

SPIN- TN, Working Group 3

Innovative Transport Vehicles on the Rhine

Comments by Peter Ohse

The working paper of Prof. Müller mentions the most important possibilities to increase the efficiency and the role of the inland shipping on the river Rhine and its tributaries. It shows under which circumstances and for which kind of goods the inland shipping is a competitive alternative to road- and railbound transport. I agree with the recommendations particularly with those given in chapter 4 regarding the harmonisation and the support of research and development. It should be avoided that waterway transport gets discriminated by changes taking place in context with the expansion of the European Union. Inland shipping can take an important role in compensating a lack of road infrastructure between the old and the new states. The river Rhine as the most important waterway in western Europe should be a backbone in the transeuropean transport chain. My few comments/questions concerning the paper of Professor Müller are:

1. The passenger transport especially the river cruising sector gained importance in the last years and is still increasing. Is it possible for passenger shipping to get a competitive alternative to other road- or railbound forms of public transport? If applicable what kind of innovations have to be realized to reach this goal?
2. Many of the concepts for innovative inland vessels are very promising. Is it possible to give a comparison regarding the costs of building between these types of ships and the conventional types?
3. In chapter 4 a change in the manning scale is recommended. What kind of qualification would be necessary to fulfill this step? Does this necessarily lead to a decreasing specialisation of the personal i.e. that the navigator has also to be a technician and vice versa? Which technical conditions have to be complied?
4. In my opinion the environmental-friendly character of waterbound transport should be further pronounced. In the adjoining states of the Rhine pollution control gains importance. Inland shipping is an environmental-friendly alternative to road- and railbound transport

particularly with the emission control taking place since 2002.

5. As mentioned in the comment to the paper of Professor Radojic the opinions concerning market regulations differ. Professor Radojic pleads for a old-for-new regulation on the Danube, Professor Müller wants such regulations to be avoided. This point should be discussed.