

NEWADA NEWSLETTER

GENERAL INFORMATION

The **NEWADA** (Network of Danube Waterway Administrations) is a transnational project funded by the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme. The project team comprises **12 project partners** representing **8 Danube countries**, namely Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine. The consortium is coordinated by via donau – Austrian Waterway Company as Lead Partner.

The **project aims** at increasing the efficiency of the Danube as the European Transport Corridor VII by **intensifying the cooperation between Waterway Administrations** to promote inland navigation as a cost-effective and environmentally friendly mode of transport.

In the framework of the project national strategy plans for waterway maintenance, hydrology and hydrography will be prepared, which are the basis for pilots, implementation guidelines and further bi- or multilateral projects. A web portal containing relevant fairway related data will be established according to European Standards. The elaboration of an organizational strategy for each country will foster cooperation between the waterway authorities, development agencies and ministries within each country. The “Board of Directors” containing the directors of each waterway administration will be implemented in the run of the project and is meant to exist also after the lifetime of the project NEWADA. Within this board strategic issues shall be discussed and common approaches shall be agreed.

The project activities are split up in **6 work packages**:

- WP 1 – Project management
- WP 2 – Dissemination
- WP 3 – Intensify cooperation on hydrographical and hydrological activities
- WP 4 – Improve physical accessibility of waterway infrastructure
- WP 5 – Enhance accessibility to ICT networks and services
- WP 6 – Integrate responsible stakeholders and foster cooperation

PROJECT STATUS

Project management (WP 1) and dissemination (WP 2)

The official Kick-off Meeting of the project took place end of June 2009 in Vienna. First steps taken after the project has started were mostly management issues, an internal partner portal and a project website (<http://www.newada.eu>) has been constructed in order to provide adequate and

high-quality information constantly about the project for different kind of target groups. For the same reason, other online information materials, such as newsletters have been distributed to the project partners and from now on to stakeholders as well. A project folder has been produced giving an overview about the project activities, its outputs, time schedule, milestones and the project partners. Furthermore, in order to promote the project, several different promotion items have been produced and distributed by all project partners.

Cooperation on hydrological and hydrographical activities (WP 3)

The cooperation in this field will be intensified in order to achieve a higher impact. The efficiency of daily work has to be increased through the exchange of know-how among experts as well as through the identification of best practice cases. At sections, where the river Danube constitutes a border between two countries, this topic is of even greater importance. National strategy plans will be prepared to harmonize efforts and measures. Due to different national procedures surveying activities will be established. Follow-up activities such as bi-multilateral work plans will be drafted. Joint research activities will be identified by the provision of a research agenda and concepts for pilot activities.

The status quo reports on hydrological and hydrographical activities have already been delivered by each partner. The main task for 2010 is the elaboration of strategy plans for each country.

Improvement of physical accessibility of waterway infrastructure (WP 4)

River engineering is the process of planned human intervention in the course, characteristics or flow of a river with the intention of producing some defined benefit. Several bottlenecks along the European Transport Corridor VII are core hindrances for navigation. Similarities among these bottlenecks shall be identified to implement common solutions for their removal.

National action plans, feasibility studies, bilateral projects and implementation guidelines for improving waterway maintenance and river engineering as well as hydrographical and hydrological tasks will be worked out in cooperation with other Danube countries. All activities will be implemented in accordance with the European Water Framework Directive.

Currently, status quo reports on waterway maintenance have been elaborated. Major task of this work package for 2010 is the preparation of a national strategy plan.

Enhancement of accessibility to ICT networks and services (WP 5)

Main goal is to harmonize implementation of ICT networks and services (e.g. ENC's) and to elaborate Danube region strategic documents, such as guidelines. Relevant data for waterway administration and its interfaces will be defined, which will then be published on a web portal, where each country is responsible for its national information. Access points will be implemented at neuralgic points along the Danube waterway where only the web portal can be addressed. For Electronic Navigational Charts a common understanding in terms of quality will be worked out and implemented. GIS data base – piloted in previous projects – will now be extended to Romania and Bulgaria.

The partners have made a first step to agree on common services for the FIS portal. The national status quo reports have been elaborated and the partners agreed regarding standard, updating and quality.

Romania & Bulgaria had the task to obtain the relevant software licenses for D4D. In addition to that first drafts of specifications for the D4D web portal and the object catalogue were elaborated. Regarding WLAN the partners are currently busy with the selection of equipment and the necessary architecture.

Integrate responsible stakeholders and foster cooperation (WP 6)

The communication between waterway administrations, development agencies and Ministries of Transport shall be enhanced. Waterway administrations shall be transformed into service oriented organizations in order to meet user demands.

A platform comprising the directors of the waterway administrations has been established called "Board of Directors" (BoD). The participating representatives have already elaborated a SWOT analysis (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) for each administration. Based on this analysis common objectives will be defined.

Furthermore the BoD will develop coherent and internationally coordinated communication strategy laid down in action plans. Know-how exchange will be enabled through the set-up of exchange programs for experts in the field of hydrology, hydrography, ecology and waterway maintenance, thus improving the cooperation between the waterway administrations and contributing to the set-up of common standards along the Danube River.

NEXT STEPS

On 3rd-4th November 2010, in Rouse, a dissemination conference will be organized, where among others NEWADA activities and achievements will be presented. The organizational committee of the DISC'10 (Danube Information Services Conference) hopes to see many representatives of the **public and private sector** at this must-attend event **as well**.