

# Sulina Channel

written by iasexam.com | 18/08/2023



**Context-** The Danube Delta has offered Ukraine an alternative route for its grain since Russia withdrew from the Black Sea Grain Agreement last month.

## Key Highlights

- An agreement brokered by the United Nations and Turkey previously allowed safe passage for cargo ships carrying grain from Odessa, Chornomorsk and Pivdennyi on the Black Sea in Ukraine.
- Often referred to as the “Breadbasket of Europe”, Ukraine is one of the largest exporters of cereals in the world and its economy is heavily dependent on agricultural exports.

## About the Danube

- Passing through ten countries, about 817,000 km<sup>2</sup> and draining the territory of 18 countries, the Danube is the most international river in the world.
- Flowing from the Black Forest in Germany to the Danube Delta in Romania and Ukraine and to the Black Sea, the Danube is the only major river in Europe that flows west to east from Central Europe to Eastern Europe.
- The Danube is the longest river in the European Union and the longest river in Europe after the Volga.
- The European Commission now recognizes the Danube as “Europe’s most important non-ocean waterway” and “the central axis of the future of the European Union”.
- The biggest tributaries of the Danube are Tisza, Dravo, Sava, Inn and Prut.

## About the Sulina Canal

- The Sulina Canal, a 63-kilometer-long Danube River that connects Ukraine's main river ports with the Black Sea, is particularly important on this "new" trade route and lies entirely within the borders of NATO member Romania.
- Historically, the Danube was crucial for the transport of goods.
- Near Tulcea in Romania, about 80 kilometers from the sea, the river begins to spread to its mouth, which has three main channels – Chilia, Sulina and St George.
- Of these, the deepened and straightened Sulina Canal is the only one deep and wide enough for cargo traffic.
- This makes it a kind of river "highway" – crucial for the transport of goods from the interior to the Black Sea.
- Ships carrying grain from Ukraine depart from Ukrainian ports such as Izmail and Reni Mainstream (or Chile Channel) and go to the port of Sulina at the mouth of the Sulina Channel.
- From there, they go approximately 140 km south to the largest port of Romania, Constanta.
- Here, the cargo is transferred to larger ships that transport it from the Black Sea through the Bosphorus Strait to the Mediterranean Sea.
- This route is under constant surveillance and protection by NATO.