

29th Steering Group Meeting of EUSDR Priority Area 4

03 – 4 June 2025 | Slovakia, Bratislava



2025 EUSDR Presidency

01 01 2025 – 31 12 2025 Bosnia and Herzegovina –
Flowing together, growing together

➤ Horizontal Priorities

- **Speeding up the European integration process** in connection with its effects on: brain-drain, widening skills gap, depopulation, youth unemployment;

➤ Thematic priorities

- Security, civil protection and disaster preparedness;
- Tourism and culture;
- **Connectivity** and green transition;
- Education, skills and labour market.

➤ Events



DSP support frame

Support for EUSDR core-stakeholders

Embedding & Funding

Monitoring & Evaluation

Communication

Capacity Building

Youth involvement



Support for EUSDR core stakeholders

- **Support the core-governance** and - management of the EUSDR
- **Institutional memory** - documentation of meetings, revision of contact lists & common calendar
- Support EUSDR-internal **horizontal coordination** measures and closer **cooperation with further relevant stakeholders**
- Technical and thematic **support to PAC events, SG meetings**
- Facilitating **stronger involvement** of EUSDR core-stakeholders into PA and SG activities
- **Cross-PA and cross-MRS events for PACs**
- **Support for increasing visibility of PAs activities and achievements**



EUSDR Governance Development

Recap of the process 2023 – 2025

2023

January &
December 2024
Joint NC-PAC
Meetings

2025

August 2023

Update of NC & PAC Rules of Procedure

November 2023

Governance Architecture Paper Review
1st Governance Development TF Meeting

2024

February 2025

2nd Governance Development TF
EUSDR PAC Meeting

March 2025

Questionnaire among PACs for
prioritisation of governance-related
topics

April 2025

3rd Governance Development TF
EUSDR NC Meeting

May-June 2025

Cluster Meetings

EUSDR Governance Development Clusters

Cluster 1:
PAC roles & responsibilities

Active contribution: PA 7, PA 8, PA 9, NC AT

Cluster 2:
SG roles & responsibilities

Active contribution: PA 1b, PA 6, PA 7, PA 8, PA 10, NC SK

Cluster 3:
relation/linkages between stakeholders

Active contribution: PA 1b, PA 6, PA 9, PA 10, NC SI, NC CZ, NC RS, NC SK

Cluster 4:
PACs co-chair PAC meetings/BAGL

Active contribution: PA 6, PA 7, PA 9

Meetings of Governance Development Clusters

- 4 Clusters for further discussion of governance development topics as **sub-groups** of EUSDR Governance Development Task Force
- **Topics** to be discussed were **brought up and prioritised by EUSDR PAs**, additional points from EUSDR Process Evaluation 2025
- Discussion among PACs, NCs, supported by DSP and guided by the (TRIO-)PCY (participation on **voluntary** basis)
- Discussion & elaboration of topics at **EUSDR level** (in a further step, can be transferred into key-documents of the Strategy, e.g. EUSDR Governance Architecture Paper, NC/PAC RoP);
NOT topic of discussion: NC level, PA level and/or cross-PA level implementation, which, in a further step, can be transferred into PA RoP, working plans, roadmaps, PAC projects etc.
- Proposals to be further discussed in **EUSDR Governance Development TF** and presented/agreed at joint **NC-PAC Meeting** in September 2025

Embedding & Funding

- Facilitating close contact with Managing Authorities, European Funding instruments and other financing institutions
- Meetings of MA Networks
- EUSDR Embedding Weeks
- Embedding support for PACs
- Overviews of EUSDR-relevant EU calls
- Monitoring and analysing the state of embedding
- Interim and final report / analysis on embedding



Monitoring & Evaluation

- Supporting the revision of EUSDR core-documents, EUSDR core-decision making processes and EUSDR reporting
 - EUSDR Implementation Report 2022–2023 *new*
- Further developing and implementing an EUSDR monitoring, evaluation and data collection system
 - EUSDR Evaluation Plan 2023-2028
 - EUSDR Process/Implementation Evaluation *new*
 - EUSDR Policy Evaluation (to be conducted in 2027/2028)



EUSDR Implementation Report 2022-2023

- **Developments and achievements in EUSDR Priority Areas**

- Main achievements and unique implementation through the EUSDR framework
- Policy development
- Projects and processes – implementation & funding

- **Implementation and activities across PAs**

- Capitalisation of projects and activities
- Steering Groups
- Cooperation with stakeholders
- Strategic policy development

- **EUSDR horizontal activities and priorities**

- E.g. EUSDR governance meetings, core documents, Monitoring & Evaluation, Embedding, Communication, Capacity Building, Youth involvement



Thank you for the input provided via
the **PAC Reporting** tool in spring 2024!

EUSDR Implementation Report 2022-2023

Main Conclusions and Lessons Learned in 2022-2023

- Setting **clear, realistic objectives** leads to effective outcomes
- Regular **communication** with stakeholders maintains engagement and participation
- **Involving new stakeholders**, particularly youth, strengthens political commitment and national support
- **Hybrid meeting formats** increase participation but reduce interpersonal interaction
- **Flexibility** in approach and adapting to challenges continues progress

Outlook on Future Activities

- The focus will remain on **sustainability, resilience, and aligning with broader EU goals**
- Ongoing support for **EU enlargement, Ukraine's recovery, and stakeholder engagement** boosts regional cohesion
- Strengthening **links between EU MRS** boosts cooperation & knowledge sharing
- **Project outcomes** should align more closely with **policymaking** to ensure practical results
- Prioritising **regional cooperation** and knowledge exchange addresses gaps & promotes innovation



EUSDR Implementation Report 2022-2023

Key highlights

- EUSDR PA 4 focused on enhancing cooperation, increasing knowledge exchange, and securing financing for water quality initiatives in the Danube Region.
- EUSDR PA 4 fostered a new partnership with the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD)
- EUSDR PA 4 became actively engaged in the EU Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters
- EUSDR PA 4 supported youth involvement
- Cross-PA cooperation – PA 1a, PA 5, PA 6, and PA 7
- Thematic events organisation (conferences, webinars, workshops)
- Publication of thematic studies, brochures, and video



EUSDR Process/Implementation Evaluation

- Evaluation topics: political commitment, governance, technical implementation and policy coordination, funding, policy impact, external factors
- External evaluator: [M&E Factory](#)
- Data collection conducted in Summer 2024 – THANK YOU to all core stakeholders who contributed
- Final Evaluation Report available on the [EUSDR website](#)



EUSDR Process/Implementation Evaluation

Key recommendations

Political commitment:

- Increase EU political engagement by involving additional stakeholders (e.g., DG ENEST, line DGs, European Parliament and others) and securing greater commitment on EU and national levels.
- Promote the benefits of macro-regional cooperation through national coordination platforms, an EUSDR impact model and clear, targeted messaging for policymakers.
- Ensure flexibility in the EUSDR Action Plan to remain adaptable to evolving challenges and opportunities, particularly in the post-2027 EU Cohesion Policy framework.

Governance:

- **Simplify the EUSDR Governance Architecture** to enhance stakeholder understanding and **better illustrate the linkages between stakeholders.**
- **Enhance SGs engagement through better information sharing, coordination via national coordination and PA platforms, and capacity-building. Recognise SG contributions through success stories and event presentations to foster a sense of value and encouraging continued involvement.**
- Strengthen youth involvement by clarifying the Danube Youth Council (DYC) role, tracking its contributions, operationalising the Danube Youth Organisation Network (DYON) with a clear operational plan, and facilitating collaboration between the DYC and the DYON.
- Improve monitoring and reporting by aligning with the EUSDR impact model, focusing on both soft and tangible results, streamlining data collection and preparing for potential performance-based reporting in the post-2027 programming period.

EUSDR Process/Implementation Evaluation

Key recommendations

Technical implementation and policy coordination:

- Maintain a strategic focus beyond project implementation by developing an EUSDR impact model, adopting mission-oriented approaches that connect individual projects to larger EUSDR's objectives, and building capacity to translate the EUSDR Action Plan into concrete actions and projects.
- Expand stakeholder engagement on EU and national levels, strengthening communication between line DGs and EUSDR core stakeholders (especially PACs), encouraging participation in EC events, and regularly involving regional/local actors in EUSDR activities.
- Strengthening information sharing and collaboration across macro-regional strategies (MRS).
- Increase the visibility and communication of EUSDR by sharing success stories in EU/national events, targeted communication events (e.g., sector or stakeholder-specific events), engaging in EU enlargement initiatives, and collaborating with civil society and academia.

External factors:

- Use the PCY agenda as a "reality check" tool to regularly review and adapt the EUSDR Action Plan to emerging needs, challenges and opportunities.
- Establish ad-hoc (crisis-response) working groups across PAs to develop plans/protocols for quickly responding to external events (e.g., post-2027 Cohesion Policy changes, Ukraine's recovery).

EUSDR Process/Implementation Evaluation

Key recommendations

Funding:

- Enhance funding access and capacity-building of the EUSDR core stakeholders by providing targeted support.
- **Embed EUSDR into the post-2027 EU Cohesion Policy, positioning it as a key capitalisation tool that scales national project results and translate EU policies into impactful regional actions.**
- **Align the EUSDR embedding tools and activities with the post-2027 Cohesion Policy framework, the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans, and future EU enlargement scenarios.**
- Address misalignment between EUSDR core stakeholders and various EU-funded programmes by promoting EUSDR as a platform for capitalising on programme results, supporting territorial cohesion, and fostering dialogue between Interreg and mainstream programmes. Clear objectives and project proposals should be formulated to align with funding programmes.
- Enhance coordination and synergy across MRS to maximize impact and avoid duplication.

Danube Strategy Flagships

- **List of Danube Strategy Flagships 2024** published on [EUSDR Website](#)
- **Total of 26 Danube Strategy Flagships**
 - 15 new Danube Strategy Flagships
 - 11 updated Danube Strategy Flagships

Selection of Danube Strategy Flagships 2025

- Selection phase from March – June 2025 (during the SG meetings of the 1st half-year)
- Certificates and promotion/dissemination/exploitation from August 2025 on



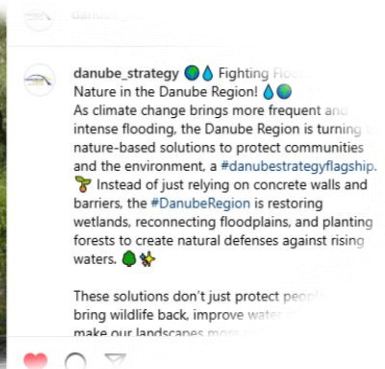
Danube Strategy Flagships - Promotion



Addressing Social Policies in the Danube Region
The Region Strategy (EUSDR) is driving collaboration across the region to tackle shared challenges and align social and ... mehr
Anzeige anzeigen



Addressing Social Policies in the Danube Region: The Role of the Social Fund (ESF) Network
The Region Strategy (EUSDR) has been instrumental in...



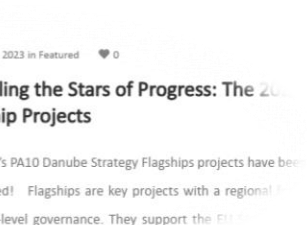
Promotion on EUSDR
Social Media Channels
(LinkedIn, Instagram,
Facebook, X, Bluesky)



About ERI SEE Projects Priorities Library



Danube Strategy Flagship



Promotion by
EUSDR PAs (e.g.,
on PA Websites)
or by project
partners



Promotion
through
Certificate
Ceremonies



Communication

- **Social media platforms** constantly updated on LinkedIn, Facebook, X, Instagram, BlueSky)
- **Social media campaign** to promote Flagships on social media channels managed by DSP (started 15 October 2024)
- **Align communication activities** with the EUSDR PCIES for more visibility (promoting events through posts on social media and articles on the main EUSDR website, on the dedicated sub-page)
- **Disseminating articles on DG Regio's website for more visibility**
- **Relaunch of the EUSDR website** (including 12 PA sites) – summer 2025



Capacity Building

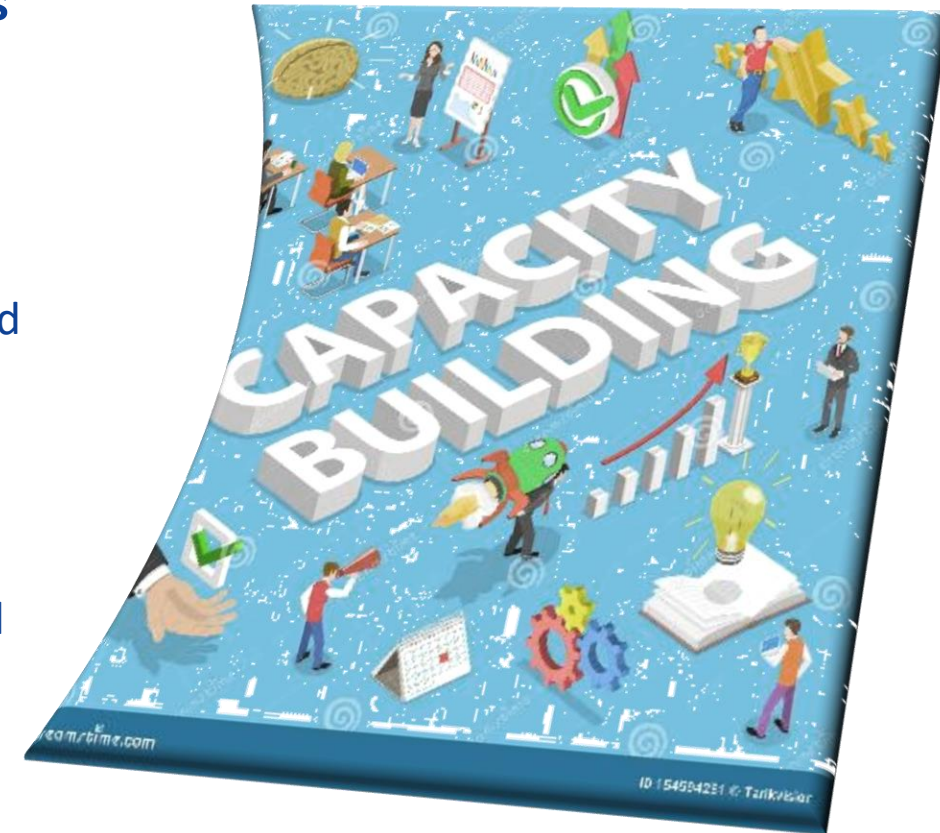
- Planning and implementing capacity building measures
 - Capacity building Needs Analysis
 - Capacity building sessions for EUSDR stakeholders
- Support EUSDR stakeholders in developing skills for implementing the Strategy
 - “Unfolding EUSDR” session – EUSDR PCY, NCs, PACs, SG – upon request



Capacity Building

Five training sessions will be provided for EUSDR core stakeholders (NCs, PACs, and SGs) :

1. **Onboarding and Institutional Memory Consolidation – 23.09.2025, Brussels**
 2. **Policy Analysis and Advocacy Skills – 07.11.2025, Sarajevo**
 3. **Effective Communication, Collaboration, Consensus-Building and Negotiation Skills – 2026**
 4. **Strategic Planning for EUSDR Objectives – 2027**
 5. **Leadership and Self-Leadership – 2028**
- ✓ As a horizontal theme, “Cross-Cultural Administrative Contexts” will be the basis on which all training will be built in terms of structure and content.
- ✓ Max. 40 participants (per training session) – NCs, PACs, and SGs members (first-come-first-serve basis).



DYC current developments

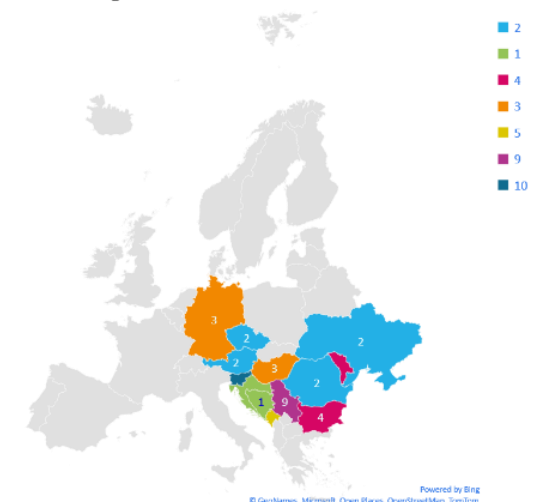
- 18 experienced DYC members remained for one more year; 10 new members were appointed.
- New members chosen Pas - PA 4 – Pejo Bosnić, Matej Jirkal, and Sára Molnár
- Meetings between PAs and (new) DYC members – February – March 2025
- 4th Danube Youth Camp – 15 – 17 June 2025, Vienna, Austria



DYON current developments

- Open network / 49 Youth Organisations
- Strategic planning workshop, held online on 17 March 2025
- DYON Boot Camp, July 2025
- Participation in a youth panel organised by PA 10 as part of the 14th EUSDR Annual Forum / Danube Participation Day (tbc)
- Identification of possible EU funding sources for future activities

Regional distribution



DYC involvement in PAs activities

- Contribute / share youth vision on various publications (studies / brochures / surveys / policy papers)
- Contribute to projects development
- Participation and support in events organisation (SG, conferences, WS) – input on the agendas, organise sessions dedicated to youth
- Danube Strategy Flagships selection
- Disseminate information within youth networks



❖ on-site participation of minimum **one** DYC member in **one** SG meeting per year shall be covered by the PA

Events calendar

EUSDR Management & Governance	Date	Location
4 th Danube Youth Camp	15-17 June 2025	Vienna, AT
NC-PAC Meeting (+TRIO Presidency Meeting)	10-11 September 2025	Sarajevo, BA
10 th 4 MRS TRIO PCIES Meeting	26 September 2025	Brussels, BE
17 th HLG Meeting	26 September 2025	Brussels, BE
14th EUSDR Annual Forum	5-6 November 2025	Sarajevo, BA
EUSDR MA/Programming authorities Network meeting		online
Joint EUSDR NC PAC and EUSAIR Governing Board Meeting	autumn 2025	Sarajevo, BA

SG meetings	Date	Location
PA 4	3-4 June 2025	Bratislava, SK
PA 1b	4 June 2025	Sarajevo, BA
PA 7	6 June 2025	Bratislava, SK
PA 9	25 June 2025	online
PA 1b	September 2025	Izola, SI
PA 3	3 November 2025	Sarajevo, BA
PA 1a	5 November 2025	Vienna, AT
PA 8	5-6 November 2025	Sarajevo, BA
PA 9	6 - 7 November 2025	Sarajevo, BA
PA 11	19 November 2025	Sofia, BG

Priority Area & cross-PA/MRS relevant events	Date	Location
Advancing Connectivity, Interoperability, and Resilience of the Danube Region Railway Network	5 June 2025	Sarajevo, BA
Workshop on Utilisation of Sewage Sludge in the Danube Region	20 June 2025	online
CIPRA Conference "FutureForum Alps 2025 – H20: precious, powerful, scarce"	27-28 June 2025	Schaan, LI
3 rd International Conference on Sustainability in Hydropower	2-5 September 2025	Vienna, AT
10 th Mediterranean Coast and Macro-Regional Strategies Week	15-18 September 2025	Izola, SI
Macro-Regional and Sea Basin Strategies Days 2025	24-25 September 2025	Brussels, BE
IRE Salzburg Summit	28-30 September 2025	Salzburg, AT
Energy - regional interconnections development, optimisation of the renewable sources of energy, regional market, storing, implementation of the ETS system and CBAM	September 2025	Sarajevo, BA
Implementation of the UN SDGs in Danube Region	October 2025	Banja Luka (TBC), BA
16 th EUSBSR Annual Forum	28-30 October 2025	Gdansk, PL
12 th Danube Participation Day	4 November 2025	Sarajevo, BA
Meeting of the Danube Transfer Centre Network	4 November 2025	Sarajevo, BA
Digitalisation – A Boost for Competitiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability	5-6 November 2025	Sarajevo, BA
Danube Rectors' Conference (DRC)	12-14 November 2025	Tuzla, BA
10 th EUSALP Annual Forum	25-26 November 2025	Innsbruck, AT
SEE2030 Conference with academia on inclusive economic growth (RCC)	November 2025	Sarajevo, BA
SEE Regional Network of Insurance Sector (focus on disaster insurance coverage)	second half of 2025	

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Thank you for your attention!

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