

# shortsea shipping

CONGESTION-FREE TRANSPORT ON A EUROPEAN SCALE  JANUARY 2011



A solution for SMEs also?  
Synergy with road haulage?  
**How to organise transport  
along the European  
coastal waters**

Europe: the hinterland of Flanders  
**12 best practices**

SSS

Shortsea Shipping Promotion Centre Flanders – [www.shortsea.be](http://www.shortsea.be)

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*Year after year the roads are becoming more and more congested, threatening the fluent transport and the proper delivery of goods within the expanding European economy. Evidently, other modes of transport have to be looked into, in particular the transport of goods across the European coastal waters. So why don't you become acquainted with shortsea shipping (SSS)?*



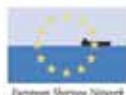
## Shortsea shipping

### European Shortsea Network

The mere national or regional promotion of shortsea shipping is too limited as logistic chains and SSS are by definition cross-border activities. In addition, the removal of obstacles requires a wider European approach. At the same time there is a need for communication between regions. On 1 December 2000 the Flemish promotion centre was one of the founders of the European Shortsea Network (ESN), an informal network of European shortsea promotion centres, which currently has 23 members.

As requested by the European Commission in 2007, some promotion centres are nowadays working 'intermodaly' (Netherlands: rail-SSS; Flanders: inland navigation-SSS). The mission of ESN is to promote SSS and to develop initiatives pertaining to it. The focus lies on tackling bottlenecks and intensifying networking. The exchange of best-practice examples between the promotion centres is particularly important. Also, ESN brings together a very extensive expertise, which the players in the market can call upon.

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# Tailor-made

**A**s the transport of goods is often, almost by definition, a cross-border matter, the problem has to be tackled on a 'European' level. The immensely long European coastline and the hundreds of ports along it, offer a perspective to promote maritime transport across the European coastal waters as an alternative to the congestion on the roads. Actually, 'coastal navigation', as a form of transport, has been around for a long time, but it remained geographically restricted to the West-European coast and was carried out by ships with a relatively limited capacity.

#### *Wider than coastal navigation*

In the middle of the 90s the European Commission launched the trendy concept of 'shortsea shipping' (SSS) to replace the 'old' coastal navigation, firmly expanding the notion in the process. Geographically the area in which shortsea shipping takes place was extended to the whole of Europe, including North Africa, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Additionally, the capacity limitation was abandoned. In certain countries SSS vessels ('coasters') can also enter the internal waterways. Such sea-river navigation is also considered to be part of SSS. So-called 'Rhine/Sea vessels' can lower their wheel house in order to negotiate low bridges. The advantage of this sea-river traffic is that the cargo can be loaded and unloaded inland, close to the customer and without extra transshipment. To that end inland navigation facilities are used.

#### *Europe as its hinterland*

We consider the Flemish 'hinterland' to be wider than Northern

## A Flemish perspective within a European context

The Shortsea Shipping Promotion Centre Flanders started in 1998 as a neutral, non-commercial entity to act as an intermediary who brings partners together around the table. Thanks to that consistent positioning and our extensive networking activities we are nowadays the main contact point for any questions regarding intermodal door-to-door transports.

In October 2009 the promotion centre launched an **online database of shortsea liner services**. On [www.shortsea.be](http://www.shortsea.be) you can look up all regular liner services as

well as all sailings from and to the four Flemish ports. This enables you to quickly find shortsea possibilities that allow you to deliver goods to the client just in time.

Very regularly we **inform** the market about new services **and illustrate** the way shortsea shipping (SSS) works using practical examples. We increasingly focus on such 'best practices' to convince both small and big exporters of the possibilities of shortsea shipping. We offer that information free of charge through our website [www.shortsea.be](http://www.shortsea.be), our print-

ed (quarterly) newsletter and an e-zine. Interested? Then pass on your data to [www.shortsea.be](http://www.shortsea.be) or mail to [shortsea@shortsea.be](mailto:shortsea@shortsea.be). That way you will easily keep abreast of any developments!

**i Do you have practical questions about your transport chain and does shortsea seem to offer possibilities? Do not hesitate to contact us at [shortsea@shortsea.be](mailto:shortsea@shortsea.be) or by telephone on number 0032 3 20 20 520.**

# for Europe



France, the Ruhr and Switzerland. Thanks to our ports Europe has become the hinterland of Flanders, both for imports and exports. No less than 40 coastal countries in the whole of Europe and North Africa are accessible via the four Flemish ports through a network of regular, frequent and reliable shortsea services.

### **For every type of cargo**

Furthermore, a suitable ship is always available for any type of cargo. Shippers and their logistic partners find in shortsea shipping a sustainable link in their transport chain.

### **Modal shift becomes comodality**

For a long time the European support programmes demanded a rather strict modal shift from road haulage to alternative transport modes. Meanwhile the European Commission has introduced the new notion of 'comodality' in which each transport mode is assessed as to its possibilities and used in the logistic chain in the most effective way possible.

### **Faster than you think**

Shortsea shipping is a fast transport mode because it can transport large quantities of cargo at once over longer distances. Shortsea enables the shipper to deliver the goods in time at the client's. Also for small cargo lots a solution is available through consolidation or grouping services.

### **Shortsea shipping is evolving rapidly**

Almost unknown ten years ago, shortsea now turns up frequently in the world of transport and logistics. In recent years a number of specific trends have emerged:

- Take-overs and joint ventures among shipping companies have turned some of them into larger and more substantial players. At the same time their area of activity within Europe has widened considerably.
- The shipping companies firmly believe in the further development of shortsea shipping. They invest in new ships and increase their capacity and offer.
- The ports continue to develop their hub function. The 'round-the-world' players want their cargo to be conveyed through a network of maritime links. The so-called feeder services, as well as the purely intra-European shipping companies, offer an enormous range of services to the shippers and their logistic partners.
- There is a growing awareness in favour of 'green' transport amongst the companies.
- Various types and sizes of containers are being developed and the 45' pallet-wide container is being introduced in the Mediterranean.
- Road haulage companies also are increasingly interested: they too have to cope with difficulties to meet their contractual lead times. Increasingly they become 'multimodal providers' looking for synergies with shortsea shipping.

# 12 Shortsea best practices

## 1. Road haulier turns into intermodal provider

*Thanks to Europe's long shoreline*

For over 20 years the transport group Corneel Geerts has developed a vision as an intermodal provider in which synergy with shortsea is part of the service to the customer. "We take advantage of Europe's long coastline", managing director Marc Geerts says. "You can keep a check on the investment in lorries. In part, you also set off any shortage of drivers and your people no longer have to be away from home for a whole week!"

The company makes just-in-time door-to-door deliveries to England, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark. It is the intention to serve Spain in future also using the Zeebrugge-Bilbao service. Additionally the company also uses rail in its intermodal concepts.

## 2. Project cargo to Liverpool

*165-tonne piling hammer spread from Willebroek to England*

In March 2010 a 165-tonne piling hammer spread was shipped from the G&G quay in Willebroek (on the Brussels-Scheldt maritime canal) straight to the waters off the port of Liverpool. After two months of work the metal construction with a 24x24 metre base and a height of 7 metres was placed on a seaworthy pontoon at the quay in Willebroek.

In order to pass a railway bridge on the maritime canal the frame was tilted 45 degrees. Using the floating crane 'Brabo' the construction was placed horizontally on the pontoon in Antwerp and after the canal tug had been replaced by a seagoing tug the transport continued to Liverpool. In the waters off Liverpool the piling hammer spread became part of an 'offshore work platform' of GeoSea, a subsidiary of the Deme dredging group.

## 3. Shortsea is also suitable for limited volumes

*Vanguard Logistics centralises small lots*

Vanguard Logistics Services bring together small batches of cargo with the same destination, loads them into containers, ships them and delivers them neatly to the various addressees. Vanguard operates as a neutral Non Vessel Operating Common Carrier (NVOCC). Since its establishment in 1978 it has witnessed a strong growth, partly thanks to acquisitions such as Confreight in 2007.

In September 2007 the construction of a new warehouse was started in Antwerp. The building was put into service on 1 September 2008. The entire site covers an area of 70.000 m<sup>2</sup>, 40.000 m<sup>2</sup> of which is storage space. 2.000 m<sup>2</sup> have been set aside for the storage of dangerous substances in accordance with the regulatory requirements. Vanguard Logistics uses all modern techniques for fumigating, barcoding, scanning, labelling and data management of the cargo.



#### 4. Tunnel sections to Norway

*Project cargo from Genk to Oslo or Bergen*

Prefaco NV has pocketed a contract for the delivery of 200,000 sqm of tunnel elements to Norway. By order of the Norwegian authorities the company supplies concrete lining elements for a drilled tunnel. The slightly curved wall elements are manufactured in Houthalen, Limburg. They each weigh 7.2 tonnes and measure 5 by 3.8 metres.

In Genk the sections are loaded on board at a quay along the Albert Canal. The transport of the first cargo of tunnel elements was carried out using a barge and a coaster with transshipment at Moerdijk. Later Prefaco opted for shipment with a smaller coaster that can sail to Genk. That way the extra handling at Moerdijk was avoided. Each coaster takes 200 wall elements on board and together with some extra material each load weighs approx. 1,600 tonnes. The coaster sails directly from Genk to the construction site in Oslo or Bergen without additional transshipment.

#### 5. Concert stages on the European seas

*Event logistics with a musical touch*

Stageco's success story started 25 years ago with the construction of stages for the Torhout-Werchter festival, currently known as Rock Werchter. Nowadays the Belgian stage-building company has subsidiaries in Belgium, Germany, France, Austria, the Netherlands and the United States. As market leader it exports 95% of its production across the world. For the transport of its European projects Stageco prefers to play the shortsea card.

For its European deliveries the stage builders can already look back on quite a large number of shortsea transports. For its regular assignments in the UK Stageco puts the trucks on ferry services. Coldplay's tour stage, for instance, was shipped to Dublin that way. For the three-day rock festival 'T in the Park' in Scotland 15 accompanied trailers were taken on board in Zeebrugge for shipment to Rosyth. The Zeebrugge-Purfleet service took 25 trailers across the Channel for the 'Brit Awards', the annual award ceremony of the British music industry in London. And shortsea services were used out of Ghent for transports to Norway (Brevik) and Sweden (Göteborg).

#### 6. Shipit develops intermodal terminal

*New dedicated terminal*

In 2008 the Antwerp-based company Shipit acquired a concession on the Antwerp Left Bank, adjacent to the container terminals at the Deurganckdok. The development of the terminal took place in different stages. The initial focus will be on operating the site as a container freight station (CFS) where containers will be stripped and stuffed. Conventional cargo will be conveyed in and out by inland navigation and rail. In a further phase a quay-wall will be built at which coasters, feeder vessels and inland barges can be handled.

Eventually Shipit wishes to operate a dedicated shortsea and lighter terminal at which the transshipment of the incoming deep-sea containers in the Deurganckdok can be carried out using all possible modes. At that time a total surface of 90.000 m<sup>2</sup> and 15.000 m<sup>2</sup> of warehouse space will be available. Shipit also takes care of the multimodal transport of bulk and project cargo using sea-river coasters, for instance. As an external logistics manager it also organises intermodal container shipments.





## 7. Van Hool moves 30 double decker buses

*Ro-ro from Lier to Oxford*

The Koningshooikt-based bus manufacturer Van Hool has shipped 99 buses from Antwerp to Algeria. Apart from that particular shortsea traffic Van Hool also makes regular use of maritime transport to ship trailers and buses to the United Kingdom. The trailers leave from Zeebrugge, the buses from Ostend. In addition, there is also a shortsea transport of mainly trailers to Norway from Amsterdam and of buses to the Canary Islands via Flushing.

The well-known bus manufacturer also sold 30 double decker buses to a Scottish bus company, to take commuters from Oxford to London. As from June 2009 the new buses were taken from Ostend to Ramsgate by the shipping company TransEuropeFerries. The final part of the route on British soil is carried out by road.

## 8. Multimodal transport to Liverpool

*Project cargo via Antwerp and Zeebrugge*

A deodoriser unit weighing 68 tonnes, with a length of 35 m and a 4-metre diameter, was transported safely from Bilbao to Liverpool by Transfennica, PortConnect and Atlantic Container Lines.

The machine, used in the refining process of oil for the food industry, had been built in Amurrio. From there it was transported by flatbed trailer 45 km down the road to Bilbao, where it was loaded on the upper deck of Transfennica's conro 'Friedrich Russ' to make the crossing to Zeebrugge. There the heavy cargo was transhipped onto Portconnect's inland barge 'Were Di' to continue its journey to Antwerp. Upon arrival the enormous piece was loaded on a flatbed trailer of the British company GCS Johnson, which, as accompanied freight, went on board of the conro 'Atlantic Concert', owned by Atlantic Container Lines, for the trip to Liverpool. There the heavy item reached its final destination at the new refinery of New Britain Oil, 4 km out of the port of Liverpool. Overall only 50 km of the transport took place by road.

## 9. Ingredients for soft drinks and washing-up liquid

*Prayon goes multimodal with liquid bulk*

Prayon, which is located in Puurs along the Brussels-Scheldt Maritime Canal, transports almost 70 percent of its goods by way of the canal. That includes maritime transport, shortsea shipping and inland navigation.

In 2007 Prayon decided to ship an annual 30,000 tonnes of liquid phosphoric acid to Immingham by shortsea instead of by road. Furthermore, it also ships, by coaster to Denmark, 10,000 tonnes of dry bulk per year for the cement industry and it uses multimodal transport for some 194,000 tonnes of merchandise to various destinations in Europe. Prayon also forwards 4.7 percent by rail and 27 percent by road – in combination with other modes, as the case may be.

The company tries to opt in favour of the canal as much as possible. There are plans to route part of the road volume via the Willebroek terminal. Initial calculations show that, in doing so, it could transfer an additional 20,000 tonnes per year from land to water.



## 10. Kesteleyn and Boskalis move sand and gravel

*From the English coast to storage in Ghent*

The Ghent-based company Kesteleyn goes maritime. With the help of the dredging company Boskalis it builds up a supply of sand and gravel in the Ghent Kluizendok. The major part of the 2m tonnes of sand and gravel the firm distributes through its own terminals in Ghent and Avelgem now comes out of the sea. To that end Kesteleyn has activated a concession off the English coast. In January 2009 the Boskalis dredge 'Oranje' has sailed some ten times back and forth between Ghent and the English coast. That way a substantial stock was accumulated at the Kluizendok.

Kesteleyn has agreed with Boskalis that dredges that are waiting for their next assignment or that are diverted because of a storm are mobilised to take sand to Ghent. That way Boskalis can keep its ships on the move and Kesteleyn makes sure that it will have a sufficient stock to cover the periods in which no ships are available.

## 11. Heitrans exports shrimps to Morocco

*Refrigerated transport over shortsea waters*



The Dutch refrigerated transport operator Heitrans B.V. has opted for Transfennica's shortsea service between Zeebrugge and Bilbao for all its shipments to Morocco. In doing so, Heitrans sets an example for other transporters of time-sensitive and expensive or perishable goods, such as vegetables, fruit, car parts or electronics. Heiploeg, the mother company of Heitrans, is the largest shrimp supplier in Europe.

As far as Heitrans is concerned, the switch from road haulage to navigation saves the company 2,000 km between the Netherlands and Morocco. At the same time the per-truck productivity also increases. While in the past nine trucks left with nine trailers, now – with shortsea – only three trucks leave for every nine trailers. According to Rudie De Vries, a planner at Heitrans, the transport currently takes just as long as before, but it now uses an environmentally-friendly alternative.

**i** You can find the full story in our electronic newsletters. Surf to [www.shortsea.be](http://www.shortsea.be) > news > newsletters, or contact the promotion office:

## 12. Sustainable containers at Colruyt's

*A green link with Spain and Portugal*

The Belgian supermarket chain Colruyt is extending its environmentally-friendly and sustainable approach by switching to shortsea shipping for its imports from the Iberian Peninsula. Products brought in from Portugal are taken on board in the port of Leixoes bound for Antwerp. From there the goods are taken by barge to the port of Brussels. As far as Spain is concerned, Colruyt uses the ro-ro connection Bilbao-Zeebrugge.

From Portugal this corresponds to a modal shift of 6,500,000 tonnes/km per year and an annual CO<sub>2</sub> reduction of 405 tonnes. From Spain an annual 2,380,000 tonnes/km is switched from road to shortsea, amounting to a reduction of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 125 tonnes per annum.

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# Short Sea Shipping: Long Term Vision



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