

EDINNA meets its members online

Last week, on May 27th, an online EDINNA meeting took place, which was conducted from Harlingen. The entire board was virtually present, consisting of Mr. H.A.L. Mintjes (president), Mr. K. Paulus (vice-president), Mr. O.S. Cupsa (vice-president), Mr. G. Benga (advisory officer) and Mr. H. Bergsma (treasurer). There were 36 participants from more than 11 countries including the Congo, Ukraine, Russia, United Kingdom, Romania etc.

EDINNA, an abbreviation for 'Education in Inland Navigation', was officially established as an association in February 2009 and is the educational network of inland waterway navigation schools and training institutes in Europe and beyond. EDINNA's aim is to achieve a more structured cooperation and to establish a harmonized education, training and certification system for inland navigation personnel in order to ensure a high quality of trained personnel on board the ships.

Once a year all members come together for a General Assembly (GA), but unfortunately, due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus, the meeting was unable to proceed. This year the meeting would have taken place in Varna, Bulgaria, but an online meeting was planned instead. During this meeting we wanted to hear how our members are coping with the current situation regard to the COVID 19 crisis. We were hoping everyone was willing to share their experiences; and they did!

How have members and their educational institutions organized themselves, what restrictive measures and procedures were adopted and especially how are theoretical and practical training and courses being conducted? The conclusion is that all countries use distance learning for the theoretical subjects and online platforms are being deployed everywhere. Problems mainly arise when it comes to practical education. The exchange of interns between the ships in the different countries, for example, still proves to be quite a challenge.

Two short presentations were also on the agenda during the meeting. Mr. Jörg Rusche from the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) gave an enlightening explanation on model examination and the use of simulators. Applying model examination in every country will eventually contribute to the harmonization of education in inland navigation; something that EDINNA stands for. The second presentation was given by Mr. Jan Smallegange from the STC-Group Rotterdam in the Netherlands. He talked about the COMPETING project, which aims is to develop and harmonize competence-based education and training for inland shipping and to contribute to increasing labor mobility in the inland shipping sector.

Sharing experiences can help us find a possible common methodology or any other means to be more efficient. Especially now it is very important being united in our efforts. Sharing best practices may also support any institution, whether or not they are members of our EDINNA network, especially those most in need.

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Note for editors. Not intended for publication:

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