

# 12<sup>th</sup>

# Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region

24–25  
October  
2023

Brdo pri Kranju,  
Slovenia

## EUSDR Entering the Decade of the Future



Slovenian Presidency  
of the EU Strategy  
for the Danube Region



Interreg Programme  
Danube Region



Co-funded by  
the European Union



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN  
AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

## AGENDA

### 24 October 2023

10:00–11:30

*Splendens hall*

#### Beyond Boundaries: Rethinking the Danube's Potential with Emerging Voices

The panel organised by the Danube Youth Council will provide an opportunity to exchange views on how the future of the Danube Region and its "power of youth" is seen by different stakeholders and generations.

9:30–12:00

*Brdo Castle*

#### Meeting of Ministers responsible for the EUSDR (invitation only)

11:15–13:00

*The Lobby*

#### Lunch

13:00–13:30

*Grandis hall*

#### Official Opening of the 12<sup>th</sup> EUSDR Annual Forum

13:30–15:00

*Grandis hall*

#### High-level plenary panel: The EU Enlargement Process & EUSDR

Discussion on the role of MRS cooperation in the framework of the new impetus of the EU enlargement process.

15:00–15:15

*Grandis hall*

#### Handover Ceremony of EUSDR Presidency to Austria

15:15–15:30

*The Lobby*

#### Break

15:15–15:45

*Glass hall*

#### Press Conference

15:30–16:30

*Grandis hall*

### **Danube Region Programme – A new beginning for cooperation and EU integration**

Discussion on the future of cooperation and development in the Danube Region and the role that the new Danube Region Programme can play in supporting these efforts, focusing on Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, but not forgetting the Balkan countries.

16:30–17:45

*Grandis hall*

### **Bottom-up recovery and transformation of Ukraine – Supporting Ukraine and Moldova on their way to the EU**

The panel will be an opportunity to explore the role of local and regional stakeholders and non-state actors (civil society and NGOs) in the recovery of Ukraine and its path towards the EU. The focus of the panel will be on how the EUSDR can build an environment where all these actors could help generate the biggest yields in terms of their contribution to the accession process.

17:45–18:15

*The Lobby*

**Break**

18:15–18:50

*Grandis hall*

**Concert by the Slovenian and Ukrainian Youth Orchestra**

19:00

*Splendens hall*

**Dinner**

## **25 October 2023**

09:30–11:00

*Grandis hall*

### **Knowledge-driven society: a regional search for the competences and skills of future professions**

The panel will provide an opportunity to explore the key issues and offer possible recommendations for policymakers, focusing on the knowledge, skills and competences needed in the professions of the future.

09:30–11:00

*Splendens hall*

### **Mobility & Multimodality: The Impact of Large Projects for Improved Connectivity**

Transport infrastructure is a key ingredient in the economic development, supporting personal well-being and economic growth. In addition, goals such as efficient, safe, resilient and sustainable multimodal network should not be neglected when the transport network is planned and expanded.

The main aim of the panel is to look at some of many great projects in the Danube region that contribute or will contribute to improved mobility, connectivity, accessibility and cohesion and explore their implications related to environmental, economic and social issues.

09:30–11:00

*Heros hall*

### **Danube Region Programme 2nd call for proposals**

The panel will focus on presenting the 2nd call's main features as well as how it differs from the 1st call for proposals. Additionally, the presenters will provide examples of best practices in terms of transnational approach.

11:00–11:30

*The Lobby*

**Break**

**11:30–13:00**  
*Grandis hall*

### **Enhancing the hydrogen economy in the Danube Region**

Hydrogen provides excellent opportunities for the EUSDR countries to move their energy systems further along the decarbonisation pathways. The discussion will focus on the key challenges for the development of the hydrogen economy in the Danube Region and provide some examples of good practice.

**13:00–14:30**  
*Glass hall*

### **Lunch**

**14:30–16:00**  
*Grandis hall*

### **Embedding in EU accession countries – Mainstreaming IPAIII/NDICI in the Danube Region**

The panel will explore the IPAIII/NDICI programming framework and how MRS/EUSDR is displayed therein. Based on an open discussion the recommendations for further improvements shall be made to stakeholders at the EU, macroregional and national level, as well as regional initiatives in the Danube Region.

**16:00–16:30**  
*Grandis hall*

### **Closing of the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum 2023**

## **SIDE EVENTS**

**20 October 2023**

**19:00–20:00**

*Hotel Lipa, Šempeter pri Gorici*

### **2nd Danube Youth Camp**

During a reflection workshop on Saturday, 21 October 2023, the 28 NYC members will look back on their NYC mandate, jointly reflect on experiences, challenges and lessons learnt, discuss the future developments of the NYC and formulate recommendations for its future work, moving from the one-year Pilot Action to a long-term implementation format.

**21 October 2023**

**09:30–16:00**

*Hotel Lipa, Šempeter pri Gorici*

### **2nd Danube Youth Camp**

During a reflection workshop on Saturday, 21 October 2023, the 28 NYC members will look back on their NYC mandate, jointly reflect on experiences, challenges and lessons learnt, discuss the future developments of the NYC and formulate recommendations for its future work, moving from the one-year Pilot Action to a long-term implementation format.

## 22 October 2023

12:00–21:00

*Primorska Technology Park,  
Šempeter pri Gorici*

### **POPRI Start-up Challenge: From talents to the Danube Region's strengths**

The POPRI Start-up challenge, an event that uses the capacity-building method for enhancing entrepreneurial and leadership skills, will focus on the importance of young talents and possible ways to tackle the brain drain in the Danube Region.

## 23 October 2023

08:00–17:00

*Primorska Technology Park,  
Šempeter pri Gorici*

### **POPRI Start-up Challenge: From talents to the Danube Region's strengths**

The POPRI Start-up challenge, an event that uses the capacity-building method for enhancing entrepreneurial and leadership skills, will focus on the importance of young talents and possible ways to tackle the brain drain in the Danube Region.

09:00–15:00

*Grand Hall, Faculty of  
Social Sciences, Ljubljana*

### **10th Danube Participation Day**

The 10th Danube Participation Day, under the slogan “Ukraine’s recovery towards EU membership,” will aim to explore how the EUSDR can strengthen civil society and local actors for a sustainable recovery towards EU membership and what can we learn for Moldova.

## 24 October 2023

10:00–12:00

*Heros hall, Brdo Congress  
Centre*

### **Danube Transfer Centre – Annual DTC Meeting (*working title*) (invitation only)**

The Annual DTC Meeting will provide an opportunity to sign three documents. The first document deals with the establishment of the DTC National Entry point in Croatia. The other two documents are two Letters of Intent for DTC Hub, and will be signed between the University of Maribor, which serves as Slovenian National Entry point, and local hubs in Novo mesto and Ljubljana.

## 25 October 2023

11:30–13:00

*Splendens hall, Brdo  
Congress Centre*

### **Global Water Partnership - GWP CEE partnership is a bridge in water management transformation in Central and Eastern Europe**

2023 marks 25 years since Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe (GWP CEE) was founded with a mission to foster Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in CEE region. The main purpose of the session is to present some of the key success stories from the 25 years. The panel will focus on key lessons learned from the past and highlights the added value of multi-stakeholder partnership and cooperation for sustainable water governance.

11:00–17:00

*Heros hall, Brdo Congress  
Centre*

### **C2Lab – Cluster Collaboration Lab**

The focus of this lab will be on transport, energy, Ukraine, skills, and networks in the Danube Region. It is open to cluster organisations, companies, research organisations, actors from the civil society, and other interested entities. Before and during the lab, the participants will team up and develop together their project idea and business case for innovative solutions for the Danube Region. After the workshop, the ECCP team will follow up and support you in further developing your projects, for example, looking into suitable financing sources. The C2Lab is open to participants from the European Union and the SMP/COSME countries. For more info and registration, click [here](#).