

NEWSLETTER 01

MAKING MORE OF THE INLAND WATERWAYS OF EUROPE

Welcome to the first Newsletter of the Voies Navigables d'Europe (VNE) project. As the title suggests our project brings together 10 partners from around the continent with the aim of furthering the sustainable development of Europe's canals, rivers and lakes. VNE is funded through the European Union INTERREG IIC programme and focuses on tourism, recreation and heritage as a means of supporting urban and rural regeneration.



VNE undertakes a number of activities to take forward its aims.

These are:

- / A series of studies and investigations into specific topics of relevance to recreational and heritage waterways and their role in regional policy.
- / The piloting of the establishment of European Recreation Navigation Observatory, as a repository of technical & statistical information concerning tourism, recreation & cultural heritage on inland waterways.

- / A series of workshops, seminars and conferences, with associated study visits to disseminate good practice and exchange experience between partners and other organisations with an interest in the development of the waterways of Europe.
- / A dissemination and publicity programme to promote both the inland waterway resource and the results of the project to interested administrations and professionals.

In this Newsletter we outline some of the progress that has been made so far. For further information please visit:
www.vne-waterways.eu

NEWSLETTER 01

PROGRESS WITH STUDIES AND INVESTIGATIONS

A key element of the work of VNE consists of a series of studies and investigations into recreational waterways and their role in regional development. Investigations into all 6 identified topics are now under way.



STUDY 1 //

Lessons learnt from other INTERREG projects
Responsible partners: British Waterways (UK),
 County Administrative Board of Varmland (SE)

British Waterways has carried out a review of the emerging results from relevant projects under the INTERREG II and III programmes, covering cross-border, transnational and inter-regional co-operation. This will be further updated as more existing INTERREG projects come to completion.

County Administrative Board of Varmland is undertaking a planning strategy for the development of boating and other tourism on the waterways connected to Lake Vänern. This draws upon experiences and good practice from the other INTERREG projects and considers how the isolated inland waterways of Sweden can be better linked to the rest of the European waterway network.



STUDY 2 //

Review Classification of Recreational Waterways
Responsible partner: SRN (NL)

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) has proposed the establishment of a dimensional classification system for recreational waterways. This will extend the current European Commission of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) classification for large freight waterways to 4 classes of smaller, primarily recreational, canals and rivers.

The practical implications of such a system have been reviewed through a number of INTERREG IIIB projects. Under VNE work is underway to identify and map the recreational network of Europe as a whole. From this, gaps and bottlenecks in the network, such as missing links and currently un-navigable historic waterways will be identified.

This study is being led by SRN. They have almost completed the data collection phase, with information being obtained by VNE partners from their national authorities.



STUDY 3 //

Environmental boating
Responsible partners: British Waterways (UK),
 SIRGA (SP)

Although inland waterways are comparatively benign environmentally, boating can give rise to adverse environmental impacts – atmospheric emissions, water pollution, and ecological damage. Many of these impacts are being looked at through other INTERREG IIIB projects and a broad overview of impacts has been prepared under VNE.

The Water Framework Directive now requires us to take measures to mitigate negative impacts boaters have on water ecology, as well as water quality.

Therefore some additional research has been commissioned to investigate possible mitigation measures for smaller recreational waterways. Follow-up research studies are now under way dealing with issues in northern and southern Europe and led by British Waterways and SIRGA.

We'll be reporting on progress with the following studies in Newsletter No. 02:



STUDY 4 //

Benchmarking of recreational and heritage waterways in the new Member States



STUDY 5 //

Multifunctional use of inland waterways



STUDY 6 //

Feasibility study "ERNO"
 (European Recreational Canal Observatory)

NEWSLETTER 01

GETTING TOGETHER

VNE partners meet regularly to discuss progress with the project and to exchange knowledge and experience gained through their work carried out to manage and develop the network of European Inland Waterways. Each partner hosts a meeting and will take the opportunity to introduce us the Canals, Rivers and Lakes in their Region and explain how they approach issues such as restoration, regeneration, navigation, heritage and tourism development.



THE HAGUE (NL) / 14 – 15 APRIL 2005

Kick-off meeting

The first meeting of the partnership had two purposes:

- / To discuss and confirm the work programme for the project, particularly in relation to the studies and investigations, who would be responsible for them and to agree the programme of meetings;
- / To agree the financial and administrative arrangements for managing the project.

BRUSSELS (BE) / 08 – 09 DECEMBER 2005

First workshop "review work programme and components"

The first project workshop consisted of an internal meeting to review progress with the work programme and to look at the emerging findings from the various studies and investigations being undertaken. The workshop was also attended by experts from two observer organisations – City of Bremen (Germany) and European Boating Association (France).

In association with the workshop, a field visit took place by boat to look at developments along the canals running through Brussels.

MILAN (IT) / 03 – 04 APRIL 2006

Second workshop
"environment and cultural heritage"

The second workshop consisted of a series of presentations and exchange of experiences regarding looking at the management of the natural environment and cultural heritage of recreational waterways. A number of speakers from Italy spoke about the master plan for the Navigli Lombardi (canals in the Lombardy Region), which must take account of the historic significance of these waterways and the careful management of both the cultural heritage and the natural environment. Also consideration was given as to how the network of canals in Lombardy can be linked to the River Po and the Italian lakes.

WHAT'S ON – FORTHCOMING VNE EVENTS



LIVERPOOL (UNITED KINGDOM) 22 – 23 NOVEMBER 2007

Final Conference – Findings and further outlook



BUDAPEST (HUNGARY) 12 – 14 JULY 2007






Seminar No 2 – Benchmarking of recreation / heritage waterways in the New Member States

NEWSLETTER 01

VNE FACTS AND FIGURES

The VNE project is part-financed by the INTERREG III C programme // The partnership consists of 10 partners from 10 European countries // The VNE project continues until December 2007

-  [1] UNITED KINGDOM: British Waterways (Lead partner)
-  [2] BELGIUM: Agentschap Waterwegen en Zeekanaal NV
-  [3] NETHERLANDS: Stichting Recreatietoervaart Nederland
-  [4] GERMANY: BIS Bremerhaven Touristik
-  [5] NORWAY: Telemark Fylkeskommune

-  [6] SWEDEN: Länsstyrelsen Värmland
-  [7] HUNGARY: Central Bureau of Water and Environment
-  [8] ITALY: Regione Lombardia
-  [9] FRANCE: Association Union des Terres de Rivières
-  [10] SPAIN: Association de Pueblos del Canal de Castilla



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:

www.vne-waterways.eu

Glenn Millar, British Waterways
Watford, United Kingdom
Email: glenn.millar@britishwaterways.co.uk
Phone: + 44 1923 20 13 56

Chris Barnett, British Waterways
Watford, United Kingdom
Email: chris.barnett@britishwaterways.co.uk
Phone: + 44 1923 20 11 63

Assistance and Coordination

Helmut Berends
Berends-Consult, Bremen, Germany
Email: bc@berends-consult.de

Concept and Design by
GfG / Gruppe für Gestaltung GmbH
Bremen, Germany
Email: info@gfg-bremen.de

