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## Department of Merchant Shipping invites funding proposals under Motorways of the Sea initiative



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Shipping & Transport, Cyprus

The Department of Merchant Shipping recently invited owners and operators of ships flying the Cyprus flag to submit proposals for funding under the Motorways of the Sea initiative, which is part of the European Commission's Connecting Europe Facility.

Motorways of the Sea consist of short sea routes, ports, associated maritime infrastructure (including hinterland connections) and equipment that facilitate short sea shipping or sea-river services between maritime ports. The initiative aims to:

- promote environmentally friendly, viable, attractive and efficient sea-based transport links which are integrated into the overall transport chain; and
- remove bottlenecks in the EU transport system by making shipping a viable alternative to other overcrowded means of transport.

Funding is available for a variety of purposes, including:

- reducing emissions and converting to less polluting fuels;
- enhancing rail interoperability;
- improving cross-border sections;
- developing port infrastructure;
- establishing new sea-based transport services that are integrated into the logistics chain; and
- upgrading of existing services.

The Connecting Europe Facility programme will finance up to 30% of eligible costs of works and up to 50% of eligible costs of studies, including pilot activities. Up to €1.9 billion of funding will be available under the 2016 call for proposals, which opened on October 13 2016 and closes on February 7 2017. As Cyprus is eligible for funding under the EU Cohesion Fund, entities in Cyprus may access the entire budget. The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works – the Department of Merchant Shipping's parent ministry – will provide advice and assistance on applications.

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