



Sustainable Transport and Tourism along the Danube www.transdanube.eu

PRESS RELEASE

O2.2.2 First Press Release of the Transdanube Project



WP2 / Action 2.2

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Version 2/ Date: 04/03/2013



Jointly for our common future

The DANUBE is passing 10 countries on its way to the Black Sea. Therefore it is one of the most transnational rivers in the world. It is a river full of history and an important interlink between the regions of South East Europe. 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 in April 2011, the member states declared their will for common action.

TRANSDANUBE project, led by the Environment Agency Austria, was successfully submitted at the 4th call of the transnational ETC-program South-East-Europe in November 2011. The project started at the beginning of October 2012 and will take two years. 14 financing project partners of 8 countries -mainly from the regional level- will implement their soft mobility & tourism activities in the Danube Region till September 2014 with an overall budget of 2,37 Mio Euro – 85 % cofounded by ERDF resp. IPA-Funds. With more than 30 Associated Strategic Partners resp. observers the project enjoys widespread support at transnational, national and regional level.

TRANSDANUBE aims to identify solutions for mobility management through sustainable accessibility and interconnectivity between cities and regions along the Danube and within participating regions by environmentally sound mobility like trains and busses, dial a ride busses and taxis, environmentally friendly alternative vehicles, ships and boats or bicycles. Special focus lies on the environmentally friendly accessibility of tourism regions and naturepark. A transnational report of the state of the art on sustainable mobility as well as a good practice collection will be the basis for a common soft mobility vision for the Danube region.

Regional partners will implement their sustainable transport offers and develop soft mobility packages and regional marketing plans in strong cooperation with the main stakeholders on different levels. Existing mobility and tourism offers will be presented via a digital map, another main transnational output of the project.

Although the planning and development of the project TRANSDANUBE took place mainly in 2011, the official start for the project was the **kick off meeting** on 10th to 12th of December 2012 in Vienna / Austria. Not only project partners, but also stakeholders like ministries, acting as strategic partners of the project, and other observing partners joined the project meeting. The session was opened by Mr. Robert Thaler, Head of the Division of Transport, Mobility, Settlements and Noise of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management. After the welcome and opening, different presentations from the lead partner and the project partners followed, introducing the fourteen partner organisations, their different views on the topic addressed as well as their participation in the work packages. This part was followed by the first project steering meeting. General administrative Issues, project and financial management, communication and public relations tasks were on the agenda. On Tuesday, 11th of December, the project coordinator presented methodology and expected results of the project. After that, the general project objectives and necessary work and communication flows in the four thematic work packages were discussed by all partners. The kick off meeting was accompanied by the visit of Vienna's largest and newly reconstructed train station "Wien Hauptbahnhof" on day 3. At this site, the Lead Partner gave an interview about the project, its partners and objectives.

More information about TRANSDANUBE and the project activities & results are available at www.transdanube.eu and www.facebook.com/transdanube.