

Welcome to the Second Edition of EMPA News. This quarterly periodical aims to keep members and stakeholders informed about our work over the past months.



EMPA President, Erik Dalege

Dear colleagues,

The elections to the European Parliament are now behind us, and the results will lead to a change in the Parliament's composition and, thus, probably also to a shift in priorities. For example, recent reports suggest that the intensity with which the so-called "green deal" was pushed forward will decrease. The "Fit for 55" package includes a series of proposals to revise and update EU legislation and will also impact shipping and maritime pilotage.

The inclusion of shipping in the EU emissions trading system (ETS) has

caused concern in some ports. European transit ports in the Mediterranean, in particular, which have already had to accept a significant decline in cargo handling due to the Russian war of aggression and the attacks by the Houthi rebels, fear a further decline due to possible shifts in transit handling to ports outside the EU. It remains to be seen if these fears will come true or can be mitigated by appropriate countermeasures.



The increased development of alternative energies, such as wind farms on the high seas, also impacts shipping, reducing the area available for shipping routes. Many ports will be expanded into energy hubs, and the piers will be reinforced to accommodate the shipment of rectifier platforms weighing hundreds of tons. Additionally, facilities for handling LNG have already been constructed, and separate terminals for handling green hydrogen will be developed in the future. These developments are generally to be welcomed, but they must not lead to neglect of the necessary maintenance, renewal, or new construction of classic infrastructure. The ports' original

purpose and functionality must be urgently maintained.

For us pilots, the EEXI directive, which comes from the IMO and not the Commission, had a significant impact. The conversion from HFO/MDO to LNG already affected the manoeuvrability of some ships. With the introduction of EEXI and ShaPoLi, this was once again significantly negatively affected.

Members of EMPA and IMPA report that the effects were sometimes dramatic, making it almost impossible to manoeuvre some ships when the wind and current were strongly influencing them.

In some cases, captains or the bridge team are unaware of the possibility of overriding a limit or are unwilling to do so for fear of reprisals. If, in individual cases, the ship's propellers have been reduced in size or structurally modified by conversion, this can impact manoeuvring characteristics in a way that cannot be mitigated by a possible "override." It is apparent to me that we are in a clear conflict of objectives in some areas. Measures that serve climate protection reduce ship safety and thus increase the probability of an incident occurring that can significantly impact environmental protection. The art of politics must promote one through clever action without risking the other. On June 10, one day after the EU parliamentary elections, representatives of the EU Commission and the most important European stakeholders from the maritime sector held a high-level meeting. The representatives of the EU Commission appeared to demonstrate a degree of reservation, as described earlier.

The upcoming legislative period will reveal the new Commission's key priorities. At EMPA, we will continue to participate actively in this process.

Our Female Pilots



We have been consistently sharing engaging articles on our website and social media channels, shedding light on the exceptional work of female pilots within our member associations. These articles not only celebrate their remarkable accomplishments but also offer a glimpse into the unique personalities and characters of each pilot. Our ultimate goal is to ignite inspiration and empower young women to pursue a rewarding career in the maritime industry, with the hope that they will consider pilotage as an exciting and fulfilling option.

In recent months, we have featured insightful articles showcasing the experiences of Maria Gonzalez Acebal, a pilot in Algeciras, Renda Aslantas, a pilot in Izmit Bay, and Asha Michaux, a River Scheldt pilot.

We were incredibly fortunate to have Kim and Renda represent their respective associations at our general meeting in early May.

These articles can be found on our LinkedIn and Facebook pages as well as our website <https://empa-pilots.eu/news>

EMPA Board meeting Tallinn



In March, our Estonian members and the Riigilaevasto, Estonian State Fleet, kindly invited us to Tallinn. The Estonian State Fleet is the national operator for maritime competence and innovation dedicated to developing and managing state-owned vessels, navigation signals, and providing piloting services in Estonia.

The Estonian State Fleet recently took on these services from different private government operators. We were happy to attend to offer our support in establishing best practices in pilotage and inform the Estonian State Fleet about our work and how we support our members.

We gathered for our board meeting on the remarkable state-owned icebreaker called the Tarmo. The vessel is built in 1963 and currently docked in Tallinn port. Tarmo remains still fully operational although most ice-breaking operations are done by a more modern counterpart.



We invited the President of the Estonian Pilots, Urmas Einlo, and the Harbour Master of Tallinn, Margus Haava, to attend our General Meeting in Antwerp. This year's theme was very topical for a national company setting up a pilotage service.

New EMPA Secretary Elke Bogaerts

At the Antwerp General Meeting, Elke Bogaerts took over the role of EMPA Secretary from Claire Van Lokeren.

Elke wants to introduce herself to members who did not get to meet her in Antwerp by sharing this brief bio.

"In my professional career, I embarked on a journey that led from arranging dream vacations to being a secretary for the Flemish Sea Pilots.

After graduating in Tourism, I began my professional voyage as a travel agent. For a decade, I immersed myself in the

world of travel, crafting unforgettable experiences for my clients.



But as the child of two shipping agents, in-laws working in the harbour, and a husband who is an engineer at the pilot boats, it seems inevitable that the job of secretary for the pilots crossed my path. This supporting role gives me immense satisfaction, allowing our Flemish pilots to focus on what they do best: safely guiding sea vessels into and out of our ports.

The opportunity to expand my knowledge and expertise within the European Maritime Pilots' Association (EMPA) is a blessing. I eagerly look forward to developing myself in the role and providing the necessary support to members and the board. I am forever grateful that Claire has taken me under her wing to be her successor at the EMPA office."

EMPA Secretary General

At the time of publication, the EMPA Secretary-General is on maternity leave. We would like to congratulate Aileen Van Raemdonck and her husband, Alexander Vets, on the birth of their first daughter, Sophia Josephine.

The following work was completed by Aileen before she went on leave.

Moving forward together: what's next for EU mobility & transport? Brussels

On 21 February, EMPA was present at this well-attended conference, organised by the European Commission's DG MOVE, alongside many transport policymakers, trade associations, experts and academics.

The main topics of discussion were delivering a deeper, more competitive and better connected EU, an inclusive twin transition in the field of transport, and the EU's transport agenda in a changed geopolitical context.



SAGMAS Brussels

EMPA participated in the 72nd meeting of the Stakeholders Advisory Group on Maritime Security (SAGMAS) on 28 February. Several important topics were discussed, such as the Ports Alliance, which is working on standards for maritime security in the fight against drug trafficking; the NATO Shipping Centre gave a presentation on their activities and an interesting discussion was held on Cyber Risk Management in the maritime sector.



Roundtable event on the Mobility Transition Pathway Brussels

On 29 February, EMPA attended a Roundtable event on the mobility transition pathway. During the meeting, several challenges of the waterborne transport sector were pointed out, and a call was made for a dedicated maritime strategy. It was also mentioned that a green, digital and resilient EU mobility industrial ecosystem will require attracting workers to the sector, upskilling and reskilling.



Belgian EU Presidency Conference on the Wellbeing of Seafarers Brussels

On 8 March, EMPA Secretary General Aileen Van Raemdonck attended the "Brussels Conference on the Wellbeing of Seafarers", organised by the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2024 and hosted by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Justice and the North Sea, Paul Van Tighelt at the Egmont Palace. The main topics of discussion were the review of STCW rules, safety requirements for seafarers, in particular when handling new fuels in the sector's transition to decarbonisation, how to attract and retain seafarers by improving their working conditions and work-life balance and addressing bullying and harassment.



At the Conference, WISTA International and WISTA Belgium members participated with a great turnout and presented Honours for Diversity and Inclusion. It was a pleasure to meet and exchange views with Gustavo Abdiel Aguilar-Miranda, who accepted an Honour for the project I EXIST TOO.



Joint Declaration



On 13 March, 13 European Associations, including EMPA, published a Joint Declaration, "Charting a course towards a resilient, competitive, and

sustainable future, ensuring that the EU's Waterborne Transport Sector remains a global leader and delivers quality jobs". The press release is available here: <https://lnkd.in/dim-CzyH>

European Ports Forum + subgroup Sustainable Ports Brussels



EMPA participated in the European Ports Forum and its subgroup Sustainable Ports on 15 March. The focus was on security, the competitiveness of European ports, the role of ports as energy hubs, investment needs, and a people-centred green and digital transition. A brief update was presented on the CENIT Support study for the report on the implementation of the Port Services Regulation (EU) 2017/352.

In the Sustainable Ports subgroup, DG CLIMA gave a clear presentation on the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS). They explained the risks of evasion have been taken into account, and specific measures have been taken to mitigate and aim to address transshipment to neighbouring ports where the risk is the highest.

EMPA Board meeting Tallinn

On 21 March, the Riigilaevastik, or Estonian State Fleet, hosted our Board meeting in Tallinn aboard the iconic icebreaker Tarmo, which celebrated its 60th anniversary last year. The EMPA Board of Directors had the privilege of meeting with the Riigilaevastik representatives and with our members, the Estonian Pilots, to learn more about their work and engage in insightful discussions on shared experiences and future plans.



Connecting Europe Days Brussels

In the week of 2-5 April, nearly 3.500 transport stakeholders, including the European Maritime Pilots' Association (EMPA), convened in Brussels for the Connecting Europe Days 2024, organised by the European Commission to discuss the need to develop more sustainable mobility solutions, the energy transition, gender equality, as well as the impact of climate change,

cyber security risks, and the geopolitical situation on the European transport network. The revised TEN-T Regulation aims to increase the share of Short Sea Shipping by 25% by 2030 and by 50% by 2050 and to improve the transport network's resilience to ensure connectivity with neighbouring countries.



EMPA joined the representatives of more than 45 transport organisations on stage during the Closing Ceremony of the Connecting Europe Days when the #moreEUBudgetforTransport campaign manifesto was handed to DG MOVE's Director General, Magda Kopczyńska. In her closing speech, she pointed out the following priorities of the Commission: safety, sustainability, digitalisation, inclusiveness, competitiveness and security.

On 5 April, EMPA attended the European Maritime Space Meeting regarding the maritime dimension of the Trans-European Transport Network

(TEN-T), formerly known as the Motorways of the Sea (MoS). During this meeting, EU Coordinator Prof. Kurt Bodewig confirmed the Commission's aim to increase short-sea shipping by 25% by 2030 and by 50% by 2050. At the end of the meeting, Prof. Bodewig announced he would step down and will be succeeded from July 1st by former MEP Gesine Meissner.



ESPO Paris

On 25 and 26 April, EMPA Secretary General Aileen Van Raemdonck attended the ESPO (European Sea Ports Organisation) Conference in Paris, France, co-organised with Ports de France. Interesting discussions ensued on the challenges and priorities of European ports and valuable exchanges were held in the margins of the conference with participants from

the European Commission and stakeholder organisations.

TRAN Committee Chair, MEP Karima Delli explained how the EU ETS will also call at non-EU ports and mentioned the work done on FuelEU Maritime. Industry leaders, including Jacques Vandermeiren, CEO of the Port of Antwerp-Bruges, emphasised the need to ensure that competitiveness is integrated into the Green Deal to make it work. Herald Ruijters, Deputy Director of DG MOVE, highlighted the need for substantial investments to achieve the goals set by the European Green Deal and emphasised the importance of unity within the European transport sector to ensure the functioning of society as a whole.

Next year's conference will take place in Thessaloniki, Greece.



Second Transport Cybersecurity Conference Brussels



On 2 May, EMPA attended the second Transport Cybersecurity conference, organised by the European Commission. In her welcome speech, Director-General for DG MOVE stressed the importance to work on common threats across the different transport modes. The NIS2 Directive and the EU Port Alliance were also mentioned, as well as the need for clear communication from IMO on cybersecurity. Chronis Kapalidis from EMSA explained that ships are floating data centres and most vulnerable when underway. EMSA will enhance their role in this field. They have already organised five conferences on cybersecurity and the next one should be organised in October.

EMPA Senior VP Miguel Vieira De Castro attends the initial Greenport Alliance Meeting in Turkey.

GREENPORT Alliance is an initiative focused on promoting sustainability and green skills in the maritime port services sector. Through a collaborative effort involving academia, industry, and industry representative bodies, GREENPORT aims to drive behavioural

change and reduce emissions within port operations.



EMPA's senior vice president attended the initial GREENPORTS Alliance meeting in late February, which lasted two days. The esteemed Piri Reis University outside Istanbul, founded by Turkish Shipowners, hosted the event, which was held at the university's exceptional facilities, underscoring the importance of the occasion.

During the initial session, team leaders provided a comprehensive overview of the various Work Projects (WP). EMPA's active participation was highlighted, particularly in WP 2, which focuses on data collection and is led by the European Tugowners Association.

In the afternoon session, there was a meeting with the Project Officer, during which the different Work projects, including deadlines, were explained.

The following morning, we presented the project to nearly 200 students and stakeholders which included a presentation on EMPA, what we are, what we do, and why we are involved in the project, as well as an overview of the various Work Projects (WP).

We are actively engaged in progressing this project and are currently conducting an assessment with a

university and the European Tugowners Association. We are utilising simulation methods to quantify potential fuel and emission reductions. This experiment is in the planning stages.



EMPA