

## 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)

Virtual event

*“Harmonious and sustainable development of the Danube Region”*

**22 October 2020**

**Zagreb**

The 9<sup>th</sup> EUSDR Annual Forum, jointly organised by the Republic of Croatia, the European Commission and the Danube Transnational Programme with the support of the Danube Strategy Point, will take place on 22 October 2020.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the 9<sup>th</sup> EUSDR Annual Forum will be held as a virtual event.

Before its official opening, the 7<sup>th</sup> *Danube Participation Day – Youth Participation in the Danube Region* event will be organized on 21 October 2020 as a side event.

We are at a crucial moment of the EU’s history. Never has cooperation been so crucial, because never before have challenges been so global. The experiences gained during the previous period will be helpful in moving forward even more united.

At this moment, the main issue which the participating states of the Danube strategy are faced are the following: minimization of the impact of COVID-19 on healthcare systems and citizens health along with the simultaneous restoration of economic and social activities.

There will also be a great and unique opportunity for promotion of deeper and wider cooperation between EUSDR-EU member states and candidate/potential candidate countries participating in the EUSDR with special focus on the fields of how to make concrete actions from the EUSDR Action plan into the practice.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Danube Participation Day – Youth Participation in the Danube Region

Within Danube Participation Day 2020 the first draft of the Guidance Paper for Youth Participation in the Danube Region will be presented. Through this document, participants will have the opportunity to exchange possible ways forward in order to boost cooperation and participation of young people in youth initiatives. In doing so, Danube Participation Day wants to provide a platform to raise awareness of valuable contributions from existing youth initiatives in the region in order to take initial steps forward to acknowledge and involve youth in the Danube Region.

### Programme

(Wednesday, 21 October 2020: side event)

#### 10:00 *Opening Session*

##### 10:00 – 10:50 *Welcome addresses – 7<sup>th</sup> Danube Participation Day*

- EUSDR Presidency Croatia
- European Commission (tbc)
- European Parliament (tbc)
- EUSDR Priority Area 9 & 10
- Danube Youth Network

##### *Quiz on Youth in the Danube Region*

#### 10:50 *Interacting with youth in the Danube Region*

##### 10:50 – 11:50 *Introducing the Guidance paper on Youth Participation* Claudia Singer | EUSDR Priority Area 10

*Introducing the Danube Youth Network*  
Danube Youth Network

*30 years Interreg & Youth Participation*  
Alessandra Cardaci, DG Regio

##### *Online Poll on Youth Participation in the Danube Region*

#### 12:00 *Working Group Session*

##### 12:00 - 13:30 *Parallel Working Groups (topics can be subject to further change)*

- Communication & the EUSDR | Danube Youth Network
- Boosting youth in the EUSDR Governance
- Youth and cross-border cooperation | AEBR Balkans
- Youth and Education | EUSDR Priority Area 9
- Environment – Youth – Sustainability | Danube Civil Society Forum/WWF

**13:30** *Wrap up & Closing Session*

**13:30 – 14:00** *Poll on Youth Participation in the Danube Region*

*Wrap-up Working Groups*

*Panel – Political Statement on Youth Participation*

*Handing over the bell*

## 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) - Virtual event -

Thursday, 22 October 2020

### 10:00 *Official opening of the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum*

*Official opening by the Moderator*

### 10:00 – 10:40 *Opening session of the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum with speeches / greetings*

- Nataša Tramišak, Minister for Regional Development and EU Funds
- Elisa Ferreira, Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms
- Andrej Plenković, Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia

### 10:40 – 11:00 *Keynote speaker*

- Mate Rimac, Rimac automobili, Croatia

### Ministerial Meeting (*invitation only*)

11:00 – 13:00 *Ministerial Meeting*  
virtual event

13:05 *Family photo*

13:10 *Virtual Press Conference*

### Virtual Thematic panels

#### 11:00 - 11:30 **Plenary session**

##### *Harmonious and sustainable development of the Danube Region – Joint introduction for panels*

In this dynamic period for Europe, all available knowledge and experts should contribute to the development of European regions as proven catalysts for growth and added value of European cooperation. Regional development is placed at the centre of Croatia's presidency of the Danube Strategy, as a precondition for economic growth, sustainable social development and strengthening of territorial cohesion. This is also an opportunity to strengthen the role of macro-regional strategies in the cohesion policy of the European Union.

The priorities and financial instruments of the regional policy, as the primary investment policy of the EU, are used to support prosperity, security and improved quality of life for all EU citizens, as well as political and economic stability in Europe as a whole. In line with regional policy objectives, European regions and cities are supported in the creation of new jobs, business competitiveness, sustainable development and improved quality of life for citizens

##### **Contributors:**

- **Giacomo Luciani, DG for Regional and Urban Policy**
- **Miroslav Vesković, Joint Research Centre**
- **Naida Mekić, Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Croatia**

**11:30 – 12:30** *Parallel Thematic Sessions (break-up sessions/panels)*

Thematic Session 1 *The ecologic perspective of sustainable regional development*

The EU will be climate neutral in 2050. The European Green Deal is about improving the well-being of people. Making Europe climate-neutral and protecting our natural habitat will be good for the people, the planet and the economy. Protected and well-preserved nature will ensure the stability of fundamental values and development potentials for the Danube region. This panel will focus and bring forward the ecological aspects of regional development.

**Moderators: Ana Kobašić and Florian Ballnus, Coordinators of EUSDR Priority Area 6**

**Panellists:**

- **Anne Teller, Senior Expert, DG for Environment**
- **Aljoša Duplić, Acting Director, Institute for Environment and Nature, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development**
- **Irene Lucius, Regional Conservation Director, Worldwide Fund for Nature Central and Eastern Europe**
- **Peter Gammeltoft, Chair of the Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF) and member of the OECD Water Governance Initiative**

Thematic Session 2 *The economic perspective of sustainable regional development*

Helping companies become world leaders in clean products and technologies will ensure economic development and inclusive transition. Digitalisation and circular economy are key enablers for reaching the objectives of the Green Deal. More systematic cooperation should be encouraged in order to contribute to all the functionalities required for human life and the economic development. This panel will underline the economic aspects of regional development.

**Moderators: Nirvana Kapitan Butković and Judit Schrick-Szenczi, Coordinators of EUSDR Priority Area 8**

**Panellists:**

- **Sanja Popović Pantić, Institute Mihajlo Pupin, Serbia**
- **Johannes Lutter, Head of Future Cities Department, Urban Innovation Vienna, Austria**
- **Gerd Meier zu Köcker, Cluster Agenture Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany**
- **Sandi Orlić, Institute Ruder Bošković, Croatia**

Thematic Session 3 *The social perspective of sustainable regional development*

The panel will focus on how to improve social and education policies as well as civil protection within a sustainable regional development in the Danube Region. It will emphasize the important role of Social and Labour Market Policies, Education, Vocational Education and Training for Social Fairness, Sustainable Development and Resilience,

touch upon Learning and Competences to support the Green and Digital Transition as well as show innovative and interdisciplinary aspects of Knowledge Sharing about Flood Resilience in the Danube Region.

**Moderator: Roland Hanak, Coordinator of EUSDR Priority Area 9**

**Panellists:**

- **Filip Miličević, Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Croatia**
- **Ulrike Damyanovic, European Training Foundation, Italy**
- **Stephan Waba, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria**
- **Ivana Cesarec, Ministry of Interior, Croatia**

**12:30 - 13:00** *Plenary session*

*Harmonious and sustainable development of the Danube Region – Joint conclusions of panels*

After attending the Parallel Thematic sessions, according to the interest shown during registration, all participants are to return to the Plenary session. One rapporteur from each Parallel Thematic session will introduce the main conclusions and topics of the discussions.

**Rapporteurs:**

- **Ana Kobašić and Florian Ballnus, Coordinators of EUSDR Priority Area 6**
- **Miroslav Vesković, Joint Research Centre**
- **Roland Hanak, Coordinator of EUSDR Priority Area 9**

**13:00 – 14:00** *Break*

Make a virtual walk through the exhibition “30 years of Interreg”

**14:00 – 16:00** *Parallel Thematic Sessions (break-up sessions/panels)  
Instruments for financing the development of the Danube Region*

Session I *Danube Transnational Programme, present and future: new priorities for 2021-2027*

The Danube Region is a region of challenges and opportunities: the Danube Transnational Programme offers stakeholders the possibility to address both by funding strategic projects. The new programming period is providing the opportunity for the countries to take part in the Danube Transnational Programme by assessing how to further support this perspective region. The newly selected priorities and specific objectives will be presented, along with the plan to address the core needs of the area.

Session II *Meeting of EUSDR National Coordinators with Managing Authorities from the Danube Region  
(invitation only)*

The aim of the meeting is to initiate the network of national and regional managing authorities responsible for ESI and IPA/NDICI funds. The already established EUSDR ESF Network could be immediately utilised in this respect. Such network should become

a permanent tool for coordinating and monitoring of the implementation of macro-regional actions and projects included in the operational and national programmes.

**Moderator: Ize Ciganska, INTERACT**

**Panellists:**

- **Colin Wolfe, DG for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations**
- **Andreja Jerina, EUSDR National Coordinator, Slovenia**
- **Filip Miličević, ESF MA network, Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Croatia**

**16:00 – 16:30** *Closing session & Concluding remarks*

- **Vittoria Alliata - di Villafranca, DG for Regional and Urban Policy**
- **EUSDR Croatian Presidency**
- **Upcoming EUSDR Slovak Presidency**