PORTUSplus – published by RETE, International Association for the Collaboration between Ports and Cities – is an open-access and peer reviewed journal, dedicated to the multidisciplinary study of themes concerning the **urban waterfronts** and the **relationship between port and cities**.
The Journal (portusplus.org) publishes and promotes scientific products and investigations – original works, studies experimental or theoretical, research results, etc. – concerning different fields of interest and from around the world.
The objective is to encourage the dissemination of knowledge and stimulate the international debate, promoting an systemic and holistic approach in the investigation and application, also exploring the interaction between policies and practices in the process.
More information <Aims and Scope>

Promoting the communication and development of scientific research that plays an increasingly relevant role in our society, PORTUSplus invites scholars and researchers, practitioners and policymakers, experts and other stakeholders to respond to the Call for Papers for the **Special Issue *“Waterway Port Cities. Navigating Challenges and Harnessing Potentials”***, submitting original works, research results, case studies and good practices, in the several disciplines inherent to the themes described below.

Submissions should contribute to the understanding and advancement of waterway port cities, providing novel insights, empirical data, or theoretical advancements that can inform future policy and practice.

Waterway Port Cities.
Navigating Challenges and Harnessing Potentials

Waterway Port Cities have long been vital nodes in **global trade, cultural exchange**, and **regional development**, serving as gateways between **maritime and inland transportation networks**. These cities are uniquely positioned at the intersection of land and water, which gives them distinct **opportunities and challenges** in the face of 21st-century **transformations**. As the world shifts towards sustainability, synchro-modality in transport, energy transition, and digital

innovation, waterway port cities are at the forefront of recent changes. However, they also face significant challenges, including those posed by climate-related extreme events, urban and environmental pressures, **complex governance dynamics**.

This special issue aims to explore the unique characteristics, **potentialities**, and challenges that define waterway port cities. We invite contributions that investigate the **innovative strategies** these cities are adopting to maintain their role as hubs as regard **resilience** and **sustainability**, while addressing the multifaceted challenges they face.

Potential Topics

To attract a diversified and multidisciplinary set of contributions, we encourage papers on the following topics, though this list is not exhaustive:

Waterway Port Cities as Economic and Cultural Hubs
The historical and contemporary roles of waterway port cities in regional and global trade.
Cultural heritage and identity in port cities: balancing development with preservation along the waterways.
The economic impact of waterway port cities on their surrounding regions.

Sustainability in Waterway Port Cities
Strategies for enhancing the environmental sustainability of waterways as regard port operations and urban development.
The role of green infrastructure and renewable energy in the system of waterways and inland ports.
Sustainable practices in dredging, waste management, and ecosystems preservation along the waterways.

Synchro-Modality and Transport Integration along the Waterways
The role of waterways and ports in multi-modal transport networks: challenges and opportunities.

Digitalization, smart technologies and artificial intelligence for multimodal traffic management and for optimizing logistics in waterway port cities.
Business models and successful case studies for the synchro-modal transport implementations in port cities bordering waterways.

Energy Transition and Innovation in Waterway Port Cities
Waterway port cities as pioneers in the global energy transition and digital advances.
Development and integration of alternative energy sources in port infrastructures changing the landscape and serving the waterways.
Challenges and opportunities in retrofitting port cities for energy efficiency and resilience of the waterway systems.

Climate Change and Resilience in Waterway Port Cities
The impact of climate change on port cities and waterway systems: vulnerabilities and adaptive strategies.
Urban planning and infrastructure development for enhancing geopolitical, geo-economic and climate resilience in port cities along the waterways.
The role of nature-based solutions in enhancing the resilience of waterway systems and urban port areas.

Trends in Governance and Policies in Waterway Port Cities
Evolving governance structures in port cities and collaboration between public agencies and private companies as they navigate increasing complexity of waterway regions.
The impact of local, national, and international policies, regulation, administration, business models on the development of port cities bordering waterways.
Interactions between stakeholders and policy makers involved in waterway management and collaboration across different sectors, disciplines, and geographical contexts for Knowledge exchange and best practices, capacity building and learning.

Waterway Management and Urban Development Processes
Challenges and opportunities in the redevelopment, specialization and diversification of waterways and ports, also for attracting new businesses and new talents.
Integrated urban and functional planning in the historic ports and along the

waterways, to make sure the port areas will increasingly become attractive places and the surrounding landscape a catalyst in bringing the port and the city.
Governance constellations and wide range of interests, policies and challenges in port city regions: formal and informal actor dynamics in the waterway context.

Socio-economic Dimensions and Impacts on Local Communities
Relationship between port cities, waterways and hinterlands: economic and social interdependencies.
Socio-economic impacts on communities living along waterways produced by port operations and related activities.
Managing cultural diversities and social inequalities in waterways: inclusive growth and local community engagement.

Suggested Research Questions

To guide potential contributors, we suggest the following research questions:

1. How can waterway port cities balance economic growth with the need for environmental sustainability?
2. What are the best practices for integrating renewable energy sources into port operations?
3. How can synchro-modality be effectively implemented in the context of waterways and port cities?
4. What governance models are most effective in managing stakeholders and complex systems of waterways and port cities?
5. How are port cities and waterway port cities adapting to the challenges posed by climate change?
6. In what ways can port cities bordering the waterways leverage their historical and cultural assets for sustainable urban development?
7. How do port authorities navigate the increasing political and economic pressures from diverse stakeholders?
8. What are the implications of the energy transition for the future development of waterways and their ports?
9. How can waterway port cities address social inequalities while fostering economic growth and innovation?

10. What role do local actor constellations play in the redevelopment of historic port areas and along the waterways?

Process of Paper Submission

PORTUSplus publishes exclusively papers that have not been published previously and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere, rigorous, well-written, high-quality, high-impact papers, with findings of basic/experimental research and development, as well as applications and innovative practices to generate discussions and new prospects.

Participation in the selection for publication in PORTUSplus Journal (**https://portusplus.org/**) can be requested by responding to the “Call for papers” before the established deadline and following the instructions for the online “**Submission Step by Step**”.
More information <Online Submission> and <Submission Preparation Checklist>

Acceptance of papers is based on originality and importance of observations and investigations, works quality and evidence validity, presentation clarity, and relevance both for readership and for fields of interest of the Journal.
More information <Editorial Guidelines> and <Information for Authors>

Language

Articles must be submitted **exclusively in English** (American English, translated or revised by a native speaker or professional in translation). If deemed appropriate by the Author(s), the same work may also be presented **eventually in a second language** among those admitted by the Journal (French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish).

Deadline for Paper Submission

As regards the Paper Submission phase, the **deadline is indicated on the Home Page of the Journal’s website**, as well as in the specific section “**New announcements**”: **https://portusplus.org/index.php/pp/announcement/**.
The works deemed suitable and in line with the standards of the Journal are subjected to a double-blind peer review process (neither the Authors nor the Reviewers know the identity of each other) to avoid bias in the evaluation.
Any submissions received after the deadline are subsequently reviewed for possible inclusion in the following 2026 issue of PORTUSplus.
More information < Publication Schedule>

Peer Review Process

The papers are subjected to evaluation through an anonymous procedure by at least two members of the **Panel of Reviewers**, composed by prestigious academics and experts from different disciplines (urban planners, architects, engineers, geographers, historians, sociologists, etc.), with the collaboration of **Scientific Advisory Board** and **Editorial Board** members.
The contributions are evaluated on the basis of specific criteria (originality of approach and methodology; scientific-academic level; quality and clarity of contents; completeness and order of presentation; importance in the disciplinary sector; scope of application of the results; contribution to the international debate, illustrations, references; etc.), making use of the expertise and experience of the Reviewers in thematic fields of interest to the Journal.
More information <Peer Review Process> and <Information for Reviewers>

Publication of Selected Papers

In accordance with the recommendations of the Reviewers, the papers will be selected by the Editors and published on **PORTUSplus** with the **ISSN code (2039-6422)**, the International Standard Serial Number which uniquely identifies a serial publication.
The articles are published, after the review and copy-editing process is completed,

as part of a single issue of the Journal, accompanied by a table of contents. All editorial processes aimed at publication are granted by the Journal Editor free of charge, with the valuable collaboration of the Editorial Team.

Open Access

All articles published on PORTUSplus are made freely and permanently accessible via the internet, immediately after publication, without restrictions, charges and embargo period. The articles are available to a wide audience and internationally, based on the principle that open access supports a greater exchange of knowledge and experience.
More information <Open Access Policy> and <Charges Policy>

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Transparency and Ethical Integrity

PORTUSplus complies with the principles of transparency and best practices in

academic publishing at all stages of the publication process.
During the entire editorial process, the Journal follows the recommendations and policies suggested by the **Committee on Publication Ethics – COPE** (https://publicationethics.org), also encouraging the Authors to pursue the international standards for publications of scholarly research.
More information <Publications Ethics and Malpractices> and <Conflicts of Interest>

Journal Policies

The Journal makes all its policies available on the website, which include detailed information on submission, editorial processes, guidelines for different users, copyright, etc. All parties involved in the activities and production process are introduced and informed around their rights and responsibilities to ensure a smooth and ethical publishing process.
More information <Policies> and <Roles and Responsibilities in Publishing>

More Information

For further details you can consult the Journal’s website at the following link:

https://portusplus.org/index.php/pp/announcement/

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