

STEEL BY SEA

Based in the Ghent canal zone, Sidmar NV is one of the world's largest steel producers. It provides materials for the automotive, white goods, furniture, shelving, radiator and construction industries, where high quality is required.

Exporting a very large proportion of its output, Sidmar makes extensive use of short sea shipping, and in 2000 shipped 465 000 tonnes of steel to other countries in Europe and beyond.

Sidmar uses regular services provided from Antwerp by the operating company Transaf Antwerpen, as well as chartering ships directly. Short sea shipping carries all its exports to Finland, Israel and Tunisia, and more than 90% of the steel destined for the British, Danish, Norwegian, Turkish and Portuguese markets.

Sidmar is convinced of the advantages of sea transport. On the basis of both environmental and cost considerations, use of short sea shipping in preference to road transport has become a clear company policy, and Sidmar is continuing to explore the possibility of using it on additional routes.



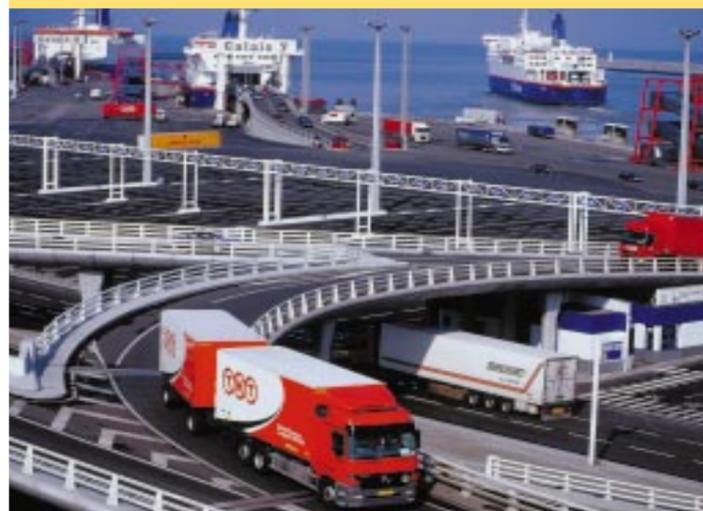
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SHIPPING GIVES COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

A two-year EU-sponsored project has shifted 18.25 million tonne-kilometres per year of heavy goods traffic off roads between northern Italy and Greece. It clearly demonstrates the commercial benefits to road hauliers of co-operation with partners in the shipping industry.

The project has involved the adaptation of terminals at each port, the introduction of new and upgraded trailers for rapid loading and unloading, and the improvement of a 'tracking and tracing' system for the exchange of consignment data with customers via electronic data interchange (EDI) or the Internet.

Together with Caberos Enterprises of Patras in Greece and the Minoan and Strintzis shipping lines, the Italian logistics firm Danzas SpA is offering a new maritime link between Venice and Patras. The daily voyages in each direction offer cost reductions to customers in the chemicals, food-processing, machine-tool and consumer-goods sectors. This positive market response is likely to encourage similar operations, removing more trucks from long-distance routes.



Photos courtesy: Ghent Port Company, Shortsea Promotion Centre Flanders, Port of Calais, Port of Hamburg
Map courtesy: Ufficio per la Promozione del Trasporto Marittimo a Corto Raggio, Roma

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy and Transport develops and carries out EU policy in these closely linked areas. The 2001 White Paper, *European transport policy for 2010: time to decide*, sets out 60 practical measures designed to bring about significant improvements in the quality and efficiency of transport in Europe by 2010, and to break the link between economic growth and growth in the demands on transport systems. Short sea shipping is a vital component of this overall strategy.

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SHORT SEA SHIPPING



Stimulating the growth of short sea shipping has been a priority of EU transport policy since 1995. It remains central to the comprehensive strategy for a clean, safe and efficient European transport system set out in the Commission's 2001 White Paper, *European transport policy for 2010: time to decide*.

Short Sea transport grew by 29.6% between 1990 and 1999. A total of 40% of all trade within the European Union is now carried by sea, surpassed only by road transport. But its potential is much greater. Still needed are improved links to inland networks and the establishment of 'sea motorways' between key ports. Promoted in this way, short sea shipping could take substantial volumes of goods traffic off Europe's congested roads and ease major road and rail bottlenecks.

short sea shipping

- an efficient and environmentally-friendly transport mode
- often, the most cost-effective means to shift long-distance traffic off Europe's roads
- an essential link to islands and outlying regions

the challenges

- to promote short sea shipping's reliability and frequency
- to ensure that its reliability, quality and safety are recognised
- to remove unnecessary costs and delays at ports

the goals

- to integrate shipping more fully in door-to-door freight transport services
- in conjunction with rail and inland waterways, to absorb predicted increases in EU goods transport

Community action

- active promotion of short sea shipping
- administrative simplification of shipping logistics
- targeted investment in infrastructure and support for R & D where possible



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

EFFICIENT, CLEAN - AND GROWING FAST

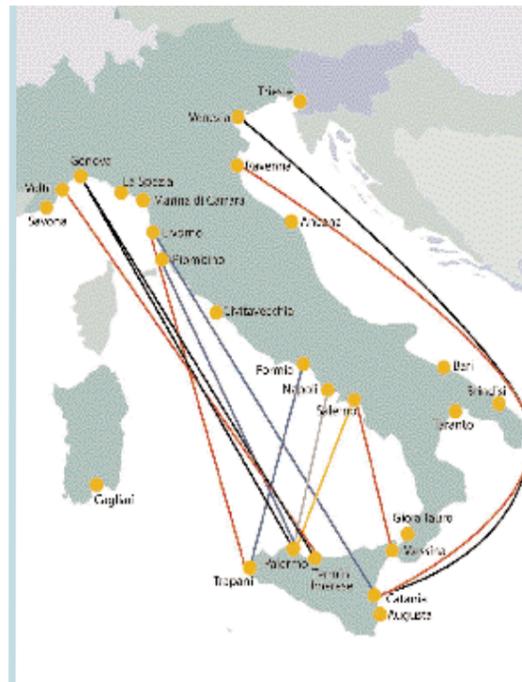
The Commission defines short sea shipping as the movement of passengers and cargo by sea within Europe, both inside and outside the EU, as well as to and from all ports in the Mediterranean, the Baltic and the Black Sea. Its 1999 communication **The development of short sea shipping in Europe: a dynamic alternative in a sustainable transport chain** (COM(1999) 317 final) reports good progress towards the long-term goal of establishing sea transport as a viable alternative to road haulage. Short sea shipping produces fewer polluting emissions than any other mode of transport and, for passengers, has a death rate only a fraction of those of other modes.

But the communication goes further, describing a strategic vision of maritime transport as a fully integrated component of door-to-door intermodal transport services, and a major contributor to sustainability, cohesion, and competitiveness. Specifically, short sea shipping has the potential to accommodate much of the anticipated growth in freight without increasing pressure on Europe's already crowded roads.

Key link in intermodal transport chains

Intermodality – the easy transfer of goods and passengers between road, rail, sea and air transport – is the key to the development of short sea shipping.

Sea transport is already highly competitive for long distances. But short sea shipping needs to become more attractive as an alternative for shorter journeys. If it is to fulfil its potential, partnerships with operators of other transport modes are vital, as the basis for intermodal transport service packages oriented to customers' changing needs.



As the successful recent expansion of Italian coastal shipping routes demonstrates, short sea shipping can provide a real off-shore alternative to congested road networks. The development of regular connections along the Italian coasts and with non-Italian ports has been steady and, as the map shows, has progressed to take in more and more destinations over recent years. The progressive shift of cargo onto these 'motorways of the sea' has produced cost savings for users, profits for operators, and cleaner, less congested roads for Italian citizens throughout the country.



PROMOTING AND STREAMLINING THE SERVICE

The Commission is engaged in an on-going exercise to identify critical bottlenecks preventing more widespread use of short sea shipping, as well as possible solutions. For example, the documentary and administrative procedures for short sea shipping differ widely between Member States and between individual ports. As a first step towards remedying this, standard use will soon be made across the EU of the IMO-FAL forms required when ships enter or leave ports. Furthermore, the Commission is proposing possible simplifications on customs rules for short sea shipping.

When adopted, the **'Marco Polo'** programme proposed in the transport White Paper will provide a budget of \$115 million over the five years 2003-2007 for actions aimed at shifting 12 billion tonne-kilometres per year of road freight from Europe's roads to its rail and inland waterway networks – and, in particular, to its short sea shipping routes.

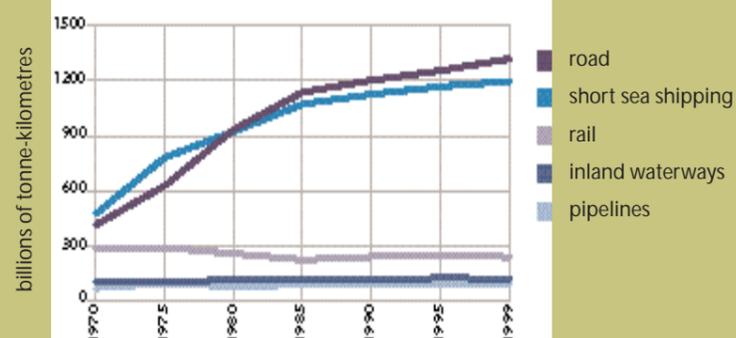
SHORT SEA SHIPPING PROMOTION CENTRES

The Commission has actively supported the creation of Shortsea Shipping Promotion Centres (SPCs) in each of the 13 maritime Member States, providing one-off financial support for the establishment of 12 centres to date. Independent of individual regions or ports, the SPCs act in the interests of all cargo-movers – whether owners, shippers or operators. Funded by both public and private sectors, all share the mission of demonstrating that sea transport is reliable, safe, cost-effective and technically advanced.

The Commission has also financed and supported the launch of the European Shortsea Network (ESN), which links the national SPCs to facilitate collaborations and the exchange of experience.

Click here: www.shortsea.info

Growth of intra-EU transport, 1970-1999, by mode



Since 1970, short sea shipping's share of total intra-EU goods transport has increased from 35.3 to 40.4%. Tonne-kilometres of cargo carried have grown by 153% (see chart), outstripping overall freight growth (121%). But road haulage has grown faster, by 220% in the same period, and now accounts for 44.5% of the total.

