

## **Germany**

### **ERDF Bavaria**

All projects that receive financial support from the ERDF-Bavaria program are screened for their support of the Danube Strategy. So far, we expect that projects within the investment priorities 1b (technology transfer between universities/research institutes and SMEs), 3d (Export Bavaria) and 5a (flood protection) will contribute to the aims of the Danube Strategy. Considering, e.g., flood protection, the projects will be coordinated internationally to prevent downstream deteriorations.

To evaluate the contribution of the ERDF Bavaria program to the Danube Strategy, all supporting projects will be registered in the ERDF-Bavaria-database. Further, it is anchored in the selection criteria of all investment priorities that, in the case of otherwise comparable projects, those projects that support the Danube Strategy will be preferred.

### **ESF Bavaria**

In the new funding period there is a cross reference to macro-regional strategies in the ESF Operational Programme for Bavaria. This means that transnational projects within macro-regional strategies can be funded if the projects correspond to the objectives of the Bavarian Operational Programme.

A meeting of representatives from ESF managing authorities in the Danube Region took place on 28 October 2015 in Ulm as a side-event of the Annual Forum for the Danube Strategy. With this first meeting an ESF network for the Danube Region was initialized. The next meeting of the network will be in July 2016 in Munich and will focus on exchange of experience and possible fields of cooperation within the Danube Strategy. All ESF management authorities will be invited. The aim of the network is to establish cooperation on working level and to generate transnational projects in the Danube Region, which can be financed by the European Social Fund.

### **EAFRD Bavaria**

A lot of elements of the 11 priority areas of the EUSDR – such as competitiveness, water quality, biodiversity, landscape protection, quality of air and soil or tourism – can receive funding within the Bavarian EAFRD programme.

A focus of the Bavarian activities in the Danube region within the agricultural context lies on „Danube Soya“ („Donau Soja“). On 25.11.2013, already the second big congress related to the European protein debate and the way to an integrated strategy for cultivators, consumers, producers and researchers, took place in Augsburg. „Donau Soja“ is linked to three EUSDR priority areas: PA 6 (Biodiversity, landscapes, quality of air and soils), PA 8 (Competitiveness) and PA 10 (Institutional capacity and cooperation).

### **ERDF Baden-Württemberg**

In the ERDF-programme is described how it contributes to the EUSDR by stimulating technological development and promoting innovation and knowledge as well as developing effective methods of carbon dioxide avoidance. With the priority "Strengthening research, technological development and innovation", it shall support the PA 7 and 8 with "carbon dioxide emissions reduction" and "sustainable development" as well as the objective of PA 2. Consequently, the ERDF picks up the aims of the EUSDR with clear regional and structural

importance, where Baden-Württemberg can contribute to progress in the Danube Region. Appropriate projects are following a method of identifying information. Knowledge will be produced. The ERDF programme is also aimed at other regions, particularly in the Danube region in order to implement its strategy. Therefore, the ERDF projects and on the ERDF homepage can be used to identify parallel projects in the Danube region. In addition, the ERDF managing authority sent at random intervals of about six to eight weeks to all ERDF managing authorities in the Danube Region a newsletter with updates on the programming and implementation process in Baden-Württemberg.

### **ESF Baden-Württemberg**

The ESF Managing Authorities of Baden-Wuerttemberg and Bavaria have initiated a network of cooperation between the ESF Managing Authorities in the Danube Region. The Starting point was a meeting of representatives from the Managing Authorities and further experts with key expertise and experience in questions of transnational cooperation – including Ms Andriana Sukova-Tosheva, Director at DG Employment - on 28 October 2015 in Ulm, as a side-event of the 4th EUSDR Annual Forum.

At this meeting, the representatives of the Managing Authorities discussed possible fields of cooperation, using both ESF-instruments and the EUSDR framework and combining them with each other. One priority identified was the exchange of experience in the practical work and here in particular regarding a simplified application of EU rules (e.g. simplified cost options, IT systems, application of indicators) and project financing.

In future and with view to the next meetings, the target is to extend the cooperation to all Member States in the Danube Region, starting from a “nucleus” consisting of the Managing Authorities represented at the first meeting on 30 October 2015 in Ulm Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bavaria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic (City of Prague), Hungary and Slovenia. So the participants would be happy to welcome in their network also the colleagues in the Managing Authorities of Austria, Croatia, Romania and Slovakia.

The next meeting of the MAs in the Danube Region is going to be in Munich in the second quarter of 2016. It will take place as a workshop with the following and possibly further topics:

- exchange of experience in the practical work with a particular view to a simplified application of EU rules (e.g. simplified cost options, IT systems, application of indicators)
- project financing.