



Selected

# EUSDR PROJECTS

Annex 2  
of the EUSDR Implementation Report 2016-2018

## **Introduction**

The projects presented in this document were selected together with EUSDR Priority Area Coordinators to illustrate the thematic fields they dedicate their work to in the framework of the Strategy.

Within the last ten years of EUSDR implementation, a considerable number of projects and initiatives have been brought forward. Projects are the most visible outcomes of the strategic efforts made by EUSDR stakeholders – they make the Strategy tangible and visible on the ground. These projects may thematically stretch across Priority Areas or Pillars and financially across different funding schemes or they may entail different territorial scales (transnational, national, regional, local), thus allowing a wider outreach of the Strategy. To name a few examples of the projects presented, JOINTISZA and DAREFFORT are thematically cross-cutting, linking water quality management and environmental risk management and ENERGY BARGE links waterways mobility management to sustainable energy supply. Also, the project “Academy of Central European Schools” (aces) exemplifies how transnational cooperation can be brought to the local level.

In this sense, the following pages complement the EUSDR Implementation Report 2016-2018 and shall help to make the impact of the Strategy more tangible to a broader audience.

Danube Strategy Point

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## Background

The quality of fairway infrastructure along the Danube influences the possible load of vessels, which determines the cost-efficiency of transport. Shallow sections with insufficient fairway depth or width along the waterways reduce the possible payload of a vessel (e.g. tons or number of stackable containers loaded).

One section of insufficient fairway depth on a waterway may result in lower load factors for the whole trip or even a hold-up of vessels for an unknown amount of time at a critical location. Furthermore, shallow water also increases the vessels' fuel consumption in a disproportional manner. These aspects strongly increase transport costs and reduce reliability and attractiveness to customers.

In addition to physical shortcomings of the fairway, also imprecise water level prognoses have a strong disadvantageous effect – the less reliable the predicted water levels are, the more “safety draught” will be kept on a vessel, i.e. the less will be loaded on the vessel beforehand in order to prevent a draught that is too deep for the actual fairway depth. This again reduces profit margins.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

Financed by the Connecting Europe Facility, FAIRway Danube is a project that contributes to increasing safety and efficiency in Danube river navigation, while reducing pollution and preserving the environment.

The focus of FAIRway Danube is to provide current and harmonised information about shallow sections, water levels and water level forecasts. Available depths will be used optimally by adapting the location of the waterway to the current riverbed conditions. In parallel, FAIRway Danube is aiming at preparing the harmonised rehabilitation of the Danube and its navigable tributaries. Pilot operations of new harmonised services for waterway users, the provision of feedback and the contribution to technical specifications or operational concepts are integral parts of FAIRway Danube. A key objective is also the involvement of stakeholders for approval and validation of results by means of pilots.

Through purchasing state-of-the-art equipment for hydrological services (surveying vessels, marking vessels etc.), FAIRway Danube will help skippers by providing accurate and harmonised navigation information about the depth of the river, shallow sections, water levels and water level forecasts.

The Danube will be a safer river and will serve with an attractive mode of transport. Skippers will be less exposed to accidents or incidents and travel times will be reduced.

*“Our investments in the extension of surveying and hydrological measurement infrastructure will significantly improve the quality of the data delivered and will exploit the potential of available waterway conditions by adapting the routing of the fairway.”*

**Mr. Claudiu Duțu, Head of ENC Dept., Giurgiu Branch, AFDJ Galați**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Partner: Via Donau – Austrian Waterway Company</li> <li>7 Project Partners from Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 23.4 mio. of which EUR 19.6 mio. are co-financed by the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Programme of the European Union	
Duration	07/2015 - 06/2020	<a href="http://www.fairwaydanube.eu/">http://www.fairwaydanube.eu/</a>

## Background

There are a number of severe barriers to the adaption of Danube inland waterway transport (IWT), to European IWT and to environmental policy objectives: long service life of inland vessels, high investment costs, low re-investment capacity of the Danube fleet operators, knowledge deficits about green technologies as well as the lack of public actions & incentives.

As an effect, people living along the Danube are confronted with air, water and noise pollution. Also the need to refuel ships results in the necessity to constantly supply and store large quantities of fossil fuels in the ports along the Danube.

Modernising inland waterway transport along the Danube would increase transport efficiency and competitiveness of vessels operator.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

Improving the environmental and economic performance of the Danube fleet is the overall goal of the GRENDL project.

Hence, GRENDL helps the Danube fleet operators and their public counterparts in ecological and economic modernisation of the sector and in defining and implementing necessary transition measures. Dedicated activities within the project are meant to raise the awareness of Danube fleet operators & sector stakeholders regarding advanced technologies to 1) reduce air pollutants and energy consumption of inland vessels and 2) to improve transport & logistics management processes making use of digitalisation.

The project offers a frame for Danube fleet operators, both private & public stakeholders, to transfer know-how through intensive transnational collaboration, in order to overcome the existing knowledge gap, lack of activities and absence of instruments to put into practice innovative solutions.

GRENDL also works at elaborating innovative technical vessel concepts and improved transport & logistic management processes for fleet operators. These concepts and processes are shared as good practices for wide-scale implementation to strengthen the competitive position of inland navigation and to exploit its market potential.

Finally, a major priority in the overall implementation process of the project in Danube riparian countries are innovative financial instruments at transnational level (Model State Aid Scheme).

*"GRENDL aims at achieving a higher acceptance and use of inland waterway transport (IWT) as an environmentally friendly transport mode contributing to economic growth and a more sustainable transport system in the Danube Region."*

**Mr. Silviu Meternă, Pro Danube Romania- Managing Director**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Partner: Pro Danube International, Austria</li> <li>• 12 Project Partners from Hungary, Romania, Austria, Germany, Bulgaria and Serbia</li> <li>• 11 Associated Partners</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 1,82 mio. of which EUR 1,48 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 70,112 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	06/2018 - 11/2020	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/grendel">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/grendel</a>



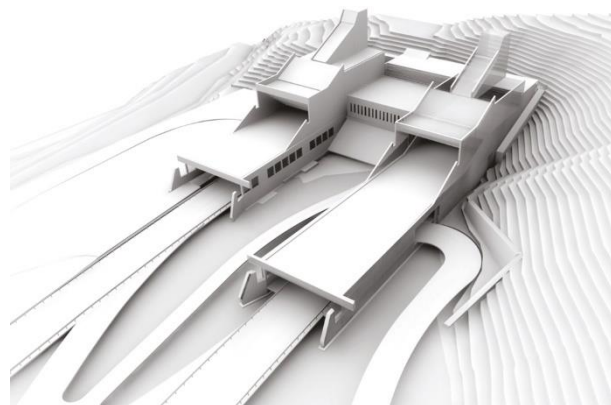
# KARAWANKS TUNNEL

## A Second Tube for the Karawanks Motorway Tunnel

### Background

The Karawanken (Karawanks) motorway tunnel connects the A2 motorway in Slovenia and the A11 motorway in Austria and is part of the TEN-T comprehensive network, connecting the Baltic-Adriatic and the Mediterranean Core Network Corridor. The tunnel in its current form – single tube and two lanes of approximately 8 km in length - does not meet its traffic flow requirements, especially since it is an important transport connection between major economic areas. The culmination of the traffic flow occurs annually during the summer months.

Furthermore, the current one-tube tunnel does not have escape routes or protective spaces for emergency situations, which is particularly relevant for heavy good vehicles. The two-lanes section poses enormous hazard potential in the event of fires. Thus, the Karawanks motorway tunnel is a bottleneck and poses a high risk to users.



### Focus & Outputs

The main goals of the project are the improvement in capacity and an increase in traffic safety, as well as the reduction of environmental impacts on the adjacent areas.

By building a new parallel tunnel tube, with a total tunnel length of about 7.948 m, out of which approximately one half is on the Slovenian side and the other one on the Austrian side, the roads will receive a modern double tunnel, thereby greatly increasing the traffic flow.

The benefits of the project are among others:

- Increased safety: Due to the full expansion there is no oncoming traffic in the tunnel anymore. Two state-of-the-art tunnel tubes with two lanes each guarantee maximum safety for all drivers.
- No bottleneck, no traffic jam: The construction of the second tunnel tube removes the bottleneck on the way from western/northern Europe to the south-eastern European countries and back again. The repeated traffic jams, especially in the summer, are to become history.
- Smoother traffic flows: The low speed limit in the present single tube tunnel is also no longer required due to the full expansion. In the Karawanks motorway tunnel, as in all twin-tube tunnels, the speed limit will be 100 km/h.

There will also be an increase in the number of users, a decrease of accidents, reduced travel times and reduced pollution.

*"In view of connectivity of the Danube Region countries, the second tube of the Karawanks increase traffic flows, reduce bottlenecks and provide greater traffic safety on the motorway's network on the right bank of Danube river, to connect Germany, Austria, Slovenia with Balkan countries."* **Dr. Tomaž Vidic, President of the Board (DARS - Motorway Company in the Republic of Slovenia)**



### Key facts

Cooperation	Motorway Company in the Republic of Slovenia and Austrian Highways and Freeways Public Company	
Financing	Total budget EUR 315 mio. of which max. EUR 25 mio. are co-financed by the Connecting Europe Facility Programme	
Duration	2019-2025 (under construction)	<a href="https://www.dars.si/INVESTMENTS_AND_RECONSTRUCTION">https://www.dars.si/INVESTMENTS_AND_RECONSTRUCTION</a> <a href="https://www.asfinag.at/verkehrssicherheit/bauen/bauprojekte/a-11-karawanken-autobahn-neubau-zweite-roehre-karawankentunnel">https://www.asfinag.at/verkehrssicherheit/bauen/bauprojekte/a-11-karawanken-autobahn-neubau-zweite-roehre-karawankentunnel</a>

### Background

Since there is no high-speed railway line between Belgrade and Budapest, respective national authorities initiated a project to improve railway connections in this part of Southeast Europe. This project will connect the capitals of Serbia and Hungary. The scope of the project is reconstruction and modernisation of the existing railway line Belgrade-Subotica-state border (Serbian part) by adding new tracks where necessary, in order to get a double track railway line to speed up to 200 km/h. A similar project is ongoing on the Hungarian side.

This is also a part of Corridor 10 and a part of SEETO Core Network (TEN-T). Section Stara Pazova-Novı Sad is the most demanding section where a tunnel (2 tubes, each at a length of 1.2 km) is being constructed. In parallel a viaduct at a length of 3 km is being constructed. This section was originally identified as a bottleneck due to rough terrain and a single-track railway line. The project is planned to be finished by the end of 2021.



### Focus & Outputs

This Project will enable an increased number of trains and will shorten travel time in the Danube Region as well as for local residents. There is a high passenger volume between Belgrade and Novi Sad. However, after the finalisation of the project inhabitants will be able to commute instead of relocating between these cities. A higher level of service will attract new passengers and decrease road passenger transport which will have a positive impact on the environment. Additionally, high safety standards will be implemented.

The main goals of the project are to increase capacity, safety, quality of service and to decrease travel time and environmental impact. Moreover, the improved connection is to attract new passengers and freight flows, shifting flows mostly from road transport to railway.

The benefits of the project are among others:

- No bottleneck: The construction of the tunnel and viaduct will shorten the length and travel time, having in mind that the current alignment of the railway line is between the slope of mountain Fruska gora and the Danube river. After the finalisation of the project the railway line will go through the mountain.
- Increase of safety and capacity: The expansion of number of railway tracks will ensure the increase of capacity and highest safety standards will eliminate most of the potential hazards.
- Increase of speed: The new railway line with all elements of the track will make possible a speed of up to 200 km/h including the tunnel section.

The construction of the high-speed railway line Belgrade-Budapest, section Stara Pazova-Novı Sad, already has and it will continue to have a huge impact on Serbia and its economy, as well as on the whole region. When finished, the railway line will connect two regional hubs and provide a high quality link between Belgrade and Budapest in 2 hours travel time. Looking at the project in a wider territorial context, other cities of the Danube Region will also benefit from this rail link by decreased travel time, enhancing competitiveness, connectivity and trade.



### Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure (SRB)</li> <li>• Infrastructure of Serbian Railways (SRB); RZD International (RUS)</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total Budget: USD 585,466,378.12 funded through a loan from the Government of the Russian Federation and 15 % participation of the Serbian Government	
Duration	08/2017-12/2021	<a href="https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/en/infrastrukturna-gradilista/reconstruction-and-modernisation-section-stara-pazova-novi-sad-tunnel">https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/en/infrastrukturna-gradilista/reconstruction-and-modernisation-section-stara-pazova-novi-sad-tunnel</a>



## Background

The Danube Region offers a great potential for green energy in the form of biomass. In this context ENERGY BARGE aims at fostering transnational cooperation and synergies between key actors of the bioenergy and the Danube logistics sectors in order to support the sustainable use of biomass for energy production.

The market information and data to assess bioenergy potentials are not available in sufficient quality for all member states and regions along the Danube. ENERGY BARGE sets up a platform for the exchange of know-how, experience and good practices, helping Danube countries to improve energy security and efficiency.

ENERGY BARGE was developed to support an increased use of Danube logistics in order to transport biomass cargo and thus help to strengthen bioenergy deployment in the region, to reduce emissions, to establish a low-carbon transport system and to improve the environmental performance along the entire bioenergy value chains.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

The main objective of the project ENERGY BARGE is to exploit the potential for green energy in the form of biomass along the Danube river in a sustainable way, thereby increasing energy security and efficiency in the Danube countries, considering:

- the Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC,
- the EU2020 climate goals,
- EU Danube Region Strategy's objectives.

Hence, the project develops activities as follows:

- 1) The Modal Shift Platform for Green Bioenergy Logistics ([www.energy-barge.eu](http://www.energy-barge.eu)), where more than 680 companies in the field are registered) aims at informing and engaging actors from the biomass/bioenergy and logistics sectors along the Danube. It focuses on the region's bioenergy landscape and the benefits of Danube logistics for all elements of the bioenergy supply and value chains.
- 2) Partners from five Danube ports implemented pre-feasibility studies and pilot actions in close cooperation with regional biomass producers and suppliers. The pilot activities serve as good practice examples for other ports in order to transfer them into hubs for processing, handling and storage of biomass for energy production in the Danube Region.
- 3) Over 10 workshops and regional B2B meetings in seven countries were organised to bring together actors of the bioenergy and Danube logistics sectors - over 350 stakeholders participated.

*"Our mission is to improve the Danube area's energy security and efficiency."* **ENERGY BARGE**

## BIOMASS &amp; BIOENERGY ATLAS



Get an overview on the company landscape, business contacts, potentials and feedstock flows along the Danube in our atlas.

## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Partner: Agency for Renewable Resources, Germany</li> <li>• 14 Project Partners from Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania</li> <li>• 8 Associated Partners</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 2.32 mio. of which EUR 1.97 mio. are funded by ERDF through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	01/2017 - 06/2019	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/energy-barge">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/energy-barge</a>

## Background

A high share of renewable energy in our energy systems is not possible without demand side management. Yet, we are lacking the right tools and clear regulatory provisions to make this possible for buildings – the largest energy consumers. As a consequence, the high share of energy obtained from fossil fuels is not displaced with green energy, which threatens the environment and health of the population.

Current tendencies in the Danube Region to integrate energy-efficiency measures and renewable energy are not followed by adequate interactions to enable optimal operation of the building as a whole. Distribution system operators are reluctant to allow renewable energy in the grid as this entails investments into the grid and increases costs for correct and secure operation.

Distribution system operators are interested in introducing coordinated energy exchange with buildings through dynamically changing conditions, e.g. via optimised hourly price profiles. Currently neither of the countries in the Danube Region has a regulatory/technology framework developed for inception of building-grid cross-spanning energy management schemes.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

The main objective of the 3Smart project is to provide a technological and legislative setup for cross-spanning energy management of buildings, grids and major city infrastructures in the Danube Region.

3Smart provides optimal economical value to energy-efficiency and renewable energy investments in buildings and at the same time it will result in optimised costs on the grid side whereas grid and buildings will also interact through exchanging energy and price data. This is expected to motivate installation of distributed storages in both buildings and grids for improving energy security in the Danube Region.

3Smart will enable economically optimal interoperation of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy sources in buildings, and will motivate installation of distributed storages to improve energy security in the Danube Region.

By implementing these project activities, 3Smart will make the energy system more prone to renewable energy integration and decrease the carbon footprint of the Danube Region.

3Smart have designed a modular software tool for integrated real-time energy management of buildings and energy distribution grids, including demand response. The developed software tool can also be used in energy management of different infrastructures in settlements to further increase flexibility of energy demand.

*"A low-carbon shift of the energy system requires demand response of buildings and their lively interaction with the energy grids. This includes planning, predictions and real-time optimisation and the 3Smart tool covers all that."*

**Prof. Mario Vašak, 3Smart Project Manager**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University of Zagreb Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, Croatia</li> <li>12 Project Partners from Slovenia, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> <li>5 Associated Partners</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 3.79 mio. of which EUR 2.68 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 537,756 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	01/2017 - 12/2019	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/3smart">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/3smart</a>



## Background

Throughout the Danube Region, Art Nouveau is a defining feature of many urban landscapes. Art Nouveau movement in this area mainly stems from the Viennese Secession, prevalent and influential in urban planning and architecture at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Secession monuments are generally revered as jewels of architecture, craftsmanship and art. Yet, their potential for becoming sites of vibrant communal life, as well as tourist attractions is often left unexplored and unrealised.

Also, the protection of cultural heritage is often conflicting with the needs of modern urban development, generating unfortunate solutions with mutually harmful effects.

Art Nouveau heritage is a defining feature of many urban landscapes throughout the Danube Region, its proper preservation and promotion being instrumental for the sustainable development of the entire region.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

With lots of examples in the Danube Region, Art Nouveau style needs to be preserved and protected, therefore all generations are bound to use them responsibly. And this is one of EUSDR's objectives assumed through Priority Area 3 - Culture and Tourism.

The ART NOUVEAU project engaged in preserving the values of this artistic movement, especially in urban landscapes where modern development do not always provide the best answers when it comes to cultural heritage.

The project contains a complex set of actions, carefully designed to increase transnational professional cooperation and knowledge, but also to raise awareness about Art Nouveau heritage.

The most spectacular elements of the project are the elaboration of a digital inventory of the Art Nouveau buildings existing in the Danube Region, the organisation of the World Day of Art Nouveau throughout the area, a mobile app, with descriptions, photos, videos and 3D objects, and a presentation film of the Art Nouveau movement in the Danube Region. The repository and mobile app are available under this link: [www.andanube.eu](http://www.andanube.eu).

Joint work has the advantage that contributes to the creation of a transnational community of experts and enthusiasts, increasing the level of quality for the interventions and measures aimed at preserving and promoting Art Nouveau heritage throughout the entire region.

*"The conservation and responsible management of cultural heritage at transnational level can act cohesively, as an integrating force for the region, bringing people from different countries closer together."*

**Mr. Sebastian Boniș, Art Nouveau Project Manager**



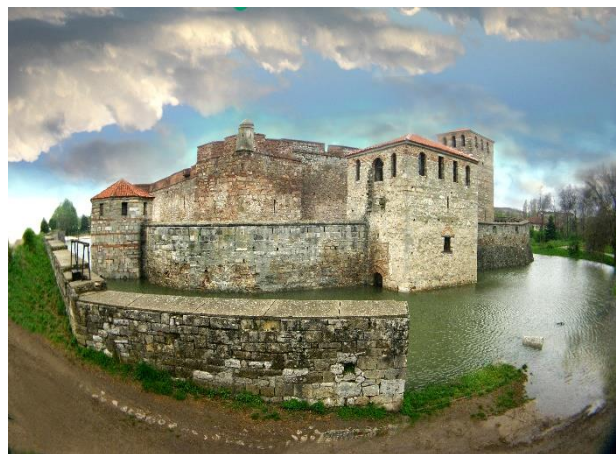
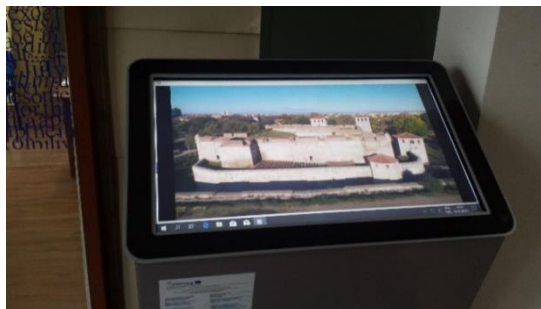
## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Partner: Oradea Municipality, Romania</li> <li>• 9 Project Partners from Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia</li> <li>• 2 Associated Partners</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 1.64 mio. of which EUR 120 mio. Are funded by ERDF and EUR 195,330 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	01/2017 - 06/2019	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/art-nouveau">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/art-nouveau</a>

## Background

In the course of history the Danube area has experienced a chequered past resulting in a culturally and historically rich but fragmented region. It has witnessed the doom of Empires, tragedies of humanity like World Wars I and II, the Shoah, a crime against humanity, the war in the Balkans in the 1990s and migration, forced and voluntary. At last, two antagonistic political and economic systems contributed to territorial imbalances. This multi-layered history is a fascinating ground to explore.

Cultural heritage is often visible, but in many cases it is invisible testimony of the past – in other words, there are many hidden historical sites which are invisible because they are situated below ground level (e.g. archaeological sites), destroyed, banned or repressed for political or societal reasons, disappeared, little known or of immaterial nature.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

“Hidden places” have been searched along the Danube and further data was collected and elaborated. Through the study *Our Hidden Danube Heritage* – Guidebook on resourcing hidden heritage for tourism and a collection of hidden heritage sites along the Danube - “Mapping Hidden Heritage Hot Spots”, CultPlatForm\_21 helps in discovering hidden heritage.

The project sought a response to multiple themes: the interpretation of historic places and events in a contemporary way (culture), the experience of culture (international audience/ tourists) and the development of new destinations along the Danube (tourism). Under the heading “Heritage Reloaded” and according to the concept of making the invisible visible, CultPlatForm\_21 developed and implemented 8 pilot projects to create spaces of remembrance. Using 3D applications for digital reconstructions renders lost history visible again and create distinct experiences of historic sites, as well as artistic interventions allow encounter and exchange with hidden cultural heritage.

The core outcome of the project is a Policy Learning Platform – a cultural policy network of project partners and a think tank consisting of stakeholders from EUSDR countries in order to enhance cooperation between culture and tourism. Together we aim at expanding cultural routes. The Policy Learning Platform follows an interdisciplinary approach and it is an active contribution to the EUSDR.

The most important outcome of the working meetings and conferences was the development of the “Interpretation Framework for Cultural Routes Based on Hidden Heritage in the Danube Region” and the proposal of “Themes for the Prolongation of European Cultural Routes”.

*“The multi-layered history of the Danube Region is a fascinating space of discoveries. The partnership of the Interreg project Danube Culture Platform (CultPlatForm\_21) has explored the hidden heritage, its interpretation and experiential potential for cultural routes.”*

**Ms. Elisabeth Pacher,**  
**Representative of**  
**CultPlatForm\_21 Lead Partner**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead partner: Federal Chancellery of Austria, Division Arts and Culture</li> <li>• 8 Project Partners from Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Serbia</li> <li>• 10 Associated Partners</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 1.67 mio. of which EUR 1.33 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 93,500 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	01/2017 - 06/2019	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/cultplatform-21">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/cultplatform-21</a>



## Background

The transport of sediments is a natural process in river systems. Over the past decades, human activities within the Danube and its tributaries have led to strong changes in the natural sediment load. These changes lead to the problems of erosion and deposition of sediment - gravel and sand – in the river. They negatively influence important water management issues such as flood risk, inland navigation, ecology and hydropower production, hydromorphology and good water status.

For people living along the Danube, the imbalance in sediment can cause higher flood risks for their homes. The changes in the riverbed can negatively affect the transport of goods via ship, if for example the river depth is no longer suitable for navigation. There are also negative impacts on plants and animals which live in or near the river, which worsens the conditions for commercial fishing. This imbalance of sediments can also cause a drop in groundwater level, which can negatively affect crop harvests, influencing the income of farmers.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

DANUBESEDIMENT project aims at improving the sediment balance of the Danube, which can have positive effects on both economy and nature along the river. For example, the sediment input into the Danube Delta has declined by 60% compared to the time before the large hydropower dams were built. If we improve the transport of sediments along the Danube, this could improve navigation conditions and the habitats of plants and animals, which positively affects the livelihoods of people living off the river and near the river. At the same time, improving the landscape would benefit tourism, which could also create new jobs. Hence, the project:

- provided assessments of sediment data and giving recommendations to practitioners and decision-makers, we can help raise the awareness for good sediment management, which improves cooperation amongst all countries and different sectors.
- developed good-practice measures that improve the sediment balance, we help to protect floodplains, improve ecology and improve sustainable tourism.
- improved the sediment balance, flood protection can thus be optimised. This prevents hazardous damages in case of flooding.

Over 500 stakeholders from different sectors such as hydropower, nature protection, navigation and the sectoral agencies working in sediment management took part in 11 workshops throughout the Danube Region. ICPDR has supported the project from day one and will use the project results in the development of the River Basin Management Plan and the Flood Risk Management Plan. Complementing these activities, Danube Day events aimed at raising awareness on the role of sediment in the Danube. They were organised in all 9 partner countries in 2018.

*"Our project results provide input to improve the sediment balance and related river management of the Danube, which will benefit both humans and nature alike."*

**Univ. Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Dr. Helmut Habersack, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Partner: Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Hungary</li> <li>• 13 Project Partners from Austria, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Slovakia, Germany, Croatia, Serbia</li> <li>• 14 Associated Partners</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 3.55 mio. of which EUR 2.82 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 197,373 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	01/2017 - 06/2019	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danubesediment">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danubesediment</a>



## Background

Over-exploitation of water resources, water regime modifications, water contamination, and a growing number of flood events — negative effects which are amplified by climate change — are all issues that require harmonised, integrated actions by management authorities in countries that share river basins.

Water is a crucial element of our living environment, therefore, sustainable and responsible management of our water resources is not only a possibility; it is our duty.

A considerable population lives in the Tisza river basin with a significant number of inhabitants living directly on the floodplain of the river. These people not only experience the beauty of the river basin but have to face the harshness of it as well: relentless floods, severe excess water inundations, enduring water scarcity and disastrous pollutions affecting water quality.

The success of tackling these problems lies in the cooperation of the Tisza countries. These nations have to harmonise their approaches in order to be able to act jointly for the sake of their citizens.



## Focus & Outputs

The JOINTISZA project will enhance the status of waters of the Tisza river basin. It will focus on the interactions of two key aspects of water management — river basin management (RBM) and flood protection — while taking into account the relevant stakeholders who play a pivotal role in the Tisza RBM planning process. The main aim of the project is to further improve the integration of water management and flood risk prevention planning and actions for the next River Basin Management (RBM) planning cycle, in line with the relevant EU legislation.

JOINTISZA activities will result in harmonised measures of flood protection that improve the success of activities in emergency cases and could thus save lives and also valuable properties.

The project is the first ever involving such cooperation of the Tisza countries and this pioneering endeavor could lead to further collaboration in other fields such as drought management and urban hydrology. Hence, all the relevant organisations, experts from all of the Tisza countries are involved. Stakeholder involvement is a high priority part of the project that is intertwined with all aspects of the project both on national and international level.

A detailed integrated River Basin Management Plan could be the basis for measures in emergency cases as well as in day-to-day management and it could serve as a guide for decision makers and experts. The project incorporates a dike failure simulation, which provides an opportunity for the experts of the countries to test themselves and their methods. JOINTISZA raised awareness through its social network sites, its website and articles (like the UN's article about the Plastic Cup: <https://www.unenvironment.org/pt-br/node/23287>).

*"The Tisza has a delicate ecosystem, as it is represented by its signature animal, the mayfly. To preserve this gem of nature the 5 Tisza countries have to think together and act together."*

**Mr. Balázs Horváth, JOINTISZA Project Manager**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lead Partner:</b> General Directorate of Water Management, Hungary</li> <li>• <b>11 Project Partners from:</b> Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Austria and Serbia</li> <li>• <b>5 Associated Partners</b></li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 2,25 mio. of which EUR 2,82 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 213,539 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	01/2017 - 09/2019	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/jointisza">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/jointisza</a>

## Background

Reliable and comprehensive hydrologic data are the basis of sound forecasting in any country of the Danube basin. None of the flood risk mitigation measures serves better the protection of human lives and the social estate than enhancing the preparation time to avoid catastrophes which could have been avoided in the face of predicted floods. The most cost effective non-structural tangible solution which highly reflects the solidarity principle is the improvement of forecasting capabilities on basin-wide scale.



## Focus & Outputs

The project will deliver an outstanding overview on the present status of the national forecasting capabilities from which project partners and stakeholders can derive common goals in order to further develop the existing system in a comprehensive way. The mutual understanding of all involved parties will be recorded in a common vision of the partners.

The partners jointly elaborate policy recommendations to be submitted to ICPDR in the interest of the establishment of the Danube Hydrological Information System (DanubeHIS) which is a fundamental step towards flexible and sustainable data exchange. The main focus is to enhance the access to the recorded hydrologic and ice data and to provide harmonised distribution for all the countries in the Danube catchment. For this purpose, all partners will receive interface software will to provide standardised data services also as data source for EFAS.

DAREFFORT project is a horizontal initiative to implement a flood risk mitigation measure in a joint and sustainable way on catchment level.

*„The DAREFFORT project aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of forecasting methods in each project country, enabling partners and decision-makers to clearly define their common goals in order to improve the current system.”*

**Mr. Zoltán Bálint,**  
**Representative of DAREFFORT**  
**Lead Partner**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lead Partner: Environ Viziterv LTD, Hungary</i></li> <li>• <i>10 project partners from Hungary, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia and Ukraine</i></li> <li>• <i>12 Associated Partners</i></li> </ul>	
Financing	<i>Total budget: EUR 1.35 mio., of which EUR 1.08 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 63,537 by ENI through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme</i>	
Duration	<i>06/2018 - 05/2021</i>	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/dareffort">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/dareffort</a>

## Background

Water scarcity and droughts hit the Danube Region frequently and have had large impacts on the economy and welfare of the people. Many people still consider drought as a rare phenomenon in this region but recent droughts (2003, 2007, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2018) showed that such extremes are becoming a regular feature of climate in this region. Despite damages in the last decades, drought is still not considered as an issue of high priority and people are not aware of its impact. It is detected on a short time scale mainly in summer, therefore people are not aware of its impact, which is devastating especially in the agricultural sector. Drought monitoring is often untimely and lacking necessary integrated risk and impact methodologies. Drought management in the region is weak and in a reactive mode (once in place to cover the losses), cooperation between key actors is missing and formal legislation mostly does not exist. Furthermore, drought response is poorly coordinated and not interconnected within the different sectors. All in all, droughts have a high damage potential: economic losses, ecological damages, and implications on human health. They are occurring more frequently and their impact on all sectors is more intense, affecting both economies and societies. They impact various sectors - agriculture, water supply, hydro-power, tourism, biodiversity, transport etc. The weakest group of affected people are farmers whose income depends on how much they grow/produce. A few years of drought one after another can ruin them.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

The DriDanube project has shifted the perspective from crisis management to risk management. DriDanube did not deal with all impacts of drought but drought affects all parts of our environment and our communities. Drought impact can be grouped in "economic," "environmental" and "social" impact.

The project established DroughtWatch, a new drought monitoring tool, to serve for surveillance, early warning and emergency response. Early detection of drought impacts will help the national authorities to forecast and respond during drought development faster and with higher precision. In practice it also means that if farmers can see immediate effects of drought and have relevant forecasts, they can take appropriate measures to reduce the impacts (e.g. more efficient use of water for irrigation). Moreover, using the information offered by this tool and the integrated drought management approach, governments may take necessary steps and invest into prevention before disasters bring irreversible loss.

National Hydro-meteorological Services and Emergency response authorities from the participating countries are already testing the project tools. The network of on-field reporters (currently over 1,000 in the region), who weekly report on drought impacts and contribute to system data, will also benefit from the tools and relevant forecasts.

*"We have to build better understanding of drought and awareness of its impacts already in its early stages. DriDanube has developed tools that will help to detect drought at early stages and provide guidance on when, who and what kind of actions need to be taken in order to manage potential drought impacts already before they occur."*

**Ms. Andreja Sušnik, DriDanube Project Manager**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slovenian Environment Agency</li> <li>• 14 Project Partners from Austria, Czech Rep., Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia&amp;Herzegovina</li> <li>• 8 Associated Partners</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 1.97 mio. of which EUR 1.43 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 243,780 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	01/2017 - 06/2019	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/dridanube">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/dridanube</a>

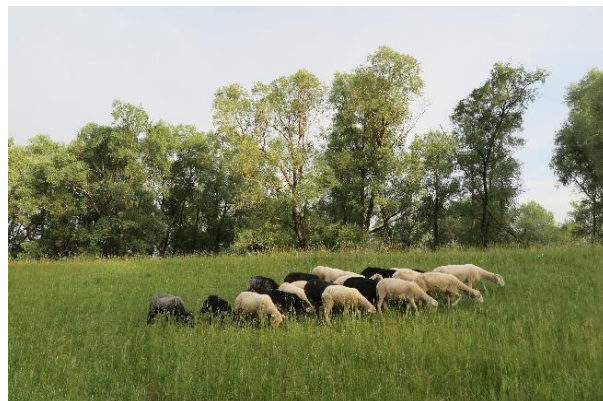


## Background

Landscape fragmentation and isolation of protected areas, urban sprawl, major infrastructure projects in transportation and energy and increasing intensification of land use threaten ecosystems and biodiversity in Europe. The dynamic economic development in Southeast Europe puts growing pressure on the natural treasures of the Danube. Protected areas function as key sites of the Danube Habitat Corridor and preserve most valuable ecosystems but are generally too small to cover self-sustaining wildlife populations. The Danube plays an important role as a Green Wildlife Corridor that enables animal migration and provides links between more bioregions than any other corridor in Europe. Therefore, it is necessary to improve ecological connectivity and raise awareness on the topic.

Loss of biodiversity, increased symptoms of climate change, less flood protection, loss of income for SME's (e.g. local fisherman, tourist guides) are a few challenges in protected areas in the Danube Region, more specifically:

- In Water: less fish species due to wave stress, hydroelectric power stations, river pollution
- In Air: less bird species due to collision with river crossing power lines, less breeding sites (disturbance through land-use by humans, infrastructure projects), poisoning of raptors
- On land: less native species through invasive species, intense land-use, dry habitats are often isolated patches, riparian forests are disappearing due to intense farming.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

DANUBE parks CONNECTED shows how cooperation and joint efforts of 9 Danube countries could improve the current state of biodiversity.

In a nutshell, DANUBE parks CONNECTED protects rare species such as the White-Tailed Eagle or the Pelican through fostering habitat connectivity in the air (DANUBE FREE SKY), fish species and soft wood forests through WILDIslands, orchids and insects through the Dry Habitat Corridor, bats and native tree species through the Riparian Forest Corridor.

The project has led to a long-term perspective on policy level. For example, power lines in Austria, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania were marked in the framework of the DANUBE FREE SKY initiative, resulting in a decreased risk of collision of birds by 70 – 90%. Two other initiatives were implemented on land, namely 1) the use of cross-border herds grazing to improve the management of dry grasslands, which is less invasive than mowing, and 2) the plantation of native tree species and the removal of invasive species in almost all protected areas.

By organising over 30 events in eight Danube countries, the project team raised awareness of the future of biodiversity in the Danube basin and local communities and stakeholders learnt about the importance of nature conservation also beyond the borders of protected areas in their region.

*“Participating in the first marking of a powerline or seeing the water running through a side arm after a river revitalisation and the first kingfisher nesting close to the restored island or visiting the sheep on our grazing-area make me very proud of what we achieved.”*

**Ms. Stephanie Blutaumüller,**  
**DANUBE PARKS CONNECTED**  
**Project Assistant**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lead Partner: Donau-Auen National Park, Austria</i></li> <li>• <i>14 Project Partners from Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, and Serbia</i></li> <li>• <i>10 Associated Partners</i></li> </ul>	
Financing	<i>Total budget: EUR 3.08 mio., of which EUR 2.48 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 134,838 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme</i>	
Duration	<i>01/2017 - 11/2019</i>	<i><a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danubeparksconnected">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danubeparksconnected</a></i>

## Background

A combination of extensive damming, pollution and illegal fishing poses serious challenges for the Danube's flora and fauna, but the most critically concerned species in the Danube are sturgeons. Among the oldest fish in the world, this 250 million-year-old fish has been brought to the brink of extinction, as it is one of the most endangered species on the planet, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Sturgeons have been of economic importance for their meat and roe (caviar) for centuries.

Illegal fishing – principally for the purpose of yielding caviar – is the main threat to sturgeons, but the loss of spawning sites and habitat is also a problem. Dams have cut off the sturgeon's migration routes. Diking and draining of 80% of the Danube's former floodplains has removed important spawning and feeding areas. Because sturgeons do not reproduce annually and live long – up to 100 years – they are particularly vulnerable to these threats and take many years to recover.

The six species in the Danube River are some of the most important globally because Romania and Bulgaria hold the only still viable wild sturgeon population in the European Union. Five of them are now listed as critically endangered.



## Focus & Outputs

MEASURES aims at four aspects of sturgeon protection:

1) Restoring the green corridors: The Iron Gate dams don't have technical equipment such as fish passes or bypasses, designed to assist fish migration. Also, the sporadic capture of migratory sturgeons upstream of the Iron Gate shows that very few individuals manage to negotiate through the locks used by ships. MEASURES is working to make the Iron Gate dams passable for sturgeons. This would be a big achievement for the conservation of Danube sturgeons and would more than double their range by making nearly 1000 km of free-flowing Danube accessible. Thus, MEASURES has mapped and identified key habitats by developing and testing a methodology for migratory fish habitat mapping and has developed a harmonised strategy for restoring green corridors and supporting implementation in future management plans. 2) MEASURES has pushed relevant authorities to support restocking sturgeon on the Lower Danube and promoting it. So far, restocking of two native species to conserve their genetic diversity in Hungary & Romania has been supported. Also, a network for concerted repopulation of the target species has been supported and a manual for brood stock facilities (providing the offspring needed for the re-population) has been elaborated. 3) Scientific research: Since not much is known about sturgeons, scientific work is the key to protect them. MEASURES' priority is to identify the species' critical habitats, better understand their behaviour and secure their remaining population. 4) Raising awareness: MEASURE promotes awareness of sturgeon green corridors and their plight among general public, fisher communities and decision-makers. MEASURES implemented the MEASURES Information System that will facilitate the access of experts, decision-makers and the general public to relevant information available.

*"The fragmentation of rivers by transversal structures like dams or flood protection measures poses a threat to natural fish populations. Transnational management and restoration actions to re-establish ecological corridors as migration routes, as well as stocking with indigenous species are essential for the preservation of these species."*

**Ms. Cristina Munteanu,**  
Freshwater Project Manager  
WWF Danube - Carpathian  
Programme Romania



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Partner: University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria</li> <li>Project Partners from Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Croatia, Slovakia, and Serbia</li> <li>12 Associated Partners</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 2.51 mio. of which EUR 2.04 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 90,346 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	06/2018 - 05/2021	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/measures">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/measures</a>



## Background

Over the last decade, the topic “research infrastructure” increasingly gained importance, also for the countries in the Danube macro-region. Core challenges lie in triggering sustainable public investments and to control their effectiveness over time. In times of scarce funding and a closer interlinked and international research landscape a clear focus of investment is a pre-requisite to facilitate important thematic niches in research.

Good steering of investment in science facilities is a prerequisite for generating benefits for society in general and for research organisations in particular. This can only be achieved with the help of adequate knowledge of funding distribution mechanisms, the consequent monitoring of investments made and the outlook on future results.



## Focus & Outputs

The ResInfra@DR actions – such as training for capacity building, a focused dialogue, provision of tools as guidance documents and a reviewer database – will foster the development of a strong research infrastructure from the Danube macro-region towards the European Research Area. These measures are supported by strong networking among stakeholders, extensive knowledge exchange on different funding approaches and management of research facilities.

Pursuing the aim of maximum outreach to the community, in 2018 ResInfra@DR attracted approx. 100 participants to three one-week trainings taking place at different locations across the Danube macro-region. Furthermore, the project team collected a quality assured reviewer database of 200 competent experts, which is available to core stakeholders also beyond the project duration. Dialogue events hosted more than 150 participants exchanging on highly relevant topics for research infrastructure such as EU-wide and national roadmaps, funding provided by structural funds (ERDF) and cooperation options with the private sector.

Addressing also countries beyond the partnership, ResInfra@DR organised 7 Information Sessions inviting over 120 experts to discuss a representative range of innovative joint actions for the future. These are actions for better information provision to stakeholders and exchange of macro-regional developments; progress in investment planning; focused capacity building; and tools in support of evidence based policy making with adequate socio-economic impact. Last but not least, in its third year of implementation, ResInfra@DR attracted over 1,650 recipients subscribing to the project's newsletter. We are happy that ResInfra@DR has become a powerful magnet for important stakeholders in the Danube macro-region.

*"ResInfra@DR supports better public investment in the research infrastructure (RI) ecosystem to support science and research actors in the Danube macro-region! The core outputs focus on capacity building and provide guidance for RI policy-makers, RI managers and RI reviewers on important processes and they cover the entire life-cycle of RIs."*

**Mr. Felix Gajdusek,**  
**Coordinator, Centre for Social Innovation, Vienna**



## Key facts

### Cooperation

- Lead partner: Centre for Social Innovation, Vienna, Austria
- 10 Project Partners from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Bosnia&Herzegovina, Serbia
- 3 Associated Partners

### Financing

Total budget: EUR 2.15 mio. of which EUR 1.64 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 185,882 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme

### Duration

01/2017 - 06/2019

<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/resinfra-dr>



## Background

In the digital era, creation of social and technological innovation is of paramount importance. The Danube Region does not lag behind the rest of Europe when it comes to ideas and initiatives within the Research, Social and Technological Innovation (ReSTI) field. Still, specific managerial skills necessary for development of ReSTI projects and their implementation are on an inadequate level and need to be improved in future.

The aim of this project is to remove gaps in knowledge and skills in managing social and technological innovation projects. The general goal is to create an environment in which interested stakeholders can find easy-to-use checklists, learning modules and advice with a specifically tailored content regarding the management of ReSTI projects. The final output of the project is to establish an innovative learning system aimed at increasing employability and quality of ReSTI projects.



## Focus & Outputs

The most important activity of EXCELLENCE-IN-ResTI is an innovative online training programme (ReSTI.academy) based on Five Learning Modules devoted to spreading excellence in ReSTI management, leadership and administration. The methodology is based on the innovative Five-Door Approach. ReSTI.academy has become interesting for a great number of young professionals and many institutions expressed their interest in applying the programme, which already proved its efficiency. A one-year pilot blended learning programme started in October 2018, and students and trainers have been working together on testing and improving the five-module curriculum on Excellence in Research, Social and Technological Innovation Project Management (Excellence-in-ReSTI).

Another important activity is the elaboration of the Strategy and Roadmap document which provides a summary of current challenges to the management of science, technology and innovation projects in the Danube macro-region. The document reflects the opinion and targets the broadest segment of relevant stakeholder groups, i.e. regional and national policy-makers, or policy influencers dealing with research and innovation.

An info-desk was also created. This is an online platform where experts from EU funding institutions and the field of EU project management and practitioners provide deep knowledge on all topics related to EU funding. Your questions may be sent to experts by accessing <https://resti.academy/infodesk>.

EXCELLENCE-IN-ResTI helps young people to reach financial means for their ideas and make their dreams come true.

*"The idea was to provide support in learning new things in project management, we had a virtual platform for communication, and provided a strategy moving forward as it was very important to show the participants that the results were sustainable."*

**Mr. Gábor Szüdi,**  
**Representative of EXCELLENCE-IN-ResTI Project Leadpartner**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Center for Social Innovation (ZSI), Austria</li> <li>10 Project Partners from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Montenegro, Bosnia&amp;Herzegovina, Serbia and an Associated Partner from Serbia</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 1.91 mio. of which EUR 1.42 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 200,470 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	02/2017 - 10/2019	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/excellence-in-resti">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/excellence-in-resti</a>

## Background

In today's economy the potential of female entrepreneurs to boost economic development cannot be underestimated. Young women in the Danube Region have great entrepreneurial potential, as 52% of the region's population are female and 30% of them are self-employed. However, they face specific challenges in starting and developing own businesses.

The gender gap in Danube Region countries is visible both in self-employment and at all stages of the entrepreneurial life cycle. The factors shaping this gap are not completely clear. An important aspect within entrepreneurial attitudes is self-confidence in the entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, and experiences needed to start a business; a lack of entrepreneurial skills is often considered to be one of the most significant barriers to successful business start-ups.

If we could study the specific needs of young women and available policy measures, we could highlight good practices for constructing the right policy measures and training models for supporting young women entrepreneurs.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

The project WOMEN IN BUSINESS picks up the challenges mentioned above and starts by first studying the specific needs of young women to become entrepreneurs and available policy measures in this field. In a second step the project highlights good practices for fostering the right policy measures and training models for supporting young women entrepreneurs.

Exchanging experience to identify and assess innovative solutions and good practices for supporting young women in implementing their own businesses and developing a policy agenda for Young Women Entrepreneurship Support are the concrete results of the project. Additionally, four Women Entrepreneurship Centers will be set up in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania to ensure adequate promotion of young women entrepreneurship and to support improvement of women's skills and knowledge.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS works to create a favorable environment for young women in the Danube Region, to help them develop successful businesses by using the right skills and adequate measures.

*"During development of the WOMEN IN BUSINESS project, we found that 52% of the Danube population is female and only 30% of them carry out entrepreneurial activities. At the same time, only 10% of young women aged up to 34 years have the courage to start own business and only 2% of them establish a business which lasts more than 42 months."*

**Ms. Ralitsa Zhekova, WOMEN IN BUSINESS Project Manager**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Partner: Regional Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovations – Varna, Bulgaria</li> <li>• 12 project Partners from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Bosnia&amp;Herzegovina, Moldova and an Associated Partner from Bulgaria</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 2.02 mio. of which EUR 1.43 mio. are funded by ERDF, EUR 144,500 by IPA and EUR 136,000 by ENI through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	06/2018 - 05/2021	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/women-in-business">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/women-in-business</a>



## Background

The rising population and associated demand for renewable biological resources make bio-economy a key element for smart and green growth in Europe and the Danube Region. Boosting local and regional economies strongly depends on the successful development of innovative services and new products in this field, which can be facilitated only by the efficient collaboration between Academia and the business sector (especially SMEs).

At the regional level, many efforts have been initiated to bridge the gap between research and innovation. Still, some “missing links” in the process of the establishment of successful collaboration appear, especially when the resources or expertise is not available on the local or national level. For these reasons, the collaboration between academia and SMEs is still low and the awareness related to the successful exploitation of locally available bio-based potentials on regional and transnational level is missing.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

MADE IN DANUBE aimed at creating this bridge between research and innovation in bio-economy, considering the rising population and associated demand for renewable biological resources. In the long run, the project contributes to smart and green growth in Europe and in the Danube Region, as bio-economy is a key element for sustainability. The solution already identified within the MADE IN DANUBE project is an innovation ecosystem, which is based on strong collaboration among researchers, SMEs and policy makers and supported by civil society. This cooperation helix may boost the region economically and socially, making it more competitive and providing better services to its citizens.

Concrete results of the project are:

- It identified major needs and the biggest difficulties which are hindering efficient exploitation of available resources and which hinder the initiation of successful collaborations. This led to a common strategy based on 3 Local Action Plans developed for the targeted sectors bio-fuels, smart agriculture and forestry whose successful implementation ultimately resulted in the establishment of transnational Cooperation and Partnership Agreements.
- It developed and tested Innovation capacity tools (Technology Offer, Technology Request, Innovation Audits) to offer a comprehensive demonstration of the existing organisations' innovation capacities. Also, a search engine was developed for all types of organisations – the Danube Transnational Innovation Cooperation e-platform. It enables the matching of compatible partners for implementing projects or developing products and services.

With these instruments in place, the project contributed to capacity building by organising thematic workshops and trainings and fostered policy dialogues aiming at innovation, technology and knowledge transfer.

*“Made in Danube was a great opportunity to connect the Quadruple Helix actors active in the bio-economy sector to jointly develop new solutions for common challenges in the Danube Region, especially when talking about the wider exploitation of the innovation capacities of SMEs. Building trust is a key elements for succesful technology transfer.”*  
**Ms. Miljana Čosić , MADE IN DANUBE Project Manager**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lead Partner: Steinbeis Innovation gGmbH, Steinbeis-Europe-Center, Germany</i></li> <li>• <i>14 Project Partners from Romania, Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, Germany, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and an Associated Partner from Ukraine</i></li> </ul>	
Financing	<i>Total budget: EUR 1.90 mio. of which EUR 1.51 mio. are funded by ERDF and EUR 97,835 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme</i>	
Duration	<i>01/2017 - 06/2019</i>	<i><a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/made-in-danube">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/made-in-danube</a></i>



## Background

Digital change and its impact on the world of work are one of the biggest challenges today and for years to come. If not regulated, digitalisation might cause a serious increase in differences in income as well as limited access to social security systems not only due to cutbacks from decreasing contributions, but also due to the often unstable nature of digital employment itself.

In short, the world of work is changing. This structural change is often at the expense of low-skilled, elderly, part-time workers under precarious conditions. Chances are that routine work will eventually be replaced by automation and low-skilled workers will not have a chance to find employment due to poor digital qualification. The number of new, precarious forms of work is increasing (e.g. crowd work, agency work, platform work). These forms of work often come with poor working conditions, poor safety at work, inadequate remuneration and low social security.

Fostering close cooperation of social partners in the Danube Region in order to create appropriate education and retraining programs, fair legal frameworks and regulations (especially for atypical forms of work) could actively help to prevent precarious work conditions, unemployment among low-skilled and elderly workers and ultimately poverty. Technological possibilities must not be used to circumvent effective regulation in the world of work.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

Danube@work brings together social partners of four countries in the Danube to explore the needs of workers concerning fair legal frameworks and regulations and in order to prevent their exploitation in the course of the a new 'industrial revolution'.

For example, the relation between platform-customer and worker is not defined by law. Therefore, even if a platform acts as employer, when it comes to "benefits" for workers or the protection of workers' rights, the platform often declares they are only a facilitator, perceiving workers as self-employed.

To face such challenges, Danube@work created a network of national experts on digitalisation within the trade unions in all partner countries to exchange knowledge and spread information about digitalisation. It further organised seminars on collective bargaining, workers' protection and other relevant topics regarding „digital workforce“.

*"In light of technological progress, one must not forget the human factor in the age of digitalization."*

**Ms. Marie Hejnys,**  
**danube@work Project**  
**Manager, Austrian Trade Union**  
**Federation**



## Key facts

## Cooperation

- Lead Partner: Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB)
- 7 Project Partners from Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Austria

## Financing

Total budget: EUR 393,000 from the Austrian National Budget

## Duration

01/2017 – 12/2019

[https://www.oegb.at/cms/S06/S06\\_90.0/home?d=Touch](https://www.oegb.at/cms/S06/S06_90.0/home?d=Touch)

**Background**

Through active dialogue and exchange among peers from abroad young people established personal contacts, developed friendships across borders and became acquainted with varying views and different ways of thinking. Besides fostering intercultural learning and raising awareness for global relations, dealing with European concepts and perspectives is essential to form European Citizenship and to come to a shared vision of the future Europe. aces also supported innovative ways of teaching and learning in the region and addressed schools as 'learning organisations' in order to contribute to the development of educational quality and professional exchange.

**aces – act local**

Due to social and political developments in Europe, such as polarisation, radicalisation, declining social cohesion, increased marginalisation and discrimination of certain groups and individuals, a change of the focus and framework of aces was essential. aces – act local promoted the establishment of local cross-sectoral collaboration between schools and other stakeholders in the community with the aim to tackle social challenges. aces – act local aimed at fostering social and civic competences, critical thinking and skills needed to create social change in schools and communities (e.g. empathy and social responsibility, understanding of local-global interconnections, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, interdisciplinary and problem-solving approaches).



**Focus & Outputs**

With an implementation period of 12 years of aces, both programmes display one of the largest school networks in the Danube Region. There are 540 aces members schools in 15 European countries with more than 4,500 teachers and 30,500 students actively involved. The initiative could implement 355 awarded projects while receiving also support by the ministries of education of all participating countries. The high number of project applications each year still shows the demand for action after the end of the programme. In addition to that, the numerous international conferences and network meetings held, also result in lasting partnerships and cooperation between schools even after the project ended.

One of the main aims of aces was to contribute to the development of educational quality and innovation in the region. At the same time, the aces network highly benefited from the fact that it is a community of practitioners. The aces toolbox offers material and methods which were either shared at the international aces events or have inspired the schools' project work.

Under the implementation of the aces project, several publications by the aces management, e.g. a Handbook for International School Projects, were published (<http://www.aces.or.at/publications>).

**Key facts**

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IZ – Verein zur Förderung von Vielfalt, Dialog und Bildung (Vienna, Austria)</li> <li>• Nadácia Slovenskej sporiteľne (Bratislava, Slovakia)</li> </ul>	
Financing	ERSTE Foundation (Vienna, Austria)	
Duration	2007 – 2016 (aces) 2017 (aces – act local)	<a href="http://www.aces.or.at">www.aces.or.at</a> <a href="http://www.act-local.aces.or.at">www.act-local.aces.or.at</a>



## Background

In recent times, the main needs and challenges related to governance systems within the Danube Region can be associated with decreasing public institutional capacities to incorporate a participatory approach into decision-making processes. The lack of participatory mechanisms contributes to a decrease in people's motivation to engage in governance and administration as they feel excluded from the political, social and economic agenda and not competent enough to act as an equal counterpart and essential driver of "change".

The gap between citizens and public authorities at all levels is therefore increasing and leading to intensified mistrust and lack of public participation, especially among the most disadvantaged communities at risk of exclusion, such as the poor, unemployed, homeless, minorities (Roma communities), elderly, women, and youth. The growing social and economic inequalities are reflected in reduced quality of urban life.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

The AGRIGO4CITIES project helps vulnerable groups to use participatory approaches in urban agriculture to learn how to organize and empower themselves and to participate when it comes to making public decisions. It also helps local communities to be more self-confident and it supports local authorities in working more closely with the communities for the common purpose: community welfare.

AGRIGO4CITIES helps interested groups in identifying good practices of participatory urban agriculture while establishing a transnational learning environment. In this way, vulnerable social groups will be actively involved in the planning process, together with the local authorities and all possible unused spaces in urban areas can be used for urban gardening and attract local communities for different activities.

The project has been awarded the Trophies & Diplomas of Excellence 'Black Sea – Danubian Social and Economic Innovator'.

*"The participatory and inclusive cooperation of multiple stakeholders with different capacities and backgrounds is the best seed to foster economic, social and environmental sustainability in cities and towns of the Danube Region."*

**Mr. Jani Kozina, AGRIGO4CITIES Project Manager**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Partner: Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia</li> <li>• 11 Project Partners from Czech Rep., Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Germany and Montenegro</li> <li>• 6 Associated Partners</li> </ul>	
Financing	Total budget: EUR 1.47 mio. of which EUR 1.16 mio. are funded by ERDF, EUR 144,500 by IPA and EUR 84,419 by IPA through Interreg Danube Transnational Programme	
Duration	01/2017 – 06/2019	<a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/agrigo4cities">http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/agrigo4cities</a>

## Background

State borders in the Danube and Adriatic-Ionian Regions have been relocated several times during the last century, still resulting in trauma and a lack of trust between nations.

Due to the small territory of the countries (also in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Balkans) a large part of the population lives close to national borders as well as the institutions and enterprises they work in, which strongly separates neighbouring areas in legal, administrative, economic and social regards. This is a huge disadvantage for these territories compared to those centrally located.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

The project came up with the idea of developing the SECCo2 Platform ([www.secco2.eu](http://www.secco2.eu)) dedicated to share knowledge and information on successful cross-border cooperation models. The platform was also created in order to provide the opportunity for the next generations to develop a more tolerant environment within the two macro-regions. This platform serves as an online meeting place (one-stop-shop) on which various CBC actors can exchange information, build partnerships, start joint projects and access the already existing useful knowledge database and materials on this topic. The platform provides a cross-border cooperation tool-kit containing e-learning type contents, access to financial resource portals (e.g. <https://www.euro-access.eu/>) and a digital library with studies, policy documents and further materials on cross-border cooperation aiming to improve the capacities of the local stakeholders.

While developing this platform, SECCo2 project organized the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Youth Forum & Conference on CBC in Tivat (Montenegro) in order to reinforce the AEBC's Young Leaders Platform (group of youngsters from all over Europe). The project also showed its efficiency in a growing macro-regional cross-border cooperation community, regular information flow on cross-border cooperation issues, regularly updated information and in organising an international event with 120 participants from all over the Danube and Adriatic-Ionian Regions. The Young Leaders Platform of CBC grew considerably and regular webinars for youngsters were held. Based on the results, the projects experts expect to improve the discourse on borders and the environment for partnership building among the two macro-regions.

*"Whether or not borders still exist, their effects still persist. It is knowledge and vision which foster cross-border cooperation."*

**Mr. Daniele del Bianco,**  
**Director, Institute of Int.**  
**Sociology of Gorizia (Trieste)**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<i>Partners: Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives (Hungary), Association of European Border Regions (Germany), Institution of International Sociology of Gorizia (Italy), Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives Balkans (Serbia)</i>		
Financing	<i>Danube Strategic Project Fund, co-financed by the European Union and the City of Vienna</i>		
Duration	<i>01/2018 – 01/2019</i>	<a href="https://secco2.eu">https://secco2.eu</a>	



## Background

Criminality in the Danube Region is not a new challenge. It dates back to the 1970s when in response to increased heroin trafficking from Europe to the United States ("French connection"), a regional task force was established at the initiative of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Over the years, this task force has evolved into an international expert panel including representatives from customs and police authorities of 20 countries and INTERPOL.

However, financial and linguistic constraints reduced the number of experts and the number of meetings, which hampered the exchange of information and experience between all member states, in particular in the fight against illicit drug trafficking along the Balkan route.

In recent years, the importance of the international fight against drug trafficking has been politically recognised as an issue affecting the internal security of the countries concerned and appropriate measures have been taken. The Working Group South East has strengthened cooperation in the Balkans and encouraged the Ministers of the Interior in the Danube Region to take joint action.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

CSDR is an example of best practice in security cooperation and strengthening networks of law enforcement agencies in the long run. Using the Working Group's networks contributes to powerful synergies, especially as the Danube Region and the Balkans largely cover the same territory and share a common historical and cultural background. Besides, the project facilitated an intense dialogue and cooperation between the EU and non-EU countries in this field. For example the Republic of Moldova participates for the first time in such a project.

The most important practical activity of the project was the implementation of a major international exercise in the form of controlled drug delivery ("Perseus"), which aimed at promoting and putting into practice the operational approach of the Working Group South East. The cross-border exercise covered the territories of Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic and Germany. International cooperation and collaboration, solving problems arising from the different legal situations in the participating countries, cross-border recovery of evidence, criminals' transfer at the border and the cross-border use of technology were practiced during the exercise.

A debriefing session of the exercise was used to address and analyse the practical and administrative problems and to develop solutions, using lessons learned from the major exercise. The CSDR project is not isolated, it is part of a coherent European anti-drug approach, together with other projects. For example, the contacts established and the exchange of experience within the Working Group South East are a sound basis for concrete investigations within the framework of the project "Drug Policing Balkan Advanced 2013-2014".

*„Drug trade knows no borders. Combating it will only work through transnational cooperation within a common strategy. The EUSDR brings together the representatives of the countries and thus enables cooperation.“*

**Mr. Jörg Beyser, representative of CSDR, Project Leadpartner**



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lead Partner: Bavarian State Criminal Police Office (BLKA), Germany</i></li> <li>• <i>Project Partners: BKA Vienna, Austria, and NPC Prague, Czech Republic</i></li> </ul>	
Financing	<i>Total budget: EUR 330,000.00 of which EUR 293,108 are funded by ISEC - Prevention of &amp; Fight against Crime</i>	
Duration	<i>12/2013 - 09/2015</i>	<i><a href="https://www.polizei.bayern.de/bepo/kriminalitaet/index.html/194636">https://www.polizei.bayern.de/bepo/kriminalitaet/index.html/194636</a></i>

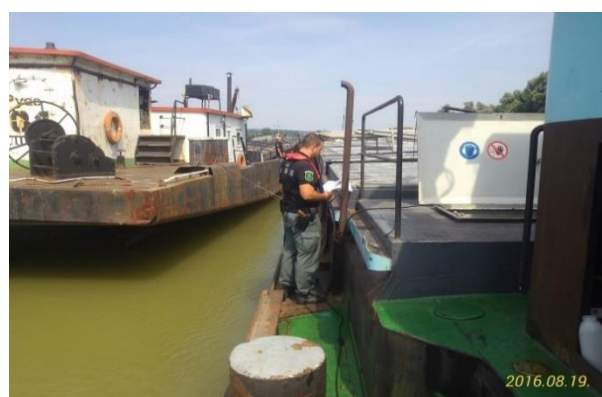
## Background

The Danube Region has undergone considerable transformations due to the social, political and economic changes of recent years. With regard to freight and passenger traffic, human smuggling, illegal migration, goods smuggling as well as drug and arms smuggling in 2011, EUROPOL evaluated the Danube river basin as a highly endangered area.

Hungary has taken up the challenge with nine other Danube member states in Priority Area 11 of the EUSDR in order to lay the foundations for law enforcement cooperation along the Danube in the framework of the DARIF project.

The cooperation in the area of border management, customs management, criminal risk analysis, disaster management and water policing that resulted from the implementation of the project was an appropriate response to the security challenges of the Danube. The project has significantly improved the joint work of those involved in inland navigation and its control.

During the Joint Operations the flow of information between law enforcement authorities accelerated and the data collected in real time contributed to the more effective control by the authorities concerned.



## Focus &amp; Outputs

The project DARIF focused on strengthening the safety of the Danube waterway, the effective and harmonised action against criminal activities and organised crime related to the waterway and the establishment of cross-border professional law enforcement cooperation in order to make the Danube a modern and safe transport corridor for goods and passengers.

Experts from law enforcement agencies, authorities and institutions cooperating in the fields of border management, criminal investigation, water policing, disaster management and river information services participated in the Hungarian-led Strategic Forum System from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. It provided opportunity to discuss current issues related to the safety of the Danube waterway for the member states of the Danube basin.

A Temporary Coordination Centre was operated in Mohács Border Port during the period of three Joint Operations along the entire Danube. The centre accelerated the flow of information between the authorities, contributed to joint risk analyses and reduced overlaps, reduced duplication and the number of uncovered areas affecting efficiency, thus fostering synergy between existing bi- and trilateral cooperation.

As one of the main transport corridors of Europe, the Danube is also a significant security threat, a challenge for the law enforcement bodies. Hence, there is a strong need to enhance transnational Danube cooperation in the field of law enforcement. Establishing a regular cooperation platform, the Danube River Law Enforcement Forum, can significantly improve the safety and security of the European Transport Corridor VII.



## Key facts

Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Partner: Ministry of Interior, Hungary</li> <li>Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria</li> <li>Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Federal Republic of Germany</li> </ul>	
Financing	ISEC - Prevention of and Fight against Crime– DARIF, HOME/2012/ISEC/FP/C2/4000003980	
Duration	07/2013-06/2015	<a href="http://bmprojekte.kormany.hu/a-dunai-folyami-forum-strukturajanak-letrehozasa-darif">http://bmprojekte.kormany.hu/a-dunai-folyami-forum-strukturajanak-letrehozasa-darif</a>





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