

Setting Course Together for a Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Maritime Sector

Recommendations for EU Policy Priorities
2024-2029



Who we are

The World Shipping Council (WSC) represents the global liner shipping industry, working for sustainable, safe, and secure maritime trade. WSC members operate high-capacity container and vehicle carrying vessels. They account for more than 90% of global liner shipping capacity, transporting 90% of the world's containerised trade and 60% of its trade in vehicles.¹

Within the European Union they enable trade amounting to EUR 1.7 trillion worth of EU imports and exports.

Our values

Insight

We leverage deep industry knowledge to identify innovative solutions.

Integrity

Transparency and honesty guide our actions, fostering trust.

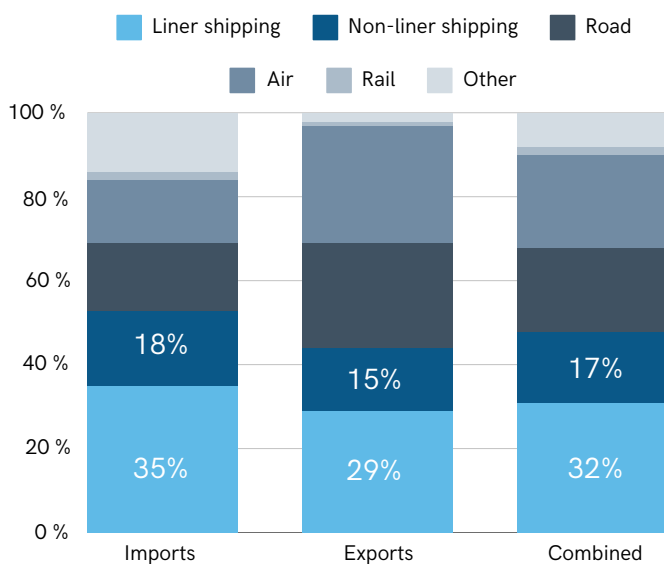
Partnership

We engage in meaningful dialogues to build relationships and achieve global impact.

¹ Source: UNCTAD, Review of Maritime Trade 2023

The shipping industry is a pillar of the EU economy. Liner shipping companies – container and vehicle carriers – transport roughly two-thirds of the value of the EU’s seaborne trade by value, equivalent to EUR 1.7 trillion of imports and exports.² This represents over 100 million TEU (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units) of cargo annually, carried to Europe in high-capacity vessels. The industry’s contributions are essential to the EU’s economic vitality, underpinning trade, supporting employment, and ensuring the smooth flow of goods across borders.

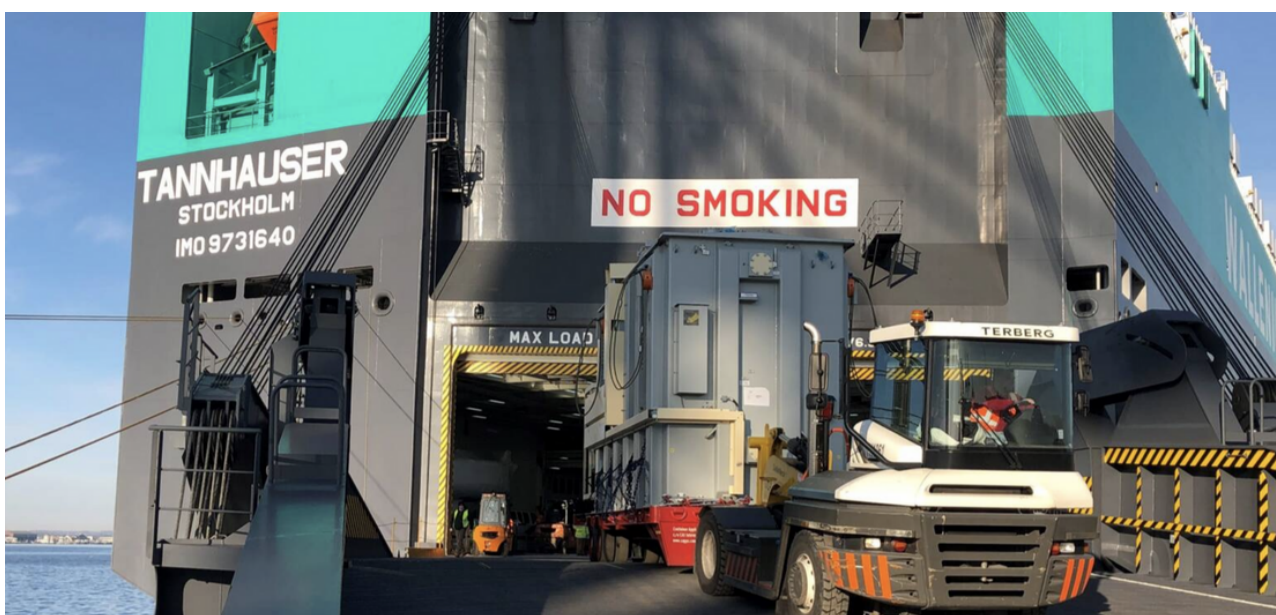
EU trade mode share by values
(Eurostat 2022)



Looking ahead to the EU's 2024-2029 legislative period, WSC urges the EU to:

- Exercise its leadership in securing global greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction regulations and actively implement the EU Green Deal to accelerate at home the decarbonisation of the maritime industry.
- Intensify efforts to secure maritime supply chains against illicit trafficking and geopolitical risks, enhancing the safety of seafarers and the resilience of trade routes.
- Facilitate maritime commerce by addressing customs and administrative barriers, ensuring streamlined, efficient trade to enhance European competitiveness.

Together the EU and Liner Shipping should cooperate to design policy frameworks that facilitate the essential role of shipping in a globally connected and thriving economy while forging ahead on towards the green transition, for net-zero shipping by 2050.



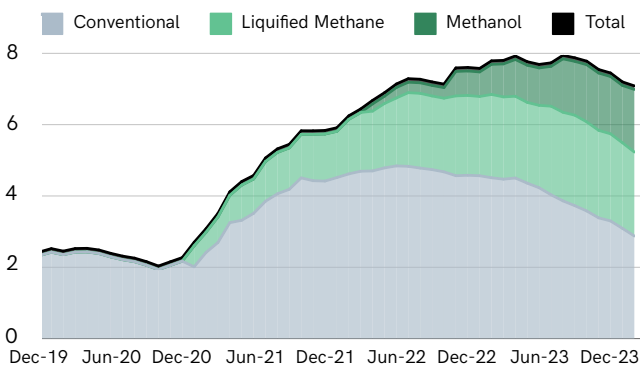
² Source: UNCTAD Statistics accessed February 2024; EUROSTAT accessed February 2024; *Port Economics, Management and Policy*, 2022, ISBN 9780367331559, doi.org/10.4324/9780429318184.



Climate & Environment

Liner shipping is leading the maritime sector effort to decarbonise through direct investment in vessels that can operate on near-zero and zero-GHG fuels. Nearly 60% of liner capacity on order for delivery before 2030 is designed to run on the greenest marine fuels.

Millions TEU's Capacity on Order
(Alphaliner data)



WSC members' sustainability efforts extend beyond climate change to a range of environmental and maritime protection priorities. WSC calls on the EU to take action on key environmental issues.

Decarbonising Shipping

Negotiate global IMO agreements by spring of 2025

WSC works with the European Commission and Member States to achieve binding GHG-reduction standards and GHG pricing that apply globally. The EU must help the IMO achieve a pricing mechanism such as the Green Balance Mechanism³, and a GHG fuel standard to phase out fossil fuel vessels.

The transition to a net-zero EU regional economy depends upon EU leadership at the IMO.

Effectively implement maritime elements of the EU Green Deal

The EU ETS can only be fully effective by aligning with well-to-wake principles in FuelEU Maritime. WSC is ready to help the European Commission revise the ETS to best account for the uptake of renewable and low-carbon maritime fuels on a lifecycle basis. The EU must also prioritise production of renewable marine fuels from green hydrogen to match the demand from dual-fuel ships coming into service before 2030. Renewable fuels must scale with fleet investment to ensure maritime Green Deal goals are met and to achieve maritime decarbonisation by 2050.

Prioritise EU competitiveness by funding decarbonisation measures using EU ETS revenues

EU ETS revenues (Innovation Fund and Member State revenues) can be better directed to provide funds for the sectors transition to decarbonisation. EU ETS revenues can accelerate the uptake of green fuels by covering cost differences between conventional and alternative fuels, more clearly supporting production and supply of renewable fuels. EU funding for green marine fuel supply must include all EU coastlines to ensure a competitive and green TEN-T freight network.

³ For more information please see: [Green Balance Mechanism — World Shipping Council](#)

Sustainable Fleet Renewal

Advance global improvements to ship recycling by leading revision of the Hong Kong Convention (HKC)

Responsible recycling of vessels at the end of their commercial lives is essential to achieving GHG reductions by accelerating the pace of fleet renewal. Sustainable global ship recycling regulations to minimise accidents, injuries, and improve protective measures for the environment are a priority for WSC members. The EU should lead the update of the HKC with the aim to improve global ship recycling practices, supported by thoughtful revision of the EU Ship Recycling Regulation (SRR).

The European List of Ship Recycling facilities includes less than 1% of global ship recycling capacity.⁴ The Commission needs to expand the list to include additional recycling facilities with sustainable practices and to create incentives for all facilities to improve safety and environmental standards. Importantly, a port-call-based recycling fee would undermine EU port and supply chain competitiveness while failing to make recycling more sustainable.

In partnership with policymakers, the WSC is committed to advancing these environmental initiatives, leveraging innovation and global cooperation to achieve a sustainable and decarbonised maritime sector.



⁴ Source: UNCTAD and EU List of Ship Recycling facilities.



Safety & Security

The liner shipping industry recognises the critical role it plays in keeping the flow of goods through Europe's maritime supply chains safe and secure. As responsible parties in the supply chain WSC members are taking dedicated actions to:

- **Detect and combat illicit trafficking** of drugs, wildlife products, timber, waste, pest contamination and other items harmful to societies and the environment.
- **Develop safety programs** for the accurate declaration and secure stowage of hazardous goods, aimed at protecting crew and preventing maritime pollution and logistics chain accidents. We are also leading efforts to bring the loss of containers to as close to zero as possible.
- **Navigate geopolitical risks** and supply chain disturbances with resilience, ensuring the uninterrupted flow of trade amid global disruptions and conflicts.

In the new legislative period, the EU has a significant opportunity to lead in bolstering safe and secure supply chains while facilitating legitimate trade. To this end, we call for the following:

Enhance partnership via the EU Ports

Alliance against drug trafficking, leveraging carriers' intelligence and technological capabilities for greater impact. WSC member lines have long been mobilised and are deploying different strategies to combat this common menace globally. With drug trafficking increasing through EU seaports, it's critical for the new Commission to maximise this partnership's impact, moving from commitments to tangible actions that safeguard citizens and trade.

Adapt and respond to new geopolitical risks.

Recent geopolitical shocks have impacted maritime supply chains and threatened key trade routes. The liner shipping industry's resilience and flexibility through recent global challenges underscores the importance of adaptability and preparedness. WSC seeks a deeper collaboration with the EU, to enhance our collective response to future geopolitical risks, ensuring the safety of seafarers and the continuity of essential maritime commerce.

Operation Tin Can

WSC and member company participation in global intelligence sharing operations, such as the WCO and UNODC's Operation Tin Can have delivered impressive results. The operation resulted in the seizure by authorities of 90 tons of cocaine between November and December 2022 and has provided a model for enhanced public-private partnerships to combat all forms of illegal goods trafficking.

Improve sanctions compliance through collaboration, focusing on the practical challenges of enforcing product-specific restrictions and the necessity of targeted and effective compliance measures. WSC members are committed to achieving sanctions compliance. A closer cooperation with the Commission is essential for an efficient compliance process, maintaining the integrity and security of maritime supply chains.

WSC invites European policymakers to foster public-private partnerships, leveraging our combined expertise to bolster maritime supply chains for a safer, more resilient future.





Trade Facilitation

The shipping industry transports 90% of the EU's external trade⁵, playing a critical role for the EU economy, efficiently connecting manufacturers, retailers and consumers to global markets and suppliers. The new Commission, mindful of the imperative of strengthening the EU's competitiveness, should renew and redouble efforts to facilitate maritime commerce.

Today, divergent customs and other administrative formalities at the EU's external border have the effect of non-tariff barriers, creating significant economic drag. A harmonised approach across the EU, fostering a single market and a genuine customs union, is essential for eliminating these barriers and unlocking potential growth. Engagement between industry and regulators ensuring legal certainty and appropriate legislative frameworks is vital.

Pending implementation of EU Maritime Single Window Environment (EMSWe)

WSC calls for the full implementation of EMSWe, streamlining data requirements to eliminate inefficiencies and facilitate a more straightforward reporting process. Further efforts should focus on reducing data redundancies and ensuring compatibility across EU ports to enhance operational efficiency and reduce administrative burdens on carriers.

Continued efforts and effective implementation in 2025 are required to

deliver the benefits and trade simplifications promised by this key reform. Successful implementation should eliminate unnecessary administrative burdens and prevent carriers having to tailor every data submission and IT connection to a mosaic of individual national and port level requirements. Considerable efforts by the European Commission, Member States and EMSA - together with industry - are needed both before and after implementation, to make sure the EMSWe delivers its full potential to boost the competitiveness of the EU's maritime trade.

Modernising the Union Customs Code (UCC) while maintaining trade continuity

WSC calls for a close engagement with maritime trade stakeholders during the Customs Code reform to ensure the new regulations are practical, reflecting the unique needs of maritime commerce and real-world logistics operations. This collaboration will help tailor reforms to support an efficient, modern and competitive EU maritime sector at the service of European businesses and consumers.

Aimed at aligning customs operations with the needs of contemporary trade, the proposed reform of the Union Customs Code seeks to establish a more unified Customs Union. WSC supports the direction of this major reform, not least the proposed establishment of an EU Customs Data Hub with a single trade interface.

⁵ European Commission - Maritime, [Maritime - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://european-commission.europa.eu)

However, as the Commission and Member States amend and adopt the new UCC it is imperative that key legal provisions are made more compatible with the characteristics of the shipping sector and that the reform provides businesses with a stable and legally certain transition to the proposed new customs environment.

In partnership with European policymakers and other stakeholders, WSC seeks enhanced trade facilitation measures, leveraging our collective expertise to ensure Europe remains a competitive force in the global economy, supported by efficient and streamlined transport and trade practices.





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