

VISIT BY EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S TRAN COMMITTEE

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The Secretary General of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), Mr Hans Van der Werf, received the MEPs of the TRAN Committee for an official visit on 11 May 2016.



Regular meetings between the European Parliament's TRAN Committee and the CCNR Secretariat

The TRAN Committee and the CCNR Secretariat have already met, on two occasions (in 2001 and in 2011). This third meeting on 11 May 2016 is an expression of the intention of both institutions to establish reciprocal information with a view to developing as much synergy as possible in the interests of promoting inland navigation.

The TRAN Committee, speaking through its Chair, Mr Michael Cramer (Group of the Greens), stressed the importance of regular discussions on topical issues concerning inland navigation in order to be able to take account of the information gathered in current work at the European Parliament.

The meeting provided an opportunity for the CCNR Secretariat to present to the MEPs the new governance in the European Union in the field of regulations on inland navigation set up by the creation of the European Committee for drawing up Standards in the field of Inland Navigation (CESNI) in 2015. On 25 November 2015, this new body adopted the European Standard laying down Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels (ES-TRIN).

Exchange of views on the draft Directive on professional qualifications

The discussion between the two institutions covered subjects at the very heart of topical aspects of inland navigation. The TRAN Committee recently completed the tripartite dialogue on the new Directive on Technical Requirements, and the matter of maintaining reference to Standards – which is directly related to the European Parliament's remit – was mentioned at the meeting.

The Committee will also soon be examining the draft Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications in inland navigation. The MEPs were clearly interested in the subject, since it is of vital importance for the European Union's citizens they directly represent; the new Directive covers employment, professional training, the environment and safety.

Ms Gesine Meissner (Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe), Rapporteur for the draft of the Directive, mentioned – inter alia – the matter of sector knowledge, which captured the attention of those present.

ABOUT THE CCNR

The Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) is an international organisation that exercises an essential regulatory role in the navigation of the Rhine. It is active in the technical, legal, economic and environmental fields. In all its areas of action, its work is guided by the efficiency of transport on the Rhine, safety, social considerations, and respect for the environment. Many of the Central Commission's activities now reach beyond the Rhine and are directly concerned with European navigable waterways more generally. The Central Commission works closely with the European Commission as well as with the other river commissions and international organisations.

The Secretariat recalled that sector knowledge was an integral part of the Rhine regulatory system, as this additional competency was necessary to ensure the safety of navigation.

Met at the Independent Port of Strasbourg by its President, Ms Catherine Trautmann

The meeting ended with a visit to the Independent Port of Strasbourg (Port Autonome de Strasbourg - PAS), under the guidance of its Director General, Jean-Louis Jérôme, and its Delegated Director General, Frédéric Doisy.

The President of the PAS, Ms Catherine Trautmann, honoured the visit with her presence. The former Mayor of Strasbourg, who also held a seat in the European Parliament for nearly ten years, stressed the importance of port activities for the City of Strasbourg. She also mentioned a number of innovative projects currently in hand, including the development of an eco-neighbourhood within the Port's boundaries.



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