



 **FORWARD**
BELGIUM

ANNUAL REPORT

2022

FORWARD BELGIUM ACTIVITIES

FORWARD Toolkit for the forwarder

In-house coaching for FORWARD Belgium members

Given the continuing tightness in the labour market and the challenges for many companies to find suitable employees, **investing** in the **knowledge** and **training** of your people will become **crucial** in the coming years.

FORWARD Belgium aims to assist its members in this regard

In previous years, FORWARD Belgium has developed several best practices and model documents focused on the freight forwarder and customs representative profession.

These focus on sector-specific recommendations, practical guidelines on how your operational staff can best deal with problems in the logistics chain, ways to increase compliance and reduce risks, use of model templates and standard contracts, ...

The frequent operational and legal questions of FORWARD Belgium members that we receive on a daily basis and the advice we provide in this regard, we have compiled in the form of best practices in a reference book that provides an ideal basis for dwelling on the day-to-day operations of the freight forwarder and its relationship with other logistics players such as shipping companies, terminals, carriers, customs, ...



A freight forwarder Toolkit taken from live

In addition to the existing services we already offer to all FORWARD Belgium members (legal QuickScan; advice & assistance; drafting model conditions and contracts, newsletters, information sessions, etc.), from now on we will focus on informing and sensitising your white-collar workers in the workplace.

We like to explain how we see the ground rules of our profession and our sector, what knowledge is required, what role the freight forwarder and customs representative has in the logistics chain.

On this basis, you will also have a good idea of your employees' wants and needs for additional specialised training.

We will be happy to come to your workplace and give an explanation based on your specific requirements, which we will discuss with you in advance.

For more info, please contact [the FORWARD Belgium secretariat](#).

FORWARD BELGIUM COMMITTEES

Several committees are active within FORWARD Belgium where members have the opportunity to discuss all kinds of current topics. An overview of the various committees can be found [here](#).

Below you can find a sample of some of the issues raised within these committees in 2022 ...

Breakbulk committee

Bulkchain

Within The Way Forward, the partnership between the Port Authority, NxtPort and the private port community, **Bulkchain** was defined as 1 of the priorities for 2023.

The coming months will see further work on digitisation in the breakbulk business.





Digitisation committee

Certified Pick up

The various container terminals are currently preparing to use **Certified Pick up**, the delivery process based on identity instead of PIN codes. As part of a digitally secure port, the implementation

of Certified Pick up is one of Port of Antwerp-Bruges' priorities. Several optimisations have been made in recent months to better align the process with users' needs.

Detailed communications will be circulated in the coming weeks to prepare for the launch.



The Way Forward

A digital pact was concluded between the private port community and Port of Antwerp - Bruges, defining further **digital cooperation**. The various stakeholders jointly determined which digital projects would be taken up and developed in the coming months.

The working group on the import customs process PN/TS has already started.

ETA Terminal tool

The **ETA** (Estimated Time of Arrival) tool is a free application that provides transparency about a ship's arrival time at the terminal.

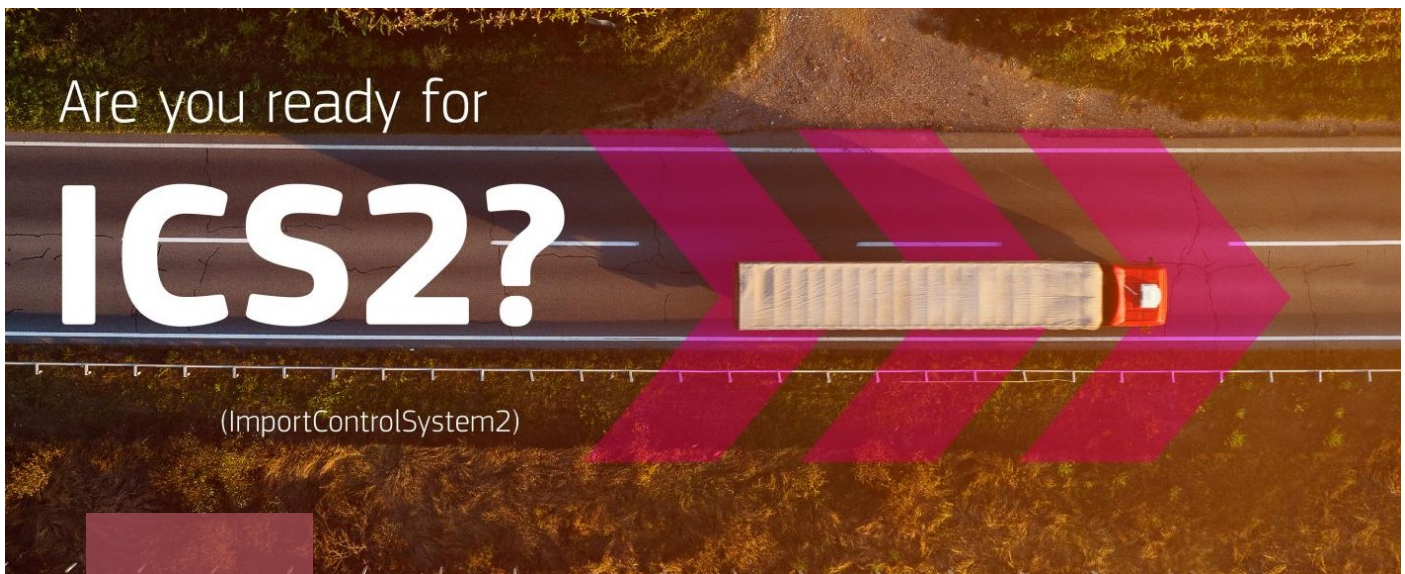
It helps you as a shipper, forwarder or transport operator to plan better.

NxtPort developed the ETA Terminal tool in collaboration with Port of Antwerp-Bruges. After registration, the tool can be consulted free of charge on the Port of Antwerp-Bruges data-sharing platform.

More information as well as the registration link can be found [here](#).

ICS2 Guidance for maritime sector

Within FORWARD Belgium, developments regarding the introduction of ICS2 are being closely monitored. A number of important customs projects are on the agenda in the coming months, which will have an impact on the operations of many customs representatives. PN /TS, ICS2 and IDMS will be discussed further in the coming months.



Customs committee

VAT-circular 2021/C/96: impact on transport services related to export

On 1 January 2022, **VAT Circular 2021/C/96** came into force. With this, the Belgian tax authorities intended to transpose the European judgment in the L.C case (Case C-288/16). The judgment provides for a limitation of the VAT exemption for transport services provided in subcontracting in relation to exports.

After explicitly urging the VAT administration and the Finance Cabinet, it was decided to postpone the introduction in Belgium. There will be renewed consultations at the European level given the major impact on the logistics sector.

Study customs criminal law reform

In 2021, the University of Antwerp conducted a study commissioned by the European Commission on **customs criminal law reform** in Belgium/Luxembourg.

We as FORWARD Belgium provided our input, which was taken into account in the study. During various consultations at the finance minister's office, we further insisted for a review.



Transit of military goods

FORWARD Belgium was involved in a study by the Flemish Peace Institute on the **transit of military goods** and participated in a debate on the subject in the Flemish Parliament on 2 February.

Sanctions against Russia

There have been several consultations with the AAD&A over the past few months on the implementation of the various **sanctions against Russia**.

Use of trade agreements

FORWARD Belgium has collaborated with the Foreign Trade Service and Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT) on a study on the **use of trade agreements** by Belgian exporters and the important role in this underlined by customs representatives and freight forwarders.



National Forum & Regional consultation

At the various meetings of the National Forum and regional consultation, FORWARD Belgium continues to raise all kinds of issues that have an impact on the functioning of the sector.

The newsletters of the FORWARD Customs Committee will give you an overview of all the topics discussed.

FORWARD Best practice customs compliance

After internal consultation between freight forwarders on the one hand and customs representatives on the other, a **Best Practice customs compliance** for freight forwarders was developed within FORWARD Belgium.

This Best Practice defines the role and responsibility of a freight forwarder who outsources its customs formalities to an external customs representative.

Given the trend that freight forwarders are increasingly involved in litigation as customs intermediaries, it is important that they themselves take on certain tasks in the customs process.

This best practice complements the MOU already developed by FORWARD Belgium for customs representatives.



Suspicious shipments reporting point

Given the resourcefulness of criminal organisations, it is not easy for logistics service providers to spot suspicious shipments. Moreover, these rogue companies often "shop around" among different logistics service providers until they find a victim. Based on the idea that you achieve more together, the '**suspicious shipments reporting point**' was set up in 2021.

Through the reporting point, you can stay informed about suspicious situations reported by fellow forwarders.

FORWARD has again held discussions with the Federal Judicial Police to see how the sector can cooperate in the context of **combating fraud and drugs**. The FORWARD Belgium reporting point for suspicious consignments was suggested at this point and ways of sharing information that could be useful to the sector are currently being looked at.

The same exercise is currently ongoing with customs.

Consultation moments cabinet minister Van Peteghem

During the month of June, **three consultation moments took place at Minister Van Peteghem's office**. Work will continue during the current legislature on:

- ⇒ Rewriting the AWDA (penalty provisions).
- ⇒ Practical development of improvement processes and compliance.
- ⇒ Various other issues related to undervaluation, collateralisation, powers of customs etc.

Tool concerning underevaluation

At FORWARD Belgium's request, **TARIC Support** has developed a tool (API link) that allows you to automatically check whether the customs value is in line with the average value of similar products.



The tool can initially be used to increase your internal compliance and mitigate underevaluation risks.

“Start with white sheet on customs law reform”

In the [Special Port & Logistics of Entrepreneurs magazine](#), Olivier Schoenmaeckers (FORWARD Belgium) and Hilde Bruggeman (ASV - Antwerp Shipping Federation) give their views on customs reform in an interview. "The Belgian economic sector needs a modern framework that responds to economic reality."

Sustainability committee



CO2 calculation of your logistics chain

During the Sustainability Committee, an **online workshop** was held on the **GLEC Framework** (*Global Logistics Emissions Council*). GLEC forms an internationally recognised methodology to calculate CO2 for logistics service providers across the entire logistics chain.

The workshop provided an insight to freight forwarders on how to get started with the **CO2 calculation** of their **logistics chain**.

As a freight forwarder does not usually have its own means of transport, we largely depend on our partners to calculate CO2 emissions.

However, using a standard emission intensity, the forwarder can make a good estimate of the CO2 emissions over the logistics chain.

A tool aimed at logistics service providers that uses emission factors from the GLEC framework is [EcoTransIT](#). During a demo session, practical insight was given on how it works.

FORWARD Goals for sustainable development

FORWARD Belgium launched its own sustainability label for freight forwarders, customs representatives and logistics service providers. The label was named 'FORWARD Goals for sustainable development' and has its own logo.

In this way, FORWARD Belgium wants to encourage its members to develop sustainable policies - in a feasible and accessible way. Meanwhile, the following companies have already been awarded the **FORWARD Goals label**:

- ⇒ Ahlers Belgium
- ⇒ BDP International
- ⇒ Deloitte Belgium
- ⇒ Embassy Freight Services Europe
- ⇒ Eutraco
- ⇒ Fast Shipping & Forwarding Belgium
- ⇒ Haeger & Schmidt Logistics Belgium
- ⇒ H. Essers
- ⇒ JAS Forwarding Worldwide Belgium
- ⇒ Manuport Logistics
- ⇒ Portmade
- ⇒ Schenker
- ⇒ TCI Carriers
- ⇒ Ziegler

Each year, a **FORWARD GOALS Award** is also presented to the company that submitted the most original project or dossier.

For 2022, the evaluation committee decided to give this Award to **Manuport Logistics** and this because of the strong involvement of the various employees in submitting their original dossier.

Using a film recording, Manuport Logistics demonstrated that sustainable cooperation is ingrained in their corporate culture.

The initiatives they do every year with an entire team of employees that work on multiple SDGs, such as various Warmest Week projects, are great examples of this.

Meanwhile, an '**inspirational guide**' of all submitted projects has also been made and can be downloaded [here](#). We hope it will inspire companies and help them follow a sustainable course.





AirCargoBelgium

External relations committee

Air Cargo Belgium

The **cooperation** between FORWARD Belgium and Air Cargo Belgium has continued in recent months.

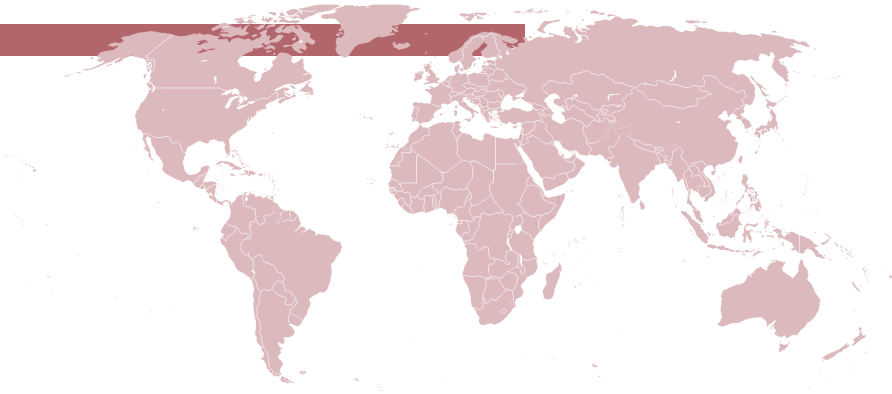
An exchange of information was set up and ideas between different representatives were exchanged on various common topics.

Representatives of the cluster Forwarders at Air Cargo Belgium will represent Belgium on air cargo matters within the international organisations Clecat and FIATA.

VEREXZ becomes FORWARD Zeebrugge

Over the past year, several discussions have taken place between FORWARD Belgium and the Zeebrugge freight forwarders' association Verexz to see how a closer **cooperation** can be established.

Further **integration** will be pursued in joint consultation in the coming period.



CLECAT / FIATA

FORWARD Belgium remains actively committed to representing the Belgian freight forwarding sector on the international stage through various representatives.

FIATA World Congress 2022

From 14 to 16 September, FORWARD Belgium was represented at the annual FIATA World Congress in Busan with the theme '*Uniting for Global Solutions*'. [Read](#) the press releases of the congress and the Young Logistics Professional (YLP) Awards 2022 [here](#).



FIATA World Congress 2023 in Brussels

Preparations for **FIATA World Congress 2023** - which will take place from 3 to 6 October at the [Square Convention Centre in Brussels](#) and which FORWARD Belgium is hosting - are in full swing.

The FIATA congress with the theme '**The changing climate of logistics**' brings together representatives from all over the world involved in the global logistics chain. Besides the congress itself, several networking events will take place as well as a trade fair.



A full day is also reserved for young people and students, who will reflect on the responsibility of logistics service providers in achieving **climate goals** and working towards the **Sustainable Development Goals** during a **Young Logistics Challenge**.

[We have several partnership opportunities to highlight your business.](#) Be sure to give us a call.



Intermodal committee

Rail workshop | 23 June 2022

On Thursday 23 June, Port of Antwerp Bruges organised a **Rail Workshop** in collaboration with FORWARD Belgium. During this event, an overview of current rail solutions was given from a practical perspective and a guide was presented for forwarders (how-to-guide) to get started with rail transport.

It also discussed the merger between the ports of Antwerp and Zeebrugge and the connection between the two ports.



Legal committee

New contract law

On 1 January 2023, **Belgium's new contract law** will come into force.

Although it was already established that no fundamental reforms were being introduced, which would have an impact on our sector, the legal committee considered whether some provisions in the general terms and conditions could be revised.



Mobility Package and the responsibility of the freight forwarder

On 27 September, FORWARD Belgium organised an online info session around the **Mobility Package and the responsibility of the forwarder.**



The **Mobility Package** is a package of European laws and regulations for the transport sector. The aim of the package is to unify rules across EU member states, create a fairer playing field and improve social conditions for drivers.

The Mobility Package includes **new rules** on driving and rest times, cabotage and the compulsory return of the driver, posting of foreign drivers, conditions of establishment, ...

Importantly, the principal of the transport incl. the forwarder also bears responsibility in this.

A number of recommendations to the industry were developed by FORWARD Belgium.

Non-paying customer? → cross-border debt collection options

The logistics sector is an international playing field with many different actors. From our country, traffics leave for every corner of the world and huge volumes of goods arrive.

A web of economic activities that obviously have to be compensated and inevitably give rise to **cross-border claims**.

With regard to Belgian customers, there are numerous options that allow you to recover your outstanding invoices fairly easily and quickly.

It becomes more difficult when you have an outstanding debt on a foreign customer.

FORWARD Belgium organised an online info session on Friday 7 October on the topical importance of a 'short on time' **debt collection policy** at international level and in particular on the benefits of the European attachment of bank accounts.



The freight forwarder as customs intermediary

On 9 December 2022, FORWARD Belgium organised a Webinar on the **role of the freight forwarder as customs intermediary**.

This session looked at freight forwarder **liability** in the customs process and the **disputes** that sometimes exist around direct representation status.

FORWARD Belgium hereby presented its '**Best practice customs compliance for freight forwarders & logistics service providers**'. It concerns **practical recommendations** on the role and responsibility of the freight forwarder, who outsources his customs formalities to an external customs representative. As a customs intermediary, the freight forwarder has every interest in increasing its own knowledge and compliance in the customs process.

This best practice not only increases internal compliance among freight forwarders, it can also act as an internal manual for new employees. Finally, the best practice is an ideal basis to improve the dialogue between freight forwarder and customs representative and to reach better mutual agreements. In this way, the risks to which both the customs representative and the forwarder are exposed can be better managed.

Model conditions in the relation freight forwarder - road transport

In 2021, FORWARD Belgium published model conditions that could be used by freight forwarders and logistics service providers in respect of the road hauliers they rely on.

From the **transport sector**, represented by Febetra, TLV and UPTR, came **joint comments** on several provisions in these conditions.



For the past year and a half, FORWARD Belgium and the various transport federations have been working in **joint dialogue** towards a **text** that is acceptable to **all** and tries to **balance** relations between transporters and their principals.

In today's logistics chain with frequent disruptions, we find that both freight forwarders and hauliers regularly face **unforeseen situations** that put a great strain on their operations. As a result, **discussions** often arise on the ground between the two parties about problems that have their origin elsewhere in the logistics chain.

During the **joint discussions** between FORWARD Belgium, Febetra, TLV and UPTR, an **increasing mutual understanding** of each other's position in the logistics chain emerged.

In practice, we often find that unclear or incomplete (formal) agreements are made between freight forwarders and carriers at the time of the transport order and its execution. In case of discussion, one then has to fall back on CMR or general transport conditions.

However, the CMR Convention has a number of grey areas and does not always address situations that our companies are often confronted with in practice, such as agreements on loading and unloading and the respective responsibilities, disputes regarding cargo securing and overloading, checks on the external condition of containers, waiting times, etc.

On several occasions during the discussions, it emerged that it is often very complex to describe such practical situations in a text and provide an appropriate solution to it that is acceptable to all.

That is why the current model conditions regularly recommend specific agreements between forwarder / principal on the one hand and carrier on the other hand when entering into the transport contract. Since not every transport is a standard process and there are often specific expectations, it is important to make good agreements around this that are clear to both parties in advance and ensure the right balance.

Thus, a **standard transport order** was drawn up in **joint consultation** for both **conventional** and **container transport**. The template leaves the choice of how this can be entered into the process, but in time it would be preferable to integrate this digitally.

This template includes what information and what data should be transferred to the carrier by default. Today, this is still done too piecemeal and cluttered.

The text of the model conditions was provided by FORWARD Belgium to its members in several languages so that freight forwarders can refer to them or preferably include them in their transport contracts.



ADR regulation

FORWARD Belgium has shared its views on the new obligations concerning the appointment of a **safety adviser**. The new ADR texts are vaguely drafted and leave different interpretations open.

FORWARD's views were confirmed by PoAB's Port Captain's Office and IDAGO's security adviser during a recent consultation.



Promotion committee

Promotion of the sector

FORWARD Belgium continues to work closely with the various colleges and universities to bring our sector to the attention of young people.

Young FORWARD Belgium regularly sends out its representatives to give practical testimonials for students. These engaging presentations are always enjoyed by the students.

Round table meeting stakeholders

Talentedroom was a collaboration between the City of Antwerp, VDAB, Province of Antwerp, Voka Alfaport, Logos and Port of Antwerp. The partners combined their expertise to jointly find solutions to the shortage of logistics clerks in and around the port of Antwerp. However, in 2022 it was decided to disband Talentedroom. The stakeholders will continue the good cooperation that was created.

FORWARD Belgium also continues to actively participate in the consultation with the objective of making our sector known to young people and jobseekers

FORWARD event. Network you into the summer!

On 9 June - after more than 2 years - the **annual FORWARD** event could finally take place again. The more than 200 attendees - from the Antwerp port and logistics world - were able to meet each other again 'live' during a reception & walking dinner in the beautiful **Antwerp Trade Fair**.

Photos from this event can be found on the [FORWARD Belgium website](#).



Port Xpert Shipping

FORWARD Belgium is co-supporting the development of the **Port Xpert Shipping** game, an initiative of the Port Centre. This game is aimed at 17-18 year-olds and will be linked to an educational day trip for schools.



9th FORWARD Belgium Quiz

On Thursday 27 October, the **9^{de} edition** of the **FORWARD Belgium Quiz** was organised by FORWARD Belgium and Young FORWARD Belgium. 60 teams had registered to compete for the coveted challenge trophy.

During 10 rounds of questions and two table rounds, the knowledge of the participants present was tested. Sciences, music, history, sports, film, ... passed the revue.

In the end, it was **Organi** with the team **'The Profitariat'** that received the challenge cup.

An award for the most original name was also presented and this year it was snatched away by **Kuehne + Nagel** for their team name **"Willen is Kuehne"**.

Young FORWARD Belgium committee

Accelerating the modal shift of maritime containers

On **Wednesday 27 April**, Young FORWARD Belgium organised a tailored **information session** for Young Logistics Professionals on the theme '*Accelerating the modal shift of maritime containers*'.

FORWARD Cup – 'afterwork edition'

On **Friday 6 May**, Young FORWARD Belgium organised the **5th edition** of the now famous **FORWARD Cup**. 18 teams and 20 companies took part in the mini-football tournament and competed for the coveted challenge cup.

The final was played between MSC Belgium and Remant Cool Logistics. After an exciting match, MSC Belgium was awarded the FORWARD Cup challenge cup for the 3th time.



Young Antwerp Anchorage

On **Thursday, 12 May 2022**, Young FORWARD Belgium, Alfaport Voka, YoungShip Belgium and ASV The Next Generation organised the first edition of the future congress **Young Antwerp Anchorage "Navigating to the future"** at the KAVA Congress Centre.

Several speakers were guests to hone the 'future skills' or personal development of the young professionals present.

Maritime transport committee

Maritime chain situation

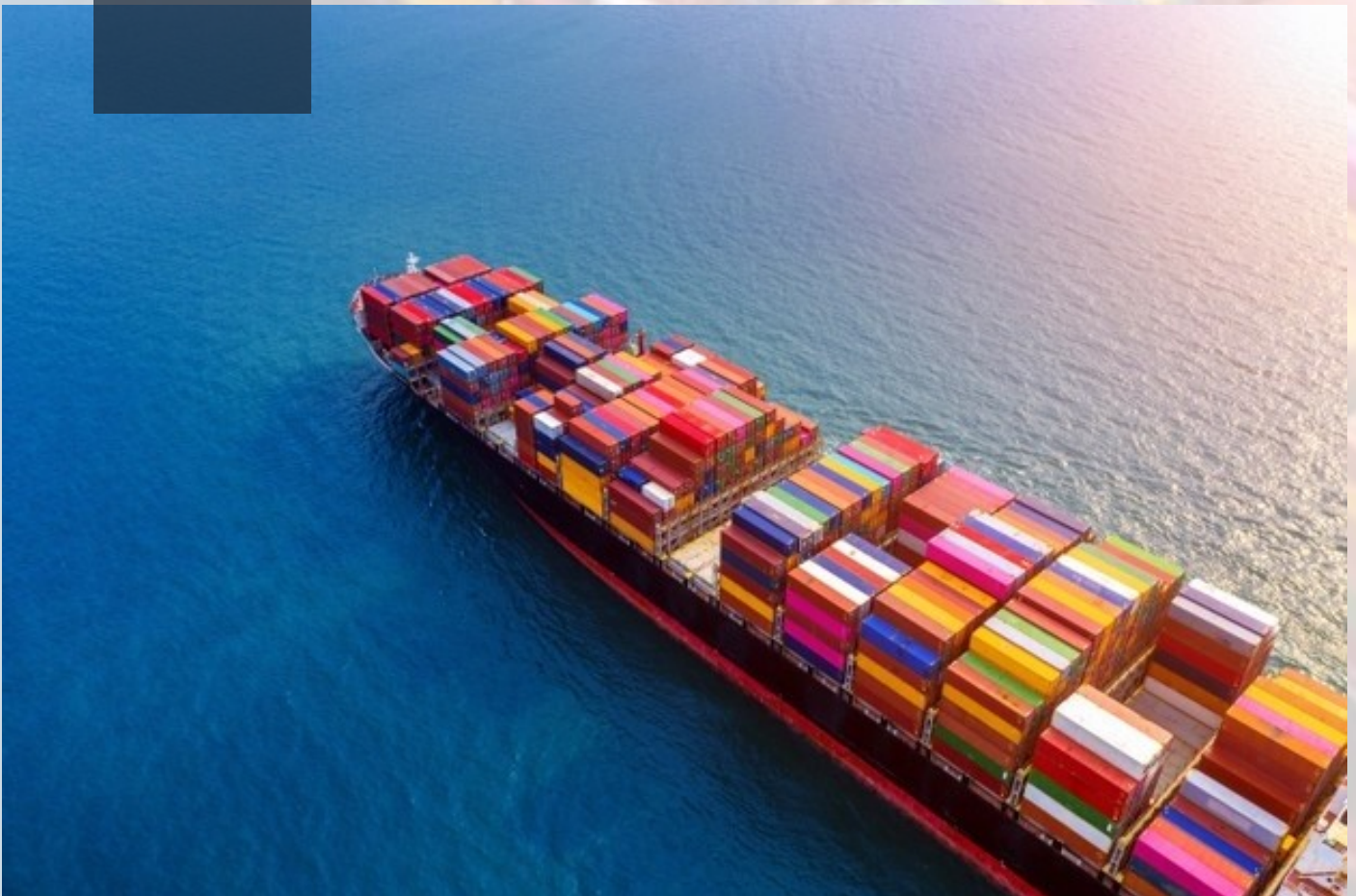
The difficult situation in the maritime chain in recent months has caused many frustrations and given rise to many discussions and disputes due to delays, congestion, altered calls, course deviations, ...

FORWARD Belgium advises its members on an individual basis when faced with such problems.

Consultations between FORWARD Belgium and the Antwerp Shipping Association have taken place over the past year to see if some actions could be taken at **local level** to improve the situation.

Advice was also sought from **specialised competition lawyers** to verify compliance with applicable legal requirements. At the European level, what actions can be taken towards the European competition authorities are also being considered.

Developments in the US and investigations by the Federal Maritime Commission continue to be closely monitored.



FORWARD MAGAZINES

FORWARD Magazine | 16th edition

You can read the online 16th edition of the **FORWARD Magazine** [here](#).

If you would like to receive a printed copy (Dutch and/or English), you can request it from the [FORWARD Belgium secretariat](#).



FORWARD Magazine | 17th edition

The 17^{de} edition of the **FORWARD Magazine** is entirely dedicated to the [FIATA World Congress 2023](#).

You can read the online edition [here](#).

FORWARD AWARD

FORWARD Belgium Award ceremony

Chain optimisation through custom-based slotting

From the bachelor and master theses submitted in 2022 to compete for the **FORWARD Belgium Award**, it was decided to award the prize to Anton Smidts for his bachelor thesis '*Optimisation of the chain by means of custom-based slotting*' with supervisor Robin Gyssels and internship supervisor Gert van Rillaer.



The work was submitted to obtain a professional bachelor of business management, majoring in logistics management at the Karel de Grote Hogeschool.

Because of the strong oral defence and high personal commitment in the elaboration of the master's thesis, an honourable mention was also given to Wout Verellen and Daan Stuyven for their master's thesis "*The implementation of drones in last-mile logistics in Europe*" with Prof Roel Gevaers as supervisor.

The work was submitted to obtain a Master's degree in applied economic sciences and a Master's degree in Commercial Engineering at the University of Antwerp, respectively.

MERCY SHIPS

FORWARD Belgium supports Mercy Ships



FORWARD Belgium has been supporting [Mercy Ships](#) for some time. We will also continue this collaboration.

We would like to put Mercy Ships in the spotlight and hereby make a warm appeal to also support Mercy Ships.

Download the digital corporate brochure [here](#).

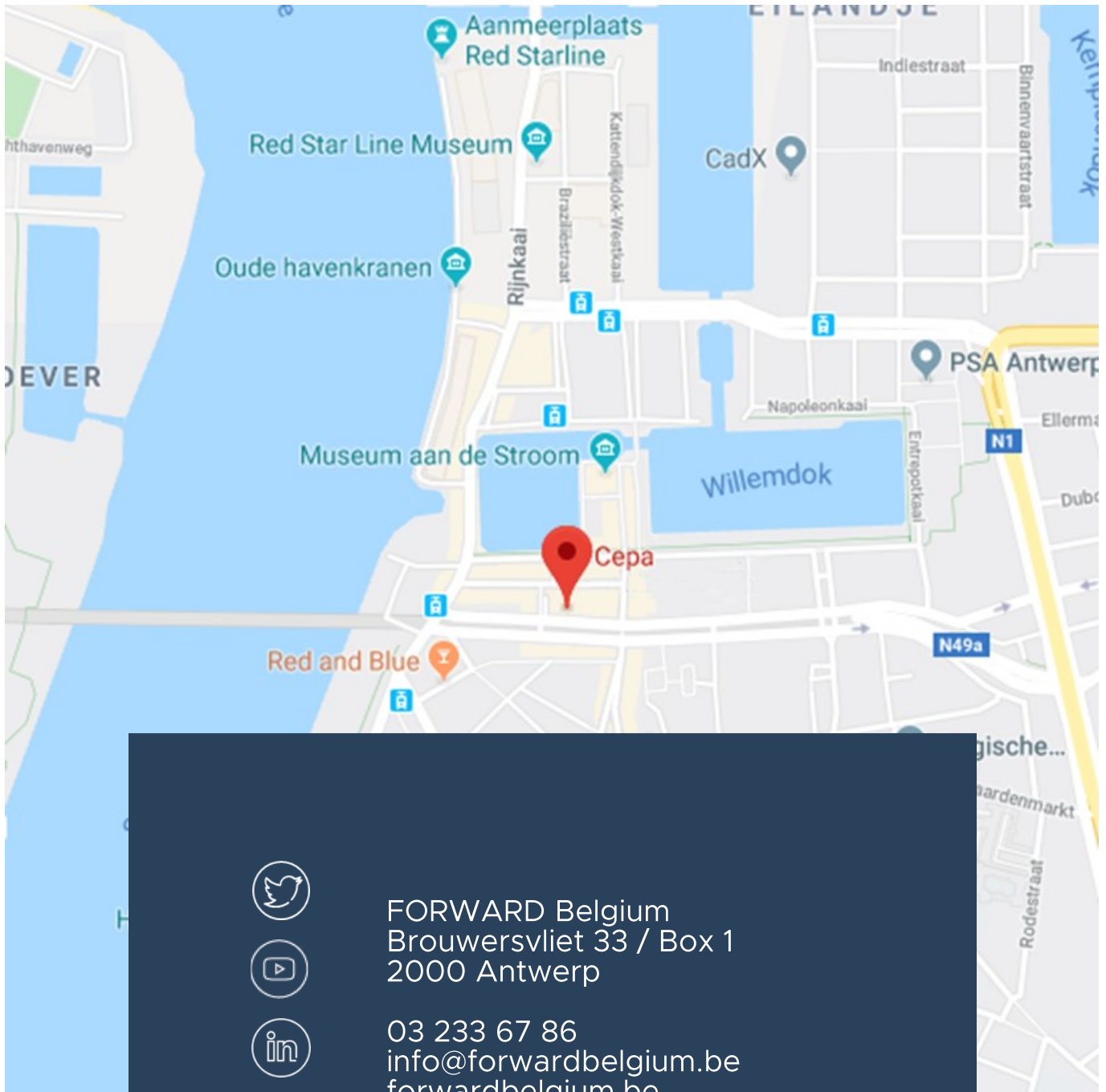
You can watch an interesting video on the history of Mercy Ships [here](#).



HOSPITAL SHIPS TO
TRANSFORM LIVES

Partner with us

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