



The 3rd Danube Participation Days in the EU Danube Strategy Working towards sustainable development: Civil Society, Local Actors and EU Strategies

2-3 November 2016, Bratislava, Slovakia

*jointly with the TP 5 Special Initiative of the
EU LADDER Project and the 9th European Conference of Danube Cities and Regions*



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INTRODUCTION

The 3rd Danube Participation Days in the EU Danube Strategy Working towards sustainable development: Civil Society, Local Actors and EU Strategies

In 2016 the partners of the EUSDR Danube Participation Days [Priority Area 10 of the EUSDR, Danube Civil Society Forum, DCSF] in cooperation with the Plenipotentiary for Civil Society Development in Slovakia, the Council of Danube Cities and Regions and the ARGE Donauländer decided to take cooperation one step further, and to cooperate with the EU LADDER Project to organise, at the beginning of the 5th Annual Forum 2016 in Bratislava, the 3rd Danube Participation Days of the EUSDR on the 2nd and 3rd November. This open and innovative meeting will bring together experts and high level representatives of regional organisations, institutions and networks representing civil society, academia and cities and regions. This will intensify the exchange and cooperation of relevant stakeholders in the Danube Region and the West Balkan with a view to develop participatory, multi-level governance, administrative capacities and a policy aiming at a stable and sustainable political, economic and social development of the region.

The first day hosted by the Plenipotentiary, EUSDR Priority Area 10, DCSF, LADDER and Foster Europe focuses on resilient sustainable development (SD) as an issue of participative multi-level governance in the Danube Region and its macro-regional strategies. SD in its holistic approach is a touchstone for quality development of our societies as well for European integration and international cooperation in the Danube Region. The second day will focus on the role and potential of local actors in making sustainable development in the Danube Region possible. Hosting organisation is the Council of Danube Cities and Regions and the City of Bratislava, cooperating with the ARGE Donauländer, the DCSF, the EUSDR Priority Area 10 Danube Local Actors Platform, Foster Europe.

This setting reflects the multitude of actors active and needed to cooperate in EU multi-level and macro-regional settings. It reflects further the demand for close and regular cooperation between state actors and civil society, the need for participation, transparency and subsidiarity. We thank the City of Bratislava, the LADDER Project, Baden-Württemberg Foundation, EUSDR Priority Area 10 and Foster Europe for making this event possible.



Stefan August Lütgenau
President, DCSF



Corina CREȚU European Commissioner for Regional Policy

Civil Society Organisations (including NGOs) are vital partners for decision-makers, as they are best placed to know people's development needs. In both the EU and non-EU countries, we need to strengthen the involvement of Civil Society Organisations in the making and implementation of development policies.

The current challenges that the EU is facing, as well as their growing complexity, make the consent and participation of Civil Society Organisations more important than ever. The experience and specialised knowledge they embody can make political decision-making not only more credible, but also more effective, as this helps the wider public to understand and engage with decisions.

In the planning and implementation of cohesion policy for 2014-2020, the partnership principle has been significantly strengthened. I am glad that regional, local, and urban public authorities, trade unions, employers, NGOs and other civil society bodies promoting issues such as social inclusion, gender equality and nondiscrimination, are now involved at all stages of planning, implementation and monitoring of projects financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds.

The principle of partnership and participation must be at the forefront of all regional development strategies and programmes, with the aim to ensure the greatest added value of available public and private financing sources. The Commission's report on governance of macro-regional strategies from 20 May 2014 recommends stronger involvement of civil society, including through national and regional parliaments and consultative networks, enhancing awareness of strategic objectives and timetable. The report was backed up by Council conclusions in October 2014, which invite all actors involved to strengthen multilevel governance as a major feature of macro-regional strategies and to better take into account the important contributions of all levels of society concerning macro-regional strategies.

The civil society is becoming more and more involved in the implementation of the different Priority Areas of the Danube Strategy. This is essential to bring our Strategy's thematic focuses closer to citizens.

But there is still work to be done.

The implementers of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region should build as widely as possible on the experience and specialised knowledge of the civil society actors in the different fields of the Danube Strategy, in order to bring citizens closer, as well as to enable the development of grass-root initiatives.

With the above spirit, I welcome this Conference, which brings together the different actors from the Danube Region from many relevant thematic fields. This is a great opportunity to find constructive ways to move further with civil society engagement in the different development areas.

I wish you a successful conference!

Yours sincerely,

Corina CREȚU



TOPIC

Resilient, Sustainable Development and the Danube Region

The Danube Region has suffered from its position at the outskirts of the divided Europe for more than four decades. Following the breakdown of the iron curtain and the (re-) democratization of the societies in the Danube Region, the region developed models for economic, social and democratic development that aimed at joining the European Union. While this process is still underway, it has become clear that developing the Danube Region and its European integration can be regarded as a capstone to the grand of European project.

At the same time it has become clear that the societies in the region cannot iterate models of development in Western Europe. A mobility model with dense highways system as in the Netherlands or energy concepts building on nuclear power as in France would be significantly be misleading and bring the region to a dead end.

The traditional models of development and growth are questioned by rapid global changes that cannot be tackled on a national basis alone, such as climate change. Climate change has the potential to undo significant elements of the developments made since the late 1990ies. Less developed and poorer regions are less qualified to react adequately to the future challenges, even more so if they rely on outdated development models. A number of societies have started this process of redirecting their development models to different degrees. This makes the Danube Region both a learning field and an area of expertise and experience. We have to acknowledge that dynamics, visions and energy for change in development is, to a large extend, born out of the younger generations.

Resilient, sustainable development, in its holistic understanding, offers ways of a quality development that will be solid and flexible at the same time to meet major challenges and changes in the general settings. This addresses social, economic, environmental, cultural and political affairs. To further this new form of development education and awareness raising will be necessary in all forms of education and public life.

A key condition for resilient, sustainable development is a truly democratic, pluralistic and based on the rule of law society embedded in an international cooperation. No autocracy or suppressing rule can lead to sustainable development; there is no nationalist path to it. Resilient sustainable development has to be built not only for the people but with the people. This brings the aspect of participation to the center of the model. Civic and civil society participation as exercised in the Danube Participation Days contribute to a broader consensus in our societies for sustainable form of development, it fosters the democratic ownership of the citizens affected and furthers the experience of European cooperation and integration that is key to tackle the challenges of the 21st century in the Danube Region. Europe and the Danube Region are in a process of reforming their public services and administrations together with a constant drive to further develop their democracies. This is an environment to initiate and broadly implement resilient sustainable development.

Development education, awareness raising, participation, European integration and international cooperation on all levels, a place-based approach taking local and regional affairs adequately into account, and a law based, pluralistic and democratic environment are the soil for resilient, sustainable development to flourish.



Development Education and Awareness Rising

Resilient sustainable Development is an answer, perhaps the only viable for the future, to the question: *What kind of earth will we hand over to our descendants?*

Development Education and Awareness Rising is an answer to the question: *What kind of descendants will we leave for our planet?* This modified quote puts it very simple.

While facing the task to adjust our habits of culture, economy, and politics as well as our habit of using the planet's resources we have to talk, to explain, to act exemplary and to do this publicly. Endeavour and prosperity of our case, to reach resilient sustainable development and save our democratic order by constantly developing it, depends to a large extend on the art of education, the change of habits and the fact that we must reach a generation contract. Sustainable development and democracy can easier be reached and pursued in an integrated Europe. This is why the element of more integration in the Danube Region is of pivotal importance. We need to see better and more in-depth cooperation on local and regional, trans-regional and trans-border and macro-regional level, by state and non-state actors in joined and mixed environments. To achieve this common goal of local actors and the EU, the financing instruments that currently take small and local actors into account insufficiently have to be adopted accordingly. Education to resilient sustainable development, democracy and a main streamed awareness rising in the agenda of macro-regional strategies will contribute to foster Europe, our democracies and a livable future.

As a small token of these changed habits we will keep the conference meat-free. The industrial production of meat is a severe burden for the global CO₂ balance, the use of soil, grain and water. An estimated 15.000 liters of water are needed to bring on kilo beef on our tables. The freeze of our annual meat consumption in the affluent nations on the level of the year 2000 will save 400.000 t of grain feeding 1.2 bn people. This is why we should drastically reduce our habit of meat consumption, shift to organic food from regional producers. More examples and innovative approaches will be presented during the two days of the program.



PROGRAM

Day 1

Wednesday, 02, November 2016

09:00 – 18:00

09:00 – 09:30 Registration

Tatra Hotel, Námestie 1. mája 5, 811 06 Bratislava-Staré Mesto, Slovakia

09:30 – 10:00 Opening

Moderation:

Anders **Bergström**, Policy Area Coordinator/Horizontal Action Coordinator, PA Education/HA Capacity, EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Sweden

Martin **Giertl**, Plenipotentiary of the Government of Slovakia for the Civil Society Development, Slovakia

Stefan August **Lütgenau**, Danube Civil Society Forum, Foster Europe, Austria

Daniela **Urschitz**, City of Vienna, Priority Area 10 of the EUSDR, Austria

10:00 – 12:00 Keynotes Resilient Sustainable Development in Politics and Society

Integration, Participation and Sustainable Development in the EUSDR

Gisela **Erlner**, State Counsellor for Civil Society and Civic Participation, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Resilient Sustainable Development: A Challenge for Europe

Franz **Fischler**, President European Forum Alpbach, Austria

Awareness Raising and Education for Sustainable Development – How can it Serve the Danube Region?

Irene **Lucius**, WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme, Austria

Q & A

12:00 – 14:00 Networking Lunch

14:00 – 17:00 Workshops

I. Workshop: Open Government Partnership

The WS will deal with the model and Slovak experience of Open Government as one example of inclusive participative governance. The WS will present examples of current and planned research as well as to investigate the absorption of scientific research for the work of states and civil society.

Moderator & Rapporteur: Simon **Vrečar**, CEKTRA – Centre for Knowledge Transfer, Slovenia
Iveta **Ferčíková**, Plenipotentiary of the Government of Slovakia for Civil Society Development, Slovakia



II. Workshop: Energy and Environment

How to produce, use and save energy is an essential element of SD with a high potential and need of state-no-state actor cooperation. The WS will deal with examples of new energy concepts in the Danube Region.

Moderator & Rapporteur: Jana **Cicmanova**, Energy Cities, Belgium

III. Workshop: Social Innovation

Social innovation is a cornerstone of innovative societies and decisive to deal both with demographic change and the incorporation of future generations.

Moderator & Rapporteur: Stefan **Barth**, Agapedia Stiftung, Germany

IV. Workshop: Impact of Consumer and Producer Behavior

In a market economy, consumer behavior is a decisive element in steering product development, production and market performance. The WS will discuss given and possible impact of consumer behavior on progressing SD in the Danube Region.

Moderator & Rapporteur: Martin **Helmert**, Italy

V. Workshop: DEAR-Turning Local Ideas into Global Solutions

Local initiatives are essential for the progress of SD as well as for raising awareness in the public. The WS will present and discuss examples of local initiatives from the field of SD.

Moderator & Rapporteur: Natalia **Sovkopljas**, Union of Towns and Cities, Slovakia

VI. Workshop: Infrastructure and Participation (Rakúske kultúrne fórum |

Österreichisches Kulturforum, Hodžovo námestie 1A, 811 06 Bratislava)

Infrastructure projects have over the past decades mobilized a growing interest and debate among citizens and civil society. The WS will look into significant cases and debate general aspects of how to implement infrastructure projects in a participative way.

Moderator & Rapporteur: Timo **Peters**, State Ministry Baden-Württemberg, Germany

17:00 – 17:30 Coffee Break

17:30 – 18:00 Closing

Andreja **Jerina**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NCP Danube Strategy, Alpine Strategy and Adriatic-Ionian Strategy, Slovenia

Anders **Bergström**, Policy Area Coordinator/Horizontal Action Coordinator, PA Education/HA Capacity, EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Sweden

19:30 Primatial Palace (City Hall)

Welcome Reception and Dinner hosted by the Mayor of the City of Bratislava and President of the CoDCR Ivo **Nesrovnal**

Speakers:

Ivo **Nesrovnal**, Mayor of the City of Bratislava

Roman **Haken**, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), ECO Vice-President, Czech Republic



Day 2

Thursday, 03, November 2016

09:30 – 11:30

9th European Conference of Danube Cities and Regions jointly with the 3rd EUSDR Danube Participation Day, ARGE Donauländer, the EUSDR Urban Platform and Danube Local Actors Platform, and the LADDER TP 5 Special Initiative

09:00 – 09:30 Registration

Slovenské Národné Divadlo, Modrý Salón, Pribinova 17, 819 01 Bratislava-Staré Mesto (Slovak National Theater, Blue Hall)

09:30 Opening

Moderation:

Oxana **Paierle**, Ministry of Regional Development and Construction, Republic of Moldova
Anders **Bergström**, Policy Area Coordinator/Horizontal Action Coordinator, PA Education/HA Capacity, EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Sweden

Ivo **Nesrovnal**, Lord Mayor of Bratislava, President of the Council of Danube Cities and Regions

Rudolf **Schicker**, City of Vienna, Coordinator of Priority Area 10 of the EUSDR, Austria

Peter **Langer**, General Coordinator, of the Council of Danube Cities and Regions

10:00 – 11:00 Keynotes

European Regions active in building resilient Sustainable Development

Karl-Heinz **Lambertz**, First Vice-President, European Committee of the Regions, Belgium
South East Europe Regional and Local Cooperation in the Context of the EU Macro-regional Strategies

Stefana **Greavu**, Regional Cooperation Council, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Building Democracy from the Bottom-up: Local Actors and the CEI Concept for a Macro-regional Participatory Approach

Ugo **Poli**, Central European Initiative, Italy

Water, Cities and Management

Dragana **Pejović**, Institute "Jaroslav Černi", Belgrade

Q & A

11:00 – 11:30 Closing

Ivo **Nesrovnal**, Lord Mayor of Bratislava, Slovakia



PARTNERS

Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF)

The Danube Civil Society Forum was born out of the idea that the newly designed EU Danube Strategy needs to come along with a strong element of civil society participation. Starting 2009 civil society organizations gathered to find ways and structures to further participation on all levels of the EUSDR. They shaped the action plan 2010/11 calling for a Danube Civil Society Forum. On the day the EUSDR was launched in Budapest, the Danube Civil Society Forum, DCSF, was founded in Esterhazy Palace in Eisenstadt. Since 1 July 2011, the DCSF has consistently worked to develop a places-based participative approach in the EUSDR and to strengthen civil society participation on the local, regional, national and EU – level in the EUSDR. The DCSF is a non-partisan, non-governmental and non-profit association, open for all civil society organizations and NGOs working within the EUSDR regional and thematic framework. The DCSF welcomes new partners in cooperation as well as new members.

The Participation Days in its Danube format as well as the various national formats of the Participation day held in Ukraine, Bulgaria, Moldavia, Serbia, Austria, Slovakia and Serbia so far are a cornerstone of participation in the Danube Region.

Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of the Civil Society

The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of the Civil Society (hereinafter the Office) has been established in 2011 with the aim of creating and supporting the partnership between the Government and the Civil Society.

The Office:

- creates and coordinates activities and strategies aimed to strengthen the position of citizens towards the Government and public authorities,
- supports activities to increase the participation of citizens and their impact on public policies,
- helps to create better legislative and economic environment of civil society organisations.

The Office consults and assesses the needs of the civil sector with the members of the Chamber for NGOs of the Government Council for NGOs and cooperates with other experts from NGOs in environmental, social, advocacy, the human rights and other topics.



EU Strategy for the Danube Region Priority Area 10

Taking advantage of the huge economic, ecological and cultural heritage in the Danube Region requires cooperation among all the stakeholders in the 14 participating countries, sharing ideas, knowledge and good-practices as well as jointly coordinated activities and funding, bottom up as well as top down. This development must be embedded within a stable institutional structure that accounts for the rule of law, transparency, democracy, and political stability. However, the levels of democratic development, institutional capacities and inclusive governance still vary within the Danube Region, which faced significant political, economic and social transformation and instability in the last 25 years. Therefore, Priority Area 10s central aims – stepping up institutional capacities and cooperation – are at the core of the strategy to make the Danube Region a smart, sustainable and inclusive macro-region.

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) seeks to optimise public administration and cooperative structures that cater to the needs of the citizens along the Danube. Priority Area 10 works towards socio-economic and political-administrative reforms in order to meet the needs of a smart, sustainable and inclusive Danube Region with its citizens as their main focus. That is why Priority Area 10 promotes structured bottom-up processes and the involvement of civil society in order to contribute to project development that serves public needs, strengthening good governance and inclusion through better cooperation among various stakeholders and thus unfold the potentials of local actors and civil society.

Foster Europe, Foundation for strong European Regions

Foster Europe, Foundation for strong European Regions is an independent, non-partisan, private, and charitable Austrian Foundation to further European integration, democracy, regional capacity and federalism in Europe. While working in a pan-European framework, Foster Europe has its main emphasis in the area of Central and Eastern Europe. Foster Europe has organised international projects and large scale events since 2009 in an intercultural and intergenerational framework.

Since 2011 Foster Europe has an additional emphasis on promoting participative political culture in Europe. Foster Europe is dedicated to create international connections among civil society organizations, active citizens, youngsters, scholars, intellectuals, practitioners, and institutions from different societies and fields. Civic participation, networking of NGOs as well the policy fields in question have been elements of Foster Europe work. Foster Europe is a founding member of the DCSF.

Council of Danube Cities and Regions (CoDCR)

The Council of Danube Cities and Regions was founded in 2009 in Budapest in the frame of the IV. European Conference of Danube Cities and Regions. The CoDCR gives an organizational framework to the local and regional cooperation network along the Danube initiated from the City of Ulm and grown over the years. The EU – Strategy for the Danube Region stresses the special significance of the cities and regions in establishing institutional capacity and cooperation and requires the active participation of the Council of Danube Cities and Regions as a strategic partner in communicating of joint projects in the fields of environment, renewable energies, culture and tourism, economic development and civil society. This function as a networking organization for the Danube Region will be consolidated and further developed through the creation of binding structures – an “Urban Platform for the Danube Region ” – and due to the close cooperation with the Working Group of Danube Regions (ARGE Donauländer) and the Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF). Currently, about eighty cities and regions in the Danube Region take part in CoDCR.



The LADDER Project: Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR)

LADDER – Local Authorities as Drivers for Development Education and Raising awareness, is a 3-year project with 27 partners & 19 associates, coming from 19 EU and 17 non EU-countries. Funded by EuropeAid, LADDER is coordinated by ALDA and seeks to enhance and increase the action of Local Authorities and Civil Society in EU DEAR policies, with special reference to the EU Neighboring area, the final objective being to increase the awareness & engagement of citizens on global development trends Foster Europe coordinates the thematic path resilient sustainable development within the LADDER project. Within this thematic path, this special initiative of the cooperation with the 3rd Danube participation Day is taken to bring the issue of resilient, sustainable development and DEAR to a newly developed, main instrument of EU-regional, development, cohesion and neighborhood policy, the EU-macro regional strategies. The EUSDR, as the second and by far largest of the four EU-macro regional strategies, will be a steering instrument and an opinion builder in shaping development for more than 115 m inhabitants in 14 countries inside and outside of the EU. For EUSDR merging under its umbrella the richest, most developed and the poorest and least developed regions in the EU and on the continent the implementation of DEAR and concepts of resilient, sustainable development will be a core issue inside the EU and for neighboring regions.

ARGE Donauländer

Working Community of the Danube Regions was founded on 17th May 1990 with signing the “Joint Declaration” in the Wachau – Lower Austria. The Working Community has the objective of promoting cooperation among its members for the development of the Danube area to serve the interests of its inhabitants and to foster peaceful cooperation in Europe. The Working Community enjoys the status of observer in the Assembly of European Regions and in Central European Initiative, has strategic partnerships with the EU corridor II management, the “Danube Offices” and the “Council of Danube Cities and Regions” and collaborates with the EU Strategy for the Danube.

The Working Community has 39 members with total number of inhabitants: about 80 million and total surface area: 650.000 sqkm.

'Our footprint is fleeting:
make it precious.'

I think the 'footprint' is reminiscent of the miles migrants needs to walk through the sandy deserts and that our humanity must always prevail in the face of adversity; but it also means to me that each and every person, while living on the planet, is responsible for the world's continued sustainability by our everyday actions and decisions.

Nicholas Testaferrata Moroni Viani
Age: 10 Years
School: St. Edward's College
Country: Malta

My slogan:

**Kids for Climate:
Your planet! Your future!**

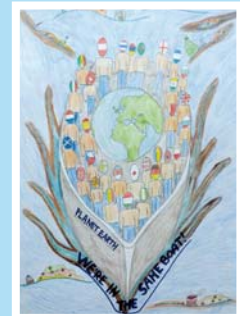
Jakob Lütgenau
Age: 13 Years
School: Gymnasium Neusiedl
Country: Austria

My slogan relates to Recycling:

**'Choose to reuse,
Choose not to abuse'**

Samuel Saliba
Age: 10 Years
School: St Edwards College
Country: Malta

Adam Habšuda
Age: 16 Years
School:
Súkromné Bilingválne
Gymnázium Česká
Country: Slovakia



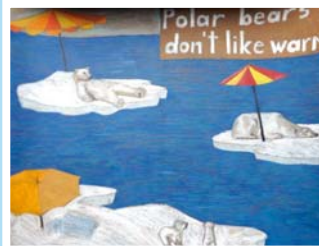
Bertalan Boglárka,
Lengyel Hanna,
Viniczay Máttyás
Age: 13-14 Years
School: Gothard Jenő
Általános Iskola
Country: Hungary



Nina Kováčsová
Age: 15 Years
School: Súkromné Bilingválne
Gymnázium Česká
Country: Slovakia



Karin Šandalová
Age: 17 Years
School: Súkromné Bilingválne
Gymnázium Česká
Country: Slovakia



Georgina Nagy
Age: 14 Years
School: Gothard Jenő Általános Iskola
Country: Hungary



Pavel Krejčí Buttigieg de Piro
Age: 11 Years
School: St Edwards College
Country: Malta



Áron Gödölle
Age: 17 Years
School: Súkromné Bilingválne Gymnázium Česká
Country: Slovakia

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