

Brussels, 11 October 2006

The European Commission has selected 16 Marco Polo projects

The European Commission has decided to award financial support to the 16 best projects submitted under the third call of the Marco Polo Programme. These projects will result in an important transfer of freight off heavily congested roads to more environmentally-friendly modes of transport, such as short-sea shipping, rail and inland waterways. The financial support awarded to the 16 selected projects amounts to € 21.7 million.

Vice-President Jacques Barrot in charge of transport welcomed the Commission's decision, stressing that "all supported projects will shift the balance between the transport modes, and thereby contribute to the sustainable development strategy of the European Union".

The actions were submitted under the third call for proposals. An extensive evaluation has been carried-out, followed by a formal procedure involving both the Member States and the European Parliament, who fully endorsed the Commission's shortlist of actions.

A few facts:

- 63 proposals were received, requesting € 91.9 million of EU support;
- the 16 actions are shifting 10.3 billion tonnes/kilometres of freight, the yearly equivalent of 134 100 trucks driving on the route Rotterdam - Rome;
- these 16 actions will trigger private investments of about € 350 million (without infrastructure);
- the 16 actions show good geographical distribution, with large, small, central and peripheral countries benefiting;
- distribution by action type: 12 modal shift actions, 2 catalyst actions and 2 common learning actions.
- A Marco Polo Info Conference will take place on the 30th November and 1st December 2006 in Nantes (France), where the results of the third selection round will be presented to interested companies and all parties concerned. The event will also help potential applicants to prepare for the first call under the new Marco Polo II Programme, which is scheduled for publication at the beginning of 2007.

In the Mid-term review of the White Paper on Transport¹, the Commission proposed to continue measures to promote environmentally friendly modes of transport. To achieve this objective, the Marco Polo Programme supports actions in freight transport, logistics and other relevant markets. These actions should contribute to shifting the increase in international road freight traffic to short sea shipping, rail and

¹ Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament *Keep Europe moving – Sustainable mobility for our continent Mid-term review of the European Commission's 2001 Transport White Paper*, COM(2006)314 of 22.6.2006 – [IP/06/818](#)

inland waterways or to a combination of modes of transport in which road journeys are as short as possible.

Further details, also on the selected actions, are available at the Marco Polo website:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/marcopolo/projects/index_en.htm