

territorial cooperation  
onboard with the **DANUBE REGION strategy**

# news

## FOCUS

# Governance in the Danube Region

How to make the  
EUSDR work? **PAGE 2**

- + **Danube Quiz**
- + **Upcoming events**



- **GOVERNANCE - INTERVIEW**  
David Sweet, DG Regio **PAGE 2**
- **PREPARATION OF THE ACTION PLAN**  
Contact national coordinators! **PAGE 3**
- **GOVERNANCE - PORTRAIT**  
Europaregion Donau-Moldau **PAGE 5**
- **EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK**  
A key partner **PAGE 6**
- **TRANSWASTE**  
A Cooperation Project **PAGE 7**



**INTERACT**

*Sharing Expertise*

## Governance: How to make the EU Strategy for the Danube Region work

*Interview with Mr David Sweet, policy adviser to the Director-General, DG Regio, European Commission*

**Mr Sweet, what do you associate with the word “governance”?**

Although this is not a word I like very much, I see governance as the structure needed to enable the effective implementation of a policy. Such structure is absolutely necessary to make sure that things happen, that you can **move from words to action**.

**Why is it necessary to set up a good governance model for the management of the Danube Region Strategy?**

A lot of work is being done at the moment to prepare the action plan of the strategy. If we do not - at the same time - start preparing a well-functioning delivery structure, there is a risk that actions and projects will not be able to develop to their full potential. If you want the airplane to take off, you need a pilot and a crew!

**What are the conditions to be fulfilled to create a well-functioning governance model?**

Where do we want to go? What do we want to do? These are the first questions we need to answer to define the action plan of the strategy. **For a successful implementation we also need clear lines of responsibility: Who does what? Who pays?** If we know from the very beginning who is responsible for what, actions and projects will be much easier to monitor. The European Commission cannot and does not want to manage the strategy directly, as we do not have sufficient resources and local knowledge. We need to rely on a governance model involving institutions and organisations from the participating regions, who know how things can be done best.

**Which are the next steps for the coming months until the adoption of the strategy?**

After the last consultation conference in Constanta on 9-11 June, the Commission will organise bilateral consultations with each Member State concerned around mid-July.

Once the Commission obtains a basic agreement of the Member States, it will launch an inter-service consultation. This very detailed procedure aims at verifying the compatibility of the strategy with EU policies (transport, energy, environment, etc) and at ensuring that all parts of the Commission actually back the strategy.

**The action plan is expected to be available for the public in December 2010.**

**What lessons are taken from the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea Region?**

The Baltic Sea Region is a first experience of an EU strategy for the development of a functional region. We learned a lot during its preparation, we identified successful tools and we also made some mistakes. For the Danube Region, the idea is of course to learn from the Baltic Region by keeping its positive aspects and by not repeating the mistakes. However we are also very much open to adapting the governance model to the specificities of the Danube Region.

**What role can territorial cooperation programmes play in the governance of the strategy? What can be learned from territorial cooperation in terms of governance?**

**Territorial cooperation stakeholders are very strong in identifying good partners and developing working practices that can work across borders.** The strategy is of course much wider than cooperation programmes, in terms of objectives, scope and geographical coverage. Territorial cooperation stakeholders will naturally be encouraged to integrate elements of the EU strategy in their own programme strategies.



PHOTO: INTERACT

PHOTO: BREGANSTINE

## Contact your national coordinator!

Bilateral meetings between the European Commission and the Member States (and informally non-Member States) in the Danube Region on preparation of the action plan for the EUSDR are to start in July. Meetings will take place between the EC and representatives of different sectors and ministries.

All territorial cooperation programmes are invited to contact their national coordinators, who may not be aware of the work done in the Objective 3 programmes. Share with national coordinators the importance of the territorial cooperation and the contribution of respective programmes for the development of the Danube Region.

If you wish to make an impact this is a time to act. **Make an appointment with your national coordinators during the second half of June and take a proactive role in shaping the future of the Danube Region!** ETC opinion counts!

Contact details of the national coordinators:

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperation/danube/contact\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/danube/contact_en.htm)



## What governance instruments for the Danube Region?

Do we need to set up dedicated structures to organise the Danube Region Flagship projects? Experience with the Baltic Sea Region EU Strategy shows that flagship projects rely either on existing networks or new networks being set up. These networks may function on an informal basis or may be given a legal personality.

The EGTC (European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation) appears as a suitable instrument for the governance of macro-regional actions. A few EGTCs are already in place in the Danube Region and some more are being prepared or considered (Source: Committee of the Regions).

**EGTCs in place in the Danube Region:** Karst-Bodva (HU-SK), Ister-Granum (HU-SK), UTTS (HU-SK).

**EGTCs in preparation/reflection:** EGTC Corridor VIII (BG-IT); EGTC Ulm-Vienna-Budapest (DE-AT-HU); EGTC Common navigation on the Danube (BG-RO); etc.

The EGTC is one option among others. The experience of the Europaregion Donau-Moldau (Danube-Vltava) shows that it is the cooperation objectives that should decide which setup is more appropriate.

### Portrait: The cooperation project “Europaregion Donau-Moldau (Danube-Vltava)”

#### Creating a long-lasting structure for an innovative region

Since 2009, partners from three countries and eight regions have been working around a joint objective: To intensify their cooperation in various fields of intervention through the creation of a long-lasting cooperation structure for the border area and the

alignment of their policies in areas of common interest. In the border area between Germany (Bavaria), Austria (Upper- and Lower-Austria) and the Czech Republic (South Bohemia, Pilsen and Vysocina), two Euroregions already exist (EUREGIO Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn, and Euroregion Sumava). The Europaregion Danube-Vltava initiative aims at **creating a unique and long-lasting structure around a multi-sectoral and integrated approach**. The partners have agreed to focus on the development of the competitiveness of the border region in view of “attracting” EU funding for the post-2013 period. Innovation and joint action in fields such as marketing, health, transport networks, tourism, labour market or environment are essential components of this initiative.

#### A 3-step procedure

The project Europaregion Danube-Vltava is currently in its preparatory phase, in which all thematic and organisational questions shall be clarified. The first module consists of the analysis of existing structures and networks in all above-mentioned fields. In a second step (2011), the development potentials of the Europaregion will be analysed: Themes of action and possible organisation structures will be identified. **The legal setup and the finalisation of the action plan will be concluded by the end of 2012.**

#### Which legal instrument for the governance of the Europaregion?

Even though the EGTC appears as a custom-made instrument for institutional cross-border cooperation, different legal solutions must be investigated. It is the cooperation objectives that should decide which setup is more appropriate!

#### A multi-programme cooperation

The Europaregion covers territories from three European Territorial Cooperation programmes: Bavaria-Czech Republic, Bavaria-Austria and Austria-Czech Republic. Funding applications were submitted to all three programmes and funding has been granted by the first two already. This project also shows the potential for cross-programme cooperation, which will be fostered more and more as part of EUSDR. **This “micro-region” appears as a model of integration across national borders, in the same way as the “macro-region” in which it will be embedded.** Relying on existing networks and making the best use out of the potentials of a border region - these are essential ingredients for successful cross-border governance!

Further information: [www.euregio-bayern.de](http://www.euregio-bayern.de)



# Territorial Cooperation in the Danube Region – cross-border and transnational programmes



PHOTO: INTERACT



PHOTOS: ALPINE SPACE, SOUTH EAST EUROPE, CENTRAL EUROPE

## The European Investment Bank: A key-partner in EU macro-regional strategies

*Eugenia Kazamaki-Ottersten is in charge of programme lending for convergence and environment at the Projects Directorate of the European Investment Bank (EIB). In this interview she tells us about the role of the EIB in the implementation of the Baltic Sea Strategy and its position on the Danube Region Strategy.*

**In your personal perspective, what are the main opportunities and challenges provided by the Baltic Sea Strategy (BSS) for this area?** One of the key assets of the Baltic Sea Partnership is the existing territorial cooperation that goes back several decades. The Baltic Sea Region is relatively homogeneous, which makes it easier to agree on joint solutions to common problems.

To progress, it is important to agree on key cross-sectoral objectives and on specific priorities shared by the entire territory and, in particular, to identify - using the BSS terminology - “flagship projects” with sufficient positive effects for the people and companies in the region and political visibility, which would yield quick results and demonstrate the ‘value added’ of the Strategy. The EIB supports such flagship projects and has already approved or is in the process of approving financing to roughly one third of the flagship projects in the Baltic Sea Region. In this context, the stocktaking exercise is vital.

Our experience also stresses that **decisions have to be made based on coherent, long-term planning**, from the technical, funding and implementation points of view, taking into account the macro-regional opportunities, challenges and constraints. This is obvious in the case of infrastructure links such as railroads, highways, waterways and ICT infrastructure, but should also take into account investment in areas such as wastewater and solid waste treatment, research and development, education and innovation.

**What is the role of the EIB in supporting the development of macro-regional strategies?** The EIB is fully committed to supporting EU macro-regional approaches. It has been very active in the launch and support of the pilot EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and is continuing to provide active support. **The EIB’s lending volume in the Baltic Sea Region doubled in 2009 to around EUR 10bn compared to 2007.**

The EIB cooperates with the European Commission at strategy level and with individual regions and Member States at project level. It also collaborates with other international financing institutions active in the different macro-regions. In the case of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea, it acts in close cooperation with the Nordic Investment Bank.

The EIB’s key role lies in funding projects but it also provides expertise with regard to financial engineering and, to the extent required, it may provide technical

assistance (TA), e.g. through technical support for project preparation and implementation. In the case of large infrastructure schemes which also receive financing from the EU’s Structural and Cohesion Funds, the “JASPERS” initiative (Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions), in cooperation with the European Commission, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, German public bank), provides project preparation support. In the BSS, the EIB continues to deliver its expertise and financial instruments; in addition, **a specific proposal is being studied for the potential launch of a BSS Trust Fund which can provide TA to further enhance the implementation of co-financed projects in the region and to support the development of complex projects.**

**What role can the EIB play in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region?** The EIB supports the Black Sea environmental partnership, where EIB-funded projects promote environmental sustainability in the lower part of the Danube River.

**In the Danube Region the EIB already lends between EUR 8-11bn a year**, with the portion directly attributable to the priorities of the EU Strategy for the Danube River Basin Region reaching almost EUR 4bn per year. Of this, 46% goes to communication and connectivity projects, 36% towards environmental protection and 18% is spent on socio-economic development.

**What is your personal advice to the Danube stakeholders?** As the Danube Region is of a rather heterogeneous/multi faceted nature, given its differing development and income levels, comprising EU Member States, Candidate Countries and Neighbourhood Countries spread over a wide area, there is potential to look at the key priorities of this region and to focus on them as far as possible. **It would be wise to opt for a few core flagship projects which will provide clear ‘value added’ and make a difference to the region.**

The time is, however, limited to make that difference, hence selected projects need to be realistic. Funding and TA support from definition, launch and through to implementation may be required to ensure the success of the projects. Close follow up will be key to the successful implementation of such flagship projects into macro-regional policies.



Waste management plant in western Lithuania included in an EIB Framework Loan

PHOTO: EIB

## GET TOGETHER

Become the 100th member of Territorial Cooperation Danube Region online community!

The Facebook group around the EU Strategy for the Danube Region is growing rapidly. Share your Danube Strategy related photos, find out about latest developments and discuss hot issues!

This online community offers an international platform to anybody interested in the development of the strategy.



Territorial Cooperation Group  
on the Danube Region Strategy

## GET INFORMED

By watching the Video and visiting our Website

Have a closer look at our Website, especially our section on the EU macro-regional strategies. The newly published video "A journey through the Danube Region: Territorial Cooperation shaping our joint future" offers a first glance at the current development of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Listen to the opinions and expectations of stakeholders, learn about the different pillars and get an insight in the development process. [www.interact-eu.net/danube\\_strategy\\_videos/328](http://www.interact-eu.net/danube_strategy_videos/328)



## GET CURIOUS

"The Danube Quiz"

As INTERACT uses 'Building bridges' as its main slogan for promoting the Danube Region Strategy, this time we want you to guess the location of this fascinating bridge across the Danube:

- A) Linz (AT)
- B) Budapest (HU)
- C) Russe (BG) / Giurgiu (RO)

Do you know the correct answer? Send us an email at: [ip.vienna@interact-eu.net](mailto:ip.vienna@interact-eu.net) or find us at the Territorial Cooperation stand at conferences. Get a reward for the first 5 correct answers!



## Zoom on a Cooperation Project in the Danube Region: TransWaste

In this issue we focus on a transnational cooperation project on the informal sector of waste picking within the Danube Region.

So far very little information is available on the informal (non-authorized) waste picking and transboundary shipment of waste / products in the European context in general. These activities are problematic for different reasons:

**Ecological:** Waste to be treated / disposed of may increase immensely in some regions and is recycled at inadequate places.

**Socially:** Waste pickers might lose even more of their social status and their main source of income if their access to waste is denied as a result of modernisation or competition. Additionally they endanger their own health by treating hazardous waste improperly.

**Economically:** Not only waste pickers are concerned but waste management authorities also lose money, which is needed to maintain a functioning infrastructure.

TransWaste aims at providing solutions to reduce these negative impacts. In particular the project partners are investigating the actual state of informal waste activities (e.g. the social background of waste pickers, the amount and type of waste / products concerned) and analysing their consequences. Furthermore the project is implementing solutions that bring a win-win situation for all parties. There is a particular focus on the integration of Roma in the formal waste management systems.

The project is co-financed by the Transnational Programme Central Europe, bringing together seven project partners from Austria, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. [www.transwaste.eu](http://www.transwaste.eu)



## The Danube Region agenda

### Major events in the Danube Region

9-11 June: Closing Conference on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Constanta (RO)



PHOTO: DREAMSTIME

29 June: Danube Day - Events in 14 countries and a special "2010 Danube Art Master competition"

[www.danubeday.org](http://www.danubeday.org)

DANUBE  
DAY



8-9 July: Danube Youth Summit (in the framework of the EXIT music festival), Novi Sad (RS)

24 September: Danube Strategy Financing and Governance, Belgrade (RS)

4-7 October: Open Days on Competitiveness, Cooperation and Cohesion, Brussels  
Including workshops on macro-regions

[www.opendays.europa.eu](http://www.opendays.europa.eu)



### Territorial Cooperation events and news

13 September: Alpine Space Programme - Launch of the third call for proposals  
The terms of reference for the call will be available on the programme website on 28 June.

[www.alpine-space.eu](http://www.alpine-space.eu)



21-22 September: South East Europe Programme - Annual event in Thessaloniki

[www.southeast-europe.net](http://www.southeast-europe.net)



30 September - 1 October: Celebrating 20 years of Territorial Cooperation, looking beyond 2013  
INTERACT and the Belgian Presidency of the European Union organise a joint event to celebrate this anniversary, together with all interested territorial cooperation stakeholders in Europe.

[www.interact-eu.net](http://www.interact-eu.net)



27 October: CENTRAL EUROPE Programme - Public event on climate change

The CENTRAL EUROPE Programme organises a public event on "Transnational concepts for combating the climate change" at the EUREGIA exhibition 2010, Leipzig (DE)

[www.central2013.eu](http://www.central2013.eu)



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