

EUSDR Report 2015

Priority Area 3

To Promote Culture, Tourism and People to People Contacts

General remarks:

This report covers the period June 2014 – June 2015.

The language of this report should be clear, simple, well-structured and should address the content rather than aiming for quantity.

The main aims of this report are:

- To illustrate what is happening (i.e. increasing/ decreasing/ changing etc.) because of the Strategy since last year. In this sense, the report should outline concrete facts and examples. Vague and general comments (e.g. "the situation is progressing favourably and quite rapidly") should preferably be avoided.*
- To explain the use of technical assistance funds for the year covered by the report (TA progress report).*

Reporting on the Technical Assistance: The provisions regarding the submission of the TA progress report (implementation and financial report) specify that the reports will be submitted every six months starting from the starting date of the action (Article 1.2.2 of the Special Conditions of the Grant Agreement).

However, considering that a separate reporting exercise on the use of TA adds additional work, one of the two annual reports will be merged with the activity report on the PA implementation and will be submitted, for all PAs, by the end of June, as an integral part of the EUSDR PA implementation report.

The second annual TA report will be submitted by the end of December each year.

1. OVERALL PROGRESS

1.1. State of play

Progress has been made on 3 targets: Danube branding, harmonized monitoring system and developing relevant clusters and networks in culture.

Changes within the governance mechanism will be put in place in order to improve the coordination and cooperation within the PA.

Main achievements

An increase visibility of PA3 has been achieved because of the events organised/supported by PAC and other SG members.

A clear outcome of this dynamic has been the high number of project proposal submitted within PA3 for 1 START facility call for projects (207 projects – 2 selected for financing), 2 START facility call for projects (40 projects – 2 selected for financing) and 2 TAF facility call for projects (5 projects – 4 selected for financing).

The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route (Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Serbia) has been officially incorporated in 2015 into the programme "The Council of Europe Cultural Routes".

Several relevant PA3 projects funded by European Territorial Cooperation programmes has been finalized and a big number of projects are being prepared by different stakeholders in order to be submitted to the future EU programmes. As for example within the South East Programme the following projects in field of tourism and culture has been finalized that contributes at the achievement of PA3 targets:

- Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes of the XX^o Century in Urban Management,
- Enhancement of cultural heritage through environmental planning and management,
- Cultural values and Leisure Environments Accessible Roundly - for All,
- Cultural value for sustainable territorial governance and marketing,
- Cultural (garden) heritage as focal points for sustainable tourism,
- Extension of the Danube Limes - UNESCO World Heritage in the Lower Danube,
- Danube River Network of Protected Areas - Development and Implementation of Transnational Strategies for the Conservation of the Natural Heritage at the Danube River,
- Transnational Strategy for the Sustainable Territorial Development of the Danube Area with special regard to Tourism,
- Achieving SUSTainability through an integrated approach to the management of CULTural heritage,
- Synergy of culture and tourism: utilisation of cultural potentials in less favoured rural regions,

- *Outline on the future. Next steps and challenges. What, if anything, is missing in order to achieve the planned goals?*

A more concrete and focused approach should be undertaken as regards activities to be realised within PA3, **a revision of the targets or establishing a set of indicators and outputs to be achieved must be envisaged.**

A priority should be given to **the follow-up of the relevant projects** that contribute at the achievement of EUSDR. The efficiency of EUSDR implementation process could be measured by the number and value of projects: generated (partner searching, dialogue, design, implementation strategy), submitted for financing to fund granting programmees (national mainstream programmees, cooperation programmees etc.), selected for financing. succesfully implemented.

Also a more clear monitoring system and evaluation system must be put in place, and in this respect PAC but also new established DSP could play the most important role.

- *Lessons learned, positive or negative.*

There is a high level of interest for objectives of the PA3 but the efforts are not coordinated. Important stakeholders from tourism and culture are in private sector and in civil society and they are not participated as much as possible at the implementation of the EUSDR. This should be a priority for PAC and SG: **to increase the participation of different stakeholders** at the implementation of the relevant EUSDR activities.

1.2. Process

The input under this sub-chapter shall be limited to maximum 2 pages.

This sub-chapter shall include information on:

- *Progress made since the last reporting period on the governance of the PA (including the organisation and functioning of the PACs, Steering Groups, Working Groups etc and the links with stakeholders);*

Within PA3 in this reporting period **4 Steering Groups** has been organised:

- 7 SG, 25 of June 2014, Vienna (Austria), within the Annual EUSDR Forum
- 8 SG, 25 of November 2014, Bucharest (Romania)
- 9 SG, 05 of March 2014, Berlin (Germany), within the 2015 ITB
- 10 SG, 17 of June 2015, on the boat, within the 2015 Danube Floating Conference

In Romania the coordination mechanism has been changed and improved in order to obtain a better involvement of all relevant stakeholders. In this respect **a new coordinator has been designated as from April 2014 – Mr. Teofil GHERCA**, head of unit, within the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration. Two other institutions are being involved in the coordination mechanism: Ministry of Economy, Commerce and Tourism, Mr. Marius ANDRA, director, and Ministry of Culture, Mr. Bogdan STANOEVICI, State Secretary.

In Bulgaria there is an increased interest for PA3 because a Ministry of Tourism has been created in 2014 and Mrs. Nikolina ANGELKOVA is supporting all EUSDR initiatives. A **new coordinator**

has been designated as from August 2015 – Mr. Lyubomir SYRAKOV, chief expert within the Ministry of Tourism.

A meeting between Romanian Minister for Regional Development and Public Administration, Mrs. Sevil SHHAIDEH, and Bulgarian Minister for Tourism, Mrs. Nikolina ANGELKOVA, has been organised in Bucharest on 21 of September 2015. A decision has been taken **to organise a PA3 Joint Technical Secretariat**, as agreed previously with the SG members. The PA3 JTS will be put in place in 2016 and should significantly increase the efficiency of PAC activities.

- *Outline of the significant changes (including comparisons with the last reporting period as well) in your work/network approach resulting from the Strategy (e.g. larger networks, more visibility), including any problems encountered and any solutions found; Links with projects from other Priority Areas; Publicity measures (such as website, stakeholder seminars, publications) etc.*

Several events, either thematic or high level, were organised in order to increase the visibility of activities realised within PA3, as for example:

- **Informal tourism ministers meeting from Danube and Adriatic-Ionian Region, 8-9 of June 2015 in Sofia**, with the participation of ministers and director generals responsible with tourism from several Danubian countries, representatives of UNTWO, EU Commission and other relevant stakeholders from public, private sector, academic and NGO.

The main conclusions of the meeting were:

- Closely collaborate to create synergies between and coordinate our tourism policies;
- Cooperate to create incentives for and to facilitate the development of specific transnational tourism products, with a particular focus on cruise tourism in the Danube Region;
- Ensure consistence and continuity to cooperation with relevant Priority Areas of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region towards supporting the effective implementation of the “Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan – Danube and its navigable tributaries”;
- Ensure the application of sustainability criteria in the development of cruise tourism infrastructure and management of tourist destinations with regard to the sustainable growth of local economies and the enhancement of natural and cultural heritage-based tourism products;
- Promote a regional knowledge sharing network in the field between public and private stakeholders, including cruise industry, port authorities, tour operators, and others;
- Incentivize targeted use of EU funding programs and financial instruments towards enhancing the investment environment for the development of sustainable and competitive river-based tourism activities in the Danube Region;
- Allocate necessary national budgets to complement targeted use of European Union co-financing for implementation of joint initiatives in the area of cruise tourism;
- Intensify cooperation with relevant coordinating bodies and key stakeholders, and strengthen cooperation and partnerships with relevant international organizations in the field of tourism development, such as the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, the World Travel and Tourism Council, the European Travel Commission, etc.

With the occasion of the meeting it was signed a Letter of commitment between the World Tourism Organization and coordinators of priority area 3 of European Union Strategy for the

Danube region regarding the establishment of a Network of Observatories for Sustainable Tourism in the Danube Region. The letter has been signed on behalf of PAC - PA3 by Mrs. Nikolina Angelkova, Minister of Tourism of Bulgaria and on behalf of UNTWO by Mr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary General.

- **Conference on Sustainable management of touristic destinations within the Danube region – focus on natural protected areas along the Danube and UNESCO sites**, within the 2015 Danube Floating Conference, 17 of June 2015, with the participation of 100 relevant stakeholders from all the Danubian region

An increase cooperation has been started with other PA on common relevant subject. Based on proposal from other PA, PA3 cooperate on 2 common pilot projects under implementation:

- Enhancing the administrative capacity in relation to the cultural heritage rehabilitation : PA10 with the support of PA3
- Developing skills for green tourism: PA9 with the support of PA3

The web platform of Priority Area 3 (<http://danubecultureandtourism.eu/>) was created to facilitate efficient communication between the Steering Group members and opened in 2014. The platform has a “Public Area”, with free access, and a “Members’ Area” which requires registration, where is also available an intranet and an on-line conference facility.

Romanian PAC finalised a **WEBGIS on-line platform** (<http://suerd.mdrap.ro/web/>) to monitor the implementation of the relevant EUSDR project proposals. The platform has been realised within a national EU funded project. The platform is based on:

- A Geographical Information System
- 2 components: to introduce and stock data and to make interrogations to produce reports, including tables and maps
- Relational data base realized with diversified relevant information in the EUSDR implementation: institutions, events, projects, persons

Created specially to monitor the Romanian EUSDR relevant projects it can be extend at the level of Danube region and in this respect is necessary to ensure a correlation with other relevant EUSDR platforms developed in the Danube region, ex: Urban Platform, EuroAccess (an online searching-tool gathering and providing information on funding in the Danube Region to be developed by PA10 PAC).

What, if anything, is missing in order to streamline the governance of the PA (progress not depending exclusively on your PA)? What are you planning to improve in the governance of the PA (progress entirely depending on your PA).

A better cooperation with Managing Authorities of different programmes that could finance EUSDR relevant projects must be realised in the next period.

1.3. Funding

PAC used the TA grant in order to finance the SG meetings and other relevant events, see the annex.

2. PROGRESS BY TARGET

Target 1 - “To develop a Danube brand for the entire Danube Region based on already existing work”

- Work was continued in view of the elaboration of a methodological concept with the active contribution of DCC and UNWTO. On the 24th of November, 2014, a draft for an integrated online survey (‘surveymonkey’) was received, in order to replace the initial two surveys and carry out the research throughout online tools.
- An online meeting on methodological aspects and internal analysis procedure was held in October 2014. The results of the online meeting took the form of a concept paper on methodological aspects for conducting the internal analysis which was discussed by the SG members during the 8th meeting of PA3 Steering Group (25th of November 2014, in Bucharest). Discussions focused on important issues related to targets respondents, participants’ role and calendar of implementation.
- During the first months of 2015, stakeholders’ inventory was created, each country being responsible for the national stakeholders lists submitted.
- On the basis of the stakeholders’ inventory, the internal analysis will be conducted with the overall support of DCC and the methodological and advisory support of UNWTO.
- The survey manual and the sampling procedure were discussed during the 9th Steering Group meeting that took place on 5th of March 2015 in Berlin, Germany.
- According to the recommendations of the Steering Group members that the development of an integrated Danube brand should integrate branding elements already developed, in September 2014 the project Danube Limes Brand was finalised, and the implementation of “*Common Strategy for Sustainable Territorial Development of the cross-border area Romania-Bulgaria*” project (<http://www.spatial.mdrap.ro/>) , towards creating a regional brand “*The Eastern Danube Region. A gateway odyssey, an odyssey*” and a common marketing strategy for the transnational area, was successfully closed at the end of 2014. A pilot project in the field of landscapes was also finalised, resulting in creating an *Atlas of the landscapes in the Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area* (an atlas that illustrates how landscapes are bringing together the natural and cultural heritage-[http://www.spatial.mdrap.ro/files/Project%20results/Work%20Package%206/Landscape_Atlas\(Cover\).pdf](http://www.spatial.mdrap.ro/files/Project%20results/Work%20Package%206/Landscape_Atlas(Cover).pdf)).

Target 2 - “To support the implementation of a harmonized monitoring system, dedicated to tourism, able to provide complete and comparable statistical data in all the 14 states part of the EUSDR”

- On the basis of work undertaken in the framework of target achievement, next steps and methodology were discussed during the 8th meeting of PA3 Steering Group, on the 25th of November 2014. Steering Group decided on roadmap revision and further developing the harmonised monitoring system by a pilot cooperation, with less countries involved in the first phase and introducing observatories for transnational destinations, collecting data and in the same time preparing in line with European Tourism Integrated System for Sustainable Tourism criteria.
- Political endorsement for starting the first implementation phase was assured by the intention letters send to UNWTO by the two PA3 coordinators (Minister level), as well as during the ministerial conference organised in Sofia, 8th of June 2015. **A joint intention letter was**

officially signed between Mr. Taleb Rifai, General Secretary of the UNTWO and the coordinators of the Priority Area 3 with the occasion of the ministerial conference.

It is foreseen that the network will cover, on a first phase 4 cross-border touristic destinations PA3 will identify other destinations in the Danube Region where new observatories could be opened, with the purpose of monitoring tourism development in such destinations and of establishing a macro-regional network of observatories.

The cooperation will focus also on:

- the promotion of sustainable tourism practices at cultural and natural heritage sites as well as within specific tourism segments,
- the introduction of “green” innovations within the whole tourism supply chain,
- the impacts of climate change on tourism destinations and the related adaptation and mitigation measures.

The activities of future network will envisage a correlation with activities to be realised with European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS).

- Initial analysis was send in March 2015 to UNWTO for the 4th transnational pilot destinations that will be included in the first implementation phase: the *Danube Delta* (Romania), *Giurgiu-Ruse* area (Romania-Bulgaria), *Vidin-Belogradchik-Orsova-Drobeta Turnu Severin-Djerdap-Iron Gates-Kladovo* (Bulgaria – Serbia - Romania) and *Sremski Karlovci-Ilok* (Serbia - Croatia).
- While cooperation with UNWTO was continued for creating the needed capacity building, a need for further funding was also identified, and work started on elaborating a project application for Danube Programme funding.

Target 3 - “Develop new and support existing Cultural Routes relevant in the Danube Region”

- The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route (Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Serbia) has been officially incorporated in 2015 into the programme "The Council of Europe Cultural Routes" (<http://www.danubecc.org/index.php?pg=roman-emperors-route>).
- The closing event of the project Danube Limes Brand, organized in Bucharest (Romania) – Ruse (Bulgaria) – Tulcea (Romania), 24-28 September 2014 highlighted the fact that the cultural route of the Danube limes needs to be promoted not only via the common brand, but also as an integrated cultural and touristic product.
- Development of a cultural route of medieval fortresses in the Danube region was also targeted during the international conference organized in Târgu Mureş, Romania, 17-18 October 2014.

Target 4 - “Develop green tourist products along the Danube Region”

- The Conference organized (16 June 2015) by the Priority Area 3 in the framework of the Danube Floating Conference was dedicated to sustainable management of tourism destinations along the Danube. The conference addressed the issues of stronger involvement of stakeholders, at all level and focused on raising responsibility in tourism destinations’ management towards developing green tourism along the Danube.

- For the implementation of the target, establishment of a joint working group with Priority Area 9, in the framework of horizontal cooperation was taken into consideration at the level of the Steering Group.

Target 5 - “To create a ‘Blue Book’ on Danube cultural identity”

- The third edition of the *Danube Cultural Conference*, took place 25-26 June 2015 in Timisoara.
- In December 2014 an international conference on Danube cultural identities was organized in Timisoara, Romania, continuing the work been done since 2014 towards creating a multicultural Danube platform dedicated to multicultural heritage. The international conference resulted in establishing the basis for developing a project and defining the future structure of the project.

The project addresses the variety of the Danube region, the history of minorities linked to the Danube, and the cooperation opportunities offered by the EUSDR in the field. Following the discussions during the conference, the project includes a component focused on promoting and awareness raising, based on the involvement of journalists and experts in the field of cultural heritage of the national minorities in the Danube region, and a component addressing institutional cooperation in the riparian countries. The two components are designed to support integrated participation to the project of all stakeholders and ensuring achievement of targets.

Institutions with competences in the field of ethnic heritage from the Danube countries were formally invited to join the project as partners.

Target 6 - “Ensure the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage and natural values by developing relevant clusters and networks of museums, interpretation and visitors centers within the Danube Region”

- Between 17th and 18th of October 2014, Romanian PA3 Coordinator organized in Târgu Mureș, Romania, the International conference, “*Touristic valorisation of medieval fortresses in the countries of the Danube region*”. The conference focused on promoting the richness of cultural heritage and raising awareness regarding the potential of medieval fortress as common regional heritage. One of the objectives of the conference was identifying future cooperation actions for sustainable preservation of medieval fortresses heritage and fostering project development dedicated to preservation of cultural heritage.
- The Conference on sustainable management of touristic destinations organized by PA3 during the 2015 Danube Floating Conference also addressed the issue of UNESCO cultural sites from the Danube region and as follow-up of this conference it was initiated an activity to create a network of UNESCO sites within the Danube region.

Target 7 - “Promoting exchange and networking in the field of contemporary arts in the Danube Region.”

Under the Danube Culture Platform framework several activities has been realised by different stakeholders.

A project proposal Danube Culture Platform - Creative spaces of the 21st century is being prepared by a group of PA3 SG members with the aim to be submitted to the Danube Transnational Program.

Annex 1: Roadmaps to implement each action

Target 1. Develop a Danube Brand for the entire Danube Region based on already existing work- Realisation of Integrated analysis of the Region

- Preparation of Tourism strategies that use Danube as a reference
- Promotion of Common Danubian transnational tourist products on global market
- Development of common cross-border tourist destinations
- Raising awareness on the existence of the Danube Brand (indicator: number/percentage of Danubian Tourism Stakeholders that are aware of it. (survey based composite indicator) indicating:
 - a) Number/percentage of Danubian Tourism stakeholders ready to use this brand or are already using it;
 - b) Number of documented tourism market products and services using the Brand.

Target 2. Support the implementation of a harmonised monitoring system, dedicated to tourism, able to provide complete and comparable statistical data in all the 14 states part of the EUSDR

- Creation of the Danubian Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories
- Number of Danubian countries/regions that are publishing tourism statistics in the framework of the harmonised monitoring system
- To develop a Quality label for Danube Sustainable Tourism

Target 3. Develop new and support existing Cultural Routes relevant in the Danube Region Action 1

- Creation of new and support of existing Cultural routes in the Danube Region
- Increase of or Number cultural heritage assets included in transnational thematic routes, indicated by:
 - a) Number of documented newly developed transnational cultural routes products and services
 - b) Number of pilot actions for supporting existing cultural routes developed and/or implemented

Target 4. Develop green tourist products along the Danube Region

- To develop a Common quality label for Danube sustainable tourism and Realisation of an Ecotourism Certification System
- Monitoring the Finalisation of a complete cycling route from Black Forest to Black Sea

- Development of new green tourism market products and services(indicator: No. of documented such products/services)
- Supporting development pilot actions for the green tourism (indicator: no of realized pilot projects)

Target 5. To create a ‘Blue Book’ on Danube cultural identity

- Platform for cooperation for an enhanced valorization of national minorities tangible and intangible heritage along the Danube
- Realisation of the Danube Region Landscape Atlas

Target 6. Ensure the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage and natural values by developing relevant clusters, and networks of museums, interpretation and visitors centres within the Danube Region

- Cultural Agenda of the Danube Region/Cultural Strategy for the Danube Region
- Number of supported transnational cooperation structures (clusters, networks of museums, interpretation and visitors centers) aiming at ensuring the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage and natural values
- Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to strengthen sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources (survey based composite indicator)
- Applications and other innovative tools that use information and communication technologies (ICT) in promotion of tourism including nature and culture values of the Danube region

Target 7. Promoting exchange and networking in the field of contemporary arts in the Danube Region

- Number of supported transnational cooperation structures aiming at the implementation of contemporary arts in the Danube region

Annex 2 - Projects approved by the steering group and for which Letters of Recommendation were issued by PA3 PAC within the reporting period

1. DANUrB cultural network

Full Project title	DANUrB (Danube Urban Brand) regional network building through tourism and education to strengthen the “Danube” cultural identity and solidarity
Project manager (including contact address, e-mail, phone, fax)	Pálffy Sándor DLA BME Urbanisztika Tanszék H-1111 Budapest Műegyetem rkp. 3. spalfy@urb.bme.hu T: 36-1-463 2332 F: 36-1-463 3841
Relevance to target or Action of PA 3, cross-sectoral aspects	<p>The project primarily aims to strengthen the Danube regional cultural identity and brand by fostering transnational cultural ties between the settlements along the Danube, and at the same time, by exploring the unused or hidden cultural and social capital resources of this regional network. The main goal of the project is to create a comprehensive tourism strategy connecting all cities along the Danube and their culture, unifying these into one tourism destination brand, offering thematic routes and development possibilities that can increase the number of visitors and can prolong their stay in the region. Important project partners are the relevant regional municipalities, universities, NGOs and professional market based agencies active in this field.</p> <p>The main objectives of the project are most relevant to the PA 03, as it develops a “Danube Brand” for cities (T1), proposes a better monitoring of tourist movements and spendings (T2), develops new “Cultural Routes” (T3), adds to the Danube cultural identity by research and specific programs (T5), ensures the preservation of heritage in cities adding new uses and interpretation (T6), and promotes exchange and networking in fields of tourism studies, tourism industries and cultural and artistic institutions (T7).</p> <p>At the same time DANUrB is strongly related to the area of Knowledge Society (PA 07, with special recommendation of this Steering Group), Competitiveness of the region’s enterprises (PA 08), and Institutional capacity building and cooperation (PA 10).</p>
Objective(s)/expected results	<p>The programme has strong horizontal objectives, which are used in vertical action programmes. The objectives to work on are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong “Danube cultural identity” <i>Cities among the Danube will have a culture-based network focusing on the connective potentials of the Danube, with municipalities harmonizing their cultural and tourism strategies, with universities implementing knowledge of the other cities into their research and teaching, and with a series of dissemination events where</i>

the citizens and culture & tourism professionals of different cities get extensive knowledge of each other's values and the possibilities of cooperation

New cultural elements and products that help cohesion and strengthen solidarity in this transnational region, diminishing existing tensions between communities of different EU member states and between communities of different social status inside cities. New cultural ties will focus on the benefits of common connecting elements, on the economic benefits of collaboration. Heritage and history interpretation can help cohesion by focusing on the multicultural dimension of the successful periods of history in these cities.

- Transnational cultural and touristic network as “Danube PPP”

that is cooperation between municipalities, universities, NGOs and private companies to enhance regional and city tourism strategy of multiple destinations along the Danube. The project has the main objective to involve in the strategy and branding the widest range of stakeholders, and to create a long-lasting collaboration in such network. The transnational cooperation between universities in common research programmes is also a novelty and goal, as very few transnational cooperation existed before in these fields in research.

- Common tourism branding of urban destinations along the Danube

Create a brand of “cities of the Danube” marketable in international tourism, in accordance with the branding activity of PA03. The unique connection with the largest river of the EU and the unique cultural-historical ties make these cities stand out as a group from all other “art cities”, “heritage cities” or other destinations. River cruises do exist connecting most of these cities, but this form of tourism does not build a cultural brand of cities, smaller cities does not benefit from it and it only involves a specific market. The goal is to create such branding strategy that can mobilize different segments of tourists to pass longer holidays visiting a series of cities by the Danube, combining the cultural richness with more relaxing forms of vacation by the water, like beaches, thermal water and water sports.

- New ICT tools to increase the competitiveness of tourism and culture related enterprises along the Danube

To develop new ICT technologies that can be used with a common platform in all cities involved, creating a transnational info-communication system shared between all cities. To allow smaller businesses to join in a network for tourism, to allow the investments of larger companies to be coordinated and have multiplied effects, and to

	<p><i>increase the competitiveness of such enterprises by the common ICT platform, more overall visitor bednights spent, better communication with the authorities. A network among all stakeholders and an effective ICT based system of tourism management connecting all cities will lead to accurate and comprehensive calculations and predictions on rates of return of investments and on the overall turnover of the tourism industry. The lack of such a system leads to weak support of such investments in the region today, this can be changed.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thematic tours inside and between cities of the Danube <i>To create new routes that connect specific attractions of different cities with specific topics. Common historical background, architectural styles and situations, socio-cultural processes define the topics. Special region-specific heritage, such as the built environment of the communist past of many cities will also be thematised for tourism consumption and cultural interpretation, creating new tourist routes in the region</i>
<p>Project description (activities)</p>	<p>The project aims to connect the urbanized areas along the Danube into comprehensive tourism destinations, fostering cultural ties and institutional/municipal collaboration. The project creates a new cultural network along the Danube, presenting a strategy to increase the tourism potentials of the cities involved. The project aims to define regions which can act together as a tourist destination and as a cultural cluster, analysing cities from Regensburg to Galati.</p> <p>The project has four main programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Branding DANUrB cities <i>Creating a unique and comprehensive cultural tourism destination along the Danube, branding together the cities from the upper and lower Danube area. A common tourism strategy based on research would be the base, an applied branding strategy, ICT tools for integrated promotion, and thematic tours between cities would be the tools of this programme</i> - Different cities, a common waterfront <i>Understanding, marketing and developing the potentials in the urban waterfronts along the Danube. The tourism strategy based on research will have a strong urban focus, concentrating on the possibilities of waterfront developments, not only physical ones, but also soft interventions and cultural programs tied to the waterfront. Thematic tours inside cities will be built.</i> - Thematising communist heritage <i>Reinterpreting the heritage of socialism, creating new thematic routes for tourists and building on the cultural resources held by the common history of the lower Danube</i>

	<p><i>Region, from Bratislava to Galati. Research is needed to map all marketable values in this theme, ICT tools will be used to build the database.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Culture connecting societies <i>Building regional identity, cultural cohesion and social solidarity along the river Danube building on the common cultural roots and present relations in a transnational context. Common research, a common forum for different local NGOs, dissemination programmes and the inter-regional promotion of cultural events would strengthen the sense of common cultural belonging. The common ICT tools and the social sensitivity of the proposed thematic tours would also enforce connectedness.</i>
<p>Instruments used, incl. innovative approaches, best-practice, etc.</p>	<p>The project consists of the following parts in terms of methodology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - collaboration between research and educational institutions to work out innovative forms of strategy making research - collaboration between municipalities relying on the work of universities to build a common network and ICT system of waterfront city tourism development and common branding - dissemination of the new forms of cultural collaboration and enhanced interpretations of the common cultural background - common presence and applications for all future tourism related forums and grants <p>The project uses an intensive networking to establish its goals. The methodology of research and the strong practical utility of tourism strategy making are based on innovative approaches not used yet in the region. The strategy will rely on the implementation of European best practices in the field of cultural collaboration and tourism clustering.</p>
<p>Impact for the Danube region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic (e.g. diversification of traditional economic activities, job creation or retention potential, etc.) - Social (e.g. use of local products and labour force, education and professional qualifications) - Environmental (e.g. protection of local natural environment, etc.) 	<p>The project has the following impacts on the Danube Region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic impacts of a comprehensive transnational tourism strategy: more visitors spending more days in the region, visiting destinations outside the main tourist gaze. Result: more activity in the hotel and catering industry, more jobs, more spending in local retail venues of the involved cities - Social impacts of a transnational cultural and research project: new form of collaboration among scholars, policy makers, cultural institutions and members of the civil society, innovative forms of education and dissemination - Social impacts of the strategic planning of urban tourism: more balanced relationship between locals and tourists, benefits to the local entrepreneurship in urban areas with increased tourist traffic - Environmental impacts of a tourism strategy focusing on

<p>- Cultural (e.g. raising awareness of the rich cultural patrimony of the Danube region, creation of interest for contemporary approaches: shaping cultural identity, etc.)</p>	<p>waterfront cities: awareness of the role of natural waterfronts, recreational use of the river and of the importance of environmental corridors through cities</p> <p>- Cultural impacts of a defined transnational cultural region: increased cultural identity reaching through the borders, awareness of the common cultural bonds and heritage, valuation of the built heritage on waterfront situations, new cultural networks among institutions and municipalities, reinterpretation of the socialist heritage</p>
<p>Indicative Timetable</p>	<p>08.09.14. Preliminary cooperation framework set up with major partners</p> <p>15.09.14. Application for START - Danube Region Project Fund Call1, and for Danube Strategy label</p> <p>2014-15 3 year research programme and DANUrB tourism & culture strategy developed with all network partners. Work schedule and tasks of research and branding set up between universities and city municipalities.</p> <p>2014-16 Application for project calls</p> <p>2015 Start of a 3 year research programme</p> <p>2015-18 Cooperation in strategy making, dissemination and educational programmes</p> <p>2017 Implementation of pilot project involving ICT technologies for cultural collaboration, thematic routes and common branding among cities involved</p>
<p>How is the sustainability of the project ensured (follow-up, multiplier effects, self-sustaining structure, cooperation/coordination with other initiatives/projects etc.)?</p>	<p>The complexity of the project, the multitude of institutional, educational, municipal, entrepreneur and civil organizations involved guarantee the long term sustainability of an innovative transnational cultural and touristic “Danube PPP”.</p> <p>As the aim of the project is to increase the competitiveness of the tourism and cultural sector of the region, all participants will be beneficiaries also financially at the second phase of the project, therefore the continuation of this collaboration is preferable and probable. A comprehensive brand is such a quality in the tourism business, that the profitability of the project is guaranteed at a regional level, but also foreseen at the level of the single partners. The topics of the project are easily connectable to a wide range of local, national and international projects and funding, such as local tourism organisations, entrepreneurial clusters, transnational and national grants.</p>
<p>Project status (idea, preparation phase, implementation phase, recently concluded)</p>	<p>Preparation phase,</p> <p>Danube start application submitted,</p> <p>Have letter of intent and first consultations with main project partners</p>
<p>Budget (budget estimate, approx. distribution of costs, etc.)</p>	<p>Total project expenditure: 200.000 EUR/year for 3 years</p> <p>Main budget categories:</p> <p>Personnel costs: 130000,- EURO / year</p>

<p>& Funding (ensured, in application, still needed)</p>	<p>Travel and accommodation costs: 30000,- EURO /year Meeting and event costs: 20000,- EURO /year External services: 20000,- EURO /year</p> <p>Funding: first application SUBMITTED: START – Danube Region Project Fund – Call 1 (2014.09.17): 40000,- EURO, 4000 EURO provided by leading partners. planned application for future project calls: foreseen call: H2020-REFLECTIVE-6-2015 („Reflective Societies: Cultural Heritage and European Identities”) other calls will be targeted as well, either at municipal and national level, or at EU level funding from entrepreneurs and institutions in the tourism sector</p>
<p>Partners (including contact address, e-mail, phone, fax)</p>	<p>Leading partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BME Faculty of Architecture, Department of Urban Planning and Design, <i>Sándor Pálffy, spalfy@urb.bme.hu, Bálint Kádár, kdarb@urb.bme.hu</i> - BME Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Department of Sociology and Communication, <i>Annamária Orbán, aorban@eik.bme.hu</i> <p>Main project partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, Faculty of Architecture, <i>Lubica Vitkova, Dean of the Faculty, vitkova@fa.stuba.sk</i> - Association of Tourism Consultants, Budapest, <i>Puczko László, lpuczko@tutsz.org.hu</i> - Municipality of Budapest, Department of Urban Development, <i>Sándor Finta, Chief Architect, Finta.Sandor@budapest.hu</i> <p>TOGETHER WITH</p> <p>BFTK Nonprofit Ltd (Budapest Festival Center, official tourism branding company of the municipality of Budapest) <i>info@fesztivalvaros.hu</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belgrad University, Faculty of Architecture, <i>Aleksandra Djukic adjukic@rcub.bg.ac.rs</i> - Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Institute of Art and Architecture, <i>Stefan Gruber, S.Gruber@akbild.ac.at</i> - Széchenyi István University in Győr, Faculty of Engineering Sciences, Department of Urban Planning and Architectural History, Department of Architectural Design, <i>Tamás Czigány, Head of Department, muteremhaz@sze.hu,</i> <p>Project partners to be involved for implementation:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Entrepreneurs from the tourism industries and creative cultural industries of the cities involved (to be selected in the moment of strategy making, as the market must be defined and can change in the meantime)</i> - <i>Other Universities from the region as main partners for research and cultural dissemination: Universitatea Dunărea de Jos din Galați (Lower-Danube University of Galati), Romania; University of Regensburg, Faculty of Economics, Department of Real Estate</i> - <i>Municipalities of main cities to be branded along the Danube: Bratislava, SK; Galati, RO; Vienna, Linz, Krems, Melk, AT; Passau, Regensburg, DE; Győr, Vác, Kalocsa, Paks, Esztergom, HU (to be selected)</i> - <i>NGOs involved in cultural interpretation and dissemination. Contacted: Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre, www.kek.org.hu; Valyo, www.valyo.hu; Others from the DRS countries will be contacted, and an inter-regional forum for these NGOs will be created</i>
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2. Donau Lounge

Full Project title	Donau Lounge – literature and culture from the Danube region at international book fairs
Project manager (including contact address, e-mail, phone, fax)	<p>Dr Márton Méhes Danube Cultural Cluster c/o Collegium Hungaricum Vienna A-1020 Wien, Hollandstraße 4 Email: marton.mehes@collegiumhungaricum.at, danubecluster@gmail.com</p>
Relevance to target or Action of PA 3, cross-sectoral aspects	<p>The basic idea of the Donau Lounge project was to provide a stage for “Danubian” literature, to establish Danube cultural cooperations, and to promote the EUDRS at huge, popular but highbrow events. Book fairs are ideal places for this kind of content and promotion having at the same time a strong impact on culture, economy, media and the public.</p> <p>The project was developed in accordance with the EUSDR, especially with Target 7 of PA 3 “Promoting exchange and networking in the field of contemporary arts in the Danube Region.” The Danube Lounge series helps to develop a literature cooperation platform in the Danube region. It clearly contributes to the exchange of thoughts and knowledge among authors, publishers, translators, journalists, cultural managers and the audience. It supports the connection of cultural players among each other and with other players of the Danube region. It is a high quality promotion tool for the results of contemporary arts (especially literature) and for the contemporary cultural issues of PA 3. Because of the EUSDR added value the EU Representation in Austria is a strong partner of the Donau Lounge project from the very beginning.</p> <p>Though the main objectives of the project are most relevant to PA 3, it is at the same time strongly related to the area of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge Society (PA 7) –knowledge transfer throughout the Danube region, wide range information spreading - Competitiveness of the region’s enterprises (PA 8) – economical factor for publishing houses and book fairs - Institutional capacity building and cooperation (PA 10) – horizontal cooperation between governmental, non-governmental and private sector

Objective(s)/expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong “Danube cultural identity” - “Danube” as a quality cultural brand - Literary platform for the Danube region - Transnational cultural cooperation between relevant institutions, embassies, NGOs, publishing houses, book fair companies to enhance artist’s mobility, literature translation, book publishing and promotion along the Danube - Stronger cultural ties between the transnational regions along the Danube, new cultural elements and products that help cohesion and strengthen solidarity - High visibility Danube branding at book fairs with ten thousands of visitors within a couple of days - Economical/material benefit for book fairs and publishing houses - Increase of demand for translations
Project description (activities)	<p>The Danube Cultural Cluster association, founded on the initiative of the Balassi Institute – Collegium Hungaricum Vienna, has expanded its most successful international literary project: the Donau Lounge. The Donau Lounge represents itself with its own stand/stage and programs at international book fairs in the area.</p> <p>This unique literary program first came out at the 2012 BUCH WIEN – Vienna International Book Fair. Since then, within the framework of a wide international cooperation, the Donau Lounge has become a genuine regional program along the Danube. One of its principal aims is to establish a sincere and likeable cultural and literary platform for the nations along the Danube, in which the force of the cultural cohesion is represented by the river Danube itself.</p> <p>Besides showcasing a selection of recent publications, organizers of the Donau Lounge feature the discussion of themes and topics that are of great importance to the area: Such as the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War or the 25th anniversary of the collapse of communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe.</p> <p>The Donau Lounge has even outgrown its regional reputation and has become a cultural trademark: Its literary programs were also introduced at TarguMures (RO) and Lviv (UA) in 2013. Last year(2014) the Donau Lounge visited BucharestBookfest and Lviv International Book Fair. For the third time since its foundation, in November 2014 the Donau Lounge was again present at the BUCH WIEN.</p> <p>At BUCH WIEN 2014 some 40 guests from 11 Danube-countries took part in the Donau Lounge-programme. Through this programme the fair visitors can learn a lot about contemporary literature in the Danube area, about recent Danube-related publications and typical issues of the region (e.g. panel discussions on relevant historical anniversaries like 1914 or</p>

	<p>1989). Publishing houses and the media get reliable information on publishing licences, translation support or contacts to other publishing houses, authors, translators or literature institutions in the Danube countries).</p> <p>During the last three years the Donau Lounge project has become a wide ranging, popular and sustainable cooperation. More and more bookfairs and festivals show interest in the event. For 2015 the following stations are under preparation:</p> <p>April: International Book Festival – Budapest (HU)</p> <p>May: Bookfest International Book Fair – Bucharest (RO)</p> <p>October: International Book Fair – Belgrade (RS)</p> <p>November: BUCH WIEN – Vienna International Book Fair (AT)</p> <p>Recently, first negotiations for a Donau Lounge programme at Leipzig International Book Fair 2016 have taken place.</p>
<p>Instruments used,incl. innovative approaches, best-practice, etc.</p>	<p>The project consists of the following main components, each supporting the message that Danube culture is likeable, exciting, colourful, and dialogue-based:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Venue:</u> open, light coloured stand (in Vienna and at upcoming book fairs with podium-stage) in the characteristic Donau Lounge design and many shelves with Danube related books. A central position in the fair hall is important. - <u>Content:</u> moderated readings and author/book presentations (the author is always present), moderated live panel discussions on exciting topics (e.g. elaboration of past and history in the Danube countries, multilingualism and -ethnicism); an exciting mix of famous writers (e.g. MirceaCartarescu, Yuri Andruhovitch, LászlóDarvasi, Martin Pollak) and young talents from several Danube counties - <u>Design/layout:</u> huge Danube region wallpaper without national borders (only the names of the cities and towns are marked), likeable design, a reading Danube fish as the symbol of the stand; every programme brochure, image, invitation etc. in the same design; funny merchandising products - <u>Cooperation strategy:</u> Main partner in each city is the book fair organization; cultural institutes (e.g. Balassi Institute, Austrian Cultural Forums, Romanian Cultural Institute) are responsible for the authors; NGOs and other organizations support us with expertise (e.g. European Danube Academy, Independent Literature House Upper Austria, Traduki); publishing houses support us with book copies or moderation; big institutions interested in literature promotion and EUSDR provide us financial support (e.g. Publishing Hungary Programme, Austrian Foreign Ministry, EU Representation in Austria) - <u>Promotion and press work:</u> Every strategic partner supports the project with promotion and press work!

<p>Impact for the Danube region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic(e.g. diversification of traditional economic activities, job creation or retention potential, etc.) - Social(e.g. use of local products and labour force, education and professional qualifications) - Environmental (e.g. protection of local natural environment, etc.) - Cultural (e.g. raising awareness of the rich cultural patrimony of the Danube region, creation of interest for contemporary approaches: shaping cultural identity,etc.) 	<p>The project has the following impacts on the Danube Region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic impacts of a comprehensive transnational literature project: Through the Donau Lounge project book fairs become more attractive, having more visitors; a contribution to the book fairs means more chance for local job creation (at the book fair organization, at publishing houses, partner institutions). Book promotion leads to an increase in book sales (which could also lead to job creation). - Potential for economic impact on tourism in the Danube area: The promotion of Danube-issues generates interest for touristic activities while making the region more attractive - Economic impact on the literature scene in the Danube region: young talents get access to the book market of other countries, publishers buy licences/copyrights from each other, translators get more jobs - Social impacts of a transnational cultural project: new form of collaboration among policy makers, cultural institutions and members of the civil society, innovative forms of knowledge exchange, author's mobility, education and dissemination - Social impact of a project with differing programme venues in the region: balanced relationship between locals (book fair organization, local institutions) and visitors (authors, partners, press), benefits to the local entrepreneurship and their employees - Cultural impacts of a defined transnational cultural region: increased cultural identity reaching through the borders, awareness of the common cultural/historical bonds and more understanding for the point of view of the neighbours (to overcome prejudice), new cultural networks among different cultural players and cities, information transfer about contemporary literature values
<p>Indicative Timetable</p>	<p>The Donau Lounge project series started in 2012. Until the present stage, the following stations took place: November 2012: BUCH WIEN – Vienna International Book Fair (AT) September 2013: Lviv International Book Forum (UA) November 2013: TarguMures International Book Fair (RO) November 2013: BUCH WIEN – Vienna International Book Fair (AT) May/June 2014: Bookfest, Bucharest International Book Fair (RO) September 2014: Lviv International Book Forum (UA) November 2014: BUCH WIEN – Vienna International Book Fair (AT)</p> <p>The following Donau Lounge stages and events are already under preparation: April 2015: International Book Festival – Budapest (HU) May 2015: Bookfest International Book Fair – Bucharest (RO)</p>

	<p>October 2015: International Book Fair – Belgrade (RS) November 2015: BUCH WIEN – Vienna International Book Fair (AT) March 2016: Leipzig International Book Fair (DE)</p>
<p>How is the sustainability of the project ensured (follow-up, multiplier effects, self-sustaining structure, cooperation/coordination with other initiatives/projects etc.)?</p>	<p>The complexity of the project, the genuine interest of international book fairs in the region, the multitude of institutional, educational, municipal, entrepreneur and civil organizations involved guarantee the long term sustainability of an innovative transnational cultural programme. Also the literature scene (authors, literature houses, translation programmes and publishers) is very much interested in a long term networking structure and the involvement in the EUDRS.</p> <p>Some of the financial supporters are solid and permanent partners, and are willing to support the project in the future, as well. Having some national governmental/institutional and EU grants means a good starting position for negotiations with the private sector. First exchanges with the sponsoring department of a big Central European bank were very promising.</p> <p>The topics of the project are easily connectable to a wide range of local, national and international projects and funding.</p>
<p>Project status (idea, preparation phase, implementation phase, recently concluded)</p>	<p>Implementation phase 2012-2014 Preparation phase for 2015-2016 (for both see also the Indicative Timetable above!)</p>
<p>Budget (budget estimate, approx. distribution of costs, etc.)</p> <p>&Funding (ensured, in application, still needed)</p>	<p>Budget: varying in venue and programme density the overall costs of a Donau Lounge programme with stage/stand are 25.000 – 40.000 EUR (costs incurred: stage/stand rent, fee/travel/accommodation costs for authors/moderators/translators, promo and merchandising materials, graphic design, transportation, organization)</p> <p>Maximum organizational/institutional capacity (at present): 4 cities per year with an approximate overall budget of 125.000 EUR per year</p> <p>Funding: national governmental contributions (HU, AT, RO), EU Representation grant, cultural institutes and embassies of the Danube countries (SI, HR, SK, CZ, BG, DE), private sponsorship (publishers, hotel partnership), further funding from entrepreneurs and institutions in the cultural sector</p> <p>Ensured for the project year 2015: 55.000 EUR. First negotiations with the sponsoring department of a big Central European bank were very promising (for an overall sponsorship of the project at several venues).</p> <p>An EU application for a Creative Europe or a Danube Transnational grant is foreseen in the future.</p>

<p>Partners (including contact address, e-mail, phone, fax)</p>	<p>Leading partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Danube Cultural Cluster/Collegium Hungaricum Vienna, Dr Márton Méhes, director, Email: marton.mehes@collegiumhungaricum.at - Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, Section for Cultural Policy, Christian Brunmayr, Email: christian.brunmayr@bmeia.gv.at - Romanian Cultural Institute (headquarters), Dr Mihály Zoltán Nagy, vice president, Email: icr@icr.ro - National Cultural Fund of Hungary (NKA) – Publishing Hungary Programme, Zsuzsanna Szabó, project leader, Email: Zsuzsanna.szabo@bbi.hu - European Danube Academy Ulm, Peter Langer, international coordinator, Email: p.langer@ulm.de <p>In Vienna:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Federation of Austrian Booksellers (Main organizer of BUCH WIEN), Dr Inge Kralupper, managing director, Email: kralupper@hvb.at - Representation of the European Commission in Austria, Johann Sollgruber, head of representation ad interim, Email: johann.sollgruber@ec.europa.eu - EUNIC Austria, Martin Krafl, president, Email: krafl@czech.cz <p>In Bucharest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bookfest – Bucharest International Book Fest <p>In Lviv:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Publisher’s Forum Lviv (Main organizer of the Book Forum Lviv), OleksandraKoval, managing director, Email: Oleksandra_koval@bookforum.com.ua <p>Main project partners:</p> <p>In Vienna:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ARGE – Working Platform of the Danube Regions - Traduki – Translation from and into the languages of South-East Europe - Independent Literature House Lower Austria, Krems - Slovak Institute in Vienna - Czech Centre in Vienna - Haus Wittgenstein – Bulgarian Cultural Institute in Vienna - Embassy of the Republic of Croatia - SKICA – Slovenian Culture Information Centre - Romanian Cultural Institute Vienna - several publishing houses <p>In Bucharest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balassi Institute – Hungarian Cultural Institute Bucharest - Austrian Cultural Forum Bucharest - Romanian Cultural Institute Vienna - Goethe Institute Bucharest
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In Lviv:

- ÖAD - Austrian Cooperation Office
- Hungarian Cultural Association Lviv
- Museum of Ideas
- Embassies of Austria and Hungary in Kiev
- LiterarneInformačné Centrum Bratislava
- literarnyclub.sk
- Austrian Cultural Forum Kiev
- The City of Vienna
- Institute for Central Europe and the Danube Region (IDM), Vienna
- Council of Danube Cities and Regions
- European Danube Academy (EDA), Ulm
- Czech Centre Kiev
- Romanian Cultural Institute Vienna
- Hungarian Cultural Institute Moscow
- Goethe-InstituteKiev

In Belgrade (foreseen):

- Balassi Institute – Hungarian Cultural Institute Belgrade
- Austrian Cultural Forum Belgrade
- cultural institutes of several Danube countries in Belgrade
- The City of Belgrade
- Ministry for Culture of the Republic of Serbia
- cultural and literature organizations in Belgrade

3.VUKOVAR FILM FESTIVAL – DANUBE REGION FILM FESTIVAL

Full Project title	Vukovar Film Festival – Danube Region Film Festival (VFF)
Project manager (including contact address, e-mail, phone, fax)	Igor Rakonic Discovery d.o.o., Veslacka 27, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia igor@discoverfilm.hr tel 00385 1 6192203; fax 00385 1 6192205
Relevance to target or Action of PA 3, cross-sectoral aspects	<p>Vukovar Film Festival - Danube Region Film Festival increases cross – border collaboration between Danube bordering countries as it is the only film festival presenting the films in competition exclusively from the Danube region countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia and Ukraine. (incl. countries close to Danube region: Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Slovenia).</p> <p>Festival serves as a meeting point for filmmakers from across the Danube region, where they have an opportunity to get to know each other and establish cooperation for future projects. Panel discussions and workshops are enabling a very useful exchange of professional experiences and ideas within different countries.</p> <p>A get-together lunches are organised at „Ada“, Danubian sand island overlooking the city, in a specific surroundings for all accredited guests offering them a taste of something different which they do not experience at other festivals. Not only do they get the opportunity to try typical food specialities of Vukovar such as “Čobanac” (meet stew) and “Fish Paprikash” (river fish stew) but also to bring them together and enjoy the buzz of a lively atmosphere at Ada.</p> <p>Furthermore, festival in collaboration with other cultural institutions of the Danube countries is organising exhibitions, presentations of international festivals and film retrospectives and thus gives an opportunity to the local population to meet the cultural heritage of other Danube countries.</p> <p>Vukovar Film Festival is relevant with regard to the implementation of the Danube Strategy as it will help cross – border cooperation among countries and facilitate better communication amongst nations, communities and cultures.</p>
Objective(s)/expected results	<p>Overall objective is to develop a suitable film culture in the region, especially amongst young people and to increase economic, cultural and educational contribution that Vukovar Film Festival brings to the region and tourism in Vukovar through its activities. VFF also offers an opportunity for community involvement and cohesion. As one of the region’s most important cultural events, we consistently strive to set the standard for excellence in film programming. Films are selected on the basis of quality and originality and the preference is given to premieres.</p> <p>What differentiates VFF from other festivals is the fact that it is held in a city that literally has no cinemas, which were destroyed during 1991 Croatian War for Independence. In this respect one of the biggest challenges for us (the organisers) is that each year we have to ‘build’ cinemas that will last during the festival and present quality films of national and international film directors</p>

	<p>and other talents to the audience. The first ever cinema location of VFF has initiated the creativity of the organisers who came up with a unique location - a converted river barge (normally used for cargo transport) that would serve as an open air cinema on the river Danube. To our knowledge there is no other festival, which operates in this manner and until this day the River Barge remains to be the trademark of VFF and the main screening location.</p> <p>What else makes the festival unique is that it is the only film festival presenting the films in competitions exclusively from the Danube region countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia and Ukraine. (Incl. countries close to Danube region: Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Slovenia).</p> <p>In 2014 (8th edition of the festival) we are expecting audience increase as we will extend duration of the festival from five to seven days, add more films and invite even more guests attached to the film from Danube region countries. In addition, we will expand VFF to nearby cities of Vinkovci and Županja. More activities are planned for young people such as Film Camp for Youth, roundtables and master classes held by film authors.</p> <p>In the near future we plan to expand the festival beyond Croatian borders and show part of the Vukovar Film Festival programme in other Danube region countries.</p>
<p>Project description (activities)</p>	<p>In 2014 the VFF program will expand to more than 100 films in 9 categories, five workshops, panel discussions and master classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main programme - Danube region films in competition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Long feature ○ Short feature ○ Documentary films • Side programme - European and World films out of competition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Europe open, up – long feature” from European countries with low audio-visual capacity ○ “Europe open, up – short feature” from European countries with low audio-visual capacity ○ “World” , films from European and World cinematography ○ “Planet Partner – The Earth” , films from European and World cinematography ○ “Matinees” - animation and feature films from European and World cinematography ○ “Country Partner – Retrospective of one of the Danube region countries film <p><u>Educational programme at VFF</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Danube Screenwriting Workshop introduced in 2009 gives upcoming screenwriters an opportunity to work intensively on the development of their short feature film scripts. In 2014 contest will involve participants from all European countries. ○ Festival Workshop “From idea to realisation” is open to all young people interested in film and television.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Film Copyright Workshop - “Legal aspects of film production” is an expert workshop introduced for the first time in 2012 at 6th VFF ○ Workshop of Animated film - STOP animation was introduced for the first time this year, whereby children (ages from 6-12) have had an opportunity to acquire basic skills from the area of STOP animation. ○ Educational workshop for creating visual identities is another novelty of the festival. The goal of this workshop is to explain everyone interested in the art of film how and in what way to visually create film characters. <p><u>Other activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction of another festival from Danube Region – this year we presented International Short Film Festival Oberhausen ○ Panel Discussions – includes guests attached to the films from Danube Region countries ○ Festival Camp at Ada serves as a meeting point for talents from Danube Region countries ○ The entertainment programme has been boosted throughout the years - we chose to orientate the whole experience towards the highest quality and the most popular urban music artists who are performing at VFF
<p>Instruments used, incl. innovative approaches, best-practice, etc.</p>	<p>Methods used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Film selection from the most eminent festivals (Berlin, Cannes, Sundance, Venetia, Toronto). Films are selected on the basis of quality and originality and the preference is given to premieres ○ Research of the film industry in Danube Region, the rest of the Europe and the world (following box office charts, film markets and so on) ○ Selection of the films through an international contest announced on festival’s web portal ○ Strong marketing and media promotion (web, press, TV, radio, billboards, etc) ○ Cooperation with Internet Protocol television (IPTV) providers who are showing festival films during the festival ○ Cooperation with Croatian national television (HRT) and Cable TV channel KinoTV who broadcasting festival chronicles each day of the festival and the best films from Vukovar Film Festival’s past editions ○ Screening the films using the latest digital projection equipment on several locations
<p>Impact for the Danube region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic (e.g. diversification of traditional economic 	<p>Economic impact:</p> <p>Revitalising local economies by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increasing visitor length of stay in the region/town; Audience expenditure is dominated by staying visitors, as they spend more, stay

<p>activities, job creation or retention potential, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social (e.g. use of local products and labour force, education and professional qualifications) - Environmental (e.g. protection of local natural environment, etc.) - Cultural (e.g. raising awareness of the rich cultural patrimony of the Danube region, creation of interest for contemporary approaches: shaping cultural identity, etc.) 	<p>for longer, etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bring thousands of artists and audiences, giving a valuable boost to the local economy ○ Improving destination awareness. VFF helps to capture attention and promote attractions and infrastructures ○ Providing routes to employment & skills. Volunteers and temporary staff who are engaged in VFF have developed on a personal level through the experience. Volunteers are expressing willingness to try new things. Temporary staff are more likely to be motivated by professional skills enhancement, and to develop employability skills during the course of their involvement with VFF <p>Social impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cultural diversity and community cohesion ○ Providing opportunities for people to meet people from, and share messages about, different cultures ○ More than 200 local people are directly involved in realisation of the festival <p>Environmental impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of the sustainable, tourism along the Danube region without negatively influencing the natural environment. One of the VFF programmes „Palnet Partner – The Earth“ is dedicated to raising awareness on environmental concerns, issues and natural resources <p>Cultural impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing enriching, world class cultural experiences ○ Audiences are able to engage more deeply with many art forms. Vukovar Film Festival gives them an opportunity to access work of the film makers that they are not otherwise able to see ○ Exploring the rich cultural heritage of the region
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<p>Indicative Timetable</p>	2013											2014												
	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	U	PROJECT STRATEGY											
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<p>How the sustainability of the project is ensured (follow-up, multiplier effects, self-sustaining structure, cooperation/coordination with other initiatives/projects etc.)?</p>	<p>For the past seven years the festival has achieved what was the original idea. It has given city of Vukovar and Eastern Slavonia the international dimension of the cultural life and encouraged development of tourism and economy in the city and the region.</p> <p>During the festival, all accommodation facilities are almost completely filled, confirming that the festival has great tourism importance. Given the growing interest abroad it has become a new export product of the culture. Synergy quality and extremely rich film program, a unique festival locations, and world-class entertainment have resulted in continued growth in attendance and for that reason 7th VFF counted over 30,000 visitors.</p> <p>For the past six years Vukovar Film Festival has been co-financed by Croatian Audio-visual Centre (HAVC) and more recently by Ministry of Tourism. The city of Vukovar is one of the co-founders and organisers of the festival. Each year there is a significant growth in all segments (program, location, education, entertainment), as well as increased audience attendance and media appearances.</p> <p>VFF is one of the priority projects of the Republic of Croatia for Danube region and from 2013 the Ministry of Culture declared VFF strategic project for the Croatian Danube region.</p>																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																				
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<p>Budget (budget estimate, approx. distribution of costs, etc.)</p> <p>& Funding (ensured, in application, still needed)</p>	<p>Estimated Budget: 300.000,00 EUR</p> <p>Funding:</p> <p>Public resources of the Republic of Croatia – 150.000,00 EUR</p> <p>Partner’s resources – 150.000,00 EUR</p>																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																				

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City of Zagreb

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City of Vukovar

Upravni odjel za društvene djelatnosti, zdravstvo, socijalnu skrb, branitelje i nacionalne manjine
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Annex 3 – TA Progress Report

In accordance with the activities set in the Grant Agreement no. 2011CE160AT090:

FINAL REPORT - Report period: from December 2011 to July 2015

Summary of the project

Grant was awarded to PA 3 coordinators of EUSDR to facilitate coordination of priority area. Two amendments were made to the Grant agreement –Amendment 1 in 2013 and Amendment 2 in 2014. Project duration was extended until 31.07.2015.

The grant supports PAC 3 coordinators to set up a stable, effective, inclusive and innovative implementation of priority area, which improve the cooperation between all participating countries and regions, in particular:

- Support PACs, through financing staff cost
- Support cooperation and exchange of experience with all relevant actors of PA, through the organization of Steering group meetings, stakeholder seminars and communication activities.

Duration of the project

December 2011 to July 2015

Activities planned and conducted

Two main activities were planned to be supported under the Grant agreement:

- Support PACs, through financing staff cost
- Support cooperation and exchange of experience with all relevant actors of PA, through the organization of Steering group meetings, stakeholder seminars and communication activities.

Financial support for these two activities was funded under the following budget lines:

1. Personnel costs
2. Other costs, including the following sub-headings:
 - 2.1 Travel
 - 2.2 Subsistence and accommodation
 - 2.3 Dissemination of brochures
 - 2.4 Translation and interpretation
 - 2.5 External experts
 - 2.6 Equipment (depreciation costs portable computers, printer, scanner, camera, recorder)
 - 2.7 Other service contract

Activities performed by years:

2012

BG PAC

- 16.01.2012 PAC meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria
- 08-09.03.2012 organisation of PA3 press conference and Participation of Bulgarian PAC in ITB Berlin 2012
- 11.04.2012 participation of Bulgarian PAC in a PAC meeting in Bucharest, Romania

- 15.05.2012 organisation of Steering group meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria
- 17-18.09.2012 participation of Bulgarian PAC in a PAC 3 meeting in Spain.
- 22 – 23.11.2012 participation of Bulgarian PAC in a Steering group meeting in Bucharest
- 06-07.12.2012 participation of Bulgarian PAC in a seminar “System for sub-national statistical analysis of and monitoring in the Danube Region”, Predel, Romania

RO PAC

- 22-23.11.2012 organisation of a Steering group meeting in Bucharest, Romania
- 5-7.12.2012 organisation of the workshop dedicated to PA3 target harmonized monitoring system in Predeal, Romania

2013

BG PAC

- 07.03.2013 organisation of Danube forum within ITB Berlin 2013
- 29 – 30.04.2013 organisation of Priority area coordinators meeting of the EUSDR in Sofia, Bulgaria
- 23.05.2013 organisation of a seminar in Sofia, Bulgaria on Developing Danube brand and a steering group meeting
- 27-30.10.2013 participation of Bulgarian PAC in the Second Annual forum of the Danube strategy and in the 6-th meeting of the Steering group

RO PAC

- 30.10.2013 organisation of a Steering Group in Bucharest, Romania

2014

BG PAC

- 11-12.03.2014 participation of Bulgarian PAC in 4-th national meeting of National coordinators and Priority area coordinators, Wien, Austria
- 05-06.05.2014 participation of Bulgarian PAC in the Second Danube Conference on Culture, Novi Sad, Serbia
- 26-27.06.2014 participation of Bulgarian PAC in Third Annual forum of the Danube strategy and steering group meeting, Wien, Austria
- 24-26.11.2014 participation of Bulgarian PAC in Steering group meeting in Bucharest, Romania

RO PAC

-
- 12-13.06.2015 travel of RO PAC to Belgrad and Wien to meet members of the Steering group
- 24-27.06.2015 travel of 3 members of Romanian coordination team to participate at the Steering group meeting and EUSDR annual forum
- 25.06.2015 organization of the Steering group meeting
- July 2014 – finalization of the PA3 webplatform – www.danubecultureandtourism.eu
- 26-28.09.2014 organisation of the *Danube Limes Strategy Conference* in Bucharest, Romania. The conference has been organized by the Romanian National Institute of Heritage and Ministry for Regional Development and Public Administration as a contribution to the PA3 Target 3 Develop new and support existing Cultural Routes relevant in the Danube Region
- 24.09.2014 Participation of RO PAC at the PAC coordination meeting in Ruse, Bulgaria

- 16-19.10.2015 Organisation of the *Conference on medieval fortresses in the countries of Danube Region* in Targu Mures, Romania. The conference has been organized by the Ministry for Regional Development and Public Administration and Ministry of Culture and it was focused on the valorization of medieval fortresses and castles from the perspective of local, regional, national and macro-regional development and tourism
- 24.11.2014 Organisation of the PAC coordination meeting in Bucharest, Romania
- 25.11.2014 Organisation of the Steering group meeting in Bucharest, Romania
- 04-05.12.2014 Travel of RO PAC to Timisoara to participate at the conference
- 04-07.12.2014 Organisation of the *Conference on Cultural Identities in the Danube Region* in Timisoara, Romania. The event was organized by the Romanian Department for Interethnic Relations and the Romanian Ministry for Regional Development and Public Administration as a contribution at the PA3 Target 5. To create a 'Blue Book' on Danube cultural identity

2015

BG PAC

- 25-27.02.2015 participation of Bulgarian PAC in a joint meeting of Bulgaria – Baden-Wurttemberg committee
- 13.02.2015 participation of Bulgarian PAC in a meeting of the coordinators of Priority areas, Stuttgart, Germany
- 05.03.2015 participation of Bulgarian PAC in a steering group meeting in Berlin, Germany, during ITB Berlin 2015
- 20.03.2015 participation of Bulgarian PAC in a meeting of Priority area coordinators of EUSDR in Wien, Austria
- 8-9.06.2015 organization of the Informal tourism ministers meeting from Danube and Adriatic-Ionian Region organized in Sofia, Bulgaria,
- 15-17.06.2015 organization of the Danube floating conference (route Ruse (BG) – Giurgiulești (MD) – Giurghiu (RO). During the conference PA3 stakeholders discussed the main issues concerning PA3 – project funding, common projects, and cooperation with UNTWO. During the floating conference was also organized a meeting of the Steering group.
- Four experts were hired for one month in July 2015 to perform financial and technical control of the project.

RO PAC

- 23.01.2015 participation of two members of the RO PAC coordination meeting at the PAC coordination meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria
- 27.01.2015 participation of RO PAC at the Danube Urban platform meeting in Wien, Austria
- 12-14.02.2015 participation at the meeting of EUSDR PAC in Stuttgart, Germany
- 04-06.03.2015 participation of the RO PAC at the ITB (moderator of the workshop dedicated to common brand for the Danube region) and the Steering group meeting
- 8-9.06.2015 participation of the RO PAC at the *Informal tourism ministers meeting from Danube and Adriatic-Ionian Region* organized in Sofia, Bulgaria, with the participation of ministers and director generals responsible with tourism from several Danubian countries, representatives of UNTWO, EU Commission and other relevant stakeholders from public, private sector, academic and NGO.

- 15-17.06.2015 organisation of the Conference on Sustainable management of touristic destinations within the Danube region – focus on natural protected areas along the Danube and UNESCO sites, within the 2015 Danube Floating Conference. The conference has been organized by the Ministry of Tourism from Bulgaria, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration of Romania and GIZ (Germany).
- Realization of audit for the activities and expenses made by both beneficiaries for the period 2011-2015.

Timetable as agreed in the Grant Agreement		Key activities conducted
Month	Activity according to the project	
2012-2015	Support PA3 PAC, through financing staff cost	Two people were hired – one expert on tourism and one accountant who supported BG PAC and project management, from the grant a total of 11.381,81 euro has been covered in the period 2012-2015. Staff cost in value of 1.159,03 has been incurred for four people for one month (July 2015). For the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration salaries for 3 people from the coordination team has been supported (3.600 euro) from the grant in 2015 for 3 months with more activities related to the PA3
2012-2015	Support cooperation and exchange of experience with all relevant actors of PA, through the organization of Steering group meetings, stakeholder seminars and communication activities	Project funding was used for organization PAC meetings, Steering group meetings other thematic meetings on PA 3 objectives. Expenditure for travel, accommodation and subsistence of BG PAC, RO PAC and the members of the PA3 Secretariat was also provided under the project.

How was the action carried out so far?

The main action of the project – to facilitate starting phase of the coordination of PA3, was carried out by supporting PA3 PAC through financing staff cost and by providing support for cooperation and exchange of experience between all PA 3 relevant actors.

Two experts were hired – one on tourism and one accountant. They supported Bulgarian PAC on performing their functions and also the sound project management.

In order to support cooperation and exchange of experience among PA3 stakeholders, Bulgarian PAC organized several thematic seminars, SG and PAC meetings. Priority area 3 participated also with communication activities in ITB Berlin 2012 and 2013.

How is the project going to meet the objectives of the budget heading?

- Personnel cost – under this budget heading PAC staff was supported, allowing establishing stable coordination system for the PA.
- Under budget heading **2. Other** and **3. Service contract** were supported cooperation and exchange of experience activities. Thus ensuring better cooperation between coordinators, SG members and other stakeholders.

Please describe the transnational dimension of the projects?

Project implementation supported cooperation and exchange of experience between stakeholders from different regions and countries along the Danube. Priority area counts on support from organizations such as UNTWO, DCC, CoDCR, GIZ. In the activities stakeholders from all the Danube region have been involved.

What contribution was made by the partners?

With the support of the technical assistance grant the PA3 PAC ensured a functional governance mechanism and the coordination of main activities realized as contribution at the achievement of the EUSDR. Therefore in this period it was organized Steering group meetings, PAC meetings and seminars/events on topics, relevant to the priority area, thus, supporting the cooperation between participating of relevant stakeholders from countries and regions.

Both PAC mobilized additional resources, human and financial, for the realization of activities foreseen in the project.

Auto-evaluation so far

-Successes

Financial support under the TA project supported PACs to set up a **stable governance system for the Priority area**. Cooperation and exchange of expertise among participating countries and other stakeholders was achieved. Better communication of PA3 activities was achieved through participating in different national and international events.

Important stakeholders are actively participating at the PA3 activities, beside representatives from national governments also other relevant institutions as United Nations Tourism World Organization, Council of Danube Cities and Regions, Danube Competence Center, GIZ.

In the last years there was a **significant increase of the number of projects** that contributed at the EUSDR objectives in tourism and culture.

Activities realized within EUSDR allow the **RO PAC to make concrete proposal at national level on how to embed EUSDR in the Operational Programmes to be financed by ESIF in the period 2014-2020**. Those proposals were related to the provisions of the Partnership Agreement an evaluation criteria to assess the relevance of the project proposal in relation with EUSDR.

Romanian PAC finalised a WEBGIS on-line platform (<http://suerd.mdrap.ro/web/>) to monitor the implementation of the relevant EUSDR project proposals. The platform has been realised within a national EU funded project.

The platform is based on:

- A Geographical Information System
- 2 components: to introduce and stock data and to make interrogations to produce reports, including tables and maps
- Relational data base realized with diversified relevant information in the EUSDR implementation: institutions, events, projects, persons

Created specially to monitor the Romanian EUSDR relevant projects it can be extend at the level of Danube region and in this respect is necessary to ensure a correlation with other relevant EUSDR platforms developed in the Danube region, ex: Urban Platform, EuroAccess (an online searching-tool gathering and providing information on funding in the Danube Region to be developed by PA10 PAC).

- Weaknesses

Although a sufficient amount of funding was provided under the project and even if the major part of the activities has been realized, **not all the available funds have been used by PAC**. The changes within the institutions ensuring the coordination and some difficulties with the procurement procedures were between the main reasons for not using all the available funds. The realization of audit took 6 months (procurement procedure and realization of audit-first phase) and it was not sufficient time to make an intermediary request for payment, and some activities not realized (supporting an event on culture in June 2015).

For some SG members was difficult to participate in PA events, including Steering group meetings. Effective financial support must be ensured for those specific cases.

Major stakeholders in tourism and culture are from private sector and civil society and in this respect more **efficient modalities are to be used in order to benefit from their involvement in the EUSDR implementation process**.

One of the main strong points of the EUSDR is the cooperation and coordination between sectors and stakeholders. Some common activities have been started with other PA (PA10-administrative capacity in small touristic resorts, PA9-skills for green tourism) but **more progress is to be made in common initiatives with other EUSDR PA**.

Concrete outputs so far

A **functional coordination mechanism** has been ensured for the PA3. 10 Steering group meetings has been organised in the period 2012-2015, prepared in advance by the RO and BG PAC. Regular meetings of both PAC have been organised.

Coordination team from both PAC has been actively participated at the annual forums and other EUSDR relevant events. In all the EUSDR annual forums PA3 organised workshops on subjects related to tourism and culture.

The RO and BG PAC participated at the meetings with other PAC, National Coordinators and EU Commission.

Promotional activities in relation with PA3 have been realised: events, web platform and brochure.

PAC organized beside the coordination meetings, technical workshops, external conferences also **high level meetings that contribute at the coordination of the EUSDR implementation process**.

Within the context of the Danube Floating Conference on 24-26 of June 2011 it was organized a *Meeting of tourism ministers from the Danube region* that adopted a declaration with political guidelines as regards the cooperation in the field of tourism in the context of implementing EUSDR.

Within the second annual EUSDR forum organized in Bucharest, Romania an *Informal meeting of ministers responsible with regional development from the Danube region* has been organized on 29 October 2013. The meeting has been hosted by the Mr. Liviu DRAGNEA, Romanian Deputy Prime minister, Minister for Regional Development and Public Administration and benefit from the participation of EU Commission for Regional Policy Mr. Johannes Hahn and ministers other Danubian countries. The conclusions of the regional development ministers adopted at the meeting contain important elements regarding the coordination of relevant strategies and programmes in correlation with EU funds dedicated for the financial period 2014-2020.

An *Informal tourism ministers meeting from Danube and Adriatic-Ionian Region*, has been organised on 8-9 of June 2015 in Sofia, with the participation of ministers and director generals responsible with tourism from several Danubian countries, representatives of UNTWO, EU Commission and other relevant stakeholders from public, private sector, academic and NGO. Proposals on common transnational touristic products to be promoted has been made.

With the occasion of the meeting it was signed a Letter of commitment between the World Tourism Organization and coordinators of priority area 3 of European Union Strategy for the Danube region regarding the establishment of a Network of Observatories for Sustainable Tourism in the Danube Region. The letter has been signed on behalf of PAC - PA3 by Mrs. Nikolina Angelkova, Minister of Tourism of Bulgaria and on behalf of UNTWO by Mr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary General.

Progress has been achieved in all the 7 targets approved for PA3 but important achievements has been registered only for a part of them.

- *Target 1. Develop a Danube Brand for the entire Danube Region based on already existing work*

A common methodology has been elaborated and approved. First phase has been finalized (stakeholders inventory) and in 2016 it is planned to finalize also the analysis phase. In parallel other contributions for a common Danube brand have been made. According to the provisions of *EUSDR Action plan* and recommendations of the Steering Group members the development of an integrated Danube brand had integrated branding elements already developed. In September 2014 the project Danube Limes Brand was finalized (<http://danubelimesbrand.org>). Within the project “Common Strategy for Sustainable Territorial Development of the cross-border area Romania-Bulgaria” (<http://www.spatial.mdrap.ro/>), a regional brand has been developed for the Romania-Bulgaria cross border area: “The Eastern Danube Region. A gateway odyssey, an odyssey” with a common marketing strategy for the transnational area.

Several strategies are including references to the Danube region specific touristic products (Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia).

- *Target 2. Support the implementation of a harmonized monitoring system, dedicated to tourism, able to provide complete and comparable statistical data in all the 14 states part of the EUSDR*

As agreed during the Steering group meetings cooperation with UNTWO has been decided to start on the creation of a Network Sustainable Tourism in the Danube Region. In this respect on 8 of June 2015 it was signed the Letter of commitment between the World Tourism Organization and coordinators of priority area 3 of European Union Strategy for the Danube region regarding the establishment of a Network of Observatories for Sustainable Tourism in the Danube Region.

It is foreseen that the network will cover, on a first phase 4 touristic destinations: Danube Delta (RO), Ruse-Giurgiu cross-border area (BG-RO), Vidin-Belogradchik-Orsova-Drobeta Turnu Severin-Djerdap-Iron Gates-Kladovo (BG-SR-RO) and Sremski Karlovci-Ilok (SR-CR).

PA3 will identify other destinations in the Danube Region where new observatories could be opened, with the purpose of monitoring tourism development in such destinations and of establishing a macro-regional network of observatories.

The cooperation will focus also on:

- the promotion of sustainable tourism practices at cultural and natural heritage sites as well as within specific tourism segments,
- the introduction of “green” innovations within the whole tourism supply chain,
- the impacts of climate change on tourism destinations and the related adaptation and mitigation measures.

The activities of future network will envisage a correlation with activities to be realized with European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS).

In order to support the creation of this network and other activities to realized for an harmonized monitoring system in the Danube region a project proposal will be drafted and submitted for financing at the Danube Transnational Programme.

- *Target 3. Develop new and support existing Cultural Routes relevant in the Danube Region*

New cultural route has been established in the Danube region, as a result of implementation of project financed by territorial cooperation programmes and political support from the relevant national authorities from the Danube region.

The *Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route* has been certified in 2014 by the Council of Europe (www.danubecc.org/index.php?pg=roman-emperors-route).

Other cultural routes are being proposed (Danube Limes, cultural route of medieval fortresses in the Danube region).

- *Target 4. Develop green tourist products along the Danube Region*

Even if at European level (MEST-Master degree on Management of Sustainable and Ecological Tourism (<http://www.sustainablecotourism.eu/>) or national level (Romania: national strategy for

ecotourism, a certification system for the ecotourism (<http://www.eco-romania.ro/>) there are some relevant projects or initiatives implemented, at the level of Danube region there is no common action under implementation.

There is a wide political agreement as regards the importance of developing the green tourist products but progress must be made on technical options and common initiatives to undertake in this direction.

One way to progress on this target is a increased cooperation with other relevant EUSDR priority areas. In this respect there is under implementation a pilot project *Developing skills for green tourism*, coordinated by PA9 with the support of PA3.

In order to support the initiatives that could contribute at this target for the last call for projects on START and TAF facilities PA3 proposed a thematic concentration on two subjects, including *Develop specific green tourist products for the Danube Region*.

As a result in 2015-2016 the project Cross-border ecotourism in the Danube Region will be financed and his implementation will contribute at this specific PA3 target.

- *Target 5. To create a 'Blue Book' on Danube cultural identity*

Under the coordination of the Romanian Department for Interethnic Relations it was initiated the creation of a Danube Platform for Intercultural Dialogue that could better integrate and valorize the cultural heritage of different national minorities living in the Danube region. Several events were organized, promotional materials (movies, brochures) were realized and a project proposal has been elaborated in the framework of this initiative.

A pilot project in the field of landscapes was also finalized, resulting in creating an Atlas of the landscapes in the Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area that illustrates how landscapes are bringing together the natural and cultural heritage(<http://www.spatial.mdrap.ro/projectresults>).

- *Target 6. Ensure the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage and natural values by developing relevant clusters, and networks of museums, interpretation and visitors centres within the Danube Region*

Important initiatives and project has been implemented in the field of culture in the Danube regions after EUSDR approval.

Third editions of the Danube Cultural Conference (Ulm, Novisad and Timisoara) has been organized by important stakeholders in culture and provided the needed platform for exchange of experience and cooperation.

- *Target 7. Promoting exchange and networking in the field of contemporary arts in the Danube Region*

The Danube Culture Platform has been initiated with the participation of national institutions and stakeholders from Germany, Austria, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.

A project proposal *Danube Culture Platform - Creative spaces of the 21st century* is being prepared by a group of PA3 SG members with the aim to be submitted to the Danube Transnational Program

In this period relevant projects that contribute at the achievement of EUSDR projects has been supported.

Letter of recommendations has been granted for the project ideas submitted to PAC, after completion of the formal procedure foreseen in the PA3 Steering group Rules of procedures.

Several relevant PA3 projects funded by European Territorial Cooperation programmes has been finalized and a big number of projects are being prepared by different stakeholders in order to be submitted to the future EU programmes.

The number of projects proposal in the field of tourism and culture had increased in the last years. A clear outcome of this dynamic has been the high number of project proposal submitted in 2014 within PA3 for 1 START facility call for projects (207 projects – 2 selected for financing), 2 START facility call for projects (40 projects – 2 selected for financing) and 2 TAF facility call for projects (5 projects – 4 selected for financing).

In 2015 at the START and TAF call for projects there were submitted for PA3 40 projects for START facility and 5 projects for TAF facility. Finally 2 PA3 project will be financed by START and 4 PA3 projects will be financed by TAF.

How was the action publicised and how have the results been disseminated so far?

As foreseen in the project description a **PA3 web platform has been realised** to better promote EUSDR and facilitate efficient communication between the Steering Group members and other relevant stakeholders.

The web platform (www.danubecultureandtourism.eu) is updated by the PA3 Secretariat on a regular basis so that news and information on relevant events is brought to the EUSDR members' attention, using public sources and announcements submitted by SG members/partners.

It aims to support achieving the PA3's objectives and targets by offering to the Steering Group members and partners direct access to PA3 related information, while offering to interested actors general information and an overall image of the activities carried out at PA3 level.

Information that will be available include: photo gallery revealing the beauty and uniqueness of the Danube River, relevant information regarding the heritage of areas along the Danube, including attraction points and visiting tips, general presentation of the PA3, relevant PA3 documents of public interest, etc.

The platform has a "Public Area", with free access, and a "Members' Area" which requires registration (username and password provided in that purpose). Members Area includes videoconference module and a working documents page for SG use with uploading option.

Progress are still to be made regarding the information and data to be presented on the web platform and the use by a wide range of stakeholders of all the functionalities within the "Members' Area".

A **PA3 brochure** has been realised in order to inform relevant stakeholders and wide public about PA3 activities.

In all the events financed under this contract the general rules regarding visual identity has been respected.

Within this period numerous events has been organised. Two types of events were organised: **internal coordination and technical meetings** (SG meetings, workshops) and **external meetings**.

Through the external meetings a wide promotion of the project activities has been insured in the support of EUSDR implementation process. With those external events several objectives has been achieved: ensure a contribution to a specific PA3 target (networking and project initiatives), give a platform for a wide discussions and concrete proposal regarding correlation between culture, tourism and other relevant domains and ensure a high level technical and political endorsement for the PA3 objectives and activities. Two examples of events are presented in order to underline the contribution to one of the above objectives:

- The *International conference on Cultural Identities in the Danube Region* took place December 4 - 7, 2014 in Timisoara, Romania. The event was organized by the Romanian Department for Interethnic Relations and the Romanian Ministry for Regional Development and Public Administration as a contribution for the PA3 Target 5. To create a 'Blue Book' on Danube cultural identity. A Danube Platform for Intercultural Dialogue has been proposed to be created in order to better valorise the cultural heritage of minorities living in the Danube region.
- A Conference on Sustainable management of touristic destinations within the Danube region – focus on natural protected areas along the Danube and UNESCO sites, within the 2015 Danube Floating Conference, has been organised on 17 of June 2015, with the participation of 100 relevant stakeholders from all the Danubian region.

What lessons have been learnt from this experience so far?

Implementation of the technical assistance project had a positive effect in the starting phase of the coordination of EUSDR PA 3. It boosted the cooperation among EUSDR states and other relevant stakeholders.

Though, there are still some challenges. One of the main problem is to provide stable financial support for PA 3 coordination. Also permanent staff dedicated for the coordination and implementation activities are needed in the institutions that are responsible with the coordination of the priority area. Financial resources for travel and participation in PA3 activities are scarce in some countries and is one of the reason for a lower rate of participation at the Steering group meetings. During this period the focus has been more on tourism related activities and in the future a balanced approach must be ensured both for tourism and culture activities. A national support group with relevant stakeholders could be created as a mean to better involve in the EUSDR implementation all the relevant actors.

Are there any plans to improve the implementation and if so, how?

After 4 years of implementing EUSDR there are several improvements that are to be made to the governance mechanism, in line with the changes made at EU level, as for example the creation of Danube Strategy Point.

In this respect both PAC agreed on modalities to improve the coordination procedures. In fact a meeting between Romanian Minister for Regional Development and Public Administration, Mrs. Sevil SHHAIDEH, and Bulgarian Minister for Tourism, Mrs. Nikolina ANGELKOVA, has been organised in Bucharest on 21 of September 2015. A decision has been take to organise a PA3 Joint Technical Secretariat, as agreed previously with the SG members. The PA3 JTS will be put in place in 2016 and should significantly increase the efficiency of PAC activities.

In September 2015 both Priority area 3 coordinators applied to Danube strategy point for technical assistance for supporting coordination of priority area. The new project will cover the period from October 2015 until 31 of December 2016. It will provide the necessary continuation in supporting of PA 3 coordinators in their functions. In 2017 technical assistance for PA coordinators is envisaged to be provided under the Danube 2014-2020 INTERREG programme.