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Extended Abstract

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Title: **The future of River Information Services – beyond borders and transport modes**

Abstract:

Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) has the potential of moving significant amounts of cargo across the European continent. River Information Services (RIS) have been created to advance IWT in terms of safety and efficiency of transports by means of telematics, with the ultimate goal to improve its share in multi-modal transport chains. Since the beginning of the creation of RIS around the millennium within co-funded European projects, the EU has been actively supporting the RIS initiative, which led into a European Directive (2005/44/EC) on the implementation of RIS in the member states. Until today EU member states have set up national RIS infrastructure based on EU RIS standards. The introduction of especially AIS and electronic charts on board has significantly contributed to safety of navigation.

However the overarching goal of increasing efficiency and the better integration of IWT into multi-modal transport chains is still not in reach. One of the main reasons is that the national RIS systems have been set up in an isolated way with very little exchange of data across borders. In addition they do not facilitate the necessary level of data exchange with logistics users.

In 2015 the project (RIS-enabled Corridor Management) CoRISMa has developed the concept for the provision of RIS along transport corridors. It is based on services beyond national borders and clearly including interfaces for logistics. The concept can clearly be seen as the next evolutionary step in RIS. The currently running project RIS Corridor Management Execution (RIS COMEX) will implement basic RIS Corridor Services along the high-priority waterway network in Europe until 2020. It will create the ability of national system to exchange data with centralised services and paves the way for future European services.

Still, waterway authorities are limited in the portfolio of services that shall be implemented and offered by the government. But RIS includes the necessary interfaces for private initiatives to create value-added services that use RIS data.

Under the umbrella of e-freight and embedded into multiple FP-funded projects, serious attempts have been made and are still ongoing to progress with the multi-modal exchange of digital transport information for logistics purposes. In line with the Digital Single Market Strategy, the European

Commission has launched the DINA (Digital Inland Waterway area) initiative which aims at fostering the digitalisation of logistics information flows in inland navigation.

The Horizon 2020 (European Research Framework Program) project "Architecture for EurOpean Logistics Information eXchange" (AEOLIX) started in September 2016 and aims at overcoming the current fragmentation of digital logistics information by creating a neutral platform which allows to connect data streams from different sources and transport modes and provide easy access to the information for logistics players. IWT and RIS will be parts of the AEOLIX "ecosystem" which shall act as communication hub between different transport modes and between governmental and private stakeholder.

Waterway authorities have clearly identified the need to make RIS interoperable beyond national borders and systems. RIS COMEX is the first attempt to extend and harmonize selected services for route and voyage planning as well as for logistics over existing borders.

Policy instruments like DINA and research project like AEOLIX show the clear trend and demand to digitize information flows in IWT and for opening RIS towards logistics.

These trends will continue and first implementations will demonstrate the benefit also for better integrating IWT into multimodal supply chains. However questions like data protection and financing of operations of services on Corridor or European level are yet unsolved, but nevertheless essential for sustainable operations.