



28 Nov 2025 -18:14

Belgium elected to the Council of the International Maritime Organisation

On Friday, Belgium was elected to the Council of the International Maritime Organisation in London. This will enable our country to influence international shipping policy over the next two years.

A seat of great importance for our country

The Council is the executive body of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), which is responsible for the international shipping policy within the UN. This includes safety standards, the training of seafarers and environmental regulations such as the Net-Zero Framework. Decisions therefore have a major impact on our economy and on the entire logistics chain.

The Council determines the priorities and budget of the IMO. Belgium is located on one of the busiest sea routes in the world, has a rapidly growing fleet and is home to the second largest port in Europe. It is therefore crucial for our country to have a say in international shipping policy.

Belgium's added value for the IMO

Being a member of the IMO Council is not only important for Belgium, Belgium is also important for the IMO. Our country focuses on five themes:

Sharing knowledge: Belgium is a pioneer in areas such as autonomous shipping and alternative fuels. Sharing this expertise with other countries is crucial to overcoming the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Security: Through legislation and partnerships, our country already took many measures against the smuggling of illegal goods, exotic animals and human beings. Belgium is now also calling for a stronger policy at international level.

Sustainability: the maritime sector should become carbon neutral by 2050. Our sector is already at the forefront of sustainable projects, and international policy frameworks provide the necessary guarantees to keep ambitious investments competitive.

Innovation: new technologies play a key role in the future of the maritime sector. With our offshore wind farms and innovative maritime sector, we are among the international leaders.

Welfare of seafarers: seafarers are at the heart of the maritime chain. Belgium is committed to ensuring their safety and preventing intimidation. Everyone should feel welcome, including women and LGBTIQ+ persons.



Elected in Category C for States with special interests

The IMO Council consists of 40 members divided into three categories:

- Category A: 10 States with the largest interest in providing international shipping services
- Category B: 10 States with the largest interest in international seaborne trade
- Category C: 20 States that have special interests in maritime transport or navigation and who represent all major geographic areas of the world

The Council has a two-year mandate and is elected by the Member States during the General Assembly. This took place in London from 24 to 28 November. Belgium was elected in Category C. Our country came in third place with 141 votes.

The [Belgian election campaign](#) was run in close cooperation with the Minister in charge of the North Sea Annelies Verlinden, the FPS Foreign Affairs, and the sector (Royal Belgian Shipowners' Association). DG Shipping (FPS Mobility and Transport) led the campaign. Thanks to their commitment, Belgium can continue to build the future of shipping on an international level.

Annelies Verlinden, Minister in charge of the North Sea: “Belgium plays a key role in international shipping. With this seat, we can use our expertise to make the sector safer, more sustainable, and more innovative. In doing so, we never lose sight of the people: the well-being of seafarers is central. It is a recognition of our commitment and an opportunity to help shape the maritime future.”

Maxime Prévot, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Development Cooperation: “Over the past year, Belgium has actively contributed to the work of the IMO. Our election shows that the IMO Member States appreciate our commitment to safe, innovative and sustainable maritime transport. As a member of the Council, we will listen to the opinions and concerns of all Member States, build bridges and strive for consensus in order to promote an ambitious and growth-oriented agenda.”

Peter Claeysens, Director General Shipping: “The FPS Mobility and Transport is committed to innovation and plays a pioneering role internationally in cooperation with the entire maritime sector. Through listening to them, we know what really matters and can adjust our policy accordingly.”

More information

FPS Mobility and Transport

Thomas De Spiegelaere, spokesperson
TEL +32 (0)485 19 59 63
EMAIL pers@mobilit.fgov.be



FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation

David Jordens, spokesperson

TEL +32 2 501 80 50, GSM +32 477 40 32 12

EMAIL david.jordens@diplobel.fed.be

Pierre Steverlynck, spokesperson

TEL +32 2 501 44 16, GSM +32 471 44 06 04

EMAIL pierre.steverlynck@diplobel.fed.be

Florinda Baleci, spokesperson

TEL +32 2 501 84 29, GSM +32 478 92 09 37

EMAIL florinda.baleci@diplobel.fed.be

FPS Mobility and Transports
Communications centre - 2nd floor
Rue du Progrès 80, boîte 5
1210 Brussels
Belgium
+32 2 277 31 11
<http://www.mobilit.belgium.be>

Charlotte Van den Branden de Reeth
Spokesperson
+32 474 41 37 47
presse@mobilit.fgov.be

