

DANTE - Improving Administrative Procedures and Processes for Danube IWT



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1 Executive summary

The Danube represents a strategic link between Western and Eastern Europe, providing a catalyst for economic progress in a region that spreads over 10 European countries and cultures. The river is – as part of the TEN-T Core Network “Rhine-Danube” – considered one of the main transport axis of Europe. In order to boost the industrial growth and social welfare of the region, the aim of DANTE was to identify and eliminate administrative barriers that hinder the development of inland waterway transport (IWT) at its full potential.

DANTE addresses the objectives defined in the policy framework “Green Deal for Danube River Transport” launched by Pro Danube International. Green Deal is a cooperative policy instrument that provides a coordinated framework for joint public and private actions to improve the efficiency and eco-performance of Danube IWT.

DANTE focused on 5 thematic areas where administrative barriers are most evidently reducing the efficiency of IWT:

- Border Police, Tax and Customs;
- Navigation/Traffic Control Authorities;
- Port Authorities/Administrations;
- Waterway and Canal Administrations;
- Other relevant authorities imposing barriers (e.g. health control, disaster management etc.).

Based on these thematic areas, the DANTE project resulted in meaningful steps forward in further strengthening the transnational collaboration process between public and private entities to mitigate and abolish the most common bureaucratic procedures in a well-defined and coordinated manner. Besides the 14 fruitful national and 4 transnational expert meetings, the transnational IWT online reporting tool played a major role in identifying the most significant administrative obstacles that the industry has to cope with in its daily activities.

The transnational IWT administrative barrier reporting tool set the ground for the active involvement of IWT stakeholders in the identification process of administrative barriers along the Danube and its navigable tributaries. All project partners actively promoted the tool in their respective communities in order to encourage as many IWT operators as possible to report on the administrative and procedural bottlenecks they encountered on different sections of the Danube. Statistics prove that this innovative approach of directly involving IWT operators is extremely successful: more and more users are actively using it – by April 2019, more than 250 issues were reported. The primary data includes both issues related to administrative barriers as well as several examples of good practices. Therefore, the online reporting barrier tool functions not solely as an instrument to gather data on procedural and administrative bottlenecks, but also on concrete improvement measures and examples of good practices. The success story of the reporting tool will continue to produce

tangible results after the official closure of the project, as it will be available on both PDI's and on the DANTE project's websites to further gather first-hand information on bureaucratic bottlenecks and on the implementation process of the proposed measures.

The fruitful transnational activities in the framework of the DANTE project have resulted in the following main findings that are causing additional administrative workload and costs:

- Lack of standardization and unified regulations even on national level;
- High time consumption and too many documents;
- Staff shortage, leading to long waiting times;
- Non-transparent and inconsistent charging policies among Danube countries;
- Inconvenient work schedules of ports and customs causing long waiting times;
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes;
- Insufficient fairway conditions due to the lack of maintenance works;
- Lack of qualified personnel and mutual recognition of documents;
- Information gaps: Lack of information causes inefficiency.

Based on multifaceted methodologies – desk research, national and transnational expert meetings and first-hand input from the industry via the online reporting tool – DANTE proposed the following strategic points to overcome the administrative barriers along the Danube and its navigable tributaries:

- Simplified and harmonised international legal framework;
- Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries;
- Definition of a maximum data set for reporting required by the authorities and ensuring true submit-only-once;
- Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting and to support interoperability;
- Information exchange between competent authorities in line with the data protection regulations for seamless and efficient cross-border transport;
- Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies;
- High quality information provision (this refers to (i) reporting requirements and (ii) events influencing the navigation) to support market orientation;
- Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment;
- Relevant work schedules of ports and customs;
- Harmonised safety and security guidelines;
- Accepted working language along the Danube countries.



Removing administrative and procedural bottlenecks is a long-term process that needs the active involvement of both the responsible public authorities and the industry. DANTE is in this regard an important step forward.

2 Introduction and background

The Danube River is one of the major transport axes in Europe (as a part of the TEN-T Core Network Corridor “Rhine-Danube”) and represents a strategic link between Eastern and Western Europe through Central Europe, providing a potential catalyst for economic development in the region. The European Commission’s “Transport Policy White Paper” sets out the framework for a Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) until 2020.

Major objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy are building of missing links and removal of the bottlenecks in the European transport infrastructure, as well as ensuring of the future sustainability of the transport networks.

Inland waterway transport plays a prominent role in reaching the goal of shifting transport to less energy-intensive, cleaner and safer transport modes in the EU. In order to exploit the potentials of inland navigation, make it more attractive, considering that the navigation on the Danube and its navigational tributaries is international, the existing administrative barriers shall be identified, assessed and removed.

Despite its potential, inland waterway suffers from different bottlenecks and navigational restrictions. That is why the aim of DANTE is to identify and eliminate administrative barriers for inland waterway transport (IWT) on the Danube and its navigable tributaries as a joint initiative of the private sector and the national public authorities responsible for these barriers.

Good practices and guidelines for effective administration of IWT activities have been developed with regard to the identified barriers. The proposed solutions were discussed with the responsible authorities at national working tables, as well as in transnational ones. This matrix approach delivered quick solutions and a wide harmonisation of procedures and processes along the river. The monitoring system for collecting user experiences (supported by an online tool) was a key element for the successful implementation of the project.

DANTE facilitates the work of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region Priority Area 1a and is acknowledged by the European Commission (EC)/Directorate General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) as part of their efforts to reduce administrative barriers in the transport sector. DANTE actively involves the Danube Commission (DC) and therefore also functions as a platform for the related joint efforts of DC & EC.



DANTE focuses on five thematic areas where administrative barriers are most evidently reducing efficiency of IWT operations, which are:

- Border Police, Tax & Customs;
- Navigation/traffic control authorities;
- Port authorities/administrations;
- Waterway and Canal administrations;
- Other relevant authorities imposing barriers (e.g. health control, disaster management, etc).

DANTE also refers to a wider policy initiative recently launched by Pro Danube called “Green Deal for Danube River Transport” which shall create an improved long-term policy framework for Danube IWT based on stakeholder commitments.

2.1 Green Deal for Danube River Transport

The Green Deal for Danube River Transport is a policy initiative developed by Pro Danube for the build-up of the innovation framework for IWT in the Danube region. Green Deal proposes examples of good practices inspired from innovative models adopted in Western Europe, with dedicated focus on the modernization of the Danube fleet and the reduction of environmental impact. Based on 4 main pillars, the Green Deal brings together governments/administrations of the Danube States, fleet & barge operators, port & terminal operators as well as industrial users of the Danube waterway together with their logistics service providers.

Based on the expertise of each of the four groups, the following key-elements are being addressed:

- Reduction of administrative barriers;
- Infrastructure and maintenance;
- State aid schemes for fleet and terminal modernization;
- Pilot projects/deployment projects;
- Development strategies/Action Plans.

Green Deal: Rationale & Concept

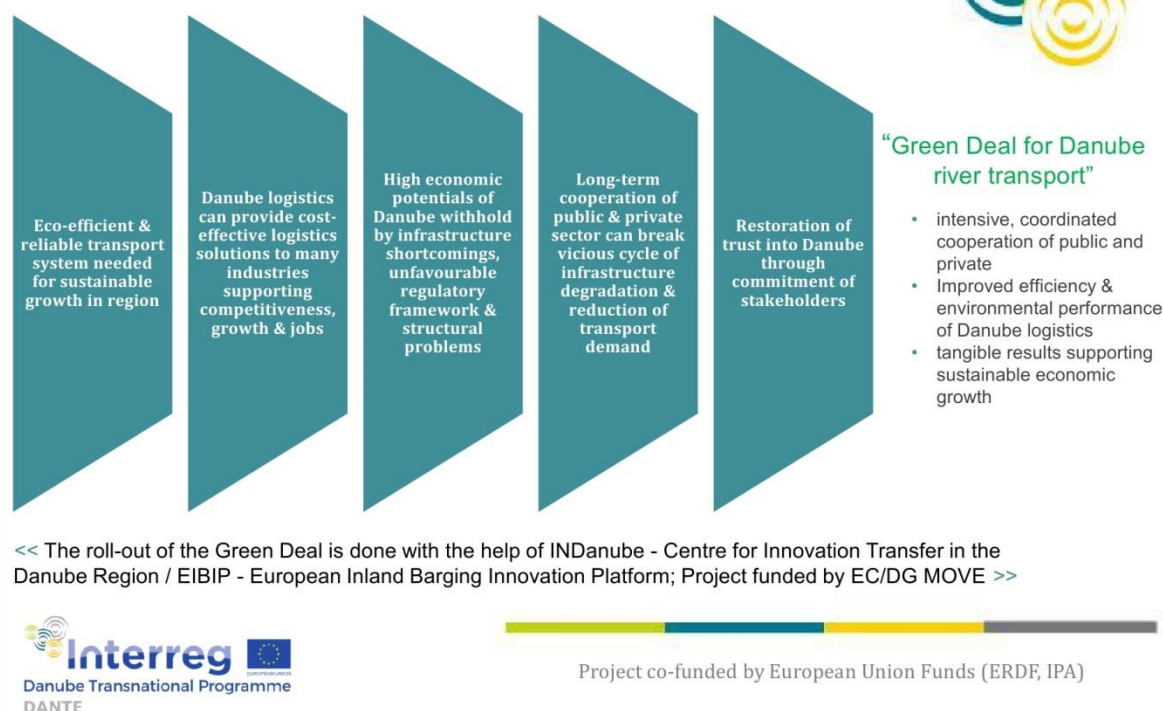


Figure 1. Green deal: rationale and concept

Benefits & Implementation of Green Deal

- Green Deal provides a platform for a targeted long-term cooperation of Danube States – Private Sector – European Commission;
- Supports key policy objectives in transport & environment/regional development/with a special focus on the greening of the waterborne transport system;
- Ensures high leverage of public spending due to wide-scale engagement of the private sector;

Embedded into EUSDR PA1a and related to the Danube Corridor Plan; Steered with the help of Danube Transnational Program (DTP) projects – DANTE, DAPhNE and GRENDDEL; Builds on successful pilot projects which testify viability of concept & produce concrete results to be up-scaled; Green Deal will create many more projects with tangible results contributing to economic growth, creating jobs and improving the environmental performance of the region’s transport system

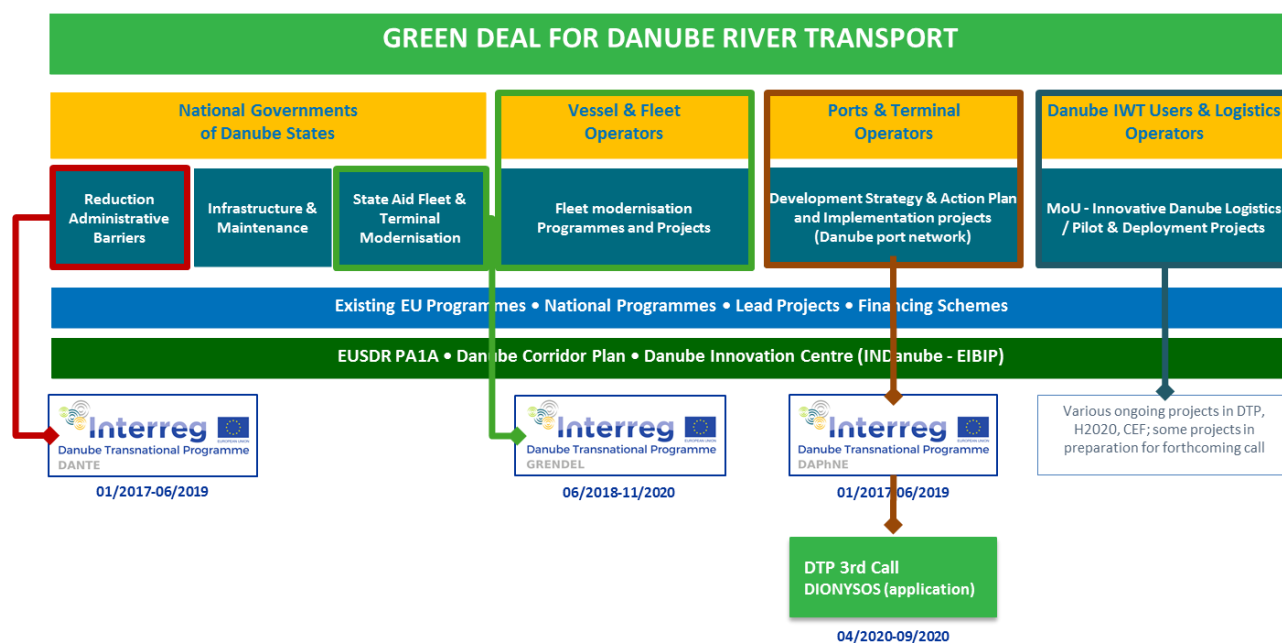


Figure 2. Green Deal: benefits and implementation

2.2 The Same River – Same Rules principle

The “Same River – Same Rules” principle represents a crucial pillar of the policy framework “Green Deal for Danube River Transport”. Bearing in mind that the reduction of bureaucratic processes and procedures that hinder the development of IWT as a reliable and efficient alternative to road transport represents the major objective of DANTE, the “Same River – Same Rules” principle can be regarded as the fundamental philosophy of the project.

The “Same River – Same Rules” principle’s vision goes far beyond borders. It underlines the unique international character of the Danube and its potential to boost the economic development and social welfare of a region that comprises 14 different European countries. Simplifying and harmonizing bureaucratic procedures and processes are essential characteristics of this concept.

Administrative reforms that boost the internal efficiency of bureaucracy are by definition a rather long-term process. Adapting administrations to the concrete needs and requirements of the IWT sector has to go beyond periodic administrative changes. An in-depth reform process mainly relies on the political will of the responsible national state authorities and Legislators. It surely represents quite a challenge. Achieving a harmonization process of administrative procedures at the transnational level is even more challenging, as it has to take the specific national preconditions of each of the involved countries into consideration. It has to be furthermore noted that not all the countries of the Danube Region are Member States of the European Union – another issue that may pose some specific challenges to the overall harmonization process at the transnational level.

The core idea behind the “Same River, Same Rules” principle is to reach an efficient, transparent and responsive administrative process of IWT related issues on the



transnational level. This principle represents the main instrument through which burdening costs could systematically be reduced. Simplifying and harmonizing administrative processes and procedures along the Danube is a vital step forward in making IWT a competitive and reliable mode of transport. This would better integrate IWT into the intermodal transport and logistics chains, increase its capacity to adapt to the current market needs of emerging industries and boost its overall economic profitability. Last but not least, efficiently harmonizing bureaucratic processes and requirements is a prerequisite for a successful process of European integration – both for Member and Candidate States.

2.3 About the DANTE project

Administrative barriers in the logistics of goods and passengers on the Danube waterway and its navigable tributaries are a major obstacle for the efficient and sustainable use of the Danube as a main transport axis of the region. The abundant existence of administrative barriers reduces its economic and environmental potentials, having a negative impact on the economic growth and social welfare of the entire region. Mitigating and abolishing the most important administrative barriers in a coordinated transnational manner is the core objective of the project and resulted into a better governance of this mode of transport and reduce the logistics costs of major industries that depend on IWT.

The European Commission has made the fight of administrative barriers and the derived higher logistics costs one of their major priorities in the current transport policy agenda. After consultations with DG MOVE and DG REGIO, the decision was taken to use the implementation programme of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (and its Priority Area 1a), the Danube Transnational Programme, as a platform where key stakeholders can be addressed and concrete solutions to the manifold existing barriers can efficiently be elaborated.

The project functioned as a network of stakeholders supported by the EUSDR/PA1a and all relevant national stakeholders from the public and private sector in providing better framework conditions for inland waterway transport as the most environmentally friendly mode of transport in accordance with the objectives of Priority Area 1a.

DANTE was developed inspired by projects & initiatives such as:

- Study on administrative and regulatory barriers in the field of inland waterway transport (NEA 2008);
- PLATINA Sub-work package 1.2 -Monitoring administrative barriers;
- DARIF in the frame of EUDRS Priority Area 11 –Security;
- World Bank Initiative on reducing administrative barriers in Danube transport;
- Work of technical secretariat EUSDR PA1a on Border Control Model Processes;
- EC objective and initiatives addressing better governance and the increase of administrative capacity;
- PDI Concept “Same River –Same Rules”;
- PDI Policy initiative "Green Deal for Danube River Transport".



The project's specific objectives are:

- Improvement of administrative procedures and reduction of bureaucratic processes as well as related charges and fees for IWT on the Danube and its navigable tributaries;
- Cooperation with public authorities to develop and implement simplified administrative procedures and processes;
- Reducing time losses and costs caused by unnecessary administrative regulations and processes for Danube businesses;
- Eliminating/Reducing red tape and the abuse of administrative power;
- Strengthening the competitive position of companies, support economic growth and the creation of jobs in the region by increasing the efficiency of the public administration;
- To introduce stakeholder consultation procedures and processes in legal and regulatory acts of public administration that are relevant for IWT;
- Harmonizing regulations and administrative processes for transport and transshipment operations ("Same River-Same Rules" concept).

2.3.1 Working methodology

The DANTE project is structured in 5 work-packages where the first two are mandatory with regard to project management, communication and dissemination activities, running along the whole duration of the project. The other three work-packages provided are the following:

- WP3 identified the administrative barriers & responsibilities,
- WP4 analysis of the procedures and administrative processes and
- WP5 implementing and capitalizing the results of the project.

The innovative approach is eminent through the creation and upgrade of the electronic reporting tool for administrative barriers and good practices, and in the integration of the stakeholders into the national and transnational meetings in the thematic areas, ensuring tangible results as a part of the project work.

The matching of an innovative approach with already existing deliverables of other initiatives secured the immediate start of the content work of the DANTE consortium, having at the same time the possibility to further develop knowledge upon a proper basis of expertise. The DANTE platform rolls out the process for all identified thematic areas that were not or not yet dealt with within the previously listed initiatives. These results are the added value of the DANTE project in close cooperation with the EUSDR PA1a – during the project lifetime and on the long term by keeping the platform active e.g. in the framework of the “Green Deal for Danube River Transport”. This mission is a key element of WP5 for all PPs and ASPs.

DANTE mapped and analyzed the administrative procedures and processes on the national basis (WP4), followed by transnational steps (WP5). Innovative electronic tool supported the DANTE platform to stay up-to-date with the barriers faced during IWT operations (WP3).

As stipulated by the White Paper Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system under the aim of the Single European Transport Area, a suitable framework must be established in order to simplify the existing formalities. The corresponding initiative is formulated under the label “Establish an appropriate framework to optimise the Internal Market for Inland Waterway Transport and to remove barriers that prevent its increased use”. Furthermore, the NAIADES II Communication “Towards quality inland waterway transport” sets out the objective to create the conditions for inland waterway transport to become a quality mode of transport: well-governed, efficient, safe, integrated into the intermodal chain, with quality jobs occupied by skilled workforce, while at the same time adhering to high environmental standards.

These elements are reflected in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region in the priority area for Mobility / Waterways (PA1a). This set of policy and strategic background aims to increase cargo transport on the river by 20% until 2020 compared to 2010, which requires



tangible operative actions. Synergies with other key fields (e.g. River Information Services, Digital Inland Navigation Area) will be identified and used.

DANTE targets to support the achievement of this goal by bringing together the relevant stakeholders from the public and private sector to jointly identify and overcome the severest existing barriers. Having to provide the same data several times for different authorities along the waterway, together with long waiting times at control points where the same documents are checked, results in a significant disadvantage for inland waterway transport compared to other modes. The full potential of IWT cannot be achieved under these circumstances.

IWT users have to be provided with clear and harmonized processes and procedures all along their transport route on the Danube, in order to be competitive and able to provide environmentally friendly services. The Same River – Same Rules concept of Pro Danube International has wide public and private support. The DANTE project is a materialization of this concept. A direct link will be established with the EUSDR by means of permanent connection to PA1a, with DANTE as the foreseen interface between the PA1a and the IWT industry in the field of administrative barriers.

DANTE will involve and encourage national authorities to consult the industry and provide administrative requirements in a way that it supports IWT stakeholders to further exploit the Danube's transport capacity in line with EU, regional and national policies and objectives.

Work approach

- Identify barriers in each country along the Danube and its main navigable tributaries;
- Assign barriers to responsible authorities;
- Inform responsible ministries/EC services;
- Set up workshops with relevant authorities at national level;
- Discuss with authorities the identified problems;
- Elaborate concrete solutions for improvement/recommendations;
- Collaborate with PA1a Secretariat to set up "working tables" as part of the working group dealing with administrative processes to create a transnational collaboration level;
- Elaborate necessary improvements in procedures and processes;
- Establish permanent monitoring to ensure the implementation of agreed changes;
- Create, upgrade and maintain related IT monitoring tools;
- Disseminate results to targeted stakeholder groups.

2.3.2 Description of the 5 thematic areas

DANTE focuses on five thematic areas where administrative barriers are most evidently reducing the efficiency of IWT operations:

- Border Police, Tax & Customs;
- Navigation / traffic control authorities;
- Port authorities / administrations;
- Waterway and Canal administrations;
- Other relevant authorities imposing barriers (e.g. health control, disaster management, etc.).

These five thematic areas group existing administrative barriers where the most important needs/challenges can be summarized as follows:

- the need for more than 20 reports in 10 different languages on a voyage along several sections of the Danube, while mostly the same data is required at various locations from different authorities;
- the unnecessary waiting times at control locations due to overwhelming administrative requirements;
- the non-availability of authority services at the announced time / location;
- lack of the maintenance of the fairway, lack or late information on fairway conditions/restrictions in periods of draught or closures of the fairways or locks;
- the unexpected fee-changes.

DANTE closely cooperated with the EUSDR PA1a in order to continue and capitalize the works of the relevant working groups, particularly in the first thematic area - Border Police, Tax & Customs.

2.3.3 Co-operation with EUSDR PA1a & PA11

The rationale behind the joint working group between PA1a/PA11 is simplification (avoid duplication/multiplication of work for ship crews), harmonization (International standardisation of data requests, forms and processes) and digitalization (Impulses for transparent, effective and efficient border control procedures) of measures for improved border controls.

The cooperation between DANTE and EUSDR PA1a/PA11 proved to be extremely successful. While the working group is specifically focusing on formalities linked to cross-border formalities, the approach of DANTE was wider, as it focussed on several types of administrative processes and procedures that are hindering the development of IWT at its full potential. The cooperation with PA1a & PA11 was therefore complementary. Simplifying, harmonising and digitalising control processes are key elements that define the transnational activities of the joint working group. This will ultimately lead to improved border control procedures in terms of coordination and efficiency. A major step forward is in this regard the acceptance of the DAVID forms (Danube Navigation Standard Forms) on the transnational level. The following graph summarizes the main goals of the working group:

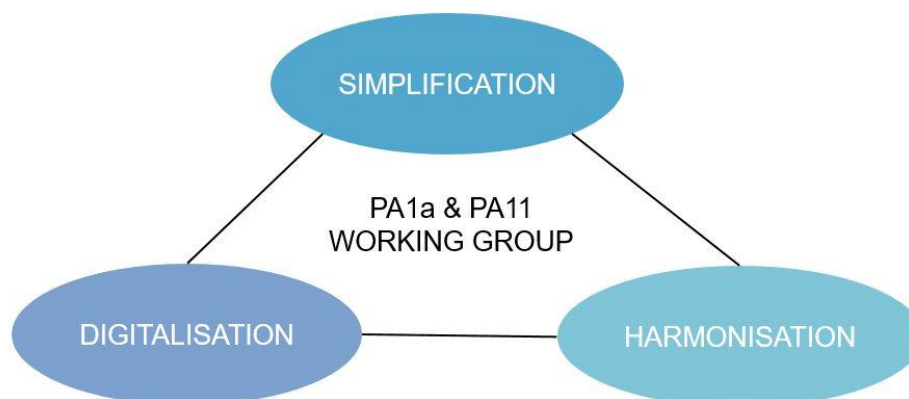


Figure 3. PA1a & PA11 Working Group. Source: PA1a

The implementation process of the DAVID forms has reached an important milestone, as their purpose will be to replace a series of national documents that are currently being used. The transnational harmonisation of the arrival and departure report, as well as that of the crew and passenger lists, will significantly reduce waiting times and all kinds of bureaucratic barriers related to border control procedures. This is in the framework of the DANTE project insofar of great importance, as the majority of the reported issues via the online tool relate to the first thematic area of DANTE – border control, tax and customs.

As the DAVID forms are widely supported on the transnational level – by the Conclusions of the Danube Ministers of Transport 2018 and by the official endorsement of the Danube Commission – the hope is that their actual implementation will start in early 2020.

The positive impact of the DAVID forms will soon start to be visible, as they will significantly reduce the overall administrative workload for ship crews – multiple requests for data and forms will no longer be necessary. The specific border control forms will furthermore be more transparent, clearly structured, self-explaining and available in all the official languages of the Danube Region. Moreover, unnecessary data, which are not relevant for border-control procedures, will no longer be requested. The transnational standardisation of data requests, forms and processes will result in more efficient and less time consuming border control procedures. Both border control authorities and stakeholders will benefit from this new approach.

3 Literature review

Considering that waterborne transport is essential to the economy of the European Union, the aim of this literature review is to offer a comprehensive overview on the academic research that was made so far in issues concerning inland waterway transport on the Danube and its navigable tributaries. The large body of research spanning over the last years suggests that inland waterway transport on the Danube, its perspectives on its development and future challenges, played a significant role on the European academic agenda. Issues like climate change, hydrological and navigation conditions, risk management or the sustainability of freight transport especially in South-East Europe are among the most discussed topics.

Juha Schweighofer (2014) for instance provides an overview of the impact of extreme weather conditions on inland waterway transport, focusing on the Rhine-Main-Danube corridor. The paper concludes that there is no clear evidence that extreme weather conditions might seriously decrease the overall performance of the European inland waterway transport until 2050. Similarly, Beuthe et al (2014) published an article dealing with the potential effects of low water levels on the Rhine and Danube navigation in the context of climate change and weather variability. Analysing the potential impact of changes on the water depth conditions, the authors conclude that the impact of climate change should, at least until 2050, be limited. In the same context, Szépszó et al (2014) published an article, motivated by the ECCONET EU FP7 project, dealing with the impact of climate change on the inland waterway transportation networks on the Rhine and the Upper Danube. As the effects of climate change are measured using climate model simulations, the authors argue that several uncertainties still represent a challenge in quantifying the concrete climate change effects on inland waterway transport.

The proper maintenance of the river and the modernization of port infrastructure play according to Nedeá (2011) and Boşneagu/Coca (2015) a decisive role in the general improvement of navigability on the Romanian sector of the Danube. The authors suggest that by making targeted investments, IWT on the Danube truly has the potential to become an attractive alternative to road transport and, as Bocăniaľă (2015) argues, the capacity to improve the economic, social and cultural development of the entire Danube Region. Similarly, Šoškić et al (2014) reflect on the development of IWT in Serbia. The lack of modern port infrastructure represents, as in the Romanian case, one of the main challenges in making IWT an attractive alternative to other, more pollutant modes of transport. By analysing official statistics, the authors show that in Serbia waterborne transport represents merely 4.7% of the total traffic at national level. By comparing the official data with EU countries, where waterborne transport represents, in relation to the total traffic, 15%, the authors conclude that Serbia lacks far behind the European average.



As can be concluded up until this point, inland waterway transport undoubtedly faces numerous challenges. In this regard, Simon (2015) tries to offer some concrete solutions to overcome these difficulties. According to the author, transport policy should rather focus on regional than national particularities, while ensuring a right balance between different interest groups and stakeholders.

In this vast scientific literature on inland waterway transport, one theme appears to be neglected: the administrative barriers and burdens that hinder the development of inland waterway transport as a reliable alternative to road transport. Improper maintenance and poorly developed port infrastructure or extreme hydrological conditions are not alone to be blamed for the fact that IWT has not yet developed to its full potential. Therefore, the goals of this Strategy and Action Plan are to investigate and analyse the effects of bureaucratic barriers and to offer concrete solutions to overcome them on a transnational level.

4 Results from the desk research on administrative processes and procedures

Desk research on administrative processes and procedures has been performed within Activity 4.1 of the DANTE project with two main deliverables:

- Template for the national inputs for the analysis of existing procedures and administrative processes;
- Report on the analysis of existing procedures and administrative processes.

The report is structured on country-basis according to the five thematic areas identified as the most significant administrative burdens causing barriers for inland navigation:

- Border Police, Tax and Customs;
- Navigation/traffic control authorities;
- Port authorities/administrations;
- Waterway & Canal Administration;
- Other relevant authorities imposing barriers.

Activity 4.1 is executed by DANTE's ERDF Partner1 SIGSEZ. This involves elaborating the template for the national inputs for the analysis of existing procedures and administrative processes and consolidating the national inputs. All partners have provided feedback on the template - the national inputs to the report were made with the involvement of appropriate legal experts.

4.1 Introduction

The document is a result of a desk research and is dealing with the analysis and collection of existing procedures and administrative processes along IWT on the Danube.

The template was developed for the purpose of data collection and has served as a tool to collect inputs from all project partners (including associated partners) of all countries along the Danube River.

The collected information was analysed in order to provide an overview of existing procedures and administrative processes along the Danube as they were identified by the DANTE project partners.

4.2 Description of the template

The template consists of 13 columns, the first 4 are mandatory and the other 9 shall be filled in in a way to comply with the reported case.

DANTE - Improving Administrative Procedures and Processes for Danube IWT. Activity 4.1 / Deliverable D 4.1.1. Template for national inputs to the analysis of existing procedures and administrative processes

Organisation	Location		Concerned authorities	Type of procedure	Existing procedures/ administrative processes - <i>Please fill in one per row</i>								Comments
	Country	City/River kilometer			1. Type of documents		2. Fees		3. Time consumption		4. Other		
<i>please enter</i>	<i>please select</i>	<i>please enter</i>	<i>please select</i>	<i>please enter</i>	Number of documents	Languages available	Type of vessel	Ship size	Time for	Time needed	<i>eg. waiting/standing, regulations, taxes, insurance, ...</i>	<i>problems, ...</i>	<i>please enter</i>

Figure 4. Template for national inputs to the analysis of existing procedures and administrative processes

Column A is always the Name of the organization entering the procedure/process. This Column is mandatory.
Column B and C are concerned with the location of the procedure/process. They are the country and either city or river kilometer. This Column is mandatory.
In Column D the responsible authority has to be selected. This Column is also mandatory.
Column E provides space to specify the type of the case that needed to be arranged at that respective point.
Columns F to L are for the procedure/processes themselves. Here only one procedure/process (1., 2., 3. or 4.) will be filled in for each row.
Column M provides space for comments. For example, every selected "other" can be specified here.

Figure 5. Description of template's column

The template was disseminated among all project partners including associated partners, in total 28, and they have distributed the template to all relevant stakeholders of the Danube IWT.

In total 41 organisations provided feedback by sending back the filled templates.

4.3 Quantification of collected information

There were 225 procedures reported in total. Different organisations/institutions provided feedback on ports, shipping operators, international organizations, associations and border police.

Figure 6 shows the number of procedures reported by different authorities.

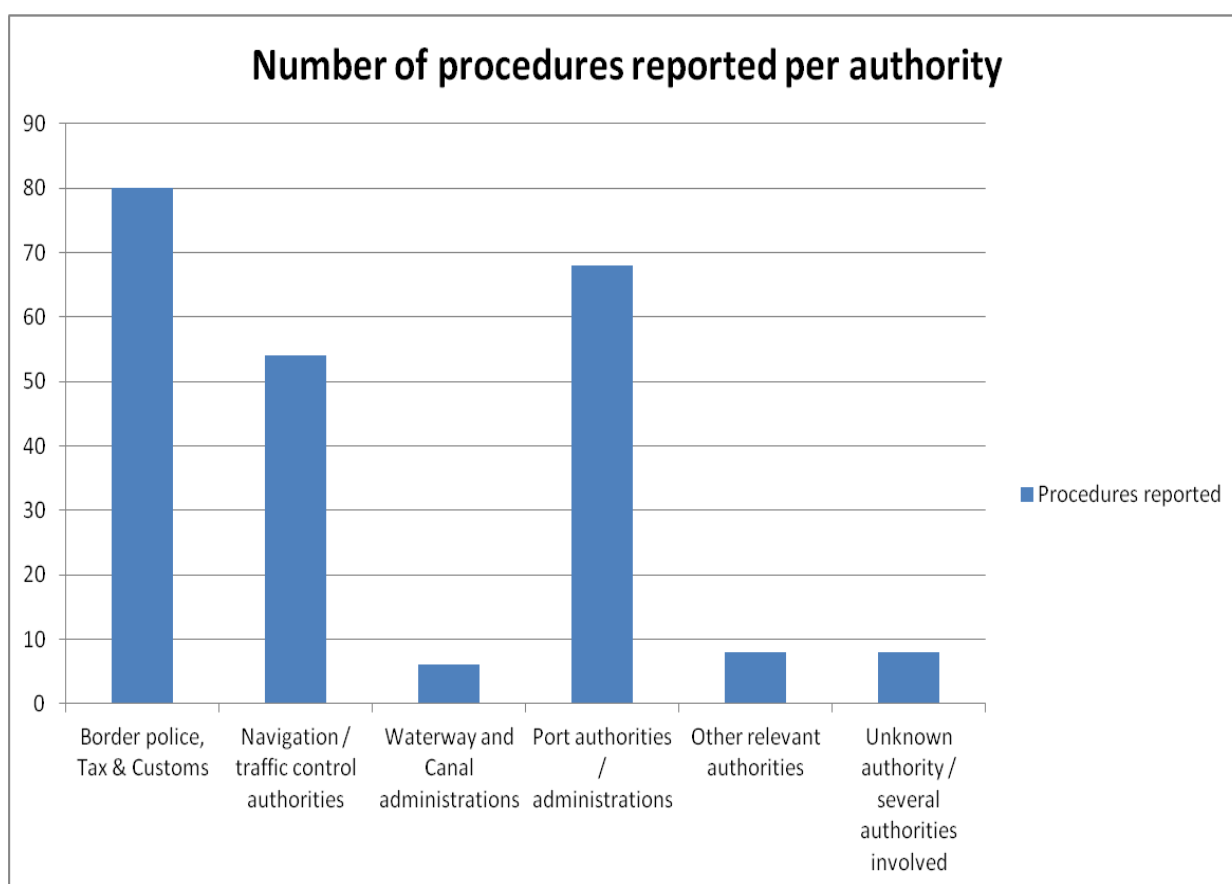


Figure 6. Number of procedures reported per authority

The highest number of reported procedures concerns Border Police, followed by port authorities. There were also quite a high number of reported procedures regarding the navigation and traffic control authorities, as well as navigation conditions (mainly dealt with shallow water). Out of the graphic, it becomes obvious that these 3 entities were regarded by the respondents as being the most problematic ones. On the other side, it can easily be deduced that unknown authority/several authorities involved, other relevant authorities and Waterway and Canal administrations played a less prominent role (less than 10 cases were reported).

Figure 7 shows the feedback received by each country. Romania reported 48 procedures, Serbia 46, Slovakia 38, Croatia and Hungary over 20, while Bulgaria and Austria more than 10.

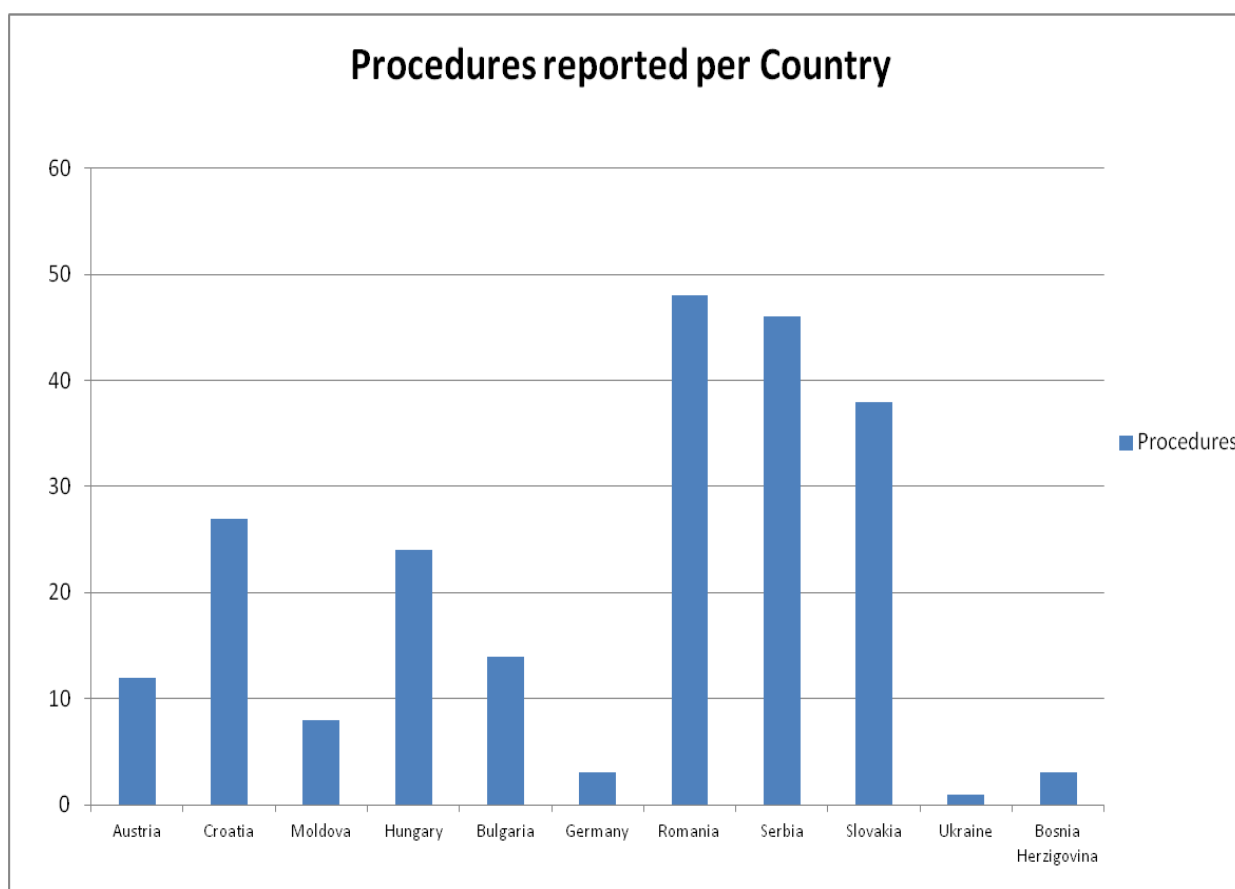


Figure 7. Number of procedures reported per country

	Border Police, Tax&Customs	Navigation / traffic control authorities	Waterway and Canal administrations	Port authorities /administrations	Other relevant authorities	Unknown authority /several authorities involved
Germany	-	-	-	2	-	1
Austria	3	7	-	2	-	-
Slovakia	2	21	-	15	-	-
Hungary	8	7	-	1	4	4
Croatia	17	6	-	4	-	-
Serbia	21	8	-	15	2	-
Romania	12	4	5	26	1	-
Bulgaria	9	-	1	-	-	4
Moldova	4	1	-	2	1	-
Ukraine	1	-	-	-	-	-
Bosnia and	3	-	-	-	-	-

	Border Police, Tax&Customs	Navigation / traffic control authorities	Waterway and Canal administrations	Port authorities /administrations	Other relevant authorities	Unknown authority /several authorities involved
Herzegovina						
n/a	-	-	-	1	-	-
Total per authority:	80	54	6	67	8	9
Total:						225

Table 1. Number procedures per country and authority

4.4 Conclusion

The document analysed the feedback of all project partners, including associated partners along the Danube River. Bearing in mind the variety of organisations that gave first hand feedback on the problems they were confronted with in their daily professional activity along the main transnational sections of the Danube, it can be undoubtedly concluded that the information gathered reflect the main administrative bottlenecks that hinder IWT to become a viable alternative to road transport.

As can be seen in figure 4, there are some country specific differences when it comes to the administrative bottlenecks that stakeholders had to deal with. In Romania for instance, the majority of problems was recorded in the field of port authorities/administrations, while in Slovakia operators complained about the navigation/traffic control authorities. In Serbia, operators were mainly confronted with administrative barriers attributed to the border police/tax and customs field.

Although the data cannot be viewed as being comprehensive, it was still possible to identify some critical issues. Generally speaking, the most mentioned authority with the highest number of procedures and critical issues reported was attributed to the first thematic area of DANTE – border police, tax and customs.

It became clear that more or less the same checks, for example border control procedures or notice of arrival and departure at ports, have to be done in each and every country and port. For these procedures, a large number of authorities are involved. Documents containing the same information are required in every country. They are available in a wide range of languages and they are currently not standardized.

After a thorough analysis of the data, it became clear that a harmonization of the complicated administrative processes along the Danube would lead to less time consumption and in the same time would increase the general attractiveness of IWT along the Danube.

5 Outcomes from the National Working Table Meetings

5.1 Introduction

The organization and the roll-out of the national working table meetings was one of the key activities of the DANTE project that has served a multitude of purposes:

- creating a durable environment for the public and private stakeholders to identify administrative barriers for the inland waterway transport;
- establishment of a cooperative working atmosphere where the barriers can be mitigated in a mutually beneficial way.

The organization of the meetings was managed by the national partners:

- 2-3 meetings based on the national needs in a coordinated way;
- It was agreed to share the workload between partners from the same country.

The meetings were organized around the five thematic areas identified in the framework of DANTE. In some countries more areas are managed by the same authority and/or some areas are not applicable, therefore it was decided to organize 2 or 3 meetings.

In each country, all 5 thematic areas were thoroughly discussed and analysed with stakeholders, waterway users, transport authorities, ports, policie representatives, etc. ASPs were also invited to the national working table meetings.

The five thematic areas are:

1. Border Policy, Tax & Customs;
2. Navigation/traffic control authorities;
3. Port authorities/administration;
4. Waterway and Canal administration;
5. Other relevant authorities imposing barriers.

It was already agreed during the preparation phase of the proposal that the national working table meetings will be organized between February 2017 and July 2017, whereas the time slot for the follow-up meetings was scheduled for December 2017 - March 2018. At the second round of the meetings, the draft of national arrangement documents including the required changes and improvements was discussed.

One partner from each country organized the national working table meetings and elaborated the national output documents, whereas the templates for the meetings (agenda & invitation, presentation, output document) was provided by ARVD in line with the project communication measures from WP2.

National working table meetings (NWTM) were organized in the following countries:

- Bulgaria (2);
- Croatia (2);
- Hungary (3);
- Romania (4);
- Serbia (1);
- Slovakia (2);

5.2 Consolidated summary of inputs

The series of national working table meetings (implemented in two steps) serve as outputs that created a coordinated framework to discuss the existing administrative barriers for the Danube IWT, resulting in measures mitigating the barriers to reduce bureaucratic processes, thus reducing time losses and costs for stakeholders. The efficient meetings paved the way to achieve the "Same River-Same Rules" concept on the transnational level as much as possible.

The most important critical issues in the NWTMs were related to fees and taxes, different interpretations of customs procedures depending on the port/ports where the ships operate and/or the countries where/from where the goods are transported.

The first thematic area (border control, tax and customs) was the most mentioned at the meetings with a total of 59 issues. In addition, the second thematic area (Navigation/traffic control authorities) was mentioned in most meetings 33 times. The main issues were about double tariffs applied for the same service, time spent for border controls, too many documents, no overall use of RIS, no possibility to send documents electronically.

5.3 Highlights of the most mentioned cases per thematic area

The following figures and chapters illustrate the findings of the national working table meetings on the overall level.

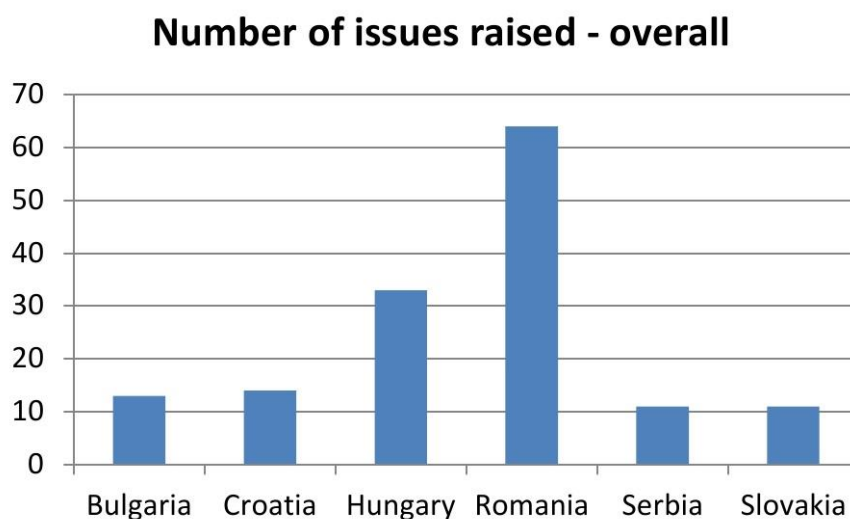


Figure 8. Number of issues raised per country - overall

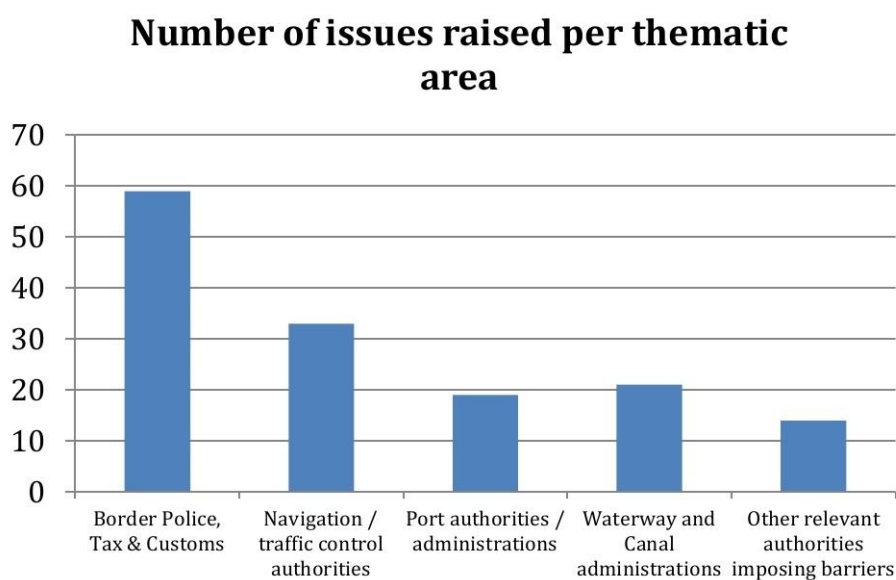


Figure 9. Number of issues raised per thematic area

5.3.1 Border Police, Tax & Customs

The identified issues during the NWTMs within this thematic area are mainly related to transparency of the work of the relevant competent authorities, the operation hours of the border police and customs, the lack of trained personnel, the duration of border control procedures, unjustified and high fees/tariffs, custom procedures and corresponding documents that are not standardized and last but not least, differentiated treatment of the passenger vessels compared to cargo vessels.

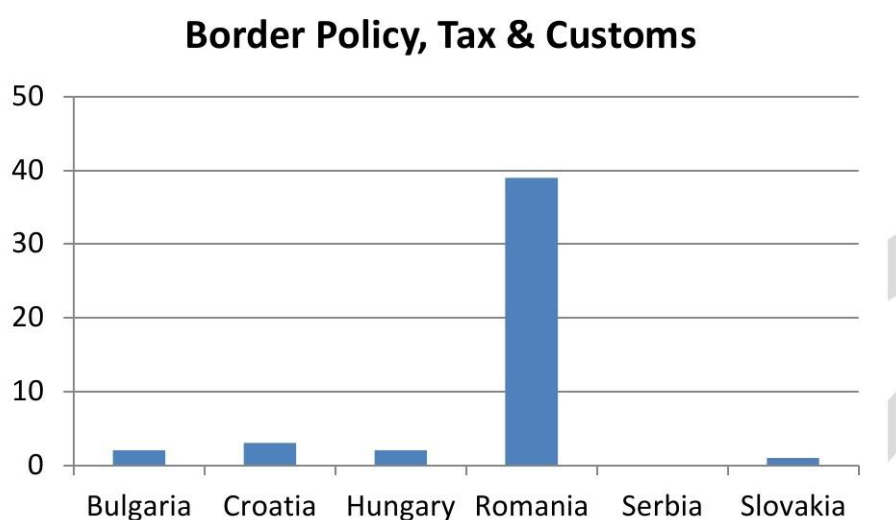


Figure 10. Number of issues raised in the 1st thematic area: Border Police, Tax & Customs per country

5.3.2 Navigation/traffic control authorities

The identified and thoroughly discussed problems during the NWTMs within this thematic area mainly related to an unjustified high number of documents (with high share of overlapping information), no use of RIS, lack of VTS, lack of AIS enforcement, no infrastructure developed to enable the sending of the required documents electronically, no transparency of the work and working hours of relevant competent authorities and the simultaneous conducting of different controls and checks.

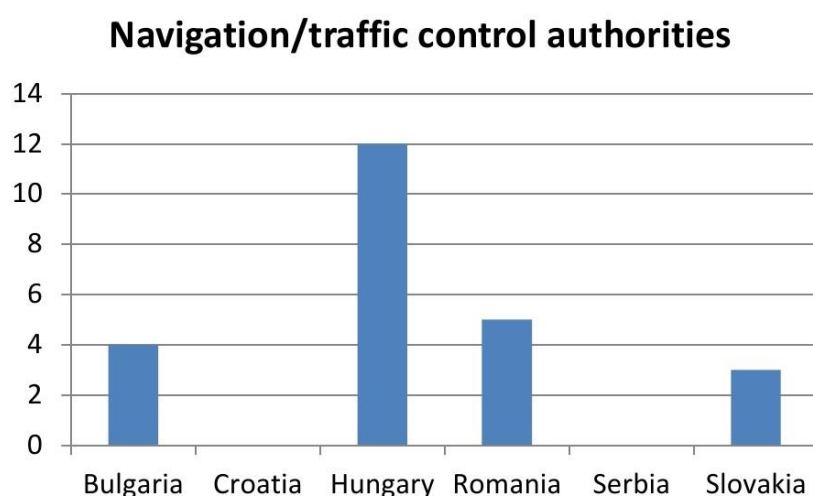


Figure 11. Number of issues raised in the 2nd thematic area: Navigation/traffic control authorities per country

5.3.3 Port authorities/administrations

Issues noted and discussed during the NWGMs within this thematic area mainly related to obsolete/missing infrastructure of port authorities, berthing capacity, lack of standardized reporting and opening hours.

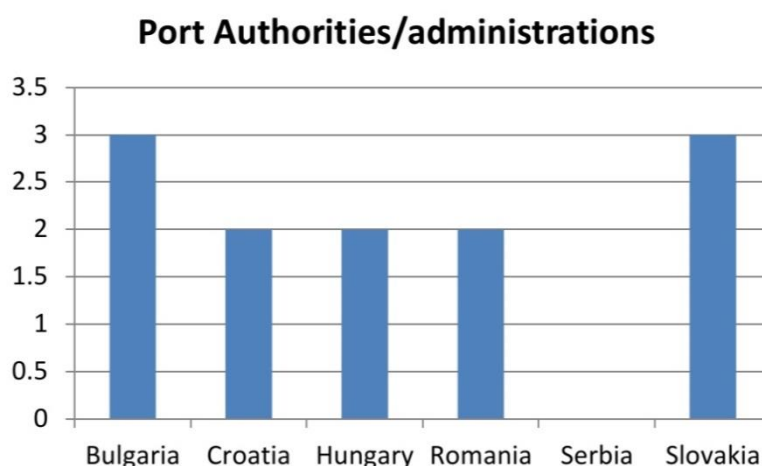


Figure 12. Number of issues raised in the 3rd thematic area: Port authorities/administrations per country

5.3.4 Waterway and Canal administrations

Issues noted and discussed during the NWTMs within this thematic area mainly related to the lack of fairway information, of insufficient marking systems, inappropriate marking of the bridges and other obstacles to navigation, no integration of water-level and meteorological related information within the RIS system and insufficient depth and width of the fairway.

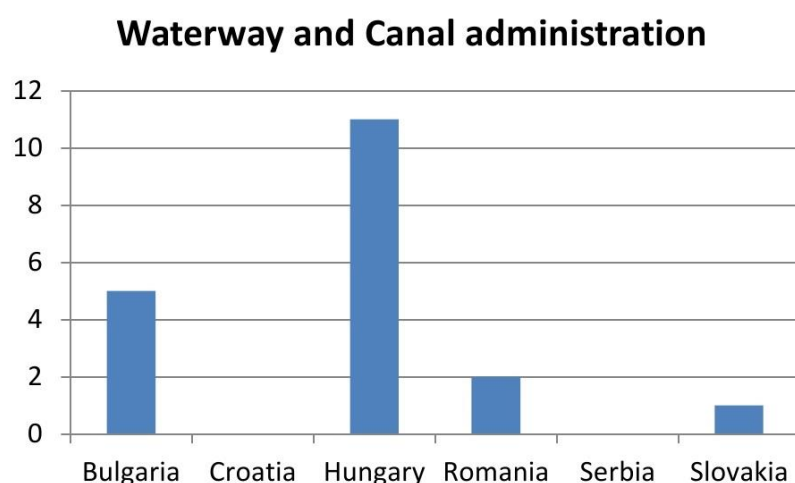


Figure 13. Number of issues raised in the 4th thematic area: Waterway and Canal administrations per country

5.3.5 Other relevant authorities imposing barriers

Issues noted and discussed during the NWTMs within this thematic area mainly related to the discrimination of the shipping operators in terms of particular permits, some special cases in terms of police and ambulance intervention on board of the vessel and lack of field laboratories.

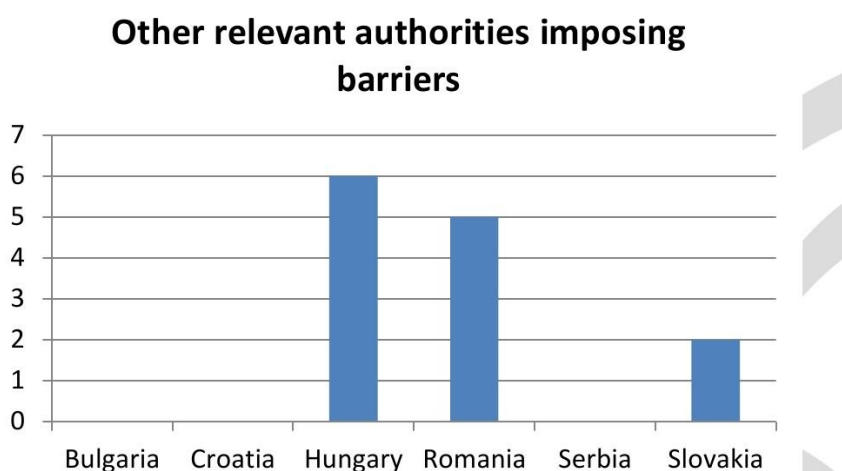


Figure 14. Number of issues raised in the 5th thematic area: Other relevant authorities imposing barriers per country

6 Outcomes from the Transnational Workshops

The aim of the transnational working group meetings was to cumulate the results of the national meetings and the collected data in the barrier database, acting this way as a key step forward in achieving harmonised regulations and simplified administrative procedures in inland waterway transport (IWT). Moreover, the transnational working group meetings were the starting point of the implementation and capitalisation process of the outcomes of WP 3 and WP 4.

These meetings addressed expert decision makers and can be regarded as a fundamental step forward in achieving harmonised regulations and simplified administrative processes in IWT on a transnational level. Hence, the 4 transnational working group meetings can be viewed as an important milestone in the overall implementation process of the DANTE project. These transnational working group meetings were held in:

- Budapest, 24 October 2017
- Galați, 6 December 2017
- Karlsruhe, 24 April 2018
- Bratislava, 14 June 2018

It is a well-known fact that the actual potential of inland waterway transport (IWT) is by far not exploited at its full potential. The reasons for this are manifold: improper waterway maintenance, missing or technically outdated port infrastructure and last but not least the poor condition of the Danube fleet. Investing in the proper maintenance of the river in order to ensure uninterrupted navigability periods, developing innovative financial instruments for investments in ports and the fleet and last but not least initiate a well-structured reform process of the IWT administration at the transnational level, can be regarded as necessary measures to efficiently integrate IWT in the European intermodal supply chain. Out of these specific issues, DANTE addresses bureaucratic processes and procedures that shipping operators have to deal with in their daily activities.

Reducing the overall bureaucratic burden is considered as a driving force for economic development and the social well-being of a region's inhabitants. Reforming administrative procedures on a national level is per se a challenge. Initiating this kind of a renewal process on the transnational level seems to be, at a first glance, mission impossible. DANTE nevertheless addressed this challenge and was able to produce tangible results. The national and the subsequent transnational working group meetings played in this regard a vital role.

By bringing together representatives of the responsible state authorities and of the sector, these meetings set the ground for future policy initiatives that will decisively shape the administrative environment of the sector. State administrations have the capacity to directly initiate the reform process of specific IWT related policies based on the concrete feedback received from the sector. The direct involvement of the stakeholders in the policy-making



process is a vital prerequisite to make sure that the actual outcomes meet the specific needs and requirements of the business environment.

Based on multifaceted methodologies – desk research, national and transnational expert meetings and first-hand input from the industry via the online reporting tool – DANTE proposed the following strategic points to overcome the administrative barriers along the Danube and its navigable tributaries:

- Simplified and harmonised international legal framework;
- Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries;
- Definition of a maximum data set for reporting required by the authorities and ensuring true submit-only-once;
- Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting and to support interoperability;
- Information exchange between competent authorities in line with the data protection regulations for seamless and efficient cross-border transport;
- Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies;
- High quality information provision (this refers to (i) reporting requirements and (ii) events influencing the navigation) to support market orientation;
- Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment;
- Relevant work schedules of ports and customs;
- Harmonised safety and security guidelines;
- Accepted working language along the Danube countries.

7 Outcomes from the Transnational IWT Barrier Reporting Tool

7.1 Introduction

The transnational IWT barrier and good practise reporting tool was the first output of the DANTE project that set the ground to collect inputs from the IWT stakeholders. This tool resulted in a database that worked as a basis for the analysis and recommendations towards the improvement of administrative procedures and processes.

The online tool provided the opportunity to report either barriers or positive experiences and describe them by the following features:

- Organisation with which the barrier/good experience was faced;
- Country;
- Waterway;
- Location;
- Date (time);
- Description of the case;
- Option to add additional data (photos, maps etc.).

7.2 Inputs per thematic area

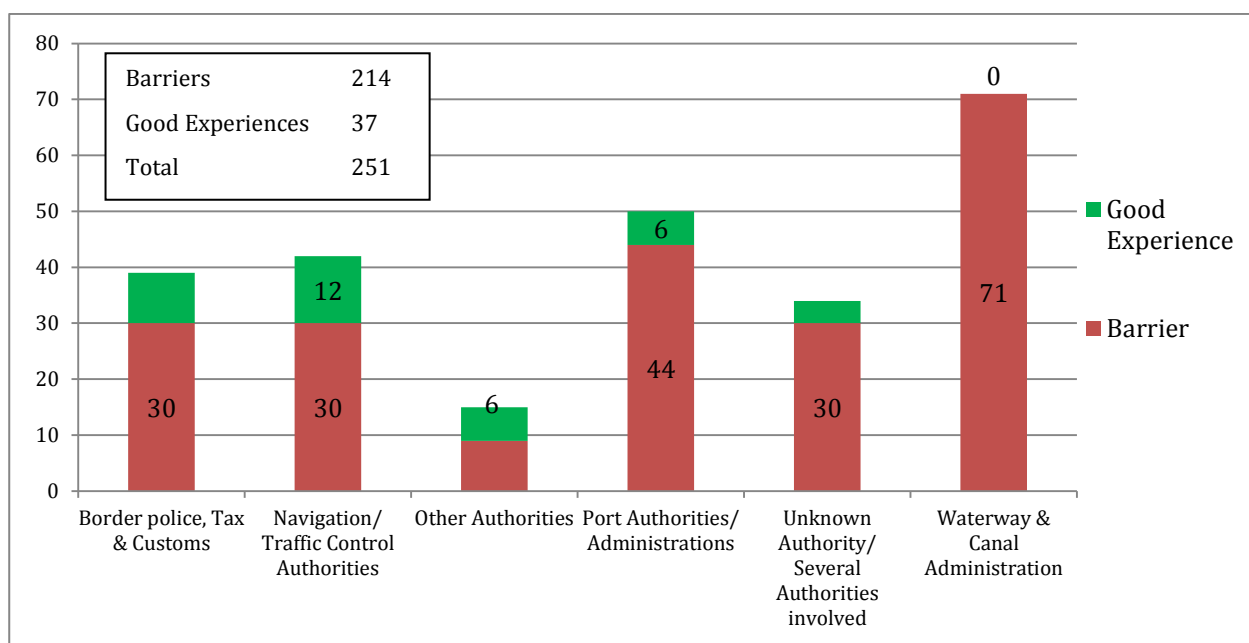


Figure 15: Inputs per thematic area

During the project phase, 251 inputs were collected through the online tool (status 04/2019). About 85% of them are barriers (214) and 15% are categorized as good experiences (37).

Figure 15 shows that most reported barriers were related to waterway & canal administrations (33%). The rest of the barriers is relatively evenly distributed among the other categories (apart from 'other authorities') (15 – 20%).

Good experiences were reported among several categories, the highest number relates to navigation/traffic control authorities.

7.3 Inputs per concerned country

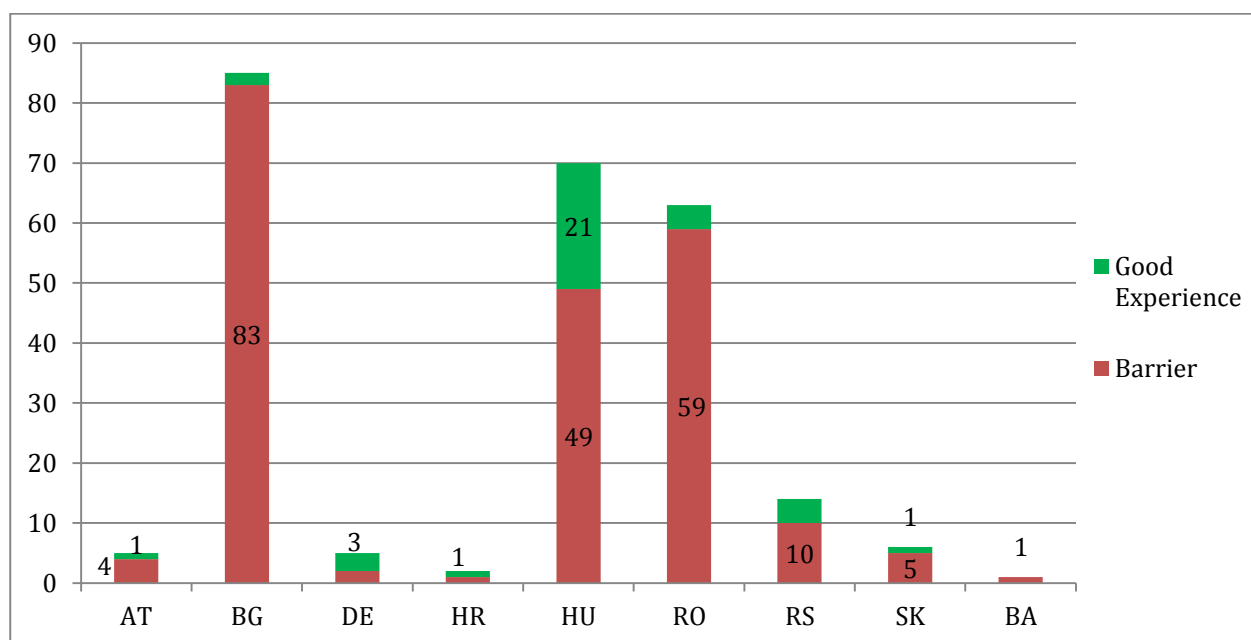


Figure 16: Inputs per concerned country

The majority of inputs describe barriers in 3 countries (see Figure 16). Almost 90% (191) of them were reported in Bulgaria, Hungary or Romania, whereas only 10 or less barriers were reported for other countries.

It is important to note that several inputs were reported a couple of times by the same user. Therefore, the absolute number does not necessarily reflect the amount of different barriers.

7.4 Overview of main barriers per thematic area

Border Police, Tax and Customs:

- Inappropriate or incomprehensible behaviour of staff;
- Border-crossing formalities between EU member states (BG/RO);
- Insufficient service by custom officers (missing software application);
- Delay in transit through Serbia.

Navigation / Traffic Control Authorities:

- Communication with the police over public channels (confidential information);
- Problems for speed boats (radio signal, speed limit);

- Temporary closure of fairway;
- Insufficient depth due to the lack of maintenance works (around Zimnicea; managed by BG authorities) – 14 entries in 08/2015.

Port Authorities / Administrations

- Vessel inspection between EU member states;
- Long waiting times at RS border;
- High number of required documents in RO;
- Unprofessional staff (RO, RS, HU);
- Payment of extra fees/taxes in Romanian ports (19 entries);
- Thefts/smuggling in roadstead (RS).

Unknown Authority/ Several Authorities Involved

- Forms with same content country by country;
- Extensive procedure during border control in BG;
- Since 2017: 7 additional documents (beside regular ones);
- Required upload to platform BULRIS > additional delay;
- Border-crossing formalities between member states (BG/RO – 9 entries) – not in other countries.

Waterway & Canal Administration

- Insufficient depth in fairway between km 515 – 570;
 - no maintenance/regularization work for years (BG side);
 - 23 entries.
- Several low water levels reported in HU;
- Insufficient location and radar signs of buoys in HU;
- High fees for transit through Danube – Black Sea Channel (22 entries);
- No good coordination between RS and RO dispatchers in regulating backwater levels.

Good Experiences

- Good experiences with water police, ambulance (HU);
- Transportation Safety Bureau (HU) publishes recommendations on accident avoidance;
- Helpful lockmaster (AT);
- Quick checks by border control/police (DE, HR).

8 Best practices from other regions and transport modes

8.1 Introduction

Activity 4.4 of the DANTE project was designed to provide information on external good practices, since this might be beneficial for the overall development of IWT in the Danube Region. These external good practices are inspired from experiences of the inland waterway transport sector on the Rhine River but also from other modes of transport. The applicable inputs were identified and customized to the Danube Region IWT requirements and regional prerequisites.

The report on identification of good practices in the Rhine IWT and other modes of transport shall be the basis for the Guidelines and Recommendations for the improved Danube IWT administrative procedures. Both documents play a key role in the elaboration of the Danube IWT Administration Strategy.

Activity 4.4 is elaborated by DANTE's ERDF Partner1 SIGSEZ.

An overview of good practices has been delivered for Inland Water Transport in the Rhine Area as well as for other modes of transport, primarily railways, by the mutual efforts of the experts engaged and all DANTE project partners.

8.2 Good practice identified in Rhine IWT

Within the good practices identified in the Rhine IWT, two projects were chosen to be presented in detail – RPIS (RheinPorts Information System) and Contargo trimodal network.

RPIS platform is established by the nine upper Rhine ports located in Switzerland, France and Germany.

RPIS is the first inland port community system in Europe and has been developed within the CEF funded project “Upper Rhine Traffic Management System” conducted by RheinPorts Basel-Mulhouse-Weil together with Port Autonome de Strasbourg, Rheinhäfen Karlsruhe and the other Upper Rhine Ports Colmar/Neuf-Brisach, Kehl, Wörth, Ludwigshafen and Mannheim.

The main goal of the nine ports is to optimize the container transport in the Upper Rhine corridor. For the follow-up it is planned to integrate bulk goods.

RPIS is a state-of-the-art traffic management platform connecting all major stakeholders in container barge handling, boosting their efficiency. The nine Upper Rhine Ports are digitally connected.

The platform dealt with the following:

- Optimizing the shipping routes in the Upper Rhine Corridor;
- Speed-up of the container handling in the ports;
- Optimizing the administration of the container data;
- Reduction of waiting times for the vessels in the ports;

- Improving the planning capability of the terminals;
- Integration of real time data in the planning process of container handling;
- Integration of the locks along the Upper Rhine;
- Integration of AIS and SIFRS data;
- Establishment of a common governance to bundle all individual measures in regard of container transport in the Upper Rhine corridor.

The Contargo trimodal network combines the inter-system advantages of the three transport modes inland waterway, rail and road: the inland barge as a reliable, low-priced, environmentally friendly transport mode, with fixed scheduled sailings, serves almost every terminal at the ARA-ports directly and shows its advantages along the Rhine River.

By combining three transport modes, Contargo combines the delivery requirements of the customers with aspects of ecology and economy. Direct trucking completes the offer. The Hamburg-Antwerp Range and European hinterland are accessible to the customers at any time.

Thanks to Contargo's inland terminals at numerous distinct locations and the high departure frequency of their barges, the company can offer many possibilities for the optimal positioning of empty containers along the Rhine and Main rivers.

Contargo has direct, scheduled barge services serving almost all terminals in the seaports of Rotterdam and Antwerp and the advantages are maximised along the Rhine and its tributaries. The Contargo network of barge lines links the western seaports with the terminals along the Rhine, its tributaries and the whole European Canal network.

Finally, Contargo is a best practice example for the handling of container logistics. Contargo offers, as a full-service provider, house-to-house delivery of containers. The internal and external processes are optimized in a way of full transparency. In addition, the customer can monitor the operational status of its containers at any time via the Contargo portal, as well as checking the delivery of the shipment.

Concerning the administration of the freight transport, Contargo is using the so-called Intermodal Tariff Information System (IMTIS).

IMTIS is for Contargo the main platform in organising transport processes from sender to receiver. The IT system integrates all logistics and administrative information of all actors of a transport.

Every procedure (status of the shipment, problems during the transport, administrative status, i.e. customs clearance, border check) is made transparent for the user.

8.3 Good practices in other modes of transport

Good practices in other modes of transport were made tangible by the following project/services:

- TIGER project;



- Interporto Quadrante Europa;
- CREAM project;
- RETRACK project;

TIGER project, acronym of “Transit via Innovative Gateway Concepts solving European Intermodal Rail Needs” is a Transport Research Project financed by the European Commission under the FP7 Framework Program and developed by a Market-Driven Consortium led by NewOpera AISBL under the supervision of DG MOVE. The TIGER project, starting from the concept of Rail Freight dedicated lines in accordance with the EU Parliament approval of the “European Rail Network for Competitive Rail Freight” legislation, aims to provide innovative solutions to eliminate or at least reduce ports and road congestion, by accessing the inland destinations with rail transport, leading to an intermodal and more sustainable mobility. The improvement of the customs process through digitalization is an outcome of the project. .

The Interporto Quadrante Europa inter-connects the various types of transport (rail, road and air). It groups traffic flows and provides access to European transport corridors. Since it is totally wired up with a telecommunications system, it offers operators data transmission services, telephone systems, video support and access to international databases. The Interporto Quadrante Europa provides quality logistics services. All logistics procedures are handled in a cooperative collaboration. The advantage for the user is the direct connection between the different actors in the logistic process i.e. warehousing, packaging, customs clearance, tracking and tracing, administration procedures. Hence, a transparent logistic handling is guaranteed. The development of high-performance control systems was the central challenge for the quality management of the handling facility of combined transport. Every improvement in the handling facility directly affects the whole performance chain of the system.

CREAM was a European research and development project that was conducted in the period 2007 – 2011. Its main objective was the improvement of rail freight between Western and Southeast Europe. Organisational improvements, technical innovations and competitive rail-based transport services were developed and successfully implemented during the project. Rail freight transport has benefited from these improvements by shorter transit times, tweaked transport quality and an increase in the annual transport performance of more than one billion tonne-kilometres.

RETRACK is the “REorganisation of Transport networks by advanced RAil freight Concepts”. It was funded under the European Commission (EC) FP6 Programme. The project was conducted in the period 2007 – 2011. The RETRACK project is applying an innovative rail freight service concept to the movement of rail freight across Europe. This is being achieved through the design, development and implementation of a commercial trans-European rail freight service along the rail corridor between Rotterdam (Netherlands) and Constanța (Romania) on the Black Sea. The project aimed to secure a significant modal shift of cargo from road to rail and to create an effective and scalable rail freight corridor between high demand regions in Western Europe and new high growth regions in Central and Eastern Europe.

8.4 Conclusion

For the purpose of the transfer of good practices identified in the previous chapters, following items have been checked within the Report on identification of good practises in the Rhine IWT and other modes of transport:

- Effects of the present corridor management and their transferability to the Danube region;
- Effects of integration of inland waterway transport in the logistic chain;
- Management of logistic networks;
- Customs issues;
- Efficient transport and logistic solutions.

The identified good practices can serve as examples to be used for the optimization of processes at the Danube IWT. Administrative processes are targeted with different solutions in several examples.

The selected best practice demonstrated that, in general, international cooperation, international agreements, as well as different electronic solutions, are being used to minimize administrative burdens.

Furthermore, digitalization together with the interaction of several stakeholders on a real time basis has the potential to smoothen and harmonize processes.

9 Strategy to simplify – harmonise – digitalise Danube IWT administration

9.1 Introduction

The Danube River is part of the TEN-T Core Network Corridor Rhine–Danube. With regard to establishing missing links, removal of the bottlenecks in the European transport infrastructure and of ensuring the sustainability of the transport networks, Danube plays a crucial role in the achievement of the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. EU Strategy for the Danube Region and its Priority Area 1a is acknowledged by the European Commission (EC)/Directorate General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) as part of their efforts to reduce administrative barriers in the transport sector.

Existing administrative barriers in inland waterway transport on the Danube and its navigable tributaries hinders effective and efficient IWT operations, so mutual initiative of the private sector and the national public authorities responsible for these barriers shall result in the identification and elimination of these administrative bottlenecks.

Administrative processes and paperwork that need to be performed are of significant competitive disadvantage for inland waterway transport on the Danube River and its navigable tributaries. Fees on the Danube-Black Sea Canal are calculated according to their loading capacity; ports set their charges autonomously and may differ substantially in line with the applied organisational scheme. Non-harmonized administrative procedures in ports delay transport operations significantly. On the other hand, good practices, as well as guidelines for effective administration of the IWT activities shall be developed with regard to the identified barriers.

DANTE targets to support the removal of administrative barriers by bringing together the relevant stakeholders from the public and private sector to jointly identify and overcome the severest existing barriers. Having to provide the same data several times for different authorities along the waterway, together with long waiting times at control points where the same documents are checked, represents a significant disadvantage for inland waterway transport compared to other modes. As such, the desired growth of IWT is significantly hindered.

Under these circumstances, it is of outmost importance to provide the stakeholders with clear and harmonized administrative processes and procedures, in order to further develop the transport chain on the Danube as a competitive and environmentally friendly mode of transport.

DANTE involved and encouraged national authorities to consult the industry and provide administrative requirements in a way that it supports IWT stakeholders to further exploit the Danube's transport capacity in line with the EU, regional and national policies and objectives.

The strategy to simplify – harmonise – digitalise Danube IWT administration is a planning document that defines the policy to be followed on national as well as on international level, connecting countries along the Danube River, and providing sustainable actions in the field



of the removal of administrative barriers and the introduction of good practices on the Danube IWT.

The identification of the most important barriers was based on the inputs received from the stakeholders, on national level provided during the national and transnational meetings and elaborated within national/transnational reports and inputs of the users, collected by means of the state-of-the-art reporting tools developed within the DANTE project.

The future development of Danube IWT depends on how the most detected limiting factors can efficiently be eliminated. Among the most important limiting factors, the following are to be mentioned:

- Lack of standardization and unified regulations even on national level;
- High time consumption and too many documents;
- Staff shortage, leading to long waiting times;
- Non-transparent and inconsistent charging policies among Danube countries;
- Inconvenient work schedules of ports and customs, which causes long waiting times;
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes;
- Insufficient fairway conditions due to the lack of maintenance works;
- Lack of qualified personnel and mutual recognition of documents;
- Information gaps: Lack of information causes inefficiency.

In the process of drafting the Strategy for the improvement of the Danube IWT administration, 38 measures were identified and will help to overcome these barriers.

Measures identified in the Action Catalogue were grouped in 26 actions, making their implementation through coordinated activities much easier. It is foreseen that the “Action Catalogue” will be updated along the implementation process of the removal of the administrative barriers on the Danube IWT.

For the successful implementation of the proposed Action Plan, the central part of the Strategy, a strong commitment from the countries and stakeholders, is needed.

9.2 Policy framework for IWT administration in Europe

The European policy framework is being developed to contribute to the general objectives of EU policy.

9.2.1 Europe 2020 strategy

Europe 2020 strategy (EC, 2010) has three priorities: smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth, meaning a competitive, resource-efficient and green economy, with a high level of employment, based on knowledge, innovation and delivering economic, social and territorial cohesion. IWT contributes to the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy with its energy and operational efficiency, safety, low transport and external costs and high reliability.

9.2.2 Transport White Paper

Roadmap to a single European transport area — Towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system - is a strategic document that presents the European Commission's vision for the future of the EU transport system and defines a policy agenda up to 2020. It is part of the Europe 2020 strategy and its flagship initiative for a resource efficient Europe.

The Transport White Paper defines the European transport system as united, efficient and enabled to secure the successful integration of Europe and its regions into the global economy. In this regard, Europe strives for territorial cohesion of its transport system through its Trans-European transport network (TEN-T). The Transport White Paper recognizes that the substantial unused transport capacity of inland waterways may accommodate the existing as well as any future growth in freight flows and calls for increasing the role of IWT in the transport of cargos to the EU hinterland and in connected European seas.

9.2.3 European Union Strategy for Danube Region

The EC published in 2010 the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) with 4 pillars that strongly support EU 2020 Strategy:

- Connecting the Danube Region;
- Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region;
- Building Prosperity in the Danube Region;
- Strengthening the Danube Region.

Improvement of mobility and multimodality is one of the main points of the first pillar – Connecting the Danube Region with spatial attention on inland waterways. The main objective is to improve the infrastructure and economic performance of waterway navigation, as well as the organisational framework and human resources for inland waterway navigation.

This needs improvements in management, equipment and availability of qualified staff in order to overcome the existing bottlenecks. Innovative technologies should be supported in



line with market needs. Better training and career opportunities should overcome a shortage of qualified personnel.

The EUSDR addresses a wide range of issues, divided among 4 pillars and 12 priority areas.

Within the Connecting the Danube Region, Priority Area 1A — to improve mobility and multimodality: inland waterways of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, is coordinated by Austria and Romania, with the involvement of a wide range of key players and stakeholders from the 14 countries of the Danube region.

The Priority Area Coordinators of EUSDR Priority Area 1a amended and expanded these three exemplary targets to five targets for which the wording was adopted by all members of the Steering Group (including the European Commission). The final targets for EUSDR Priority Area 1a are the following

- Increase the cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020 compared to 2010. [target maintained as in EC Communication of Dec. 2010];
- Overcome obstacles to navigability, taking into account the specific characteristics of each section of the Danube and its navigable tributaries and establish effective waterway infrastructure management by 2020. [target reformulated from EC Communication of Dec. 2010: "Remove existing navigability bottlenecks on the river to accommodate type VIb vessels throughout the year by 2015"];
- Develop efficient multimodal terminals at river ports along the Danube and its navigable tributaries to connect inland waterways with rail and road transport by 2020. [target reformulated from EC Communication of Dec. 2010: "Development of efficient multimodal terminals at Danube river ports to connect inland waterways with rail and road transport by 2020"];
- Implement harmonized River Information Services (RIS) on the Danube and its navigable tributaries and ensure the international exchange of RIS data preferably by 2020. [new target; not in EC Communication of Dec. 2010];
- Solve the shortage of qualified personnel and harmonize education standards in inland navigation in the Danube region by 2020, taking duly into account the social dimension of the respective measures. [new target; not in EC Communication of Dec. 2010].

9.2.4 NAIADES II

The EC published in 2013 the NAIADES II programme “Towards quality inland waterway transport” with its main objective to align the European IWT policy with the objectives of the Transport White Paper, such as a modal shift in favor of rail and IWT and emissions reduction. It is structured in a way to enable the IWT sector to be in conformity with the EUROPE 2020 Strategy objective and set out the guidelines for the further development of IWT. NAIADES II defines key areas of intervention, elaborates on responsibilities for implementation of this intervention, proposes a new approach to governance and identifies financing sources to support policy actions. The key intervention areas are:

- quality infrastructure;

- quality through innovation;
- smooth functioning of the market;
- environmental quality through low emissions;
- skilled workforce and quality jobs;
- integration of IWT into multimodal chains.

NAIADES II represents an update of NAIADES, published in 2006 by the EC.

9.2.5 Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)

The Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) is a European Commission policy directed towards the implementation and development of a Europe-wide network of roads, railway lines, inland waterways, maritime shipping routes, ports, airports and rail-road terminals. It consists of two planning layers:

- The Comprehensive Network: Covering all European regions, and
- The Core Network: Most important connections within the Comprehensive Network linking the most important nodes.

The Trans-European transport network (TEN-T) policy is a vital part of the EU's common transport policy. It is the policy framework for the development of transport infrastructure with a view to allowing the smooth functioning of the internal market and for ensuring economic, social and territorial cohesion and improved accessibility across the EU.

The ultimate objective of TEN-T is to close gaps, remove bottlenecks and eliminate technical barriers that exist between the transport networks of EU Member States, strengthening the social, economic and territorial cohesion of the Union and contributing to the creation of a single European transport area.

Following a 2013 review of TEN-T policy, nine Core Network Corridors were identified to streamline and facilitate the coordinated development of the TEN-T Core Network (one of them is the Rhine-Danube Corridor).

The Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) provides EU funding for projects on each Corridor, with relevant member states obliged to align their national infrastructure investment policy with European priorities. Other sources of funding and financing include the European Structural and Investment Funds and the European Fund for Strategic Investment.

9.2.6 RIS

The implementation of the RIS concept, developed at the end of the 20th century, took place after 2005. Since then, the EU has been working on the process of implementation for the RIS concept in all EU member states, as well as other non-EU countries that are connected to the EU waterways network.

The legal framework of RIS is based on Directive 2005/44/EC on Harmonized River Information Services (RIS) on Inland Waterways of the Community ("RIS Directive"). This directive establishes a Europe-wide framework for the harmonized deployment of RIS, and the compatibility and interoperability of actual and new systems.

According to the “Study on Rhine - Danube TEN-T Core Network Corridor”, 2nd Phase - Final Report, December 2017, River Information Services are available along the Inland Waterway Core Network (95%) but to a different extent and quality. International and national exchange of fairway or traffic related data between the RIS operators is not always ensured.

9.2.7 Green Deal for Danube River Transport

The Green Deal for Danube River Transport shall create an improved long-term policy framework for Danube IWT based on stakeholder commitments. Details are provided in Chapter 2.1

9.3 Issues identified for the Danube Region

Identifying and removing of the administrative barriers for the IWT on the Danube River is the main objective of the DANTE project. Aiming to achieve this objective, DANTE facilitates the work of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region Priority Area 1a that is recognized by the EC/DG MOVE as part of their efforts to reduce administrative barriers in the transport sector.

DANTE focuses on five thematic areas where administrative barriers are most evidently reducing the efficiency of IWT operations, which are:

- Border Police, Tax & Customs;
- Navigation/traffic control authorities;
- Port authorities/administrations;
- Waterway and Canal administrations;
- Other relevant authorities imposing barriers (e.g. health control, disaster management, etc.).

Primary data on both barriers and good practices is collected by the reporting tool and complementary through different other instruments such as meetings with stakeholders on the national and transnational level. Based on the provided first-hand input, country reports were elaborated for Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania (AAOPFR elaborated an extended Country Report for Romania including some proposals for actions to eliminate some administrative barriers) and Bulgaria. The type of administrative barriers and procedures that were mentioned the most by the Danube river stakeholders can be summarized as follows:

- Lack of standardization and unified regulations even on national level;
- High time consumption and too many documents;
- Staff shortage for customs and border police, leading to long waiting times;
- Non-transparent and inconsistent charging policies among Danube countries;
- Inconvenient work schedules of ports and customs, which causes long waiting times;
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes;
- Insufficient fairway conditions due to the lack of maintenance works;

- Lack of qualified personnel and mutual recognition of documents;
- Information gaps: Lack of information causes inefficiency.

However, in the following sub-chapters, issues identified in close cooperation with EUSDR PA1a and PA11, as well as by the DANTE stakeholder through already mentioned channels of collecting information, are presented in detail.

9.3.1 Border Police, Tax & Customs

Border police, Tax and Customs is the most mentioned thematic area noticed in the feedback that was received from the stakeholders who participated in the National and Transnational meetings.

The joint activities of the EUSDR PA1a (inland waterways) and PA11 (security) resulted in the following three headlines for which recommendations have been given in order to help to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of border controls along the whole Danube:

- to harmonise and simplify border controls,
- to establish time-efficient, service-oriented and transparent border controls, and
- to introduce new electronic tools to improve the efficiency of border controls.

Recommendations that have been given correspond to issues that are identified during the collection process:

Harmonise and simplify border controls

- Reduce the number of different forms to be filled in and provide multilingual versions;
- Improve the collaboration between Border Control Points.

Establish time-efficient, service-oriented and transparent border controls

- Reduce waiting time and duration of controls;
- Conduct controls in a purposeful and service-oriented way;
- Prevent unjustified payments of fees and fines;
- Come prepared to the control points along the Danube and discuss difficulties directly with the control authorities.

Introduce electronic tools to improve the efficiency of border controls

- Enable the electronic submission and processing of data;
- Schedule arrivals at control points via an electronic registration tool;
- Provide accurate electronic data.

A key output of the cooperation of the Priority Area 1a (inland waterways) and Priority Area 11 (security) is the technical finalization of the **DAVID - Danube Navigation Standard Forms**. As such, in April 2018, the first set of DAVID forms (Danube Navigation Standard Forms) was aligned on a technical level and sent out to the working group members:

- arrival and departure report;
- crew list;



- passenger list.

On the other hand, DANTE collected and analyzed administrative procedures and processes on the national level by means of National meetings, followed by transnational ones and supported by the innovative electronic tool. These results are the added value of the DANTE project.

Issues identified by DANTE are, as was already mentioned before:

- Lack of standardization and unified regulations even on national level;
- High time consumption and too many documents;
- Staff shortage, leading to long waiting times;
- Lack of qualified personnel and mutual recognition of documents;
- Non-transparent and inconsistent charging policies among Danube countries;
- Inconvenient work schedules of customs, which causes long waiting times;
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes;
- Lack of information causes inefficiency.

9.3.2 Navigation authorities (traffic control authorities)

Some of the issues detected in the DANTE project within the Border Police, Tax & Customs are also applicable to this thematic area:

- Lack of standardization and unified regulations even on national level;
- High time consumption and too many documents;
- Staff shortage, leading to long waiting times;
- Lack of qualified personnel and mutual recognition of documents;
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes;
- Lack of information causes inefficiency.

Additional issues collected and analyzed through the national and transnational meetings, supported by the electronic tool for collecting data on administrative barriers and good practices in the Navigation authorities' thematic area are the following:

- Unused potential of the RIS (including lack of international exchange of RIS data);
- Lack of AIS enforcement;
- Lack of VTS;
- Common sea and river regulations;
- Non-harmonized and high fines.

9.3.3 Port authorities (Harbor master) /administrations

Some of the issues detected in the DANTE project within the Border Police, Tax & Customs are also applicable to this thematic area:

- Lack of qualified personnel;
- Inconvenient work schedules of some ports, which causes long waiting times;
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes;
- Lack of adequate funding for development and maintenance of the infrastructure;
- Non-transparent and extremely high port dues;
- Lack of information causes inefficiency.

Additional issues collected and analyzed by means of the National and Transnational meetings, supported by the electronic tool for collecting data on the administrative barriers and good practices in the Port authorities (harbour master)/administrations' thematic area are: Non-transparent and extremely high fees;

- The fees policy is often changed during the year;
- No single form applicable to every port;
- Lack of general central port authority.

9.3.4 Waterway and Canal administrations

Generally speaking, the issues which are collected and analysed within the Waterway and Canal administrations' thematic area are mostly related to the status and the maintenance of the infrastructure, the quality of the marking system and the lack of qualified personnel within the administration: Inadequate marking systems on waterways;

- Lack of integration of water-level information and meteorological information within the RIS system;
- Lack of electronic navigation charts (ENC);
- Lack of coherent administration on the same river;
- Lack of qualified personnel;
- Lack of adequate funding for development and maintenance of navigation related infrastructure on the waterways;
- Transit fees for the Black Sea Danube Canal;
- Breaching of the navigation restrictions when water is low.

9.3.5 Other authorities

For the other authorities (such as Health Control, Disaster Management, Law Enforcement/Water Police, etc.) who impose administrative barriers to the movement of inland vessels and the transportation and transshipment of goods on the river and in the ports, the following issues were collected and analysed:

- Lack of standardization and regulations;
- Lack of qualified personnel;
- Inconvenient work schedules, which causes long waiting times (radiological and phytopathological testing);
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes (lack of possibility to dispose ship waste);
- Lack of information causes inefficiency;

9.4 Conclusions and recommendations regarding IWT fees

Romania (APDM Galati)

Simplification

It is important to note that an overall simplification process of the structure of the fees took place.

By comparing the fees valid before 01 January 2019 with those being currently in force, it immediately becomes obvious that a comprehensive simplification process took place. The concrete effects of this simplification process has to be analysed from a twofold perspective. From the administrative perspective, the immediate effect results in a more transparent and therefore accessible mode of charging the different services provided by the port. On the other hand, from a strict financial point of view, it has to be noticed that some tariffs were raised on average by 15%. In this case, the simplification procedure had a positive effect from the bureaucratic point of view, while from the financial point of view it resulted in a slight increase of the tariffs that were charged before.

Conclusion

The simplification of the structure of the tariffs is a positive development. By significantly reducing the structure of the charged fees, the overall administrative processes were reduced.

Recommendation

The overall reduction of the structure of the fees is a positive development. It can be regarded as a significant progress in the implementation procedure of the DANTE project. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that there is still enough room for further improvement. In this regard, **a first recommendation** would be to make the tariffs published on the official website of APDM Galati more accessible to international fleet operators. The problem is that the fees currently charged are only available in Romanian. The last available translation in English is outdated (30.04.2018). Since then, fees were already changed twice. By not providing a translation in an internationally spoken language (in this case English), foreign vessel operators who don't speak the local language (in this case Romanian), might have problems in getting the necessary information to plan their expected costs. This issue can be regarded as a slight lack of transparency and a barrier that could easily be removed. **A second recommendation** would be to harmonise the tariff structure at the Romanian national level. Even though APDM Galati simplified the tariff structure, in Giurgiu and Constanta this has not happened yet. The harmonisation of the tariffs structure at the national level is an indispensable prerequisite for the harmonisation process at the level of the entire Danube region. Furthermore, it is recommended that Giurgiu provides a more user-friendly website and a tariff structure in English.

Conclusion regarding the Romanian case

The developments that lately happened in Romania regarding the fees charged by inland ports are, at least in the case of Galați, positive. Starting with January 2019, the structure of the charged fees were, compared to other versions that were in force until the end of last year, simplified. This simplification process made the fees charged become more transparent and easier to understand. Nevertheless, a slight increase of the fees, on average by 15%, is observable.

Simplifying the structure of the fees can undoubtedly be regarded as a success story achieved in the framework of the DANTE project. Until recently, a Government Ordinance issued in 1999 regulated the general activity of ports and the administration of canals. In order to adapt the legal text to the current needs and challenges of the industry, a working group set up of the representatives of AAOPFR, together with representatives of the Romanian Ministry of Transport and Constanta Port Business Association, drafted a text amending the law that was at that time in force. The new legal text was adopted in December 2017.

According to the new legal provision, a cooperation between the port/inland waterway administrations and the industry has to exist in order to set up service contracts and to decide upon the charged fees. This cooperation relationship works the following way: administrations are required to propose framework contracts for service provisions and set up transparent schemes for the proposed fees, which will then be negotiated with the industry. In case of any kind of divergence, a Supervisory Council for Naval Transport was

set up to mediate and take the final decision in case the parties involved do not manage to reach an agreement.

Moreover, by comparing the archive on the tariffs structure on the official website of APDM Galati, it becomes clear that the tariffs are modified on a regular basis, on average every 6 months.

Bulgaria

In the Bulgarian case, sea and river ships are governed under a common legislative act. There is no legal separation between inland waterway transport and maritime transport. Therefore, the tariffs perceived for inland waterway transport (IWT) and maritime transport are identical. The consequence is that the tariffs charged for IWT are in the Bulgarian case quite high. From this point of view, Bulgaria seems to be an exception, as in the Romanian case the tariffs charged for inland and maritime vessels are separately regulated, resulting in lower fees for IWT compared to the maritime sector.

According to the national report submitted in the framework of the DANTE project, amending the legislative text that regulates both inland and maritime vessels could be a feasible solution to overcome this issue. It was agreed that, indeed, applying the same tariffs to both the maritime and inland waterway operators, poses serious problems to the sector. Nevertheless, the report concludes that in the Bulgarian case, amending the currently existing legal provision is extremely time consuming. The proposal to initiate an impact assessment in order to analyse the potential consequences would furthermore delay the modification of the regulatory framework.

Even though from a legal, administrative and political point of view, amending the currently existing regulatory text poses some difficulties, it is highly recommended to initiate this kind of procedure at the earliest opportunity. The proper maintenance of fairway conditions and a transparent and affordable tariff structure are both key prerequisites to make IWT a more attractive mode of transport for the industry.

Hungary

The current structure of the tariffs perceived by the responsible Hungarian authorities is similar to those currently imposed by the Romanian authorities in Giurgiu and Constanta (unlike APDM Galati that already reformed its tariff structure). It is furthermore noteworthy to mention the fact that the tariffs applied by the Hungarian authorities are compared to the other Danube states quite high. The high tariffs pose a challenge to vessel operators. A general recommendation in the Hungarian case would be to firstly simplify and secondly reduce the charged fees.

Croatia and Slovakia

In the case of Croatia and Slovakia, the tariffs charged for the services provided by port authorities are at first glance transparent, clear and easy to understand.

Germany and Austria

Both Germany and Austria have a clear, well-defined and transparent structure of the tariffs they charge for different port operations. Nevertheless, making the charged tariffs available in English would further contribute to overcome the typical language barriers of the Danube region.

Overall conclusions and recommendations regarding IWT fees

After a thorough analysis of the charged fees in the countries along the Danube, it became more than evident that structural differences are a defining element of this multicultural region. Whereas the German and Austrian approaches are similar, at the other end of the Danube, in Romania and Bulgaria, things are done differently. Whereas in Romania the charged fees are not even harmonised at the national level, in Bulgaria no differentiation is made between maritime and river vessel operators. In Hungary, vessel operators are not only confronted with a complex structure of tariffs, but also have to deal with rather high fees charged by ports and naval authorities. On the other hand, even though the identified problems in the fee policy of the Danube states are somewhat problematic, at least the services provided by border control authorities are in all countries free of charge.

It has to be furthermore noted that one problem that could be identified in all Danube countries is the language issue. Usually, fees are only available in the local language. This poses a challenge to foreign vessel operators.

In the spirit of the “Same River – Same Rules” vision, a harmonisation of the charged fees at transnational level would further encourage the development of IWT on the Danube. It would ease administrative processes and make inland waterway transport a feasible and reliable alternative to road transport.

Harmonising the fees at the transnational level would be the ideal solution. This kind of in-depth reform however would be extremely time-consuming since the administrative set-up and specific interest of each Danube state has to be taken into consideration. Therefore, a short-term recommendation that could be implemented without any kind of unnecessary administrative or procedural costs would be to make the tariffs available in an internationally circulated language – preferably English. Making the charged fees available in a single language at the transnational level would be a step forward in the successful development of the Danube as the main transport axis of the region.



9.5 Definition of the Monitoring Methodology and the DANTE Platform

Projects funded by the European Union usually come to an end after a certain, well defined period of time. As foreseen in the application form, the DANTE project will cease to exist on 30 June 2019. Nevertheless, unlike other projects funded through the Danube Transnational Programme, DANTE will, under the auspices of the Danube Commission or EUSDR PA1a, continue to exist in the form of the DANTE Facilitation and Monitoring Platform.

The Monitoring Methodology is designed in a way to reduce unnecessary burdens created by bureaucracy and uncertainty. Its final objective is to promote the development of IWT on the Danube as an environmentally friendly, less energy-consuming and sustainable mode of transport.

Most of the identified barriers are found in countries that administer the lower sections of the Danube, which may lead to the assumption that these similarities allow similar approaches to try to overcome them. Nevertheless, when discussing and proposing concrete policy options, it is of utmost importance to bear in mind that each country should develop its own model according to its own national specificities while, at the same time, adapting to others' experiences. Consequently, in order to achieve a successful administrative simplification and procedural harmonisation process along the Danube and its navigable tributaries, disseminating knowledge among the partner countries provides the ground to further develop successful initiatives to promote the development of IWT as a feasible alternative to road transport. The monitoring methodology will, after the lifespan of the project ends, play a prominent role in this sense.

In order to provide the necessary preconditions for DANTE to produce tangible results after the lifespan of the project ends, two monitoring methodologies were developed. The first primary scenario is based on a grant agreement signed between DG Move (European Commission) and the Danube Commission. Potentially, DC can already take up the DANTE Platform in its working scheme before the new grant agreement is signed. The alternative scenario foresees a monitoring platform in the framework of EUSDR PA1a, with a special focus on Working Group 6 – Administrative Processes. The aim of both methodologies is to provide the necessary framework to further tackle and abolish administrative barriers on the Danube and its navigable tributaries.

The monitoring methodology document elaborated in the project foresees the DC and the EUSDR PA1a scenarios as two parallel solutions, however, the main intention is that the DC is the primary host of the platform.

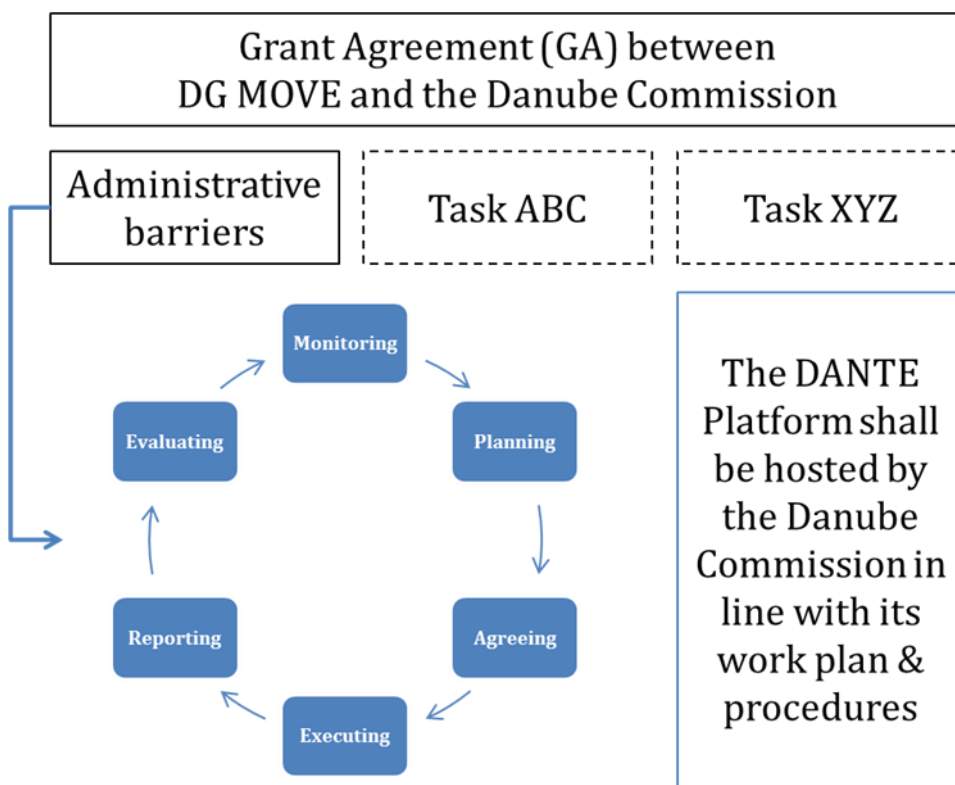


Figure 17. Primary DANTE Monitoring Methodology: concept with DC in the lead

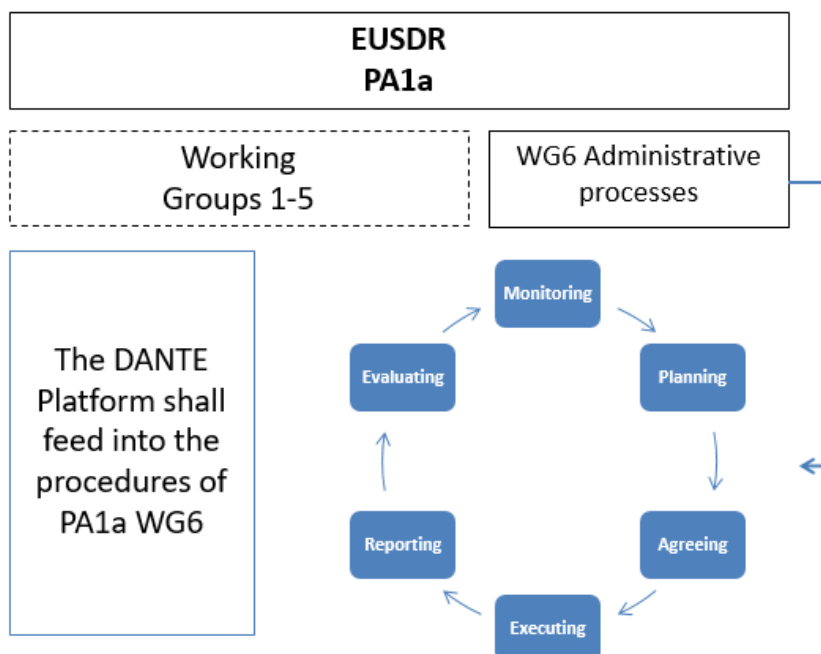


Figure 17: Alternative Monitoring Methodology: concept with EUSDR PA1a as basis



Both methodologies were developed to have an effective system to monitor the implementation of the solutions that were identified, to foresee their impact on the complex process of administrative harmonisation and simplification along different sections of the Danube and finally yet importantly, to gain a comprehensive overview of what was done and what could have been done better.

9.5.1 Methodology to address the issues to the competent authorities/organisations

In order to facilitate a smooth preparation of the period after the official closure of the project, a monitoring methodology has been prepared. No matter if it will function under the auspices of the Danube Commission (primary scenario) or EUSDR PA1a (alternative scenario), this monitoring methodology is built up of several steps.

After consulting the experts taking part in the elaboration of the Good Navigation Status (GNS) study, the DANTE monitoring methodology uses a similar approach as defined for GNS. The similar approach might enable the stakeholders to handle the IWT-related proceedings in a complex manner.

Step	Action
1. Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continuous use of the Transnational IWT Barrier Reporting Tool (O 3.1) b. Bi-monthly extract of the insert inputs / cases
2. Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Analysing the inputs / cases extracted from the tool b. Ex-ante evaluation to assess the effects when barriers are removed c. Pre-selection between „Quick fixes“ and „Structural barriers“ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • „Quick fix“ → direct interaction with the competent authorities • „Structural barriers“ → defined working procedure for barrier elimination • Start consultation mechanism • Prepare file report and proposed action • Plan elimination action
3. Agreeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. DANTE Platform working meetings (2/year, cooperative level with the DC Secretariat & the industry) b. Expert meetings of the Danube Commission (2/year, transnational level with the authorities & the industry) c. Plenary sessions of the Danube Commission (2/year)
4. Executing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Execution of elimination actions by the responsible authority b. Monitored by the DC focal point as part of the DANTE Platform
5. Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. At the relevant upcoming meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert meetings • Plenary sessions b. Industry c. Public affairs
6. Evaluating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Matching ex-ante evaluation with ex-post benefits b. Measuring results

Table 2. Monitoring methodology: steps

The first step consists of the **monitoring** of administrative barriers and bottlenecks all over the Danube. As such, the Transnational IWT Barrier Reporting Tool will continue to be available on the official websites of [Pro Danube International](#) and the [DTP](#) after the lifespan of the project ends. This innovative online tool was created in the framework of the DANTE project to ensure a comprehensive gathering of primary data concerning administrative barriers received directly from the businesses that operate in the IWT sector on the Danube. The tool is available in English and in the languages of the Danube region – German, Slovak, Hungarian, Croatian, Serbian, Romanian and Bulgarian – enabling the stakeholders to report on administrative barriers in the language they are the most comfortable with. As the reporting tool will continue to exist after the project ends, it will be possible to easily have an overview on the administrative burdens that stakeholders still have to cope with, while at the same time giving the opportunity to analyse the decisions that were already taken to

overcome these barriers. It is foreseen that the analysis of the inputs made by the stakeholders is made twice a month.

The second step, **planning**, deals, among other things, with the analysis of the inputs made by the stakeholders. In this phase it is important to ensure a thorough ex-ante evaluation in order to assess the concrete effects on IWT when barriers are removed. This way it will be possible to gain a comprehensive overview on the immediate effects of administrative barrier removal. At this point, it is important to differentiate between “quick fixes” and “structural barriers”. While “quick fixes” refer to the direct interaction with the competent authorities, “structural barriers” is a working procedure for barrier elimination that consists of a consultation mechanism, the preparation of a report that contains a proposed action-plan and a concrete strategy to eliminate the administrative bottlenecks that were identified.

The third phase of the methodology refers to **agreeing** i.e. the meeting of the stakeholders with the relevant national and European decision makers. The aim of these meetings is to discuss about the current problems that the Danube businesses are facing on certain sections of the river and to provide the responsible authorities with first hand input that shall enable them to implement feasible, comprehensive and long-term solutions to the problems stakeholders are facing. Furthermore, the involvement of recognized experts from the IWT sector will result into a smooth implementation of the proposed and agreed action-plans. The meetings should take place twice a year.

In the framework of the monitoring methodology, **execution** plays a crucial role since it implies the implementation of the solutions that have been identified up until this stage. As a solution is ineffective until it is executed, the responsible authorities, in their ability to implement strategies and action-plans, play at this stage a decisive role. Nevertheless, implementing a solution might not necessarily result in the expected outcome. Therefore, the actual elimination of administrative burdens on IWT requires a well-defined monitoring system. This approach enables to control each step of the implementation process and, where necessary, to offer alternative solutions that will be beneficial for the removal of administrative barriers that hinder the development of IWT as a real alternative to road transport.

Reporting, as the fifth step of the monitoring methodology, will be done in the framework of regular meetings – expert meetings and plenary sessions. Similar to all other phases of the monitoring methodology, representatives of the industry will play an important role, as they can provide experts and decision makers with first-hand information of the problems encountered on different sections of the Danube.

A monitoring methodology would be incomplete without a comprehensive **evaluation** process of what was achieved, what could have been done better and what effects the implementation of the proposed solutions had. In this final step of the methodology, a direct comparison between the results of the ex-ante evaluation and the ex-post benefits allows the analysis of the impact of the implemented reforms in the removal process of administrative bottlenecks on the Danube IWT.

9.5.2 Tasks and roles

As can be seen in the graph below, the tasks and roles of those involved in the process of administrative barrier removal are well defined. Regular meetings between the responsible authorities and the stakeholders play a significant role in identifying problems and proposing solutions to overcome these issues.

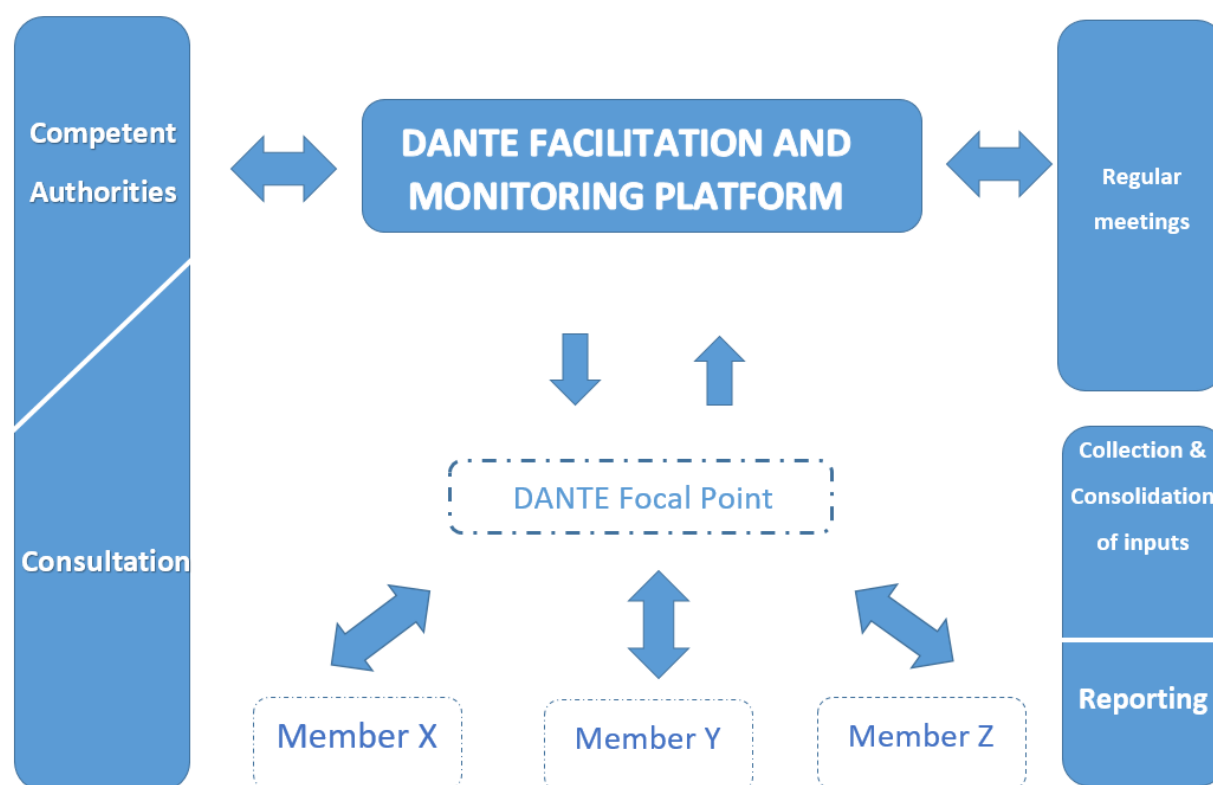


Figure 18. Administrative barrier removal: task and roles

Administrative barriers and complicated bureaucratic procedures cannot be eliminated in a relatively short period, as was the lifespan of the DANTE project. Nevertheless, political decision makers on the national and European levels are aware of the administrative burdens stakeholders, who operate on the Danube, have to cope with. Making these issues visible and through the innovative reporting tool even tangible to political decision makers on the European and national levels is one of the main achievements of the project. Putting their concerns on the political agenda is a success story of its own.

By taking the decision of creating a permanent platform of the DANTE project under the auspices of the Danube Commission / EUSDR PA1a, the work to eliminate administrative and procedural barriers on the Danube will continue. The reporting tool will remain active on the official website of Pro Danube International, giving stakeholders the opportunity to



continue providing their feedback on the developments regarding administrative barrier removal.

The DANTE platform can be regarded as a win-win situation for both the responsible administrations and the private sector. Stakeholders play a significant role in identifying and defining issues, while administrations have the chance to implement decisions based on the consultation of the sector. Through this approach, the general quality of the implemented policy will increase substantially.

9.5.3 Roll-out scenarios

The key elements to develop the scenarios are:

- increasing efficiency of IWT operations;
- modal shift in favor of IWT and emissions reduction.

Increasing efficiency of IWT operations:

There are clear advantages of IWT compared to other modes of transport:

- Lower transport cost;
- The possibility to transport large amounts of cargo at a time from one destination to the other;
- A fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly mode of transport;

There is no need of huge investments in the infrastructure since the annual maintenance costs are compared to road transport relatively low.

Simplifying and reducing administrative procedures and barriers would furthermore have a positive impact on travel and transport times. This could be a strong argument for the industry to switch from road to waterway transport. Due to the international character of the Danube IWW, a significant step forward in reducing unnecessary administrative procedures would be the implementation of the **DAVID (Danube Navigation Standard) Forms** and further work of the PA1a/PA11 joint working group on harmonising the documents dealing with health, dangerous goods and nautical controls.

In order to further raise the attractiveness of IWT, further measures, proposed by the Strategy, shall be implemented in parallel:

- Standardised and unified regulations;
- Engagement of qualified and trained staff;
- Improvement of infrastructure and equipment to increase processes;
- Transparent and consistent charging policies among Danube countries;
- Convenient work schedules of relevant institutions;
- Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries.

Lack of congestion combined with efficient processes along the Danube IWW would motivate the industry to switch from road transport to IWT.



Modal shift in favour of IWT and emissions reduction

Increasing the administrative efficiency of IWT related operations would make this mode of transport more attractive to industries that mainly rely on road transport. Making IWT a reliable alternative mode of transport furthermore depends on other aspects, too. Greening the Danube fleet, investing in technologies that have the potential to reduce transport times and developing alternative fuels are indispensable measures in making IWT truly competitive.

9.6 Action plan

9.6.1 Introduction

The Action Plan is organized in a way to clearly identify priorities and provides information on responsibilities for their implementation and follow-up. Assigning of the responsibilities to the administrative level and actors along the Danube waterway is the aim of the Action Plan.

The removal of existing administrative barriers by improving administrative procedures and reducing bureaucratic processes shall facilitate the efficient and sustainable use of the Danube River as a main transport axis and increase its economic and environmental potentials and social welfare in the entire region.

Beyond the actions identified in this Action Plan, further actions may be proposed by stakeholders.

The Action Plan will serve as a catalyst to coordinate the removal of administrative barriers along the Danube and its navigable tributaries. The Action Plan will not have a dedicated budget or funding instrument; it will however help to coordinate funding sources and accompanying measures that are available.

In identifying the actions suggested in the Action Plan, the following factors were taken into consideration:

- The action should be supported by countries and stakeholders including existing transnational bodies such as the Danube Commission and the International Sava River Basin Commission;
- The action should have an impact on the whole Danube River and its navigational tributaries;
- Actions should be realistic and feasible and there should be overall agreement between stakeholders;

The Action Plan should be stable for a certain period of time. However, the Action Plan shall be regularly reviewed and should be subject to revisions and periodic updates.

In the process of drafting the Action plan, 41 measures have been identified; they shall help to overcome these barriers. In order to make it more organized and more readable, measures are presented in an Action Catalogue, organized in 5 thematic areas as was defined by the DANTE project and then grouped in 23 actions, aiming to make their implementation through coordinated activities easier.

For the successful implementation of the proposed Action Plan, the central part of the Strategy for the improvement of the Danube IWT administration, a strong commitment from the countries and stakeholders is needed.

The measures are described in detail in the following chapters.

Danube IWT Administration Strategy and Action Plan – Catalogue of Actions and Measures

Border Police, Tax & Customs



1. Set up of simplified and harmonised international legal framework

- Standardise and harmonise administrative procedures and processes among the border controls along the Danube
- Support the joint activities of the EUSDR PA1a and PA11 in harmonising and simplifying border controls, including Flagship Initiative on Administrative Processes

2. Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries

- Support the joint activities of the EUSDR PA1a and PA11 in harmonising DAVID forms and its implementation along the Danube
- Encourage the industry to take part in the pilots for implementation of the DAVID forms

3. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting

- Encourage industry to use DANTE web-oriented reporting tool to collect data on administrative barriers and good practices
- Promote further utilization and stakeholders' usage of the RIS in terms of removing administrative barriers and bottlenecks and speeding up of border control
- Exchange of information stored in common control database in line with data protection regulations and promote electronic submission and processing of data relevant for border control
- Encourage the industry to participate in a pilot regarding the electronic submission and processing of ship, cargo and crew/passenger related data

4. Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment

- Improve the qualification of staff by proper training, working conditions and attractiveness of jobs
- Improve the infrastructure and equipment for efficient processes

5. Relevant work schedules of customs

- Ensure 24/7 working hours of customs by prior appointment to reduce idle time for vessels

6. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries

- Control forms requested to be available in multilingual versions (including an English version and the versions in the official languages of the Danube Commission)
- Introduction of a widely accepted language to be used in verbal communication for border crossing issues

Navigation authorities (traffic control authorities)



1. Improve and harmonise legal framework

- Standardise and harmonise administrative procedures and processes among the navigation authorities along the Danube
- Support the joint activities of the EUSDR PA1a and PA11 in harmonising and simplifying documents related to nautical controls
- Separate sea and river regulations

2. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools to accelerate transport and to support market orientation

- Effective and efficient RIS usage along the Danube in terms of international exchange of RIS data
- Support completion and harmonisation of the VTS along the Danube
- Prioritize projects for market oriented infrastructure services

3. Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies

- Enforcement of harmonised (guidelines for), reasonable fees and removal of traffic management fines

4. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries

- Forms requested to be available in multilingual versions (including an English version and the versions in the official languages of the Danube Commission)
- Introduction of widely accepted language to be used in radio/verbal communication

Port authorities (Harbor master) /administrations



1. Standardised and simplified documents required for Port Authorities

- Standardised and simplified administrative procedures and processes for port authorities/administrations
- Promote results of the DAPhNE project

2. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools to report and to support interoperability

- Effective and efficient RIS usage along the Danube in terms of international exchange of RIS data
- Effective and efficient usage of Port Community System along the Danube

3. Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies

- Introduction of harmonised (guidelines for) port dues and port rules

4. Sufficient staff at Port authority/Harbor master with proper infrastructure and equipment

- Improve the qualification of staff by proper training, working conditions and attractiveness of jobs
- Improve infrastructure and equipment for efficient processes

5. Relevant work schedules of ports

- Ensure appropriate working hours of ports to reduce idle time of port operations

6. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries

- Forms requested to be available in multilingual versions (including an English version and the versions in the official languages of the Danube Commission)
- Introduction of a widely accepted language to be used in verbal/radio communication for border crossing issues

Waterway and Canal administrations



1. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for safe and efficient transport

- Effective and efficient RIS usage along the Danube in terms of international exchange of RIS data (including information on infrastructure, fairway, marking system, etc.)
- Define minimum standards on how/when to inform IWT stakeholders on fairway-related information

2. Sufficient qualified staff, proper infrastructure and equipment

- Improve the qualification of staff by proper training, working conditions and attractiveness of jobs
- Improve the infrastructure and equipment for safe and efficient navigation

Other authorities



1. Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries

- Support the activities of River Commissions in terms of mutual recognition of the specific qualifications/certificates for crew members

2. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools to report and to support interoperability

- Effective and efficient RIS usage along the Danube in terms of international exchange of RIS data

3. Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment

- Improve the qualification of staff by proper training, working conditions and attractiveness of jobs

4. Harmonised safety and security guidelines

- Establish a common safety and security standard for vessels on the Danube

Figure 19. Actions catalogue with measures (breakdown)

9.6.2 Selected items/prioritization per thematic area

Border Police and Tax & Customs authorities

In order to exploit the potentials of the inland navigation, existing administrative barriers have to be removed by concrete actions. This statement particularly applies to Border Police, Tax & Customs authorities on inland waterways.

Most of the identified, reported, collected and analyzed barriers within the DANTE project refer to border controls. Information analyzed lead to the conclusion that in some cases almost the same border control procedures have to be done in all countries. The required procedures and documents included almost the same information in every country. The average time consumption that has been reported by the countries is 2 hours for border controls.

The immediate effect of these barriers implies that the procedures and corresponding documents are not standardized, the operation hours of the border police and customs are often inadequate, there is a different treatment of passenger vessels compared to cargo vessels, there are not enough transparent competencies for the stakeholders of the IWT sector. In addition, the respondents had to deal with severe information gaps, unwarranted fees/tariffs applied, a low number of qualified personnel, while the organization of the revision locations is inadequate. All these elements lead to extremely time-consuming border controls.

In order to overcome the above-mentioned bottlenecks that are hindering the development of the IWT on the Danube, the following solutions were elaborated:

1. Set up of a simplified and harmonized international legal framework;
2. Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries;
3. Use of a state-of-the-art digital tool for reporting;
4. Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment;
5. Relevant work schedules of customs;
6. A generally accepted working language along the Danube countries.

These actions are presented in the Action Catalogue together with related measures.

Navigation authorities (traffic control authorities)

Collected and analyzed barriers recognized for Navigation authorities mainly refers to the further utilization and digitalization of different systems and services in order to mitigate existing barriers, primarily dealing with international exchange of RIS data and further development of VTS. Some of the barriers noted are similar to the ones detected for Border controls, such as high number of documents, language issues, waiting times, repeating of the same procedures, lack of qualified personnel transparency etc.



As such, following actions have been proposed in order to overcome the noted barriers concerning the Navigation authorities:

1. Improve and harmonize legal framework;
2. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools to accelerate transport and to support market orientation;
3. Harmonized, transparent and consistent charging policies;
4. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries.

These actions are presented in the Action Catalogue together with related measures.

Port authorities (Harbor master) /administrations

For the Port authorities/administrations, the most reported issues concern the lack of transparency and the high fees. Increasing costs are viewed as a burden to businesses that are reducing the competitiveness of the IWT in relation to other transport modes. General observation of the users who reported barriers is that insufficient infrastructure and equipment are obstacles for efficient processes. Other addressed bottlenecks refer to the large number of documents, the lack of a single language used with the authorities along the Danube region, work schedules of authorities etc.

Following actions have been systematized to overcome the identified barriers concerning port authorities:

1. Standardised and simplified documents required for Port Authorities/Harbor master;
2. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting and to support interoperability;
3. Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies;
4. High quality information provision to support market orientation;
5. Sufficient staff at Port authority/Harbor master with proper infrastructure and equipment;
6. Relevant work schedules of ports;
7. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries.

These actions are presented in the Action Catalogue together with related measures.

Waterway and Canal administrations

Data collected for waterway and canal administration refers to the availability of the infrastructure, high and non-transparent transit canal fees, the lack of coherent interaction and data exchange between/among neighboring river information systems.

Out of the provided input by the stakeholders, the following measures can be regarded as solutions for the identified bottlenecks:

1. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for safe and efficient transport while supporting a feasible market orientation;
2. Sufficient qualified staff and proper infrastructure and equipment.

These actions have been presented in the Action Catalogue together with the related measures.

Other authorities (such as Health Control, Disaster Management, Law Enforcement/Water Police, etc.) who impose administrative barriers to the movement of inland vessels and the transportation and transshipment of goods on the river and in the ports

Information collected and analyzed by the electronic tool, but also the feedback received from the national round tables clearly indicate a lack of related infrastructure and equipment, as well as the absence of proper standards and regulations. Similar to other thematic areas, the identified bottlenecks also relate to the large number of documents, language issues, waiting times, lack of qualified personnel etc.

After the analysis of the collected data, the following actions are proposed to overcome the detected problems:

1. Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries;
2. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting and the support of interoperability;
3. Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment;
4. Harmonised safety and security guidelines.

These actions were included in the Action Catalogue together with related measures.

9.6.3 Actions and measures to be taken

Border Police, Tax & Customs

The increase of the efficiency and effectiveness of border controls results in the reduction of voyage time, and, consequently, means a significant advantage for the IWT compared to other modes of transport, while providing the basis for the required growth of the sector. From the point of view of the inland waterway transport sector, there is a need to reduce the time necessary for border procedures. The general improvement of control processes will be beneficial for both port authorities and stakeholders.

An efficient and effective border control procedure can be achieved through the simplification, harmonization and digitalization of the administrative procedures.

The simplification of the administrative procedures can be achieved through the harmonization and reduction of the numbers of forms that are used during the complicated control process, through an effective and efficient cooperation among the control points along the Danube and last but not least through the digitalization of the entire administrative process.

It can be therefore concluded that the IWT stakeholders have to be provided with clear, simple and harmonized administrative procedures along the Danube, in order to make inland waterway transport a reliable alternative to road or other modes of transport.

1. Set up of a simplified and harmonized international legal framework

Current situation & gap analysis

The existing border control procedures and processes do not provide a sound environment for seamless, efficient and effective inland waterway transport.

Shipping operators, skippers and crew, for example, often need to provide the same data into different forms and for different authorities. Language barriers still need to be resolved and, similar to other administrative and procedural aspects, in-depth and repeated controls prolong the waiting times for control procedures while stakeholders have to face delayed control procedures and often also need to make payments for unjustified fees and fines.

On the other hand, control authorities often suffer from a serious lack of qualified personnel and have to deal with staff shortage and insufficient infrastructure and equipment for better control processes.

Many other issues detected concerning border controls are a consequence of the non-harmonized international legal framework in the countries along the Danube.

Border controls should meet the objectives prescribed by the following EC regulations:

“Border control should help to combat illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings and to prevent any threat to the Member States’ internal security, public policy, public health and international relations.”

Schengen Borders Code, Regulation (EC) No 562/2006, and

“Control procedures should be merged or aligned and the number of procedures reduced to those that are economically justified, with a view to increasing the competitiveness of business.”

Community Customs Code, Regulation (EC) No 450/2008

Currently, each riparian country of the Danube River has a different legal framework. This results in different approaches in border control processes, making navigation along the Danube extremely time consuming, more expensive and less environmentally friendly.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Standardize and harmonize administrative procedures and processes among border controls along the Danube;
- b. Support the joint activities of the EUSDR PA1a and PA11 in harmonizing and simplifying border controls, including Flagship Initiative on Administrative Processes.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

A harmonised legal framework for border control in inland navigation will improve the competitiveness of the IWT, having a positive economic impact and providing more environmentally friendly services because of reduced time spent for border control procedures.



Already planned activities within the framework of PA1a/PA11 joint working group shall be followed closely as their results shall provide valuable input to the harmonized legislation for border control in inland navigation.

Priority	+++
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), Pa1a/Pa11, border control authorities, industry b. MS, non-MS, River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), border control authorities, industry



2. Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries

Current situation & gap analysis

During the border control procedure different authorities require a large amount of data to be entered in different forms. Due to the lack of coordination among the border authorities along the Danube, the skippers and the crew need to repeat, even several times, pretty much the same exercise during their voyage. Sometimes the same data has to be entered into different forms. Forms are often not available in multilingual versions.

The EUSDR joint working group between PA1a/PA11 was established aiming to simplify (avoid duplication/multiplication of work for ship crews), harmonize (International standardisation of data requests, forms and processes) and digitalize (Impulses for transparent, effective and efficient border control procedures) of the required measures for improved border controls.

DAVID forms - Danube Navigation Standard Forms – is the key output of the cooperation of the PA1a/PA11 joint group with regard to standardized and harmonized documents that are accepted in all countries. The first set of DAVID forms (Danube Navigation Standard Forms) were already aligned.

The DANTE project closely cooperated with the EUSDR Priority Area 1a – PA1a (inland waterways) in order to continue and capitalize the works of the relevant working groups and has a broader focus with more diverse topics, using a state-of-the-art reporting tool to collect information on procedural barriers directly from the stakeholders of the IWT and national working table meetings as a platform to identify administrative barriers.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Support the joint activities of the EUSDR PA1a and PA11 in harmonizing DAVID forms and its implementation along the Danube;
- b. Encourage the industry to take part in the pilots for implementation of the DAVID forms.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The first set of DAVID forms (Danube Navigation Standard Forms):

- arrival and departure report;
- crew list;
- passenger list.

Second phase of unified documents dealing with health, dangerous goods and nautical controls (support the database concept) developed within the PA1a/PA11 joint working group.

Already performed and planned activities within the framework of PA1a/PA11 joint working group regarding the standardized and harmonized documents, mutually recognized and accepted by the border control authorities, shall be followed closely as their results will provide an environment for smooth and fast border controls.



As a result, the standardized and harmonized documents for border controls will improve competitiveness of the IWT, having a positive economic impact and providing more environmentally friendly services as a result of reduced time for border controls.

Priority	+++
Time horizon	Till 2021
Responsible(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), border control authorities, industry b. MS, non-MS, River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), border control authorities, industry

3. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting

Current situation & gap analysis

The European Union's Community Customs Code already took into account modern tools and technology as a basis for simplified and efficient procedures. For practical reasons and to reduce the administrative burden on both the responsible authorities' and stakeholders' side, paperless processes should be introduced wherever meaningful and practical.

On the other hand, River information services developed along the Danube, in line with Directive 2005/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on harmonised river information services (RIS) on inland waterways in the Community. Nevertheless, the actual interconnection in terms of data exchange is between the Danube riparian states still missing.

Border control authorities should be able to perform the digital submission of the data related to the administrative processing of the cargo and crew/passenger vessels. Control authorities should have the capacity to access the necessary data prior to the actual control procedures. The relevant data should be made available in a special database.

The European Hull Database, already set and operated by the EC, includes standardised and officially validated vessel data. It is already possible to use it via RIS, but it should also be possible to access hull data independently from RIS. This static data, in combination with other data provided in advance by shipping operators, can serve as a basis for a new electronic structure and should therefore be further explored.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Encourage the industry to use the DANTE web-oriented reporting tool for collecting data on several types of administrative barriers and good practices;
- b. Promote further utilization and stakeholders' usage of the RIS in terms of removal of administrative barriers and bottlenecks;
- c. Exchange of information stored in common control database in line with data protection regulations and promote electronic submission and processing of data relevant for border control;
- d. Encourage the industry to participate in a pilot project regarding the electronic submission and processing of ship, cargo and crew/passenger related data.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

. The timely electronic submission of digital data should be made possible prior to any control related procedures. This will enable authorities to process and evaluate the submitted data.

This would create an environment for scheduled and efficient controls reducing the time needed for paperwork during the control. Uninterrupted access to static data of the vessels would prevent multiple submissions for each individual control process.



Repeated border controls would be prevented if the database would contain a list of border control authorities that previously accessed and validated the individual vessel's data.

Already planned activities within the RIS COMEX project shall be followed closely as their results on **corridor** management of RIS (described by PIANC and adopted in the EU RIS directive and the EU RIS Guidelines) shall provide valuable input to the interconnection of the existing RIS along the Danube and contribute to efficient border control procedures.

Priority	+++
Time horizon	Till 2021
Responsible(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. River Commissions (DC, ISRBC) b. MS, non-MS, RIS COMEX, border control authorities, industry c. MS, non-MS, border control authorities d. MS, non-MS, border control authorities

4. Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment

Current situation & gap analysis

The data collected in DANTE by the reporting tool, as well as the input received during the national working table meetings, have been processed and analysed. The outcome reveals a severe lack of sufficient trained personnel, as well as a lack of additional personnel when it is necessary to carry out the controls of a high number of vessels in parallel.

Other issues that represent specific bottlenecks in the process of border control procedures is related to the lack of proper infrastructure and equipment that is necessary to carry out a smooth inspection of the vessel.

The lack of personnel is also obvious when dangerous goods are transported.

Proper training based on existing procedures shall be performed and followed by the improvement of working conditions and other related measures to increase the overall attractiveness of the job. Making career opportunities in the IWT more attractive would create a more competitive environment setting the selection criteria much higher. Proper training also involves improved language skills of the control authorities in order to ensure an efficient control process.

To ensure harmonised control mechanisms along the Danube (with a special focus on regulations regarding the transport of dangerous goods - ADN) transnational trainings and know-how exchanges for control bodies should be organized.

It was also observed that problems emerge when several vessels wait in parallel to be inspected.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Improve the qualification of staff by proper training courses, working conditions and attractiveness of jobs;
- b. Improve the infrastructure and equipment for efficient processes.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The border control authority will be able to perform procedures by well-trained and motivated personnel. Working conditions should be improved and necessary infrastructure and equipment be available for inspection procedures.

Additional personnel may be engaged on an ad-hoc basis, when larger number of vessels are to be inspected.



In terms of the procedures itself, the number of border control personnel entering the vessels should be limited and known beforehand, in order to avoid the feeling that they violate the privacy of the vessel's crew.

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2024
Responsible(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), border control authorities b. EC, MS, non-MS, border control authorities

5. Relevant work schedules of customs

Current situation & gap analysis

A basic precondition for time-efficient border control is related to the opening hours at all control points. In some ports, custom offices are closed over the weekend, which causes unnecessary long waiting times for vessels. The majority of border controls are not open 24/7. As there is no continuous presence of the border control personnel, vessel operators are obliged to schedule an appointment to ensure that cross-border operations are carried out. This unnecessarily prolongs waiting times.

The overall voyage planning would be for shipping operators easier to plan if the opening hours of custom offices were in line with the officially published opening hours at all control points.

Also, it would be extremely beneficial for the shipping operators if the 24/7 opening hours at all control points would be offered by prior appointment.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Ensure 24/7 working hours of customs by prior appointment to reduce idle time for vessels.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action The impact of the proposed measures would be much higher if the actual opening hours would be in line with the officially published opening hours, while operators would have the possibility to schedule border controls at any point, any time, by prior appointment.

This will reduce waiting times, speed up and increase the competitiveness of the IWT while making it more environmentally friendly.

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, border control authorities



6. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries

Current situation & gap analysis

The official language used by border control authorities depends on the location of the vessel. As there is no general consent, the language used is different from region to region. While German is the dominant language on the upstream part of the Danube, at the downstream part rather Russian is the commonly used language. Official languages of the Danube Commission are Russian, French and German. English is generally accepted in the marine navigation.

Control forms requested to be filled by the skippers and ship crews are often not available in multilingual versions. Since documents are used in an international environment, they should be issued in multilingual versions (including an English version and the official languages of the Danube Commission).

Regarding the digitalization of the IWW, which enables the electronical submission and processing of control forms, it is rather simple to (among official languages of the Danube Commission and English) add explanations or translations of certain fields or to translate even software applications as a whole in additional languages to the skippers and ship crews.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Requested control forms should be available in multilingual versions (including an English version and the versions in official languages of the Danube Commission);
- b. Introduction of a single language to be used in verbal communication for border crossing issues.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The requested standard forms should be harmonized, prepared and used in multilingual versions. Software used for digital submission of the forms should be available in a multilingual interface. Defined predominant language(s) used for border control processes.

Priority	+
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, border control authorities, shipping operators; b. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, border control authorities, shipping operators.

Navigation authorities (traffic control authorities)

Along the Danube riparian countries, there are different authorities with different responsibilities that hinder the development of IWT as a feasible transport alternative. These authorities are established by laws and regulations which are in line with relevant EU Directives (e.g. Directive (EU) 2016/1629 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2016 laying down technical requirements for inland waterway vessels, amending Directive 2009/100/EC and repealing Directive 2006/87/EC), the Directive 2008/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on the inland transport of dangerous goods, etc.) and recommendations of the Danube Commission.

Issues noted and discussed during the National working group meetings and the barriers and bottlenecks collected by DANTE's tool related to Navigation authorities mainly refer to further utilization of different existing systems and services in order to mitigate existing barriers, primarily dealing with the international exchange of RIS data and further development of VTS, and even of AIS enforcement. Some of the barriers noted are similar to the ones detected for border controls, such as high number of documents, language issues, waiting times, repeating of the same procedures, lack of qualified personnel, transparency of the work, opening hours of relevant authorities, etc. In some countries, high fees for traffic management have been reported.

Generally, all barriers and bottlenecks within this thematic area can be grouped as follows:

- Lack of standardization and unified regulations even on national level;
- High time consumption and too many documents;
- Lack of qualified personnel;
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes;

1. Improve and harmonize legal framework

Current situation & gap analysis

Shipping operators have to enter the same data into different forms for different navigation authorities, while these forms are often in different languages. In addition to these issues, operators have to cope with long waiting times for control, particularly in the case of dangerous goods, required payments for unjustified fees and lack of transparency.

On the other hand, navigation authorities often suffer from a lack of qualified personnel, general staff shortage, poorly developed infrastructure and adequate equipment for better control processes.

Many of the issues detected are a consequence of the non-harmonized legal framework in countries along the Danube. Navigation control should meet the objectives required by the following EC regulations:

- Directive (EU) 2016/1629 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2016 laying down technical requirements for inland waterway vessels, amending Directive 2009/100/EC and repealing Directive 2006/87/EC),
- Directive 2008/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on the inland transport of dangerous goods.

Currently, each riparian country of the Danube River has a different legal framework and consequently applies different approaches in navigation related control procedures.

Furthermore, there are some specific characteristics, for instance in Romania, where the RNA (Romanian Naval Authority) applies high fees for traffic management services. In Bulgaria, national legislation for sea and inland navigation is within the common CODE for commercial shipping and the Law on Maritime Areas, Inland Waterways and Ports of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The EUSDR joint working group between PA1a/PA11 works on the 2nd phase of unified documents dealing with health, dangerous goods and nautical controls (support the database concept):

- documents related to nautical controls (support the database concept);
- dangerous cargo control.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Standardize and harmonize administrative procedures and processes among the navigation authorities on the Danube;
- b. Support the joint activities of the EUSDR PA1a and PA11 in harmonizing and simplifying documents related to nautical controls;
- c. Separate sea and river regulations.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

A harmonised legal framework for navigation authorities' control procedures that will improve the competitiveness of IWT will have a positive economic impact and provide



more environmentally friendly services as a result of reduced time losses for border control.

Already planned activities within the framework of PA1a/PA11 joint group should be followed closely, as their results will provide a valuable input to the harmonized legislation for border control in inland navigation.

Second phase of unified documents dealing with health, dangerous goods and nautical controls (support the database concept) developed within the PA1a/PA11 joint group.

Performance of separated sea and river regulations.

Priority	+++
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), Pa1a/Pa11, navigation authorities, industry b. MS, non-MS, River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), navigation authorities, industry d. MS, navigation authorities

2. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools to accelerate transport development and to support market orientation

Current situation & gap analysis

Having in mind the already achieved and planned goals concerning the paper forms to be used in control processes, paperless processes should be applied whenever meaningful and practical.

On the other hand, river information services are developed along the Danube, in line with Directive 2005/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on harmonised river information services (RIS) on inland waterways in the Community, but the actual interconnection among the developed systems (in terms of data exchange) among the Danube riparian countries is still missing.

Navigation control authorities should be able to perform the digital submission and processing of ship, cargo (including dangerous goods) and crew/passenger related data prior to the control itself and should be able to access a database which contains the static information on vessels, as well as a list of authorities which previously accessed and already validated the individual vessel's data.

The European Hull Database already set and operated by the EC includes standardised and officially validated vessel data. It was already possible to use it via RIS, but it should also be possible to access hull data independently from RIS. This static data in combination with other data provided in advance by shipping operators can serve as a basis for a new electronic structure and should be further developed.

In some countries the vessel traffic service (VTS) is not available. There is no possibility to receive traffic instructions or address traffic related issues to any authority, unless via the VHF device at the local Port Authority within its working hours. There is no centralized monitoring of the traffic or possibility to request instructions or assistance from remote locations on a standardized manner.

Despite existing regulation that imposes AIS carriage requirement, there are many vessels navigating on inland waterway networks either without AIS equipment or with class B devices on board. In many cases, the configuration of AIS on board equipment is incorrect, causing much confusion to the parties involved in navigation.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Effective and efficient RIS usage along the Danube in terms of international exchange of RIS data;
- b. Support completion and harmonization of the VTS along the Danube;

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The digital submission and processing of ship, cargo and crew/passenger related data prior to control procedures should be secured while the navigation control authority has the capacity to process data.

This would create the proper environment for scheduled and efficient controls reducing the time needed for paperwork. Uninterrupted access to static data of vessels would prevent multiple submissions of these data for each individual control process.



Already planned activities within RIS Comex project shall be followed closely as their results on **corridor** management of RIS (described by PIANC and adopted in the EU RIS directive and the EU RIS Guidelines) will provide valuable input to the interconnection of the existing RIS along the Danube and contribute to efficient border control procedures.

Fully developed and harmonized VTS, with trained personnel.

AIS transponder of proper class properly configured and carried by each vessel.

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2024
Responsible(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. MS, non-MS, RIS COMEX, navigation authorities, industry b. MS, non-MS, navigation authorities c. EU, MS, non-MS

3. Harmonized, transparent and consistent charging policies

Current situation & gap analysis

Non-transparency and inconsistency of charges and fees along the characterizes Danube navigation. Several examples can be named: transit charges for the Black Sea-Danube Canal are calculated on vessel's capacity and not on the actual load, which is critical particularly in low water periods; also in Romania, a tax for surveillance of safe navigation has to be paid, which does not exist in any other riparian country. Fees are often calculated in a complex way, which makes it non-transparent and subject to complaints.

Not only fees but also fines are present and extremely diverse along the Danube. Somewhere fines are too low and do not discourage the violation of the law, whereas somewhere else even skippers' licenses can be quite easily be suspended for some period of time.

Transparent and consistent approaches in defining charging policies shall be introduced along the Danube waterway in order to create a predictable and safe environment for shipping operators.

The lack of an independent complaint's office causes dissatisfaction of the shipping operators.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Enforcement of harmonized (guidelines for) and reasonable fees and removal of traffic management fines.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The aim of the final outcome is to increase efficiency, while the fees and fines should be transparent and well justified. In order to improve satisfaction of the shipping operators, complaints offices should be established.

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2023
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, navigation control authorities, shipping operators

4. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries

Current situation & gap analysis

The language used by border control authorities depends on the location of the vessel. While German is the dominant language on the upstream part of the Danube, at the downstream part rather Russian is the commonly used language. Official languages of the Danube Commission are Russian, French and German. English is generally accepted in the marine navigation.

Control forms requested to be filled by the skippers and ship crews are often not available in multilingual versions. Since documents are used in an international environment, they should be issued in multilingual versions (including an English version and the official languages of the Danube Commission).

Regarding the digitalization of the IWW, which enables the digital submission and processing of control forms, it is rather simple to (among official languages of the Danube Commission and English) add explanations or translations of certain fields or to even translate software applications in additional languages accessible to the skippers and ship crews.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Forms requested should be available in multilingual versions (including an English version and the versions in the official languages of the Danube Commission);
- b. Introduction of a single language to be used in radio/verbal communication.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

Requested standard forms should be harmonized, prepared and used in multilingual versions. Software used for the electronical submissions of the forms available with multilingual interface. Defined predominant language(s) used for control purpose and radio communication.

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, navigation control authorities, shipping operators; b. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, navigation control authorities, shipping operators.

5. Port authorities (Harbor master) /administrations

Port authorities/Harbor masters are important nodes in the logistic chain. Ports are particularly important, since they connect different transport modes - inland waterways, rails and roads.

In line with that, IWT users shall be supplied by upgraded procedures all along the Danube to be more competitive and to provide more environmentally friendly services.

Generally, all barriers and bottlenecks within this thematic area can be grouped as follows:

- Lack of qualified personnel;
- Inconvenient work schedules of ports which cause long waiting times;
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes;
- Lack of information causes inefficiency;
- Non-transparent and extremely high fees.

1. Standardised and simplified documents required for Port Authorities/Harbor master

Current situation & gap analysis

Administrative obstacles in the ports' activities, as well as harbor masters are related to the rather complex administration.

Sometimes, existing electronic systems require the submission of documents that are not needed/required. It is not unusual that port authorities are requiring additional documents to be presented on a random basis, a procedure that causes delays. Forms are not unified in terms of language, they are not available in multilingual versions. Number of documents varies from port to port and they depend on the type of the cargo.

There are, of course, examples, where for the announcement of the arrival of passenger vessels, one document is needed that can be submitted electronically in advance.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Standardized and simplified administrative procedures and processes for port authorities/administrations;
- b. Promote results of the DAPhNE project.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

As a result, standardized and simplified documents for port/harbour master activities will improve competitiveness of the IWT reducing time for port activities.

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), Port authorities/Harbor master, Port agencies, freight forwarders, shipping operators b. River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), Port authorities/Harbor master

2. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting and supporting interoperability

Current situation & gap analysis

Modern technologies are a basis for simplified and efficient procedures. Having in mind the already achieved and planned goals concerning the use of paper forms in the administrative chain, paperless processes should be applied whenever meaningful and practical. These tools also shall contribute to the simplification and standardization of the documents and should be from the multilingual point of view easier to handle.

On the other hand, river information services are developed along the Danube in line with Directive 2005/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on harmonised river information services (RIS) on inland waterways in the Community, and could bring added values in port operations. The problem is that the interconnection among the developed systems (in terms of data exchange) is along the Danube riparian countries still not available.

Port authorities/harbor masters should be able to perform the electronic submission and processing of the vessel and cargo related data prior to the vessels' arrival.

Static data on vessels in combination with other data provided in advance by shipping operators/agents can serve as a basis for a new electronic structure and should be further explored.

- Electronic systems are available in some ports. Nevertheless, the outcomes from the DAPHNE project and their Port Community System along the Danube should be further supported.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Effective and efficient RIS usage along the Danube in terms of international exchange of RIS data;
- b. Effective and efficient usage of Port Community Systems along the Danube.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The electronic submission and processing of vessel, cargo and crew/passenger related data prior to the port arrival should be secured and port authorities should be enabled to process data.

This would create an environment for scheduled and efficient port operations reducing the time needed for paperwork.

Already planned activities within the RIS COMEX project shall be followed closely as their results on the **corridor** management of RIS (described by PIANC and adopted in the EU RIS directive and the EU RIS Guidelines) should provide valuable input to the interconnection of the existing RIS along the Danube and contribute to efficient port operations.



Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2024
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, RIS COMEX, Port authorities, shipping operators) b. MS, non-MS, RIS COMEX, Port authorities



3. Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies

Current situation & gap analysis

Charging policies in ports is a pretty much reported issue and recognized by the participants of the national meeting as one of the most critical barriers.

Beside attributes such as “non-transparent” and “high” fees, there is another issue that is quite interesting, but has a negative impact on planning, the performance of the shipping and port operators: “unstable” charges policy, which means that fees are often changed during the year.

Charging policies are based on countries regulation and the international approach is still sporadic.

In this respect, the joint working group PA1a/PA11 is dealing with harmonised (guidelines for) port fees and port rules that shall bring transparent and consistent charging policies along the Danube.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Introduction of harmonised and transparent (guidelines for) port fees and port rules.
- b. Prioritize projects for market-oriented infrastructure services.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The final outcome shall be well justified (based on actual costs) and lead to transparent, harmonised and stable charging policies.

Already planned activities within the framework of PA1a/PA11 joint group shall be followed closely as their results shall provide additional valuable inputs to charging policies.

Priority	+++
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, Port authorities, shipping operators

4. Sufficient staff at Port authority/Harbor master with proper infrastructure and equipment

Current situation & gap analysis

An issue that represents a bottleneck in the daily operation is related to the lack of proper infrastructure, its proper maintenance and the necessary equipment need to perform smooth operations of the Port authorities/Harbour master.

Infrastructure shortcomings are limiting the provision of ports, but also the activities of the Harbour masters.

Proper training based on existing procedures shall be performed and followed by the improvement of working conditions and other measures to increase the attractiveness of the job. As a precondition, this may create a more competitive environment where the selection criteria can be set higher. Proper training also involves improved language skills of the authorities in order to ensure efficient operations.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Improve the qualification of staff by proper training, working conditions and attractiveness of jobs;
- b. Improve the infrastructure and equipment for efficient processes.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

Port authorities/Harbour masters will be able to perform procedures by trained, educated and motivated personnel. Working conditions will be improved and also necessary infrastructure and equipment shall be at disposal for operations.

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2024
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions (DC, ISRBC), Port authorities/Harbor master b. EC, MS, non-MS, Port authorities/Harbor master

5. Relevant work schedules of ports

Current situation & gap analysis

Basic precondition for time-efficient port/harbour master operations are the opening hours at all points. In some (smaller) ports, port administration is closed over the weekend, which causes long waiting times for vessels.

Planning of the shipping operators should be more flexible if the opening hours of ports/harbour masters are in line with the officially published opening hours.

Also, it would be extremely beneficial for the shipping operators if 24/7 opening hours are available at all points, by prior appointment.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Ensure appropriate working hours of ports/harbour masters to reduce the idle times for operations.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The outcomes and the impact of the proposed measures would be increased if the opening hours would be in line with the officially published opening hours and the possibility to schedule the operations at any point, any time, by prior appointment.

This will reduce the waiting time, speed up and increase the competitiveness of IWT and make it more environmentally friendly.

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, port authorities



6. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries

Current situation & gap analysis

A language used in verbal/radio communication with Port authorities/harbour master often depends on the location. There is no general consent; therefore, the language used is different from region to region.

Control forms requested that should be filled out by the skippers and ship crews are often not available in multilingual versions. Since documents are used in an international environment, they should be issued in multilingual versions (including an English version and the official languages of the Danube Commission). The digitalization process of IWT, which enables the electronical submission and processing of control forms, should be made accessible to skippers and ship crews by using applications in additional languages.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Forms requested to be available in multilingual versions (including an English version and the versions in the official languages of the Danube Commission);
- b. Introduction of a single language to be used in verbal/radio communication for operations.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

Requested standard forms should be harmonized, prepared and used in multilingual versions. The software used for electronical submission of the forms should be available in a multilingual interface. Defined predominant language(s) to be used for communication with port authorities/harbour masters.

Priority	+
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, Port authorities/Harbour master, shipping operators; b. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, Port authorities/Harbor master, shipping operators;



Waterway and Canal administrations

The Main role of the Waterway and Canal administration is primarily the maintenance and development of the inland waterways in terms of infrastructure. Along the Danube, authorities are established in a different way, having different responsibilities. Nevertheless, all of them have to disseminate fairway information that are relevant for users of inland waterways/canals.

Some of them are RIS operators, too, which give them the opportunity to disseminate relevant information in a more transparent and standardized way to the users of the waterway/canal infrastructure.

However, all of them impose certain obstacles and barriers to navigation, primarily with regard to information gap and their inability to secure services required for safe navigation.

Other issues detected are related to the lack of human resources and the inability to provide adequate safety and security measures.

1. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for safe and efficient transport

Current situation & gap analysis

Although river information services are developed along the Danube, in line with Directive 2005/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on harmonised river information services (RIS) on inland waterways in the Community, interconnection among the developed systems (in terms of data exchange) along the Danube riparian countries is still not available. However, RIS COMEX intends to connect RIS along the EU corridors that will significantly improve safe and efficient IWT on EU level.

For the purpose of maintenance of inland waterways, some of the information should be further integrated in RIS, such as water level and hydro-meteorological information.

In order to achieve this, the PA1a working group invested certain efforts in preparing a minimum set of standards on how/when to inform IWT stakeholders on fairway-related information (basically a required quality of service for notices to skippers);

Measures to implement the action

- a. Effective and efficient RIS usage along the Danube in terms of international exchange of RIS data (including information on infrastructure, fairway, marking system, etc.).
- b. Define minimum standards on how/when to inform IWT stakeholders on fairway-related information.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

Water level and hydro-meteorological data should be integrated in RIS. Minimum standards on information related to IWT stakeholders should be clearly defined.

Already planned activities within the framework of PA1a group shall be followed closely as their results will contribute to safer and more efficient IWT.

Priority	+
Time horizon	Till 2023
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, Waterways/Canal administrations b. MS, non-MS, Waterways/Canal administrations, PA1a

2. Sufficient qualified staff and proper infrastructure and equipment

Current situation & gap analysis

The responsibility of the waterway and canal administrations, includes, among other things, the maintenance of the waterways/canals. Nevertheless, these institutions often suffer of a serious lack of human resources, budget, equipment or infrastructure that is necessary to perform their foreseen responsibilities. Due to unfavourable weather conditions like draught, increased efforts to secure safe and efficient navigation on several sections of the Danube are needed. For these reasons, sometimes, some stretches of the waterways are not properly marked.

Waterway and Canal administration often lack educated and trained personnel. Funds needed for regular maintenance of IWW are insufficient.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Improve the qualification of staff by proper training, working conditions and an increase of the attractiveness of jobs;
- b. Improve the infrastructure and equipment for safe and efficient navigation.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The Waterway/Canal authority shall be able to perform regular operations by trained and motivated personnel. Working conditions should be improved and also necessary infrastructure and equipment shall be at disposal for operations.

Priority	+++
Time horizon	Till 2024
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, Waterway/Canal authorities b. EC, MS, non-MS, Waterway/Canal authorities

3. Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies

Current situation & gap analysis

Charging policies at canal administrations is a pretty much reported issue and recognized by the participants of the national meetings as one of the most critical barriers.

Beside attributes such as “non-transparent” and “high” fees, there is another issue that has a negative impact on planning the performance of the shipping operators: “unstable” charging policy, which means that fees are often changed during the year. Issues reported are related to calculation of the fees (instead of capacity of the convoys, the charged fee should be calculated based on the loaded cargo, for empty convoys no fees should be required, while some discounts should be calculated during low water periods);

Measures to implement the action

- a. Introduction of harmonised and transparent (guidelines for) canal fees and rules.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The final outcome shall be a well justified (based on actual costs), transparent, harmonised and stable charging policy.

Priority	+++
Time horizon	Till 2022
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, Port authorities, shipping operators



Other authorities (such as Health Control, Disaster Management, Law Enforcement/Water Police, etc.) who impose administrative barriers to the movement of inland vessels and the transportation and transshipment of goods on the river and in the ports

Other authorities such as Health Control, Disaster Management, Law Enforcement, Water/River Police impose similar barriers as in other thematic areas. This is a consequence of the severe lack of human resources, language barriers, coherent administration, and, - important issue for the skippers and crew members - the acceptance of specific qualifications/certificates in order to be allowed to navigate all along the Danube.

There is also a need to establish common safety and security standards for vessels on the Danube River.

1. Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries

Current situation & gap analysis

The acceptance of specific qualifications/certificates for crew members from different countries is also a challenge that was acknowledged during the national working table meetings as an administrative barrier. This topic was already discussed and debated in different River Commissions, such as the Rhine Commission, Danube Commission and the International Sava River Basin Commission.

However, there were some additional issues reported during the National Round Table Meetings.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Support the activities of River Commissions in terms of mutual recognition of the specific qualifications/certificates for crew members.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

The main outcome will be the mutual recognition of the qualifications/certificates for the crew members.

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2024
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions



2. Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting and supporting interoperability

Current situation & gap analysis

River information services are developed along the Danube in line with Directive 2005/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on harmonised river information services (RIS) on inland waterways in the Community, but the interconnection of the systems developed (in terms of data exchange) along the Danube riparian countries is not yet available.

However, it is notable that other authorities rarely use RIS and other electronic tools for everyday operations.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Effective and efficient RIS usage along the Danube in terms of international exchange of RIS data.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

Priority	+
Time horizon	Till 2023
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, other authorities

3. Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment

Current situation & gap analysis

The lack of trained personnel, proper infrastructure and equipment necessary to secure a smooth operation by the responsible authorities is huge.

In case of transporting dangerous goods, some particular inspections are required by law. Effectively performing these operations is often hindered by a lack of trained human resources.

Proper training based on existing procedures should be performed and followed by an improvement of working conditions and other measures to increase the attractiveness of the job. This may create a more competitive environment where the selection criteria can be set higher. In terms of proper training, improved language skills of other responsible authorities should also play a significant role. This will ultimately lead to more efficient and less time-consuming administrative processes.

In order to ensure harmonised control mechanisms along the Danube (with a special focus on regulations regarding the transport of dangerous goods - ADN) transnational training and know-how exchange for the involved bodies should be organized.

Measures to implement the action

- a. Improve the qualification of staff by proper training, working conditions and attractiveness of jobs.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

Priority	++
Time horizon	Till 2023
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non- MS, other authorities

4. Harmonised safety and security guidelines

Current situation & gap analysis

There is no commonly accepted safety and security standard for vessels along the Danube. In this sense, a common legal framework should be created in the Danube countries.

Measures to implement the action

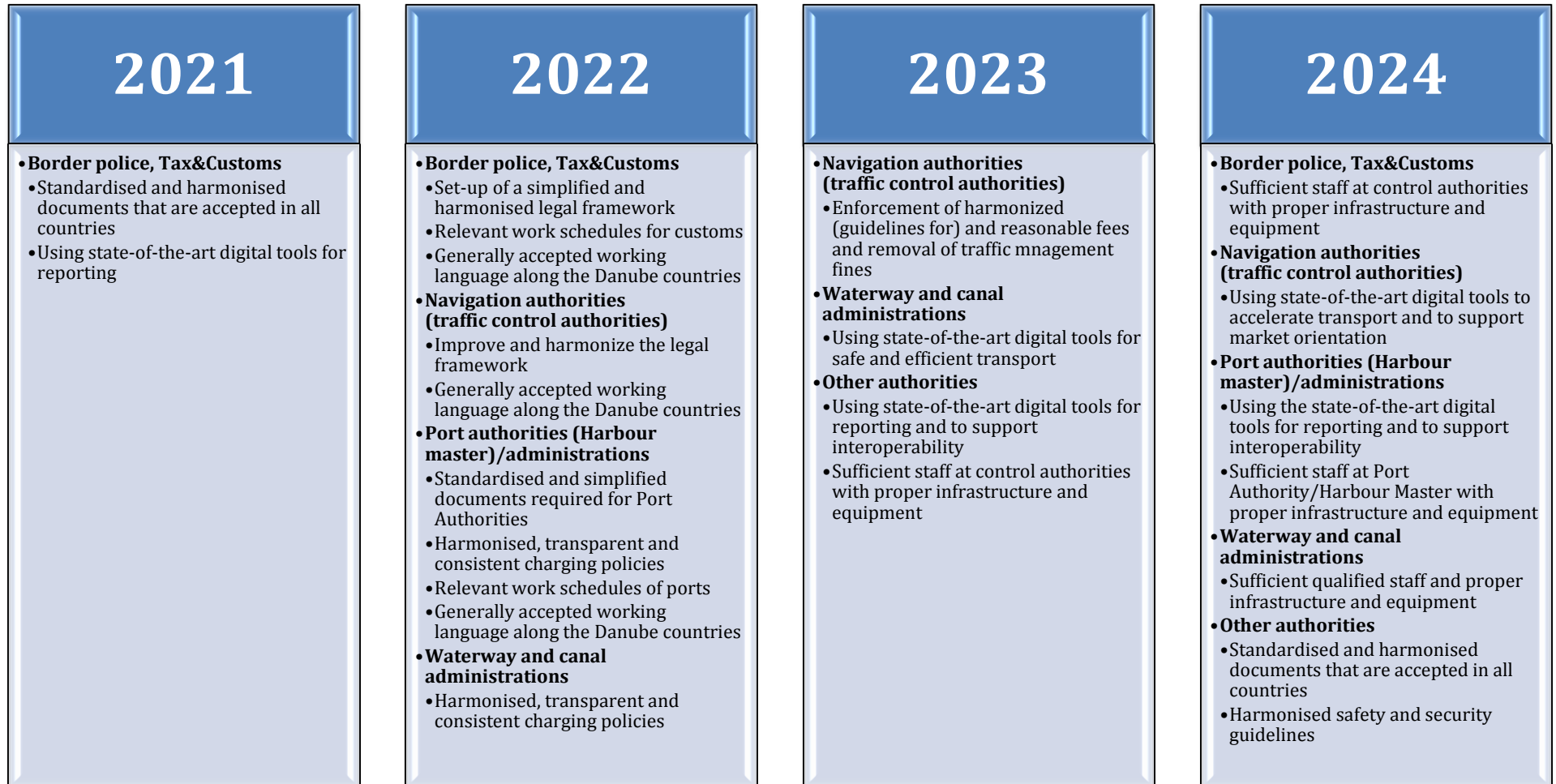
- a. Establish common safety and security standards for vessels on the Danube.

Outcomes and impact of implementing the action

Safety and security standard for vessels should be established along the Danube

Priority	+
Time horizon	Till 2024
Responsible(s)	a. MS, non-MS, River Commissions, other authorities

9.6.4 Timeline for interventions



9.6.5 What was achieved during DANTE?

The Action Catalogue is organised according to the five thematic areas where administrative barriers are reducing the efficiency of IWT:

- Border Police, Tax & Customs
- Navigation/traffic control authorities
- Port authorities/administrations
- Waterway and Canal administrations
- Other relevant authorities imposing barriers

In order to overcome the administrative barriers that hinder the development of IWT at its full potential, several measures were identified. These measures were classified according to the above-mentioned five thematic areas of the DANTE project. The identified measures propose concrete solutions to overcome the administrative burdens that pose a challenge to inland vessel operators in their daily activity. Harmonising and reducing as far as possible diverse administrative procedures is a key element in adequately responding to the current needs of the industry, setting the ground for new and innovative business opportunities.

Increasing the integration of IWT on the Danube in the multimodal transport chain is a prerequisite for the social and economic development of the entire region. The identified measures were thoroughly discussed in several national and transnational working group meetings attended by key representatives of the industry and of the responsible public authorities. DANTE was in this regard extremely successful in bringing together the industry and their counterparts from the public sector.

Since the lifespan of the DANTE project is slowly coming to an end, the question arose to what extent the proposed measures were efficiently implemented. Therefore, DANTE partners were invited to provide first-hand information on the status of the implementation process of the proposed solutions to overcome the shortcomings caused by unnecessary administrative procedures. The core idea was to find out whether the discussed and proposed measures were already implemented during DANTE or if their concrete implementation is expected to happen after the lifespan of the project ends. Feedback was provided by Croatia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, since the major bureaucratic barriers were identified in the lower sections of the Danube.

The implementation status of the measures in each country will be described in detail in the following subchapters and is entirely based on the feedback provided by the responsible DANTE partners.



9.6.5.1 Croatia

In the Croatian case, a series of measures were already implemented during the lifespan of the DANTE project. Nevertheless, as the reform process of the bureaucratic barriers is a long-term process, important solutions are still expected to be implemented after the official closure of the project.

However, as can be deduced from the feedback provided by the Croatian partners, setting up a simplified and harmonised legal framework with regard to border control procedures was already achieved during the lifespan of the project. Harmonising administrative procedures at the national level is a precondition to reduce administrative barriers at the transnational level. Moreover, the working hours of the border police are 24/7. Procedures related to custom issues can be done during the week from 07:00 until 15:00. Outside the official working hours, the Croatian authorities offer the possibility to do custom procedures by prior appointment.

Analysing the second thematic area of the project, navigation authorities (traffic control authorities), it becomes more than evident that important steps forward were already made both in issues related to the harmonisation of the national legal framework and in the general use of state-of-the-art digital tools. Furthermore, traffic fees charged in Croatia are harmonised through national legislation. The fees charged by ports are online available on their respective official websites. It can be therefore concluded that the charged fees are transparently available to IWT users.

9.6.5.2 Slovakia

Under the first thematic area, border police, tax and customs, nearly all of the proposed measures were already implemented in the lifespan of the DANTE project. Slovak authorities use state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting, while there is sufficient staff at control authorities to efficiently perform their duties. Furthermore, appropriate infrastructure and equipment is available to ensure that the activities of border control authorities run smoothly without causing unnecessary time losses for IWT users.

A positive development can be furthermore observed under the second thematic area of the DANTE project related to navigation authorities. According to the provided feedback, the legal framework regulating the status of traffic authorities was improved and harmonised. In order to accelerate transport operations and to support the adequate market orientation of the IWT sector, state-of-the-art digital tools have become a standard. The fees charged by the responsible authorities are consistent and transparent.

Important steps forward were also registered in the third thematic area of the DANTE project - port authorities/administrations. The documents required by the responsible authorities have been standardized and simplified; the charged fees are transparent and easily accessible for IWT users. Nevertheless, state-of-the-art digital tools used to report and to support interoperability is still an issue and will most probably be implemented after the closure of the project. Proper infrastructure and equipment still represent a challenge for port authorities (for instance missing parking lots in the public port of



Bratislava, no Wi-Fi connection neither in the port nor on vessels). An improvement of this situation is expected to happen after the lifespan of DANTE ends. According to the feedback provided by the Slovak partners, work schedules of port authorities never represented a problem, as landing sites can be accessed by IWT users 24/7.

9.6.5.3 Hungary

Hungary was the third country that provided a comprehensive feedback on the measures proposed in the framework of DANTE analysing the timing of their implementation. By comparing the feedback provided by the Hungarian partners with the feedback provided by the Croatian and Slovak partners, striking differences become visible. In the Hungarian case, there were significantly less measures implemented during the lifespan of the project as in the other two countries. According to the provided feedback, it is expected that the majority of the measures will produce tangible results only after the lifespan of the project ends.

Regarding the first thematic area of the project, border police, tax and customs, only the measure that proposes the using of digital state-of-the-art tools for reporting can be considered as implemented. All the other measures are expected to be implemented after the lifespan of the project ends.

Regarding the second thematic area, navigation authorities, none of the proposed measures were implemented so far. The expectation is that these measures will produce tangible results only after the lifespan of the project ends. Under the third thematic area, port authorities, only one change happened during DANTE. Even though from a quantitative point of view this may seem as not being much, it has to be said that providing sufficient staff at port authorities with adequate infrastructure and equipment is an important step forward that significantly eases the overall procedures related to the administration of IWT. The same is valid for the Hungarian waterway administration. There is currently a recruitment procedure under way.

9.6.5.4 Bulgaria

Bulgaria was the fourth country that provided a comprehensive feedback on the implementation status of the measures that were proposed in the framework of DANTE. Similar to the Hungarian case, under the first thematic area – border police, tax and customs – the only change that happened during the lifespan of the project is the use of state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting. It has to be noted though that a simplified and harmonised legal framework has been already achieved through the implementation of the EU Directive for customs in 2016.

The Bulgarian border police still has to face staff shortage. The solution to this problem lies, according to the provided feedback, in the hand of the political decision makers. Bulgarian authorities support both a 24-hour working schedule at the border and the introduction of English as a generally accepted working language along the Danube countries.

Under the second thematic area – navigation authorities – the most important steps forward in reducing administrative burdens is expected to happen after DANTE officially ends. One of the main objectives is the introduction of state-of-the-art digital tools with



the concrete aim to accelerate and support market orientation. This should be achieved at the earliest opportunity.

9.6.5.5 Romania

Last but not least, Romania provided, based on the action catalogue developed in the framework of DANTE, a comprehensive overview and analysis on what was achieved during the project and what is expected to produce tangible results after the lifespan of the projects ends. Similar to Croatia, Slovakia and Bulgaria, Romania registered concrete results in the overall improvement of the IWT situation.

Under the first thematic area – border police, tax and customs – setting up a simplified and harmonised legal framework was already achieved during the lifespan of the project. As Romanian border control authorities use digital, state-of-the-art tools for reporting, unnecessary time-consuming paperwork can be avoided.

Having sufficient staff working for border control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment is a prerequisite to reduce waiting times and to make control procedures run smoothly and more efficiently.

The Romanian partners have moreover acknowledged that both recruiting new staff and providing an attractive working environment is of utmost importance. Improving the overall situation of the human resources is a measure that will be implemented after the lifespan of the project ends. A positive development though that was already achieved as a measure proposed by DANTE is the existence of relevant work schedules for customs. This will significantly reduce waiting times of international IWT users and operators.

Important steps forward in the implementation process of the measures proposed by the DANTE project were also made in the second thematic area – navigation authorities. As can be concluded from the received feedback - state-of-the-art digital tools to accelerate transport and support the market orientation of IWT- already play a vital role in the day-to-day activity of the sector. The implementation of the other measures is expected to take place after the project ends.

DANTE also produced tangible results in the third thematic area of the project – port authorities. Simplifying and harmonising charging policies is a major step forward in reducing the administrative burdens that the sector has to deal with. Based on the feedback provided by the Romanian partners, a tangible development in this regard will most probably be registered after the lifespan of DANTE ends. While this is a preliminary conclusion, the example of APDM Galati is a strong argument in favour of the fact that this particular measure was at least partially implemented. Simplifying the fees structure and making it more transparent, undoubtedly is a step in the right direction that hopefully will soon be followed by all the other Romanian ports on the Danube.

The efficient integration of IWT in the transnational transport and logistics chain furthermore depends on adequate work schedules of ports. Easing the access to port is a major objective that was achieved during the lifespan of the project.



9.6.5.6 Preliminary Conclusions

Identify, mitigate and eliminate administrative barriers for IWT operators is the main objective of the DANTE project. As can be concluded from the action and measures catalogue and the national feedback provided by the project's partners, DANTE was successful in identifying and bundling administrative procedures and barriers that pose a challenge to IWT on the transnational level. Eliminating bureaucratic barriers is a long-term process and overwhelmingly depends on the political will of each Danube state.

Important steps forward in the overall implementation of the detailed solutions that were summarized in what can be regarded as an important output of the DANTE project - the actions and measure catalogue - were mainly registered in Slovakia, Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania. In the Hungarian case most of the proposed measures are expected to be implemented after the lifespan of the project ends. Of course, there is still a long way to go to efficiently and thoroughly eliminate administrative barriers at the transnational level. Nevertheless, important steps forward in the right direction are already visible at the level of some Danube states.

The following table visualises the main measures that were already achieved during the lifespan of DANTE and what measures are expected to be implemented after the lifespan of the project ends. It can be therefore stated, as a preliminary conclusion, that DANTE sets the ground for tangible results even after the official closure of the project.

Actions - thematic areas/barriers	Measures done / changes happened during DANTE	Measures expected to be done after DANTE
I. Border police, tax & customs		
1. Set-up of a simplified and harmonised legal framework	HR, RO	HU, SK
2. Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries	SK, HR	HU, BG, RO
3. Using state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting	HU, BG, SK, RO	HR
4. Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment		HU, HR, RO, SK
5. Relevant work schedules for customs	RO	HU, BG, HR
6. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries		BG, SK, HR
II. Navigation authorities (traffic control authorities)		
1. Improve and harmonize the legal framework	SK, HR	HU, RO
2. Using state-of-the-art digital tools to accelerate transport and to support market orientation	HR, RO	HU, SK
3. Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies	SK, HR	HU, RO
4. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries		HR
III. Port authorities (Harbour master) / administrations		
1. Standardised and simplified documents required for Port Authorities		HU, HR, RO, SK
2. Using the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting and to support interoperability	HR	HU, SK, RO
3. Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies	SK, HR	HU, RO
4. Sufficient staff at Port Authority/Harbour Master with proper infrastructure and equipment	HU, RO	BG, SK, HR
5. Relevant work schedules of ports	SK, RO	HU, HR
6. Generally accepted working language along the Danube countries	RO	HU, SK, HR
IV. Waterway and canal administrations		
1. Using state-of-the-art digital tools for safe and efficient transport	BG, HR	HU, SK, RO
2. Sufficient qualified staff and proper infrastructure and equipment	HU, RO	BG, SK, HR
V. Other authorities		
1. Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries		
2. Using state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting and to support interoperability		
3. Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment		
4. Harmonised safety and security guidelines		
VI. Other issues		

10 Conclusions

Identifying, mitigating and abolishing administrative barriers were key concepts that defined the whole lifespan of the DANTE project. In spite of its unique potential, several obstacles are hindering inland waterway transport becoming a reliable and efficient alternative to road, rail and air transport. The development of the Danube as a safe, environmental-friendly and cost-effective mode of transport is a mission that has to go beyond borders in order to achieve tangible results on a long-term basis. Therefore, the main purpose of the DANTE project was to bring together both the representatives of the industry and the responsible state authorities to unite their forces in combating the most common administrative barriers and procedures in a well-defined and coordinated manner at the transnational level. The know-how of the stakeholders paired with the capacity of policy makers to implement the identified solutions paved the way to successfully abolish administrative burdens and to make important steps forward in better integrating IWT in the European intermodal transport and logistics chains. Nevertheless, it has to be kept in mind that any kind of intervention in procedures related to administrations is a challenging matter, as it has to take the specific national logic and “ways of doing things” into consideration. The overall harmonisation of administrative requirements is moreover challenged by the fact that the Danube is an international river that crosses both EU and non-EU Member States.

DANTE focused on specific thematic areas where administrative barriers are significantly reducing the efficiency of IWT operations. These thematic areas were identified based on the comprehensive consultations Pro Danube has conducted with the industry in the preparation phase of the project. An overview of the current academic agenda linked to different barriers that hinder the development of IWT also played a prominent role in defining the main administrative categories. DANTE focused on the following thematic areas:

- Border Police, Tax and Customs;
- Navigation/Traffic Control Authorities;
- Port Authorities/Administrations;
- Waterway and Canal Administrations;
- Other relevant authorities imposing barriers (e.g. health control, disaster management etc.)

The Strategy and Action Plan plays a vital role in the implementation process of the project. This document delivered tangible results from a twofold perspective. Firstly, based on extensive desk research conducted by the national partners, the national and transnational working group meetings and last but not least, based on the first-hand information received through the online barrier reporting tool, DANTE was successful in identifying and summing-up the main administrative burdens at the transnational level. Secondly, based on the fruitful meetings between the industry and the responsible national and European authorities, DANTE delivered concrete solutions to make IWT more efficient and more



attractive for industries. The implementation of these measures will result in the general improvement of the economic and social well-being of a region that spreads over ten different European countries.

The most common administrative barriers that hamper the development of IWT at its full potential can be summarized as follows:

- Lack of standardization and unified regulations even on national level;
- High time consumption and too many documents;
- Staff shortage, leading to long waiting times;
- Non-transparent and inconsistent charging policies among Danube countries;
- Inconvenient work schedules of ports and customs causing long waiting times;
- No generally accepted working language along the Danube countries;
- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment as an obstacle for efficient processes;
- Insufficient fairway conditions due to the lack of maintenance works;
- Lack of qualified personnel and mutual recognition of documents;
- Information gaps: Lack of information causes inefficiency.

These administrative barriers have been thoroughly discussed in the framework of the Strategy and Action Plan. While some barriers can efficiently be reduced on the short to middle term, others imply a comprehensive reform-process that requires more time. The DANTE project was not only successful in identifying administrative burdens. It furthermore offers concrete solutions to overcome them, making IWT a reliable alternative to road transport and enlarging economic opportunities by a proper integration to potentially new markets. Based on extensive works, DANTE proposed the following strategic points to overcome the administrative barriers along the Danube and its navigable tributaries:

- Simplified and harmonised international legal framework;
- Standardised and harmonised documents that are accepted in all countries;
- Definition of a maximum data set for reporting required by the authorities and ensuring true submit-only-once;
- Usage of the state-of-the-art digital tools for reporting and to support interoperability;
- Information exchange between competent authorities in line with the data protection regulations for seamless and efficient cross-border transport;
- Harmonised, transparent and consistent charging policies;
- High quality information provision (this refers to (i) reporting requirements and (ii) events influencing the navigation) to support market orientation;
- Sufficient staff at control authorities with proper infrastructure and equipment;
- Relevant work schedules of ports and customs;
- Harmonised safety and security guidelines;
- Accepted working language along the Danube countries.



Successfully implementing the above-mentioned strategic points mainly depends on the political will of the Danube states. Therefore, continuing the intercountry collaboration after the lifespan of the project ends is in this regard a key prerequisite. DANTE elaborated two different versions of monitoring methodologies that will make sure that the project delivers even after its official closure. The primary scenario is based on a grant agreement signed between DG Move (European Commission) and the Danube Commission. The alternative scenario foresees a monitoring platform in the framework of EUSDR PA1a, with a special focus on Working Group 6 – Administrative Processes. The aim of both methodologies is to provide the necessary framework to further tackle and abolish administrative barriers on the Danube and its navigable tributaries.

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14 Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AIS	Automatic identification system
AAOPFR	Association of Shipowners and Port Operators in Romania
ADN	European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways
APDM	The Administration of maritime Danube ports
ARA-ports	Amsterdam-Rotterdam-Antwerp ports
ARVD	Waterborne Transport Development Agency
CCNR	Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine
CEF	Connecting Europe Facility
CESNI	European Committee for drawing up Standards in Inland Navigation
CREAM	Customer-driven Rail-freight services on a European mega-corridor based on Advanced business and operating Models project
DAPhNE	Danube Ports Network project
DARIF	Setting up the Structure of a Danube River Forum
DAVID	Danube Navigation Standard Forms
DC	Danube Commission
DG MOVE	Directorate General for Mobility and Transport
DG REGIO	Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy
DTP	Danube Transnational Program
ENC	Electronic navigation charts
EC	European Commission
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
EUSDR	European Union Strategy for the Danube Region
Europe 2020	European Union's ten-year growth strategy covering employment; research and development; climate/energy; education; social inclusion and poverty reduction.
GA	Grant Agreement
GNS	Good Navigation Status
Horizon 2020	EU Research and Innovation programme

IMTIS	Intermodal Tariff Information System
ISO	International Organization for Standardisation
IWT	Inland waterway transport
IWW	Inland waterways
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MS	Member States
NWTM	National working table meetings
PDI	Pro Danube International
PLATINA	Platform for the Implementation of NAIADES
RETRACK	REorganisation of Transport networks by advanced RAil freight Concepts project
RIS	River information services
RPIS	RheinPorts Information System
SIFRS	River Information Services for the Upper Rhine
SIGSEZ	Steinbeis Innovation gGmbH, Steinbeis-Europe-Center
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Networks
TIGER	Transit via Innovative Gateway Concepts solving European Intermodal Rail Needs project
VTS	Vessel traffic service
WP	Work package