

MERIDIAN Newsletter II, April 2023

Welcome to the second Meridian Newsletter. In this newsletter you will find:

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If you would like to receive the Meridian Newsletter in the future, please mail to:
peter.van.dop@rws.nl and bastiaan.kocken@rws.nl.

Throwback to the Steering Committee in Ghent

On the 14th and 15th of March 2023 our Belgium colleagues welcomed us for the MERIDIAN Steering Committee in Ghent. Two days packed with information from our harbour partners, knowledge building and sharing on C-ITS, and a demonstration on intelligent pedestrian crosswalks for blind people.

The day started with the formal announcement that Björn Siebert, colleague from Die Autobahn GmbH, will take on the job as international coordinator for MERIDIAN. After this announcement and the flowers for Stephanie Kleine for her boundless dedication to MERIDIAN and the Ursa Major programs, it was time to start with the technical content of the day.

The AWW (Agentschap Wegen en Verkeer Vlaanderen) welcomed us in the beautiful, medieval city of Ghent with some information about the city and the Flanders road authority. Following this was a heads-up on the communication- and knowledge building plan (more on these topics further on in this Newsletter) and a RTTI recap by Vincent Lau after the NAPCORE meeting in Vienna.



After a short break it was the moment of the ports. The four Italian port partners, Livorno, Trieste, La Spezia and Ravenna took the floor to present their participation in MERIDIAN. Despite the limited time the presentations led to interesting and lively discussion among the partners on multimodal questions. This calls for a specific timeslot in future Steering Committees.

With a good lunch and some fresh air the Steering Committee marched on into the afternoon program, in which our Belgium colleagues were given the floor to present their contributing tasks to MERIDIAN, Building information Management (BIM, see Newsletter 1 for more information), Dynamic Traffic Management, Peak Hour Lanes and Tunnel Safety Systems showed us the development in traffic management in Flanders. Last but not least was Mobilidata, the C-ITS tasks from Flanders, to kick off the C-ITS afternoon.

Using a hybrid format with over 50 participants (online and in the lecture hall), the four C-ITS projects in MERIDIAN presented their tasks, followed by a lively discussion. This is part of the knowledge building on the current status of C-ITS in the different Member States and partners and there will also be a future meeting in the form of workshops.

The day ended with the demonstration of Mobilidata, in which the Flanders colleagues showed a smart traffic light which is able to recognise blind people and help them cross over. For more information on the C-ITS discussion and the demonstration, please continue to read this newsletter.

After a long day of presentations, discussions and demonstrations it was time to blow off some steam and socialise during dinner in the medieval city centre of Ghent. Good food and good company to get us started for the second, shorter and administrative day of the Steering Committee.

We want to thank the organization, host and our Flemish colleagues for all the good care!

Knowledge Building: C-ITS

During the Meridian Ghent steering committee meeting a kick-off session was organized of the C-ITS knowledge building topic. The objective is to exchange knowledge between the 4 C-ITS tasks to learn about: similar past and current problems and solutions and future steps and integrations of task learnings.



The 4 C-ITS related tasks were presented: Mobilidata (Agency for Roads and Traffic), Phase II of the C-ITS Road works warning roll-out (Die Autobahn), C-ITS Corridor Services to the port of Livorno (Autorita di Sistema Portuale del Mar Tirreno Settentrionale) and Safety Priority Services - I2V data provision for in-car warnings (Ministerie I&W). The session concluded with a highly interactive Q&A and discussion.

In addition, the presentations of the ports of Livorno, Trieste, La Spezia and Ravenna formed the introduction of the Multimodal/Intermodal Services knowledge building topic.

Great interest was shown and the limited time available certainly calls for a more detailed workshop to exchange knowledge and experience at a deeper level in the near future.

Mobilidata: Smart traffic light

The grand finale of the first day of the Steering Committee in Ghent was a demonstration on smart traffic lights. Inside the building of the Flemish road authority Agentschap Wegen & Verkeer (AWV) the Steering Committee eye witnessed the latest developments and future possibilities of using smart traffic lights.

In this demonstration a portable traffic light was installed in the room next door, and under the guidance of Bart Lowyck the Steering Committee witnessed another use case on smart traffic lights: safe crossing for blind people.

The idea is that the application recognizes the proximity of the smart traffic lights, and communicates to the blind people about either a red or green light by different frequencies of vibrations.

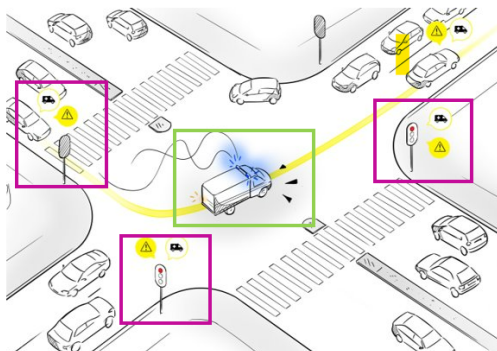
In the recreated zebra crossing, Kristof Rombaut volunteered as the blind person. He was blindfolded and he was given the phone with the application. When the frequencies of vibrations changed, he should recognize that the traffic light turned green and he can safely cross the road. And indeed, despite loss of sight, Kristof new exactly when it was safe to cross this virtual road.



Beautiful examples of new developments that can be used in the daily operation.


The smart traffic lights can, for example, recognise emergency vehicles that have to pass a crossing as quickly as possible. The lights on the crossing will turn green in favour for the emergency vehicle.

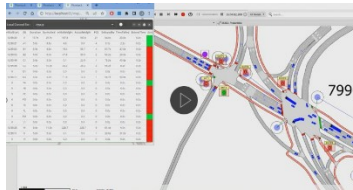

Intelligent traffic light pre ampts



- Priority for specific target groups
- Taking into account:
 - Road safety
 - Other traffic in the vicinity

Also for active road users



During the presentation, the audience was presented with videos showing the functionality of intelligent traffic lights.

Communication

During the Steering Committee the work plan was presented on communication for MERIDIAN. The objective is to:

1. Promote MERIDIAN, the tasks, its results and beneficiaries
2. To show contribution to the objectives set by the European Commission regarding ITS and C-ITS
3. Inform stakeholders on progression
4. To highlight the participation of the European Commission to the project financing.

The project wants to use several ways of communication to achieve the objectives set above. Starting with this newsletter. The goal is to spread a newsletter with the latest information and news items on the MERIDIAN tasks. The goal is to send out a newsletter after every Steering Committee.

Second, the project is working on a MERIDIAN website, where all the latest news and information can be found of MERIDIAN, as well as an archive of all historic items.

Furthermore, the projects wants to use social media for distribution of information and interesting information about achieved results. The idea is to create a LinkedIn page to disseminate information throughout the project with regular press releases.

Last but not least, in order to highlight the participation of the European Commission to the project, Meridian is making stickers to put on the financed projects in every participating partner.



The stickers are in English, as well as the local language of the partners. Stickers will be available at the next SC meeting in Amsterdam. Furthermore the concept and design of Roll ups was discussed, first versions will be presented at the SC meeting in Amsterdam as well.

Next Steering Committee

For the next MERIDIAN Steering Committee you will all be welcomed in Amsterdam on behalf of the Dutch partners: Rijkswaterstaat and The City of Amsterdam. The Steering Committee will take place on the 13th and 14th of June 2023. Further details on the venue and agenda will be shared as quickly as possible.

See you all in Amsterdam!!

