

*Final Technical Report*

*Part A - General*

*Publication date (final version): 16.03.2015*

**IRIS Europe 3 – Implementation of River Information Services in Europe**

**The European Union's TEN-T programme supporting …**



Implementation of River Information Services in Europe

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| **Deliverable** |
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| Title of deliverable | |
| **Final Technical Report**  **Part A - General** |
|  |  |
| Version | |
| v1p0 (final) |
|  |
| Date | |
| March 16, 2015 |
|  |
| Status | |
| Public |
|  |
| Main author(s) | |
| Mario Kaufmann, viadonau, Austria |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Document history (version / date / authorised by) | |
| v0p1 (first draft) | 29.10.2014 | viadonau |
| v0p2 (draft final) | 29.01.2015 | viadonau |
| v1p0 (final) | 16.03.2015 | Project Consortium including Beneficiaries |
|  |
| Contributing authors | | |
| Hélène Gilkarov, viadonau, Austria | | |

**Table of content**

[Acknowledgements 5](#_Toc414264696)

[1 Executive Summary 5](#_Toc414264697)

[2 Structure of the Final Technical Report 6](#_Toc414264698)

[3 Introduction 7](#_Toc414264699)

[3.1 Main objectives of IRIS Europe 3 7](#_Toc414264700)

[3.2 Geographic scope of IRIS Europe 3 8](#_Toc414264701)

[3.3 Project partners of IRIS Europe 3 9](#_Toc414264702)

[3.4 Work breakdown structure of IRIS Europe 3 10](#_Toc414264703)

[4 Conclusions and Recommendations out of the execution of IRIS Europe 3 11](#_Toc414264704)

[4.1 Conclusions 11](#_Toc414264705)

[4.2 Recommendations 12](#_Toc414264706)

[5 Activity 6 – Project Management 13](#_Toc414264707)

[5.1 SuAc 6.1 Project Management 13](#_Toc414264708)

[5.1.1 Background information 13](#_Toc414264709)

[5.1.2 Objectives 13](#_Toc414264710)

[5.1.3 Work approach 13](#_Toc414264711)

[5.1.4 Results 13](#_Toc414264712)

[5.1.5 Conclusions / Recommendations / Envisioned next steps 14](#_Toc414264713)

[5.2 SuAc 6.2 Dissemination 15](#_Toc414264714)

[5.2.1 Background information 15](#_Toc414264715)

[5.2.2 Objectives 15](#_Toc414264716)

[5.2.3 Work approach 15](#_Toc414264717)

[5.2.4 Results 15](#_Toc414264718)

[5.2.5 Conclusions / Recommendations / Envisioned next steps 16](#_Toc414264719)

[5.3 SuAc 6.3 Liaison with relevant projects 17](#_Toc414264720)

[5.3.1 Background information 17](#_Toc414264721)

[5.3.2 Objectives 17](#_Toc414264722)

[5.3.3 Work approach and results 17](#_Toc414264723)

[5.3.4 Conclusions / Recommendations / Envisioned next steps 17](#_Toc414264724)

# Acknowledgements

The Project Management Team and the National Coordinators of IRIS Europe 3, consisting of Mario Kaufmann, Mario Sattler (both via donau, AT), Petya Gegova (BPI Co, BG), Vojtech Dabrowski (MDCR, CZ), Dalibor Fanta (SPS, CZ), Robert Rafael, Attila Lajtar (both RSOE, HU), Piotr Durajczyk (UZS, PL), Romeo Soare, Claudiu Dutu (both AFDJ, RO), Peter Zitnansky (VUD, SK), would like to thank all project partners and especially the SuAc leaders for their active contribution to the project and constructive communication with each other.

Furthermore, the PMT and the NCs would like to thank the Beneficiaries for their interest and active involvement in decision making processes and steering of the project on a high level as well as for keeping an eye on the national progress.

Last but certainly not least, special thanks to the representatives of the Innovation & Networks Executive Agency, especially the IRIS Europe 3 project officer Nadia Chellafa, and the European Commission for their active support during the whole lifetime of the project.

# Executive Summary

The project IRIS Europe 3 – Implementation of River Information Services in Europe 3 – started in January 2012 and ended in December 2013. The project is co-funded by the European Commission within the TEN-T programme. Partners of 7 EU Member States are actively participating and in addition cooperation partners of 7 more countries are observing and contributing to the project.

The project was structured into activities which were again divided into sub-activities. For each SuAc a leader was nominated who coordinated the work to be done and monitored the results to be achieved. Furthermore the SuAc leader communicated regularly with the Project Coordinator (viadonau) on the status and next steps as well as on open issues concerning the related SuAc.

A Project Management Team was established in order to monitor the technical and financial progress as well as to identify and initiate necessary steps and action points. Furthermore the PMT was responsible to elaborate the Strategic Action Plan for the project as well as the yearly Action Status Report as required by the INEA. The project coordinator viadonau was nominated by the European Commission and was responsible for the entire coordination of the project and for the communication with the INEA.

Furthermore, a Steering Committee (SCOM) was established, consisting of representatives of the national Beneficiaries of the project, in order to monitor and steer, if required, the project on a higher level. Regular project meetings were organised by the Project Coordinator, the so-called Activity Coordination Meetings and the Steering Committee Meetings where mainly the status of the SuAcs per country was presented and the next steps and open issues were identified and discussed. Furthermore, this platform was used to inform each other about national implementations and gave the cooperation partners, and other European Projects, the opportunity to inform about their project to safeguard the alignment of RIS-developments on a pan-European level.

After three years of executing investigations, elaborating specifications and documents, tendering and contracting, implementing, testing and evaluating of pilots as well as documenting all results, the Project Management Team can proudly state, that the project was successfully executed and almost all planned results were achieved by the very actively contributing and motivated project partners.

Some of the key successes are:

* Conclusion of multilateral legal agreements as legal basis for International Data Exchange
* Start of pilot operation of the International RIS Data Exchange among several countries
* Pilot implementation of mobile RIS applications in several countries
* Pilot implementation of specific services for logistics users based on national and international RIS data exchange
* Enhancement of IENC / ECDIS related processes in several pilots (bathymetric IENCs; operational requirements for water level model web service pilot; IENC facility data editor; IENC data exchange based on web services)
* Detailed investigation of RIS quality issues (identification and documentation of gaps and deficits within existing RIS key technology standardisation based on operational experiences with NtS, ERI, VTT and Inland ECDIS; definition of quality requirements for international RIS data exchange)

These results supported and will support the on-going harmonised implementation of RIS in Europe towards safe, secure and efficient transport as well as to utilise inland waterways to their fullest potential.

# Structure of the Final Technical Report

The Final Technical Report (FTR) documents all work that was executed within the project as well as all results that were achieved. Furthermore a lot of conclusions and recommendations from SuAc level up to European level were identified and are documented as well.

Due to the high amount of relevant information to be included into the Final technical Report, the Project Coordinator decided to split the FTR into the following parts (separate files):

* Part A, General (this document)
  + Introduction to the project
  + Conclusions and recommendations on project level
  + Details on Project Management, Dissemination and Liaison with other initiatives
* Part B, Activity 1
  + Details, results, conclusions and recommendations of the SuAcs within Activity 1
* Part C, Activity 2
  + Details, results, conclusions and recommendations of the SuAcs within Activity 2
* Part D, Activity 3
  + Details, results, conclusions and recommendations of the SuAcs within Activity 3
* Part E, Activity 4
  + Details, results, conclusions and recommendations of the SuAcs within Activity 4
* Part F, Activity 5
  + Details, results, conclusions and recommendations of the SuAcs within Activity 5

# Introduction

IRIS Europe 3 as pilot implementation project for River Information Services (RIS) was co-financed by the Directorate General for Mobility and Transport of the European Commission within the TEN-T programme (Trans European Transport Networks). IRIS Europe 3 started in January 2012 and was finished in December 2014.

IRIS Europe 3 was a multi-beneficiary TEN-T project focusing on further enhancement and fine-tuning of RIS key technologies, services and applications; in particular the (pilot) implementation of new harmonized RIS services especially at the level of fairway, traffic and transport-related RIS services, services based upon multilateral legal agreements and definitions of service levels for RIS, the provision of feedback and contribution to the maintenance and amendment of technical specifications.

IRIS Europe 3 has significantly contributed to a harmonized RIS implementation at European level. IRIS Europe 3 was based on the work of the RIS Expert Groups and of previous RIS implementation projects. A broad European consortium representing 7 member states and 7 more cooperation partners have joined forces to support RIS providers, traffic and fairway authorities in enhancing their RIS services, especially those for logistical RIS users on a European level. A key objective of IRIS Europe 3 was the involvement of logistics RIS users by means of pilots.

## Main objectives of IRIS Europe 3

The emphasis of IRIS Europe 3 was to facilitate the development of River Information Services in Europe, enabling an international coordinated implementation, provision and enhancement of services as defined in the European RIS Directive 2005/44/EC.

In detail providing the following:

* Further development and pilot operation of national and international data exchange making use of multilateral legal agreements and this way providing services especially for logistics RIS users
* Contribution to the work of the RIS Expert Groups and amendment of the technical specifications for RIS technologies and services based on experiences from pilot implementations and test operation phases
* Participation in standardization of RIS services and technologies
* Pilot implementation of new RIS services and RIS technologies
* Feasibility studies outlining potential future services for RIS
* Demonstration and evaluation of new RIS technologies and additional services
* Further elaboration and implementation of measures for cross-border exchange of RIS data and other European services
* Further investigations and efforts towards enhanced quality level within RIS operations

## Geographic scope of IRIS Europe 3

IRIS Europe 3 was a Pan European Project with partners from 7 Member States as well as interested parties from 7 other countries which have been integrated as cooperation partners within IRIS Europe 3.

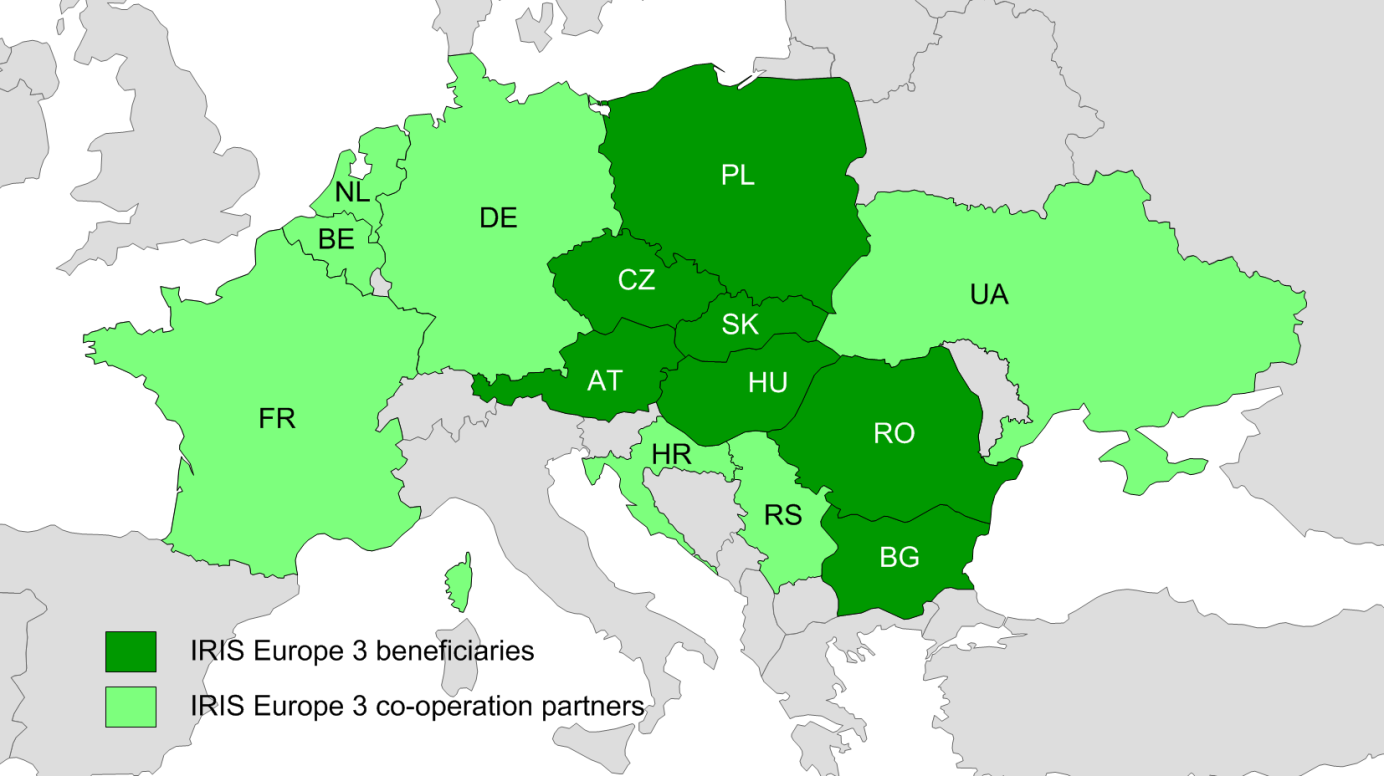


Figure 1: Geographical scope of IRIS Europe 3

Project partners represented the following Member States: Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

Cooperation partners represented the following countries: Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Serbia and the Ukraine.

## Project partners of IRIS Europe 3

The table below shows the Beneficiaries and executing project partners from Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Organisation** | **Beneficiary** | **Implementing**  **organisation** |
| Austria | Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology | X |  |
| via donau – Österreichische Wasserstraßen-Gesellschaft mbH |  | X |
|  |  |  |  |
| Bulgaria | Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications | X |  |
| Bulgarian Ports Infrastructure Co. |  | X |
|  |  |  |  |
| Czech Republic | Ministry of Transport | X |  |
| State Navigation Authority  Czech Waterways Directorate |  | X |
|  |  |  |  |
| Hungary | Ministry of National Development | X |  |
| National Association of Radio Distress-Signalling and Infocommunications (RSOE) |  | X |
|  |  |  |  |
| Poland | Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy | X |  |
| Inland Navigation Office in Szczecin |  | X |
|  |  |  |  |
| Romania | River Administration of the Lower Danube | X | X |
|  |  |  |  |
| Slovakia | Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic | X |  |
| Consortium VÚD a.s. and KIOS s.r.o |  | X |
|  |  |  |  |

Table 1: Project partners IRIS Europe 3

## Work breakdown structure of IRIS Europe 3

IRIS Europe 3 was structured into 6 activities and several sub-activities, so- called SuAcs, which all dealt with different topics:

* Activity 1 concentrated on the pilot implementation of enhanced Fairway Information Services
* Activity 2 focused on a pilot implementation of Traffic and Transport Related RIS Services
* Activity 3 dealt with the definition of Quality of Information Services for RIS
* Activity 4 dealt with pilot implementations of international RIS data exchange
* Activity 5 dealt with issues related RIS operation
* Activity 6 dealt with Project Management and Dissemination

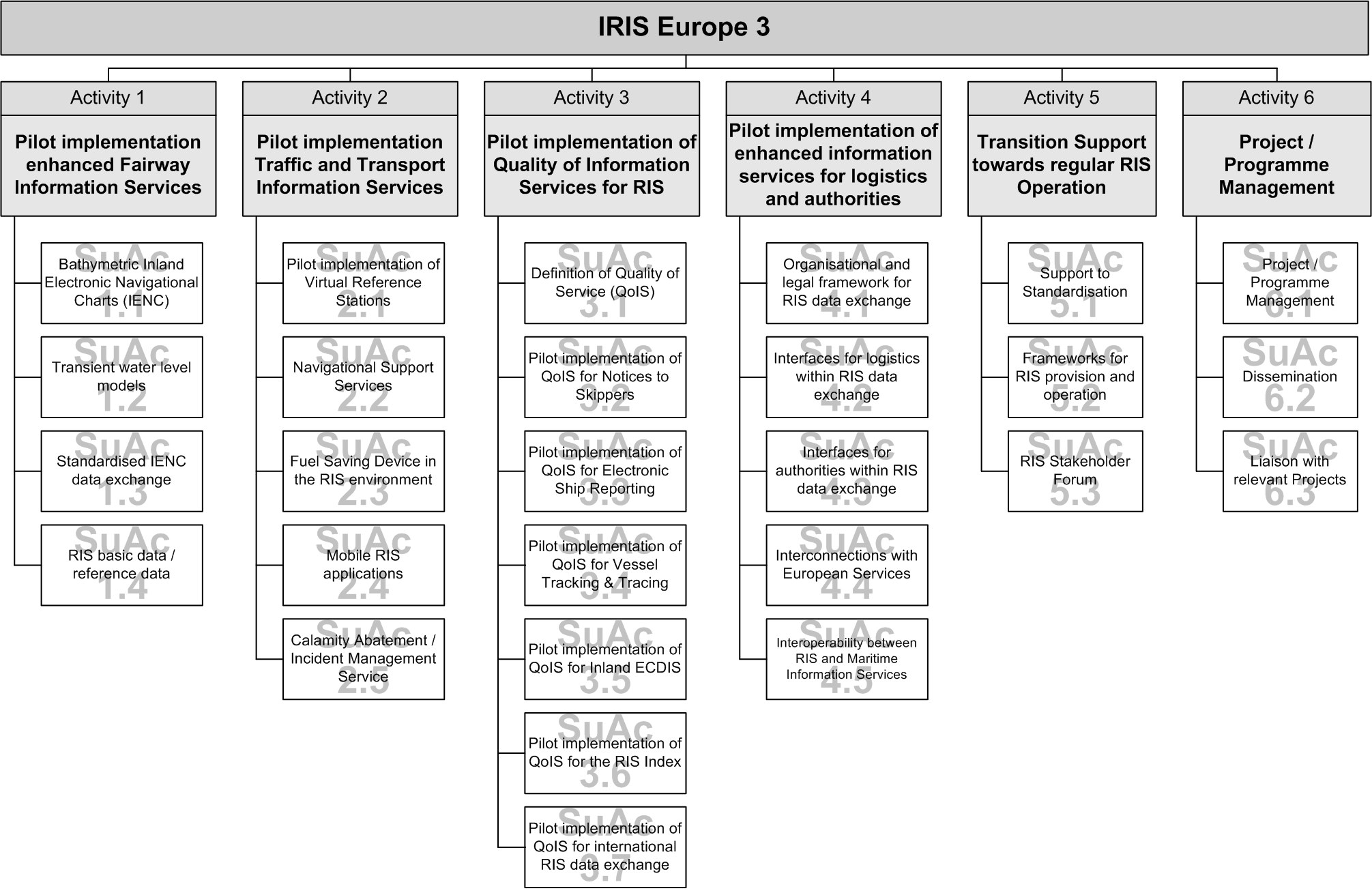


Figure 2: Work breakdown structure of IRIS Europe 3

# Conclusions and Recommendations out of the execution of IRIS Europe 3

## Conclusions

Overall it can be concluded that the IRIS Europe 3 project was a highly **successful project** which brought pilot implementation and operation of River Information Services in Europe to the next level, getting it operational, and established international data exchange between Member States and with European Services within the required legal service agreements.

This chapter contains the conclusions and the respective recommendations based on how the project was executed and were given by the national beneficiaries and/or the national coordinator of the project. The conclusions and recommendations of the various sub-activities can be found in part B till F of the FTR.

The **organisational structure** of the IRIS Europe 3 project and coordination meetings were considered successful. Furthermore it was concluded that the close cooperation between the Project Coordinator, the Project Management Team (PMT) and the National Coordinators was a valuable and powerful instrument to guide the participating Member States through the project. This coordination-team acted as an executive organisation of the IRIS Europe 3 Steering Committee (SCOM) thus reducing the amount of work of the IRIS Europe 3 Steering Committee. Taken into account that the members of the PMT were often also the National Coordinators and were involved in other related projects, the majority of issues raised were handled by the PMT, such as preparation of the SCOM decision-making based upon the advice of the PMT.

It was concluded that the IRIS Europe 3 **Steering Committee** could only steer based on consensus among the beneficiaries of the IRIS Europe 3 project which had some shortcomings due to the fact that the official beneficiaries did not participate in most of the meetings and often were represented by the national coordinators, which were responsible for executing the work. Furthermore, as already experienced and concluded within the predecessor projects IRIS Europe I and II, the IRIS Europe 3 Steering Committee Meetings and the Active Coordination Meetings were combined as both and dealt with similar topics with almost the same representatives.

The introduction of **sub-activities** has proven beneficial. With the project divided into various smaller projects with each their own objectives and deliverables, the detailed definition of each individual sub-activity within the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) supported the sub-activity leaders to set-up and manage their sub-activity and was the basis for monitoring by the Project Coordinator, the PMT and the National Coordinators. However, the downside of a fine breakdown structure by subjects is that it requires more effort by the partners. The partners had to provide one or more sub-activity leaders with project management skills and RIS knowledge, meetings had to be coordinated and combined to reduce costs and travelling time, and it required also more workforce to conduct all the activities due to the numerous sub-activities.

It was concluded that the operational **organisational aspects** within the project and the respective sub-activities was a point of attention. viadonau as project coordinator provided a set of tools to support the participants (templates for agenda, minutes, reports, deliverables, presentations; project website incl. discussion forum; publication of documents; etc.) but the application of these tools was limited, although these tools had been requested by the partners.

During the project it was noted that the **motivation** to participate to the IRIS Europe 3 project varied between Member States. Some Member States executed only national implementation during the IRIS Europe 3 project, while others aimed at implementing RIS in a coordinated European way and to enhance their RIS-services. For other Member States participation meant to ensure alignment with European initiatives. In addition there were also a number of Member States that had also their own National implementation projects, co-funded in a similar way, with the purpose of implementing RIS-services and/or participate in other projects. It was concluded that the variety of motivations in combination of conduction simultaneous projects often lead to undesired dependencies between projects which delayed the IRIS Europe 3 project in some countries. Some of the Member States concluded that this also led to huge workload and constrains in the prioritisation of the required effort.

One of the key conclusions related to the organisational framework was that the different setup in the individual countries resulted in different performance curves throughout the project runtime. The Beneficiaries of at least two countries (the respective Ministries of Transport) had to wait until the final **EC Decision** was officially notified in order to start an official tender procedure for the national implementation of the entire IRIS Europe 3 project. As the Decision was notified only in December 2012 these two countries could only start with the implementation of the project with a delay of approximately 14 months.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that specific **Milestones** are clearly defined including the conditions for their fulfilment (Strategic Action Plan) as well as potential consequences for individual partners if milestones are delayed or are not fulfilled by the end of the project at all (EC Decision).

As it seems that this specific part was severely underestimated, it is recommended for **National Coordinators** of future projects to have a clear vision of the national requirements and priorities within the project and to plan sufficient resources for necessary coordination, monitoring and steering the project on national level as well as for cooperation on international level.

It is recommended for future projects that the **Sub-Activity Leaders** have proven-track of project management skills, a certain level of knowledge about the sub-activity that should be managed and continuously maintain an overview of the SuAc status of all involved partners.

It is recommended that the participating Member States should consider their participation in European projects based on the **national requirements** and the available resources and ensure that activities in various national, regional or European projects are harmonised.

The **Steering Committee** is an important body and it is mandatory that all beneficiaries attend the respective Steering Committee meetings and steer the project by making strategic decisions, especially on national level. Based on the experiences, it is recommended that Steering Committee meetings are combined with the regular Activity Coordination Meetings for efficiency reasons. Separate SCOM meetings during the project should only be organised on demand.

# Activity 6 – Project Management

Activity 6 is called Project Management but also comprises the sub-activities concerning dissemination and liaison with relevant projects. The details and results of these SuAcs are provided in the following chapters.

## SuAc 6.1 Project Management

### Background information

IRIS Europe 3 is an international project. Partners all over Europe work on different topics concerning River Information Services. In order to contribute to smooth activities during the whole duration of the project a structured and good coordination of the project partners was necessary.

### Objectives

The main objective of project management is to monitor the status and progress of the project, technically as well as financially.

Furthermore the communication with the INEA and the European Commission as well as a harmonised documentation and organisation of meetings was of extreme importance for IRIS Europe 3.

### Work approach

Within IRIS Europe 3 a Project Management Team (PMT) was established, consisting out of six partners from participating member states:

* Mario Kaufmann, viadonau, AT
* Mario Sattler, viadonau, AT
* Petya Gegova, BPI Co, BG
* Dalibor Fanta, SPS, CZ
* Robert Rafael, RSOE, HU
* Piotr Durajczyk, UZS, PL
* Claudiu Dutu, AFDJ, RO
* Peter Zitnansky, VUD, SK

To guarantee a successful cooperation between the different countries and project partners, regular Activity Coordination meetings were arranged. These meetings were held in regular intervals. In addition, constant communication concerning the progress and status of IRIS Europe 3 was performed mostly via e-mail and telephone. The overall project coordination as well as the main communication with the INEA and the representatives of the European Commission was done by viadonau as officially nominated project coordinator.

### Results

First of all the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) was elaborated that defines in detail the work to be done and the results to be achieved on the level of sub-activities. Furthermore the responsibilities per SuAc were defined within the SAP.

In the course of the yearly progress reporting towards the INEA, the project coordinator viadonau provided detailed templates in order to gather and consolidate the input of the SuAc leaders and the national coordinators on technical and financial level. The consolidated Action Status Reports (ASRs) 2013 (reporting year 2012) and 2014 (reporting year 2013) were submitted to the INEA in time and were satisfying the expectations of the responsible representatives.

Based on the details gathered in the course of the elaboration of the ASRs, the Strategic Action Plan was updated as well based on necessary amendments and changes in the work approach.

During the lifetime of the project the following meetings were organised by the PMT in order to ensure an efficient communication and exchange of know-how as well as to monitor the progress of the activities:

* Kick-Off Meeting
* 4 Activity Coordination and Steering Committee Meetings: Overview on project status, discussion of critical issues and necessary steps to be initiated, preparation of meetings and project documentation (e.g. SAP, ASR, SuAc Reports, Final Technical Report), presentation of status of work per SuAc (alternatively per country), identification of open issues and next steps to be taken, agreement on progress by the Steering Committee, decisions to be taken, etc.

In addition to overall project meetings, many additional meetings took place on SuAc level whereas the PMT initiated the combination of relevant meetings in order the reduce travel times and costs. This was possible due to the fact that several experts participated in several SuAcs and thus a high efficiency in terms of meetings and travelling was ensured.

In the second half of 2014 the project coordinator initiated the elaboration of the SuAc reports by providing templates to the SuAc leaders and requiting their input based on a defined deadline. These SuAc reports are consolidated in the Final Technical Report which reflects the final project documentation and has to be submitted to the INEA and the national beneficiaries for their approval.

### Conclusions / Recommendations / Envisioned next steps

Conclusions:

* It was concluded that the Project Management Team could be a valuable and powerful instrument to support the participating Member States through the project under the precondition of active support and initiative of the PMT members.
* The fine-meshed structure of the Project and the relationship and dependencies between the sub-activity deliverables, official deliverables and milestones caused difficulties to monitor the progress of official deliverables and milestones and especially as dependencies are cross- over the project.
* It was concluded that the number of Milestones was too high to guarantee an efficient monitoring of the overall project status. On the other hand it was considered as necessary to have two Milestones per SuAc as most of the SuAcs were more or less stand-alone projects. It will be challenging to find the right level of detail and number of Milestones for projects of this size and structure (as these are actually not projects but programmes with several projects contained).
* Other general conclusions are provided in chapter 4.1

Recommendations:

* It is recommended to re-consider the position of a Project Management Team and formalise its position as the official executive body of the Steering Committee with a clear mandate, not only to give advice and guidance but also to enforce activities.
* It is recommended that the PMT is a real reflection of all the partners of the project, so consisting of all national coordinators for example.
* It is recommended to clearly investigate the number of necessary Milestones, the conditions for their fulfilment and potential consequences of delays or non-fulfilment enabling efficient but sufficient monitoring of the project progress.

## SuAc 6.2 Dissemination

### Background information

IRIS Europe 3 was a multinational project focusing on a very important transport sector with many different stakeholders and interest groups with different requirements and demands. Therefore, marketing of the project towards implementation of River Information Services was considered to be very important.

### Objectives

The main objective was to create awareness for the project focusing on the implemented and available RIS Services in order to ensure the involvement of relevant stakeholders, to identify their requirements and to get their feedback and recommendations for further improvements.

Another very important objective was to present and demonstrate the work that was done and the results that were achieved within the project in order to justify the effort and budget that had been invested into the project for the past three years.

Last but not least it is an important dissemination task to highlight the support of the European Commission by granting funds to the project out of the TEN-T programme.

### Work approach

A dissemination concept was elaborated by viadonau and agreed within PMT. The concept contained the main dissemination activities and defined the responsibilities which were divided among the national coordinators.

Relevant content for the dissemination activities was gathered by the project coordinator and dissemination officer from the national coordinators and the SuAc leaders. The content for all dissemination activities (texts, presentations, etc.) were agreed among the national coordinators and / or the Project Management Team before publication.

### Results

The main results of the dissemination activities were:

* Provision of templates for presentations, reports, meeting documents (minutes, agenda) etc. in-line with the visibility guidelines of the European Commission / TEN-T Programme
* Implementation and maintenance of the project website ([www.iris-europe.net](http://www.iris-europe.net)) by viadonau; the website provided basic information about the project as well as regularly published news on specific progress or results; furthermore the website served as document sharing point for the project consortium
* Creation (text and layout), printing and distribution of the first project folder
* Creation (text and layout), printing and distribution of a project newsletter
* Order and distribution of specific dissemination material (workbooks, notepads, pens, folder, USB sticks with project results, etc.)
* Creation (text and layout), printing and distribution of the final project brochure (IRIS Europe 3 Service Booklet)
* Organisation of the IRIS Europe 3 Final Event combined with the Common Issues Day of the RIS Week in November 2014 in Vienna

Furthermore, the status and results of the project were exchanged with other initiatives and presented several times at different opportunities:

* Presentations at RIS Expert Groups
* Presentations at the common issues meetings
* Presentations at conferences
* Presentations to specific (national) stakeholder groups

### Conclusions / Recommendations / Envisioned next steps

Conclusions:

* Generally the dissemination activities within IRIS Europe 3 ran quite well.
* Besides the active awareness building for the project website, it is assumed that mainly the partners and other interested parties used the website (download meeting documents, make use of the provided forum, etc.).
* Partners did not actively provide any articles for the “news” section of the website. Nevertheless, such a website is still considered as a “must have” for a project of such dimensions and can be a very useful tool for various issues (distribution of results, news, discussion in forums, etc.).
* The project folder at the beginning of the project describing the objectives and planned work to be done is considered as very important in order to create awareness for the project and to support interested parties to identify their points of interest. Same applies for the printed newsletter in the middle of the project highlighting the status progress and work ahead.
* The Final Event has to be seen as a successful dissemination activity focusing on the results of the project. The presentations and demonstrations of a subset of the project results gave an impression on the work that was done and justified the effort that was put into the project.

Recommendations:

* It is recommended to elaborate a dissemination concept for similar projects at their starting phase, with agreed shared responsibilities among the project coordinator and the national coordinators as well as the SuAc leaders.
* What shall not be missing in the dissemination activities of such projects are a starting folder, a final brochure and a final event as well as a project website and dissemination at certain opportunities (e.g. expert meetings, conferences, meetings of relevant other projects or initiatives, etc.).
* It is recommended to encourage the project partners to provide more information to be put on the project website (news, meeting documents, results, etc.).
* As a basis for all dissemination activities, an inventory of the relevant stakeholders that shall be reached has to be created and compiled in a common stakeholder database to be updated on a regular basis and channels to contact the stakeholders shall be identified.

## SuAc 6.3 Liaison with relevant projects

### Background information

Several RIS implementation projects and initiatives were ongoing with different focus during the project lifetime of IRIS Europe 3. A selection is provided in the following:

* PLATINA II
* NEWADA duo
* RIS enabled Corridor Management (CoRISMa study)
* National RIS implementation projects
* Projects and initiatives of Cooperation Partners
* RIS Expert Groups

### Objectives

Main objective is to ensure harmonised development and implementation of River Information Services in Europe by ensuring efficient coordination and cooperation between the IRIS Europe 3 project and identified relevant other projects and initiatives focusing on topics of common interest as well as by regular exchange of experiences and know-how in order to profit from each other.

### Work approach and results

First of all relevant initiatives and their content respectively their responsibility was identified at the beginning of IRIS Europe 3 by the Project Management Team. Together with the identified contact points, topics of common interest were identified together with next steps in terms of coordination and cooperation but also towards necessary differentiation and responsibilities in case of common activities.

Regular information exchange was established by the identified contact points via e-mail, telephone and meetings and proved to be essential for a harmonised implementation of RIS in Europe.

### Conclusions / Recommendations / Envisioned next steps

Conclusions:

* The cooperation with other projects and the RIS Expert Groups was successful, although it has to be remarked that the success factor of the cooperation is often based on personal relationships and interests, however it was not always conducted in the most optimal manner.
* The RIS Expert Groups do not always enough resources (manpower, funding) to investigate new technologies and to implement and evaluate new functional requirements as well as the respective standards by means of empirical validation. IRIS Europe 3 proved its benefit to implement and evaluate new functional requirements and the respective standards in a pilot environment and provide feedback to the RIS Expert Groups and tried to speed up the developments.
* Furthermore it was concluded that the RIS Expert Groups and the respective Member States have no budget to participate and to follow up all the developments, especially for the Member States not participating in IRIS Europe 3. As a consequence of this, discussions will be held again in the RIS Expert Groups.

Recommendations:

* It is highly recommended that the cooperation between projects and the respective RIS Expert Groups are formally established by means of a letter of intent and make clear agreements of each expectations and responsibilities.
* It is recommended to investigate whether it is possible to give the involved RIS Expert Groups a financial funding for the additional effort, especially when partners are involved who are not participating in the respective project.
* It is recommended that the next projects and the RIS Expert Groups draft a transition document on how the results of next projects will be transited to the respective RIS Expert Group, or other bodies, in order to ensure continuity.

Envisioned next steps:

* An envisioned next step could be that the chairs of the RIS Expert Groups and the PMTs of the various European Projects organize a meeting to evaluate the cooperation and determine how the cooperation can be continued and where applicable improved in the future.