



Danube S3 Cluster Project

“Transnational Cluster Cooperation active on Agro – food, based on Smart Specialization Approach in Danube region”

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– **South Muntenia Regional Development Agency**

October 21st, 2021, virtual event

Final Conference of Danube S3 Cluster project



Programme priority and specific objective:

 **INNOVATIVE AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE DANUBE REGION**
1.1 Improve framework conditions for innovation

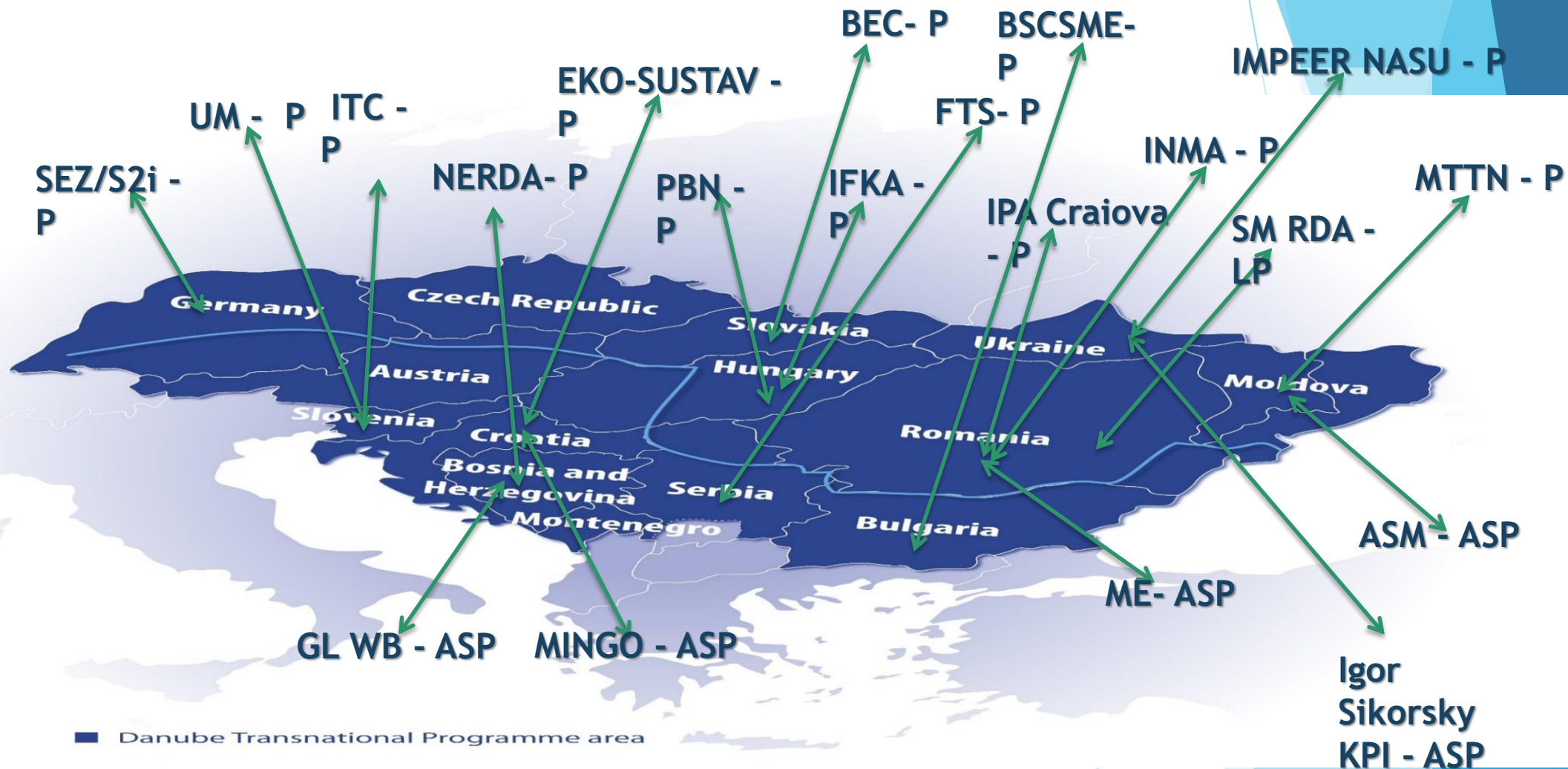
Project duration: 01.07.2018 – 31.12.2021

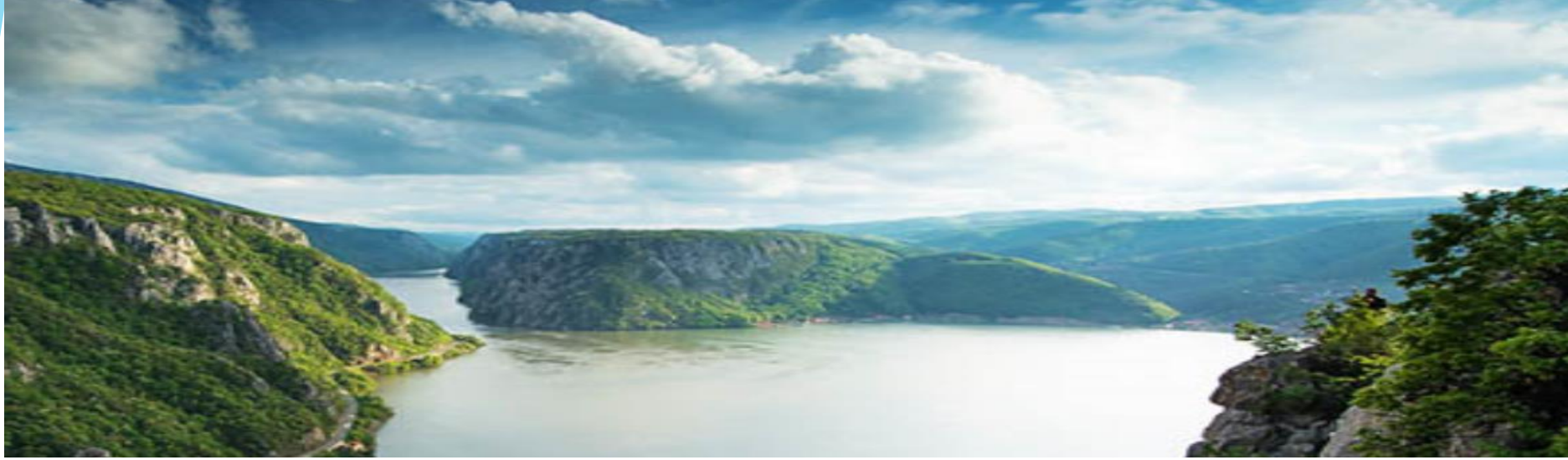
Lead Partner: South Muntenia Regional Development Agency- Romania

Project partners: 11 countries, 15 partners - 11 ERDF, 2 IPA, 2 ENI and 5 ASP

Project budget: 1,915,011.94 €

Danube S3 Cluster Project Consortium





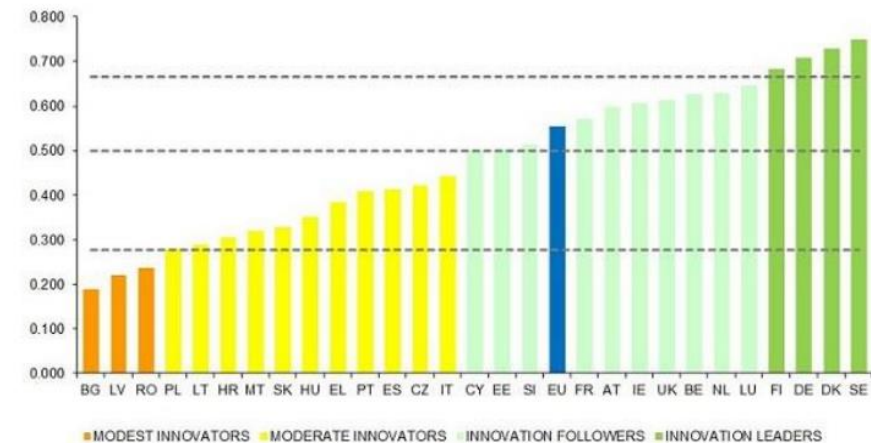
Major territorial challenge in the Danube area:

- *unbalanced distribution of innovation performances between Western part of the region and the Eastern part;*
- *most of the countries belonging to the Modest Innovators group;*

Causes:

- *different framework conditions;*
- *wide range of policies governing the R&I sector.*

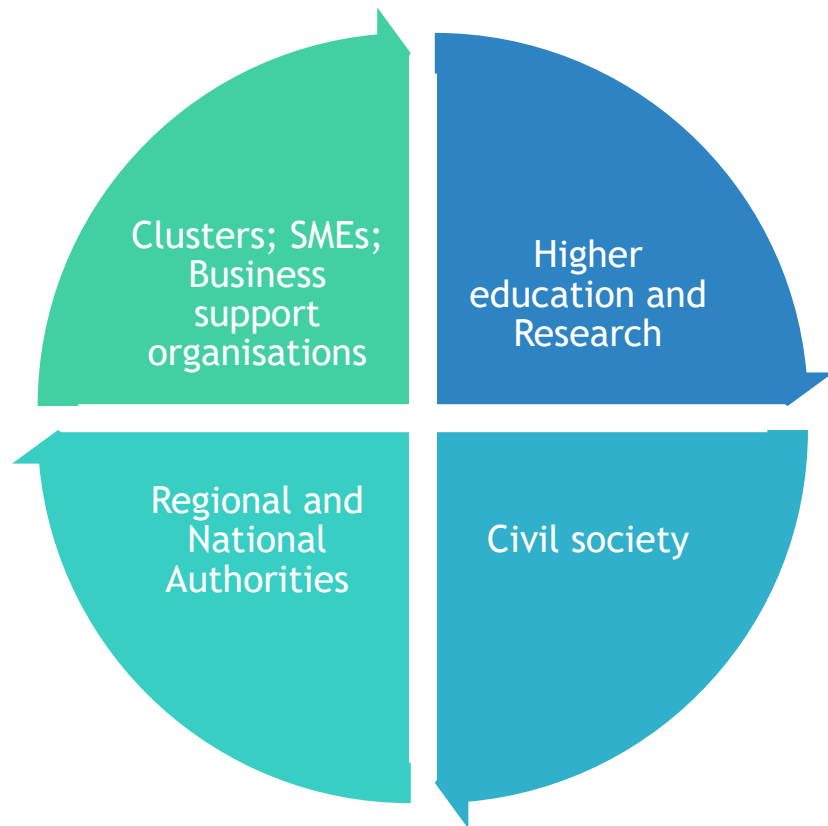
Figure 5. Innovation Union Scoreboard 2014



Source: Innovation Union Scoreboard 2014

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/innovation-scoreboard/index_en.htm

Our experts...



... gathered to solve these challenges by putting together:

- *knowledge*
- *expertise*
- *experience*

..to create framework conditions favorable for the development of clusters in the Danube Region.

Danube S3 Cluster aimed to...

- have better and coordinated **public policies in the Danube area**;
- boost innovation-driven entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Danube area by **developing smart and coordinated cluster policies**;
- **enhance innovation management knowledge and skills**;
- **foster transnational cluster cooperation** in Agro-Food sector.



Main Phases of the project

Danube S3 Cluster Strategy



UNDERSTAND HOW?

Performing regional analysis of cluster policies in order to develop Danube S3 Cluster Strategy

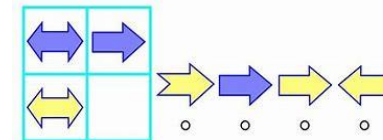
Innovative tools development



LEARN HOW?

Innovation audits of Agro-Food clusters and Business and innovation training sessions

Pilot initiatives



TEST & VALIDATE HOW?

Implementation of 5 pilot projects in 3 cross-cutting themes in the Agro-Food sector

Policy Recommendations



FEEDBACK HOW?

Joint elaboration of Agro-Food Cluster Program

Joint S3 Cluster Strategy

- based on analysis of regional context and cluster innovation potential in the Danube region

Project partners elaborated a transnational coordinated cluster strategy **to support the development of a sustainable, resource efficient agro-food sector in the Danube region and strengthen the role and market efficiency of clusters.**

The strategy provides **recommendations for actions**, structured along **five intervention areas**:

- Improve framework conditions for cluster policy;
- Increase cluster mapping and visibility;
- Monitoring, accreditation and benchmarking;
- Cluster management and excellence support programmes;
- Increase trans sectoral cooperation and internationalization



Project Code:	DTP2-004.1.1	Document type:	Output 3.3
Project start date:	01.07.2018	Project end date:	30.06.2021

Danube S3 Cluster

Transnational Cluster Cooperation active on Agro-Food, based on Smart Specialization Approach in the Danube region

Output

Danube S3 Cluster Strategy

Innovation Tools & Dedicated Training Sessions

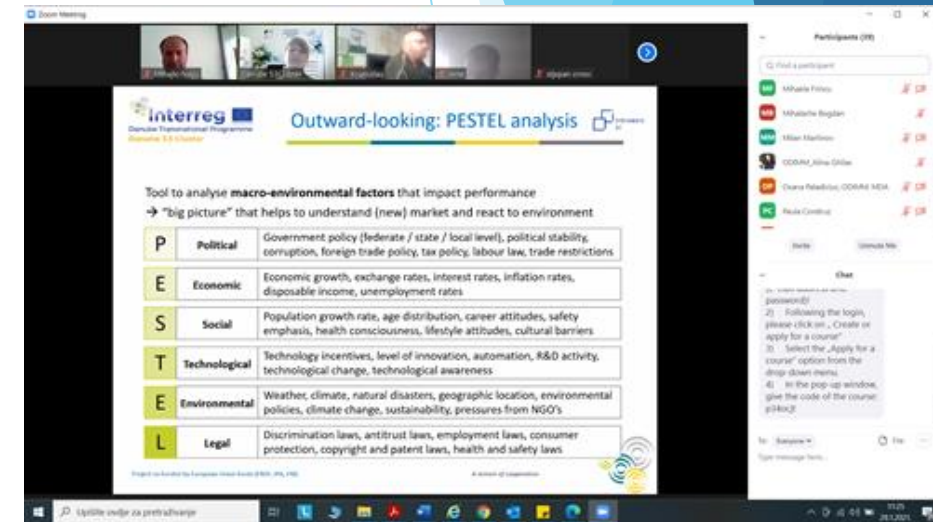
In order to meet the needs of clusters, partners developed **2 Innovation Audit tools** for clusters (*1 cluster managers & 1 cluster members*) that are operating in the Agro-Food.

➤ **200 innovation audits** performed

Following the assessment, a **Business and Innovation training program** was developed to improve cluster cooperation and SMEs' competitiveness - **313 participants**.

The training contains 3 modules (9 training sessions):

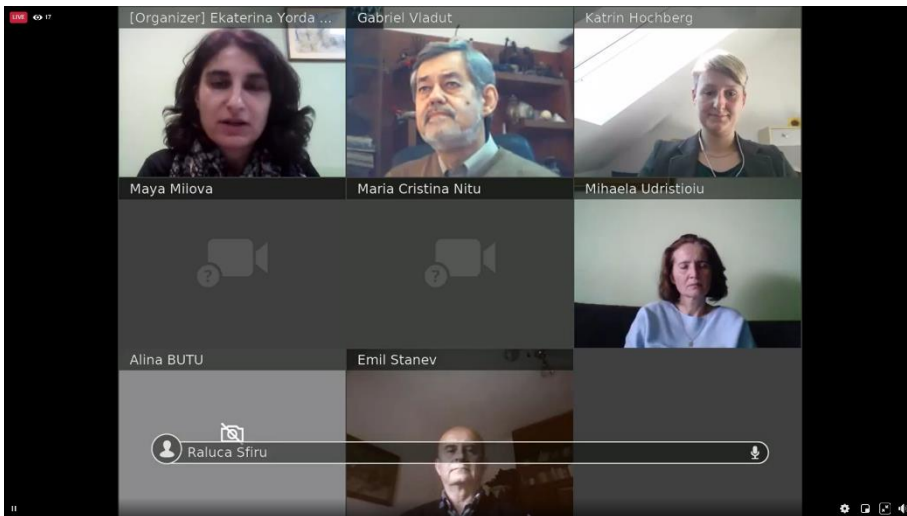
- (1) **Innovation Management Dimensions** – Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Romania
- (2) **Business Models for Self-Sustainable Clusters** – Romania, Slovenia, and Slovakia
- (3) **Business Internationalization and Scale-up** – Slovenia, Croatia, and Hungary



Pilot actions

5 local action plans – in *Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Slovakia* – have been developed as pilot actions to test the strategy.

The activities of pilot actions have been ranging from organization of different events and workshops where various project ideas have been discussed to the organization of two brokerage events, where clusters were trying to identify potential partners and get to the signature of the cluster cooperation agreements.



LAP	Topic	Responsible for pilot implementation	
1	Healthy food	IPA CRAIOVA	D5.1.1
2	Open innovation in clusters	NERDA	D5.1.2
3	Business models that work in circular economy	EKO-SUSTAV	D5.1.3
4	Business models that work in circular economy	FTS	D5.1.4
5	Healthy food	BEC	D5.1.5

National Programs to support clusters in the Danube Region in the period 2021 – 2027

To bring the Danube S3 Cluster results closer to decision makers, a set of activities has been implemented.

These include the organization of **3 Policy Dialogue Workshops**, which managed to bring together more than **130 participants** from almost all Danube region counties and beyond.

The discussions within these events supported the coordination between the activities of EUSDR **PA7 (Knowledge society)** and **PA8 (Competitiveness of enterprises)** and Danube S3 Cluster project.

New proposals for projects have been initiated by the policy learning dialogues and insights from the discussions were included in various strategic documents for regional development.



Policy Recommendations to support Agri Food Clusters in the Danube Region

Based on all the information gathered during the project implementation, **policy recommendations were formulated at the level of each Danube S3 Cluster partner country as well as for the Danube region** as such, taking into account the diverse situation in individual regions regarding cluster policies and cluster support.

These recommendations are linked directly to the priorities defined in Danube S3 Cluster Strategy and their fulfilment should lead to achieving the **project's vision, which is a sustainable, resource efficient agri-food sector in the Danube region.**



Extension phase of the project

June-December 2021

Additional activities to assess the impact of the Covid19 pandemic on the agri-food sector

Regional Analyses of Covid19 Impacts on Agri-Food Clusters

Assess the situation during and after the pandemic:

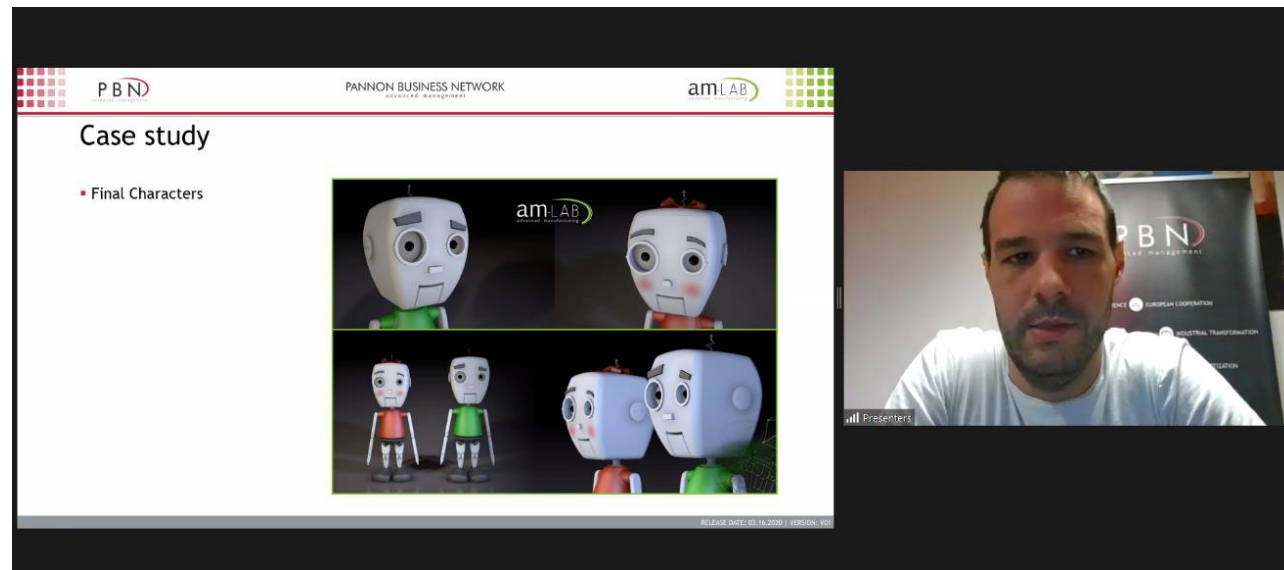
- lock down and disruptions triggered by COVID-19
- critical weaknesses, inequalities, and inequities in the food system
- serious challenges in the Danube region with surpluses in production, resulting from limitations in logistics, lower demand as a consequence of lock down, shortages as a result of low self-sufficiency, difficulties in production resulting from labor shortages

Results from the analyses will be discussed during the 4th Policy Learning Dialogue Workshop



Training program dedicated to digitization

- ❑ was developed and will be provided focused on the digitization possibilities that can be used successfully by the representatives of the Agri-Food sector.
- ❑ The training materials prepared by partners are on the following topics:
 - **3D printing,**
 - **Drone,**
 - **Business Animation,**
 - **Artificial Intelligence in the Agri-Food sector.**

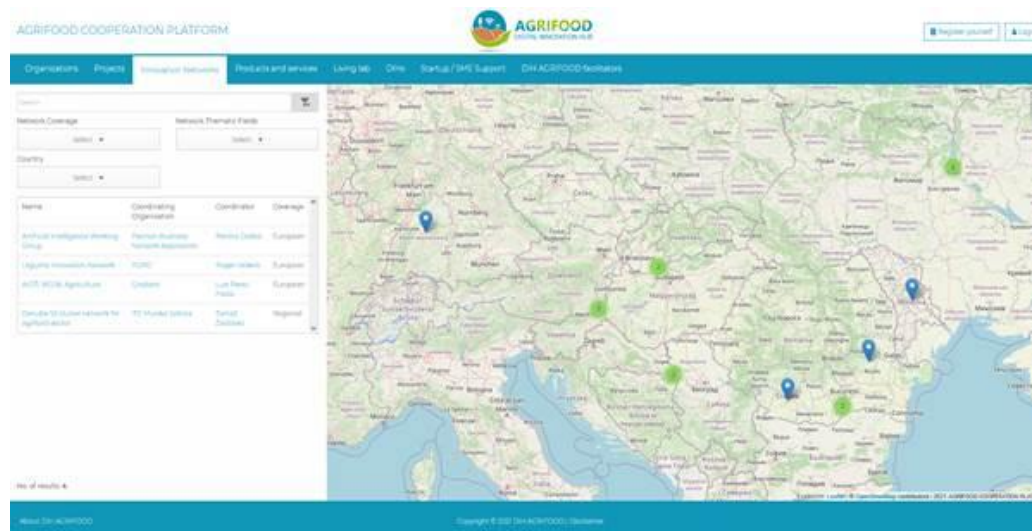


Expanding the Local Action Plans

- with concrete activities aimed at:
 - *establishing new DIHs in the region,*
 - *supporting organizations that are planning to establish DIHs,*
 - *the establishment of EDIHs at national level,*
 - *connections between EDIHs at European level.*

Establishing the Danube Agri-food Innovation Eco-system

- under the umbrella of already operational **European DIH AGRIFOOD COOPERATION PLATFORM**, which will upscale and expand activities in the direction of identifying and systematically connect organizations, projects, DIHs, products & solutions, Startup/SME Support Organizations with the help of designated and trained facilitators provided by Danube S3 cluster partners.



Pandemic Response Plan designed for Agri-Food Clusters

- provide new and additional **policy recommendations** and create policy framework for the **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic Response Plan** specially designed **for Agri-Food Clusters**.

This activity will include also development of emergency protocol(s) and procedures for limiting the consequences of the negative impact of pandemic virus diseases suitable for Agri-Food Clusters and companies



DANUBE S3 CLUSTER

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Overall budget: € 1,790,445.70
ERDF Contribution: € 1,263,982.66
IPA Contribution: € 128,113.91
ENI Contribution: € 129,782.25

A stream of cooperation.

Project co-funded by European Union funds (ERDF, IPA, ENI)



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