waterways and ports, as contained in the annexes to AGN, and facilitate accession to the agreement;

(b) Further strengthen the monitoring mechanism to review and update the development of the E waterway network, in particular, by maintaining and updating the Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network (“the Blue Book”), the GIS database of the E Waterway Network (the Blue Book database), classification of waterways (resolution No. 30) and other relevant SC.3 resolutions, maps and databases which provides regularly updated information on standards and parameters of E waterways and ports, based upon the relevant existing work;

(c) Maintain the inventory of most important bottlenecks and missing links on particular E waterways crossing the territory of more than one State Contracting Party to AGN, based upon the relevant existing work;

(d) Monitor and support the ongoing infrastructure projects on European waterways of international importance and provide a forum for ad hoc committees and expert groups to further coordinate and monitor the development of the E waterway network.

### **3. Address safety and operational requirements in inland navigation and encourage modernization and greening of fleet and infrastructure**

(a) Organize exchanges of views on selected aspects of new and improved techniques in IWT with a view to their harmonization with the aim of facilitating and promoting international water transport in Europe;

(b) Harmonize and maintain the rules for inland navigation in Europe with a view to ensuring homogeneous and internationally acceptable standards of navigation safety throughout the European network of inland waterways taking into account standards of other international organizations;

(c) Harmonize technical requirements for inland navigation vessels and river-sea vessels with a view to ensuring the high-level of navigation safety and bring the added value throughout the European network of inland waterways;

(d) Coordinate and support measures aimed at modernization and greening of the inland water fleet at the pan-European level;

(e) Keep member States informed about developments in mutual recognition of boatmasters’ certificates and other issues related to the professional qualifications in the area of inland navigation;

(f) Promote the use of intelligent communication and transport systems in inland navigation including River Information Services (RIS) and provide a forum for information exchange on developments and best practice, facilitate and promote harmonization and cooperation in this area at a pan-European level;

(g) Promote the development and safety of recreational navigation, water tourism and related issues, maintain the database of models of the International Certificate for Operator of Pleasure Craft.

### **4. Promote integration of IWT in multimodal transport chains, automation, digitalization and other innovations**

(a) Support activities on the development of river-sea routes in the context of AGN;

(b) Continue work on aligning annexes to the Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations with annexes to AGN and contribute to the development of Euro-Asian transport links;

- (c) Provide a representative forum for exchanges of experience and best practices on how to promote integration of IWT in multimodal transport chains;
- (d) Forge international cooperation towards an international legislative basis for automation in inland navigation;
- (e) Provide a representative forum for exchanging best practices on recent developments in automation, digitalization and other innovations in IWT.

**5. Contribute to the prevention of pollution from vessels and resilience of the sector to climate changes**

- (a) Promote the development of a harmonized pan-European legal framework for the management of waste generated as a result of operation of vessels, maintain technical rules on the prevention of pollution by inland vessels taking into account the standards of other international organizations and the list of reception facilities for transfer of waste from vessels available on the E waterway network;
- (b) Exchange best practices and support programmes, pilot projects and measures aimed at modernization and greening of the fleet, new and enhanced vessel types, low and zero emission propulsion systems and monitor their implementation;
- (c) Provide a representative forum for exchange of information and best practices on the implication of climate changes on IWT, and assist member States in their activities aimed at enhancing the resilience of IWT to climate changes;
- (d) Promote introducing the circular economy principles on inland waterways and provide a representative forum for exchange of experience and best practices in this field.

**6. Contribute to the harmonization of the international legal framework for IWT**

- (a) Promote the existing United Nations conventions pertaining to inland navigation, monitor their implementation and discuss measures on how to make them more efficient and attractive to other ECE member States as well as United Nations Member States;
- (b) Undertake other activities aimed at further harmonizing and simplifying the international legal framework for IWT operations.

**7. Undertake other activities related to regional and international cooperation or requested by the ECE Inland Transport Committee**

- (a) Cooperate with regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other United Nations regional commissions and invite their representatives to participate in its meetings in consultative capacity in consideration of any matter of particular concern to them;
- (b) Carry out other actions aimed at facilitating the use of IWT, as recommended by the ECE White Paper on the Progress, Accomplishments and Future of Sustainable Inland Water Transport (ECE/TRANS/279);
- (c) Develop working contacts with River Commissions and basin administrations and, upon their request, facilitate the understanding of international conventions and agreements under the ITC purview which are relevant to IWT;
- (d) Take measures to ensure that the necessary liaison is maintained with other bodies of the United Nations, in particular sister Regional Commissions, and the specialized agencies;
- (e) Collaborate closely with other subsidiary bodies of ITC and other ECE bodies on matters of common interest;
- (f) Organize workshops, roundtables and other capacity building events in the area of its expertise and in support of its specific activities;

(g) Support ITC in addressing cross-sectorial issues, such as inland transport and security, and environment, automation and digitalization etc.

---