



PRESS RELEASE

Danube Ports Days 2024: Navigating Towards Sustainable Multimodality

Budapest, 31 October 2024 – Organised on 29 and 30 October by Pro Danube and hosted by the Danube Commission, Danube Ports Days 2024, supported by the EU-funded projects **MultiRELOAD**, **Green Inland Ports Study** and **SYNERGETICS** and the **Danube Ports Network** successfully concluded. The event brought together policymakers, industry leaders and experts to discuss and evaluate innovative solutions aimed at achieving climate neutrality within inland ports in particular and inland waterway transport (IWT) in general.

The event focused on critical themes including the **modal shift to eco-friendly transportation**, **emission insights**, and **green energy solutions**. It showcased cutting-edge digitalisation tools and strategies that are transforming port operations across Europe.

Marta Wolska, representing DG MOVE, European Commission, highlighted the importance of inland ports in the EU's transport infrastructure, stating *"Inland waterways are nothing without ports. These ports are essential within the EU's trans-European transport network (TEN-T). They need efficient hinterland connections, particularly to rail infrastructure and trans-shipment facilities, to ensure smooth connections and increase their share of freight transport."*

Echoing the critical role of IWT in Europe's green transition, **Dr. János Kerékgyártó**, Deputy State Secretary at the Hungarian Ministry of Construction and Transport highlighted: *"European waterway transport, with a well-functioning port infrastructure, is an essential cornerstone for developing an environmentally conscious and sustainable combined freight transport system."*

On behalf of the event's host, the Danube Commission, Director General **Manfred Seitz** remarked, *"The Danube Ports Days 2024 unites policymakers, industry leaders, and experts to discuss concrete solutions to reduce the environmental footprint of port operations,*



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enhance digitalisation, and improve emission measurement. Hosting this event reaffirms our institution's commitment to promoting sustainability and innovation within the sector."

Turi Fiorito, representing the European Federation of Inland Ports (EFIP), underscored the significance of cross-sectoral collaboration: *"Collaboration is invaluable as we must ensure continued support for the success of the Rhine-Danube Corridor."*

The event culminated in the Danube Networking Cruise, a social highlight that encouraged meaningful discussions on the greening of Europe's transport system. Participants shared innovative ideas, reinforcing collaboration and advancing sustainable transport goals in Europe.

Róbert Rafael, representing Pro Danube, reflected on the event's success: *"The Danube Ports Days 2024 provided a unique platform for dialogue among industry leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders. Our event furthermore hosted a dedicated poster exhibition showcasing key European projects and initiatives, as well as innovative companies leading the way in the field of IWT. We are thrilled with the positive feedback and extend our gratitude to the speakers and attendees for making the event a success."*

About Pro Danube

Pro Danube represents the voice of Danube-minded businesses which are interested in the promotion of better navigation conditions, waterway infrastructure and transport services, hence being an active contributor in the political debates on transport policy, technology, and regional development fora. For over a decade, Pro Danube has been involved in the initiation and execution of transnational EU-funded projects related to the development of the inland waterway transport sector in the Danube Region.

Contact Details

For more information and additional details please contact:

Contact person: Christian Stark

E-Mail: stark@prodanube.eu

Homepage: www.prodanube.eu

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