



DANUBE BASELINE STUDY

STUDY FOR DETERMINING THE BASELINE VALUES OF THE
RESULT INDICATORS FOR THE
INTERREG V-B DANUBE
(DANUBE TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMME)

FINAL REPORT

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1. Executive summary

The shift embraced by the European Commission towards a stronger result oriented approach in the new programming period, included the requirement to define result indicators for each of the Specific Objectives of the Cooperation Programmes (CP). Used for determining the progresses achieved by their interventions, the result indicators are integral parts of the intervention logic defined for each of the programmes. In order to meet their scope, each of the result indicators must have a quantified baseline against which the changes can be measured, through reproducible methods and timely collection of data. In line with these requirements, *the aim of the present study is to determine the baseline values for the result indicators defined for the Danube Transnational Programme (DTP).*

In the specific case of DTP, the CP defined 10 content related Specific Objectives, grouped along 4 Priority Axes. The result indicators were defined in a general form as “The intensity of cooperation of key actors/key institutions in the programme area...” in achieving the results defined in the cooperation programme. The only exception was Specific Objective 4.2, focused on supporting the governance and the implementation of European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), for which the result indicator was referring mainly to the management capacities of the Priority Area Coordinators (PAC), as key actors in EUSDR implementation.

A Methodological Note was endorsed by the DTP Programming Committee containing the general principles and methods for measurement for all of the indicators. This Note served as a basis for the present study, the final methodology being defined after rounds of consultations with the Joint Secretariat of the Programme.

The study is based on a survey applied in November 2015 to a large group of stakeholders relevant for the purpose of the specific policies tackled by DTP. The focus of the survey was set on the results and their different dimensions (as they were defined by the CP), investigating them along a set of elements characterizing the intensity of cooperation. In order to reflect the territorial dimension of the cooperation in the programme area, a quantitative question was also included reflecting the extent of international expansion of the cooperation networks.

Until the deadline set for filling in the questionnaires, a number of 254 valid responses were received. This amount of responses is in line with the requirements of the Methodological Note which, considering the size of the programme area, was targeting 250 stakeholders in order to reach meaningful results for the survey.

The questions served as tools for determining the baseline values for the result indicators of the DTP. For each result and their dimensions, the respondents were asked to rate different elements of the intensity of interaction with relevant stakeholders on a scale ranging from 1 to 7. The ratings were aggregated using a weighting method, as provided by the Methodological Note. The calculation of the baseline value was based on the arithmetic average of the scores obtained for each result/dimension of result defined for each of the Specific Objectives of the Programme.

The values obtained are synthetically presented in the table below:

Result indicator		Baseline value
RI 1.1	Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to improve the framework conditions for research and innovation	3.68
RI 1.2	Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to increase competences for business and social innovation	3.22
RI 2.1	Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to improve transnational water management and flood risk prevention	3.76
RI 2.2	Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to strengthen sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources	3.87
RI 2.3	Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to foster restoration and management of ecological corridors	3.55
RI 2.4	Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to improve preparedness for disaster risk management	3.65
RI 3.1	Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to strengthen environmentally-friendly, safe and balanced transport systems	4.05
RI 3.2	Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to contribute to energy security and energy efficiency	3.90
RI 4.1	Intensity of cooperation of institutional actors and other stakeholders in the programme area in order to tackle major societal challenges	4.14
RI 4.2	The status of management capacities of Priority Area Coordinators (PAC) to effectively implement EUSDR goals, targets and key action	3.59

Additionally, a set of qualitative questions was inserted in the survey with the scope of providing an insight to the professional background and to disclose the expectations of the stakeholders related to DTP. The answers to these types of questions were only informative, having no role in calculating the baseline values of the related indicators.

Based on the CPR requirements, the progresses achieved under each of the Specific Objectives shall be measured in the future against the same set of criteria, using the same methodology for calculating the values. The updated values of the result indicators will represent compulsory parts of the Annual Implementation Reports submitted in 2017 and 2019.

2. Assignment

2.1. Background

In December 2012, the European Commission presented its view on the territorial coverage of the new European Territorial Cooperation programmes, including the Danube Transnational Programme comprising 14 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany – Baden-Wuerttemberg and Bavaria, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine – partly). As a result of an effective programming process the new INTERREG V-B DANUBE (Danube Transnational Programme 2014-2020) was submitted to the EU Commission in March 2015 and in August 2015 it was endorsed.

As part of the programming exercise, result indicators (measuring the dimension of the expected change in a specific policy area) related to the specific objectives selected by the Programme Authorities were identified and agreed by the Programme bodies. Result indicators are a core element of the Programme's intervention logic thus their identification was one of the cornerstones of the programming exercise in order to strengthen the *result-orientation of the programming* according ETC Reg. Art. 8. The legal framework is the following: Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 (ERDF Regulation), Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 (General regulation) and Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 (ETC Regulation).

Since result indicators have to meet specific requirements, the expert team assisting the programming process elaborated a „**Methodological note on the indicator system taking into account EC comments and the action plan**“ emphasizing a few guiding principles for setting and using these indicators in implementing the Danube Transnational Programme as follows:

- It is proposed to focus result indicators on the (evolving) intensity of cooperation of key actors/key institutions in the programme area in order to improve the framework conditions in specific policy fields therefore the CP adopted the use of composite result indicators to be defined on the bases of qualitative surveys;
- As for result indicators baselines, they shall use the latest available data and targets shall be set for 2023. Targets may be expressed in quantitative or qualitative terms (ETC Reg. Art. 16);
- Changes of the result indicator baseline value must be measurable by reproducible methods and timely collection of data;
- Changes in the value of result indicators have to be reported in the Annual Implementation Reports (“where appropriate”, acc. to Article 50 CPR);
- The provisions to collect, analyse and evaluate the result indicators have to be described in the mandatory evaluation plan to be elaborated;

- According to the Indicative multi annual work plan for monitoring and evaluation of result indicators) there will be 3 further surveys to be implemented in 2018, 2020 and 2023 (not included into the present contract);
- It is crucial to define a sound and practical method to measure cooperation effects by means of result indicators related to specific policy objectives.

2.2. The Programme

The Danube Transnational Programme 2014-2020 represents an instrument of the European Union intended to foster the territorial cohesion of the geographic area comprising 14 countries mainly part of the Danube rivers basin. The area is overlapping the territorial coverage of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region.

The elaboration of DTP consisted of an extended, participatory process, involving representatives of all countries part of the programme area, and coordinated by the Programming Committee (PC). Based on a comprehensive Territorial Analysis, and in line with the EU Regulation, the PC selected four Thematic Objectives to be addressed by the programme, grouped along four Priority Axes:

1. Innovative and Socially Responsible Danube Region
2. Environmental and Cultural Responsible Region
3. Better Connected and Energy Responsible Danube Region
4. Well-governed Danube Region

The Priority Axes were further broken down into Specific Objectives, reflecting the investment priorities defined by the relevant EU Regulation. In line with the EC requirements, in case of each of the Specific Objective a result was defined, which represent the change sought by the programme's intervention in the specific field. In order to capture this change, the programme defined a set of result indicators, corresponding to each of the Specific Objectives. The result indicator in its general form is defined as: "The intensity of cooperation of key actors/key institutions in the programme area to achieve the results defined in the cooperation programme".

2.3. Tasks and objective

During the contract implementation the following tasks were undertaken to be performed:

- Development of the detailed questions for the interviews (online survey)
- Starting and closing the online survey (including collected data analysis)
- Drafting the report for the baseline values and describing the next steps to be taken during next future surveys (2018, 2020, 2023)

The scope and objective of the present study is to determine the baseline value for each of the result indicators, using a method which can be replicated in the future, in order to reflect the changes occurred related to the respective indicator. The change is the result of the programme intervention but also of external factors, the net effect (effect of the programme) on the baseline values being measured in the future in the framework of the impact evaluation.

3. Methodology

3.1. Principles

When setting-up the survey for determining the baseline, the following principles were taken into consideration:

- for understanding the change, it is important to reflect not only a single value, but to capture the changes in various elements of the programme results
- to operationalise the level of cooperation and to ensure comparability of the data from future measurements, the survey used mainly closed-ended questions
- for comparability reasons, reproducible methods shall be applied in collecting the relevant data

3.2. Questionnaire

The methodology applied for the survey was in line with the „Methodological note on the indicator system taking into account EC comments and the action plan” presented by METIS GmbH in June 2015, and endorsed by the Programming Committee. During the initial discussions held with the Joint Secretariat, the methodology proposed in the note was slightly amended, so it grasps more comprehensively the content of the programme results.

Hence, the focus of the measurement was shifted from the indicative actions to the expected results for each of the Specific Objectives. The rationale of this shift was that the list of actions is only an indicative one, not being exhaustive. Therefore, possible activities falling out of the scope of the indicative actions would have not been measured by the survey, not being thus included in the measurement of the result indicator. Additionally, due to the relatively large thematic coverage of the indicative actions, many of them would have not been covered by a single organization/institution, making it impossible for them to provide ratings, affecting by this the outcome of the survey. Moreover the fulfilment of the indicative actions is subject to the output indicators.

Instead, the survey focused on the expected results defined under each of the Specific Objectives. Having a distinctive set of beneficiaries, Specific Objective 4.2 was treated separately. In case the results defined by the CP were very complex, they were broken down in more elements, reflecting the different dimensions of their content. For each result/dimension of the result it was defined a set of elements reflecting the intensity of cooperation, in line with the Methodological note, as follows:

- the appropriateness and relevance of the stakeholders involved in cooperation (partnership)
- the quality of communication among the stakeholders involved in cooperation (communication)
- the ability of cooperation activities to reach all the relevant stakeholders (coverage of cooperation)

- the availability of financial resources for cooperation (financing)
- the degree of transfer of knowledge and good practices (transferability of knowledge)
- the extent of usage of the results of the cooperation activities (utility)
- the leverage effect of the results coming from the cooperation activities (leverage)
- the achievement of synergies with other policies, programmes and projects (synergy)

Each of these elements was provided with a scale grasping different levels of intensity, ranging from „No” (Not existent), to „Excellent”, with 5 different intermediary options.

In order to reflect the territorial dimension of the programme, the survey included a question related to the international cooperation within the programme territory. The scale was covering different stages of cooperation, from none, to extensive cooperation involving more than 7 Danube Region countries. In order to make possible further investigations of the cooperation flows in the region, the stakeholders were asked to nominate the cooperating countries.

Finally, the survey included a set of qualitative questions which would provide valuable information for the programme, reflecting the integration of the respondents into the professional networks active in the area, but also their expectations regarding the Programme. This data is not part of the calculation basis, having just an informative purpose, providing inputs which may be used by the programme management in defining its communication and implementation strategies.

As mentioned above, the data necessary for establishing the baseline value for Specific Objective 4.2 is of different nature, due to the specificities of the given SO. Unlike the other Specific Objectives, SO 4.2 is meant to support the governance and implementation of EUSDR, therefore its’ scope and target groups are very specific. Thus, the content of the questionnaire and the stakeholders targeted by it was different. In line with the results defined by the programme, the questions were directed towards the performance of Priority Area Coordinators and the Danube Strategy Point, and the efficiency of the envisioned seed money facility. Even though the seed money facility is not yet in place, and the Danube Strategy Point was just starting its activity, due to the need of ensuring comparability of data monitored, the survey for establishing the baseline value included also questions related to these.

The language of the questionnaire is English.

3.3. Target groups

The target group of the survey is formed by the key actors/stakeholders from the programme area, active in the professional topics addressed by the Specific Objectives. In line with the Methodological note, key actors/stakeholders are defined as „actors/institutions in the public and private sectors which are highly competent in a specific policy field and which can influence the development and diffusion of policies, offer specific tools and services and can contribute to common orientations, frameworks and strategies”. They represent former beneficiaries of the programme’s predecessor (South-East Europe Transnational Programme), but include also non-beneficiaries, ensuring thus the representativeness of the survey. The list

of the addressed institutions was established based on the inputs provided by the members of the Programming Committee, but also on the database of the SEE Programme.

In line with the Methodological Note and the CP, the target group for the questionnaire related to SO 4.2 was composed of the Priority Areas Coordinators and the EUSDR National Coordinators.

3.4. Analysis of the primary data

As already mentioned, the data was collected at the level of results/dimension of results. Out of the received questionnaires, only those which were filled in completely, providing answers for all the questions addressed were considered for interpretation. Until the deadline, 254 valid questionnaires were received, reaching thus the target of 250 set within the Methodological Note. The target was set in order to ensure that the amount of information is sufficient enough to provide meaningful results, taking into consideration the size of the programme area.

Based on the responses received, a value was calculated for each of them, using a weighting method, as proposed in the Methodological note. In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of cooperation in specific sectors, the responses were shortly analysed in terms of prevalence of certain perceptions related to the elements of cooperation predefined within the questions.

The baseline value for each Specific Objective was determined as an arithmetic average of the values obtained on the level of the results/dimension of results, including the value of the international dimension of cooperation.

Even if having a different focus of the questions and different target groups, the methodology of analysing and interpreting the data for determining the baseline value for the result indicator of Specific Objective 4.2 was similar to the other Specific Objectives.

4. Activities

4.1. Description of services

The implementation of the tasks were carried out according to the following steps:

0. **Briefing meeting** with the DTP JS: clarification of the content of the work, common understanding on how the tasks will be implemented, division of tasks/responsibilities between the stakeholders
1. **Fine-tuning** the scope of key actors to be involved in the survey as respondents in line with fine-tuned DTP methodology
2. **Nomination** of the key actors by the PC/MC members
3. **Composition** of the questionnaires in close cooperation of DTP JS
4. **Developing, testing and finalizing** the online questionnaire forms
5. **Sending out** the survey invitations to the selected respondents (with links to the survey)
6. **Supporting** the survey with reminders
7. **Collecting and processing** data
8. **Drafting the report** for the baseline values with analysing the results of the survey
9. **Presenting the report** to the MA/JS, preparing a final report based on comments received

4.2. Timing of activities

The timing, sequence and duration of the activities are presented in the table below:

Steps	Main tasks	Responsible organisation(s)	Months		October				November						
			Weeks		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4			
0	Briefing meeting	Tenderer+CA/MA/JS													
1	Fine-tuning the methodology	Tenderer													
2	Fine-tuning the survey's sample	Tenderer													
3	Nominating the key actors	CA													
4	Composing the questionnaires	Tenderer													
5	Consulting, approving the questionnaires	Tenderer+CA/MA/JS													
6	Developing (translating), testing and finalizing the online questionnaires	Tenderer													
7	Sending out the survey invitations	Tenderer+CA/MA/JS													
8	Supporting the survey with reinforcing phone calls	Tenderer													
9	Collecting and processing data	Tenderer													
10	Drafting the report for the baseline values with analyzing the results	Tenderer													
11	Presenting, consulting the report	Tenderer+CA/MA/JS													

Deadline for delivering and presenting the report: **30 November 2015**

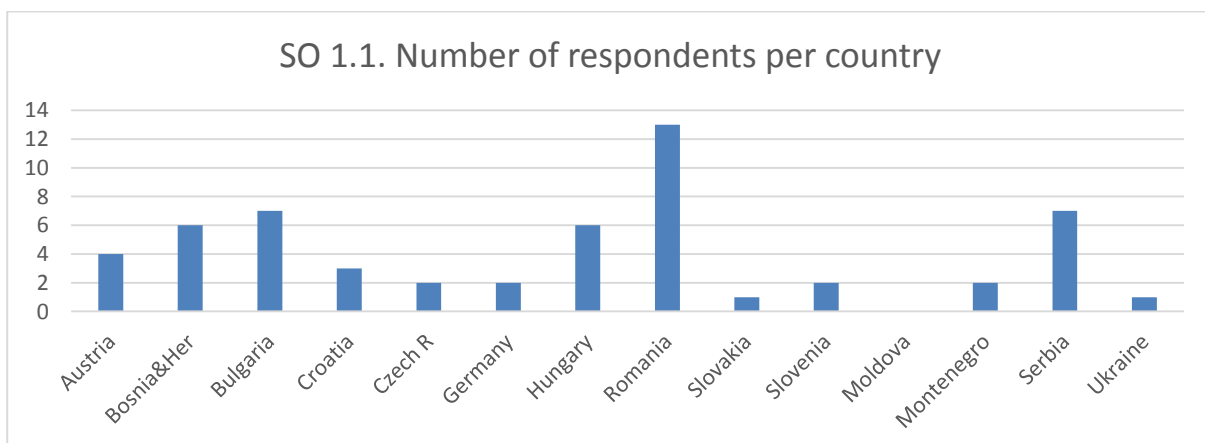
5. Results of the questionnaire survey

5.1. Specific objective 1.1

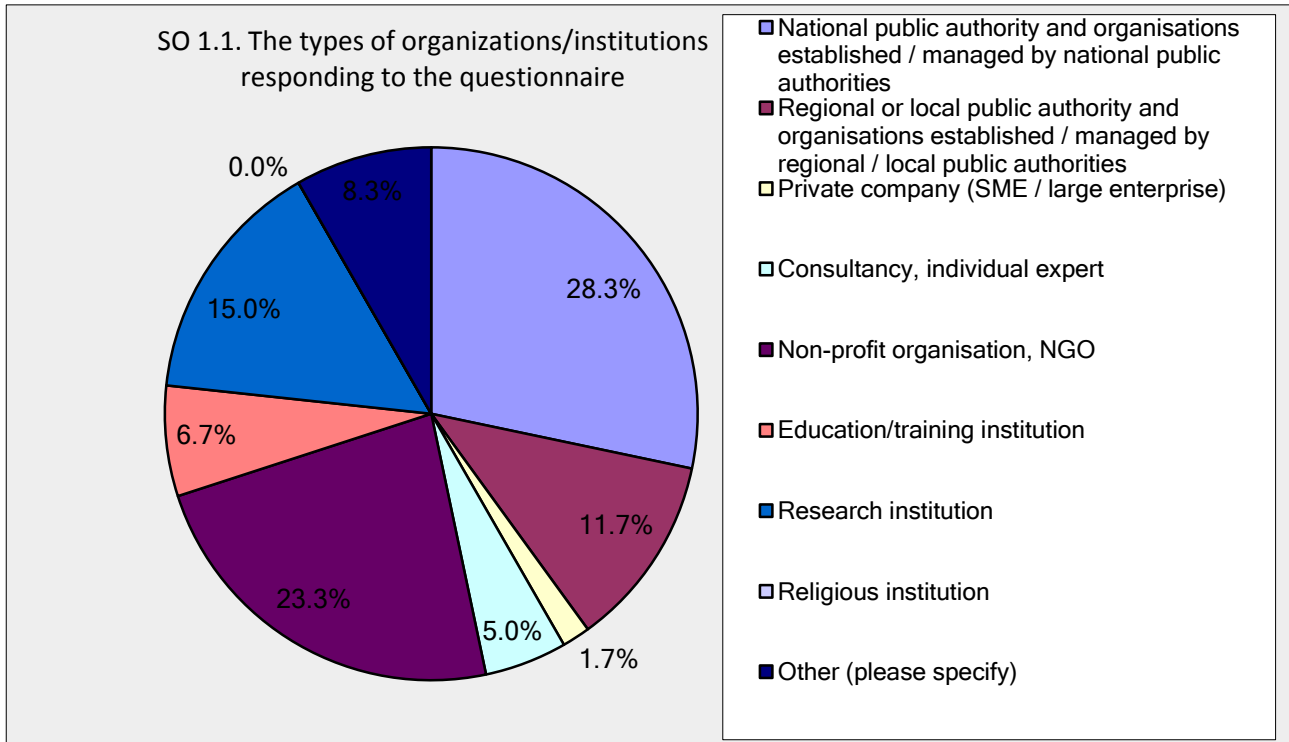
Specific Objective	Result indicator
1.1 Improve framework conditions for innovation (short title). Improve the institutional and infrastructural framework conditions and policy instruments for research & innovation to ensure a broader access to knowledge for the development of new technologies and the social dimension of innovation	R 1.1 Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to improve the framework conditions for research and innovation

5.1.1. Quantitative analysis

The questionnaire related to Specific Objective 1.1 was answered by 68 respondents, out of which 60 were considered valid for the exercise. This number of responses was the highest amongst all Specific Objectives. Apart from Moldova, all Danube countries accessed the survey: the highest number of questionnaires was received from Romania (13), Serbian respondents filled 9, Bulgarians did 7, and the rest of the countries vary between 1-6 responses. Considering research & innovation is a hot topic in the recent period, the extent and rate of responses are rather expected.



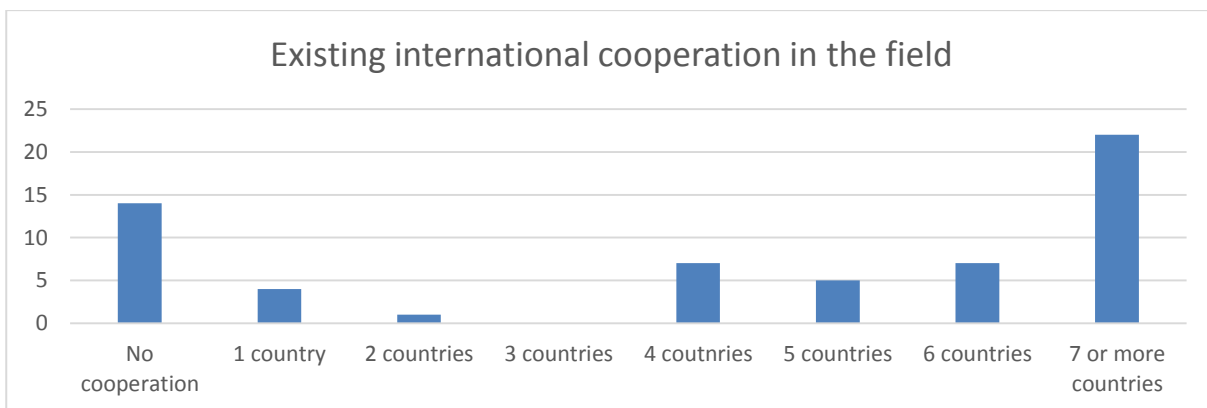
The type of organization/institution that ranked highest in the number of responses is national public authority and organizations established/managed by national public authorities (28.3%), followed by non-profit organisations, NGOs with a close 23.2% and research institutions with 15%. Apart from religious institutions all types of potential respondent institutions represented themselves in the survey, covering representatively the possible questionnaire respondents in the Danube region.

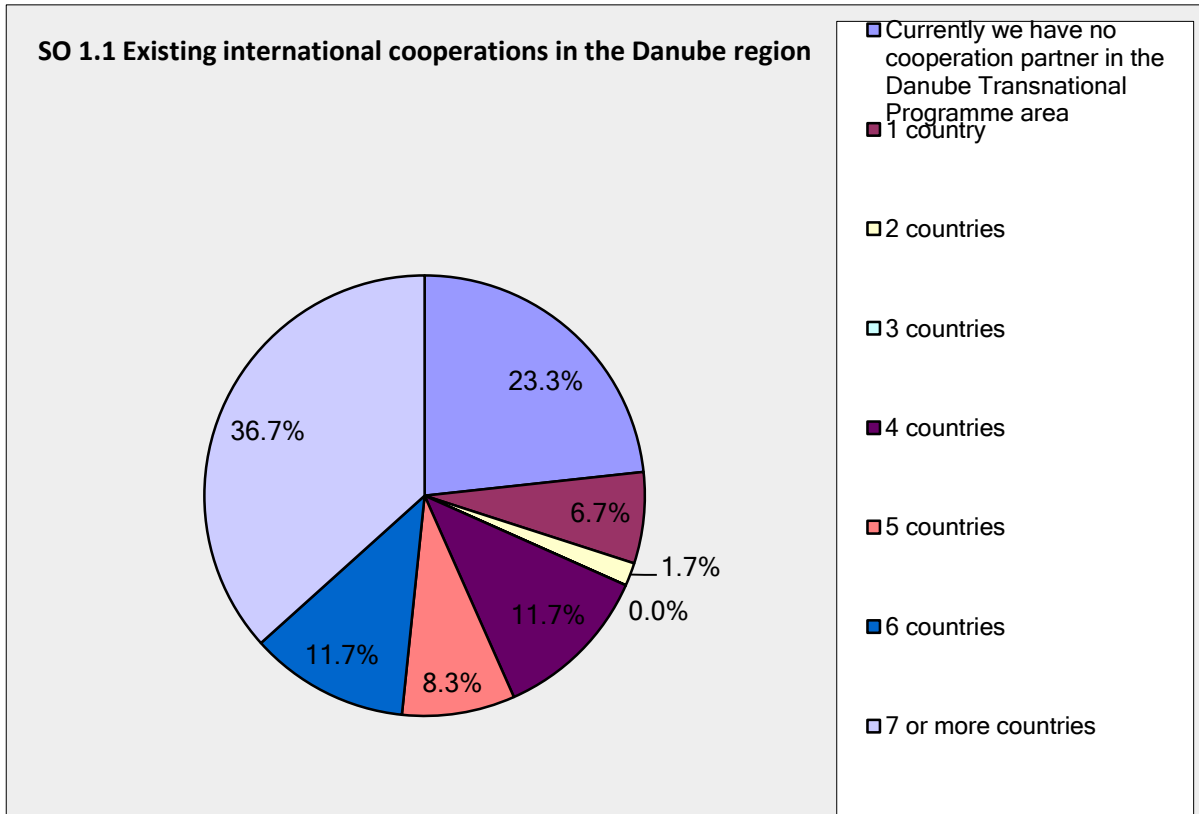


5.1.2. Qualitative analysis

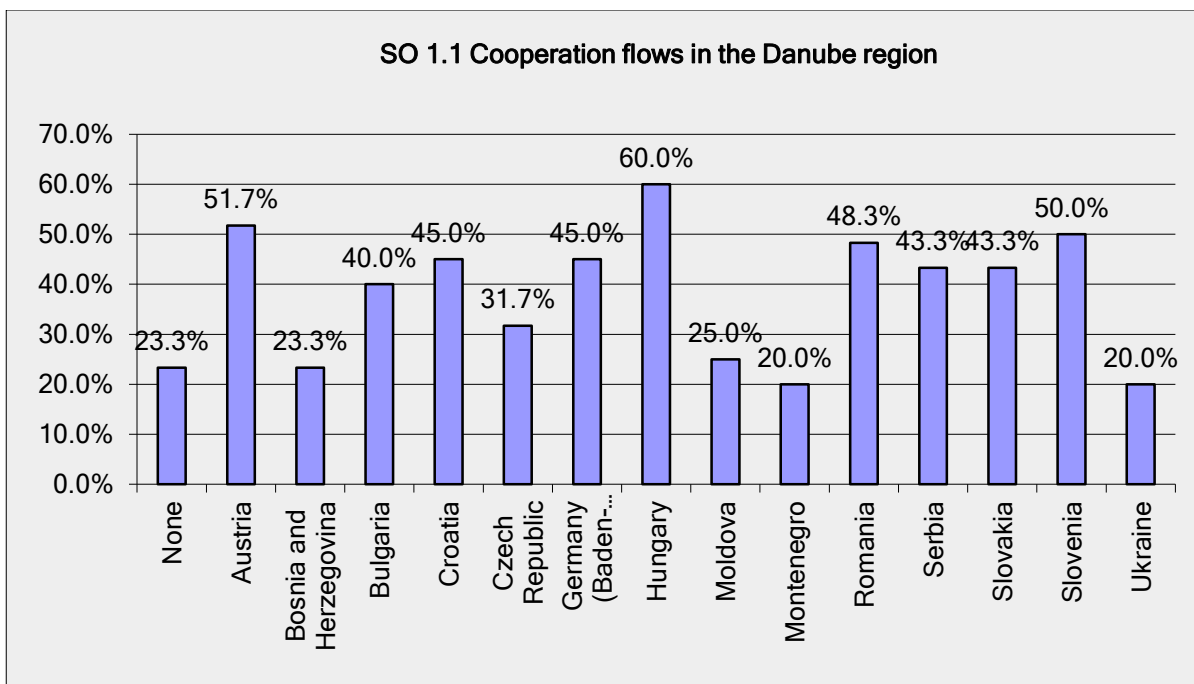
International dimension of cooperation intensity

The nature of research and innovation activities, as well as the wide territorial coverage of the respondents, already predict what facts show: 36.6% of the respondent institutions and organizations have broad cooperation partnerships in the Danube region, meaning they are engaged in cooperation activities with actors from 7 or more countries. Even though – surprisingly – the 23.3% of the respondents (14 out of 60) have currently no cooperation activities with other actors in the area, altogether it shows that the sector is rich in well-operating, extensive international and transnational cooperation: over 89% of the institutions having existing cooperation relationships currently are engaged with actors from 4 to 13 countries.





As for the cooperation flows, we can find that most of the countries have extensive network of partner organizations in the Danube region. The top cooperative country is Hungary with 60% of the responses, followed by Austria (51.7%) and Slovenia (50%). 20 to 45% of the respondents have partners in the rest of the countries, too. Also it shows that all of the countries have at least some acknowledged cooperation activities in the field.





Cooperation country choices of respondents

Source: Own edition

In line with the Methodological note, based on the received responses, the result of the international cooperation dimension in the field of research and innovation is 4.48, computed as follows:

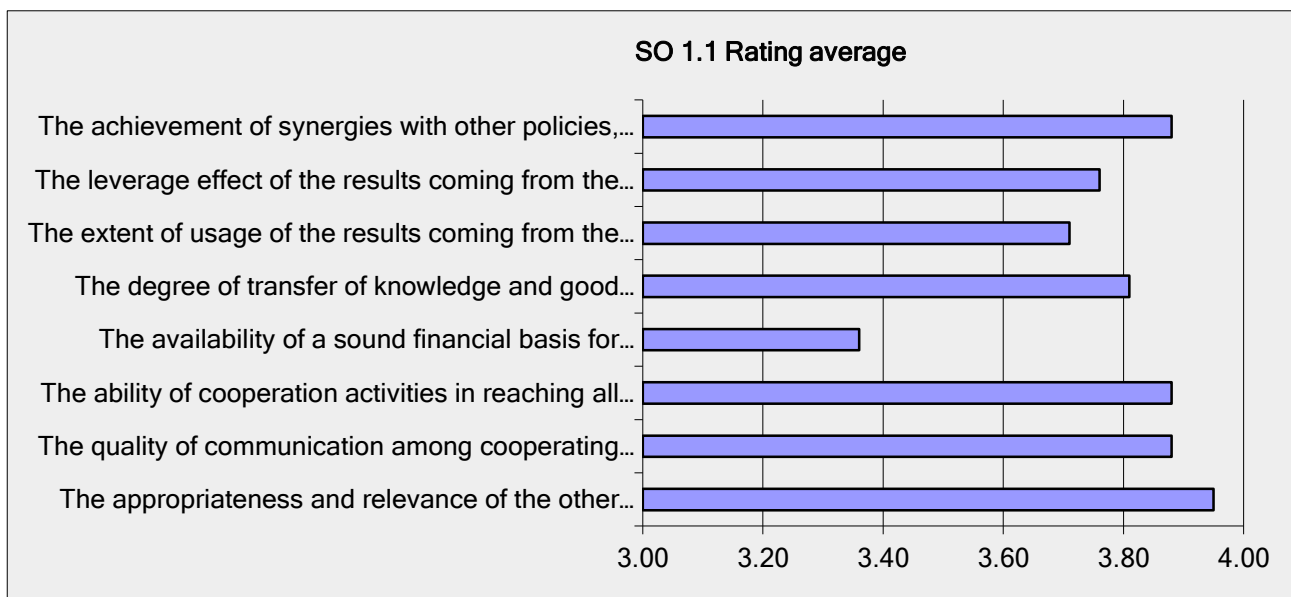
	No or 1 country	2 countries	3 countries	4 countries	5 countries	6 countries	7 or more countries	
Responses	18	1	0	7	5	7	22	60
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	18	2	0	28	25	42	154	269
Result								4.48

Assessment of the level of cooperation

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving strategic frameworks and cooperation to build up excellent research infrastructure

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	11	2	10	10	11	9	5	
Communication	11	3	10	8	13	10	3	
Coverage	10	1	12	11	15	5	4	

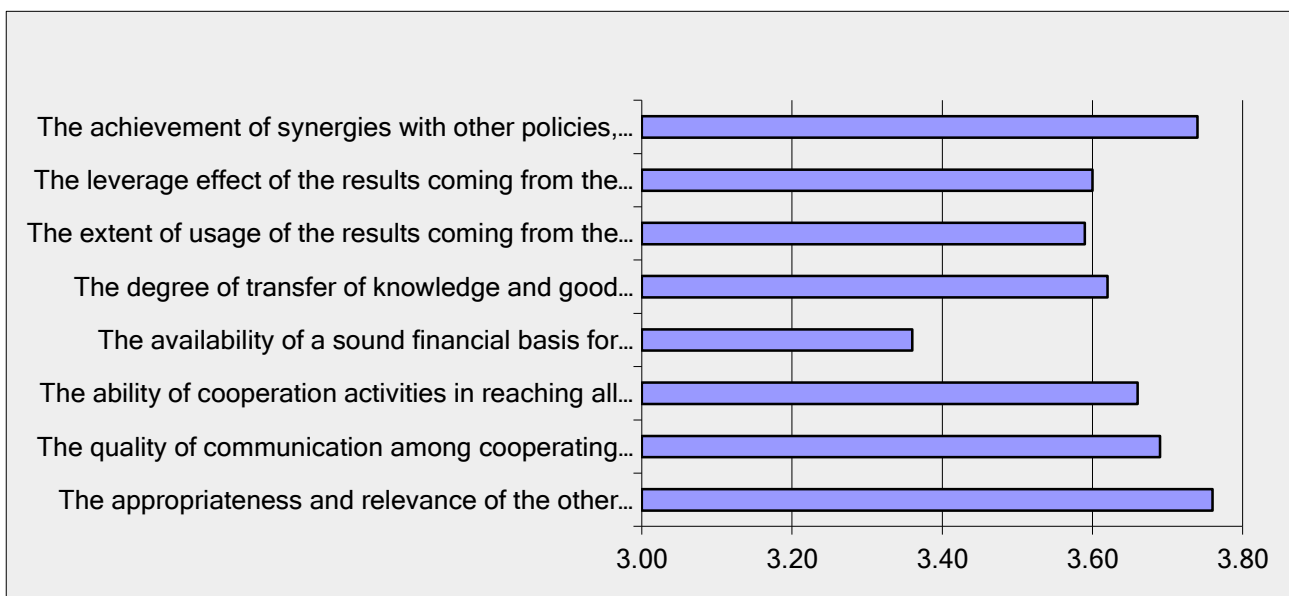
	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Financing	11	7	14	9	11	5	1	
Transferability	10	4	11	10	14	3	6	
Utility	11	5	11	10	10	6	5	
Leverage	11	5	8	12	12	5	5	
Synergy	10	2	11	13	11	6	5	
Total responses	85	29	87	83	97	49	34	464
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	85	58	261	332	485	294	238	1753
Result								3.78



The rating average for all the sub-questions fall slightly below 4, meaning that the attributes of the level of interaction of the institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving strategic frameworks and cooperation to build up excellent research infrastructure is at a satisfactory/good level. It shows that respondents are more or less satisfied with the cooperation in all aspects, with only a low percent of poor marks; however the availability of sound financial basis for the cooperation activities is shown as a challenging factor for most respondents. It is to be noted that the sector received quite a number of very good and excellent votes (almost 8% of all responses). Altogether it is seen that even though there are factors to improve (e.g. the extent of usage of results coming from the cooperation activities), the overall perception of the cooperation of partners in improving strategic frameworks and cooperation to build up excellent research infrastructure is good and balanced.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in developing competent networks amongst enterprises, R&D, education and public administration

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	10	6	14	5	9	9	5	
Communication	10	7	10	9	12	6	4	
Coverage	10	6	11	11	10	7	3	
Financing	10	10	14	7	9	6	2	
Transferability	10	5	11	15	9	4	4	
Utility	12	4	13	10	9	6	4	
Leverage	12	5	14	7	8	7	5	
Synergy	10	5	13	9	9	7	5	
Total responses	84	48	100	73	75	52	32	464
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	84	96	300	292	375	312	224	1683
Result								3.63



In terms of developing competent networks amongst enterprises, R&D, education and public administration, the respondents expressed that the appropriateness and relevance of the other partners, as well as the achievement of synergies with other policies, programmes and projects are at a good level – one possibly coming from the other logically. Besides there, other elements are ranked slightly weaker, especially the availability of sound financial basis, which is lagging behind at a poor to fair level. However

altogether the responding institutions found their level of interaction fairly good in developing competent networks amongst enterprises, R&D, education and public administration.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in enhancing coordination and improving practical solutions for cluster policies and transnational cluster cooperation for innovation development in technological areas

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	12	5	16	6	8	7	4	
Communication	12	6	16	6	8	5	5	
Coverage	12	4	17	7	8	4	6	
Financing	12	10	14	7	8	6	1	
Transferability	12	5	11	14	7	5	4	
Utility	14	5	14	9	6	6	4	
Leverage	14	7	15	8	4	7	3	
Synergy	12	8	14	8	6	5	5	
Total responses	100	50	117	65	55	45	32	464
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	100	100	351	260	275	270	224	1580
Result								3.40

In terms of enhancing coordination and improving practical solutions for cluster policies and transnational cluster cooperation for innovation development in technological areas, the respondents consider their level of interaction rather low and fair. Interesting dual character shows though, as approximately the quarter of the given responses are excellent and very good, giving high scores to the appropriateness and relevance of other partners, the communication quality among cooperating partners and the leverage effect of the results coming from cooperation activities. This indicates that there are very good experiences in cooperation and even the leverage effect coming from the results of the cooperation activities is praised, which otherwise is rather a problematic factor. Nonetheless the majority (2/3) of the responding institutions and organizations don't have the same praising opinion, and their level of interaction is viewed rather fair to satisfactory. The availability of the financial sources is seen also as a challenge for most, as well as the achievement of synergies with other policies, programmes and projects. Altogether, based on the dual character, it is clear that there is plenty of room for development, e.g. in the degree of transfer of knowledge and good practices in order to achieve overall good results in the field of research and innovation in enhancing coordination and improving practical solutions for cluster policies and transnational cluster cooperation for innovation development in technological areas.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in enhancing coordination and improving practical solutions for cluster policies and transnational cluster cooperation for innovation development in non-technological areas (service innovation, social innovation)

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	13	4	15	8	9	7	2	
Communication	13	6	11	10	10	6	2	
Coverage	13	5	14	9	8	7	2	
Financing	13	12	8	9	11	3	2	
Transferability	13	6	10	13	8	6	2	
Utility	15	8	9	8	12	4	2	
Leverage	15	8	9	13	5	6	2	
Synergy	13	9	8	12	7	7	2	
Total responses	108	58	84	82	70	46	16	464
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	108	116	252	328	350	276	112	1542
Result								3.32

The overall perception of the level of interactions in enhancing coordination and improving practical solutions for cluster policies and transnational cluster cooperation for innovation development in non-technological areas (service innovation, social innovation) is at a satisfactory level. On the contrary to the same aspect but for technological areas, in this case there is a pretty balanced composition of opinions expressed. Even though the responding institutions rated the communication, the transfer of knowledge and good practices as being relatively good, very few respondents considered any factor of the cooperation intensity as being excellent. This may be due to the lack of sound financial basis, which was rated as poor by the majority of respondents.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving strategic frameworks and improving practical solutions to tackle bottleneck factors that hinder the innovation of SMEs

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	11	6	9	12	8	7	4	
Communication	11	7	9	8	12	7	3	
Coverage	11	5	11	13	10	4	3	
Financing	11	13	10	7	9	6	1	

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Transferability	11	6	12	10	9	5	4	
Utility	13	6	12	8	10	3	5	
Leverage	13	9	9	7	10	5	4	
Synergy	11	8	8	10	9	8	3	
Total responses	92	60	80	75	77	45	27	456
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	92	120	240	300	385	270	189	1596
Result								3.5

Obvious from the data that even though the respondents find their cooperation partnerships relevant and in place, their communication and the coverage of the partnership satisfactory to good in majority, the main problem in the area is the limited financial background, which was rated poor by most of the respondents. However, the leverage effect and the achievement of synergies with other programmes and projects show a more balanced, fairly good opinion status in the survey. Also quite some very good and excellent ratings were given related to the transferability and the extent of usage of the results coming from the cooperation activities.

5.1.3. Findings and conclusions

In general, it shows that in the field of research and innovation there are moderate to large partnerships all around the Danube region, in which the cooperating partners rate their interaction to a satisfactory, good level in majority. However, there are differences in the cooperation intensity: related to the improvement of strategic frameworks and cooperation to build up excellent research infrastructure it is seen to be stronger than in the case of developing competent networks amongst enterprises, R&D, education and public administration, which came weaker, only to a fair-satisfactory level. So is the case in enhancing coordination and improving practical solutions for cluster policies and transnational cluster cooperation for innovation development in technical vs. non-technological areas (service innovation, social innovation) – where technical came stronger compared to the latter, needing more initiatives and improved interaction level to produce tangible results.

Even though it shows that there are spiking very good/excellent cooperation activities going on, too, it is clear that there is potential for new cooperation to be established within the Danube Transnational Programme (23.3% of respondents lack international cooperation experience at the moment), as well as to extend to higher number of involved stakeholders of the current cooperation and/or to reinforce current ones.

The questionnaire clearly revealed that the sound financial background is rather a challenging factor in terms of all the cooperation activities, and even though some partners declare to have great experience with transferability and the leverage effect of the results coming from the cooperation activities, as well as

the synergies with other programmes and projects, these elements could receive better scores in the future through further improved interactions.

The survey shows that most of the respondents (almost 80%) declared that they are familiar with the current policies and directions in the field. Intensified cooperation, market utilization, collaboration in sustainable projects, increasing the innovation level in the Danube region, technology transfer, knowledge and good practice sharing were indicated as major directions in almost all of the questionnaires, in line with their expectation towards the DTP.

More than 70% of the respondents declared that they are aware of the existing financial instruments designed for supporting the international cooperation in the field, most of them including as example the Danube Transnational Programme, Horizon2020, COSME or Erasmus+, as well as cross-border cooperation programmes.

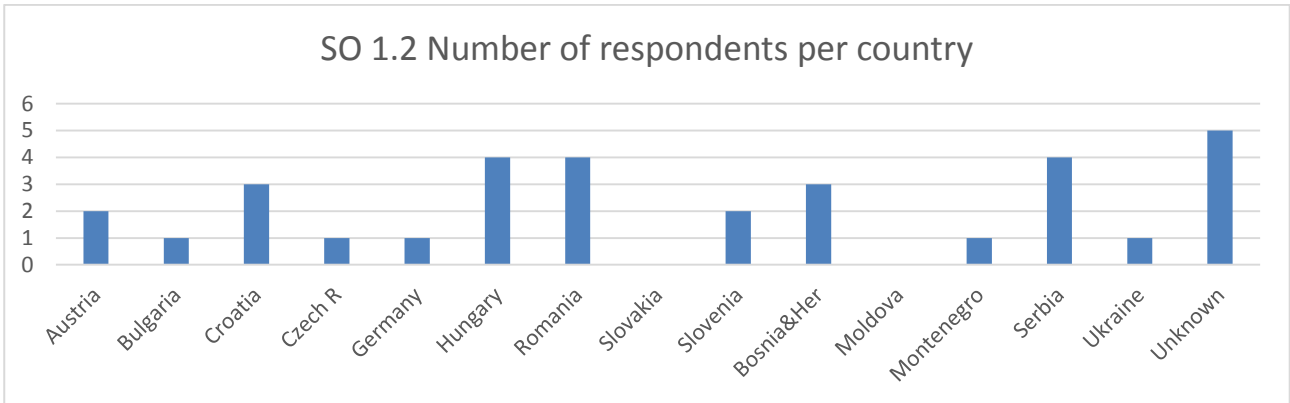
In conclusion, the baseline value for the result indicator RI 1.1 “Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to improve the framework conditions for research and innovation” is 3.68.

5.2. Specific objective 1.2

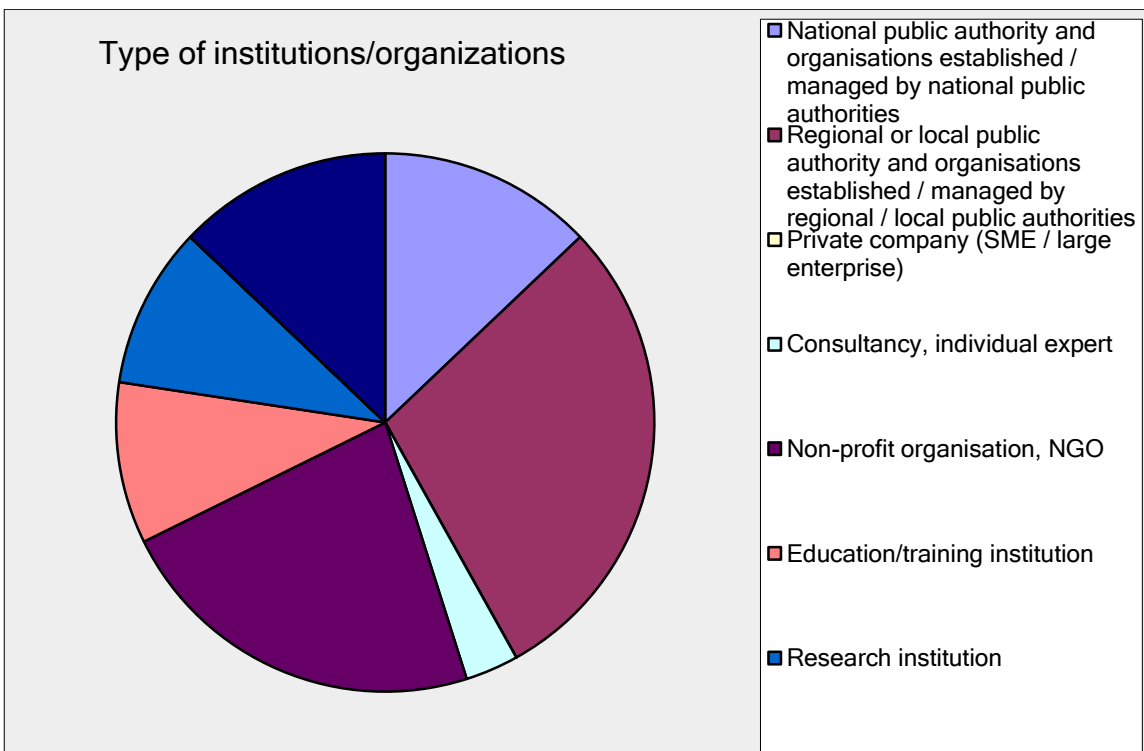
Specific Objective	Result indicator
1.2 Increase competences for business and social innovation (short title). Foster innovative learning systems to increase competences of employees in the business sector, to strengthen entrepreneurial culture and learning contributing to better meet social needs and the delivery of services in the general interest.	R 1.2 Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to increase competences for business and social innovation

5.2.1. Quantitative analysis

The questionnaire related to SO 1.2 was answered by 38 respondents, out of which 31 were considered valid for the exercise. The highest number of questionnaires were received from Hungary, Romania and Serbia (all 4), and all the rest of the countries came in with 1-3 responses, except for Moldova and Slovakia, from where no filled questionnaire was received.



As for the type of organizations which provided inputs for the baseline values, the big majority was formed of national, regional and local public authorities or organizations – over 42%. Additionally, the questionnaire was fulfilled by education and research institutions, NGOs and individual experts.

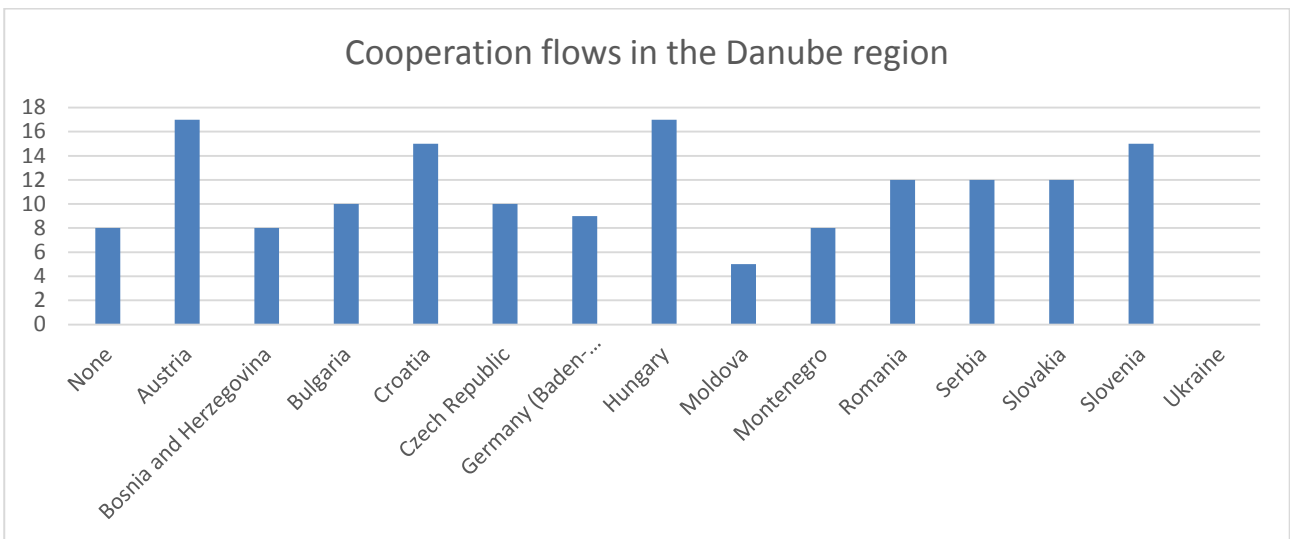
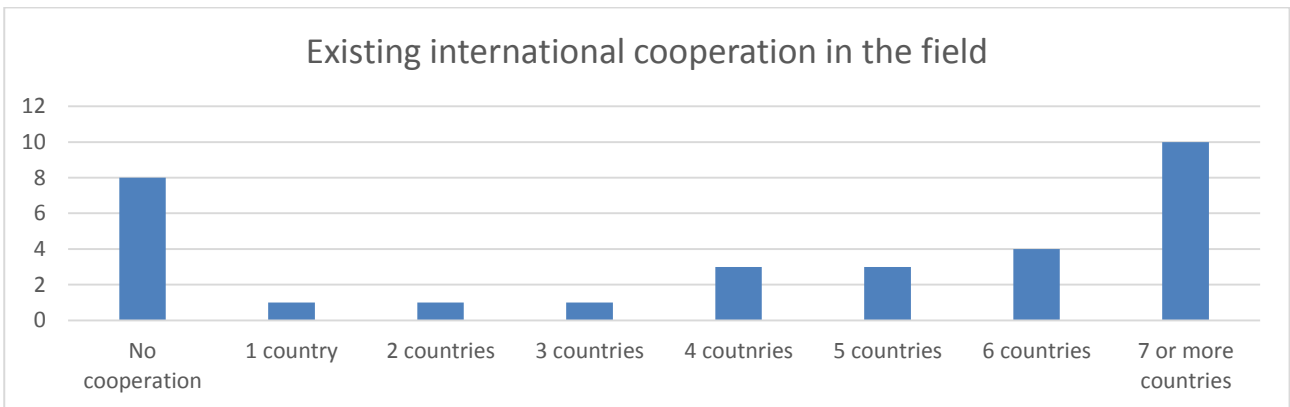


5.2.2. Qualitative analysis

International dimension of cooperation intensity

The field of business and social innovation is a great opportunity field for international cooperation, which shows in the responses institutions and organizations: over 66% of them have large, extended partnerships with 4 to 7 or more countries, and only the quarter of them expressed not having current international/transnational relations. This meaning –in terms of cooperation flows – that in most cases the actors of the field are either engaged in international cooperation activities with wide involvement of parties from several countries in the Danube region, or not at all. As a choice for cooperation Austrian and

Hungary are leading the way with over 54% of choices responded, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia and Slovakia also bringing great values with the 38 to 50 % of choices.



Cooperation choices of respondents
Source: Own edition

In line with the methodology, based on the received responses, the result of the international cooperation dimension in the field of business and social innovation is 4.35, computed as follows:

	No or 1 country	2 countries	3 countries	4 countries	5 countries	6 countries	7 or more countries	
Responses	9	1	1	3	3	4	10	31
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	9	2	3	12	15	24	70	135
Result								4.35

Assessment of the level of cooperation

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in policy learning and development of practical solutions to better adapt human resources to technological change and market requirements:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	7	2	4	7	8	3	0	
Communication	7	2	3	8	7	4	0	
Coverage	7	2	7	6	6	3	0	
Financing	7	9	6	5	3	1	0	
Transferability	7	5	4	6	6	2	1	
Utility	7	4	6	8	4	1	1	
Leverage	7	3	8	6	5	1	1	
Synergy	7	3	6	8	3	3	1	
Total responses	56	30	44	54	42	18	4	248
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	56	60	132	216	210	108	28	810
Result								3.27

The respondents consider that the cooperation in the field policy learning and development of practical solutions to better adapt human resources to technological change and market requirements is mostly characterized by a relatively satisfactory communication and satisfactorily functional systems for transfer of knowledge and best practices among the partner organizations. However only a few respondents gave good to excellent choices, so it shows that the field needs further improvement in terms of interaction level in most of the aspects. The lack of sufficient financial resources and the limited capacity of generating

synergies with other policies, programmes and projects are seen, on the other hand, as the weakest element of the cooperation.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in policies and practical solutions for innovative entrepreneurial culture and learning:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	7	3	4	6	7	4	0	
Communication	7	3	5	5	7	4	0	
Coverage	7	4	5	5	7	2	1	
Financing	7	9	8	3	3	1	0	
Transferability	7	3	7	4	7	2	1	
Utility	7	5	5	7	5	1	1	
Leverage	7	6	4	7	6	0	1	
Synergy	7	5	5	8	3	2	1	
Total responses	56	38	43	45	45	16	5	248
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	56	76	129	180	225	96	35	797
Result								3.21

In terms of developing practical solutions for innovative entrepreneurial culture and learning, the respondents consider that relevant stakeholders are involved in their cooperation, with whom the communication, the transfer of knowledge and best practices is at a fairly good level. The availability of financial resources is perceived as the most challenging factor in cooperation, which can be explained by the fact that implementing practical solutions may require substantial financial involvement.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in enhancing the environment, skills and competences to advance social innovation and social services

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	7	2	1	10	7	4	0	
Communication	7	3	2	7	9	3	0	
Coverage	7	3	2	9	5	4	1	
Financing	7	5	8	6	2	3	0	
Transferability	7	4	3	9	6	1	1	

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Utility	7	3	4	9	6	1	1	
Leverage	7	2	7	8	4	2	1	
Synergy	7	3	6	9	2	2	2	
Total responses	56	25	33	67	41	20	6	248
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	56	50	99	268	205	120	42	840
Result								3.39

The overall perception of cooperation in the field of in enhancing the environment, skills and competences to advance social innovation and social services is at a fairly satisfactory level, however leaning towards fair. Most of the interaction factors are rated to a balanced satisfactory level, with only the financing and the leverage effect of results coming from the cooperation activities receiving rather poorer scores. As an overall view it can be stated that in the field of social innovation there is space to improve the interactions.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in building capacities of public administration to better cope with innovation processes including improved systems for institutional learning:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	10	6	3	6	3	2	1	
Communication	10	6	5	5	3	1	1	
Coverage	10	8	2	3	6	1	1	
Financing	10	7	8	2	2	1	1	
Transferability	10	8	6	2	2	2	1	
Utility	10	8	3	5	1	3	1	
Leverage	10	8	6	2	2	2	1	
Synergy	10	9	3	3	3	0	3	
Total responses	80	60	36	28	22	12	10	248
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	80	120	108	112	110	72	70	672
Result								2.71

The respondents' opinion about the intensity of cooperation in building capacities of public administration to better cope with innovation processes including improved systems for institutional learning is very poor, coming to the last place amongst the relevant fields of this SO. The quality of partnerships and the functioning is rated mostly fair to poor, which shows a great lack of interaction with public administration

in terms of innovation processes. This field however shows a dual character, as contrary to the rather poor scores of the majority of the respondents, the survey shows that there are valuable experiences of some respondents expressed in very good and excellent rates in all aspects with emphasis on synergies with other programmes and projects, which obviously is a great basis for knowledge transfer and utilization.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in building up joint, innovative education offer:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	10	4	6	4	2	3	2	
Communication	10	5	5	3	6	1	1	
Coverage	10	5	5	3	5	2	1	
Financing	10	7	6	5	1	1	1	
Transferability	10	6	5	4	2	2	2	
Utility	10	10	0	5	4	0	2	
Leverage	10	9	4	2	4	1	1	
Synergy	10	9	3	3	2	3	1	
Total responses	80	55	34	29	26	13	11	248
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	80	110	102	116	130	78	77	693
Result								2.79

Very similar to the previous field, this one: building up joint, innovative education offer, is rated poor, too, however slightly stronger. The quality of partnerships and the functioning of them is rated mostly fair to poor. This field shows also a dual character: there are valuable experiences of some respondents expressed in very good and excellent rates in all aspects with emphasis on appropriate and relevant partnerships, result transferability, and synergies with other programmes and projects, all giving the positive pole to the survey results.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving strategic frameworks and improving practical solutions to tackle bottleneck factors that hinder the innovation of SMEs:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	8	6	3	8	3	2	1	
Communication	8	6	3	7	6	0	1	
Coverage	8	6	4	7	4	1	1	
Financing	8	9	6	3	4	0	1	

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Transferability	8	7	3	7	4	1	1	
Utility	8	9	6	3	4	0	1	
Leverage	8	9	6	5	2	0	1	
Synergy	8	7	7	6	1	1	1	
Total responses	64	59	38	46	28	5	8	248
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	64	118	114	184	140	30	56	706
Result								2.85

On the contrary to some good cooperation experiences, the majority of the respondents gave very poor ranking to the cooperation factors of the field of improving strategic frameworks and improving practical solutions to tackle bottleneck factors that hinder the innovation of SMEs, in terms of the partnership itself, their relevance, coverage, the result related factors, and not surprisingly to the sound availability of financing, too. The survey shows that in the opinion of the respondents this is a field lacking good practices and needs improvement in all terms. Obviously a field that includes practical solutions for SMEs is always a challenging one, as to reach solid, tangible results with involvement is rather proven hard.

5.2.3. Findings and conclusions

Altogether the results of this SO are rather fair – receiving the worst scores amongst all the SOs. Even though the fields “*developing practical solutions for innovative entrepreneurial culture and learning*” and “*enhancing the environment, skills and competences to advance social innovation and social services*” came in with better scores, than the rest (“*building capacities of public administration to better cope with innovation processes including improved systems for institutional learning*”; “*joint, innovative educational offer*”; “*improving practical solutions to tackle bottleneck factors that hinder the innovation of SMEs*”), the survey shows, that this Specific Objective is doomed for predictable improvement, provided the Programme gives opportunity and sound financial support for such development. However unfortunately it can be stated that social innovation is not one of the most attractive fields as it is way less exploitable in a profit-oriented way than other areas.

The majority of the responding organizations are engaged in international/transnational relations, however more than the 25% of them are lacking this experience, which again gives was to the DTP through well communicated initiative possibilities – which is backed up by the fact that even some of the respondents expressed that they had filed their EoI in the first call of the Programme.

Only about the 58% of the respondents communicated that they are aware of the current policies/directions in the Danube Transnational Programme area in the field of innovative learning systems for the business sector – thus it shows that roughly half of actors and stakeholders of the field are rather

engaged in partnerships at their own initiative, not following the policies in the area due to limited institutional capacities and not sufficient information flow - the rest mostly naming EUSDR and EU2020.

Interesting contradiction to the number of cooperation, that the 74.5% of the respondents defined not knowing about current cooperation initiatives, meaning they could be way better involved in DTP networks. Which shows also in their expectation towards the Programme being successful cooperation with other organisations from more developed countries to improve competences and skills as well as framework conditions for social innovations, as well as transfer of innovative practices to support start-ups and SMEs.

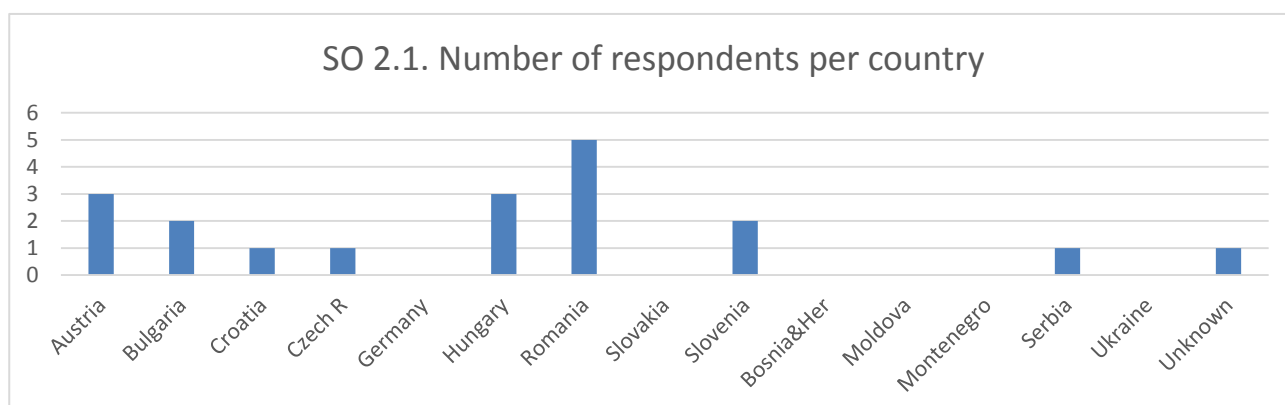
In conclusion, the baseline value for the result indicator RI 1.2 “Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to increase competences for business and social innovation” is 3.22.

5.3. Specific objective 2.1

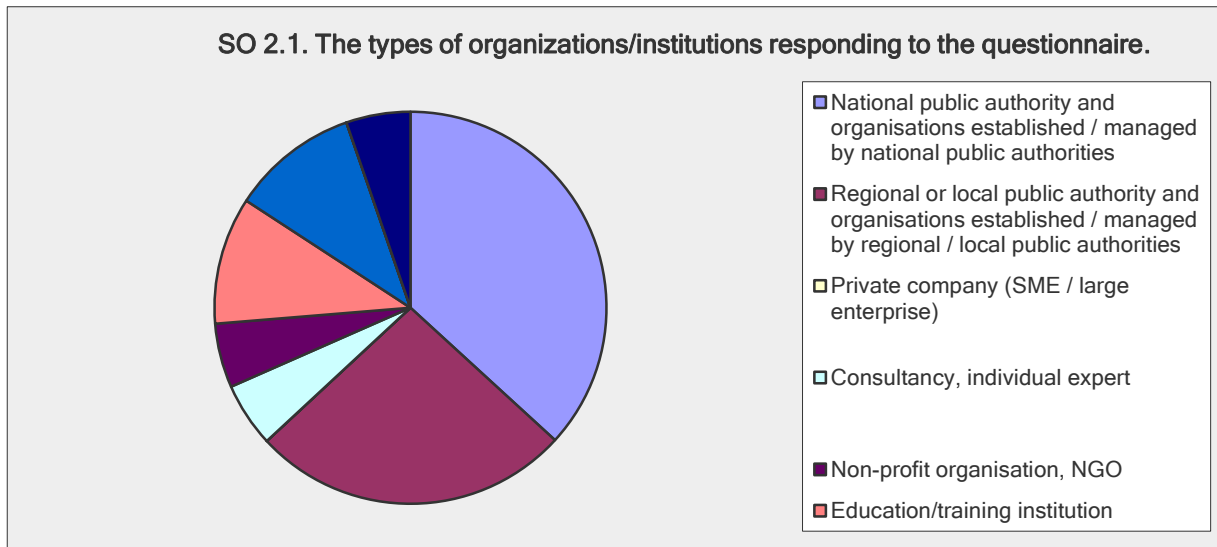
Specific Objective	Result indicator
2.1 Strengthen transnational water management and flood risk prevention (short title). Strengthen joint and integrated approaches to further develop and implement River Basin Management Plans in the Partner States in line with the overall Danube River Basin Management Plan in order to improve transnational water management and flood risk prevention contributing to the sustainable provision of ecosystem services.	R 2.1 Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to improve transnational water management and flood risk prevention

5.3.1. Quantitative analysis

The questionnaire related to Specific Objective 2.1 was answered by 24 respondents, out of which 19 were considered for the interpretation. The highest number of questionnaires was received from Romania (5), Austria (3) and Hungary (3). However, there was a number of countries from where no filled in questionnaire was received (Germany, Slovakia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, Ukraine).



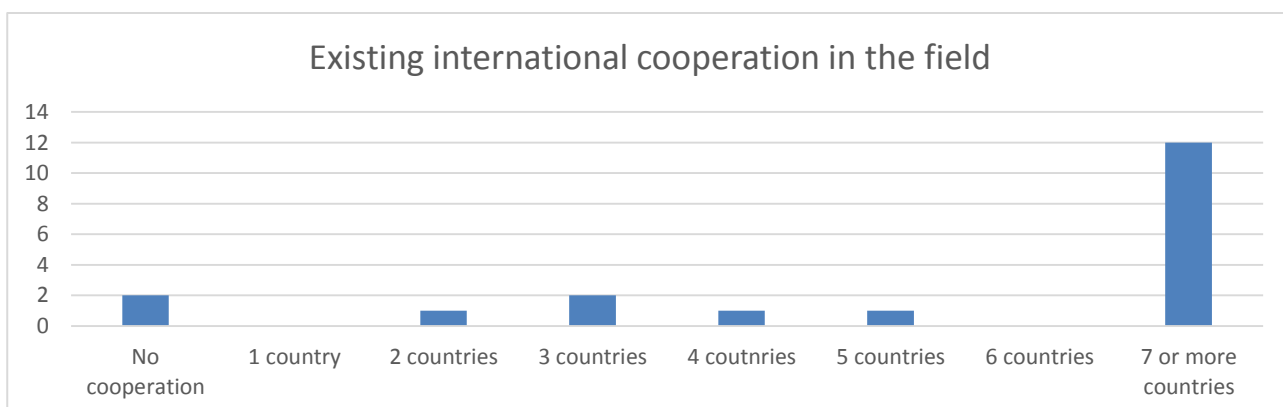
Analysing the type of organizations which provided inputs for the baseline values, the big majority was formed of national, regional and local public authorities or organizations – 63%. Additionally, the questionnaire was fulfilled by education and research institutions, NGOs and individual experts. Considering the specificity of the topic (water management) the typology of respondent institutions is considered to be representative, reflecting the different levels of competence and expertise.



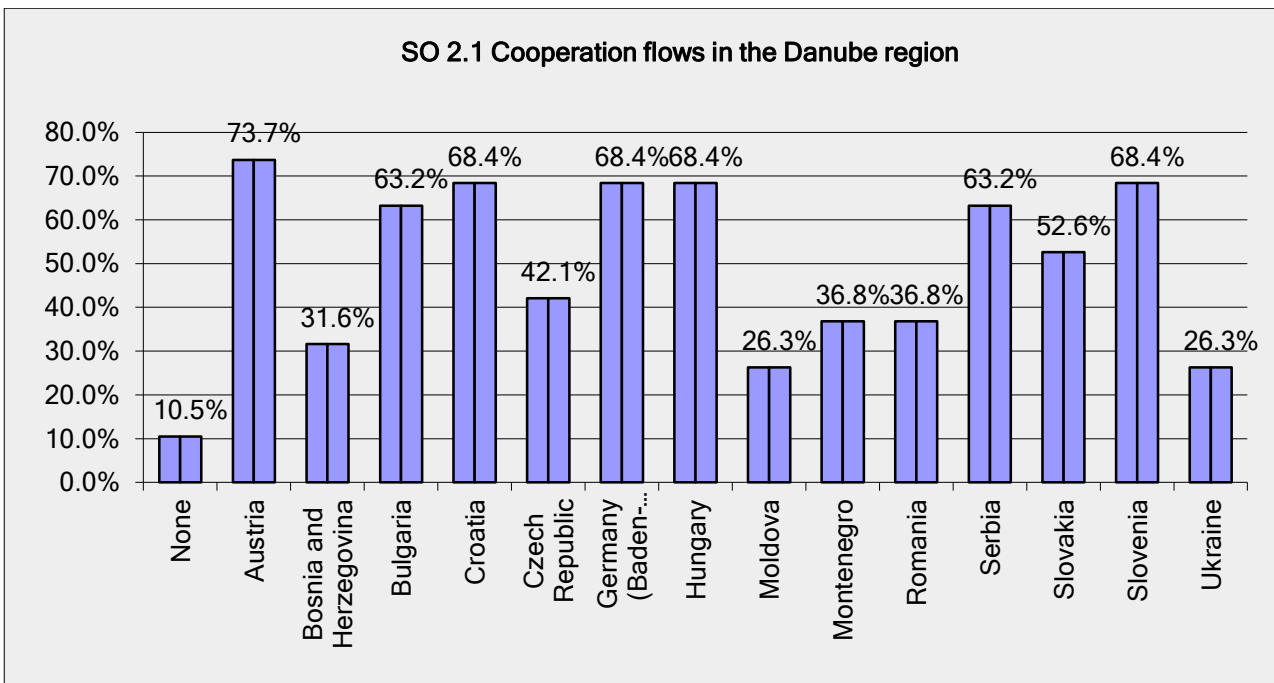
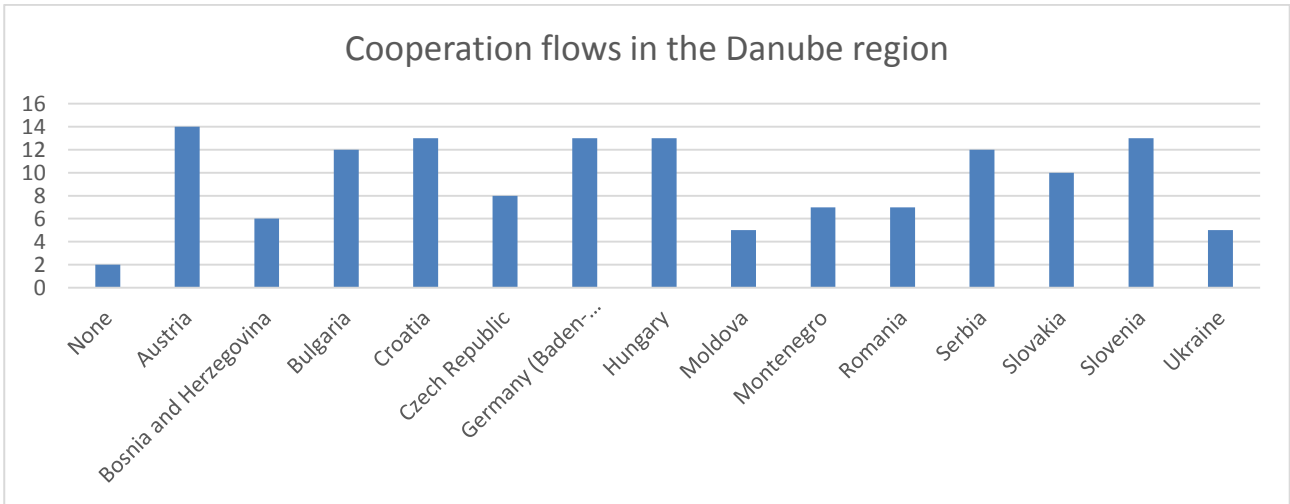
5.3.2. Qualitative analysis

International dimension of cooperation intensity

The status of waters and flood protection are fields where international cooperation is necessary in order to achieve durable results. Therefore, it is not surprising that most of the institutions and organizations which responded to the questionnaire are already engaged in transnational cooperation. Only two of the respondents indicated that there is no cooperation at the moment, while 63% of the institutions and organizations are cooperating with partners from at least 7 countries of the Danube region.



In terms of cooperation flows, some countries developed large, widespread networks of partnerships. Almost all of the institutions and organizations declared they have cooperation established with Austrian, Croatian, German, Hungarian or Slovenian partners. Moreover, Austria was indicated as a partner country by the respondents from all the countries.





Cooperation country choices of respondents

Source: Own edition

In line with the methodology, based on the received responses, the result of the international cooperation dimension in the field of water management and flood protection is 5.42, computed as follows:

	No or 1 country	2 countries	3 countries	4 countries	5 countries	6 countries	7 or more countries	
Responses	2	1	2	1	1	0	12	19
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	2	2	6	4	5	0	84	103
Result								5.42

Assessment of the level of cooperation

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant Danube region actors in developing strategic frameworks for enhancing the status of waters:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	4	2	1	6	3	2	1	
Communication	3	2	3	4	4	2	1	
Coverage	3	4	3	4	3	1	1	
Financing	2	6	4	5	1	0	1	
Transferability	4	0	1	7	3	2	2	
Utility	4	0	6	2	5	1	1	
Leverage	3	2	4	4	3	1	2	
Synergy	4	1	5	5	2	1	1	
Total responses	27	17	27	37	24	10	10	152
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	27	34	81	148	120	60	70	540
Result								3.55

The respondents consider that the cooperation in the field of strategic frameworks for enhancing the status of waters is mostly characterized by a relatively good communication and well established and functional systems for transfer of knowledge and best practices among the partner organizations. The lack of sufficient financial resources and the limited capacity of generating synergies with other policies, programmes and projects is seen, on the other hand, as the weakest element of the cooperation.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in developing practical solutions to enhance the status of waters:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	2	3	5	4	1	2	2	
Communication	2	3	6	3	1	3	1	
Coverage	3	4	3	5	1	1	2	
Financing	3	6	3	5	2	0	0	
Transferability	3	2	4	4	3	1	2	
Utility	2	3	5	3	3	2	1	
Leverage	3	3	5	3	3	1	1	
Synergy	2	4	4	4	3	1	1	

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Total responses	20	28	35	31	17	11	10	152
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	20	56	105	124	85	66	70	526
Result								3.46

In terms of developing practical solutions for enhancing the status of waters, the respondents consider that relevant stakeholders are involved in their cooperation, with whom the transfer of knowledge and best practices is at a fairly satisfactory level. The availability of financial resources is perceived as the most challenging factor in cooperation, which can be explained by the fact that implementing practical solutions usually require an important financial involvement.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the strategic frameworks to support the coordination in the field of flood prevention:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	5	2	3	4	4	1	0	
Communication	5	2	2	6	2	2	0	
Coverage	5	1	5	4	3	1	0	
Financing	5	5	1	6	2	0	0	
Transferability	5	0	5	3	4	2	0	
Utility	5	2	3	3	4	2	0	
Leverage	5	4	2	2	3	2	1	
Synergy	5	2	4	3	3	2	0	
Total responses	40	18	25	31	25	12	1	152
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	40	36	75	124	125	72	7	479
Result								3.15

The overall perception of cooperation in the field of developing of strategic frameworks coordination in flood prevention is that it is at a fair level. Even if the respondents rated the communication, the transfer of best practices and the utility of the results achieved as being relatively good, very few considered any element of cooperation intensity as being excellent. This may be the result of the limited financial background, which was rated as poor by the majority of respondents.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in developing practical solutions to support the coordination in the field of flood prevention:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	5	1	3	3	5	1	0	
Communication	5	0	3	6	3	1	0	
Coverage	5	2	2	3	5	1	0	
Financing	5	2	5	2	4	0	0	
Transferability	5	0	4	4	4	1	0	
Utility	5	2	3	2	5	1	0	
Leverage	5	3	2	2	4	1	1	
Synergy	5	1	3	3	5	1	0	
Total responses	40	11	25	25	35	7	1	144
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	40	22	75	100	175	42	7	461
Result								3.20

The respondents' opinion about the intensity of cooperation in developing practical solutions for coordination in flood protection is very similar to the one referring to the development of strategic framework.

5.3.3. Findings and conclusions

Based on the received responses, it can be concluded that the most intensive element of cooperation in the field of water management and flood protection is the transfer of knowledge and best practices, with altogether, more than half of the respondents declaring that it is at a satisfactory or higher level. At the other end, the lack of financial background is perceived as being the major factor hampering cooperation, with more than 60% of the respondents considering it only fair or below. In general, the intensity of interaction in the field of flood protection is rated lower than in the field of enhancing the status of waters.

Almost two thirds of the respondents declared they are familiar with the current policies/directions in water management in the Danube Region. As concrete examples, most of them indicated European level regulatory documents, as the Water Directive, or Flood Directive. In two cases, the respondents were more specific indicating the EUSDR or the Danube River Basin Management Plan. The major reason for not being familiar with the policies in the field was indicated as being the lack of availability of relevant information.

In terms of thematic initiatives/networks, most of the respondents are aware of their existence in the Danube region, mentioning networks established via previous transnational projects, or existing thematic

cooperation in the framework of EUSDR or International Committee for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR).

The expectations towards the Danube Transnational Programme are mostly in line with the content of the Cooperation Programme, being linked to the improvement of the cooperation in the field of strategic frameworks or practical solutions in tackling challenges related to water management. Two thirds of the respondents declared that they are aware of the existing financial instruments available in the Danube region for supporting cooperation activities in water management. Besides the Danube Transnational Programme, indicated by most of the respondents, other EU funded instruments were mentioned, as CBC programmes, HORIZON2020, LIFE, or COSME programmes.

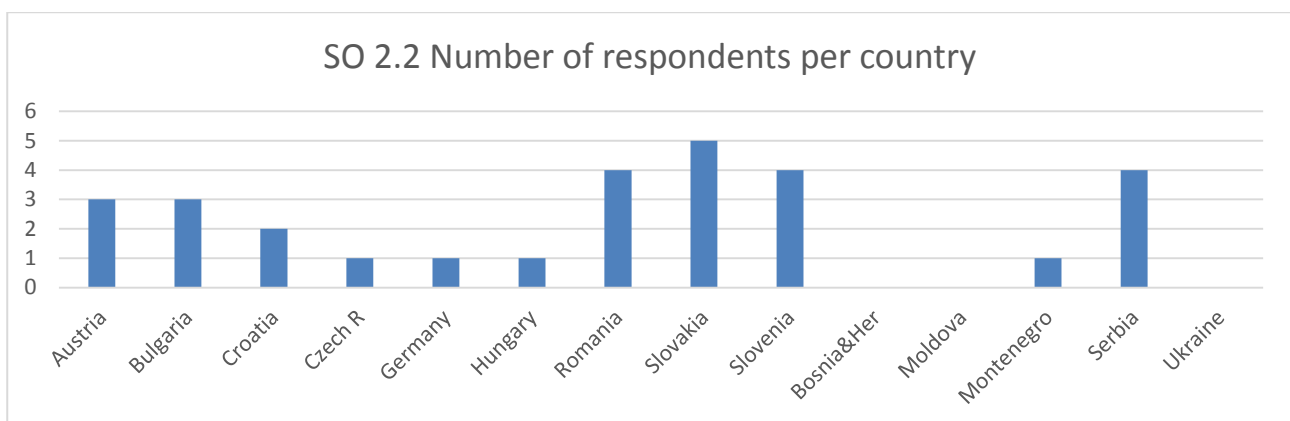
In conclusion, the baseline value for the result indicator RI 2.1 “Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to improve transnational water management and flood risk prevention” is 3.76.

5.4. Specific objective 2.2

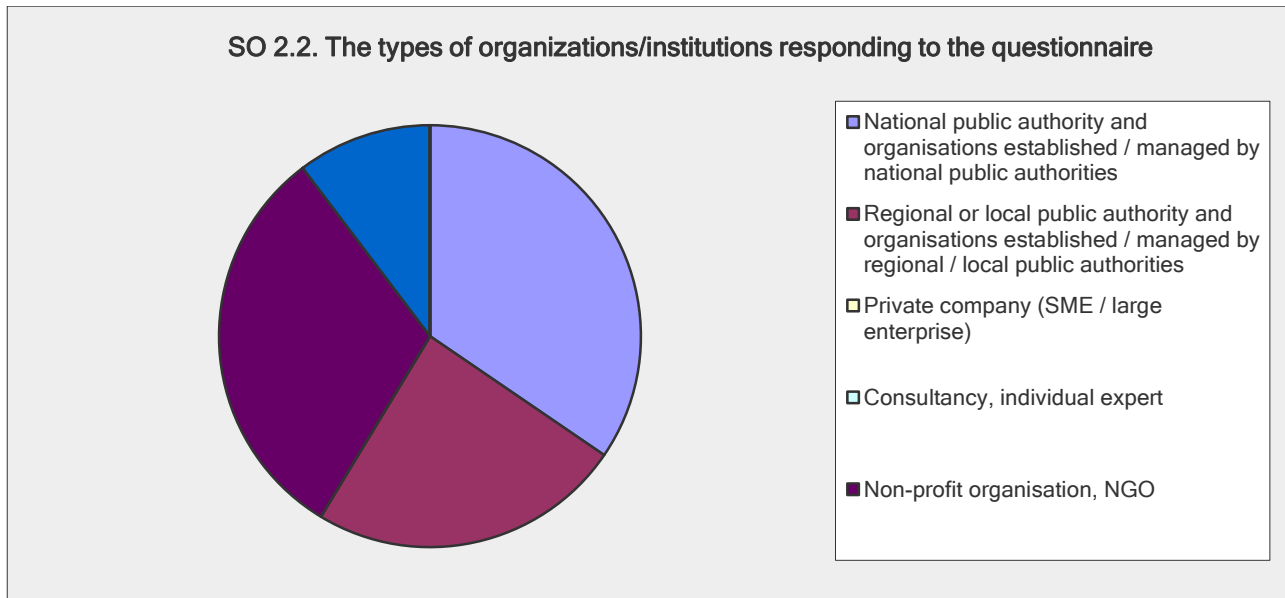
Specific Objective	Result indicator
2.2 Foster sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources (short title). Strengthen joint and integrated approaches to preserve and manage the diversity of natural and cultural heritage and resources in the Danube region as a basis for sustainable development and growth strategies.	R 2.2 Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to strengthen sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources

5.4.1. Quantitative analysis

The questionnaire related to Specific Objective 2.2 was answered by 40 respondents, out of which 29 were considered for the interpretation. The highest number of questionnaires was received from Slovakia (5), Serbia (4) and Romania (4). However, there was a number of countries from where no filled in questionnaire was received (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, and Ukraine).



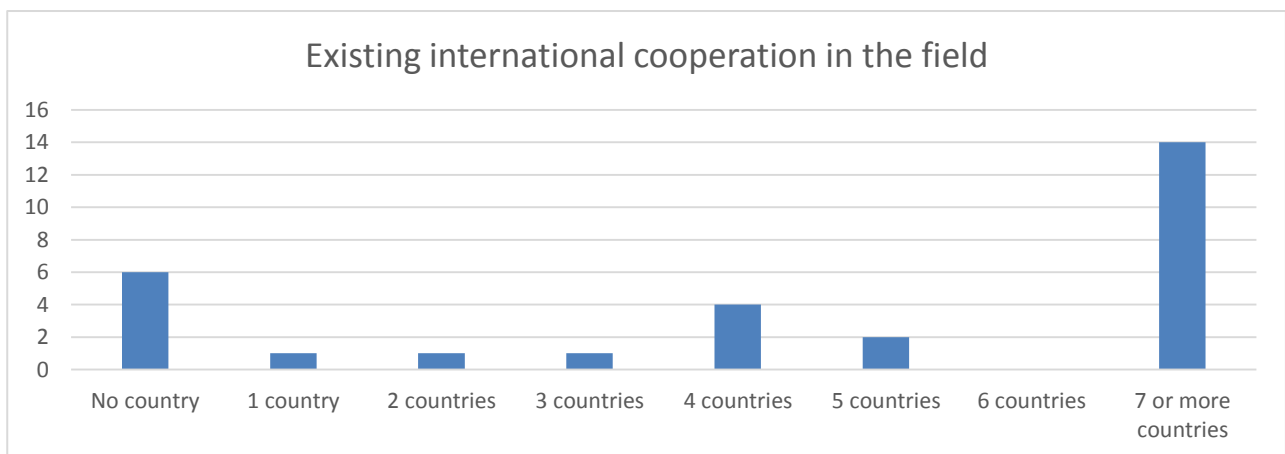
Analysing the type of organizations which provided inputs for the baseline values, the big majority was formed of national, regional and local public authorities or organizations – 58%. Additionally, the questionnaire was fulfilled by research institutions and NGOs.



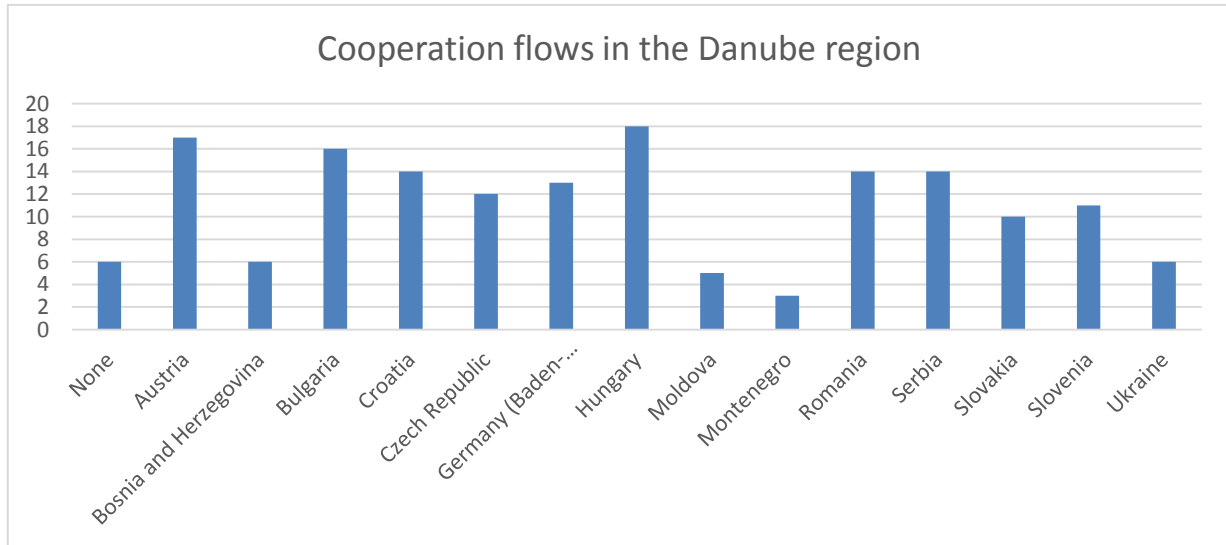
5.4.2. Qualitative analysis

International dimension of cooperation intensity

When analysing the responses on international cooperation existing in this field, there is an evident bipolarity characterizing the Danube region. Half of the respondents indicated that they are engaged in cooperation activities with 7 or more countries, while the answers received are indicating a large margin of organizations and institutions (24%) which do not have any, or very limited experience in international cooperation in the field of preservation and management of natural and cultural heritage. Hence, the premises are in place for exchange of experiences in transnational cooperation, improving thus the efficiency of the organizations active in the topic.



In terms of cooperation flows, the answers received are revealing that some countries developed large, widespread networks of partnerships, the most popular in this sense being Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria.



*Cooperation country choices of respondents
Source: Own edition*

In line with the methodology, based on the received responses, the result of the international cooperation dimension in the field of sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage is 4.69, computed as follows:

	No or 1 country	2 countries	3 countries	4 countries	5 countries	6 countries	7 or more countries	
Responses	7	1	1	4	2	0	14	29
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	7	2	3	16	10	0	98	136
Result								4.69

Assessment of the level of cooperation

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving frameworks for development of sustainable tourism:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	7	1	3	6	5	6	1	
Communication	6	4	4	3	6	3	3	
Coverage	6	3	3	6	7	3	1	
Financing	6	4	3	8	6	1	1	
Transferability	6	3	2	5	4	5	4	
Utility	6	4	4	4	6	3	2	
Leverage	6	5	4	5	5	3	1	
Synergy	6	2	4	5	8	2	2	
Total responses	49	26	27	42	47	26	15	232
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	49	52	81	168	235	156	105	846
Result								3.65

The respondents consider that the cooperation in the field of improving the frameworks for sustainable tourism is mostly characterized by involvement of relevant partners and well established and functional systems for transfer of knowledge and best practices among the partner organizations. Based on the answers received, the international cooperation is also characterized by the development of synergies with other programmes, projects or even policies. The lack of sufficient financial resources and the limited capacity of generating leverage effects for the results achieved from the cooperation activities is perceived as being on the other end of the spectrum.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the capacities and solutions for development of sustainable tourism:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	7	2	4	5	3	5	2	
Communication	7	3	3	3	5	5	2	
Coverage	7	4	2	2	8	3	2	
Financing	7	5	3	6	6	0	1	
Transferability	7	5	3	2	5	4	2	

Utility	7	2	6	2	6	4	1	
Leverage	7	2	5	5	5	2	2	
Synergy	7	3	3	3	8	2	2	
Total responses	56	26	29	28	46	25	14	224
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	56	52	87	112	230	150	98	785
Result								3.50

In terms of improving the capacities and solutions for development of sustainable tourism, the respondents consider that relevant, well communicating stakeholders are involved in cooperation. The availability of financial resources is perceived as the most challenging factor in cooperation, as well as a relatively inefficient transfer of knowledge and best practices. On a larger perspective, the perception of limited transferability of experiences may be the outcome of the bipolarity of the international dimension of cooperation, with a relatively large number of organizations and institutions not engaged in international relationships.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the strategies for sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	7	0	3	7	4	3	4	
Communication	7	1	3	4	7	3	3	
Coverage	7	1	2	6	5	6	1	
Financing	7	3	4	6	7	0	1	
Transferability	7	0	4	5	5	5	2	
Utility	7	0	4	6	6	4	1	
Leverage	7	0	4	6	7	3	1	
Synergy	7	1	3	5	9	1	2	
Total responses	56	6	27	45	50	25	15	224
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	56	12	81	180	250	150	105	834
Result								3.72

The overall perception of cooperation in the field of improving the strategies for sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage is at a satisfactory level. The respondents were highlighting especially the good communication and the synergies achieved by the well-established partnerships. Nevertheless, the lack of a

strong and stable financial background seems to hamper the further development of these relationships, influencing the ability to generate leverage effects for the results achieved.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the tools for sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	7	2	1	4	7	3	3	
Communication	6	0	4	3	8	4	2	
Coverage	7	0	2	3	9	3	3	
Financing	7	2	3	7	6	0	2	
Transferability	7	1	3	2	8	3	3	
Utility	7	1	3	5	6	3	2	
Leverage	7	2	1	6	8	1	2	
Synergy	7	1	3	3	9	1	3	
Total responses	55	9	20	33	61	18	20	216
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	55	18	60	132	305	108	140	818
Result								3.79

The respondents' opinion about the intensity of cooperation in improving the tools for sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage is similar to the one referring to the improvement of the strategies in this field. According to the answers received, the specific activities are covering very well the different categories of organizations and institutions, reaching the relevant stakeholders. Even if financing is rated as the most problematic aspect of cooperation, there are also best practices when the respondents consider that the availability of financial resources is excellent.

5.4.3. Findings and conclusions

In general, in case the respondents were involved in international cooperation activities, they have rated the intensity of their cooperation as being good or very good. The relevance of the established partnerships were most often perceived as being strong, while in most of the cases the respondents were highlighting that they have managed to achieve synergies with other policies, programmes and projects. According to the answers, the international cooperation is more intense and efficient in the field of sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage, than in improving the strategies and the practical tools related to sustainable tourism.

The questionnaire revealed a relatively large number of organizations and institutions lacking international experience in preservation and management of natural and cultural heritage. From DTP perspective, this

represents an important potential since, with well communicated initiatives, new stakeholders can be involved in the transnational efforts of conservation and promotion of the natural and cultural environment, increasing thus the effectiveness and sustainability of its interventions. This conclusion is reinforced by the answers related to the awareness of the existing cooperation networks in the topic: only 51% of the respondents declared they are aware of such networks, most of them indicating networks established through the SEE Transnational Programme, or networks developed within the EUSDR. Moreover, even if not engaged or not aware of the international cooperation initiatives in the Danube region, most of the respondents (80%) declared that they are familiar with the current policies and directions in the field of natural and cultural heritage. The environmental responsibility and the sustainability of the specific interventions were indicated as major directions in almost all of the questionnaires, with references to the European or macro-regional level strategic frameworks in the field (as EUSDR or Prioritized Action Frameworks for Natura 2000).

The expectations towards the DTP are in line with the content and objectives of the Cooperation Programme, with an emphasis on the development of mechanisms for cooperation resulting in joint approaches in related thematic fields. More than 80% of the respondents declared that they are aware of the existing financial instruments designed for supporting the international cooperation in the field, most of them including as example the DTP, but also cross-border cooperation programmes, COSME or Creative Europe.

In conclusion, the baseline value for the result indicator RI 2.2 “Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to strengthen sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources” is 3.87.

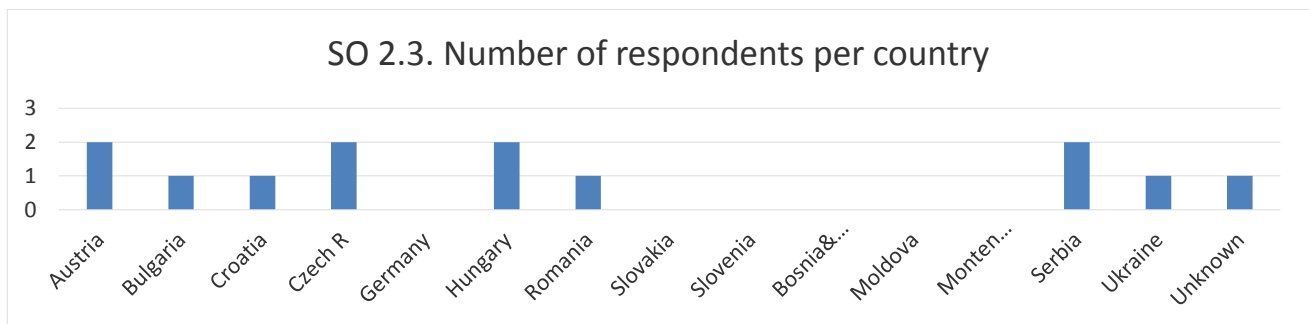
5.5. Specific objective 2.3

Specific Objective	Result indicator
2.3 Foster the restoration and management of ecological corridors (short title). Strengthen effective approaches to preservation, restoring and management of bio-corridors and wetlands of transnational relevance to contribute to the better conservation status of ecosystems of European relevance.	R 2.3 Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to foster restoration and management of ecological corridors

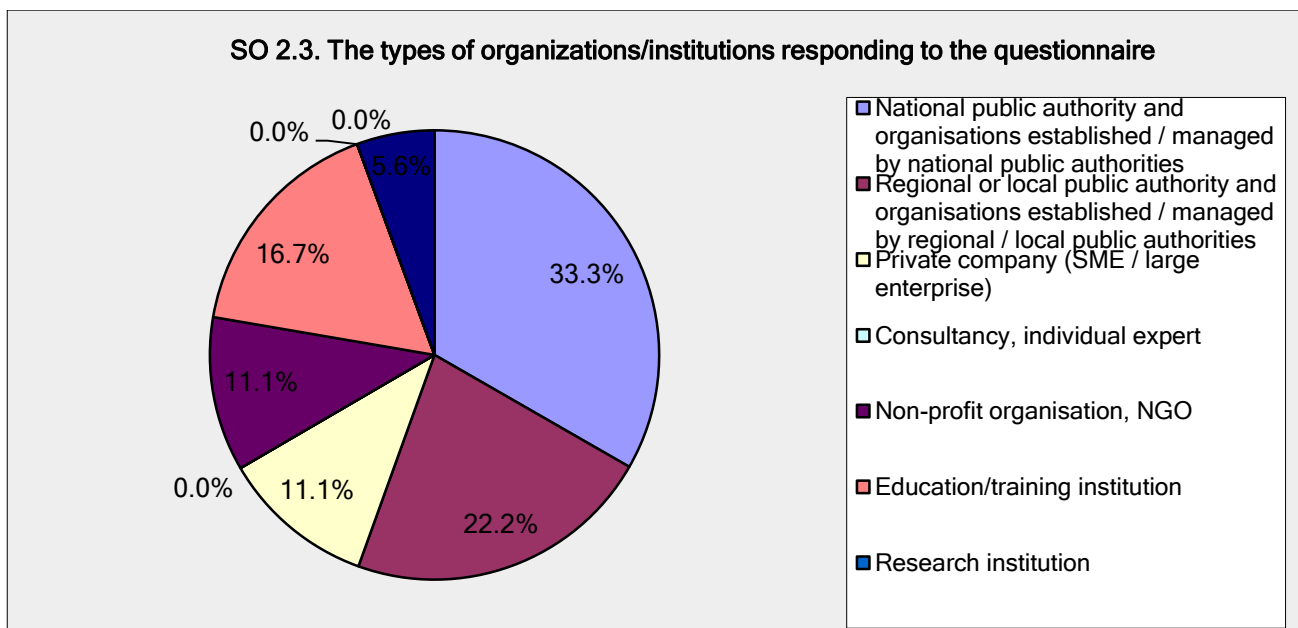
5.5.1. Quantitative analysis

The questionnaire related to Specific Objective 2.3 was answered by 18 respondents, out of which 13 were considered for the interpretation. There were one or two questionnaires received from most of the countries, with a number of countries not submitting any filled in questionnaire (Germany, Slovakia,

Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, and Montenegro), and one respondent not indicating its country of origin.



Analysing the type of organizations which provided inputs for the baseline values, the national public authorities and the educational/training organizations were the most active, accounting for more than a half of the answers received. Additionally, the questionnaire was fulfilled by regional level institutions, private companies, NGOs and international organizations. Considering the specificity of the topic (ecological corridors), the typology of respondent institutions is considered to be representative, reflecting the different levels of competence and expertise.

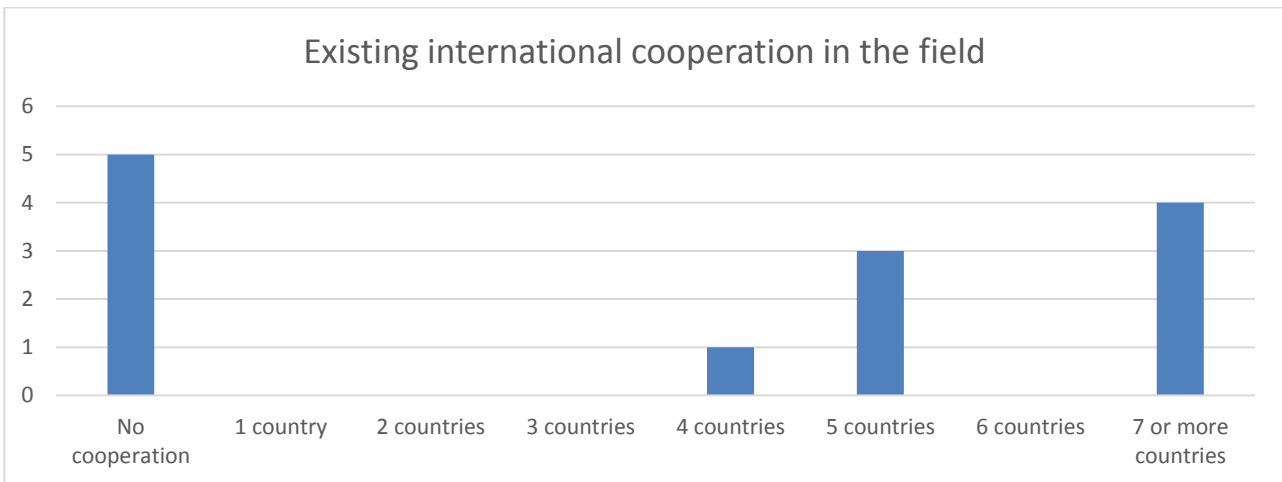


5.5.2. Qualitative analysis

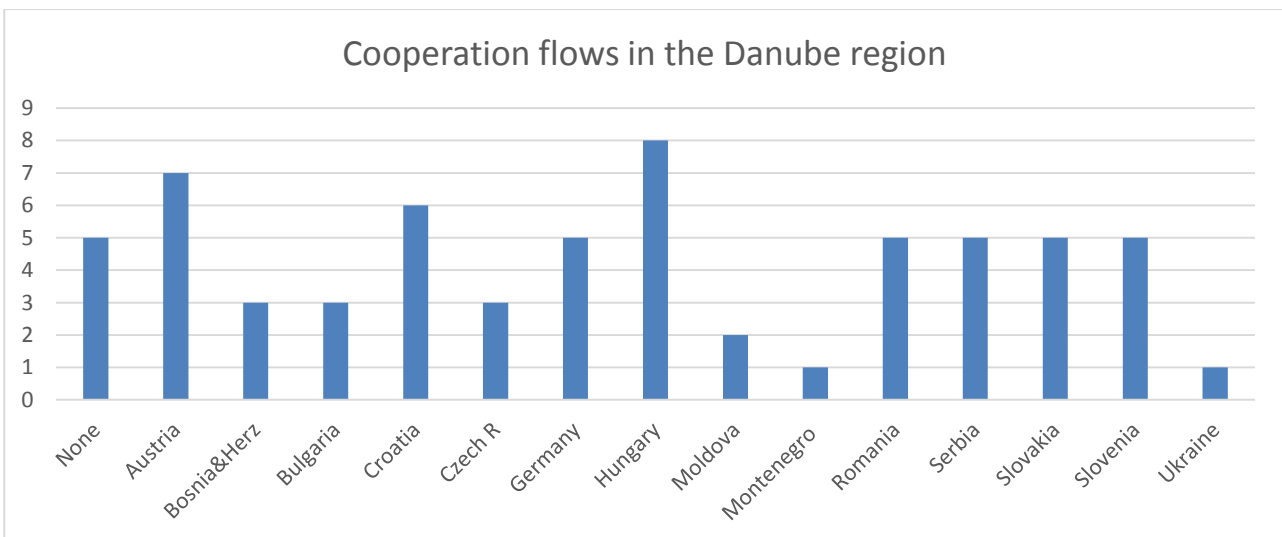
International dimension of cooperation intensity

When analysing the responses on international cooperation existing in this field, as in the case of sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage, there is an evident bipolarity characterizing the Danube region. A large number of the respondents (38%) declared that they are not engaged at all in international cooperation in the field, while almost 54% are indicating that they are part of cooperation networks involving 5 or more countries. The efficient management of the ecological corridors requires international

coordination, therefore the involvement of a high number of stakeholders will represent an important challenge for the DTP in the future.



In terms of cooperation flows, the answers received are revealing that some countries developed large, widespread networks of partnerships, the most popular in this sense being Hungary, Austria and Croatia.





Cooperation country choices of respondents
Source: Own edition

In line with the methodology, based on the received responses, the result of the international cooperation dimension in the field of ecological corridors is 4.00, computed as follows:

	No or 1 country	2 countries	3 countries	4 countries	5 countries	6 countries	7 or more countries	
Responses	5	0	0	1	3	0	4	13
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	5	0	0	4	15	0	28	52
Result								4.00

Assessment of the level of cooperation

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the strategic frameworks to restoration, conservation and improvement of the network of green infrastructures/green-corridors

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	3	1	3	4	1	1	0	
Communication	3	0	1	5	4	0	0	
Coverage	3	1	2	0	7	0	0	
Financing	3	2	1	5	2	0	0	
Transferability	3	0	3	1	5	1	0	
Utility	3	0	4	1	4	1	0	
Leverage	3	0	4	2	3	0	1	
Synergy	3	3	0	1	4	2	0	
Total responses	24	7	18	19	30	5	1	104
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	24	14	54	76	150	30	7	355
Result								3.41

When rating the level interaction with other stakeholders in the field of developing the strategic frameworks for restoration, conservation, and improvement of the network of green infrastructures/green corridors, the respondents were indicating as good the coverage of the cooperation initiatives which are able to reach all the relevant stakeholders and the mechanisms for transferring knowledge and best practices. The responses are indicating also, that there are difficulties in forming relevant, functional partnerships, and in providing a good financial background for their operation.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in developing concrete solutions to restore, conserve and improve the network of green infrastructures/green-corridors:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	3	1	2	3	2	1	0	
Communication	3	0	2	4	3	0	0	
Coverage	3	0	3	2	4	0	0	
Financing	3	1	4	1	3	0	0	
Transferability	3	0	2	2	3	2	0	

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Utility	3	0	3	1	4	1	0	
Leverage	3	0	2	2	4	1	0	
Synergy	3	1	3	2	1	2	0	
Total responses	24	3	21	17	24	7	0	96
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	24	6	63	68	120	42	0	323
Result								3.64

In the case of developing concrete solutions to restore, conserve and improve the network of green infrastructures/green corridors, the answers are indicating a good utilization of the results of cooperation and a good capacity to achieve leverage effects for these results, which is suggesting that the partnerships which are reaching the phase of delivering results are also sustainable. The lack of good financial support is indicated as the weakest element of cooperation in this sector.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the policy frameworks and developing concrete solutions in order to reduce fragmentation and improve connectivity between sites in the Natura 2000 network:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	3	1	3	2	2	1	0	
Communication	3	0	3	3	3	0	0	
Coverage	3	1	2	2	4	0	0	
Financing	3	1	3	3	2	0	0	
Transferability	3	0	3	0	4	2	0	
Utility	3	0	2	1	5	1	0	
Leverage	3	0	1	2	5	1	0	
Synergy	3	1	0	3	3	2	0	
Total responses	24	4	17	16	28	7	0	96
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	24	8	51	64	140	42	0	329
Result								3.43

The utility of the results of cooperation and the capacity to achieve leverage effects for these results in the field of reducing fragmentation and increasing inter-connectivity of NATURA2000 network is indicated as good by many of the respondents. Together with the transfer of knowledge and best practices, perceived

as good by half of the respondents, these may contribute to the achievement of synergies with other relevant policies and projects, which were positively rated in the majority of questionnaires.

5.5.3. Findings and conclusions

On average, the intensity of cooperation does not reach a satisfactory level in the field of ecological corridors in the Danube region, almost none of the opinions rating any of the elements of cooperation as being “excellent”. Based on the received answers, besides the financial availabilities, one of the major problems faced by the stakeholders is the establishment of relevant partnerships needed in order to develop initiatives in this field. On the other hand, once established, the partnerships seem to be capable of delivering useful results, which have the ability to generate leverage effects and synergies with other related policies, programmes and projects.

Most of the respondents declared that they are aware of the current policies and directions in the field of ecological corridors relevant in the Danube region, nominating EU, macro-regional, and national level strategic documents (i.e. EU Biodiversity Strategy, EU Strategy for Green Infrastructures, Habitat Directive, EUSDR). The major reason for not being updated was identified as the lack of availability of relevant information flows.

Moreover, more than half of the respondents (54%) declared that they are unaware of any cooperation network or initiative in the Danube region. Those which are aware, named as examples partnerships developed mainly within SEE Transnational Programme and EUSDR initiatives, which is showing the importance of the transnational programmes in developing and sustaining international cooperation in the region.

The expectations of the respondents towards the DTP in this field are mainly related to the provision of the necessary framework for developing concrete interventions in the sector. The majority of them declared that they are aware of the existing financial instruments to support international cooperation, but only one indicated concrete examples, besides the DTP (as Interreg Europe, or LIFE+).

In conclusion, the baseline value for the result indicator RI 2.3 “Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to foster restoration and management of ecological corridors” is 3.55.

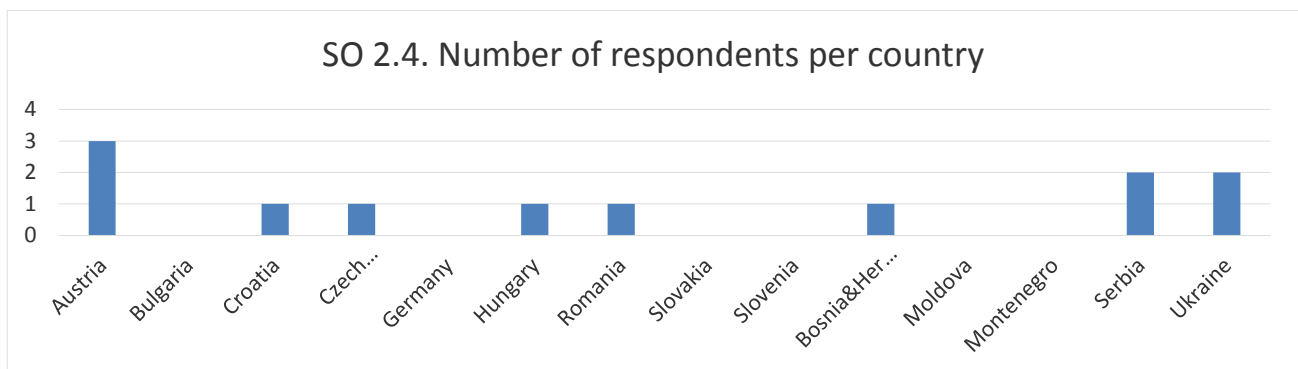
5.6. Specific objective 2.4

Specific Objective	Result indicator
2.4 Improve preparedness for environmental risk management (short title). Establish and develop a more effective governance system for environmental protection addressing emergency situations and improve the preparedness of public	R 2.4 Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to improve preparedness for disaster risk management

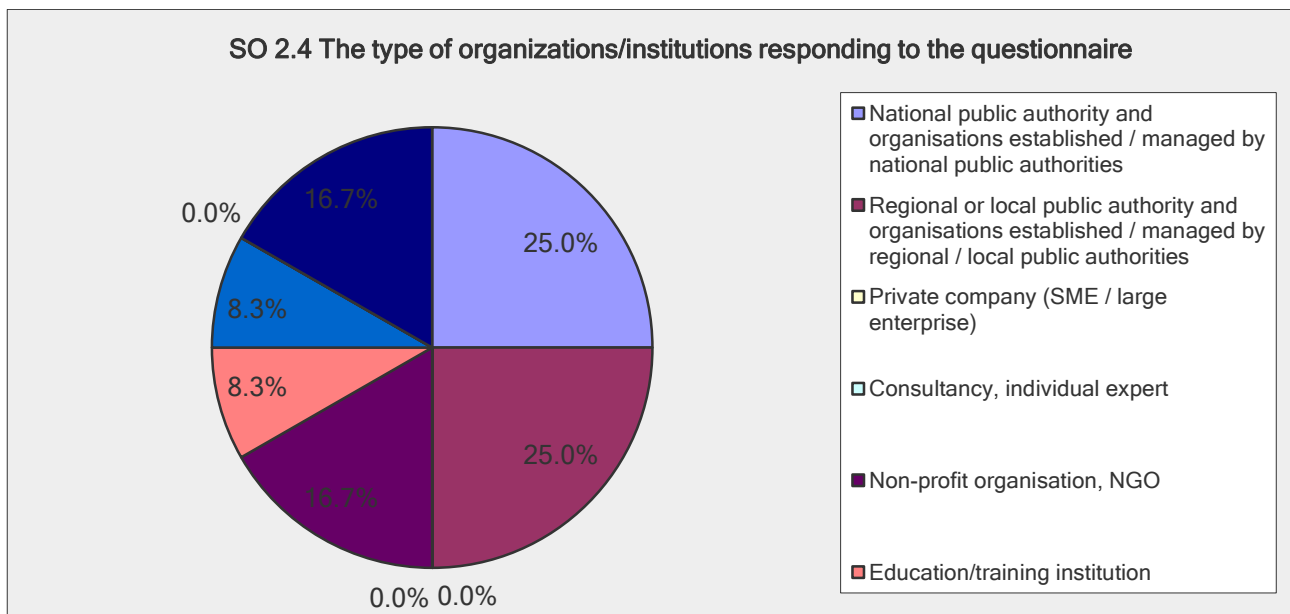
authorities and civil protection organisation contributing to the reduction of risks and impact on ecosystem services, biodiversity and human health.

5.6.1. Quantitative analysis

The questionnaire related to Specific Objective 2.3 was answered by 20 respondents, out of which 12 were considered for the interpretation. There were three questionnaires received from Austria, two from Serbia and Ukraine, and 1 from five other countries. Nevertheless, there were no questionnaires filled in by stakeholders from a number of six countries (Bulgaria, Germany, Slovakia, Slovenia, Moldova, and Montenegro).



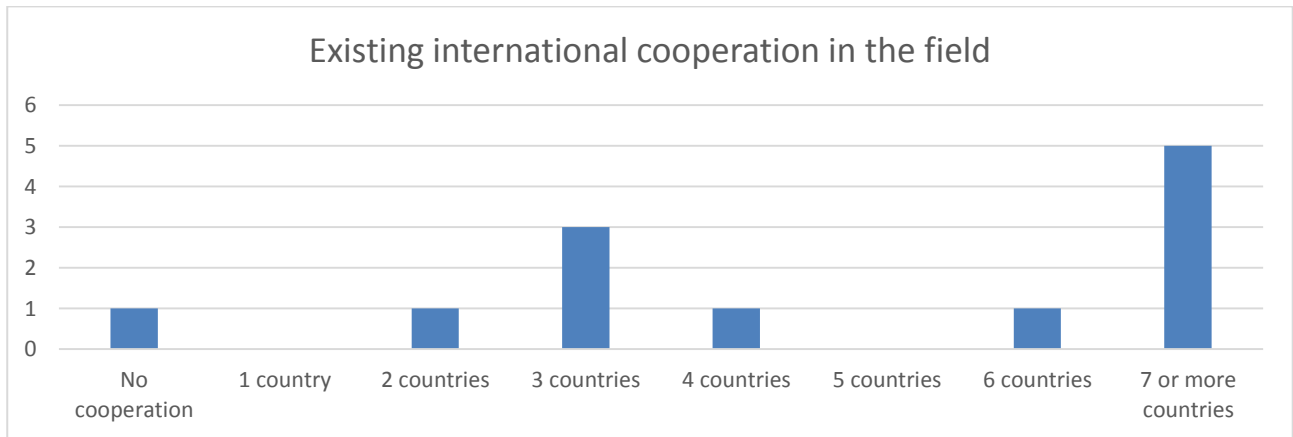
According to the type of organizations which provided inputs for the baseline values, half of the respondents were national, regional or local public authorities. Additionally, the questionnaire was fulfilled by educational/training institutions, research institutions, NGOs and international organizations. Considering the specificity of the topic (risk management) the typology of respondent institutions is considered to be representative, reflecting the different levels of competence and expertise.



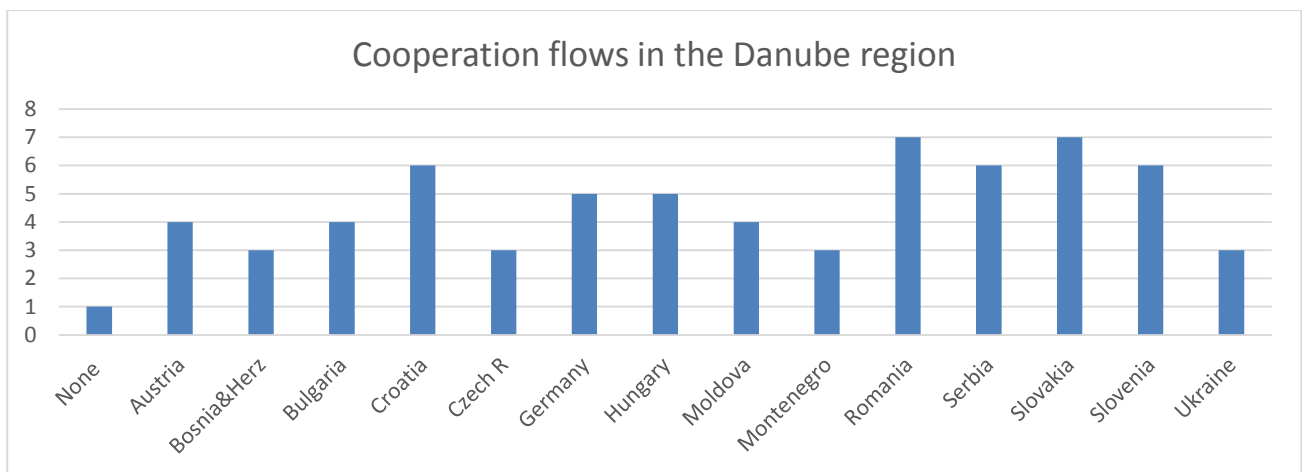
5.6.2. Qualitative analysis

International dimension of cooperation intensity

With one exception, all the respondents declared that they are involved in international cooperation with partners from at least 2 other countries. Half of the institutions indicated that they are having partnerships with at least 6 different countries, denoting a good international cooperation network.



In terms of cooperation flows, the majority of respondents indicated that they are having partnerships established with Romanian and Slovakian institutions in the field of risk management.





Cooperation country choices of respondents
Source: Own edition

In line with the methodology, based on the received responses, the result of the international cooperation dimension in the field of risk management is 4.75, computed as follows:

	No or 1 country	2 countries	3 countries	4 countries	5 countries	6 countries	7 or more countries	
Responses	1	1	3	1	0	1	5	12
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	1	2	9	4	0	6	35	57
Result								4.75

Assessment of the level of cooperation

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in the development of joint strategies and action plans for more effective management of natural and manmade disasters:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	3	2	1	2	4	0	0	
Communication	2	1	2	2	4	0	1	
Coverage	2	2	1	4	2	1	0	

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Financing	2	4	3	2	1	0	0	
Transferability	2	1	1	3	4	1	0	
Utility	2	2	0	4	4	0	0	
Leverage	2	1	1	5	3	0	0	
Synergy	2	1	3	2	4	0	0	
Total responses	17	14	12	24	26	2	1	96
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	17	28	36	96	130	12	7	326
Result								3.40

According to the received responses, the development of joint strategies and actions plans for more effective management of natural and manmade disasters is impeded by the poor financing of such initiatives. Besides the lack of financial resources, the interactions are perceived as generally satisfactory or good. The low number of very good or excellent ratings may be interpreted as a consequence of the missing material background.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the operational frameworks for emergency response of the authorities and stakeholders:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	2	2	3	4	1	0	0	
Communication	2	3	1	2	3	1	0	
Coverage	2	2	1	2	4	0	1	
Financing	2	5	2	2	1	0	0	
Transferability	2	1	2	4	1	2	0	
Utility	2	1	2	4	3	0	0	
Leverage	2	2	2	3	2	1	0	
Synergy	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	
Total responses	16	18	15	23	17	6	1	96
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	16	36	45	92	85	36	7	317
Result								3.30

The respondents considered that the cooperation actions in improving the operational frameworks for emergency response are able to reach the relevant stakeholders ensuring a good coverage for such activities. The cooperation is generating useful results and putting in place good mechanisms for transfer of knowledge and best practices, but they find it difficult to build the partnerships and to ensure the necessary financial support for their activities.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in the interoperability among the emergency response systems:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	2	3	2	3	1	1	0	
Communication	2	2	3	2	2	1	0	
Coverage	2	2	3	2	2	1	0	
Financing	2	4	4	2	0	0	0	
Transferability	2	2	1	4	2	0	1	
Utility	2	1	3	4	2	0	0	
Leverage	2	1	3	4	2	0	0	
Synergy	2	1	4	3	2	0	0	
Total responses	16	16	23	24	13	3	1	96
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	16	32	69	96	65	18	7	303
Result								3.16

The financial basis for cooperation in ensuring interoperability among the emergency response systems is perceived as poor by half of the respondents. Probably because of this, the establishment of relevant partnerships is considered as being difficult, hence the relatively low level of synergies with other policies stemming from international cooperation.

5.6.3. Findings and conclusions

Investments in the risk management systems are costly, therefore the lack of strong financial availabilities are having a negative impact on the international cooperation in the field. The respondents indicated as difficult the establishment of functional partnerships, which may be the consequence of the lack of financial support, but it can result also from the centralized structure of the sector. The interoperability among the emergency response systems seems to be the most challenging dimension of the risk management in the Danube region.

The majority of the respondents declared that they are aware of the current directions and policies manifested in this filed in the Danube Region, those which are not indicating the limited institutional capacities and the lack of relevant information flows as major reasons. On the other hand, only 41%

declared that they are aware of existing thematic cooperation initiatives, only one respondent nominating such a network developed within the SEE project WANDA.

The expectations from the DTP are mainly linked to the development of partnerships and cooperation platforms in the sector, which would finally lead to specific results related to risk management. The majority of the respondents (72%) declared that they are aware of the existing financial instruments for international cooperation, but only few of them nominated ETC in general.

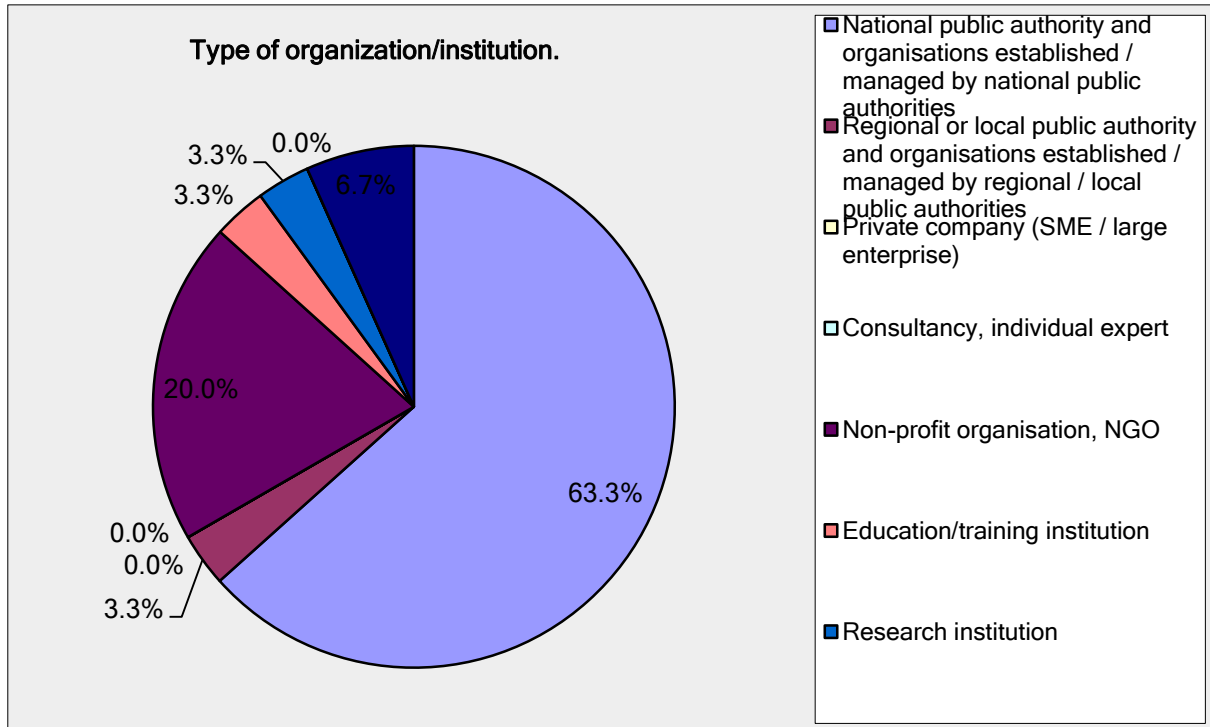
In conclusion, the baseline value for the result indicator RI 2.4 “Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to improve preparedness for disaster risk management” is 3.65.

5.7. Specific objective 3.1

Specific Objective	Result indicator
3.1 Support environmentally-friendly and safe transport systems and balanced accessibility of urban and rural areas (short title). Improve planning, coordination and practical solutions for an environmentally-friendly, low-carbon and safer transport network and services in the programme area contributing to a balanced accessibility of urban and rural areas.	R 3.1 Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to strengthen environmentally-friendly, safe and balanced transport systems

5.7.1. Quantitative analysis

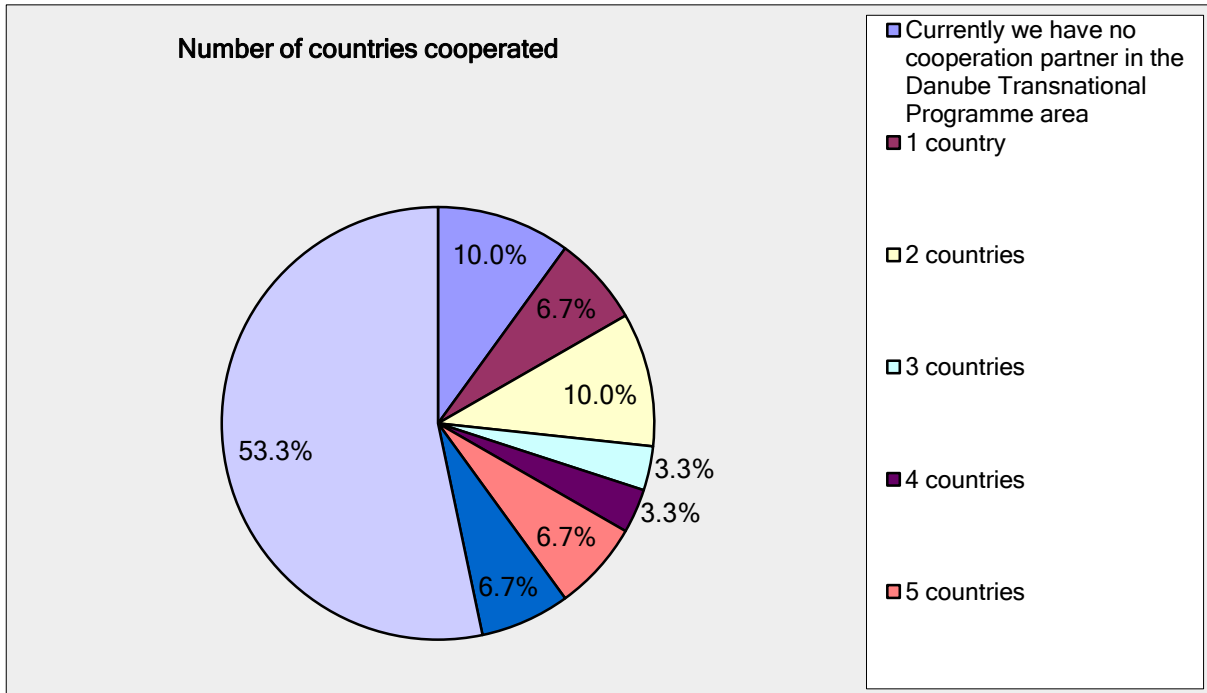
The questionnaire related to Specific Objective 3.1 was answered by 30. Analysing the type of organizations which provided inputs for the calculation of the baseline value for this SO, the big majority was formed of national, regional and local public authorities or organizations – 63.3% and the NGOs were significantly represented, too (20% of the respondents). Considering the specificity of the topic (environmentally-friendly transport) the typology of respondent institutions is considered to be representative, reflecting the different levels of competence and expertise.



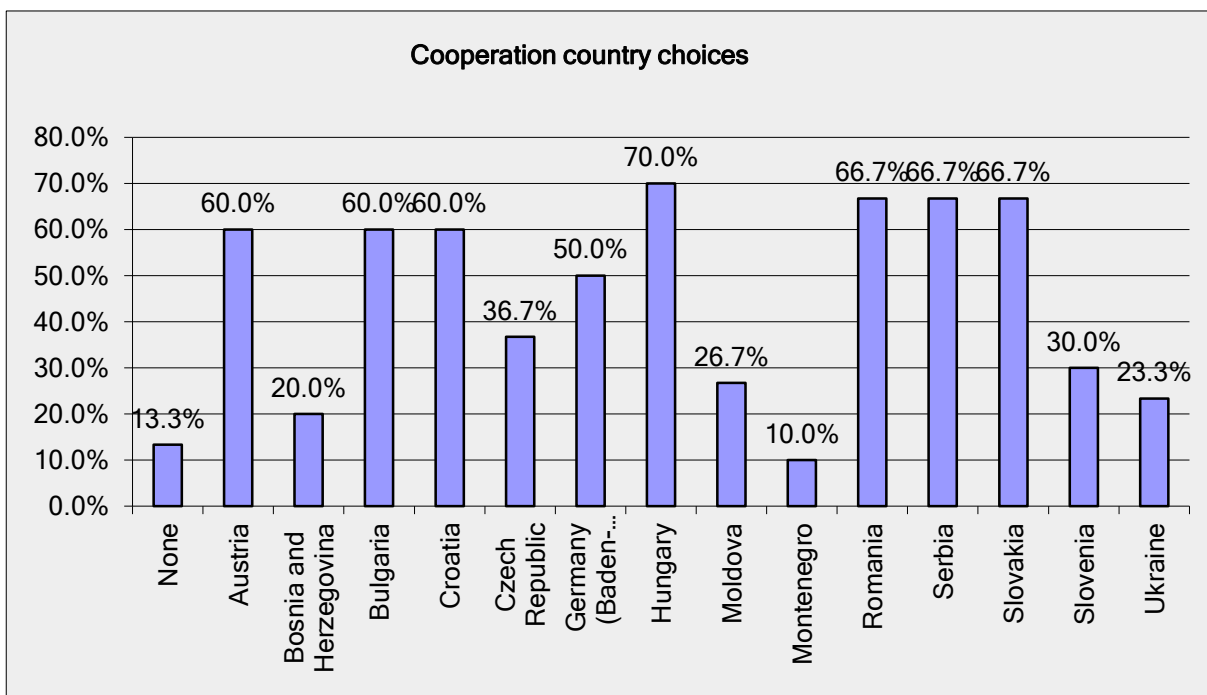
5.7.2. Qualitative analysis

International dimension of cooperation intensity

Transport is a field where international cooperation is crucial in order to achieve durable results. Efficient and sustainable development in the transport sector is grounded by extensive and well-functioning cooperation actions. Therefore, it is not surprising that almost half (53.3%) of the institutions and organizations which responded to the questionnaire are already engaged in transnational cooperation activities with actors from 7 or more countries in the Danube Transnational Programme area. On the other hand, it is to be mentioned that by the time of the survey 10% of the respondents had no cooperation partner in the Danube Region.



Concerning the cooperation flows, we can find that most of the Danube countries have large network of partner organisations from abroad. The most “popular” countries (more than 50% of the respondents cooperate with) are Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. It is to be highlighted that all 14 countries of the Programme area were marked as origin of partner organisations for the field of transport.





Cooperation country choices of respondents
Source: Own edition

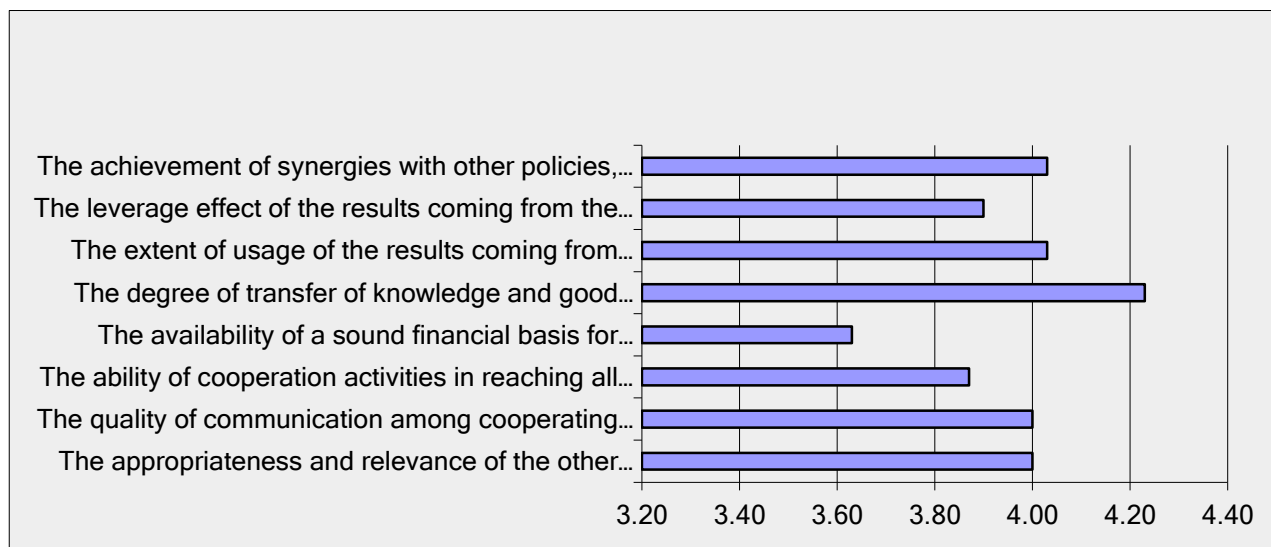
In line with the methodology, based on the received responses, the result of the international cooperation dimension in the field of water management and flood protection is 5.42, computed as follows:

	No or 1 country	2 countries	3 countries	4 countries	5 countries	6 countries	7 or more countries	
Responses	5	3	1	1	2	2	16	30
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	5	6	3	4	10	12	112	152
							Result	5.07

Assessment of the level of cooperation

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in the development of inter-connectivity of environmentally-friendly transport systems, by rating the following components:

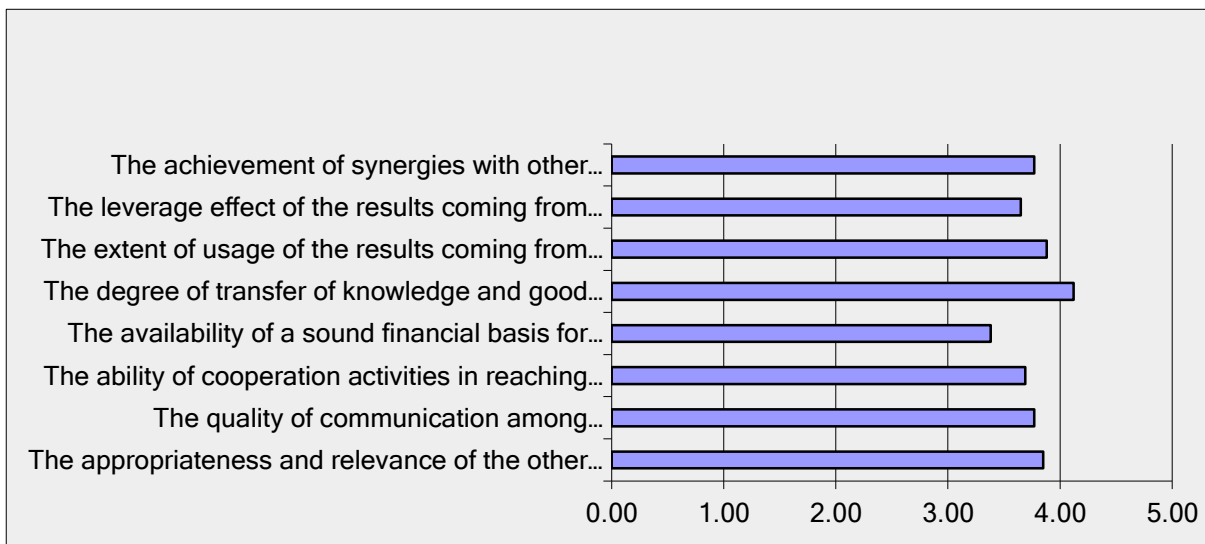
	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	4	4	5	2	7	6	2	
Communication	4	1	7	5	6	6	1	
Coverage	4	4	3	6	9	2	2	
Financing	4	6	3	5	9	2	1	
Transferability	4	0	7	2	8	9	0	
Utility	4	2	6	1	12	4	1	
Leverage	4	2	8	2	7	7	0	
Synergy	4	3	4	3	9	7	0	
Total responses	32	22	43	26	67	43	7	240
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	32	44	129	104	335	258	49	951
Result								3.96



The respondents consider that the cooperation in the field of development of inter-connectivity of environmentally-friendly transport systems is mostly characterized by a relatively good level for transfer of knowledge and best practices among the partner organizations (average = 4.23). However, taking into account all responses, 13.33% of them refer to the weakest option offered by the questionnaire. The lack of sufficient financial resources is seen, on the other hand, as a challenging element of the cooperation activities.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in enhancing the inter-operability of environmentally-friendly transport systems, by rating the following components:

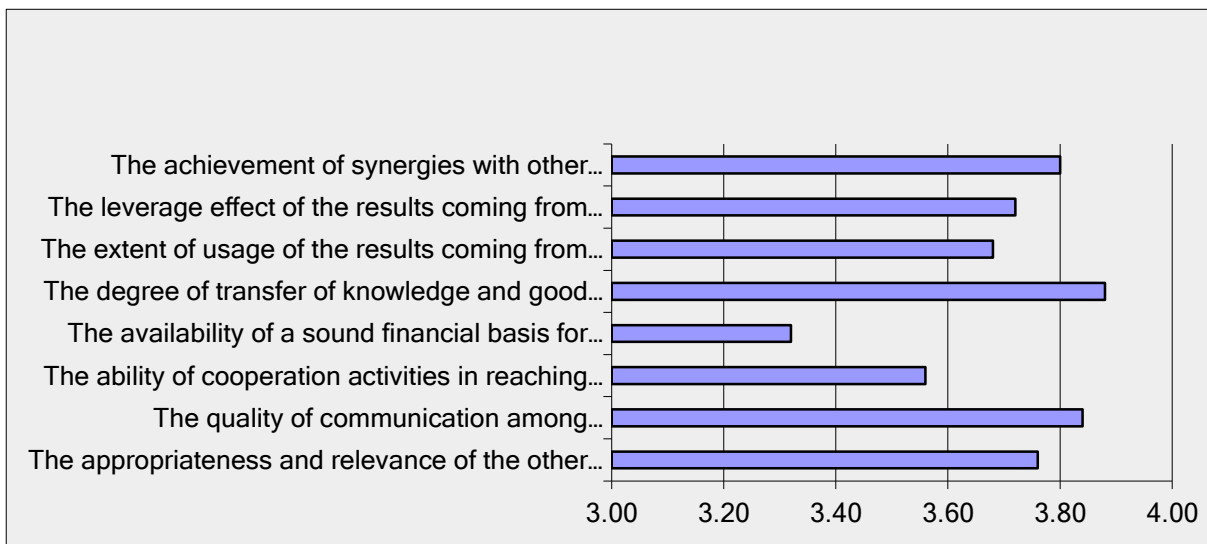
	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	4	3	4	3	7	4	1	
Communication	4	3	3	6	6	3	1	
Coverage	4	2	5	6	6	2	1	
Financing	4	7	3	3	6	2	1	
Transferability	4	0	6	4	5	5	2	
Utility	4	2	7	1	6	4	2	
Leverage	4	3	7	2	5	4	1	
Synergy	4	4	4	2	7	4	1	
Total responses	32	24	39	27	48	28	10	208
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	32	48	117	108	240	168	70	783
Result								3.76



In terms of enhancing the inter-operability of environmentally-friendly transport systems, the respondents consider that the transfer of knowledge and best practices is at a good level, while other elements are ranked as a bit weaker. The availability of financial resources is assessed as the most challenging factor in cooperation, which can be explained by the fact that solutions for enhancing inter-operability in the transport sector usually require significant financial resources. Additionally, same as above, taking into account all responses, 13.33% of them refer to the weakest option offered by the questionnaire.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in the development of multi-modality of environmentally-friendly transport systems, by rating the following elements:

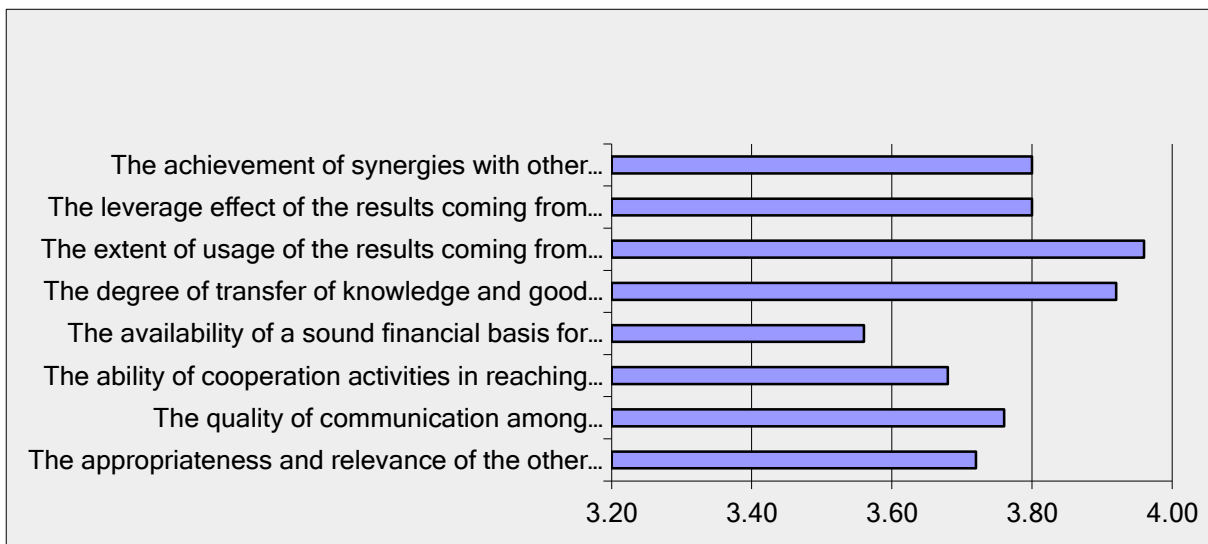
	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	4	1	8	2	5	4	1	3.76
Communication	4	1	7	2	5	6	0	3.84
Coverage	4	5	3	5	2	6	0	3.56
Financing	4	7	4	3	1	6	0	3.32
Transferability	4	1	6	4	5	3	2	3.88
Utility	4	2	7	2	6	3	1	3.68
Leverage	4	2	7	2	5	4	1	3.72
Synergy	4	4	4	3	3	5	2	3.80
Total responses	32	23	46	23	32	37	7	200
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	32	46	138	92	160	222	49	739
Result								3.70



Concerning the development of multi-modality of environmentally-friendly transport systems, the respondents classify all elements of the cooperation into the range of fair-satisfactory categories. Of course, financing is a recurring issue also for this type of interactions. And not to forget, same as above, 13.33% of the answers refer to the weakest option offered by the questionnaire. On the other side, 38% of the responses fall into the categories good-very-good-excellent.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in the development of safer transport systems, by rating the following elements:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	3	1	7	5	7	2	0	3.72
Communication	3	2	5	6	6	3	0	3.76
Coverage	3	2	7	5	4	4	0	3.68
Financing	3	5	4	4	6	3	0	3.56
Transferability	3	3	2	6	7	4	0	3.92
Utility	3	2	4	4	8	4	0	3.96
Leverage	3	2	5	6	5	4	0	3.80
Synergy	3	2	6	3	8	3	0	3.80
Total responses	24	19	40	39	51	27	0	200
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	24	38	120	156	255	162	0	755
Result								3.78



The respondents' opinion about the intensity of cooperation in developing safer transport systems is almost the same as it was stated for the other aspects in case of the present Specific Objective: fairly satisfactory, with a slightly lower score assigned to the financial condition of the cooperation. Concerning the cooperation level, no "excellent" classification was given in case of developments of safer transport systems.

5.7.3. Findings and conclusions

The survey found that the interactions among various actors of the Danube Region in the field of environmentally-friendly transport systems can be classified as fairly-satisfactory and the assessed elements are at a very similar level. The strongest aspect is the transfer and exchange of knowledge and best-practice, while the availability of financial resources is always a big challenge for the stakeholders. Another characteristic of the result for SO 3.1 is the large variance of the responses: for all questions and aspects all 7 options (from ‘no’ to ‘excellent’) are represented (except one single case) which refers to a very heterogeneous population.

80% of the respondents are familiar with the current policies and directions in the Danube Transnational Programme area concerning environmentally-friendly and low-carbon transport. Besides the relevant PAs of the EUSDR and the Europe 2020 Strategy, they also mentioned Water Framework Directive, Danube River Basin Management Plan, TEN-T Connecting Europe, Naiades II and the Clean Power for Transport Directive (2014/94/EU). The issue of limited human resources was indicated as the main reason behind the lack of information on the current policies.

As far as the thematic initiatives/networks are concerned, more than the two-thirds (70%) of the respondents are aware of their existence in their specific field of cooperation in the Danube region. They mentioned networks established via previous transnational projects (SEE), or existing thematic cooperation in the framework of DTP or CEF projects.

The expectations towards the Danube Transnational Programme reflect the content of the Cooperation Programme, being linked to the improvement of the cooperation in the field of environmentally-friendly and low-carbon transport. Respondents stress the need of knowledge sharing and exchange of good (and bad) practice to react better to common challenges and to create integrated multimodal transport solutions. Respondents also expect the increased awareness of the significance of the environmentally-friendly transport systems development, as well as better communication among the stakeholders since the good cooperation is the only way of achieving the common goals. Answers listing very specific expectations were also received, e.g. continuation of previous cooperation/projects or specific solution for a specific area.

In conclusion, the baseline value for the result indicator RI 3.1 “Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to strengthen environmentally-friendly, safe and balanced transport systems” is 4.05.

5.8. Specific objective 3.2

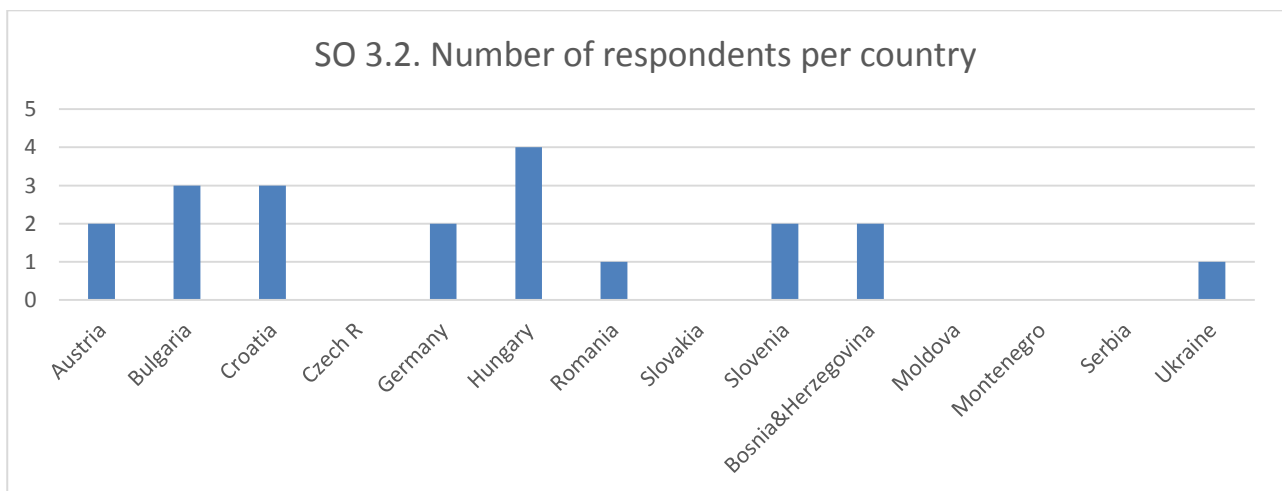
Specific Objective	Result indicator
3.2 Improve energy security and energy efficiency (short title). Contribute to the energy security and	R 3.2 Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to contribute to energy

energy efficiency of the region by supporting the development of joint regional storage and distribution solutions and strategies for increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy usage.

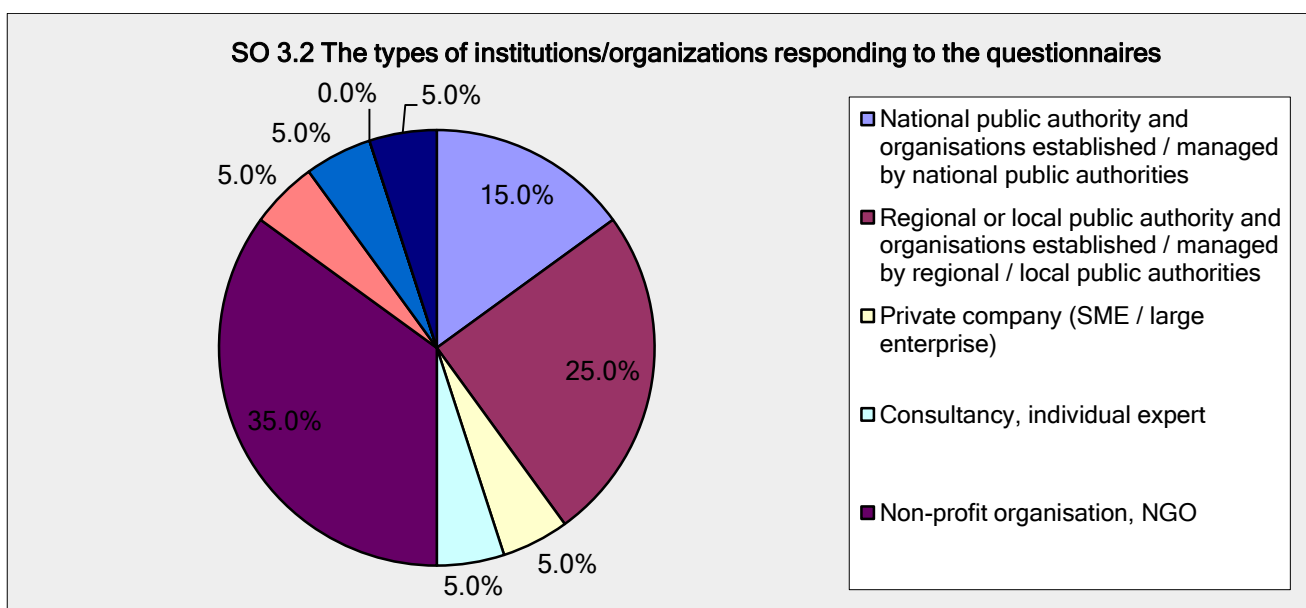
security and energy efficiency

5.8.1. Quantitative analysis

The questionnaire related to energy security and energy efficiency received a number of 29 answers, out of which 20 were considered for interpretation. The most active were the respondents from Hungary (4), Bulgaria and Croatia (3 each). There were no answers received from Czech Republic, Slovakia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia.



Considering the type of institutions, the most active respondents were the non-profit organizations, accounting for 35% of the received answers. Nevertheless, the questionnaire related to SO 3.2 was filled in by a large variety of institutions, including national, regional and local level public authorities, private companies, educational/training institutions, and research institutions. This ensures the representativeness of the survey, reflecting different levels of competence and expertise.



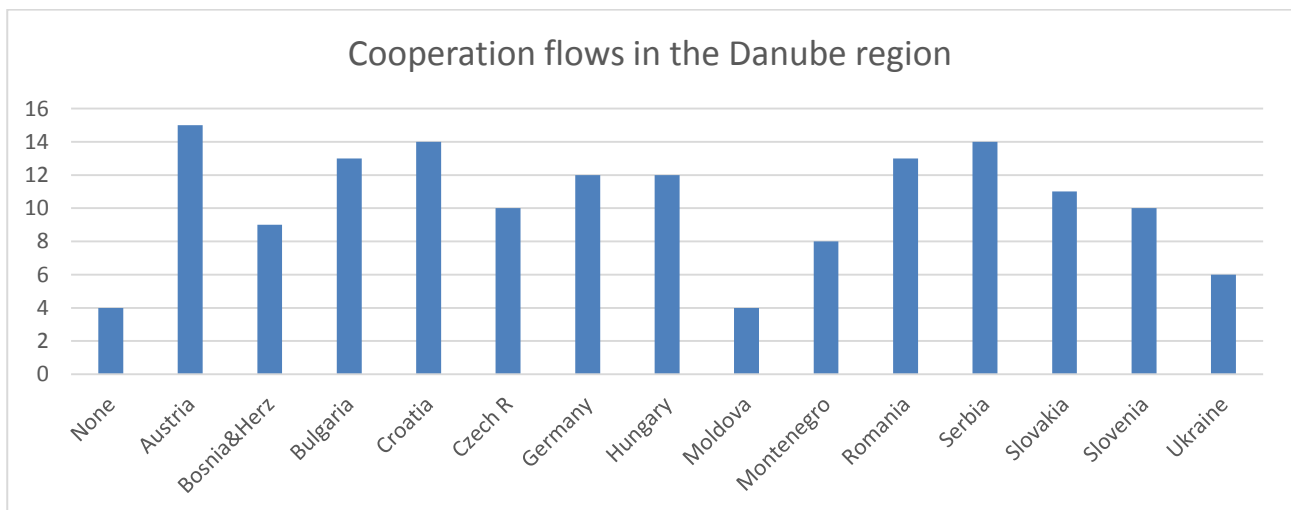
5.8.2. Qualitative analysis

International dimension of cooperation intensity

The big majority of the respondents are engaged in large international cooperation networks, involving in most of the cases 7 or more countries. It can be observed that, in case involved in international relationships, the responding organizations are joining extended networks, the limited, cross-border type of connections not being indicated in the answers.



The most present partner-country in the international networks is Austria (15), closely followed by Croatia and Serbia. The answers revealed a well-balanced distribution of the cooperation flows, almost all countries being strongly involved in the partnership networks.





Cooperation country choices of respondents
Source: Own edition

In line with the methodology, based on the received responses, the result of the international cooperation dimension in the field of energy security and energy efficiency is 5.65, computed as follows:

	No or 1 country	2 countries	3 countries	4 countries	5 countries	6 countries	7 or more countries	
Responses	4	0	0	0	1	1	14	20
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	4	0	0	0	5	6	98	113
Result								5.65

Assessment of the level of cooperation

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the strategic frameworks for energy storage and distribution:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	6	1	2	3	4	3	1	
Communication	6	2	0	2	6	3	1	
Coverage	6	1	3	2	5	2	1	
Financing	6	2	3	5	2	1	1	
Transferability	6	2	2	3	4	2	1	

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Utility	6	2	3	3	3	2	1	
Leverage	6	1	3	4	4	1	1	
Synergy	6	1	4	1	5	2	1	
Total responses	48	12	20	23	33	16	8	160
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	48	24	60	92	165	96	56	541
Result								3.38

The perception of the respondents related to the interaction with other stakeholders in the field of improving the strategic frameworks for energy storage and distribution is rather heterogenic, with the wide range of ratings for the different elements. On average, the opinion is that the cooperation in the sector is on a fair to satisfactory level, with a high number of answers rating the communication of the existing partnerships as being good. The availability of financial resources is considered by most of the respondents as being the weakest element of their international cooperation actions.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in developing practical solutions for coordination in energy storage and distribution:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	5	1	1	5	5	2	1	
Communication	5	2	0	3	7	2	1	
Coverage	5	1	3	4	3	3	1	
Financing	5	3	4	4	1	2	1	
Transferability	5	2	1	5	3	3	1	
Utility	5	2	0	6	4	2	1	
Leverage	5	1	3	6	2	2	1	
Synergy	5	1	5	3	2	3	1	
Total responses	40	13	17	36	27	19	8	160
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	40	26	51	144	135	114	56	566
Result								3.54

The quality of communication among cooperating stakeholders is considered at least good by the majority of the respondents, which also see that the existing partnerships are involving the relevant stakeholders in a satisfactory manner. Based on the received answers, it can be concluded that the partnerships in the field

of coordination of energy storage and distribution are leading to useful results. Nevertheless, the ability to generate leverage effects for these results, as well as the capacity to reach synergies with other policies or projects is considered as less than satisfactory by most of the respondents. This may be due to the lack of sufficient financial resources, which is rated the lowest by the respondents to this question.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the strategic frameworks for diversification of energy sources:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	5	3	2	1	4	4	1	
Communication	5	4	0	3	4	3	1	
Coverage	5	3	3	1	4	3	1	
Financing	5	6	2	4	0	2	1	
Transferability	5	3	3	2	4	2	1	
Utility	5	5	1	4	2	2	1	
Leverage	5	4	4	1	3	2	1	
Synergy	5	4	3	1	2	4	1	
Total responses	40	32	18	17	23	22	8	160
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	40	64	54	68	115	132	56	529
Result								3.31

The opinion of the respondents to this question indicate that even if there are well-establish, relevant and well-communicating partnerships in the area of improving the strategic frameworks for diversification of energy sources, the lack of a solid financial background is affecting their capacity to generate concrete results which are used and are able to create leverage effects and synergies.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in developing practical solutions for diversification of energy sources:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	5	2	1	2	4	5	1	
Communication	5	1	2	2	4	5	1	
Coverage	5	2	2	1	5	4	1	
Financing	5	5	2	2	3	2	1	
Transferability	5	0	3	3	4	4	1	
Utility	5	2	2	5	2	3	1	

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Leverage	5	2	3	3	3	3	1	
Synergy	5	2	2	3	3	4	1	
Total responses	40	16	17	21	28	30	8	160
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	40	32	51	84	140	180	56	583
Result								3.64

The respondents were considering that the cooperation in developing practical solutions for diversification of energy sources is more intense than in developing the strategic frameworks in the field. The relevance of the partnerships and the quality of communication were the most appreciated, with the majority of the respondents considering that there are good mechanisms in place for transfer of knowledge and best practices. Somehow surprisingly, even if still considered as the major problem for cooperation activities, the availability of financial resources was better rated than in the field of developing the strategic frameworks.

5.8.3. Findings and conclusions

The opinion of the respondents is that the cooperation intensity in the field of energy security and energy efficiency is, in average, at a satisfactory level in the Danube region. The international dimension of the cooperation is strong, with large partnership networks, involving relevant, well-communicating stakeholders. The lack of sufficient financial resources seems to have a negative impact on the usage of the results of the cooperation platforms, as well as on the capacity to generate leverage effects for these results and synergies with other policies and projects.

A big majority of respondents (80%) declare that they are familiar with the policies/directions in the sector, 65% indicating that they are aware of existing thematic networks in the Danube Region, mentioning former transnational projects or EUSDR initiatives as examples. The expectations towards DTP are primarily related to increasing the level of professional cooperation and coordination in the field, especially by creating platforms for exchange of knowledge and best practices. Even if 70% of the respondents declared that they are aware of the existing financial instruments for supporting international cooperation in this field, only the quarter of them provided concrete examples in this sense.

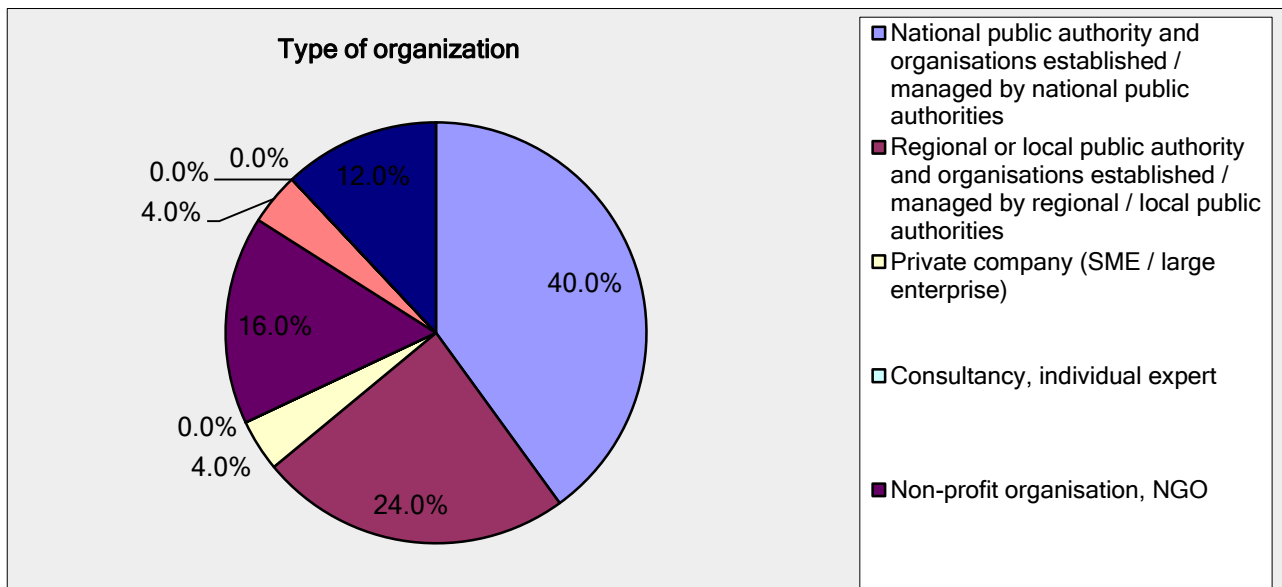
In conclusion, the baseline value for the result indicator RI 3.2 “Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to contribute to energy security and energy efficiency” is 3.90.

5.9. Specific objective 4.1

Specific Objective	Result indicator
4.1 Improve institutional capacities to tackle major societal challenges (short title). Strengthen multilevel- and transnational governance and institutional capacities and provide viable institutional and legal frameworks for more effective, wider and deeper transnational cooperation across the Danube region in areas with major societal challenges	R 4.1 Intensity of cooperation of institutional actors and other stakeholders in the programme area in order to tackle major societal challenges

5.9.1. Quantitative analysis

The questionnaire related to Specific Objective 4.1 was answered by 25 respondents. Analysing the type of organizations which provided inputs for the calculation of the baseline value for this SO, the big majority was formed of national, regional and local public authorities or organizations – 64% and the NGOs were significantly represented, too (16% of the respondents). Considering the specificity of the topic (governance) the typology of respondent institutions reflects the different levels of competence and expertise.

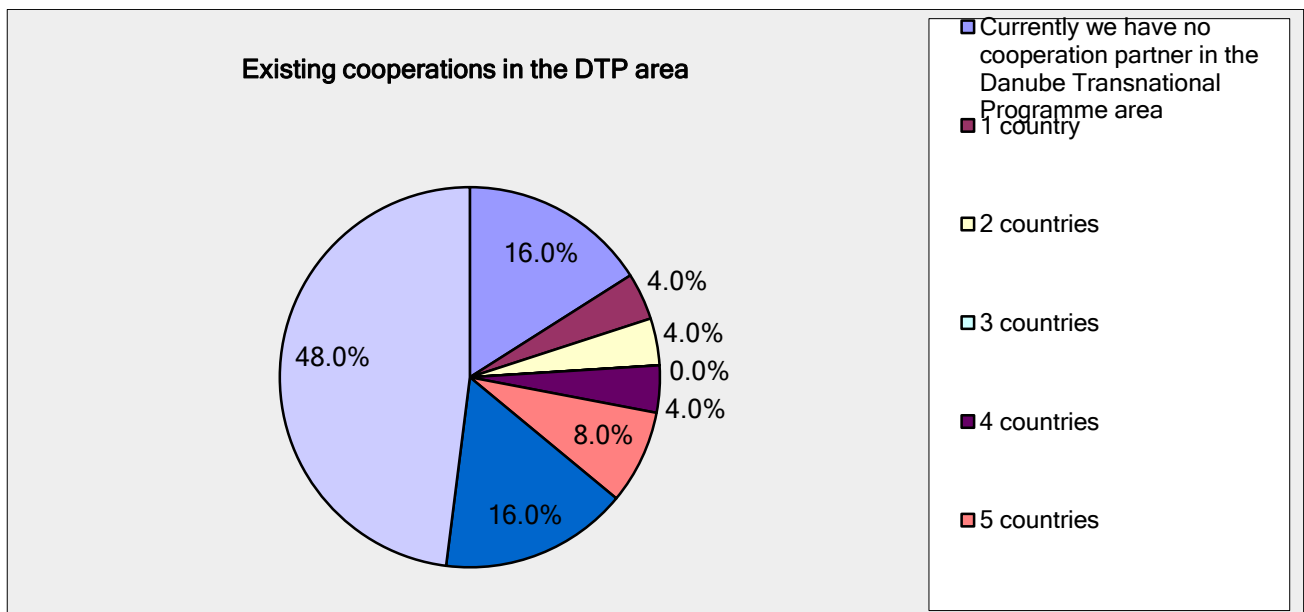


5.9.2. Qualitative analysis

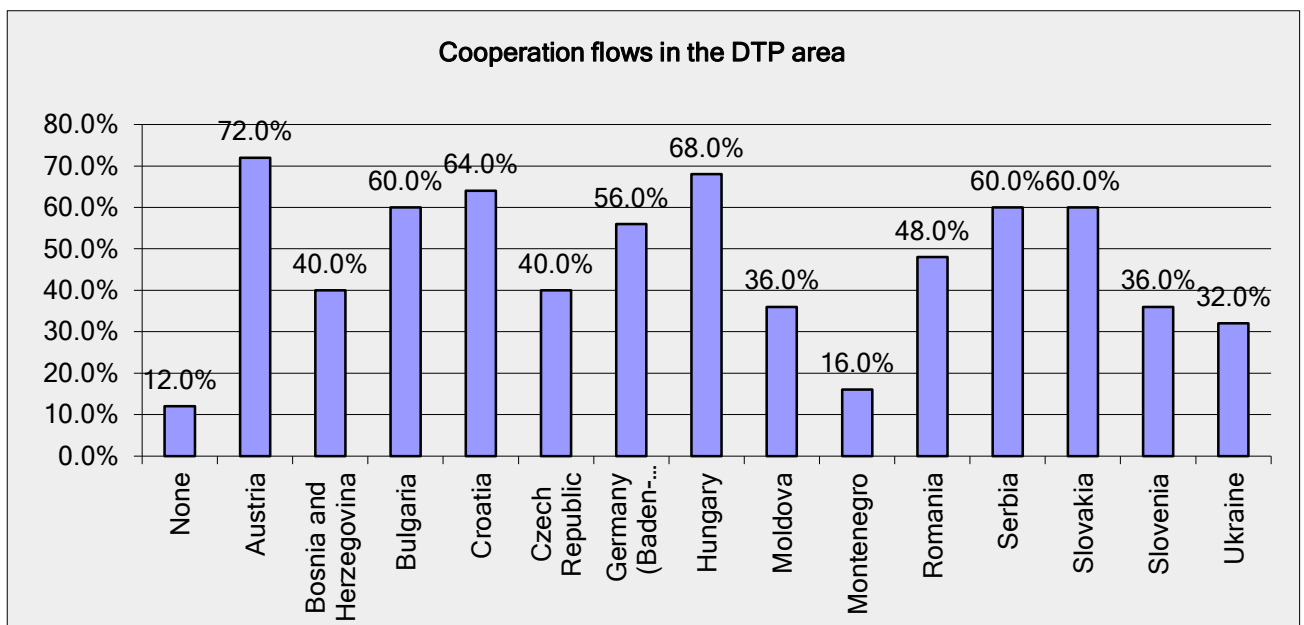
International dimension of cooperation intensity

Good and efficient governance is grounded by extensive and well-functioning cooperation. Therefore, it is not surprising that almost half (48%) of the institutions and organizations which responded to the questionnaire are already engaged in transnational cooperation activities with actors from 7 or more

countries in the Danube Transnational Programme area. Only 4 of the 25 respondents indicated that they have no cooperation at the moment.



Having regard to the cooperation flows, we can find that most of the Danube countries has large network of partner organisations from abroad. The most “popular” countries (more than 50% of the respondents cooperate with) are Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Serbia and Slovakia. It is to be highlighted that all 14 countries of the Programme area were marked as origin of partner organisations.





Cooperation choices of respondents
Source: own edition

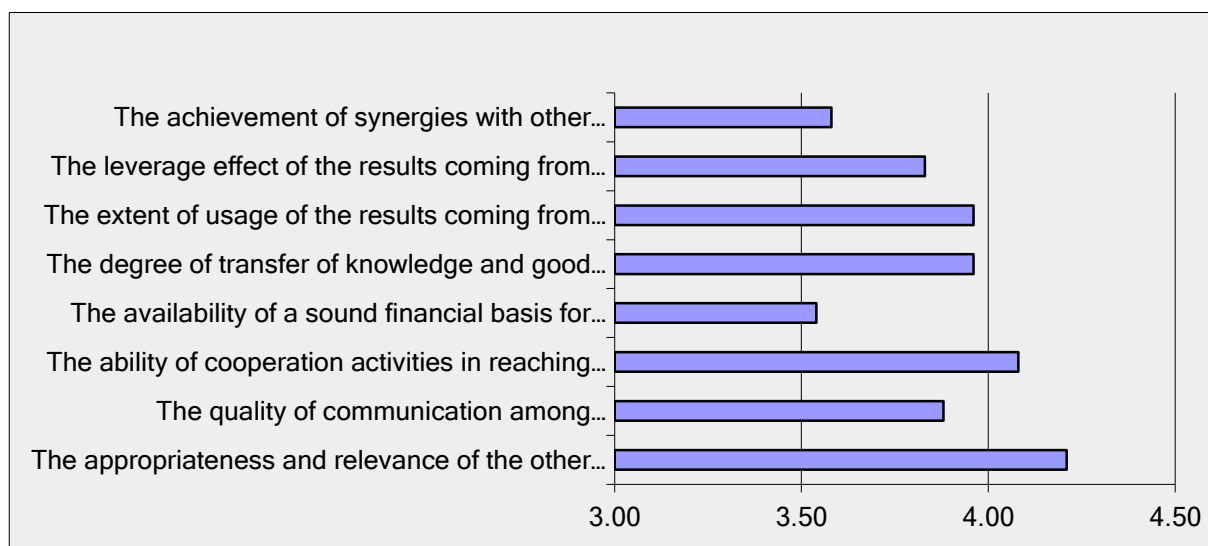
In line with the methodology, based on the received responses, the result of the international cooperation dimension in the field of governance is 5.16, computed as follows:

	No or 1 country	2 countries	3 countries	4 countries	5 countries	6 countries	7 or more countries	
Responses	5	1	0	1	2	4	12	25
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	5	2	0	4	10	24	84	129
Result								5.16

Assessment of the level of cooperation

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the capacities of public institutions and stakeholders in tackling major societal challenges, by rating the following components:

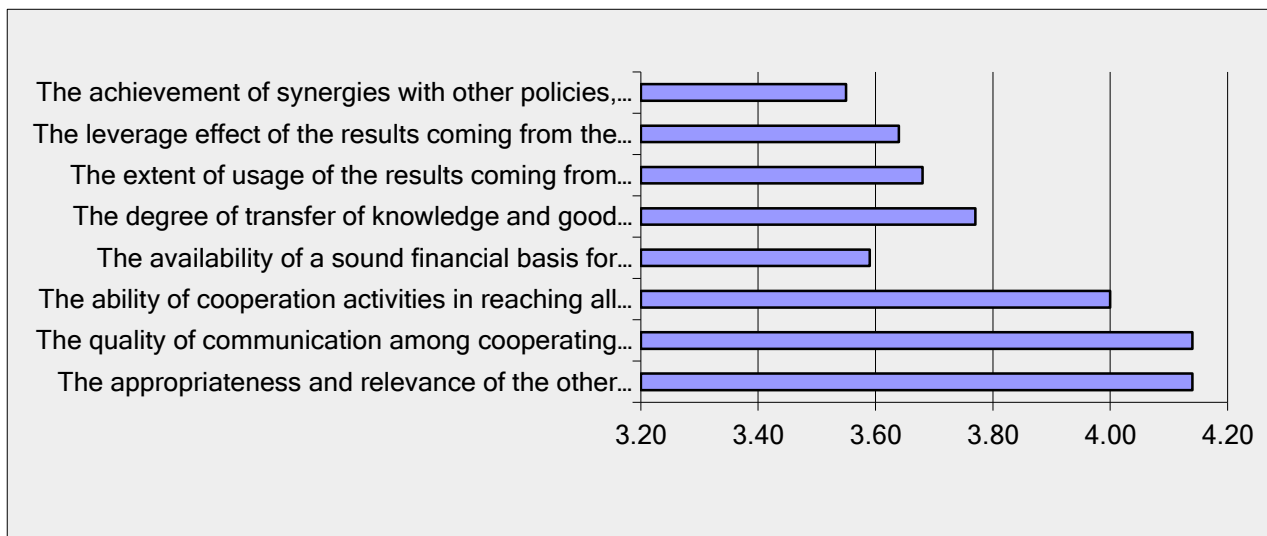
	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	2	2	6	2	6	3	3	
Communication	3	3	6	2	4	4	2	
Coverage	2	4	3	3	7	3	2	
Financing	3	4	6	4	2	5	0	
Transferability	3	0	7	5	4	4	1	
Utility	2	3	5	4	4	6	0	
Leverage	3	2	5	6	3	4	1	
Synergy	3	4	6	3	4	3	1	
Total responses	21	22	44	29	34	32	10	192
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	21	44	132	116	170	192	70	745
Result								3.88



The appropriateness and relevance of the partnerships and the coverage of the involvement of relevant actors are assessed as the strongest elements in actions improving the capacities of public institutions and other stakeholders. On the other hand, the lack of sufficient financial resources and the limited capacity of generating synergies with other policies, programmes and projects are marked as the weakest components of the cooperation. In 10 cases the respondents classified the level of interaction into the 'excellent' category.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving policy instruments for multi-level and transnational governance application, by rating the following components:

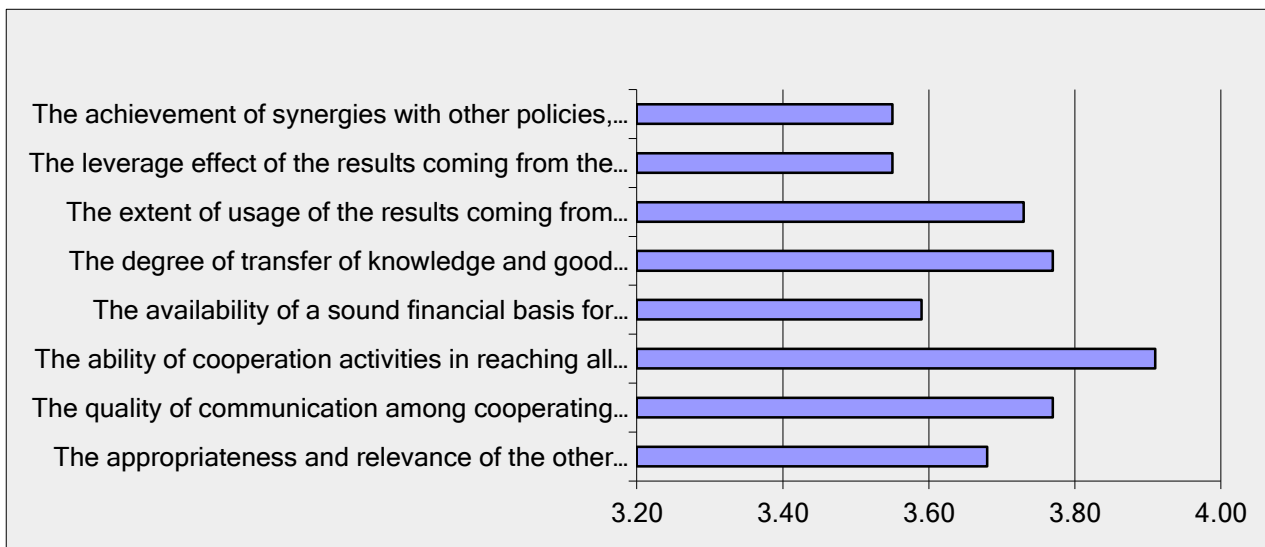
	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	2	4	4	1	5	2	4	
Communication	2	3	4	1	7	3	2	
Coverage	2	3	5	2	5	3	2	
Financing	3	5	4	2	3	4	1	
Transferability	3	3	4	4	4	2	2	
Utility	2	4	5	3	4	4	0	
Leverage	2	6	4	3	1	5	1	
Synergy	2	7	4	1	3	4	1	
Total responses	18	35	34	17	32	27	13	176
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	18	70	102	68	160	162	91	671
Result								3.81



In terms of developing policy instruments for multi-level and transnational governance applications, the respondents consider that the appropriateness and relevance of the partnerships and the quality of communication while cooperating with the partners are at a fairly satisfactory level. Also under this question, the availability of financial resources and provision of synergies are assessed as the most challenging factors in cooperation. The reasons behind could be the often unpredictable financial background of the concerned organisations and the difficulties while facing interoperability and synergy with other initiatives.

Q: Please appraise the level of interaction of your institution with relevant actors from the Danube Transnational Programme area in improving the frameworks for monitoring and evaluation of the capacities of public institutions to cope with major societal challenges, by rating the following elements:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Partnership	4	2	6	3	1	4	2	
Communication	4	1	7	2	2	4	2	
Coverage	4	1	6	3	1	4	3	
Financing	3	5	4	3	2	3	2	
Transferability	5	1	5	3	2	3	3	
Utility	4	2	7	1	2	3	3	
Leverage	4	3	6	2	1	5	1	
Synergy	4	4	5	1	2	5	1	
Total responses	32	19	46	18	13	31	17	176
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	32	38	138	72	65	186	119	650
Result								3.69



Cooperation in developing frameworks for monitoring and evaluation of the capacities of the institutions is seen at a fairly satisfactory level by the respondents. All elements of the cooperation are at a very similar level, only the ability to access to all relevant stakeholders is found at an advanced stage.

5.9.3. Findings and conclusions

The survey can conclude that the strongest element of cooperation in the field of governance is the appropriateness and relevance of partnerships and the involvement of the more relevant stakeholders in

the cooperation activities. By the time of the data collection the respondents found difficult to create synergies and to have significant leverage effect in their cooperation. Overall, interactions with partner organisations in capacity buildings are assessed as the most advanced aspect in this field (average=3.88). The baseline value for this result indicator has been significantly increased by the high level of the international cooperation dimension.

72% of the respondents (mostly interested in education-, demographic change, migration-, civil society- or social inclusion-related policies) are familiar with the current policies and directions in the Danube Transnational Programme area. Besides the relevant PAs of the EUSDR and the Europe 2020 Strategy, they also mentioned the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018, the European Agenda on Migration and the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies. Also those not aware of the relevant policies, indicated experiences gained through previously implemented projects in the related fields.

As far as the thematic initiatives/networks are concerned, less than the half (44%) of the respondents are aware of their existence in their specific field of cooperation in the Danube region. The list of cooperation initiatives includes stakeholder conferences, and the initiatives of dedicated organisations such as Danube Countries Working Group, the European Regions Assembly, and the International Association for Danube Research and the European Regions Institute. The expectations towards the Danube Transnational Programme are mostly in line with the content of the Cooperation Programme, being linked to the improvement of the cooperation in the field of capacity building and governance in tackling societal challenges. Respondents stress the need of knowledge sharing and exchange of good practice to react better to common challenges. They also expect new synergies and the use of complementarities. Moreover, the increased flow of knowledge and information through transnational channels may generate positive results in terms of strengthening the institutional cooperation and in elaborating innovative governance instruments. Innovative sectors, media literacy and public services are special focus areas in the answers.

Following the methodology, the baseline value for the result indicator “Intensity of cooperation of institutional actors and other stakeholders in the programme area in order to tackle major societal challenges” is 4.14.

5.10. Specific objective 4.2

Specific Objective	Result indicator
4.2 Support to the governance and implementation of the EUSDR (short title). Improve the governance system and the capabilities and capacities of public institutions and key actors involved in complex transnational project development to implement the EUSDR in a more effective way.	R 4.2 The status of management capacities of Priority Area Coordinators (PAC) to effectively implement EUSDR goals, targets and key action

5.10.1. Quantitative analysis

The questionnaire related to Specific Objective 4.2 was sent to the Priority Area Coordinators and National Coordinators. By the deadline, 15 filled in questionnaires were received and all of them were analysed.

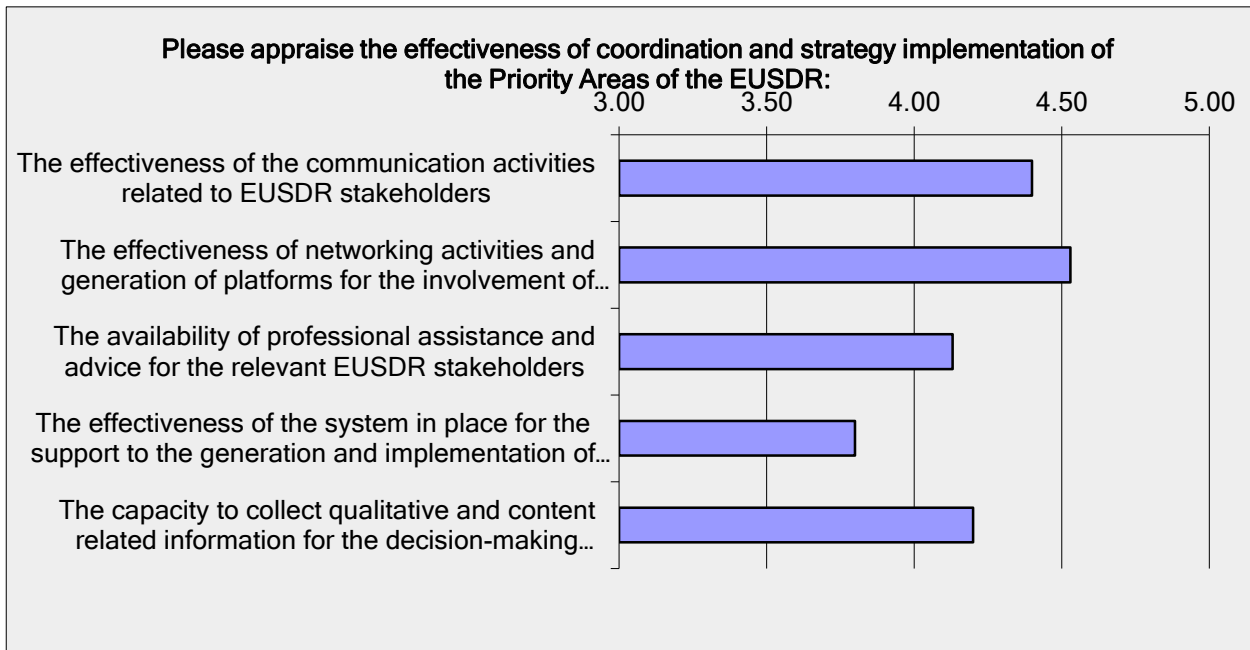
It is important to note that the Danube Strategy Point was established in July 2015 and thus the respondents found it difficult to assess its performance. Analysing the answers the consultant has to highlight that in most cases the respondents tried to evaluate the results to be expected in the future instead of the current situation.

5.10.2. Qualitative analysis

Assessment of the management capacities of the implementation of EUSDR goals, targets and key actions

Q: Please, appraise the effectiveness of coordination and strategy implementation of the Priority Areas of the EUSDR, by rating the following elements

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Communication activities	0	0	2	8	2	3	0	
Networking on regional level	0	0	3	5	3	4	0	
Professional assistance	0	1	3	6	3	2	0	
Functioning of the institutional system	0	0	6	6	3	0	0	
Provision of information	0	1	4	4	3	3	0	
Total responses	0	2	18	29	14	12	0	75
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	0	4	54	116	70	72	0	316
Result								4.21

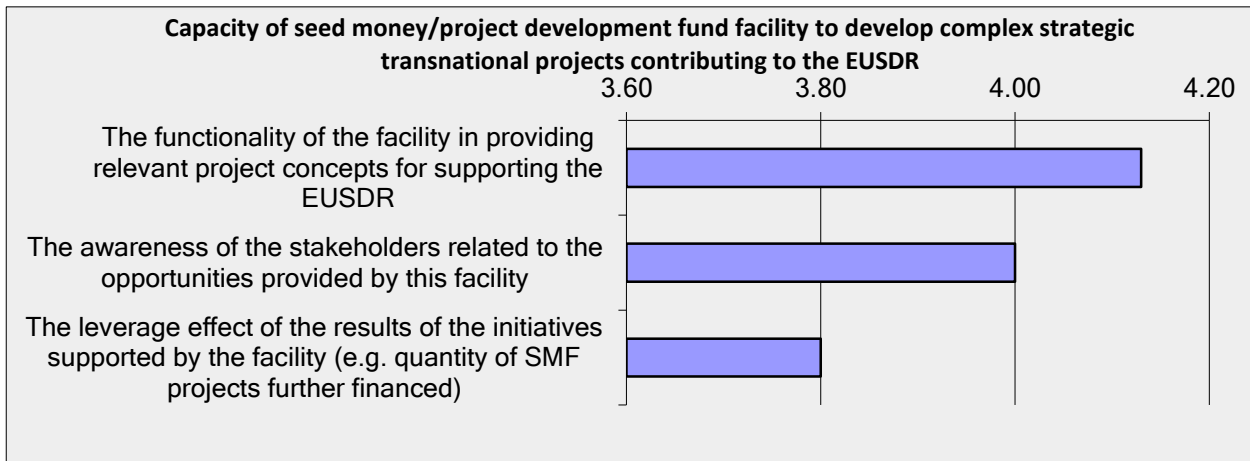


Most respondents (97%) ranked the various aspects of the effectiveness of coordination and strategy implementation of the Priority Areas from fair to very good and the classification called satisfactory received the most votes. This distribution means that there is room to develop the effectiveness of the implementation of the Strategy.

The institutional framework has just been built up for the EUSDR. Thus, not surprisingly, “the effectiveness of the system in place for the support to the generation and implementation of the EUSDR projects” is assessed as the weakest element of the current situation, and on the other hand, the networking and the communication are considered the most advanced components.

Q: Please appraise the capacity of the seed money/project development fund facility to develop complex strategic transnational projects contributing to the EUSDR, by rating the following components:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Provision of project concepts	2	1	2	2	4	4	0	
Awareness of the stakeholders	2	2	1	3	3	4	0	
Leverage effect	2	3	2	2	2	3	1	
Total responses	6	6	5	7	9	11	1	
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	6	12	15	28	45	66	7	179
Result								3.98

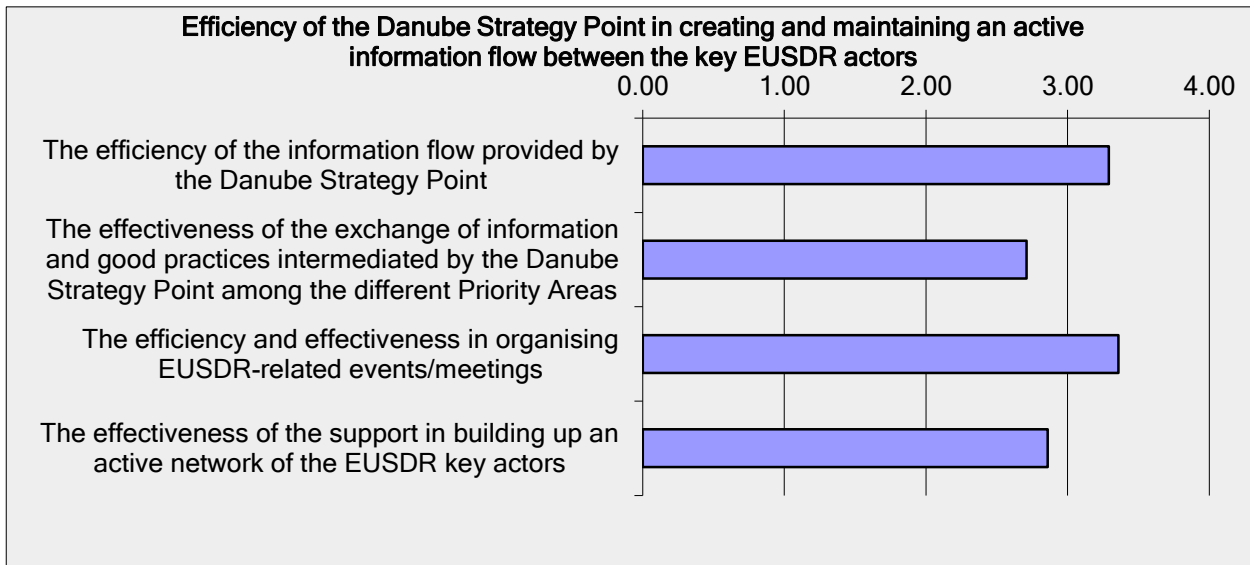


High scores were assigned to the relevance of project concepts supporting the EUSDR and the awareness of the stakeholders on this facility. Nevertheless, the leverage effect of the facility is perceived as a very challenging factor in the fund management, which absolutely reflects that impacts are multifactorial, complex and long-term results.

NB: Since the facility to be evaluated under this question will come into operation only in the near future, it's clear that the respondents formulated their opinion on the expected results.

Q: Please, appraise the efficiency of the Danube Strategy Point in creating and maintaining an active information flow between the key EUSDR actors, by rating the following elements:

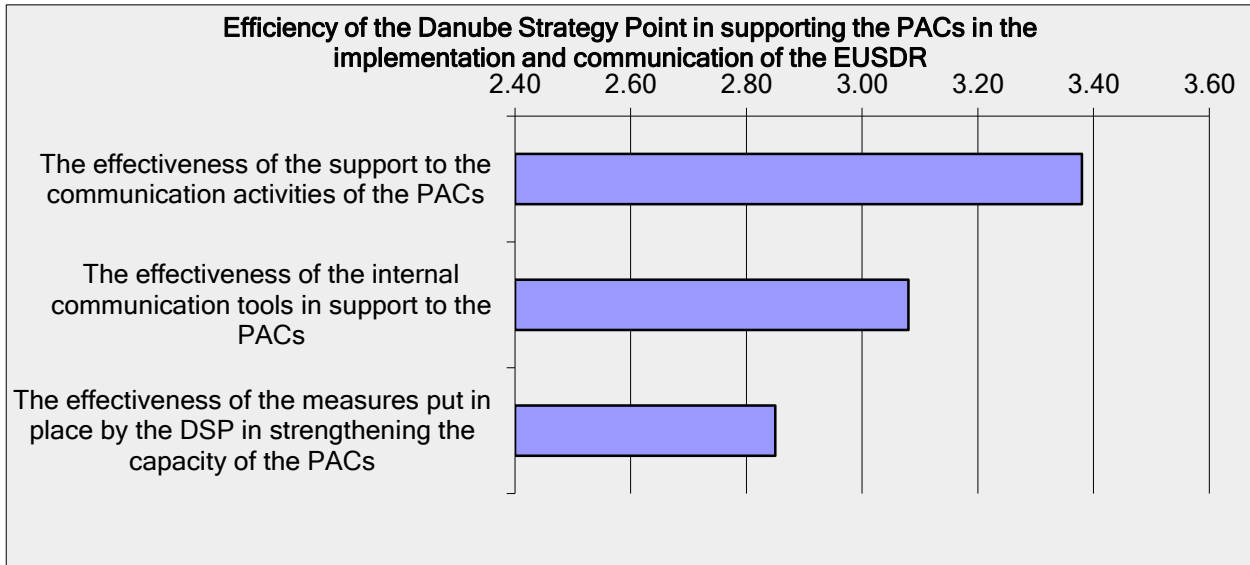
	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Information flow	2	3	2	3	4	0	0	
Exchange of information	4	2	4	2	2	0	0	
Organisation of events	4	1	1	3	4	1	0	
Networking	4	2	2	4	2	0	0	
Total responses	14	8	9	12	12	1	0	56
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	14	16	27	48	60	6	0	171
Result								3.05



Under this question, most of the informants responded negatively (14 out of 56 answers were ‘no’). This result confirms the start-up status of the Danube Strategy Point. However, the relatively high averages for the assessment of the information flow and the efficiency and effectiveness in organizing EUSDR-related events (3.29 and 3.36) show a good basis for an efficient Danube Strategy Point.

Q: Please appraise the efficiency of the Danube Strategy Point in supporting the PACs in the implementation and communication of the EUSDR, by rating the following elements:

	No	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Excellent	
Support to the communication	2	3	1	3	3	1	0	
Support concerning internal communication tools	3	2	1	5	2	0	0	
Capacity building	3	3	2	3	2	0	0	
Total responses	8	8	4	11	7	1	0	39
Weighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total score	8	16	12	44	35	6	0	121
Result								3.10



What was said above can be repeated here: a newly established Danube Strategy Point cannot support in an efficient way the work of the PACs. But the first result can be observed in the support of the communication (underlined by three ‘good’ and even one ‘very good’ classifications). The efficiency in support of the capacity building of the PACs is assessed as a weak element (average=2.85).

5.10.3. Findings and conclusions

The survey results in all aspects show that the support system to the governance and implementation of the EUSDR is at a premature stage, which is reasonable as the Danube Strategy Point’s operation just started recently (July 2015), and the links with the PACs are not yet established.

However, related to the PACs – managing the EUSDR priority areas – the perception of the respondents is more or less satisfactory considering their effectiveness of coordination and strategy implementation of the Priority Areas in terms of communication activities, regional networking and professional assistance.

As for the seed money/project development facility, which is not yet in operation, the perception of the respondents is reflecting the future expectation about its capacity to develop complex strategic transnational projects contributing to the EUSDR as being good/very good in terms of providing relevant project concepts, and even the leverage effect of the results of the initiatives supported by the facility.

Altogether, it is foreseen that the status level of the management capacities of the implementation of EUSDR goals, targets and key actions will improve through the further operation, cooperation and established links between the Danube Strategy Point and the PACs, thus statement that the current relatively low capacity levels will advance, resulting in better effectiveness and efficiency of the collaboration of the concerned actors.

In conclusion, the baseline value for the result indicator “The status of management capacities of Priority Area Coordinators (PAC) to effectively implement EUSDR goals, targets and key actions,, is 3.59.

6. Recommendations

Related to the future surveys to be taken in 2018, 2020 and 2023, in order to obtain comparable and realistic data to define the progress the Programme made, the following aspects are recommended to be taken into consideration:

- providing sufficient time frame is favourable
- the questions shall remain the same in all cases (which compose the bases of the baseline calculation)
- the informative questions (open-end) may be modified based on the future current interest of the Programme
- open-end questions are suggested to be placed at the end of the survey
- survey filling in anonym way is suggested (thus more realistic values provided)

7. Annexes

7.1. Online questionnaire survey (as separate documents)

7.2. Invited respondents (as separate documents)

7.3. Presentation of HBH

The assignment was carried by HBH Strategy and Development (former name: HitesyBartuczHollai Euroconsulting), which has over 25 years of experience in providing technical assistance and consulting services for the design and implementation of EU financed regional development programmes and projects. The vast knowledge and expertise acquired makes HBH one of the leading regional consulting firms in the field of developing and managing ETC (Interregional, Transnational and Cross-border Cooperation) projects in Hungary and in the Central European Region. In the context of regional development HBH has built up valuable sector-related knowledge as well, including economy, transport, environment (especially energy efficiency and renewable energy) demography and cultural heritage. In its numerous evaluation and regional/urban development projects HBH had carried out and gained thorough professional experience in data collection and analysis involving great number and wide range of participants in several EU languages.

HBH's clients include public authorities at different levels (central governmental institutions, regional bodies and municipalities), universities and knowledge institutes, public foundations and private companies from all over Europe. Services provided to these clients include a wide range of expertise. The most relevant services in the context of the current offer are:

- **Ex-ante evaluation of INTERREG V-B DANUBE (Danube Transnational Programme 2014-2020):** the overall objective of the ex-ante evaluation was to improve and strengthen the quality of the new Programme for the 2014-2020 period, while the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) aimed at integrating the environmental considerations into the preparation of the Programme for the sake of fostering sustainable development.
- **Further ex-ante evaluations and SEA of 2014-2020 CBC programmes:** Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI Cross-border Cooperation Programme; Romania-Hungary Cross-border Cooperation Programme.
- **Design and development of CBC Programmes for 2014-2020 (Hungary-Serbia, Slovenia-Hungary and Hungary-Croatia Cross-border Cooperation Programmes):** elaboration of the Operational Programmes of the cross-border cooperation addressing the needs and challenges of the programme areas in order to harmonically develop the region utilizing its assets, capitalizing on the

results of the previous programmes, in line with the EU, national and regional level strategic papers. Within the framework of these projects, thorough situation analysis has been implemented with primary and secondary information collection; including in-depth interviews, workshops, focus groups and online surveys as well (e.g. the online survey of the SI-HU CBC Programme involved approximately 45 respondents). As part of the programming exercise of the Hungary-Serbia IPA CBC Programme, a specific web-based survey – based on a structured online questionnaire – was carried out to define the current level of the intensity of cross-border cooperation among public and other non-profit organizations dealing with cultural, leisure sport and nature protection issues. The aim of the survey is to define the baseline and target value of the result indicator RI/3.2 “Level of cross-border cooperation intensity of the public and non-profit organisations dealing with cultural, leisure sport and nature protection issues” (elaboration of the survey report is in progress).

- **Ongoing evaluation of the 2007-2013 Hungary-Serbia and Hungary-Croatia IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programmes:** the overall objective of the ongoing evaluation of the HU-SRB and HU-HR IPA CBC Programmes 2007-2013 was to analyse and evaluate the programmes’ performance (comparison of objectives and results, project selection criteria and procedure, communication, indicators) in order to provide recommendations for improving the quality of the 2014-2020 programming documents by taking into account lessons learnt and good practices as well. Within the framework of the projects, thorough situation analysis has been implemented with primary and secondary information collection; including in-depth interviews, workshops, focus groups and online surveys as well (bilingual online questionnaires; HU-HR Programme: more than 500 respondents; HU-SRB Programme: closely 600 respondents – beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries as well).

The permanent staff of HBH operates permanently in a bilingual (English and Hungarian) working environment and has knowledge of further languages such as Serbian, Croatian, Romanian, German, Italian and Greek. HBH also has a wide spread external European expert pool eager to provide technical and professional support for the implementation of the current tasks.