

NEWSLETTER

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NELI at quick pace towards the finish line

The EU co-funded project implemented under the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme (SEE), NELI - *Cooperation-Network for Logistics and nautical education focusing on Inland Waterway Transport in the Danube corridor supported by innovative solutions* – is approaching its finish line after a three-year run which made possible authentic transnational cooperation and exchange of great ideas.

By now the once identified problems which NELI set out to address (discrepancies between educational systems, lack of interaction and communication between training institutions and stakeholders in the sector, limited number of harmonized initiatives, scarce or lacking eLearning services, insufficient promotion of the IWT sector) have been solved at SEE-Danube region level due to the commitment, efforts and involvement of the partners. Each topic has been tackled in a common, transnational manner meant to harmonize actions throughout the Danube region.

With less than three months before the end of the project, NELI partners can proudly list a whole series of achieved outputs.

The after-NELI Danube-wide IWT education and training can make use of the **Danube Knowledge Network** connecting all IWT specialized education and training institutions identified in the eight participant countries, of the three harmonized courses – **River Information Services, Logistics, Inland Navigation and Ports** –, of the **elearning INeS platform** which was adopted by five new countries – Serbia, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Croatia and Hungary – as well as of the four Information and Training Centres: **Infocenter Danube** in Enns/ Austria, **InfoDanube** in Galati/ Romania, **RIS Centre** in Sisak/ Croatia and **Mobile ITC –Danube promotion action** in Budapest/ Hungary.

The in-depth analysis of education systems at country level provided the basis for the development of **Draft National Action Plans for education and training issues in the field of IWT**. The eight NAPs, validated by appropriate political decision makers and stakeholders, offer information on current applicable policies across South East Europe, describe the status quo of IWT education and training including a SWOT analysis and at the same time pinpoint necessary measures for both nautical and IWT logistics personnel and suggest national and regional funding possibilities to back up the implementation of these measures. NAPs have been drawn up not only to raise the awareness on the importance of urgent actions to be taken at national level but also to support the development of a **Transnational Action Plan** to include paramount measures and harmonized actions to be implemented at transnational level in the field of IWT.

Besides the Action Plans, NELI made significant steps to support the EU and the national policies by developing **long-term strategies for future common activities in the Danube region** with regard to education, use of eLearning platforms and development of Information and Training Centres as IWT promotion instruments.

All the **joint cooperation actions** and the **national and transnational workshops** organized both to the benefit of the project partners but mostly to that of the stakeholders counted as fundamental given the received feedback which set the general trend in IWT education.

Cooperation with national and international stakeholders, relevant political institutions and other projects and initiatives opened new horizons and allowed the partners to see the bigger picture within the frame of which NELI outcomes found their right place.

The two-day **NELI final event** to take place in **Constanta, Romania on the 20th and 21st of March 2012** will represent the crowning achievement of all the partners' efforts and commitment in the past three years.

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