

Inland waterway transport: an obvious choice

MANFRED SEITZ • VIA DONAU

CHAIRMAN OF THE PLATINA EXECUTIVE BOARD



In January 2006, the European Commission launched NAIADES for the promotion of inland waterway transport. NAIADES is a Commission initiative to enhance the use of

inland navigation, as part of creating a sustainable, competitive and environmentally friendly European transport network. This objective was embraced by the inland navigation sector, who, together with the Commission, have created PLATINA (Platform for the implementation of NAIADES), an FP7 project consisting of 22 partners from nine different countries, in order to accelerate the achievement of the NAIADES aims.

The PLATINA consortium is dedicated to supporting the European Commission, Mem-

ber States and third countries in the implementation of selected NAIADES actions. Organised along the lines of the NAIADES action programme, five thematic areas are pursued in the work plan of PLATINA.

In the first project year PLATINA activities and working groups have been set up. PLATINA has initiated several actions in the fields of fleet innovation, education and training, image and awareness, River Information Services and infrastructure development.

PLATINA is a multi-disciplinary knowledge network with an open communication strategy. All project actions, results and events can therefore be monitored through our online information services (www.naiades.info). Additionally, the PLATINA consortium keeps you informed through a regular newsletter. We are pleased to be able to present this first newsletter, detailing the progress made so far by PLATINA.

The NAIADES action programme

The European Commission has the aim of reducing congestion, energy usage and developing sustainable distribution solutions. It recognises inland navigation as an important part of this strategy and to this end has committed itself to the NAIADES action programme, which runs from 2006 to 2013.

Named NAIADES after the river nymphs of ancient Greece, the European NAIADES action programme is the first comprehensive development programme for inland waterway transport. It focuses on five strategic areas to make inland navigation more attractive and competitive:

1. Creating a sound business climate and attracting new markets
2. Stimulating fleet modernisation and innovation
3. Attracting new workforce and increasing investment in human capital
4. Promoting inland waterway transport and
5. Providing an adequate inland waterway infrastructure

Stimulating waterway transport

GERT-JAN MUILERMAN • VIA DONAU

PROJECT COORDINATOR AND WORK PACKAGE LEADER "MARKETS"

Information on the benefits of inland navigation is available in abundance all across Europe. Despite this, the information that people have about inland waterway transport is often incomplete, incorrect or badly communicated. It is one of the key tasks of PLATINA to correct this by creating tailor-made information sets as well as by collecting and consolidating already existing information.



The website www.naiades.info forms the primary communication and dissemination tool of PLATINA. Contents of the website include a news and events section on which news stories are run on a wide range of topics, from new logistics solutions and technical innovations to topical information on infrastructure projects and political initiatives.

➤ www.naiades.info/fast-facts

Available in four languages, the European Funding Database for inland waterway transport provides detailed and up-to-date information on funding programmes available for Europe's inland navigation sector.

➤ www.naiades.info/funding

PLATINA is publishing a series of Good Practices Reports. The cases represent success stories across Europe and have been specifically selected for their transferability. The first Good Practices Report is available online.

➤ www.naiades.info/downloads

Another focus of PLATINA's work package "Markets" is to assist administrations in reducing administrative barriers which hamper inland waterway transport. A consultative meeting was held with representatives of Member States, professional organisations,

river commissions and other interested parties in spring 2009. Following that, PLATINA organised in-depth discussions with public and



private stakeholders and monitored developments on national and European level. The results of this analysis will be presented in a synthesis report on administrative barriers.

Coming up

- Good Practices Report II
- Monitoring report on administrative barriers

Innovations in fleet and operations

CATHERINE LELEU • VNF

WORK PACKAGE LEADER "FLEET"

The strategic objective of this working group is to prepare inland waterway transport for the technological, logistics and environmental challenges of the 21st century. In order to meet these requirements, a group of 21 renowned innovation experts was created to establish a concrete link with the inland waterway transport market. Their fields of competence include ship building, regulation, logistics, hydrodynamics, propulsion and alternative propulsion systems (including fuel cells), container lines, high-speed engines, bio-energy, traffic management, Ro-Ro traffic, etc.

One of the outputs of the innovation expert group is an Innovation Database which will speed up technology transfer and raise the innovative level of the fleet. This database has been designed as a "wiki", allowing ongoing enrichment and easy navigation. The wiki database contains a representative overview



of promising innovations that will help inland navigation to become more competitive and maintain its head start in terms of environmentally friendliness.

Based on this inventory, a Strategic Research Agenda for inland navigation will be formulated and made available in order to help decision makers to establish research priorities by pointing out the future inland waterway transport's stakes.

➤ www.naiades.info/wiki

Another PLATINA task in the field of "Fleet" deals with the creation of a European Hull Database. It is an important element in the harmonized vessel registration regime, facilitating seamless data exchange and being a basic enabler for several River Information Services. According to agreed specifications, PLATINA coordinates technical implementation of the Hull Database and its pilot operation.

Coming up

- Release of wiki Innovation Database
- Creation of Strategic Research Agenda for inland navigation
- Start of pilot operation of European Hull Database

Schools unite in educational diversity

JÖRG RUSCHE • BDB

WORK PACKAGE LEADER "JOBS AND SKILLS"

Did you know that four institutions in Romania deal with the education and training of inland waterway transport personnel? That there is a dedicated school unit dealing with inland waterway transport education in Mantova / Italy? That Polish students studying inland waterway transport attend classes in the Netherlands?

Highly qualified personnel are crucial for the efficient operation and competitiveness of tomorrow's fleet on European inland waterways. As demonstrated in the NAIADES action programme, the lack of skilled labour will pose a major problem to the future development of inland navigation in Europe. The first activities within this area were therefore aimed at identifying the status quo of the educational situation on inland waterway transport in Europe. PLATINA conducted an investigation identifying the status quo of the current inland waterway transport educational situation. It produced an inventory of education and training institutes detailing contact data, the number of pupils, the level of education as well as collected curricula. The complete inventory of inland navigation schools can be downloaded from the PLATINA website.

➔ www.naiades.info/downloads

Stronger cooperation and coordination between the existing educational institutions is needed to raise the effectiveness and efficiency of the European educational land-



scape. For this purpose, with the support of PLATINA, a European network of 20 inland navigation schools from nine different countries was founded in February 2009 under the name of EDINNA – Education Inland Navigation. EDINNA has given itself an ambitious working programme:

- Harmonisation of education and training in inland waterway transport: A concept of "Standards of Training and Certification for Inland Navigation" (STCIN) has been drafted.
- Training equipment and simulators: EDINNA was asked to establish an inventory of simulators being used in education and training.

- Exchange programmes: EDINNA wants to facilitate the exchange of teachers, students and learning materials.
- Language and communication: Standardised English phrases of "Riverspeak" could be developed for situations with communication deficits and be translated into different languages by the EDINNA members.

➔ www.edinna.eu

Coming up

- Standards of Training and Certification for Inland Navigation
- Inventory of training and education demands

Building a future for inland waterway transport

ROELAND VAN BOCKEL • DVS

WORK PACKAGE LEADER "INFRASTRUCTURE"

Sustainable inland waterway transport infrastructure developments reach beyond national borders and require an open mind and interdisciplinary approach. PLATINA is assisting the European Commission to create a cross border and overarching infrastructure

a knowledge base on which a common EU waterway infrastructure development plan can be developed.

Waterway infrastructure planning development is not a one-dimensional exercise but should include environmental aspects in an integrated planning process. The PLATINA objectives in this area are to raise awareness and planning competence, by disseminating practical examples demonstrating how general planning guidelines can be turned into reality. In parallel, PLATINA meanwhile hosted two training workshops, in Zagreb and Ruse, to assist waterway managers in developing an interdisciplinary approach towards waterway planning.

Regarding River Information Services (RIS), PLATINA has established a common working structure for all existing RIS Experts Groups based on which the standardisation of various RIS can be improved. A common RIS web portal to facilitate this process is going to be launched on short notice.

➔ www.ris.eu



for inland waterways. To this end, PLATINA will present the Commission the results of its research into ongoing waterway infrastructure projects and further developments in Europe. The study will provide the policy makers with

Coming up

- Inventory of strategic inland waterway projects
- Training manual on sustainable waterway planning
- Release of RIS community portal www.ris.eu

Changing the public face of inland waterway transport

HILDE BOLLEN • PBV
 WORK PACKAGE LEADER "IMAGE"

In order to effectively develop inland navigation, it is essential that it be known as a cost-effective option. While some countries with inland waterway transport have strong promotion and development centres, in several member states such structures are lacking or only just beginning.

Within this activity, PLATINA has made a start on the work through investigating the current image of inland waterway transport, using a renowned communication agency. The analysis showed that most people have a positive attitude towards inland waterway transport. On the other hand, it also showed that the benefits and practical advantages of inland waterway transport are generally unknown among potential customers. Dedicated and coordinated communication efforts are needed to change this.

PLATINA formed a European network of promotion and development agencies to stimulate communication activities. Findings and results of the different surveys were cross-checked by the PLATINA partners in order to



come to jointly agreed objectives and a prioritisation of promotion activities. Following the survey phase, PLATINA partners further elaborated the desired image for inland waterway transport. This is the basis of the future posi-

tioning, so a recap of the most important elements is necessary to set the frame for the upcoming communication plan.

A jointly elaborated communication plan will provide a solid basis for start-up promotion and development centres as well as the existing network of promotion agencies. The follow-up and implementation of the communication and promotion strategy will be taken up by the European network of promotion centres. Based on the strategic communication agenda and the guidelines for implementation a first set of practical communication tools will be developed. This will include production of communication materials such as IWT picture gallery, maps, visuals, examples of successful instruments and basic statistics.

➔ www.naiades.info/platina/wp4



Coming up

- Strategic positioning of inland navigation's reputation
- Strategic communication agenda

Imprint

Published by: PLATINA consortium
Responsible for content: Gert-Jan Muilerman (via donau)
 Donau-City-Straße 1, 1220 Vienna, Austria
Editor: Caroline Smith (INE)
Contributors: Catherine Leleu (VNF), Jörg Rusche (BDB), Hilde Bollen (PBV), Roeland van Bockel (DVS), Manfred Seitz (via donau), Gert-Jan Muilerman (via donau)
Layout: Bernhard Jobst (visionmedia.at)

Brussels, December 2009

Disclaimer

The views expressed in the working papers, deliverables and reports are those of the project consortium partners. These views have not been adopted or approved by the Commission and should not be relied upon as a statement of the Commission's or its services' views. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in the working papers and reports, nor does it accept responsibility for any use made thereof.

Printed on environmentally friendly paper.