

Meeting Report: 14th Technical Committee Meeting

Date: 15 May 2025

Location: Kotor+

Attendees: Representatives from TCT, DG MOVE, EMSA, Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Port of Durres, Port of Vlora, Port of Bar, Ploput, and other relevant stakeholders.

Summary of Discussions and Key Developments

1. The agenda of the meeting was adopted.
2. Transport Community Permanent Secretariat's Mr Elson Thana, Desk Officer for Waterborne Transport, welcomed all the participants in the TC meeting and highlighted the progress made in implementation of the Action plan for Waterborne Transport and Multimodality.
3. Mr Kristijan Lezaic, Unit D3, European Commission, DG MOVE welcomed participants and presented latest developments from the European Commission. Regarding **inland waterways active files**, trilogues on the **revised River Information Services (RIS) Directive** are ongoing. While unlikely to conclude under the Polish Presidency, we hope for adoption under the Danish Presidency. Once adopted and published in the Official Journal, it will subsequently become part of the acquis (Annex I.5), requiring transposition by candidate countries. This reflects the ongoing alignment of regional partners with the EU waterborne acquis. The **crewing and e-tools initiative** has been delayed. High-level discussions are ongoing, with a focus on simplification. A new legal act is not ruled out, but alternative approaches are being considered. The second phase of **NAIADES III**, with several actions is underway. Work on **greening** continues, though no new legislation is expected soon.

Progress is being made on **mutual recognition of certificates**, important for **Serbia and Ukraine**. Serbia has shown strong commitment; a visit to Ukraine is planned. We're working through platforms like the **Danube Commission** to address urgent issues, such as expiring crew certificates, to ensure continued navigation.

The Commission remains engaged with the **Transport Community**, including upcoming screening meetings. While the acquis is broad, prioritisation is key. The goal remains full transposition and implementation by all partners.

Finally, he encouraged all partners to focus on concrete progress since the last meeting. And introduced Mr **Mutien Marchandise**, who will be closely involved in future work.
4. Mr. Marchandise expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to join the meeting, albeit remotely. He regretted not being able to attend in person, especially given the appealing venue. He introduced himself as working in the European Commission's DG MOVE, Unit D3, responsible for the EU enlargement process and coordination in the field of inland waterways. He underlined the importance of the Technical Committee's work in the context of EU enlargement and alignment with the waterborne acquis.

Mr. Marchandise concluded by expressing his eagerness to engage with all regional partners and to collaborate closely in the near future.
5. Ms Manuela Tomassini, Head of Department on Sustainability & TA, EMSA thanked the TCT for organising this Technical Committee and extended greetings to all participants. She emphasised EMSA's ongoing support and technical assistance, particularly in the maritime and shipping domains. The current context of geopolitical challenges and the EU enlargement process places additional pressure on the competent authorities in the region, many of whom are working with limited resources. Daily responsibilities as flag, port, and coastal states, along with transposing and

implementing the EU acquis, add complexity to national processes that involve multiple institutions and lengthy procedures. Despite these challenges, Ms Tomoassini reassured participants that they are not alone. EMSA, the Transport Community, and various EU financial instruments are in place to support this transition. However, success depends on the proactive engagement of national authorities—who must drive implementation at the country level. She also encouraged leveraging synergies among regional actors, each contributing according to their strengths. Highlighting the importance of capacity building and urged partners to move beyond learning services and actively upgrade their national competencies EMSA remains available to provide targeted technical support, including on decarbonisation initiatives.

6. Ms Marijana Perić, General Director, Ministry of Maritime Affairs during here welcoming note on behalf of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs of Montenegro welcomed participants to the Technical Committee held during Waterborne Week 2025 in Kotor. The meeting was highlighted as a symbol of regional commitment to waterborne transport as a key driver of connectivity, sustainability, and integration. Key achievements under the previous action plan were noted are Completion of the STCW Regulation I/2.8 evaluation, Finalisation of the Maritime National Single Window and Phase II of VTMS, Transposition of the EU Directive on Vessel Traffic Monitoring.
Montenegro is progressing with three major legal reforms to align with the EU acquis: the Law on Protection of the Sea from Pollution, the Law on Safety of Navigation, and the Law on Ports. Appreciation was expressed for the support of the Transport Community and regional partners. The Ministry encouraged active engagement to advance a modern, sustainable, and EU-aligned waterborne transport system.
7. Ms Zorica Durovic the Vice Dean of the faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Montenegro. The Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Montenegro, extended a warm welcome to participants on behalf of Prof. Tatjana Dlabac, who was unable to attend the opening but would join later sessions. As one of the founding faculties of the only public university in Montenegro, the Faculty emphasized its longstanding role in maritime education. Participants were invited to attend the final day of Waterborne Week 2025, featuring a conference in Tivat focused on "Boka Bay as a Sustainable Nautical Destination," with a special session on the impact of cruise ships. The event will also include a presentation on Ocean Race Europe, which concludes in Boka Bay this September. The faculty wished all attendees a productive meeting and an enjoyable stay in Kotor.
8. Mr. Dimo Dimov, PIU Waterborne and Green Mobility Desk Officer provided an update on the implementation of the EU grant contract supporting observer participants (Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova), which includes technical assistance and capacity building to support regulatory alignment, institutional reform, and integration into the Transport Community and the EU.
Georgia has made significant progress under Annex I.4 (maritime transport), with over 50% of the listed legislation transposed and implemented. Although no progress has yet been made on Annex I.5 (inland waterways), dedicated unit was established within the Maritime Transport Agency, which will ensure to initiate alignment efforts. **Republic of Moldova** has transposed over 17% of the legislation under Annex I.4 but has limited progress under Annex I.5. The country is committed to advancing in both areas over the next two years, as outlined in the Action Plan for Waterborne Transport and Multimodality. Cooperation with the Naval Agency and the Ministry of Regional Development remains strong. **Ukraine** faced challenges in communication due to the ongoing Russian aggression. However, technical cooperation resumed last month, with several online meetings being held to assess technical needs and capacity building requirements. The PIU has also supported both Moldova and Ukraine in their mock screening sessions to prepare for bilateral screening with the European Commission in the areas of maritime and inland waterways.

Session 2 - Presentations from Institutions in Support to the implementation of the Next Generation Action Plan for Waterborne Transport and Multimodality

Mr Giuseppe Russo, representing the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), provided an overview of EMSA's ongoing and planned support initiatives targeting both Balkan countries and observer states (Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) under the Black Sea II Project.

Scope of Projects: Western Balkan partners are supported under an EMSA project funded through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine are covered under the Black Sea II Project, focusing on countries bordering the Black Sea.

Key Areas of Support: Legal and Regulatory Alignment: EMSA assists maritime administrations in establishing a legal basis for implementing international maritime conventions and relevant EU legislation. This includes drafting and transposing both international and European legal instruments into national law.

Institutional and Organisational Strengthening: Support for shaping national maritime organizations. Assistance in developing implementing procedures, contingency plans, and related administrative tools.

Capacity Building and Professional Development: EMSA has evolved from simply providing training to implementing structured professional development schemes aligned with international requirements. Training is now function-oriented, focusing on essential roles within maritime administrations.

Technical Tools and Services: Provision and continuous improvement of digital tools and services that help countries meet their obligations under maritime conventions. Emphasis on maximizing efficiency and usability of these systems.

Progress in Transposition and Implementation: EMSA has supported parties like Serbia, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in translating and transposing EU legislation. Notably, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been assisted in drafting national legislation aligned with the Search and Rescue Convention.

Mr Russo continued his presentation by outlining the technical actions and training sessions provided by EMSA under the Black Sea II Project, as well as the broader support extended to the beneficiary countries.

Key Technical Support and Training Initiatives:

1. Training and Capacity Building:

- EMSA has organised several training sessions aimed at strengthening the maritime capabilities of the beneficiary countries.
- Structured training programs are designed to support the implementation of professional development schemes, focusing on developing key competencies within maritime administrations.
- Parties such as Albania, Turkey, Montenegro, and Serbia have benefitted from these tailored training sessions, covering areas such as maritime safety and search and rescue planning.

2. Technical Actions and Evaluations:

- **Assessment of STCW systems:** EMSA conducted an independent evaluation of Albania's STCW system (International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers).
- **Search and Rescue Plans:** EMSA supported Montenegro in updating its national search and rescue plan to meet international standards.

3. Tools and Services for Beneficiary Countries:

- EMSA's tools and services are available without limitations on user creation. The more authorities that can access and benefit from these tools, the better.
- There has been an ongoing effort to raise awareness within maritime authorities about the tools and services available to them. Many authorities are unaware of the full scope of services EMSA

offers, and Russo encouraged the sharing of these opportunities as widely as possible within countries.

- The EMSAS tools support countries in complying with international maritime conventions and provide additional resources for improving safety, compliance, and capacity.

4. Black Sea II Project - Focused Support:

- The Black Sea II Project mirrored similar activities, providing support to Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.
- Support to Moldova: EMSA particularly supported Moldova with the transposition of SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) and MARPOL (International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships) regulations, covering 14 pieces of EU legislation.
- Moldova's efforts were particularly highlighted, where progress in transposing EU legislation has been supported.

5. Coordination and Avoiding Duplication:

- EMSA and the Transport Community have worked to coordinate efforts and avoid duplication of work. While Moldova directly benefited from EMSA's support in transposition, Ukraine has received similar assistance from other sources.
- This division of labour between different stakeholders ensures efficient resource use and maximizes the impact of the support offered to each country.

Mr Russo emphasised that EMSA's support is available to all beneficiary partners and that parties should take full advantage of the technical assistance provided. Countries are encouraged to reach out to EMSA for additional support in maritime safety, legislation transposition, and professional development.

Mr Russo emphasises that IMO Member States have an obligation to carry out certain maritime activities, including audits and assessments related to environmental protection (e.g., oil pollution response). However, many parties lack the knowledge and skills required to effectively conduct these operations, which is where EMSA's support becomes crucial. EMSA offers its expertise in capacity building by training maritime administrations in the implementation of international maritime conventions and codes and provides tools to increase their technical proficiency.

EMSA has provided oil pollution response equipment to Ukraine, which is an example of special assistance granted under extraordinary circumstances. Russo pointed out that such donations are not routine but can be made available if there is a clear need and if contracting authorities approve. This assistance underlines EMSA's flexible approach to supporting countries with essential equipment in times of crisis. One of the main challenges identified is the lack of awareness among some authorities about the tools and services provided by EMSA, such as maritime traffic information. He highlighted an incident where an authority responsible for search and rescue operations was unaware that it already had access to critical maritime traffic information through EMSA's services. He encouraged the spread of this knowledge within countries, stressing that EMSA is ready to create as many user accounts as necessary for relevant personnel in maritime administrations. EMSA has laid out plans to continue its support to Balkans and Black Sea countries in the coming years, extending until 2027 for the Balkans project and 2026 for the Black Sea project. Key activities include:

- Additional transposition of international maritime conventions and codes for countries like Albania and Moldova.
- Fellowships for Ukraine and Turkmenistan, focusing on providing specialised training for maritime professionals.
- An oil pollution response exercise planned for Turkey in September 2025, with a potential follow-up in Montenegro in 2026. These exercises will allow national and international entities to work together to address maritime pollution and improve their response capabilities.

Russo drew attention to previous successful exercises (e.g., one in Morocco) and expressed hope that the Turkey exercise would serve as another valuable experience for sharing expertise and improving

cooperation between national maritime administrations and EMSA. This approach ensures that beneficiary countries can meet their IMO obligations while improving maritime safety and environmental protection across the region.

He also discussed EMSA's ongoing and future initiatives aimed at strengthening the maritime administrations of countries in the Black Sea and Balkans regions.

1. Support for Ukraine's Observer Status in Paris MoU (Memorandum of Understanding):

EMSA plans to assist Ukraine in achieving observer status within the Paris MoU, an important international agreement on port state control. This is crucial for Ukraine to align with European port control directives and to enhance their maritime governance. The project also involves the implementation of corrective action plans to ensure that Ukraine's maritime administration is fully compliant with international standards. EMSA will be providing long-term support to Ukraine throughout this process.

2. Development of the "Donor" Tool for Non-EU Countries:

EMSA is developing a new tool called Donor, which is like tools already available to EU Member States. The Donor tool will help non-EU countries like Ukraine, Moldova, and others supported by EMSA to share information related to their maritime responsibilities and performance. The tool will be launched after the summer break, and it will be available in two phases:

- Phase 1: Sharing of Responsibility Information

This phase will allow countries to share information about responsible authorities for various maritime topics, including international and European maritime regulations. The information will be made public, so anyone can access it and see which authorities are responsible for specific maritime topics in a given country.

- Phase 2: Sharing of Statistical Information

This phase will focus on sharing more detailed statistical data, such as fleet size, performance of maritime organizations, export control, and more. Unlike Phase 1, this phase will be restricted to each country's maritime administration, meaning only countries will have access to their own performance data. For example, only Albania will be able to access its own statistics, and the same applies to other countries.

3. Future Plans for the Donor Tool:

Phase 2 of the Donor tool will be developed further in upcoming projects, aiming to enhance the tool's capabilities over time. This tool is intended to increase transparency and facilitate the evaluation and review of each country's maritime performance. The data-sharing platform will also help countries meet international obligations, particularly those related to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and EU maritime legislation.

Mr Russo continued to provide insight into EMSA's efforts to support maritime countries, especially those in the Black Sea and Balkans regions, emphasizing oil pollution response exercises and addressing challenges faced by the beneficiaries.

Oil Pollution Response Exercises and Donor Tool:

- EMSA plans to continue organising oil pollution response exercises with different countries in the region. These exercises allow countries to practice and test their response capabilities based on realistic scenarios, helping to improve cooperation and coordination in case of actual oil pollution incidents.
- The Donor tool will play a crucial role in enabling countries to report mandatory information related to oil pollution response to the IMO. This system will automatically transfer the required data to the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

- The tool aims to address gaps in the reporting process, but implementing this system is complex and requires cooperation with the IMO and alignment with international standards.

Future of EMSA Projects:

Although the current projects are scheduled to end by 2026 or 2027, informal discussions with the European Commission suggest that the project may continue beyond this date. EMSA is hopeful that future funding will be available, allowing continued technical assistance to countries involved in the Black Sea and Balkans maritime initiatives. The availability of EMSA's support for beneficiaries could extend for several more years, providing continued assistance in meeting international maritime standards.

Challenges and Obstacles Faced by Beneficiary Countries:

- **Institutional Capacity:** Many of the beneficiary countries face a lack of resources—both in terms of quantity and quality of maritime expertise and staffing.
 - Example: Ukraine, with its limited resources, is struggling to implement the UA Key and follow up on training.
- **Cooperation Issues:** When EMSA contractors help countries develop national legislation to transpose conventions, the countries' cooperation is crucial. Countries often face challenges due to political choices, sanctions, and the legal systems within the country that can complicate this process.
 - Ukraine, despite its efforts, finds it difficult to cooperate due to these resource limitations.
- **Coordination Between Authorities:** There is often a lack of coordination between the various national authorities. For example, while EMSA tools are available to the countries, the relevant authorities sometimes don't know about them or are not using them effectively.
 - Better coordination is needed not only within countries but also among international and regional actors to optimize resources and avoid duplication of efforts.
- **Resistance to Change:** Some countries, especially those considering EU membership, face resistance to change. This resistance is evident when trying to implement structural changes that come with EU maritime regulations.
 - A notable example is the classification societies in some countries, which are often state-owned and seen as part of the administration rather than independent bodies. Changing this mindset is a significant challenge.

EMSA remains flexible and is willing to adapt its action plan to best meet the needs of the beneficiary countries. The agency is always ready to take on new tasks and is open to feedback to ensure that its support is aligned with the evolving needs of the countries it serves.

After the question that was risen from the TCT about Technical Assistance to be given to the Republic of North Macedonia Mr Russo replied that the Republic of North Macedonia initially expressed no interest in maritime transport, which led to their exclusion from the project that involved multiple beneficiaries. However, the possibility of future support remains open. While the rules currently prevent direct assistance, they can still send requests to the EMSA, which will be reviewed in collaboration with the European Commission. If the Commission agrees, there may be a possibility to amend the current project and provide support to North Macedonia, including their alignment with new maritime regulations. EMSA is committed to exploring options to assist the country as soon as feasible.

Mr Lezaic expressed support for Mr Russo's answer and highlighted the importance of addressing a crucial issue regarding the transposition of legislation, particularly for countries like North Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro in the context of inland waterways. He emphasised that some legislation is not clear-cut, with certain parts being applicable while others may not be. This issue needs to be handled carefully, and he mentioned the importance of clarity from the European Commission before

proceeding with any decisions. The goal is to optimise resources and ensure that countries focus on the most relevant regulations, whether maritime or inland waterways.

He acknowledged that this is a complex issue and insisted that it must be analyzed thoroughly to determine the best way forward. There is a need for collaboration with partners bilaterally and he mentioned the detailed process of accession negotiations, which will help guide the decision-making process. He expressed hope that, with time, clarity will be achieved and that the topic will be further discussed in future meetings of the Transport Community. EMSA, being an agency of the European Commission, will be in contact with those responsible for maritime safety. However, the issue at hand involves more than just maritime safety regulations—it touches on the broader scope of maritime law. He supported the constructive approach mentioned earlier by Giuseppe and agreed that the matter should be addressed thoughtfully.

He intends to raise awareness internally about the growing issue of the applicability of maritime regulations, particularly for countries like North Macedonia. He suggested starting with the letter to EMSA as a first step but clarify that putting significant resources into transposing maritime safety regulations in North Macedonia should not be a priority at this moment. He stressed that the broader question of how the maritime regulations apply across different countries needs to be resolved first, as this is a more complex issue than just focusing on North Macedonia's maritime safety regulations.

Mr Lezaic agreed with TCT point about the need for a study or analysis to clarify what parts of maritime regulations are applicable to specific countries, and suggested that, while a comprehensive study could be helpful, it's not necessarily required. Instead, a focused analysis of what's relevant might be enough. There is a plan to consult with colleagues from DG ENEST and explore possible next steps. The matter will be raised internally, will be flagged for attention, and come back with a plan or update in the coming months.

Mr Russo agreed with Kristijan's points but emphasises that there are two different issues at hand. The first, assisting North Macedonia with transposition, is seen as a manageable problem that can be resolved if they approach the EMSA. The second, more serious issue is establishing priorities for transposing regulations across different countries, which is a much broader challenge.

He outlined the standard procedure in EMSA for handling transposition requests: a first screening is done, followed by sharing proposals for feedback. He highlighted the need for clarity on which regulations must be prioritized for immediate transposition, and which can be deferred to later stages. They stress the importance of clear communication between technical assistance providers and the European Commission, ensuring that work is done efficiently and resources are allocated properly. The goal is to identify the most pressing regulations and avoid wasting resources on non-urgent matters.

Mr Thana thanked Mr Russo for his comprehensive input and mentioned an additional point: a suggestion from Manuela to combine an upcoming technical committee meeting with some training sessions at EMSA's premises. The idea is to hold the meeting and training in one place, using EMSA's resources and expertise. He acknowledged that it could be more efficient than hosting the event in the region. They plan to discuss the details of the training—like timing and specific topics—before making an official request. The goal is to leverage EMSA's capacity to support the meeting and the training, making it a more effective and streamlined experience for all involved.

Mr Russo emphasised that organising the meeting and training at EMSA is quite feasible, as EMSA is always available and has the necessary facilities to host such events. He expressed full willingness to cooperate and make the process smooth. The next step is to agree on the specifics—such as the type of meeting, timing, and the training topics that would be most useful. Once these details are settled, they are ready to start working on it fully, ensuring complete support from their side

During the Session 3 - Roundtable reporting from Regional Partners on Implementation of the Next Generation Action Plan for Waterborne Transport & Multimodality.

1. Albania

a. General Maritime Directorate of Albania

The representative of Albania began by thanking the Transport Community and various organizations for their support. They share several updates on the progress made in Albania over the past three months.

1. Independent Evaluation of STCW Compliance:
 - Albania conducted an independent evaluation of its compliance with the STCW (Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping) in March, facilitated by EMSA experts.
 - A report was produced, and a roadmap has been created to address the findings. Implementation of the recommendations is already underway.
2. Training and Developments:
 - Albania is progressing with its maritime objectives, including new training initiatives. EMSA experts conducted training for Albanian inspectors and port state control inspectors in April.
 - Albania successfully hosted an audit by the Mediterranean Group, and the outcome was positive, with a follow-up report expected next month.
3. State Control and Inspections:
 - Albania has had no detentions on its ships for the past two years, indicating good performance.
 - Two inspectors have completed training at EMSA and are now qualified for further duties, with two more inspectors currently undergoing training at the EMSA Academy.
4. Legislative Developments. Albania has made significant progress in transposing EU maritime legislation:
 - They have drafted three important pieces of legislation with EMSA's technical assistance, covering ship inspection and survey standards, greenhouse gas emissions monitoring, and maritime administration activities.
 - Work is also underway on regulations for the prohibition of certain components on ships and passenger liability regulations.
5. Next Steps:
 - Albania will continue working on transposing further maritime legislation and expects to provide reports on these activities in the coming months.

b. Durres Port Authority (DPA) and the Centre of Excellence in Maritime Affairs (CEMA)

The representative outlined several significant developments and projects by the Port Authority in recent months, focusing on sustainability, digitalisation, and infrastructure improvements:

1. Green and Low-Carbon Initiatives:
 - The Port Authority is working on a project aimed at reducing energy consumption by installing solar panels on buildings. This is part of the Green Energy Investment Initiative, funded through the Interact Project and Renew Board under the Indirect EPAQ Project.
 - The solar installation is estimated to generate around 8.5 kWh of energy per day. By combining two phases of the project into one tender process, the port aims to streamline the work and reduce energy dependence.
2. Sustainable Mobility:
 - A 2.5-kilometer bicycle lane connecting Gate 2 to Gate 4 has been completed and is currently under development, with plans to finish it by the end of the month. This initiative promotes sustainable mobility within the port.
3. Water Management and Environmental Projects:

- The Port Authority is part of a project for water services and management, which includes collecting environmental data in the port and implementing innovative solutions for managing water resources. This project is funded by the EU and the government.

4. Digital Transformation:

- The Port Authority is embracing full digital transformation. They have completed a pre-investment study for the General Cargo Terminal Operating System (CTOS) and Port Management System, aimed at automating cargo procedures and improving efficiency. The study also covers vehicle key management tailored to the port's needs.
- The SWOT analysis for these systems has been completed, and tender documents are expected to be launched in the third quarter of 2025. The goal is to integrate these systems with the Maritime Single Window once it is completed.

5. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Improvements:

- A new firewall was implemented in March 2025, and the Port Authority is also working on a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) system to strengthen cybersecurity. These systems are crucial for managing user access to both internal services and external internet services.

6. Software System Upgrades:

- The Port Authority is working on upgrading its existing software systems, including the Oracle BI International Managing System, Oracle GDA, and the Asset and Maintenance Management Software to enhance operational efficiency.

7. The development of the new port in Porto Romano.

The representative of the Port of Durres provided an update on various developments in Porto Romano, followed by a discussion about progress at the Port of Dora, highlighting improvements in infrastructure, passenger services, and security.

- Tender Evaluation: Porto Romano is currently in the second phase of the tender process for a project. The evaluation of bids from international bidders is almost complete, with a final decision expected by September 2025. The next step involves negotiating the contract once the technical analysis of the bids is finished, and the bidders will have 60 days to submit their final offers.

c. Port of Vlora

Passenger Traffic: The Port of Dora has experienced a 10% increase in passenger traffic, translating to an additional 50,000 passengers compared to last year. The goal is to reach 15,000 more passengers, improving services during the peak summer period.

1. Investments and Infrastructure:

- The port has invested in solar panels and new technical equipment to support passenger services, as well as stationary work equipment to streamline operations.
- New training programs for staff have been conducted, focusing on emergency response and port operations. This year, the port hosted a training event that involved local schools to practice and improve emergency protocols.

2. Security Enhancements:

Significant improvements have been made to the port's security systems, ensuring safety and better management. While there have been no significant incidents, the port continues to focus on enhancing security measures to prevent potential risks.

3. Regional Transport Developments:

- There is an emerging collaboration between the port and local airports, especially with a new cargo transport strategy that will allow better integration of air and sea transport.

- A new business plan is being developed to cater to this growing demand, especially as the port seeks to become a stronger intermodal transport hub.

4. Special Events:

The port recently hosted the Giro d'Italia, one of Europe's top cycling events. The facilities were used to accommodate participants, highlighting the port's versatility in hosting large events.

5. General Observations:

- The Port of Vlora is positioning itself as a crucial link in the broader regional transport network, particularly between the West and East, as well as a gateway for the Western Balkans.
- The port's development is seen as an integral part of the regional transport revolution, with a focus on intercontinental connections and stronger cargo operations.

The improvements to the port's infrastructure and the introduction of new business strategies are expected to make it a more competitive transport hub in the Mediterranean region.

2. Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mr Kenan Djonko, the representative of the Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina provided an update on two significant projects in the region, focusing on port infrastructure and inland waterways.

1. Port Reconstruction and Modernisation Project:

Phases of the Project: The port modernisation is divided into three phases, with two phases already completed.

- Phase 1: A new clay platform of 8,000 square meters was constructed and is now in operation.
- Phase 2: A new port was created with a 27-tonne capacity and a 150-tonne cargo hopper that has been installed and is functioning.
- Phase 3: Currently underway, this phase focuses on the construction of new roads and tracks, which are 70% completed. The full completion of this phase is expected by October.

2. Inland Waterborne Projects:

De-mining of the Sava River (Bosnia and Herzegovina side):

- A key project for improving inland waterway navigation is the de-mining of the right bank of the Sava River, on the Bosnia and Herzegovina side. The other side of the river is Croatia.
- The World Bank grant for this project became effective in February.
- Environmental and social studies have been completed, and they will be included in the tender documentation for the procurement of works.
- A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) has been set up, with experts from various fields, including procurement, social affairs, environmental, and finance experts. The Bosnian de-mining agency (BH Mac) is also involved, helping with the technical challenges of de-mining in such a specific area.
- The procurement for works is currently in the documentation phase, and the contractor selection process is expected to be completed by the end of this year.
- The de-mining work themselves will take 18 months to finish.

3. Improvement of Waterborne Navigation on the Sava River:

- The agreement between Croatia and Bosnia for the improvement of waterborne navigation on the Sava River is now in progress. This involves the section between __ and the Brcko port.
- The main design for the waterborne navigation of the entire Sava River is planned for the near future, marking a long-term effort to improve the river's navigability.

He outlined progress in both the port modernisation and inland waterway projects, emphasising the strategic importance of these initiatives. They stress the ongoing work and the need for continuous efforts to complete these projects effectively and on time. There is an understanding that further progress will require both national and international cooperation to overcome specific challenges and ensure that all necessary legislative and technical steps are taken.

Montenegro

Mr Vladan Radonjic the representative of Ministry of Maritime Affairs of Montenegro provided a detailed update on ongoing activities related to Montenegro's maritime legislation and its progress towards alignment with EU standards. Here's a summary of the key points discussed:

Key Laws and Activities in Progress:

1. Law on Pollution Prevention from Maritime Facilities:
 - The law which transposes the MARPOL Convention (International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships), is currently being drafted.
 - This law has been upgraded to include additional international instruments and relevant legislation.
 - The law is in the translation phase, with the English version being prepared.
 - A Table of Ordinances for the law is also under preparation, ensuring that it aligns with other regulations and directives.
2. Law on the Prevention of Pollution (related to Port Reception Facilities):
 - Due to government changes last year, the adoption of this law has been postponed until the end of this year.
 - Initially, some EU directives, particularly one related to port reception facilities, were supposed to be included in this law. However, after discussions with consultants, it was decided that this directive will now be integrated into the Law on Pollution Prevention from Maritime Facilities.
 - The first draft of this law is expected to be completed by the end of June.
3. Law on the Safety of Navigation:
 - This law has already been drafted and is currently in the formalization phase with the legislation office.
 - In parallel, expert support is being provided by Asian consultants through the Technical Assistance for Capacity Building and Optimization of the Transport Sector project. This support is focused on improving performance and efficiency in Montenegro's transport sector, particularly maritime safety.
4. Ongoing Activities and Additional Efforts:
 - Independent Evaluation: The administration is also working on the corrective action plan following an independent evaluation that took place in November 2024. Experts are assisting in the process of addressing the evaluation's findings and recommendations.

The team is making good progress in preparing draft legislation that will help Montenegro align more effectively with EU maritime safety and environmental standards.

Port of Bar JSC – Sustainable and Smart Port Development

1. Activities from the scope of the “Green port”:
 - In order to reduce emissions to air within the Port area, two wheel washing systems (for trucks and port machinery) as well as a de-mucking system for port machinery (and trucks) were

purchased (end of January, 2025). Preparatory civil works for installation of the systems are in the final phase – the expected deadline to have the action completed is 15th June 2025 (wheel washing systems and de-mucking system in function);

- Regular measurements of quality of air, sea water, soil and sediments in the port area are performed by the authorized external bodies. The measurement of air quality parameters for the first quarter of 2025 was executed and related Report was finished and received in the Port of Bar JSC on 14th April 2025.

2. Activities from the scope of the “Smart port”:

- The first phase of activities with an objective to consider possibilities to totally automatize activities at the Port parking for truck is ongoing. A detailed analysis of working processes was performed and a preliminary communication with specialized service providers from the related field was carried out. The next step of the activities is related to the analysis of model of truck parking` s automatization implemented in developed European Ports (Port of Rotterdam, Port of Valencia and Port of Genova).

3. Port infrastructure:

- Rehabilitation of the Quay construction at the Terminal for dry bulk and liquid bulk cargo – after a temporary break. In coordination with the Contractor, details on the work continuation are taken into consideration and will be formalized through a new addendum of the related Contract.
- A draft of ToR for realization of the activities foreseen by the approved WBIF Grant Application Form (technical assistance) was prepared and a process of its analyzing by involved stakeholders is ongoing now:
 - Preparation of the technical documentation (and all documentation foreseen by the Montenegrin legislation) for project “Dredging of the Port of Bar water area” (financed under a WBIF grant on technical assistance);
 - Preparation of the technical documentation (and all documentation foreseen by the Montenegrin legislation) for project “Extension of the Quay at the Passenger Terminal” (financed under a WBIF grant on technical assistance);
 - Preparation of the technical documentation (and all documentation foreseen by the Montenegrin legislation) for project “Reconstruction of the Electric Power Supply System in the Port of Bar” (financed under a WBIF grant on technical assistance);
 - Preparation of the technical documentation (and all documentation foreseen by the Montenegrin legislation) for project “Reconstruction of the railway network within the Port area and the connecting railway line from the Port of Bar to the Railway Station of Bar” (financed under a WBIF grant on technical assistance);

4. Port machinery:

- Procedure of purchasing a new mobile harbor crane is under way (according to Montenegrin Law on Public Procurements) – supply contract was signed on 6th March 2025. In accordance with the Contract, the deadline for finishing all remaining activities including handover of the assembled crane and its introduction in the exploitation in the Port of Bar JSC is 22nd September 2025.

Serbia

Mr Predrag Jevremovic, the representative of Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure Serbia, presented the following:

Since the thirteenth meeting of the Technical Committee Meeting for Waterborne Transport and Multimodality held in Chişinău, the Department for Waterborne Transport and Safety of Navigation of

the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure has completed one task regarding the adoption of amendments to existing legislation.

- Pursuant to the implementation of a corrective action plan in accordance with the Independent Evaluation report in line with the requirements of Regulation I/8 of the STCW Convention, the Government of Republic Serbia adopted the Draft Regulation on amendments to the Regulation on titles, requirements for obtaining titles and certificates for crew members of seagoing ships on 11th April 2025. Prior to that, other observations were also eliminated by changing one procedure, one instruction and several forms of the QMS.
- After the adoption of the regulation, the entire documentation was submitted by the GISIS module: STCW-related information. IMO representatives confirmed that they had received the documentation and that it would be forwarded for review by the panel.
- Another very important task is underway. It is implementation of a corrective action plan regarding the request to the European Commission for recognition certificates of crew members of inland waterway vessels.

Amendments to four existing rulebooks are in the final stage. These are the following regulations:

Draft Rulebook on amendments to the Rulebook on the titles of crew members of inland waterway vessels,

- Draft Rulebook on amendments to the Rulebook on service record book,
- Draft Rulebook on amendments to the Rulebook on ship's documents and books and
- Draft Rulebook on amendments to the Rulebook on conditions regarding the medical fitness of crew members of ships and other vessels, as well as the conditions and manner of conducting health surveillance.
- Amendments to four existing rulebooks are being developed in close cooperation with the European Commission. The adoption of the aforementioned legislation will fully harmonize the Directive (EU) 2017/2397. The Ministry is waiting for the green light from Brussels to adopt the aforementioned rulebooks.

In accordance with technical assistance from EMSA, a contractor has been engaged to prepare harmonized regulations with the following European legislation:

- Directive (EU) 2019/883 on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships;
- Regulation (EU) 2015/757 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015 on the monitoring, reporting and verification of carbon dioxide emissions from maritime transport, and amending Directive 2009/16/EC (Text with EEA relevance);
- Regulation (EU) 2019/1239 establishes a European Maritime Single Window environment (EMSWe) with harmonized interfaces to simplify reporting obligations for ships arriving at, staying in, and departing from European Union (EU) ports.

In order to improve the tax, health and social insurance conditions of seafarers, the Ministry is in the final stages of preparing for the adoption of two rulebooks regarding seafarers, which relate to the method of determining the number of sailing days and the calculation of tax and health insurance for seafarers. Implementation of the rulebooks, which will improve health, social and pension protection, will start on 1st January 2026.

Information on infrastructure projects in waterborne transport

Ongoing projects:

- Removal of Sunken Fleet from the WWII from Danube near Prahovo
 - Project value: EUR 31 million. Financing: EIB (46%), approved grant funds from the WBIF fund (46% - EUR 16 million) and the RS budget 8%.

- Status: Contracts have been signed with the supervision and contractor for the removal of the sunken German fleet from the Second World War from the Danube near Prahovo. The contract with the contractor was signed on 29 June 2023. The start date of the works is 27 July 2023. Project completion: 27 July 2028. Four vessels have been removed.
- Implementation of a network of hydro-meteorological stations along Danube and Sava rivers
 - Project value: 5.38 million euros. Financing: 50% EIB, 50% RS budget.
 - Status: Supervision contract signed on 14 September 2022. Contract value: 989,500 euros. Implementation deadline: 30 months.
 - Establishment of a system of hydro-meteorological stations on Danube and Sava rivers in the Republic of Serbia. Estimated contract value: 4,387,760 euros. Contract signed on 12 February 2024. Implementation deadline: 30 months.
- Hydraulic and morphological modeling of Danube and Sava rivers in the Republic of Serbia
 - Estimated value: Lot 01 Danube, joint sector Serbia-Croatia. Financing: EUR 599,200, CEF financing 50%, EIB 50%.
 - Status: Contract signed on 11 June 2024. Implementation underway, 1D model of the entire section completed, hydrological study, inventory of critical sectors and their prioritization, multi-criteria analysis and 2D model without variant solutions. The implementation of the entire project is expected in early 2025.
 - Lot 02 Danube River and Sava River: EUR 4,600,000, EIB 100%.
 - Status: Contract signed on 29 August 2024. Implementation underway.
- Construction of vessels for marking and hydrographic surveying of Danube, Sava and Tisa rivers in the Republic of Serbia
 - Value: 4 million euros. EIB financing 48%, CEF 40%, RS budget 12%.
 - Status: Contracts signed for Lot 1 in November 2024, Lot 2 Contract signed in September 2024.
 - Technical supervision: Procurement of technical supervision for the construction of the hydrographic vessel has been carried out, EIB has approved the evaluation report. The contract was signed in November 2024.

Projects in tender procedure:

- Expansion capacities of the Port of Sremska Mitrovica
 - Value: 45 million euros. Financing 16.96 million euros - World Bank loan for the Drina-Sava Corridor Integrated Development Program, 16.96 million euros - Financing agreement with the European Investment Bank, 10.88 million euros from the RS budget.
- Expansion capacities of the Port of Bogojevo
 - Project value 60 million euros. Financing: 50% EIB, 50% RS budget.
 - Status: Construction permit obtained. Two international tenders for supervision and works on the reconstruction and expansion of the port of Bogojevo have been conducted. Supervision of the works on the reconstruction and expansion of the port of Bogojevo: Contracted value of supervision: 2,450,500 euros. Contract was signed in December 2022.

- Works on the reconstruction and expansion of the port of Bogojevo: estimated contract value: 57,500,000 euros.
- Expansion capacities of the Port of Prahovo
 - Project value: 36 million euros port infrastructure. Financing of port infrastructure construction: 100% RS budget.
 - Status: After the public procurement procedure was carried out, in December 2024, the Works Contract was signed with the selected contractors. The preparation of tender documentation for the technical supervision is underway. It is planned to announce the public procurement for the selection of technical supervision in February 2025. The start of the implementation of this project is expected in the first quarter of 2025. Implementation deadline: 40 months from the start of operations.
- Hydrotechnical and dredging works at the mouth of the Drina River into the Sava River
 - The project value is 8,580,000 euros.
 - Financing: EIB 50%, RS budget 50%.
 - Status: The Environmental Impact Assessment Study has been adopted, the construction permit project has been prepared, and the construction permit has been issued. The tender documentation for work and supervision has been completed, and approval has been obtained from the EIB. The implementation of international procurement for work and supervision is underway. Funds have been allocated by the EIB.

Projects in the design phase

- National Academy for emergencies and training of ship crew members
 - Total project value: The estimated value of the infrastructure construction and supervision works is a total of 47 million euros, of which the EIB is 50% and the RS budget is 50%.
 - Status: Location conditions were obtained on 20 March 2023. The construction permit is expected to be issued soon. Tender documentation for supervision and works on the construction of the national academy has been prepared and approval of the tender documentation by the EIB is awaited. It is planned that international tenders for work and supervision will be announced in the first half of 2025.
- Construction of the new lock on the Tisa River
 - Contract value 62 million euros. EIB financing 50% and RS budget 50%
 - Status: Previous feasibility study with General Design adopted by the State Audit Commission. Feasibility Study with Preliminary Design prepared. Plan of the Special Purpose Area of the Tisa Dam adopted in December 2024. The start of physical implementation is planned for 2025.
- Construction of a bulk cargo terminal in Belgrade, location of Krnjača
 - Status project: Agency for management ports is conducted a public procurement and construction is underway of the project for a building permit and an Environmental Impact Assessment Study. The building permit is expected to be issued in mid-2025.
 - Estimated value construction investments: 82 million euros excluding VAT. Included in the Plan purchases European investment banks if would arrive to extensions financial contract for

development river transport infrastructure in Serbia between RS and EIB. Proposed financing 50% EIB, 50% RS budget.

Planned projects

- Construction of a new port in Belgrade
 - o Estimated value: 300 million euros (port infrastructure 160 million euros).
 - o Status: A positive opinion has been obtained from the Ministry of Environmental Protection for the location on the left bank of the Danube River upstream of the Pupin Bridge, i.e. the area in which the new Belgrade Port is planned on the left bank of the Danube River, upstream of the Pupin Bridge, is not within the protected areas for which the protection procedure has been implemented or initiated, nor within the ecologically significant areas of the ecological network of the Republic of Serbia.
- Establishment of a VTS and VHF radio-telephone system on the Tisa River
 - o Project value 2 million euros. Financing 50% EIB, 50% RS budget.
 - o Status: Included in the European Investment Bank Procurement Plan within the existing financing agreement for the development of river transport infrastructure in Serbia between the Republic of Serbia and the EIB.
- Expansion of the AIS AtoNs system for navigational monitoring and electronic marking of the waterway on the Tisa River
 - o Project value: 2 million euros. Financing 50% EIB, 50% RS budget.
 - o Status: Included in the European Investment Bank Procurement Plan within the existing financing agreement for the development of river transport infrastructure in Serbia between the Republic of Serbia and the EIB.
- Green ports
 - o Description: The Project "Green ports" implies introduction clean, green energy in ports and docks in Serbia as well as solving questions management with waste with ships. The following branches of the "Green Ports" project are included:
 - o Monitoring system for accidents and nautical conditions, which should collect, process and display data obtained from buoys equipped with sensors for nautical conditions and sensors for detecting accidents in port areas.
 - o Green (solar) energy, that is placement solar panels in ports and international passenger ports in the Republic Serbia.
 - o Supply cruiser electric with energy.
 - o Total estimated investment value: EUR 50 million euros. Financing 50% EIB, 50% RS budget.

Directorate for Inland Waterways in Serbia

Mr Aleksandar Pantelic, the Director of the Directorate for Inland Waterway from Serbia, presented the current project overview

The Directorate for Inland Waterways in Serbia is actively implementing several projects to improve navigability and enhance the efficiency of waterborne transport on the Danube and Sava Rivers, as part of the Rhine-Danube Corridor.

- FAIRway works!

Serbia is procuring a modern Marking Vessel and a Hydrographic Vessel equipped with multibeam and ADCP capabilities to replace outdated equipment and significantly improve marking and hydrographic survey accuracy. The hydrographic vessel is ready for testing by the end of May 2025, and the hull is expected to be completed by the end of July.

- The Preparing FAIRway 2 Works project,

a joint initiative with Austria and Croatia and co-financed by the EU, is progressing with data collection, hydraulic and morphological modelling, and scenario analysis. The final study on bottleneck solutions is expected by May 2025.

- On the **Sava River**, river training and dredging works are being prepared at the Sava–Drina confluence.
 - o The preliminary design and feasibility study are completed, and the permit application process is finalised. Bid evaluation is ongoing, with implementation planned over two years.
 - o A network of 38 hydro-meteo stations (27 on the Danube, 11 on the Sava), financed by the European Investment Bank, will provide real-time navigation data. Location permits are secured, and designs are nearly complete.
- The UXO Survey and sunken fleet removal near Prahovo is a high-risk project addressing WWII-era wrecks.

Four shipwrecks have been removed since August 2024, with sediment dredging ongoing to facilitate further extraction. A total of 21 wrecks are planned for removal to improve safety.

- New project has started for data collection and modelling downstream of Bačka Palanka and along the Sava River. LiDAR and hydrographic surveys are underway and expected to conclude by September 2025, after which the modelling phase will begin. These initiatives collectively aim to remove bottlenecks, modernise port and fairway infrastructure, and enhance the use of digital technologies in inland waterway transport.

Port Governance Agency of Serbia.

- Cargo handling (01.01.2024-31.12.2024.) – 15.6 million tonnes (+1.64% compared to the same period last year)
- Cargo handling (01.01.2025-01.05.2025.) – 3.9 million tonnes (-10.6% compared to the same period last year)
- Passenger traffic (01.01.2025-01.05.2025.)- 157 port calls (+4.7% compared to the same period last year) and 23,655 passengers (+13% compared to the same period last year)

There have been no new activities related to the implementation of the action plan between the previous and the current technical committee, apart from the ongoing work aimed at preparing the ground for the launch of the Green Ports project.

During the Session 4 - Roundtable reporting from Observer Participants on Implementation of the Next Generation Action Plan for Waterborne Transport & Multimodality.

Georgia

- Improvement of Port Infrastructure

Bathymetric studies are underway to support the design and construction of the Anaklia Deep Sea Port. Meanwhile, the selection of a private partner is progressing. The Chinese Singaporean Consortium has submitted final clarifications, currently under review by the Agency before the Selection Commission makes a decision.

- Legislative and Regulatory Progress in Inland Waterways

Georgia has advanced its inland waterway regulations to ensure safety, efficiency, and international alignment. A dedicated Internal Waterways Transport Department has been established within the Maritime Transport Agency (MTA), with divisions in Tbilisi and Batumi.

On 27 December 2024, key legislative acts were adopted, including Safety, Registration, and Inspection Rules, along with new navigation and operator retraining rules.

Additionally, classification societies can now be recognized to conduct inspections and issue safety certificates. Work is ongoing to digitalize the registration system and introduce electronic records. Further legal and procedural steps are expected to enhance internal waterway governance and compliance.

- Digitalisation of Maritime and Port Services

- o PCS: A feasibility study for a Port Community System (PCS) was completed in 2021, supported by the EBRD. The project officially launched on 25 October 2023, and the design phase is currently being validated with a focus on customs integration. PCS is expected to go live by end of 2025 and will be linked to the National Maritime Single Window (NMSW).
- o MSW: The Maritime Single Window system became operational on 1 October 2024. A development contract was signed with Prodevelop in December 2024. Nearly 600 users now utilize the system, with 50 shipping agencies recognized. Integration with PCS is ongoing.

- Black Sea Connectivity

As of February 2025, strengthening Black Sea connectivity remains a priority. Weekly Ro/Ro ferry services operate on the Batumi-Burgas, Batumi-Varna, and Poti-Burgas routes (to Bulgaria), as well as Poti-Constanta (to Romania), supporting Georgia's links to EU markets.

- Cargo and Container Volumes at Seaports

In Q1 2025, Georgian seaports (Poti and Batumi) handled 3.4 million tons of cargo (+12.9% vs. Q1 2024) and 180,193 TEUs (+23.5%).

In 2024, total cargo volume reached 13.2 million tons (+9.6% vs. 2023), underlining the growing importance of Georgian ports in regional trade and the Middle Corridor.

Republic of Moldova

Mr Vadim Pavalachi the representative of the Naval Agency of the Republic of Moldova and Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development presented several important developments that have taken place recently in the field of maritime and inland waterway transport in the Republic of Moldova:

- The Government has approved Decision No. 115 of 5 March 2025, adopting the Regulation on Navigation on Inland Waterways and on the Danube River, which transposes the provisions of the CEVNI Resolution;
- With the support of technical assistance, the Maritime Strategy has been finalised. This represents a key objective under the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code);

- The draft Government Decision approving the National Action Plan for the Transposition and Alignment with EU Directives and Regulations 2025–2027 has been drafted and it's on the way for approval. It outlines, for each relevant EU act, the timeline for transposition, responsible authorities, and expected outcomes for all Ministries and subordinated institutions and cover all fields;
- In cooperation with EMSA and the World Maritime University, Republic of Moldova finalised the project for SOLAS Convention implementation, including a draft law and several draft government decisions for transposing its provisions.
- The Roadmap for Moldova's removal from the blacklist, developed with the support of the Transport Community, has been completed and submitted for approval to the Government.
- The draft decision transposing the Directive on River Information Services (RIS) is in its final stage and currently under government approval.

Request for Ongoing Assistance:

Moldova has requested further technical assistance for the development of the new maritime law, as current legislation remains outdated and not aligned with modern international standards. This support is crucial for facilitating the transposition of European maritime regulations and improving the sector's overall functioning.

Ukraine

Mr Heorhii Stepanenko the Deputy head of the port's operations organisation department SE "Ukrainian Sea Ports Authority" participation remotely reported as follows:

- Ports and Cargo Turnover:
 - o Prior to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation in 2022, Ukraine had 13 seaports, including Mykolaiv, Pivdennyi, Olvia, Kherson, Odesa, Chornomorsk, Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi, Danube ports (Izmail, Reni, Ust-Dunaysk), as well as Mariupol, Berdyansk, and Skadovsk. These ports handled over 150 million tons of cargo annually until 2022, with approximately 80% accounted for by the ports of Greater Odesa (Odesa, Chornomorsk, Pivdennyi) and Mykolaiv.
 - o The main export goods were grain (35 million tons), ore (20 million tons), and metal products (30 million tons), while the key imported goods included fuel, machinery, and electronics.
 - o Separately, 5 ports on the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea have been under the control of the occupying authorities of the Russian Federation since 2014 as a result of an armed invasion.
 - o As of May 2025, due to the ongoing aggressive war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which began in 2014, only 6 ports are operational: the Danube ports (Izmail, Reni, Ust-Dunaysk), Odesa, Chornomorsk, and Pivdennyi. Due to military actions, security conditions, and infrastructure damage, the ports of Mykolaiv, Olvia, Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi, and Kherson are non-operational, while the ports of Mariupol, Berdyansk, and Skadovsk have been under temporary occupation since 2022.
- Port Blockades and Challenges:
 - o At the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, most Ukrainian seaports, except for the Danube ports, ceased operations due to blockades caused by the actions of the occupying authorities of the Russian Federation. These blockades disrupted maritime trade, forcing Ukraine to switch to alternative routes and significantly increasing reliance on the Danube ports (Izmail, Reni, Ust-Dunaysk), which faced significant congestion as over 100 vessels awaited passage through the Sulina and Bystre channels.
- Recovery and Record Operations:

- Despite challenges caused by the aggressive war of the Russian Federation, the Danube ports achieved record figures: handling 3.3 million tons of cargo per month, over 121 thousand tons per day, over 9 thousand railcars per month, and simultaneously processing 22 ships and 40 barges at the port of Reni. The largest bulk carrier in Ukraine's history of independence, CAPE SCOTT, with a deadweight of 28.7 thousand tons, was handled at the port of Reni.
- Operations of the Ports of Greater Odesa:
 - Under the terms of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, signed in Istanbul on July 22, 2022, for the export of grain and related food products by sea, transportation from Ukrainian ports (Chornomorsk, Odesa, Pivdennyi) was limited exclusively to grain and related food products. From August 1, 2022, to June 16, 2023, 1004 vessels were loaded.
 - After the termination of the Black Sea Grain Initiative in July 2023, the occupying authorities of the Russian Federation intensified attacks on Ukrainian port infrastructure, destroying civilian vessels and facilities.
 - In response, Ukraine launched the Ukrainian Corridor, which from September 2023 to May 6, 2025, facilitated a cargo turnover of 122 million tons, predominantly grain (23%), oil (4%), black metals (4%), and other goods (66%), and processed 4655 vessels.
 - The ports of Chornomorsk, Odesa, and Pivdennyi have partially resumed operations with containerships, with ongoing efforts to fully restore ferry and container lines.
 - Primary attention is focused on restoring port infrastructure to support the growth of trade and economic recovery, which is part of a broader strategy outlined in the Peace Formula of the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy, aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in Ukraine for the security of the whole world.
- Maritime Single Window:
 - Prior to the full-scale invasion, Ukraine utilized the Port Community Information System (PCIS) within the framework of the "Single Window – Local Solution" project, managed by LLC "PPL 33-35".
 - Support for PCIS was discontinued on January 1, 2023, due to the military aggression of the Russian Federation, which disrupted maritime trade connections, necessitating a shift to paper-based processes. At the same time, the increased use of ports on the Danube River required regional digitization.
 - With the reopening of the ports of Greater Odesa, the digitization process extended to these ports as well.
 - The State Enterprise "USPA" is developing a new system, DocPort, which will include the Maritime Single Window (MSW) module, based on the IMO data model and the requirements of the FAL Convention.
 - The DocPort system will facilitate data exchange, including information on vessels (IMO number, name, flag, arrival/departure dates) and cargo declarations (FAL forms 1–6). It will also integrate with customs systems to simplify customs procedures and support automated monitoring and data requests.
 - The DocPort system features a documented API for integration with external systems, ensuring seamless data exchange with port community participants.
 - The MSW module is scheduled to be tested at the Pivdennyi port in the near future, with plans for expansion to other ports following successful implementation.
- Future Plans:
 - Ukraine prioritizes the restoration of port infrastructure, including concession projects in the ports of Chornomorsk and Odesa.
 - Work continues on restoring critical infrastructure, including roads, railways, and port facilities, to enhance operational capacity and support economic recovery.
 - Expansion of the DocPort system to all operational ports by 2026 is planned.

Mr Russo asked mentioned the possibility of a of having bilateral support Ukraine with the provision of actions like establishment of maritime single window, digitalization of the ship certificate which is a wide spectrum project.

Conclusions of the 14th Technical Committee Meeting for Waterborne Transport & Multimodality:

The Technical Committee welcomed the continued progress made by regional and observer partners in aligning with the EU waterborne acquis, with notable developments in STCW compliance, inland waterways regulation, and maritime digitalisation. The European Commission and EMSA reiterated their commitment to providing targeted technical assistance and capacity-building support.

In response to the official request by the Republic of North Macedonia for a study on the EU acquis to be transposed, the following was agreed:

1. North Macedonia is encouraged to formally submit its request for technical assistance to EMSA, which will assess the request accordingly.
2. The European Commission will further examine this issue in consultation with DG ENEST and DG MOVE to define a coordinated approach for regional partners, particularly in cases where maritime or inland waterway transport is currently not applicable.

Regional Partners and observer participants, including Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, presented key legislative and infrastructure developments. These include efforts to modernise ports, transpose EU Acquis of the Annex I of the Treaty, improve safety standards, and strengthen regional and cross-border connectivity following the Next Generation Action Plan for Waterborne Transport and Multimodality.

The Transport Community stressed the importance of prioritising transposition efforts, ensuring effective coordination among institutions, and translating reforms into practical implementation. Delegations were encouraged to maintain reform momentum and to request technical support where needed.

Looking ahead, the 15th Technical Committee Meeting will be held on 17 September in Constanta Port back-to-back with the Danube Port Days (16 - 17 September 2025) and to be followed on 18 September 2025 with the workshop on Green Ports to be organised from Transport Community Permanent Secretariat in collaboration with the EU project on Green Inland Ports. This workshop will be an opportunity for intensive discussions on sustainable and Green Transition of port.