

SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY IN TOURISM – A VISION FOR THE DANUBE REGION

MISSION

Sustainable tourism needs sustainable access and mobility: zero emissions, healthy and environmentally friendly, energy efficient and carbon neutral, comfortable and flexible from home door to hotel door.

We, the undersigned partners of the TRANSDANUBE Project and stakeholders – authorities, tourism and transport businesses and umbrella bodies, destination management and regional development organisations, NGOs and academia –, declare our commitment to sustainable mobility development in tourism within the Danube Region.

The Danube is one of the most important inland waterways in Europe. It is a river of highly international character and the Danube region is a flourishing sensitive hub of various cultures, vulnerable ecosystems and different economic and regional development. We aim to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the European Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and hope to develop a European model region for sustainable mobility, both for the inhabitants and for guest and tourists in the Danube region. By actively working together in partnerships to develop and practically implement measures and projects for environmentally friendly, healthy sustainable transport and mobility along the Danube, we will contribute to the UNECE WHO Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) and its regional priority goals.

We wish to explore every possibility to raise people's awareness of, and increase their motivation to, use environmentally friendly ways of travelling (by train, bus, boat, by bicycle or on foot). We encourage cooperation between different stakeholders and contribute, with our resources and competences, to the development, implementation and marketing of sustainable mobility solutions – both for people getting to the Danube and for getting around within the region – as part of high-quality sustainable tourism and leisure offers.



BASIC PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the experiences gained from the TRANSDANUBE project, the following principles and recommendations for sustainable mobility within the Danube region can be established:

Transport and tourism authorities must work on a comprehensive understanding of the mobility challenge and on vertically and horizontally integrated solutions.

When it comes to the implementation of sustainable mobility policies and the development and implementation of sustainable transport and tourism products, close cooperation between the stakeholders is a prerequisite for the achievement of improved mobility solutions. Only integrated approaches lead to appropriate solutions. Stakeholders and policy makers from the transport, environment, health, economy, technology, tourism and regional development sectors must collaborate closely in the process of implementation and to set up policies and frameworks supportive for sustainable mobility and tourism. Authorities at the European and national levels must work together with the regions (destinations) and communities, particularly during the development phase and the implementation process of measures and the creation of interlinked EU, national, regional and local seamless environmentally friendly transport networks and tourism-related mobility management. More emphasis needs to be put on networking between places of departure and destination.

The transport sector must offer a customer-oriented choice of high quality, healthy and environmentally friendly, energy efficient and carbon neutral means of transport (especially trains, buses, bicycles and boats).

To this end the implementation of mobility management for tourism and leisure is of key importance: This should include, first and foremost, comfortable journeys and good connections as well as suitable arrival and departure times, especially for short and middle distance trains. Improved and extended rail and public transport infrastructure and services in particular for cross-border connec-

tions are necessary, as well as efficient seamless environmentally friendly transport chains and smart logistic solutions without gaps – neither for the travellers nor their luggage (door to door).

These offers should be completed by a modern, user-friendly and cross-sectional mobility and information system, which needs to take into account the situation at the place of departure and at the place of destination. It is thus important to organise bus and taxi services from home to railway stations and from railway stations to tourism destinations.

The technology sector has to develop user-friendly communication technologies and new low or zero vehicles using re-newable sources of energy.

Information about public transport should be supported by user-friendly communication technologies. All desired information about travel itineraries and pick-up services etc. should be provided without delay whenever required. Employees in the transport and tourism sector (and also the customers) should have direct access to this information e.g. on the Internet. Even during their journey passengers could benefit from an improved customer service provided by such innovative systems, e.g. by personalised information (about public transport connections or tourist attractions along their travel route) being sent to their mobile phones. Especially within regional and local transport networks low or zero emission engines should step by step replace conventional vehicles.

Destinations must provide excellent connections to local and regional transport, enable easy arrivals and departures, guarantee environmentally friendly mobility including for the 'last mile' (public transport, flexible traffic systems, shuttle-services, rental of non- or low-polluting conveyances, footpaths, cycle tracks, horse carriages etc.).

At destinations tourists arriving by train, bus or bicycle without their own cars should be handled with care and special hospitality like VIPs with guaranteed comfortable mobility services by eco-friendly means of transport. As it can be assumed that these tourists appreciate and expect peace and tranquillity at their vacation resort, measures must be taken to reduce car traffic and to create car-free areas. Holiday destinations should also provide relevant information services on the spot (Danube tourist-mobility service centres).

The tourism industry should create new, attractive offers which include environmentally friendly mobility solutions.

These solutions should provide benefits for environmentally friendly travellers and tourists offering attractive all inclusive tourism and mobility packages e.g. train, bus, boat and bike packages and packages including the Danube cycle trail (EuroVelo 6) and hiking trails. Furthermore an appropriate marketing scheme has to be developed (e. g. soft mobility packages with appropriate slogans; car-free offers at the destination). Destinations, hotels and tourism boards are expected to play an active role and to add environmentally friendly solutions to their range of products. Customer demand has to form the basis for any measures and activities undertaken in all the sectors concerned. This is the only way tailor-made, high-quality solutions that provide a high level of comfort can be achieved. Another essential topic is to raise customer awareness. This should be the objective of training sessions, and an objective pursued by NGOs representing, and addressing, different customer groups.

COMMON VISIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The common vision and aim is to develop a Danube region, which provides socially fair, economically viable, environmentally friendly and health promoting mobility and tourism for citizens and guests of the region by developing of climate friendly, low-carbon and low-emission, multimodal and efficient transport

systems and sustainable tourism services based on renewable energy sources, saving energy and resources, preserving natural and cultural heritage and taking care of the sensitive Danube ecosystems and landscapes while at the same time ensuring sustainable regional development and offering new chances for green

economy and green jobs in the region.

To this end we will strengthen our endeavours, dedicate resources and develop further our collaborations to promote the practical implementation of our common vision.