

TRANSDANUBE News 01/2013

Welcome to TRANSDANUBE!



TRANSDANUBE – Sustainable Transport and Tourism along the Danube – a project developed by the Environment Agency Austria together with 13 partners from 6 countries. The aim of the project is to improve accessibility and disseminate the concept of sustainable mobility and tourism in the whole Danube region. With this

project, we hope to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of European policies and strategies and to strengthen transnational cooperation on all levels. The keen interest in the TRANSDANUBE project at transnational, national and regional level is demonstrated by the participation of more than 35 associated partners and observers.

We are pleased that our submission of the Expression of Interest resulted in the approval of the project by the ETC programme for South East Europe and that the project's implementation started in October 2012. With this newsletter, we would like to introduce you to our partnership and provide you with first details about the progress of our project.

Günther Lichtblau; Environment Agency Austria – Head of the Department "Transport & Noise"

What is TRANSDANUBE?

The Danube passes through ten countries on its way to the Black Sea. Therefore it is a river of highly international character. It is a river full of history and an important link between the regions of South East Europe - although the role of rivers as transport axes between different regions has long been in decline.

TRANSDANUBE aims at tackling the weak accessibility of the Danube region and the poor quality of transport services, both of which hinder economic development and growth. By developing sustainable mobility offers the project will improve accessibility and disseminate the concept of sustainable tourism in the whole Danube region. The regions will benefit from the added value of sustainable transport and from tourists being able to reach tourist destinations even in the hinterland of the Danube.

Kick-off Meeting in Vienna

The project's implementation started on 1st October 2013. The official project kick-off was the 1st partner meeting which took place in Vienna (Austria) on 10th-12th of December 2012. Not only project partners but also other stakeholders (e.g. ministries), acting as strategic project partners, and other observers joined the project meeting.



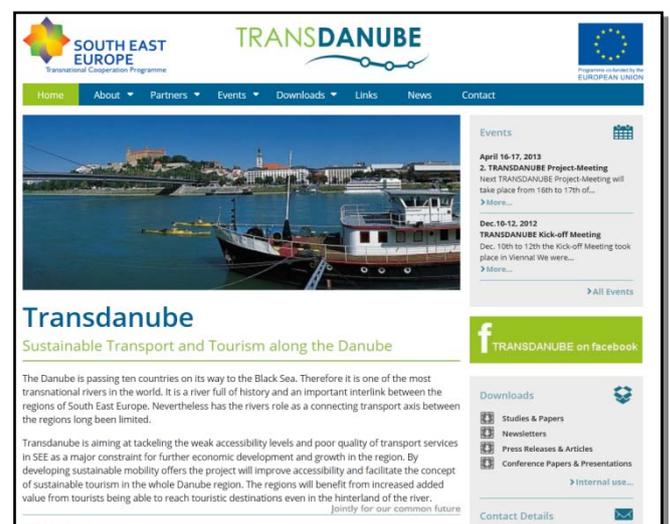
During 2 days of intensive work the project partners introduced themselves, learned about the formal framework of the project and discussed the different activities of the different thematic work packages.

The kick-off meeting was followed by a visit to Vienna's largest and newly reconstructed train station "Wien Hauptbahnhof" on day 3. There the Lead Partner gave an interview about the project, its partners and objectives.

TRANSDANUBE is online

The Regional Government of Burgenland (ERDF PP2) developed the corporate identity design as well as the website which was launched in March 2013. Please go to www.transdanube.eu for all relevant information about the project and to follow the progress of the project.

The German project partner, Danube Office Ulm manages the facebook profile of the project, which has been online since January 2013. Please visit us on facebook: www.facebook.com/transdanube.



The screenshot shows the TRANSDANUBE website interface. At the top, there are logos for South East Europe and the European Union. The main navigation bar includes Home, About, Partners, Events, Downloads, Links, News, and Contact. A large banner image shows a river scene with boats. Below the banner, there is a section for 'Events' listing the next project meeting and the kick-off meeting. A Facebook widget is also visible. The footer contains contact details and a tagline: 'Jointly for our common future'.

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How is the project embedded in European initiatives?

Several initiatives clearly identified the need for cooperation to boost the development of the Danube region. With the endorsement of the **EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)** in April 2011, the member states declared their will for common action. TRANSDANUBE will contribute to the successful implementation of the EUSDR within the Priority Area PA1b ("To improve mobility and multimodality - road, rail and air links") and Priority 3 (To promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts).



By promoting the development and practical implementation of concepts and measures to make transport and mobility along the Danube more sustainable, the project will furthermore contribute to the **UNECE WHO Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)**. The focal points of THE PEP function as advisory board for the project.

TRANSDANUBE is one of the very promising projects where Member States are working together within THE PEP partnership to implement the Regional Priority Goals of the Amsterdam Declaration.



"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."

Robert Thaler, Austrian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management; Head of Division Transport, Mobility, Human Settlement and Noise;
Chairman of THE PEP



Common basis for implementation

Common action has to start with a common understanding of the objectives and the working programme on expert level. Therefore one of the first steps was the preparation of a **Common Methodology Report** by the Lead Partner, a **Communication Plan** by the communication manager (the West Pannon Regional and Economic Development Nonprofit Ltd (PP4)) and a **Cooperation Concept** by the Danube Tourist Commission (PP1) to provide a basis for stakeholder involvement on all levels.

TRANSDANUBE at events

The project partners started spreading the project's idea at different events and workshops in their regions.

At the world's leading travel trade show, the ITB (Internationale Tourismus Börse) at Berlin, TRANSDANUBE was represented by the project partners Danube Tourist Commission, Danube Office Ulm and Danube Competence Center Belgrade.



The German project partner Danube Office Ulm in the "Danube Saloon" at the ITB.

Upcoming events

16-17 April 2013 2nd partner meeting in Vidin

September 2013 3rd partner meeting and mid-term-conference in Bratislava

Please find all events on www.transdanube.eu

Next steps

Based on the Common Methodology Report, the project partners have already started to prepare a comprehensive overview about the status quo of sustainable mobility in tourism in the regions along the Danube. So far guidelines have been provided to the project partners, supporting them during the data collection and consolidation process for **State-of-the-Art (SoA) analysis** and **good practice collection** on regional level. The findings will be consolidated in a transnational SoA report on sustainable mobility in tourism in the Danube region.

The outputs of these activities will be the basis for the development of the **common soft mobility vision**, with basic principles on how to implement the concept of sustainable mobility in tourism and its development in the regions along the Danube. The vision will be presented to the public during the mid-term conference in Bratislava.

The Partnership

Lead Partner - Environment Agency Austria



As Austria's leading organisation of experts for environmental issues, the Environment Agency Austria is a major European player in environmental consulting. It pursues an interdisciplinary approach to the design and development of perspectives for the environment and society. Preventive environmental protection, in the sense of sustainable development, is at the centre of its activities. Businesses and the public sector benefit from its know-how, both at national and international level.

ERDF PP1 - Danube Tourist Commission



Founded in 1970, the Danube Tourist Commission brings together countries such as Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania and Moldova. Member states are represented by their national tourism organisations and are joined in their activities by supporting members from the private sector. The organisation is financed entirely by membership shares. The Danube Tourist Commission is committed to securing and improving conditions for tourism in the regions and provides a common platform for Danube region marketing and generating income for the tourism sector of the member countries.

ERDF PP2 - Regional Government of Burgenland



The Regional Government of Burgenland is the responsible authority for the development of the regional transport system. Its responsibilities cover all means of transport. Burgenland is interested in further economic development and cooperation with the neighbouring regions. With its long experience in project implementation, especially with a focus on the development of sustainable mobility solutions, Burgenland is a valuable project partner.

ERDF PP3 - Bratislava Self-Governing Region Department of Strategy and project management



Despite being the smallest of Slovakia's eight regions, Bratislava is the country's economic powerhouse, enjoying the highest average income and lowest unemployment rate of any Slovak region. It also welcomes a large share of the country's incoming tourists. Although dominated by the service sector, the regional economy is also supported by a strong manufacturing base, and increasingly focused on knowledge-based economy and research. The office of the Bratislava Region is responsible for development in the following sectors (as defined by law) - Transport, Education, Youth and Sport, Tourism and Culture, Social Services, Health Care, European territorial co-operation and regional development.

ERDF PP4 - West Pannon Regional and Economic Development Nonprofit Ltd



The mission of West Pannon Regional and Economic Development Nonprofit Ltd is to support the initiation and implementation of cooperation-based regional and economic development processes in the West Transdanubian Region. Our activities are based on local community building and national and international network cooperation. The aim is to strengthen networking among the region's municipalities, enterprises and NGOs at small-regional, county and regional levels by increasing the efficiency of development programmes and improving the effectiveness of preparation activities for the 2014-2020 planning period. Our organisation is based in Szombathely.



ERDF PP5 - Bakony and Balaton Regional Tourism Nonprofit Ltd.



The Ltd. is responsible for the tourism development in the region. We represent a sustainable way of travel called slow tourism which means using transport tools, such as: walking, horse riding, bicycle or public transportation. In the framework of our current EU co-financed project we set up a bicycle renting network with more stations. We cooperate with the local bus company and we have a strategic partnership with MÁV (national train company). As a destination from Lake Balaton we also have experience on ship transportation.

ERDF PP6 - Regional Administration of Vidin Region



According to the Structural Regulation of Regional Administrations, the regional governor is a one-man body of the executive authority in the region, which implements state governance at the local level and assures coordination of national and local interests in the implementation of regional policy. In exercising his legal authority and functions, the Regional Governor is assisted by the Regional Administration. It is a unit at the NUTS III level of government.

ERDF PP7 - Club Sustainable Development of Civil Society



The Club "Sustainable Development of Civil Society" was founded in 1997 with the goal to unify the efforts of some fellow members of Bulgarian Universities to introduce new sustainable approaches to economic and social activities in Bulgaria. CSDCS implemented more than 30 projects, mostly in the the sectors environment and transport. Projects are organised by the National Coordinator of EPOMM-network in Bulgaria and the Bulgarian SUMP focal point.

ERDF PP8 - The National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism



The National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism (NIRD) has participated in the establishment of various tourism objectives in Romania, by providing permanent specialised support. NIRD organises projects that are aimed at enhancing the value and development of the tourist potential of in different areas, tourist resorts and localities (master plan) by providing business plans, feasibility studies; marketing research, strategies and policy for the tourist services. NIRD has established collaborations under various international programmes such as South East Europe (i.e. Datourway, Sagittarius, Iron Curtain Trail), INTERREG IVC (i.e. Charts), Calypso (i.e. Healtour).

ERDF PP9 - The South-East Regional Development Agency



The South-East Regional Development Agency's (SE RDA) mission is to promote the socio-economic sustainable development of the South-East Region of Romania. SERDA is responsible for regional development policy programming and implementation. Within this framework, it organises and manages the implementation of the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 and of the Sectoral Operational Programme "Increase of Economic Competitiveness" in the South-East Region. SERDA is involved as a lead partner or a partner in projects funded by INTERREG IVC and SEE Programmes.

ERDF PP10 - Slovak Cycle Club



Slovenský cyklokub is a civic association which operates in the Slovak Republic. In 1997 it became a corporate member of ECF on the AGM of ECF in Maribor. It has been granted the Slovak state accreditation by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic as "The expert of marking the cycle routes". The main activities and targets of the SCK are: support of cycling and the creation of marked cycle route networks in Slovakia, as well as the coordination of all these activities. SCK is responsible for the registration of cycle routes in Slovakia. It represents Slovakia's interests abroad and connects the Slovak cycle network with the neighbouring countries.

ERDF 20% PP1 - Danube Office Ltd.



The Danube Office Ulm/Neu-Ulm is one of 15 development agencies which have been established as a network to cover the region from Ulm to the Danube Delta and are all modelled on the example of the Ulm/Neu-Ulm Danube Office. It is a non-profit organisation run by the cities of Ulm and Neu-Ulm. Together with its partner offices, it acts as project agency and civic platform for different actors of regional development along the Danube. The Danube Office has devised many initiatives and projects in science, education, ecology, cultural and government exchange. Every two years the International Danube Festival is organised by the Danube Office Ulm/Neu-Ulm, a 10-day cultural event with music, literature and culinary from the Danube region and political conferences on the banks of the Danube, attracting 300,000 visitors. For more details visit: www.donauburo.de.

IPA-I PP1 - Danube Competence Center



The Danube Competence Centre (DCC) aims to build and support networks of tourism stakeholders in the whole Danube region by investing in people and skills, enhancing transnational cooperation and promoting the mutual interests of our members. As an association of members from the public, private and non-government sectors, the DCC supports marketing initiatives aiming at the creation and promotion of a single tourism brand for the Danube region.

IPA-I PP2 - Regional Agency for development of the Eastern Serbia



Regional Development Agency Eastern Serbia – RARIS, founded in 2007 (by eight local self-government bodies in Eastern Serbia, the regional Chamber of Commerce, the companies "Vodogradnja" and "Strabag", the NGO Timok Club and the Faculty of Management) has a vision of a balanced and more equitable regional development in Serbia. The objective of RARIS is to support development initiatives on the basis of institutional networking and aiming at the sustainable development of Eastern Serbia. The main activities of RARIS are: identification, preparation and implementation of regional projects, promotion and networking, lobbying and representation of interests and training activities.



Contact us

Lead Partner

Environment Agency Austria
Agnes Kurzweil / Klara Brandl
T: +43 1 31304 5554

Project & Technical Coordination

Prisma Solutions
Cornelia Draxler / +43 2236 479751
Verracon GmbH
Andreas Friedwager / +43 664 2412924

Contact: office@transdanube.eu

web: www.transdanube.eu
facebook: www.facebook.com/transdanube

April 2013