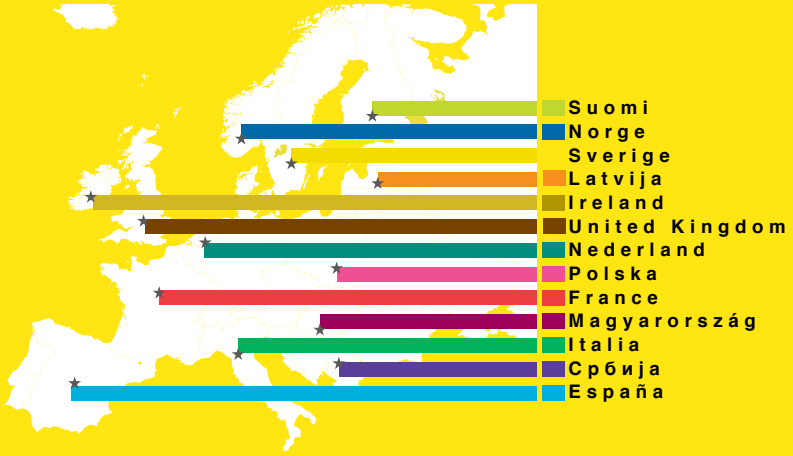

Final Joint Policy Recommendations and Governance Model of the Waterways Forward project

2012

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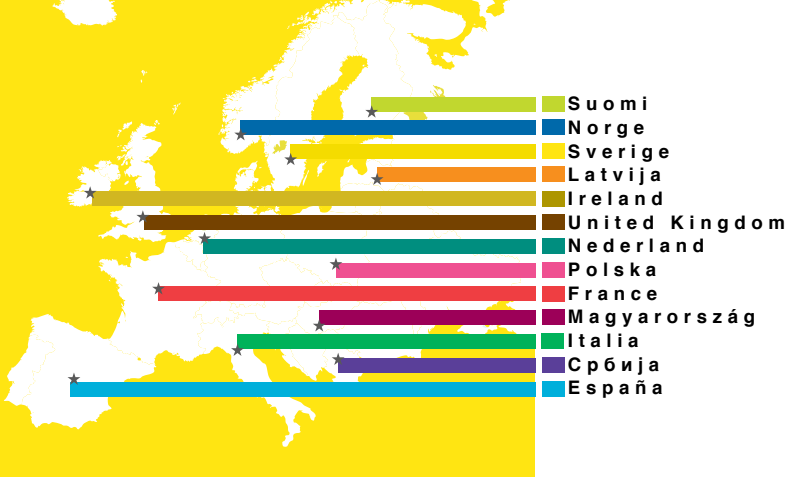

This project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and made possible by the INTERREG IVC programme:

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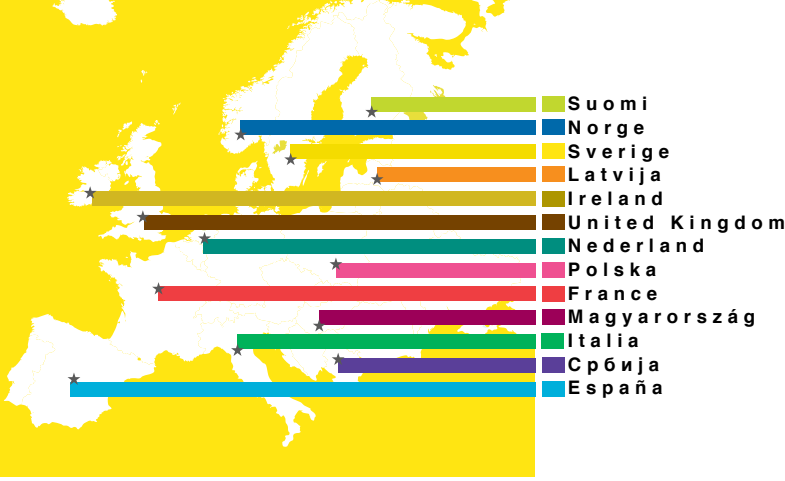

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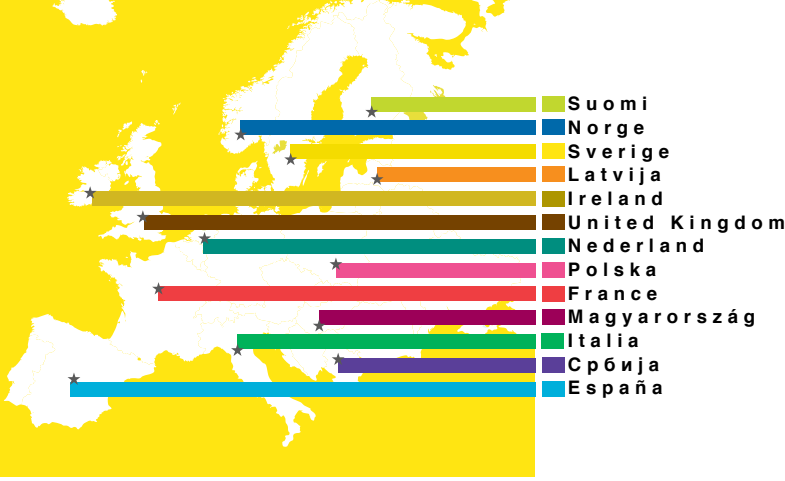
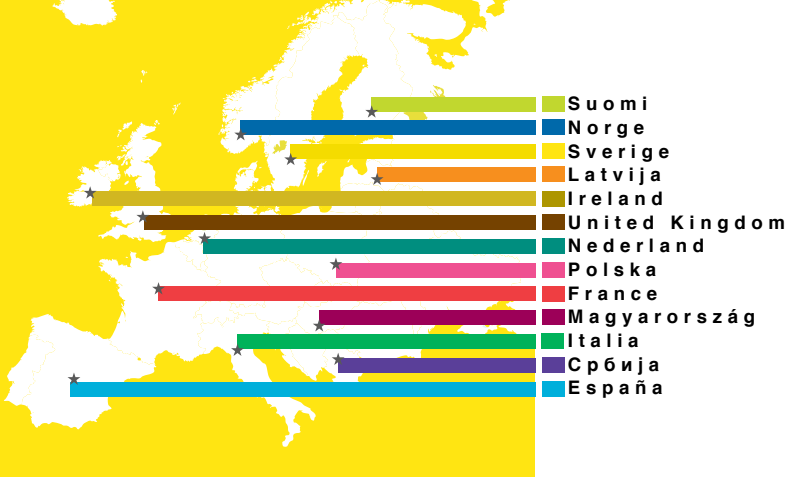


Summary of Policy Recommendations

Waterways Forward is a project supported through the Interreg IVC programme, which explores opportunities to reinforce the role of Europe's navigable inland waterways in furthering regional economic development. The Waterways Forward partnership consists of 17 partners from 13 European countries.

In the course of the work, the Waterways Forward partners have identified both:

- measures that might reinforce the role of inland waterways in delivering Europe 2020, the European Union strategy for smart, sustainable, inclusive growth; and
- policy gaps / barriers to effective regional / local action.
- The recommendations are summarised here. A fuller description of the measures proposed is available on the Waterways Forward website - http://www.waterways-forward.eu/policy-recommendations



Recommendation 1

On EU policy and regulations:

- Preparation of common guidelines (a White Paper) for the future development of inland waterways, from a multi-functional use perspective
- Greater clarity and consistency regarding the application of EU environmental legislation on inland waterways
- Recognition of the linking role of inland waterways in maritime policy and measures to develop he maritime economy

Recommendation 2

On EU funding programmes:

Support & funding for:

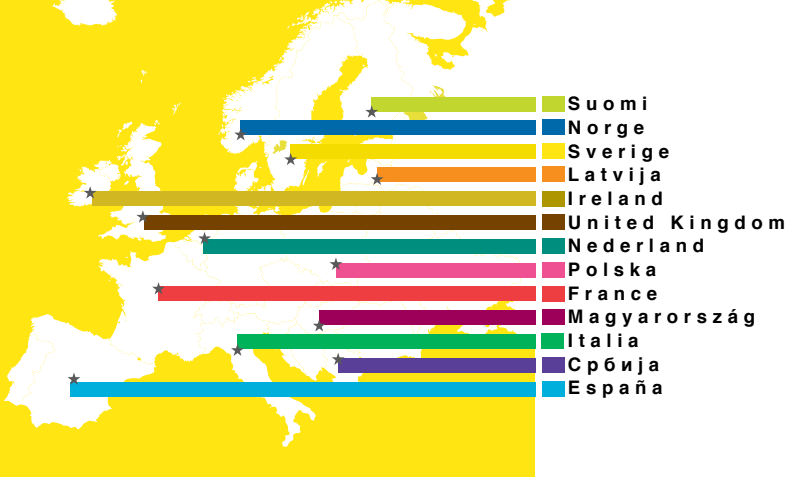
- A Europe-wide approach for tackling alien invasive species
- Innovative approaches for maximising the biodiversity value of waterways, while supporting navigation
- Reinforcing the role of inland waterways & adjacent regions for sustainable development
- In the development of new regional programmes for the 2014-20 period:
- Representatives of the inland waterway sector should be included in stakeholder consultations
- Specific reference should be made to the multi-functional role of waterways in delivering smart, sustainable, inclusive growth

Recommendation 3

On initiatives for Research & Development:

Support & funding for:

- Innovation in logistics systems for freight transport on smaller inland waterways



- Use of new technology in managing waterway infrastructure to improve efficiency & reduce costs
- Continued support for approaches that encourage research and development across sectors and disciplines eg. “triple helix” and clustering

Recommendation 4

On Europe 2020 Flagship for Resource Efficiency / EU environmental policy:

Promotion of greater awareness, recognition & valuation of the full range of ecosystems services that waterways deliver

- Support for initiatives to mitigate & adapt to climate change – sustainable transport, renewable energy, flood management etc.
- Support & funding for encouraging better environmental behaviour amongst users of waterways and the development of more energy-efficient & less polluting / damaging vessels
- Greater recognition of & support for waterways as green infrastructure as a driver for economic growth, an environmental resource and for promoting people’s health and well-being

Recommendation 5

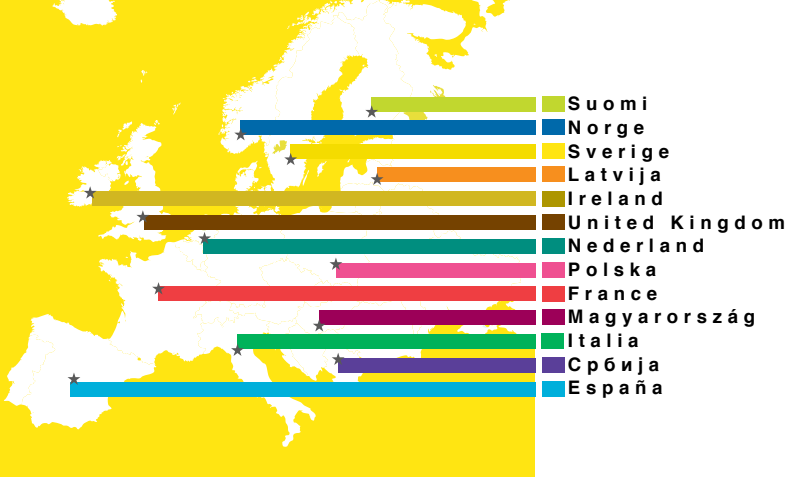
On energy measures:

Development of guidance material on energy efficiency & renewables for Covenant of Mayors (COM) signatory cities with inland waterways on their territory.

Recommendation 6

On policy for transport & accessibility:

- Recognition of the full range of ecosystems services delivered by inland waterways in the appraisal of water freight transport schemes and in EU / national Government support for transport by inland waterway
- Grant support and other measures to encourage a shift from road freight



& passenger transport to inland waterways and to facilitate inter-modality

- Recognition of the green infrastructure role of waterway towpaths and banks in encouraging sustainable transport through walking and cycling – particularly by creating "trunk" routes in and out of towns and cities
- Ensure fair competition between transport modes
- Support for measures to create "greener" inland shipping

Recommendation 7

On policy for culture:

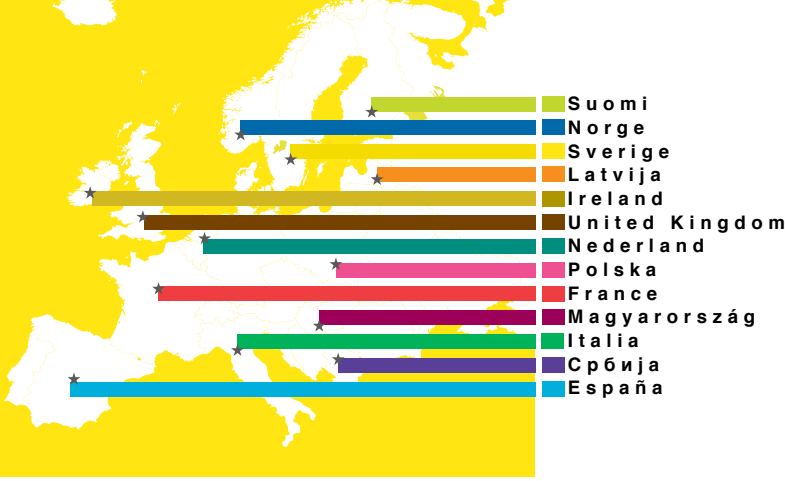
- Increased recognition in EU policy for the unique cultural heritage of Europe's waterways and to build on this heritage as a driver for economic growth
- Promotion of exchanges / dialogue between inland waterway cultural operators in the context of Europe's common heritage, including links with countries outside the EU that have been influenced by European waterway development
- Support for new & social media approaches to encourage tourism, based on waterway heritage

Recommendation 8

On Europe 2020 Flagship – An agenda for new skills and jobs:

Support & funding for integrated approaches for the management of inland waterways and adjacent regions through:

- Exchanges & placements through the Lifelong Learning programmes
- The development of waterway-based social enterprises delivering employment & training programmes targeted at disadvantaged groups eg. the long-term unemployed, young people and ex-offenders
- Volunteering schemes, particularly those that bring the generations together



Recommendation 9

Europe 2020 Territorial Pacts

Territorial Pacts, as proposed by the Committee of the Regions, should include specific reference to the sustainable development of inland waterways and adjacent regions.

Recommendation 10

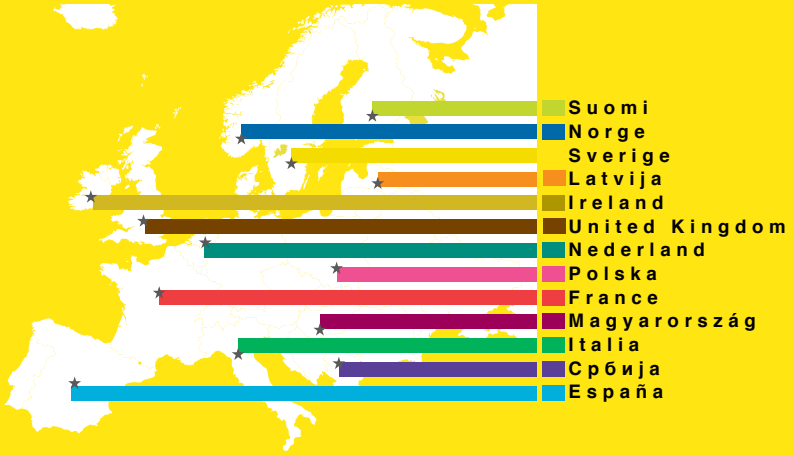
Promotion of inland waterways

- Support & funding for EU-wide inland waterways promotion organisation, covering both transport and recreation
- Encouragement for national organisations in providing public information and support for inland waterways, recognising the needs of the private sector
- Encourage, stimulate and support innovation by private companies in inland waterway-related sectors, particularly in rural areas

Recommendation 11

Tailored Governance models

It is recognised that there is not one Governance model for inland waterways that fits the needs of all regions / countries. However waterways are cross-border in nature and it is important that coordination and cooperation models are development to facilitate the transnational development of inland waterways.



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