

About us



Europe's network of navigable inland waterways – canals, rivers and lakes - extends right across the continent. From early times, waterways were made navigable to facilitate the movement of both people and goods.

They made possible the industrial revolution in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. Many waterways still retain a significant transport function, particularly where they have been enlarged to form part of Europe's high capacity transport infrastructure. On other waterways, the transport function has reduced or has ceased altogether. However there is now a growing recognition of the contribution that inland waterways make to tourism development, sustainable transport, economic growth and the quality of life of the inhabitants of Europe's regions. As a result waterways are being restored and revitalised throughout Europe as a focus for economic and social development.

Waterways Forward is a project developed under the European Union's INTERREG IVC programme. It brings together 17 partner organisations from 11 EU countries plus Norway and Serbia. The Lead Partner is *Stichting Recreatietoervaart Nederland (Dutch Recreational Waterways Foundation)*. The €2.8m project runs for 3 years from 2010 to 2012. It is a successor to the INTERREG IIIC project *Voies Navigables d'Europe (VNE)*, which looked at ways to maximise the tourism and cultural heritage aspects of waterways, see www.vne-waterways.eu/



The main objective of *Waterways Forward* is to improve the management of regional inland waterways and the regions adjacent to them by promoting an integrated, sustainable and participatory approach, taking account of the multi-functional role of waterways. *Waterways Forward* will do this through addressing two broad themes:-

Governance

Developing recommendations for improved and state of the art governance models to create a sound basis for more integrated regional policies to boost the socio-economic development of inland waterways and adjacent areas in a balanced way. Consideration will be given as to how waterways are regulated, managed and funded and how their contribution to regional economies can be enhanced, taking account of the role of the wide range of stakeholders involved.

Environment & Climate Change

Investigating how the multi-functional use of regional waterways can be further developed, while minimising potentially negative impacts on the quality of the environment. Indeed the project will consider how the natural environment, ecology and cultural heritage of waterways can be enhanced and how inland waterways can contribute to the challenges posed by climate change.

Through the sharing and transfer of good practices, integrated regional strategies and actions, plans will be created to support the on-going development of the multi-functional use of Europe's inland waterways, with the aim of enhancing the quality of life of its citizens.



Our partners

SRN – *Lead Partner - Netherlands*
South Tipperary County Council – *Ireland*
Waterways Ireland – *UK*
British Waterways – *UK*
Association Regio Water – *Netherlands*
Telemark County Council – *Norway*
County Administrative Board of Värmland – *Sweden*
Savolinna Regio Federation of Municipalities – *Finland*
Central Directorate for Water and Environment – *Hungary*

Province of Ferrara – *Italy*
Navigli Lombardi s.c.a.r.l. – *Italy*
French Waterways – *France*
SIRGA – *Spain*
PWMC Vode Vojvodine Office for European Affairs – *Serbia*
Vidzeme Planning Region – *Latvia*
Municipality of Brzeg Dolny – *Poland*
Municipality of Dunaújváros – *Hungary*