



## Virtual Site-Visit Port of Antwerp and PP Meeting

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020, 10:00 to 12:00 hrs, virtual

### Minutes

Meeting Item	Meeting Topic	Agreed responsibilities
1	Border Inspection Post of Port of Antwerp	n/a
2	Status Quo of project activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Monfalcone translating study,</li><li>- Varna further discussion needed,</li><li>- Nantes preparing exec. summary before Christmas</li><li>- Livorno and Hamburg ready</li></ul>
3	Workshop on Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- All PPs finalise studies and Good Practices as basis for Action Plans</li></ul>
4	Any other Business / Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Next virtual meeting January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, physical meetings still not possible</li><li>- All PPs to submit missing information by December 11<sup>th</sup> to LP</li></ul>

Kristin van Kesteren-Stefan offered to provide an overview of the Antwerp Border Inspection Post (BIP) to an audience of about 40 people. Besides the Project Partners, the audience consisted of Italian and German stakeholders. The event was also recorded.

As a Customs and Foodchain Policy Advisor of the Antwerp Port Authority, Mrs. Kesteren-Stefan provided a corporate video at the beginning and illustrated her presentation through a virtual visit using Google Maps. With a brief introduction to the Port of Antwerp it was noted that Antwerp is an inlet port and about 80 kilometers down the river Scheldt. Being currently



the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest European port, underlines the fact that the Port of Antwerp has also established as a logistics platform and industry location. For example, BASF has its second largest production site located in the northernmost part of the port. The port is exposed to the tides of the river Scheldt. To reduce tidal effects and to allow safe and smooth access to the port, the largest lock in the world was created.

The BIP was built on the left-hand riverside. The port authority, customs and food authorities have a good relationship and work closely together in the BIP. There are currently 10 docks for inspection and an area to unload a container and enough reefer plugs to ensure the cold chain. There is also the area for foodstuff controls and phytosanitary. The latter are also possibly handled at the fruit terminal areas. Of course, due to legislation and nature of the product, animal and non-animal foodstuffs are strictly separated and controlled accordingly. This way, cross-contamination can be avoided. Dockworkers with special qualifications are hired by the Port Authority of the Port of Antwerp and are carrying out the actual work. Customs and food safety staff advise them what they want to be investigated, controlled, etc. The handling of cargo is done at a first come, first serve basis without any appointments. The customs is open from 06:00 hrs to 22:00 hrs and the foodstuffs office is open between 07:00 hrs and 18:00 hrs. There are also 2 scanners on site. Antwerp is part of the [Megaport Initiative](#). It was then pointed out, that different controls are expected in the future again. The trend goes towards the terminals again and customs acting in the close vicinity of the terminals as an effort to increase safety and security against fraud.

Gas measuring done by external company and once cleared, container can be attended by customs and or foodstuffs personnel. The gas check



is carried out, like in all other major ports in the world and underlies strict health and safety regulations. The “airing” of containers can take several hours, depending on the gas identified.

Nantes Saint-Nazaire had a question on truck driver waiting times for the inspection.

The needed differentiation between processing- and waiting time was pointed out. Furthermore, due to the first come, first serve system, the waiting time can vary. Depending on the cue and when a trucker arrives, the whole process can take anywhere between one and three hours. The average pure control time is about 45 minutes. Depending on the type of customs check, that check itself can take anywhere between 90 and 120 minutes.

Livorno asked whether there is an ICT system that supports the administrations and port authority in the way of notices. Livorno has no BIP just yet and was thus interested in that matter.

The customs and port authority use a customs system that includes a risk analysis and through that organizes inspections.

Mr Müller-Sannmann of the Plant Inspection Department of the Ministry of Economy and Innovation Hamburg asked whether the ventilation was done actively or passively.

In Antwerp, the ventilation is done passively. The Port Harbor Regulation gives the framework, but the organization in charge of the ventilation has the responsibility. There is also no gas measuring in reefer containers, as that is not possible due to coldchain transport type.



Katrin Witthoff from the Ministry of Economy and Innovation asked whether there were any estimations on how much CO<sub>2</sub> was saved due to the BIP / one-stop-shop.

According to the Port of Antwerp no measurements of that have ever been done and are currently considered.

These questions concluded the virtual study-visit, and most stakeholders left the virtual conference. Thereafter, the internal discussions were on the agenda.

The Lead Partner first checked on the status of all partners on the topic of study and good practices. Hamburg and Livorno are done. Nantes study is received and under final revision. An executive summary in English was promised before Christmas. Monfalcone's study is also ready and currently in translation. The study should be available by the deadline provided by the Lead Partner. Varna noted that there are still some issues, that need to be discussed bilaterally by e-mail and phone.

Planco then went on to talk about the upcoming Action Plans by each partner working with a policy instrument. It is important that in semester 3 all status quo reports and good practices are finalized. Semester 4 should then be focusing on Action Plans and a workshop on that topic. During semester 5, all Action Plans should be finalized. This is also the end of Phase 1 and Phase 2 will focus on how the Action Plans will be implemented and administrative follow-up activities related to the project. To ensure that this timeline will be kept, all action plan drafts should be finalized in summer 2021. As it is an official document, the finalization will most likely be time consuming, therefore the summer deadline. They are based upon reports (problems identified), good practices (ideas for



solutions) and the policy instruments analyzed. Planco then provided a potential table of contents of the action plans and asked if any of the project partners have already an idea for their action plans. Livorno is considering looking at the Tuscany perspective of their policy instrument and provide inputs to the managing authority for the upcoming new policy instrument for the period 2021-2027. It was suggested to add another action related to the Smooth Ports project. Trieste pointed out that it should not be an issue to create the action plans for the sister ports Monfalcone / Trieste. There are many synergies with other projects that analyze various aspects of the regional policy instruments and they estimate to be ready in time in mid-2021. They also suggested an additional point for the table of contents, the compatibility to other policy makers, policy instruments and programs.

As a last item, the Lead Partner pointed out that even with a vaccine in sight, it is unlikely that travel restrictions will be lifted before summer. Therefore, the physical meeting postponed to January 2021 in Varna, will be cancelled for now. A virtual meeting will take place on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The project partners will try and meet physically again, as soon as travel restrictions and policies allow, following the vaccination process started in many Member States across Europe and worldwide.

Minutes drafted by: Johannes Betz on 8 December 2020