

## Newsletter June 2020

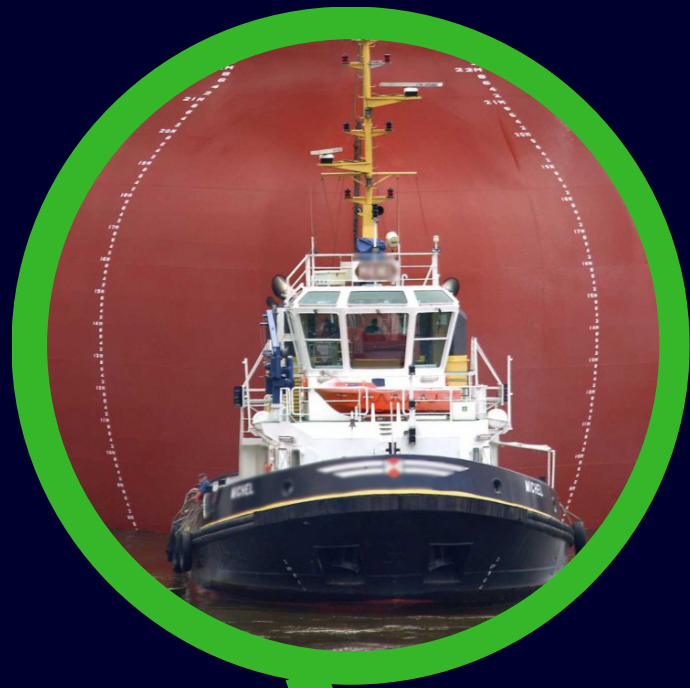
### The Council agrees on the foundations of the EU maritime policy

The Council of Transport Ministers adopted conclusions concerning the European maritime transport industry, establishing the goals for a future EU policy: “a carbon-neutral, zero accidents, automated and competitive EU Waterborne Transport Sector”. The Council highlighted the crucial role of European shipping during the pandemic and the vital importance of the industry for the EU economies. The conclusions underline the substantial efforts required to reduce shipping emissions and the need to develop carbon-neutral port activities. To reach these ambitions the Council calls for greater financial support for research, development and deployment of zero-emission vessels and alternative fuels.

The Council acknowledges the opportunities that the digital transformation creates in enabling seamless multimodal transport operations. In addition to the complete implementation of the European Maritime Single Window, the conclusions also call for European support to automation technologies and the development of a legal framework to enable the safe operation of autonomous ships.

Concerning labour issues affecting the sector, the conclusions highlight the importance of the European Social Dialogue in maintaining attractive working conditions for seafarers. The document recognises the skills shortage issues and encourages the EU Commission and Member States to act in cooperation with industry, education and training providers so as to ensure that European seafarers are equipped with the right competences.

Finally, the Council acknowledges that the "EU waterborne transport sector, its infrastructure and its financial autonomy as being of EU strategic interest" and stresses the importance of ensuring adequate access to finance.





## Germany takes the helm at the EU Council

Germany will preside the EU Council during this semester, one of the most important for the EU in the last decades due to the health and economic effects of COVID-19.

The German Presidency main objective is the rapid adoption of the temporary recovery instrument (Next Generation EU) and the new multiannual financial framework so that the funds for the reconstruction of European economies are available as soon as possible. Moreover, the Presidency aims to lift the crisis-related restrictions in crossborder transport in a coordinated and gradual way in order to create the conditions for economic recovery.

Concerning the environment dossier, the German Presidency will attempt to conclude the deliberations on the European Climate Law. What is more, the Presidency will seek to find an agreement on the expansion of carbon pricing to cover all sectors including maritime transport, and the introduction of a moderate minimum carbon price within the context of the European emissions trading system (EU ETS). This would be complemented with the efforts to establish a fair level playing field in the prevention of CO2 emissions at international level, striving as far as possible to avoid the creation of incentives for carbon leakage to third countries.

You can find the German Presidency's programme [here](#)



## The EC approves Italian tax measures for maritime transport

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, the prolongation of various Italian support measures until the end of 2023. These measures are part of the Italian "International Registry" scheme.

Under the "International Registry" scheme, shipping companies are granted tax reductions and other benefits. Following the changes, towage companies revenues are subject under certain conditions to a lower corporate tax.

The Commission assessed the amendments to Italian legislation and concluded that the Italian scheme is in line with EU State aid rules.



## The EC publishes a further note on Brexit and EU rules in the field of maritime transport

The European Commission published a notice to stakeholders with regards to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union and EU rules in the field of maritime transport.

The documents request operators in the maritime transport sector to proceed as follows: Operators of shipping services should assess whether they are affected by the change in market access rights and take the necessary precautionary steps when selling shipping services after the end of the transition period at the end of 2020.<sup>44</sup>

Operators of vessels flying the flag of an EU Member State should ensure that certificates issued to seafarers in the United Kingdom are recognised in the EU in accordance with the appropriate procedure.

After the end of the transition period, EU law on maritime transport will no longer apply to the UK. This will have consequences in cabotage, maritime safety and seafarer qualifications.