



# Interreg



EUROPEAN UNION

**Danube Transnational Programme**

**CultPlatForm\_21**

**Report from Final Conference**

**held from 22 – 24 May 2019 in Regensburg, Germany**

organized at:

Thon-Dittmer-Palais

World Heritage Visitor Centre in

the Salzstadel



## Report of the Final Conference „Visible Danube – Hidden Heritage as Future Potential in Culture and Tourism“

The Final Conference “Visible Danube. Hidden Heritage as Future Potential in Culture and Tourism” took place from 22 – 24 May 2019 in Regensburg, Germany and was organized by PP6 (City of Regensburg), the Lead Partner (Federal Chancellery of Austria) and PP2 (Ministry of Science, Research and Arts Baden-Württemberg). The project meetings and panels were held at the Thon-Dittmer-Palais and at the World Heritage Visitor Centre; dinner receptions were hosted at the historic Reichssaal of the Old Town Hall and at the cultural and creative centre “Degginger”; and on the last day of the conference, five guided tours offered different approaches and various ways to explore the City of Regensburg and its hidden treasures.

The event was dedicated to present the outcomes and the future orientated strategies of the INTERREG project “Danube Culture Platform” which had been successfully developed during 30 months of transnational cooperation. The nine international partners showcased their pilot projects providing exciting artistic and digital interventions uncovering hidden heritage places, stories and objects along the Danube. The comprehensive Project Documentation – introduced at the conference –, includes two new strategies for cultural routes in the Danube area. As a solemn closing act, the official Memorandum was signed leading to the final statements on the follow-up plans.



The final transnational event in Regensburg enhanced the EU-wide visibility of the Danube Culture Platform project by engaging external and internal experts in knowledge transfer, by fostering networking and information exchange among the partners and by including key stakeholders like national policy makers, operators, scientists and artists in an empowering exchange. Several outstanding speakers from all over Europe – among them Stefano Dominioni (Executive Secretary of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, Directorate General on Democracy, LU) and Nigel Mills (Hadrian’s Wall Heritage, UK) – enriched the European cultural dialogue.

The Regensburg conference aimed at presenting the Danube region as an innovative space for culture and tourism able to bridge its chequered history with the perspectives and opportunities of the future. Transferable results for the benefit of culture and tourism development in the Danube countries are of high relevance for the project.

Besides addressing strategic project issues such as the expansion of cultural routes, an exploration of visible and invisible cultural heritage, this international meeting has been a forum for the multifarious results of two and a half years of systematic regional cooperation work. Moreover, this has been the first time to present the future perspectives of the project.

During a Public Presentation all important project results have been introduced by the partners. In addition, a model for a future Small Project Fund for the Danube region and the comprehensive Project Documentation has been presented including two strategies for cultural routes in the Danube area.

**Wednesday, 22 May 2019**

### **Opening of the exhibition „Danube Women Stories“**

The Conference started on 22 May 2019 with the opening of the exhibition “Danube Women Stories” at 7 pm at the World Heritage Visitor Centre next to the Danube. It shows one representative female personality from present days and one from history from Ulm, Regensburg, Linz, Vienna, Budapest, Vukovar, Novi Sad and Timisoara, and provides information about their lives and work. The design was created by the communications designer Sabine Geller (Ulm), who has been publishing the bilingual "danube connects" magazine for more than ten years. The artist Natalija Ribovic (Novi Sad) is responsible for the illustrations.



In addition to the exhibition, the results of the project include a handy city tour guide with the title "Danube Women Stories", published by danube books Verlag. The city of Regensburg's cultural

advisor, Klemens Unger, welcomed guests. Sabine Geller ("danube connects" magazine, Ulm) gave an introduction to the project and the exhibition. Thomas Zehender (danube books Verlag) presented the accompanying book.

"Danube Women Stories" is an international project supported by the Baden-Württemberg Foundation as part of its "Perspective Danube: education, culture and civil society" programme. Lead partner is the Center for General Scientific Continuing Education (ZAWiW) at the University of Ulm. In keeping with the EU strategy for the Danube region, the project stimulates cross-border exchange on women's issues, researches and disseminates knowledge about the historical and contemporary significance of women in different cities along the Danube.

**Thursday, 23 May 2019**

### Welcome



The contribution and discussion part of the conference began with the charming introduction of the Vienna based actress and moderator **Mercedes Echerer**, who outlined her affinity to the Danube region.



**Klemens Unger** highlighted the historical parallels in the field of culture that connect all the countries along the Danube. As the city of Regensburg's cultural advisor he welcomed Elisabeth Pacher from the Federal Chancellery of Austria, Volker Wedekind from the Ministry of Science, Research and Arts Baden-Württemberg and Dr. Swantje Volkmann, consultant for cultural affairs for the Danube Region at the Danube Swabian Museum. Unger encouraged to find out further similarities and to build up on common grounds.



**Elisabeth Pacher** reflected the past 2,5 years of cooperation of 9 partners in the frame of the Danube Culture Platform. In the course of the project the hidden heritage was defined as a characteristic of the Danube region. Places of history have been searched and data was collected, a series of workshops and conferences has taken place with the aim of developing two strategies for cultural routes. The hidden heritage was the point of departure of pilot projects. New technologies and artistic means interpret historic places and events create (new) narratives and a new culture of memory and remembrance. Pacher is convinced: Cultural heritage connects and is a source of reflection.



**Volker Wedekind** outlined the special meaning of this transnational Danube Conferences on Culture for Baden-Württemberg. Exchange is the most important process for civil society. He found warm words for the project: “Let us strengthen this cooperation“, and: “I am glad to be part of the Danube culture family.“

### Keynote Speech



place?

**Nigel Mills** continued by presenting his Heritage Project “Hadrian’s Wall“. He underlined the importance of storytelling while talking about history: “People are interested in people and things what people do or did. Storytelling is at the heart of good interpretation.“ Most important in this context, the narrative frame and the question: What is the spirit of a

### Facilitation of Danube Heritage – From Theory to Practice



Referring to the “Danube Culture Platform” **Gábor Móczár** asked **Nigel Mills**: “Do you think we have a real narrative in our project?” According to Mills, the Interpretation Framework is a tremendously interesting document and a good starting point. An overarching story and simplification is needed. Móczár asked how to approach this challenge. According to Mills in a first step issues connecting and dividing have to be looked at, stories have to be illustrated and short stories connected with a core narrative. The second step is audience testing. This is the basis for communicating narratives and developing branding. Tourism packages make it easier for people to get involved and fascinated, said Mills, the ideal package consists of “the story, the visitor experience, accommodation and food“. **Stefano Dominioni** highlighted the participatory aspect. The panel was concluded by emphasizing the importance of exploring stories of local communities and stated that it was a long term plan to develop access and experience.

### Multimedia Presentation “CultPlatForm Reflections”



The multimedia presentation “CultPlatForm Reflections” designed by **Olivera Gračanin** gave a picture of the wide range of pilot projects giving a visible testimony of the historic memory of the Danube region providing sustainable impulses for a new, contemporary interpretation of hidden heritage.

## Panel Discussion with Project Partners: The Benefit of the Pilot Projects

In the frame of a panel discussion project partners discussed the benefit of pilot projects. Regina Hellwig-Schmid, donumenta e.V., Gábor Móczár, Zsolany Heritage Management Non-Profit Ltd., Plamena Nikolova, Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria, Josef Gruber, Upper Austria Culture Quarter, Andreea Ursuleasa, Ministry of Culture and National Identity of Romania and Annika Schäfer, Student DAHD, Academy of Performing Arts Baden-Württemberg took part and presented the conclusions of their projects drawn from the experiences and evaluations made while and after the implementation.

**Gábor Móczár** developed an app for the Roman history in order to strengthen the connection between the hidden heritage and the city of Pécs. He identified Roman history as a unifying element across the Danube region acting as a link between all the countries along the river. **Plamena Nikolova** also presented a multimedia tool to get in touch with History. She talked about her project in Vidin, an audio guide for the future storytelling. **Andreea Ursuleasa** talked about two hidden places, Golubac Fortress and Tabula Traiana in the Iron Gate Area and plans to make them visible by the means of the arts. **Regina Hellwig-Schmid** talked about the “Danube Art Lab”, an Artist-in-Residence-Programme. Eleven artists from the countries of the Danube region came to UNESCO World heritage Regensburg to find hidden spaces and work with them. The audience learned how people from other countries, especially artists look at one’s own city, history, culture and society. **Annika Schäfer** made a critical point and asked if heritage is always located in the past and talked about her experiences in the course of the DAHD (Danube Artistic Heritage Development) project, in which students recovered a place of history through contemporary art. **Josef Gruber** imagined by the means of stereoscopy how the Danube region was 2000 years ago. – All participants found different approaches to hidden heritage and made it visible for a broader audience.

### Presentation of the project “Romno Power Festival – Cultural Week of Sinti and Roma in Ulm”



“The Roma are the biggest minority in Europe“, recalls Mercedes Echerer **Paul F. Langer’s** project “Romno Power Festival – Cultural Week of Sinti and Roma in Ulm”, a project of the European Danube Academy in Ulm. He started by talking about a design label in Budapest which presents Romno Fashion. 2008 the Danube Academy in Ulm was founded focussing on Roma culture. The genocide of 500.000 Sinti and Roma during the National Socialism was not yet fully known and is also an example for hidden heritage. To give this heritage a stage means to promote the dialogue between Roma and Non-Roma people.

### Visit to the Photo Exhibition “Danube Art Lab”



Regina Hellwig-Schmid showed the photo exhibition “Danube Art Lab” by telling stories about each project and giving information about the participating artists and their projects.

### Reception by the Mayor of the City of Regensburg

In the evening the **Mayor of the City of Regensburg, Gertrud Maltz-Schwarzfischer**, hosted a reception at the Old Town Hall with subsequent dinner. The Mayor welcomed the invited guests and stated that Regensburg considers itself as a European city for a number of reasons. This is related to the past: Regensburg was founded in Roman times; in the Middle Ages, it was a city with trading relationships across Europe; and in the 17th and 18th century, it hosted the Perpetual Imperial Diet, bringing diplomats from throughout Europe into the city. In particular, the European context of Regensburg has always been related to the Danube region, its people and its culture in a special way. In the 20th and 21st century, the city is trying to continue these traditions. INTERREG projects such as “Danube Culture Platform” give the necessary scope to put these strategies into practice – in collaboration with strong European partners from the Danube region. At the end of her welcome address she thanked all the partners for the profitable cooperation over the past two and a half years.



The Regensburg Cathedral Choir enriched this welcome reception with their music. Moreover, the SOSANI Art Zone developed an exciting dance performance for this evening, tailored to the Reichssaal. The Sosanis come from Georgia and are another example of how international encounters enrich the cultural life of a city. And last but not least the Austrian actress Mercedes Echerer read from her book “Märchen, Mythen & Musik – Donau” (Fairy tales, Myths and Music – Danube), a collection of tales from the Danube region.



The welcome reception was followed by an informal get-together in the cultural and creative centre “Degginger”.

**Friday, 24 May 2019**

### Danube Culture Platform: Presentation of Project Results

**Klemens Unger** welcomed Elisabeth Pacher, Volker Wedekind and Stefano Dominioni, Executive Secretary of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, Directorate General on Democracy as well as the participants of the public part of the conference. **Volker Wedekind** appealed to the press to talk about this a connecting project, especially in times when the EU is facing major challenges.



In his keynote **Stefano Dominioni** talked about the history of Cultural Routes which are existing since 1987. Their aim is to foster democracy, sharing diversity, foster participation, understanding our shared culture, history, art and architecture including every country in Europe. As a successful example he named the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes. 25 Cultural Routes are crossing Europe. They are organized as NGOs.



In the frame of a public presentation **Elisabeth Pacher, Boris Čamernik, Oliviera Gračanin** and **Volker Wedekind** presented the project results and shared with the public results and images of the project. Elisabeth Pacher highlighted the dedication of the project to the hidden, forgotten and invisible Project co-funded by the European Union funds (ERDF and IPA)



heritage of the Danube region and presented the Interpretation Framework for Cultural Routes Based on Hidden Heritage. Interpretation helps to foster understanding, create visitor experiences and makes them engaging and memorable creating holistic and memorable experiences. Within the projects, Boris Čamernik found a good base for various touristic products. Olivera Gračanin concluded that pilot projects provided the experience how hidden heritage can be made visible by artistic means.

### Presentation of the Small Project Fund Study



**Annemarie Türk, Paul F. Langer and Márton Mehes** (European Danube Academy Ulm) presented the Small Project Fund Study which was undertaken in cooperation with the European Danube Academy. The idea for this fund is as old as the Danube Strategy, meanwhile 10 years. Annemarie Türk highlighted that in the list of funds one is missing: a small project fund for artists and institutions. A survey showed that bureaucracy of existing support programs is very high. Traduki, europäisches Netzwerk for Literature and Books in South East Europe, serves as a role model. The 18 members are active in the whole South-Eastern region and their key questions are: how to get the money, how to avoid bureaucracy, how to keep transparency. – A small project fund would bridge a funding gap.

### Presentation of the Project Documentation



**Anja Lungstraß**, österreichische kulturdokumentation, together with project partners presented the Project Documentation giving a picture of the wide range of project activities.

### Our Hidden Heritage: Ideas for Connecting the Danube Region

**Stefano Dominioni, Nigel Mills, Elisabeth Pacher, Olivera Gračanin, Boris Čamernik, Volker Wedekind and Klemens Unger** participated in the final discussion moderated by **Márton Méhes**. As an introduction, Elisabeth Pacher presented the Interpretation Framework for Cultural Routes Based on Hidden Heritage in the Danube region. Nigel Mills recommended to focus on selected messages when developing the Interpretation Framework. Dominioni appreciated the model of the Interpretation Framework and hidden heritage as a connecting theme recognizing new narratives and unknown personalities having the potential to be integrated into cultural routes. Gračanin highlighted the importance of cooperation for value creation through a joint learning process.



Boris Camernik acknowledged “hidden heritage” as a theme for tourism which should be put into the spotlight. Ideas generated by the project have the potential to be implemented in existing touristic routes. He stated: “This should bring profit to the local community.” and recalled that tourism is a close field to culture and culture brings tourism further value. Klemens Unger named the Danube a cultural axis which was very important for the identity of people. Volker Wedekind proposes to focus on special themes, for example sustainable tourism. Elisabeth Pacher closes: “We should continue to foster awareness of cultural diversity and history of the Danube region in order to support the creation or new narratives and a culture of memory and remembrance.”

At the end of the conference the nine Partners signed the Memorandum “Danube Culture Platform – Creative Spaces of the 21st Century”.





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