

EU Strategy for the Danube Region

Priority Area 1a – To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways

NEWSLETTER

Author(s): Technical Secretariat of
Priority Area 1a

Version (date):
09/08/2022



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional Development Fund

 **Federal Ministry**
Republic of Austria
Climate Action, Environment,
Energy, Mobility,
Innovation and Technology

viadonau



Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure

News, facts and events

- ❖ On 2nd of June 2022 the European Transport Ministers adopted a common position ('general approach') on each of the three legislative proposals of the "FIT for 55" package that relate to the transport sector (alternative fuels infrastructure (AFIR), FuelEU Maritime and ReFuelEU Aviation).

More information can be found at:

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/06/02/fit-for-55-package-council-adopts-its-position-on-three-texts-relating-to-the-transport-sector/>

Working Group 1 – Waterway and Port Infrastructure & Management

After seven years of implementation, the *Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan for the Danube and its navigable tributaries* (first endorsed in 2014) was updated in 2021/2022 by the waterway administrations and Ministries of Transport of the Danube region. The Master Plan highlights national needs and short- to medium-term measures in order to ensure the efficient and effective realisation of harmonised waterway infrastructure parameters along the entire Danube and its navigable tributaries within the existing legal framework.

Since 2014, several of the measures proposed in the Master Plan have been implemented in various transnational and national implementation projects and several necessary investments have been made, in many cases with the support of EU co-financing. More than 75 million EUR have been invested through EU co-financed projects within the Connecting Europe Facility, the national Operational Programmes and the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA).

However, complementing the new equipment (e.g. purchasing dredging equipment) and in particular

securing sufficient and regular operational budgets at the national level remain to be the key challenges for the next years.



In the framework of the Connecting Europe Days 2022 in Lyon, the **Danube Ministerial Conclusions 2022** were signed by the Danube Transport Ministers on 29 June 2022, upon invitation of DG MOVE. The Ministers endorsed the updated Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan and agreed to step up fairway management efforts in the coming years by allocating the necessary national budgets. The [final version](#) of the conclusions is available here.

Working Group 2 – Business Development

Upcoming Danube Business Talks 2022 - "Green Deal – Green Danube"

The Danube Business Talks 2022 will be organized on 12 and 13 October 2022 in Linz (Austria) under the motto *Green Deal – Green Danube*.

The Danube Business Talks offer private and public stakeholders an opportunity for targeted networking and knowledge exchange on economic impulses and innovations in the field of Danube navigation. The climate and environmental protection goals of the Austrian Federal Government provide a favorable framework for the development of cross-border solutions to

strengthen the Danube transport axis in the European transport network. In addition to the international exchange between companies, public authorities and political decision makers, the B2B platform “Danube Business Dating” will provide once again opportunities for establishing new business contacts.

Registration is opened starting with 1st of June and details are available at:

<https://www.danubebusinesstalks.org/>

Working Group 3 – Fleet modernization

PA1a is following closely the policy developments at EU level regarding the Green Deal implementation and the progresses on the “FIT for 55 Package” – focusing on the draft regulation on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure (AFIR).

The main objective of the proposed regulation is to ensure that the public has access to a sufficient infrastructure network for recharging or refueling road vehicles or ships with alternative fuels.

As member in the Advisory Board of the PLATINA 3 project, PA1a is attending the meetings and following the project outcomes regarding the zero-emission fleet, climate resilient fleet, digital and automated vessel, etc.

Working Group 4 – River Information Services

“Notices to Skippers (NtS)” are one of the key River Information Services essential for the safety and efficiency of navigation. This service can still be improved in the Danube Region in terms of the content of the notices and the way the NtS are disseminated. Working group 4 has therefore taken up this issue and aims in particular to promote the exchange of practices between the different

authorities responsible for the publication of NtS.

On 23 June 2022 the second focus workshop *Notices to Skippers standard 4.0*, on the implementation of NtS in the Danube Region was organized in a digital format. Current improvements of the service and national action points were discussed during the workshop with representatives of national authorities responsible for issuing the NtS.

Follow-up events and bilateral discussions on the topic will continue in the course of 2022 and 2023.

Working Group 5 – Education & Jobs

The mandatory implementation of the provisions of Directive (EU) 2017/2397 on the recognition of professional qualifications in inland navigation in all EU countries by 17 of January 2022 as well as delegated acts, is a matter of concern for all Danube riparian states. National transposition measures communicated by the Member States concerning the implementation of the Directive are available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/NIM/?uri=CELEX:32017L2397>

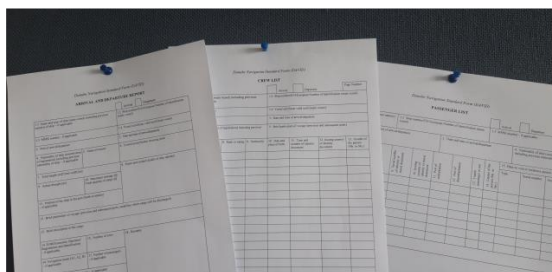
PA1a has summarized the results of past and ongoing initiatives in this area and developed a Recommendation for professional qualifications. PA1a will in the future provide a platform for cooperation, remind the member states of their obligations and push for the real implementation of the Directive’s provisions after 2022.

Working Group 6 Administrative Processes

In the last years the joint Working Group of Priority Areas 1a (Inland Waterways) and 11 (Security) of the EU’s Danube Region Strategy developed a set of so-called Danube Navigation Standard Forms (DAVID Forms). Using the expertise of stakeholders from the shipping sector and control authorities, the data fields of three often used forms (arrival

and departure forms, crew lists and passenger lists) were harmonized in an international effort.

The harmonized DAVID forms are now used at all checkpoints at and outside the Schengen external borders. After Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Ukraine introduced the DAVID forms in 2020, also Romania and the Republic of Moldova followed in the first half of 2022 and thus completed the introduction process. This also means that all Danube riparian countries have the legal framework to use the simplified forms on the CEERIS platform <https://ceeris.eu/> in a digital format.



Furthermore, PA1a and PA11 started the joint activities for the implementation of a *Trans-national Electronic Registration and Time Management Tool for Border Controls* (TERM). This tool should allow skippers to “book” a time slot for their border control procedure in advance. This measure will improve transparency and plannability for the shipping industry as well as the border control authorities involved.

Upcoming events

❖ **PA1a Steering Group Meeting on 09 Sept. 2022** (upon invitation only)

❖ **Danube Business Talks 2022 - “Green Deal – Green Danube”** will be organized on 12 and 13 October 2022 in Linz, Austria.

Register at:

<https://www.danubebusinesstalks.org/>

❖ **11th EUSDR Annual Forum**

The event will be jointly organized by the Ukrainian EUSDR Presidency, the former Slovak EUSDR Presidency, the European Commission and the Danube Strategy Point. It will take place on 19-20 October 2022 in a hybrid format.

A preliminary agenda and a pre-registration link are available [here](#).

Priority Area 1a – Targets & Governance

Priority Area 1a on Inland waterways is coordinated by Romania (Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Communication) and Austria (Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology and via donau).

ACTION 1: Contribute to improve waterway and port infrastructure & management.

TARGET: Achieve a notable improvement of the fairway conditions and shore side infrastructure along the Danube and its navigable tributaries, confirmed by the waterway users by means of an annual user survey.

ACTION 2: Foster business development.

TARGET: Contribute to transnational business-to-business (B2B) meetings on an annual basis

ACTION 3: Facilitate fleet modernization.

TARGET: Promote the use of EU funds for fleet modernisation and support the set-up of national funding schemes.

ACTION 4: Support the further roll-out and enhancement of River Information Services.

TARGET: Ensure the online provision, availability and interoperability of up-to-date Fairway Information Services in the Danube Region.

ACTION 5: Contribute to the enhanced quality of education and jobs.

TARGET: Facilitate the implementation of the provisions of Directive 2017/2397 in all Danube riparian states, putting specific emphasis on non-EU riparian states.

ACTION 6: Contribute to the simplification, harmonisation and digitalisation of administrative processes.

TARGET: Achieve a notable improvement of administrative procedures, especially border controls, in inland navigation on the Danube and its navigable tributaries by 2023, as confirmed by the waterway users by means of user surveys.

In order to achieve these targets the governance structure for Priority Area 1a of the EU Danube Region Strategy has been set up by the Priority Area Coordinators in close cooperation with the European Commission.

As part of the Priority Area 1a structures, a [Steering Group](#) and several [Working Groups](#) have been established.

The Steering Group meetings are the framework that allows each involved country, as well as the European Commission, to provide feedback and to contribute in a practical manner to all decisions needed for achieving the Priority Area 1a targets, in order to ensure a successful implementation of the Danube Region Strategy.

Within the Working Groups project ideas, measures needed, means of cooperation etc. between all stakeholders are discussed. The results of the Working Groups are to be presented to the Steering Group members in order to decide the next steps on a specific topic.

