

DRAFT PROGRAMME

9th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)

Virtual event

“Harmonious and sustainable development of the Danube Region”

22 October 2020

The 9th EUSDR Annual Forum, jointly organised by the Republic of Croatia, the European Commission and the Danube Transnational Programme with the support of the Danube Strategy Point, will take place on 22 October 2020.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the 9th EUSDR Annual Forum will be held as a virtual event.

Before its official opening, the 7th *Danube Participation Day – Youth Participation in the Danube Region* event will be organized on 21 October 2020 as a side event.

We are at a crucial moment of the EU’s history. Never has cooperation been so crucial, because never before have challenges been so global. The experiences gained during the previous period will be helpful in moving forward even more united.

At this moment, the main issue which the participating states of the Danube strategy are faced are the following: minimization of the impact of COVID-19 on healthcare systems and citizens health along with the simultaneous restoration of economic and social activities.

There will be also a great and unique opportunity for promotion of deeper and wider cooperation between EUSDR-EU member states and candidate/potential candidate countries participating in the EUSDR with special focus on the fields of how to make a concrete actions from the EUSDR Action plan into the practice.

7th Danube Participation Day – Youth Participation in the Danube Region

The Danube Participation Day 2020 will present the first draft of the Guidance Paper for Youth Participation in the Danube Region. Against this background, participants will have the opportunity to exchange on possible ways forward in order to boost cooperation and participation of young people and youth initiatives. In doing so, the Danube Participation Day wants to provide a platform to raise awareness of valuable contributions from existing youth initiatives in the region and taking initial steps forward to acknowledge and involve youth in the Danube Region.

Draft agenda

(Wednesday, 21 October 2020: side event)

10:00 *Opening Session*

10:00 – 10:50 *Welcome addresses – 7th Danube Participation Day*

- EUSDR Presidency Croatia
- European Commission (tbc)
- European Parliament (tbc)
- EUSDR Priority Area 9 & 10
- Danube Youth Network

Quiz on Youth in the Danube Region

10:50 *Interacting with youth in the Danube Region*

10:50 – 11:50 *Introducing the Guidance paper on Youth Participation*

Claudia Singer | EUSDR Priority Area 10

Introducing the Danube Youth Network

Danube Youth Network

30 years Interreg & Youth Participation

Alessandra Cardaci, DG Regio

Online Poll on Youth Participation in the Danube Region

12:00 *Working Group Session*

12:00 - 13:30 *Parallel Working Groups (topics can be subject to further change)*

- Communication & the EUSDR | Danube Youth Network
- Boosting youth in the EUSDR Governance
- Youth and cross-border cooperation | AEBC Balkans
- Youth and Education | EUSDR Priority Area 9
- Environment – Youth – Sustainability | Danube Civil Society Forum/WWF

13:30 *Wrap up & Closing Session*

13:30 – 14:00 *Poll on Youth Participation in the Danube Region*

Wrap-up Working Groups

Panel – Political Statement on Youth Participation

Handing over the bell

9th EUSDR Annual Forum
of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)
-Online event-

Draft agenda (Thursday, 22 October 2020)

- 10:00** *Official opening of the 9th Annual Forum*
- 10:00 – 10:40** *Opening session of the 9th Annual Forum with speeches / greetings*
- Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia Mr Andrej Plenković (tbc)
 - Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms Ms Elisa Ferreira
 - Minister for Regional Development and EU Funds Ms Nataša Tramišak
 - Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Mr Gordan Grlić-Radman

10:40 – 11:00 *Keynote speech*

Ministerial Meeting

- 11:00 – 13:00** *Ministerial Meeting*
on-line event
- 13:05** *Virtual Family photo*
- 13:10** *Virtual Press Conference*

Virtual Thematic panels

11:00 - 11:30 **Plenary session**

Harmonious and sustainable development of the Danube Region – Joint introduction for panels

In this dynamic period for the Europe, all available knowledge and experts should contribute to the development of European regions as proven catalysts for growth and added value of European cooperation. Regional development is placed at the centre of Croatia's presidency of the Danube Strategy, as a precondition for economic growth, sustainable social development and strengthening of territorial cohesion. This is also an opportunity to strengthen the role of macro-regional strategies in the cohesion policy of the European Union.

The priorities and financial instruments of the regional policy, as the primary investment policy of the EU, are used to support prosperity, security and improved quality of life for all EU citizens, as well as political and economic stability in Europe as a whole. In line with regional policy objectives, European regions and cities are supported in the creation of new jobs, business competitiveness, sustainable development and improved quality of life for citizens

11:30 – 12:30 **Parallel Thematic Sessions (break-up sessions/panels)**

Thematic
Session 1 *The ecologic perspective of the sustainable regional development*

The EU will be climate neutral in 2050. The European Green Deal is about improving the well-being of people. Making Europe climate-neutral and protecting our natural habitat will be good for the people, the planet and the economy. Protected and well-preserved nature will ensure the stability of fundamental values and development potentials for the

Danube region. This panel will focus and bring forward the ecological aspects of regional development.

Thematic
Session 2

The economic perspective of sustainable regional development

Helping companies become world leaders in clean products and technologies will ensure economic development and inclusive transition. Digitalisation and circular economy are key enablers for reaching the objectives of the Green Deal. A more systematic cooperation should be encouraged in order to contribute to all the functionalities required for human life and the economic development. This panel will underline the economic aspects of regional development.

Thematic
Session 3

The social and civil perspective of sustainable regional development

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on labour market, cooperation within Danube region is necessity if we aim for better response. Even before the outbreak of the pandemic, the Danube region was hit by a strong migration wave. This has significantly affected the sense of security and perspective of our residents. Civil protection plays an important role in the mitigation of the effects of natural and other disasters. All this have influence on the quality of life in the Danube Region and will be presented during this panel as a social aspects of regional development.

12:30 - 13:00 Plenary session

Harmonious and sustainable development of the Danube Region – Joint conclusions of panels

After attending the parallel sessions according to the interest shown during registration, all participants are to return to the plenary. One rapporteur from each parallel session will introduce the main conclusions and topics of the discussions.

13:00 – 14:00 Break

Make a virtual walk through the exhibition “30 years of Interreg” (tbc)

**14:00 – 16:00 Parallel Thematic Sessions (break-up sessions/panels)
*Instruments for financing the development of the Danube Region***

Session I ***Danube Transnational Programme, present and future: new priorities for 2021-2027***

The Danube Region is a region of challenges and opportunities: the Danube Transnational Programme offered stakeholders the possibility to address both by funding strategic projects. The new programming period provided the countries part of the Danube Transnational Programme with the opportunity to assess how to further support this incredible region. The newly selected priorities and specific objectives will be presented, along with the plan to address the core needs of the area.

Session II ***Meeting of EUSDR National Coordinators with Managing Authorities from the Danube Region (invitation only)***

The aim of the meeting is to initiate a network of national and regional managing authorities responsible for ESI and IPA/NDICI funds. The already established EUSDR ESF Network could be immediately utilised in this respect. Such network should then become a permanent tool for coordinating/monitoring the implementation of macro-regional actions (and then projects) included in the operational and national programmes.

16:00 – 16:30 Closing session & Concluding remarks