ANNUAL REPORT

Inland Navigation <u>Europe</u>



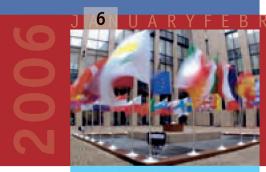
Annual



Inland Navigation Europe (INE) is the European platform of national & regional waterway managers and promotion bureaux, established in 2000 with the support of the European Commission. INE sees major opportunities to contribute to long-term strategies for sustainable transportation by moving more goods by water in EU regions with accessible and navigable rivers and canals. To capture this business. INE members share their experience and know-how with enterprises ready to rethink their freight logistics. INE is a neutral platform without commercial interests.

The year opened with the long awaited communication from the European Commission on the promotion of inland waterway transport. The Naiades programme, recalling the river nymphs from ancient Greece, was adopted in January after a period of intensive preparations and consultations with all stakeholders.

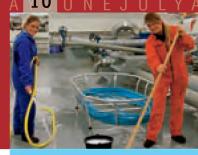
Trade volumes will double by 2020. An optimal use of all transport modalities is crucial to accommodate this growth and to win the fight against congestion. 18 out of 25 EU Member States have navigable inland waterways, harbouring a promising development potential for cost-efficient and sustainable mobility. In the last two decades, barge transport has shown it can deliver. The industry has successfully entered in



THE YEAR IN PICTURES

R 8 M A R C H A P R

THE NAIADES PROGRAMME



THE NATADES PROGRAMME

Political milestones

- > Adoption of Naiades Communication
- > High level meeting in Vienna
- > White paper review by European
- > Commission
- > Bucharest conference of European Ministers of Transport

New services and innovative ships

- > Small business industry
- > Better access to finance
- > Pro-competitive regulation
- > Eco-innovation
- > Way forward

Telling the story

- > Actors of change
- > Promotion as a catalyst
- > Attracting skilled people
- > Facts guide decisions
- > Way forward

report 2006

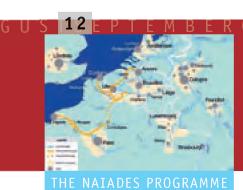
"Now that congestion becomes really critical for further growth, EU policy makers are ready to harness development potential of barge transport"

the booming container business, experiencing a twodigit annual growth rate in a number of countries. Its further expansion into new markets provides opportunities for new distribution solutions.

The NAIADES programme provides a genuine toolbox to unlock the potential of inland navigation. Replacing the cut and paste measures of the past, the European Commission has now presented a coherent strategy which truly aims at bolstering the advantages of inland waterway transport and to tackle a number of obstacles that hamper its current development in an eco-innovative way.

All this against a background of economic recovery in Europe with more products flowing in spite of higher oil prices, although there is no time for complacency because all clouds have not cleared up yet. Knowing that positive macroeconomic policies have a major impact on the underlying business cycle, the success of the inland waterway programme will depend on its timely implementation.

INE has actively worked towards the publication of the NAIADES programme and is determined to work together with all actors involved on its implementation.



Towards a quality network

- > Trans-European Networks
- > Debate on charging
- > Intelligent infrastructure
- > Waterways of tomorrow
- > Way forward



THE YEAR IN FIGURES

Market trends



HE THE COMMUNITY

5 years of INE

- > INE members
- > INE Board
- > Brussels' office





THE YEAR IN PICTURES

Political milestones 2006

A European inland waterway strategy at last!

It took a long time, but the first European consolidated action programme for the promotion of inland waterway transport IWT has finally been published. It is the unexpected tale of success of barge transport and a fruitful pro-active policy of some Member States that have made EU policy makers discover how inland waterways offer genuine opportunities for a more efficient and balanced transport system.

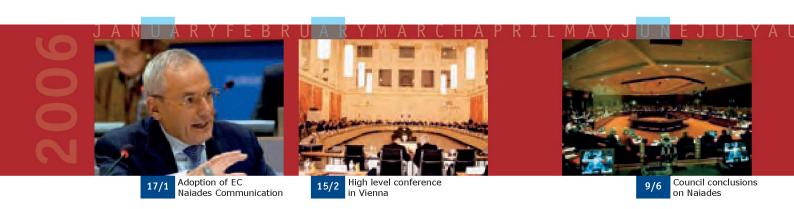
Inland waterways on the political agenda

The programme is not just a European Commission plan but calls for a coordinated effort by all private and public actors. The Austrian EU presidency threw its full weight behind the programme by declaring barge transport a priority of their presidency. It organised a high level meeting in February and secured the support of all Member States for Naiades by the end of their term in June. The

backing for the programme was reinforced at the Conference of European Ministers of Transport in Bucharest in September. The European Parliament followed in October with a clear signal to the policy-makers promising to closely monitor the implementation of the programme.

EU reformulates transport policy

Meanwhile, the European Commission readjusted its transport policy to the new situation of EU enlargement, limited economic growth and high oil prices. The major objectives of rebalancing the transport system and relieving congestion remain in place, but the Commission opts for more efficiency, innovation, logistics, mastering energy and greening transport, hoping to tap the full potential of each mode in order to attain competitive and sustainable mobility. As for inland waterway transport, the Naiades programme becomes full part of the EU transport policy.



"The key to success for the Naiades programme will be the consequent financing of necessary policy measures to shape a better business environment"



INE and members in action





Action programme 2006-2013

The Naiades programme focuses on 5 priorities which address the key challenges for inland waterways' success:

- Market
- Fleet
- Jobs and skills
- Image
- Infrastructure

A set of legislative, coordination and support measures will cover all these issues which are closely interlinked.

Inland Navigation Summit in Vienna

In the framework of the Austrian EU Presidency, via donau organised, on behalf of the ministry of transport, the Inland Navigation Summit of 14-15 February in Vienna. The high level conference gathered more than 100 high-ranking officials from 24 European countries and representatives of the inland navigation industry, preparing the Council conclusions on Naiades of 9 June.

Austrian National Action Plan

The National Action Plan for navigation on the Danube (NAP), prepared by via donau, was published and presented in May. It will become the cornerstone of the Austrian inland navigation policy for the next decade, and was designed to realise European targets on a national level.

12-measures programme in Belgium

The Parliament of Flanders welcomed a comprehensive programme, prepared by Promotie Binnenvaart Vlaanderen and taken on board by the minister, for developing inland navigation, which aims mainly at creating incentives for innovation, improving

Ministers' Conference in Bucharest



26/10 European Parliament endorses Naiades

WAY FORWARD

The Naiades programme lays out the contours. Needless to say that the plan is a nice piece of paper, but now that all Member States have expressed their support, it is time to put flesh on the bone. Some have already started, but more is needed. The implementation of a pro-competitive policy involves a good multi-modal infrastructure, better access to finance and less red tape to enhance technology transfer and entrepreneurship in a capital-intensive sector. Overall, it is a realistic plan, with no excessive costs involved. Failing to act now would be shortsighted as it means rocketing costs in the near future for unmanageable congestion threatening Europe's competitiveness.

access to capital for starters and setting up a onestop-shop.

Dutch Inland shipping memorandum

The Dutch ministry of transport and inland shipping organisations concluded a memorandum in November spelling out the tasks of each party to unlock the potential of inland waterway transport. The agreement covers an innovation budget of EUR 10 million for concrete projects in the field of logistics, eco-innovation and safety.

THE NAIADES PROGRAMME

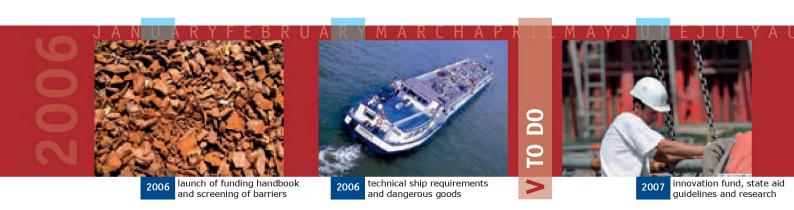
New services and innovative ships

Capital-intensive small businesses

Inland shipping operators are small businesses like the bulk of European industry. But there is one decisive difference. Ships are much more expensive, both in purchase and maintenance, than the usual capital goods of small businesses. It is not surprising new entrepreneurs hesitate to enter the inland navigation sector, notwithstanding young blood is urgently needed. INE and its members advocate tailormade but market compatible financial incentives. Additional barriers are difficult access to finance and a business environment unduly mired in red tape.

In a rapidly changing environment

In spite of tight financing, innovation is a hot and popular item. The booming logistics industry, global warming and new technologies raise a lot of challenges but also create numerous opportunities to tap new markets. A large majority of the barge owners affirm they want to replace their old engine for a new, more energy efficient one. That is good news, because a clean technology business means less fuel use and lower emissions. Dozens of innovative business ideas also see the light in the field of logistics and technology, but unfortunately too often still they fail or fight for survival due to a lack of critical mass of financing in the start-up phase. That is a shame and could be perfectly avoided.



"The success or failure of innovative business ideas depends on transparent regulation and efficient access to capital"



Initiated policy initiatives

In terms of support measures, the EU adopted the Marco Polo II Programme, but this will not bring any spectacular advantages to inland waterway transport because funding thresholds remain too high. The Commission launched preliminary studies to map all existing funding instruments and to examine the impact of existing barriers. In terms of legislation, agreement has been reached about technical prescriptions of vessels and a new proposal for dangerous good is on the table.

Towards a favourable business climate Current successful examples of facilitating access to capital are two regional programmes in Belgium aiming at the set up of waterborne freight facilities, resulting in 2006 in a reduction of 630,000 truck movements, and the quay-wall programme in France, shifting more than 3 billion tonnes kilometres at a co-financing rate of less than 18%. Further to existing agreements with the sectors of cereals and construction materials. Voies Navigables de France also established dedicated partnerships with the wood and waste sectors to develop new ways to transport by water. Besides abolishing navigation dues on its inland waterways, the Walloon government set aside a budget for developing 5 priority port zones from 2006 to 2009.

Enhancing modernisation & eco-innovation
Belgium enters in the footsteps of Germany and
the Netherlands by introducing fiscal stimuli for
purchase of newer and environmentally friendlier
ships. Where Wallonia supports by 21% the
innovation of the fleet through its Walloon aid plan
until 2007, Flanders prepares a specific aid scheme



one-stop-shops and appointment focal points

engine emissions, fuel quality and waste disposal

WAY FORWARD

Turning inventions into products and services that tempt entrepreneurs to part with their money is the most significant part of innovation. That is why efficient technology transfer and good access to finance are so important for a competitive economy. An innovation fund co-financed by private and public partners can provide that essential leverage.

A stimulating business environment also means not only screening the impact of barriers but effectively removing them and replacing them by pro-competitive regulation through the installation of one-stop-shops and a European network of officials who keep an eye on the process.

2007>

for emission-low and energy-efficient engines. The French framework plan, managed by Voies Navigables de France financed up to 10 innovation projects covering new ships and prototypes. For each euro of public money, the private sector invested between 6 and 12 euro.

THE NAIADES PROGRAMME

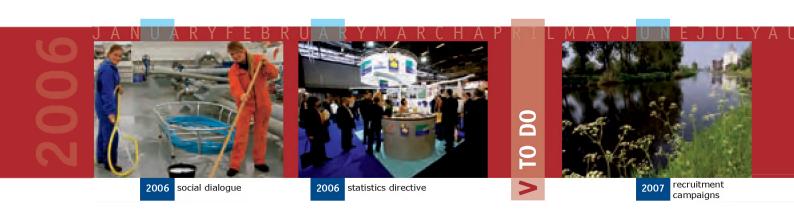
Telling the story

Catching the actors of change

Solutions may exist but if nobody knows about it, nothing will change. In our information age, people are overwhelmed by messages and rather tend to tune out than in. Therefore, a message which truly connects with the needs of the transport buyers and the agendas of the policy makers shows to be much more effective than addressing the general, undefined public. Only in countries where waterway transport promotion is targeted, a more positive image goes hand in hand with more barge transport.

More and better skilled people

Both employers and workers in inland shipping are increasingly experiencing the pressure of skills and labour shortages associated with the rapid ageing in the sector. The particular working conditions also hinder the ability to attract a skilled workforce. Talented workers are no doubt the most important capital to companies. They drive creative solutions and competitiveness. Here again, campaigns appealing to key values and presenting realistic but nevertheless exciting career perspectives, both aboard and ashore, combined with high quality training, are most successful.



"Freight by water operates cross-border, hence the need for a European wide pro-active promotion network"



INE and members in action



Initiated policy initiatives

Making the case of transport by water is not enough. Enhancing the visibility of new distribution solutions only works when underpinned with compelling data. So far, there was no such thing as comparable market information on inland navigation in Europe, which made it very difficult to put the picture together. Hopefully, the new statistics directive, which enters into force next year, will change that. This is paramount to plan adequate investment decisions and identify new trends.

Jobs & talents

On the initiative of via donau, INeS, a learning platform for inland navigation was developed in the framework of the Marco Polo Programme. This e-learning tool, currently focusing on the Danube region, is a comprehensive web-based learning package which aims at the integration of inland shipping into logistics training Europe wide. In the Netherlands, a dedicated training coordinator cooperates with the promotion office and in France a brand new structure has been set up to accompany young entrepreneurs with the launch of their career.

In Belgium, along with campaigns to attract youngsters to the waterborne profession, training programs for adults to obtain a certificate as apprentice in inland navigation in cooperation with the regional training and employment agencies are organised and training sessions for barge owners on the use of ICT aboard ship and computerised cost calculation are held. On the demand side, freight forwarders can obtain on-the-job training on how to use inland waterway transport in their business.

GUSTSEPTEMBERO 2007 EU training programmes and training standards



support for set-up new offices and promotion network

Promotion & cooperation

INE's website has seen a major transformation to provide web visitors with user-friendly access to targeted information on the benefits of using waterways for moving freight, shipping contacts, grant opportunities and EU policy.

Besides acting as catalysts and helpdesks for new freight projects, INE members organised several waterborne freight events for shippers and policy makers, including the co-organisation of the 3rd Danube Summit in Budapest.

WAY FORWARD

Inland navigation is truly international, it operates cross-border for 75%. Enlarging the promotion network to all countries with a large potential for inland navigation would definitely bring more results than the efforts of single promotion structures here and there. It is by all means a low-cost measure for the countries involved, which pays off as the already existing promotion structures demonstrate. A pro-active network can even act as a stronger catalyst when assisting business with new freight projects and advocating measures which lift barriers to move goods by water. Strengthening efforts can also help to build a comprehensive communication strategy.

THE NAIADES PROGRAMME

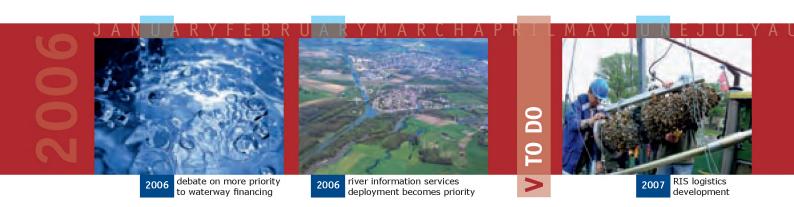
Towards a quality network

Working with nature

Imagine all inland waterway traffic being shifted to the already busy roads. This would be an awful blow to mobility and lead to a tremendous rise in harmful emissions. The evolving techniques in river engineering and ship design create numerous opportunities to combine living waterways and cost-efficient transport. The era of isolated approaches progressively makes room for cross-sectoral thinking where all functions of the water environment are integrated. This is a welcome trend break providing a much sounder basis for a serene debate on infrastructure charging in which all public and private waterway uses can now be thoroughly evaluated.

Intelligent infrastructure brings more service

Waterway management is in transition. From being a public aim in itself, it evolves towards a more service-oriented management taking into account user needs. The deployment across Europe of River Information Services (RIS) fits perfectly in this evolution. Swift data transfer between water and shore enhances inland waterway transport as a safe, secure and reliable mobility option. Moreover, RIS will yield major benefits in terms of sustainable logistics, as it has strong potential to have supply chain actors participating in intelligent information routing and optimising resource allocation.



"International trade is key to Europe's competitiveness - without smart development, current infrastructure will soon fall short of doubling freight volumes and negatively impact our lifestyle"



INE and members in action





Initiated policy initiatives

The European Commission launched a proposal for a special incentive co-financing rate for the two inland waterway priority projects: Seine-Scheldt and Rhine-Main-Danube. Important parts are already under preparation and under construction. These multi-faceted projects are strongly embedded in their economic, environmental and societal context going far beyond a mere transport function, which immediately points out their high added value. Nevertheless, the overall budget of the trans-European network casts gloomy prospects on the EU contribution to waterways.

Trans-European Networks of transport

In France, the public consultations on Seine-Scheldt have started, the last step before the construction planned for 2008. In Belgium, the works are carried out on schedule. On the Danube between Austria and Slovakia, the integrated river engineering project, with the double aim to restore the river's ecological balance as well as to improve its navigability, is entering in its test phase to measure the impact of the hydraulic engineering measures. On the same east-west corridor, the feasibility study for a new 9,000 tonnes lock on the Belgian Meuse and the works for the Maasroute in the Netherlands have been kicked off. The Dutch government decided on a major catch-up of the infrastructure maintenance backlog earmarking EUR 700 million extra until 2010.

Towards service-oriented waterway managers
Traffic management systems or River Information
Services (RIS) are being progressively deployed.
The Austrian navigation information system DoRIS
entered its official operational phase together with
the equipment of AIS transponders on 250 Danube

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cross-sector dialogue on rivers



unlocking freight centres beside waterways

2007>

WAY FORWARD

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Member States' backlog in infrastructure maintenance remains the Achilles' heel of inland waterway development. Public investment in quality infrastructure triggers economic activities and private investment providing welfare and jobs. As long as the inland waterway network looks like a series of motorways connected by farm tracks, a lot of private investors avoid the risk and stay aside. A solidly grounded European Development Plan, as proposed by the European Commission, can map regional and inter-regional freight flows and show what happens without investment in the waterway network, smart infrastructure and transhipment facilities. Actions will speak louder than words.

vessels. The newly equipped DoRIS test centre facilities will serve in future as a reference and training facility for all Danube States. France joined forces with Belgium and Austria to prepare RIS coverage of the Seine basin for connection to other main waterways. INE members meanwhile prepare next steps to unlock the logistics potential of RIS by linking all interested market parties in intelligent information routing and smart flow control.





THE YEAR IN FIGURES

Market Trends

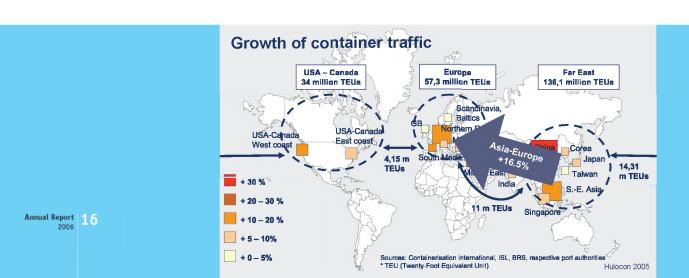
With the progressive relocation of manufacturing to the Far East, the merchandise exports from this region continue to expand. This leads to a steep increase in maritime container trade taxing the capacity of both the transportation industry and infrastructure to secure reliable deliveries to customers inland Europe. Inland shipping picks the fruits with continuously growing volumes of boxes on the waterways. For the traditional markets, the picture is more mixed and clearly subject to economic cyclic trends in 2005.

FRANCE

2005 saw an increase of 7.4% in traffic with a total of 7.9 billion tonne-kilometres transported. Tonnage increased by 2.6% to 59.5 million tonnes. The container market continued its growth to 400,000 TEU, an increase of 8.3% compared to 2004. The waterfreight growth was mainly driven by increased transport performance in the container business (+17.4%), followed by agricultural and foodstuffs (+14.4%) and construction materials (+7.1%), as a result of the agreements with the industry to facilitate transport by water.

BELGIUM - FLANDERS

After eight years of continuous growth, the closure of a major steel mill in southern Belgium caused a drop of 2.9% in tonne-kilometres compared to the previous year. Container traffic, however, kept its steady pace of the last years with an increase of 13%. The ten-year trend still shows an increase of 57%, and the rise in the number of loadings (+10.2%) and off-loadings (+3.2%) demonstrate the success of the freight facility programme in the formula of public private partnerships for the building of public quay-walls along the waterways.





BELGIUM - WALLONIA

The restructuring of the steel industry in the Liège basin also interrupted the steady growth of waterfreight in Wallonia, causing a decline of over 1.6% in traffic. Despite a real take-off in the container market (+64%), tonnage overall decreased by 3.2% to 43.7 million tonnes, and traffic volumes by 2.1% to 1.07 billion tonne-kilometres. Still, a 44% increase can be observed in traffic for the last ten years, and +37% in tonnage, and 2005 remains the second best year since 1996.

GERMANY

Traffic on German waterways has increased by 0.4% to 236.8 million tonnes, and by 0.7% in tonne-kilometres to 64.1 billion tonne-kilometres. This is the second year of growth since 2003, a year of historical low water levels, and figures show the third highest goods tonnage transported over waterways since the reunification of Germany. This good result is mainly due to higher export traffic (+3.9% in tonnes and +3.7% in tonne-kilometres) and inland traffic (+2.6% in tonnes and +3.5% in tonne-kilometres). Growth is most notable in the transport of agricultural products (+26.9%), and in finished products transported by container (+9.6%)

AUSTRIA

On the Danube, the container market is not yet mature due to difficult nautical conditions and by consequence higher costs. Despite a new decrease in container traffic of more than 50%, total volumes transported over the Danube in Austria increased by 2% to 11.5 million tonnes, and decreased by 2% when looking at traffic performance. Liquid and dry bulk transport account for the major portion of the increase. Waterside transhipment in the Austrian Danube ports rose by 4.3 percent to 8.4 million tonnes

NETHERLANDS

In the period 2001-2005, container traffic kept rising to 747,000 twenty foot equivalent, an increase of 15%, but fell victim to structural capacity problems in the port of Rotterdam in 2005. Due to the finalisation of some major works such as the Betuwe rail link, considerably less construction material, making up 45% of all transport, was transported over the Dutch waterways, resulting in a decrease of volume by 4.2% to 95 million tonnes compared to 2004, while transport performance totalled 10.52 billion tonne-kilometres. 2005 constituted a weaker year balanced against a general upward trend, particularly in containers and liquid bulk over the last ten years.





THE INE COMMUNITY

Members and structure

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Bureau Voorlichting Binnenvaart (BVB) Koninklijke Schuttevaer

Vasteland 12e, NL - 3011 BL Rotterdam T +31 10 412 91 51 www.inlandshipping.com ds@inlandshipping.com



BVB has been established in 1989 by the Dutch inland navigation organisations cofinanced by the Dutch government. Its main activity consists of presenting the advantages and possibilities of waterways transportation to the different players in the field. Promotion

actions and lobby activities are mainly directed at policy makers and industry.

Office de Promotion des Voies Navigables (OPVN)

Rue Forgeur 2, B - 4000 Liège T +32 4 220 8720 www.opvn.be opvn@met.wallonie.be



OPVN was created in 1995 as a department of the Walloon Ministry of transport and Equipment. OPVN's main task is to enhance the economic and recreational use of inland waterways in the southern part of Belgium through distribution of information, the organisation of promotion

activities, policy measures in favour of the sector's development and through contacts with economic decision makers.

Promotie Binnenvaart Vlaanderen (PBV)

Kempische Kaai 57, B – 3500 Hasselt T +32 11 23 06 06 www.binnenvaart.be pbv@binnenvaart.be



PBV is a non-profit association founded in 1992 by the Flemish Government. Its mission is to increase the economic and recreational use of inland waterways in Flanders. PBV is a platform for consultation representing all private and public inland navigation interests groups. PBV has no commercial interests. It is an independent partner for the industry and

public authorities.

Voies Navigables de France (VNF)

Rue Ludovic Boutleux, 175, F - 62 408 Béthune T +33 3 21 63 24 50 www.vnf.fr developpement@vnf.fr



VNF is a public company created in 1991 by the French state. VNF has the mission to manage, to maintain and to develop 6700 km of the French waterway network. VNF aims at developing activities around the waterways, at

promoting the interests of transport by water and at stimulating inland shipping and waterway tourism.

via donau Österreichische Wasserstraßen Gesellschaft mbH

Donau-City-Straße 1, A - 1220 Wien T +43 50 4321 1000 www.via-donau.org office@via-donau.org



via donau – Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH is the Austrian waterway management

company which provides competitive transportation infrastructure on the Danube and works together with the inland navigation sector to come up with innovative logistics solutions to increase the utilisation of the Danube. It is reponsible for river & water management and carries out development projects for inland navigation. via donau helps to manage the traffic along the Danube corridor and to relieve the burden on Austrian roads by trying to shift the heavy traffic to the inland waterway.

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

British Waterways European River-Sea Transport Union - ERSTU Maritime Ports Administration Constantza Port de Bruxelles - Haven van Brussel Port Autonome de Marseille Port Autonome du Havre

SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Flemish Waterway Managers Port of Rotterdam

INE structure 2005-2006

Board

PRESIDENT Hilde Bollen Promotie Binnenvaart Vlaanderen VICE-PRESIDENT Kees de Vries Bureau Voorlichting Binnenvaart

MEMBERS Manfred Seitz via donau – Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH

Léon Orban Office de Promotion des Voies Navigables

Jean Gadenne Voies Navigables de France

ALTERNATE MEMBERS Elisa van Oosten Bureau Voorlichting Binnenvaart

Eva Michlits via donau – Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH

Marc Delaude Office de Promotion des Voies Navigables
Christa Kellens Promotie Binnenvaart Vlaanderen
Catherine Leleu Voies Navigables de France

Brussels' office

Karin De Schepper Caroline van de Leur

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- WENZ, DonauParkAuen, CNSPB-Couneur Dreamstime.com, iStockphoto.com P. Cheuva, Jan Csernoch, Elena Elisseeva, Joao Estevao Freitas, Nik Frey, Pascal Lemaître, Johnny Lye, Giacomo Nodari, Liliane Van Hiele, Branko Veinovic, Vladimir Popovic

Water is the way to go

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