

Factsheet

Transnational State-of-the-Art (SoA) analysis

The results of the regional SoA reports elaborated by the project partners for their regions have been summarized in this transnational SoA report. It contains the consolidated results of the regional SWOT analyses and the SoA analyses provided by the project partners. The results of the analyses will provide the starting point for the development of regional action plans and the development of concrete sustainable transport offers and packages in the participating regions. Further information about the regional SoA reports can be found on the project website www.transdanube.eu.

A region with great potential....

With its vast natural and cultural heritage and its geopolitical position on the crossroads of several Pan European Corridors, the Danube region is one of the most promising tourism destinations in Europe. Strategies on the macro level (European Strategy for the Danube Region) as well as on the regional level try to address this opportunities in different ways. In order to create an added value from the increasing demand for eco-touristic and cultural touristic products as well as the increasing awareness for sustainable transport, adequate sustainable tourism products including sustainable mobility offers have to be provided.



Cooperation between stakeholders between the transport and the tourism sector, within and between regions especially across-borders are the key for an integrated, sustainable development. Funding schemes on the regional the national and the European level should secure that good projects receive adequate financial resources to get them started and to secure operation over a longer period of time.

... significant differences and challenges ...

Strengths and weaknesses in the transport and the tourism system still vary widely throughout the Danube region. While the extent of the existing public transport system in the regions along the Danube has been identified as strength, the quality of services provided is weak especially in the lower sections of the Danube. Decreasing numbers of public transport passengers coincide with a still growing popularity of private car usage. Going along with this trend is a strong focus on improving the existing road infrastructure, while there is a lack of funds for the improvement and maintenance of the rail infrastructure.

The negative consequences of growing road transport (congestions, noise, emissions, etc.) and the expansion of land use for settlements, business zones or renewable energy production even in nature protection areas are indicators for the conflict between the interest for further economic growth and the necessity to protect natural resources (amongst others for sustainable tourism). Besides the construction of new transport infrastructure, the more efficient usage of the existing infrastructure provides potentials for further development. For that up-to-date (real-time) information and services are crucial. Good infrastructure and services for cyclists resulted in constantly growing number of cycling tourists especially between Passau and Bratislava. Because of a lack of adequate (cross-border) bicycle routes, the regions of the lower Danube area couldn't benefit from this development in the same way.



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Besides cyclists on the Eurovelo 6, the increasing number of tourists traveling along the Danube on cruise ships offers an opportunity for the regions to attract solvent tourists to visit their regions. Neither the infrastructure nor the services allows the exploitation of these potentials at the moment. Improvements of port facilities as well as the development of new services (e.g. hop on hop off services for young people, etc.) provide potentials to attract more tourists to visit the regions along the river and its hinterland. In order to generate a real added value, the tourist packages have to allow tourists to stay longer than just a few hours in the region.

... where cooperation plays a key role...

On the organization level a lack of adequate bodies to coordinate the public transport systems within the regions has been identified. Even in the more advanced regions in the upper reaches of the Danube a lack of cross-border cooperation in the field of public transport coordination limits the unrestricted usage of the sustainable mobility offers along the Danube. There is also room for improvement as far as the cooperation between stakeholder from the transport and the tourism sector (within the regions as well as on the cross-border level) is concerned. In the tourism sector destination management institutions provide structures which could improve the cooperation between the stakeholders in the tourism sector.

By fostering cooperation instead of competition it should be possible to create an added value resulting from sustainable tourism for all regions along the most international river of the world.

...for further sustainable development...

Still, the opportunities of the Danube aren't used adequately. The huge economic and touristic development potential of the Danube should be of benefit for all the regions. For that it is necessary to improve the accessibility and facilitate the concept of sustainable tourism in the whole Danube region.



The development of sustainable mobility offers will stimulate the shift to environmentally friendly mobility systems resulting in reduced green house gas emissions/pollutants/noise and better transport services for the inhabitants as well as for tourists. This will finally influence the quality of the whole region for economic development and the quality of life for the inhabitants themselves.