

communicating

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The Danube Strategy

The EU Danube Region Strategy (DRS) is the macro-regional development strategy and action plan for the regions and countries located in the catchment area of the Danube river. It targets the sustainable development of the Danube macro-region as well as the protection of its natural areas, landscapes and cultural heritage. Acting on the request of the European Council in June 2009, the European Commission submitted a proposal for the DRS in December 2010, the adoption of which is scheduled for the period of the Hungarian Presidency.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of the DRS is to achieve a sustainable increase in the region's economy and competitiveness, and to increase general welfare, with a view to establishing a flourishing, developing and attractive region. The DRS contributes to strengthening cohesion in the region and helps reduce existing regional differences. The support given to assist the competitiveness and the expansion of small and medium enterprises in the Danube Region is an important aspect of this. As an important element of the Central European policy, the DRS can also promote the European integration of the Western Balkans.

A priority action area of the DRS is to complete the connections in the energy and transportation networks, to develop the road and rail transportation corridors in the region and to improve of the security of energy supply. An integrated approach and the harmonization of Member State projects are key to the strategy.

With respect to renewable energy (for example geothermic energy) and energy efficiency, the DRS clearly supports the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy. Promoting cooperation with countries of the region in the related field of research and development is also important.

The DRS incorporates the topic of water management, which is one of the priorities of the Hungarian Presidency in 2011. The strategy is a valuable contribution to shaping the new, comprehensive water policy that is to begin in 2012, because it complements the earlier approach concentrating on protecting water quality with the issue of integrated and sustainable water management.

It is important to strengthen the comprehensive security of the Danube Region. The Danube Region is made up of Schengen- and non-Schengen, candidate and non-member countries, which makes coordinated law enforcement action and coordination between countries more difficult. The DRS provides an opportunity for operative cooperation between all relevant law enforcement and other organisations along the entire stretch of the Danube. The parallel development of disaster relief information systems also helps to strengthen the security of the Danube as a transportation corridor.

The DRS builds on the rich cultural heritage of the region both by protecting and presenting its material heritage and by emphasizing its cultural diversity. Equally important is the utilization of the Danube for aqua tourism and water sports along the entire stretch of the river.

The strategy also aims for a better and coordinated use of resources, but no special EU funds will be allocated for this purpose. It is an eminent interest of countries in the region to use the macro-regional strategy to promote economic growth through projects and programs, in harmony with the Europe 2020 strategy aimed at economic recovery.

It indicates the significance and complexity of the DRS that a large number of professional and civil organizations wish to participate in developing and implementing the strategy. As the basic objectives of the DRS also mentions, professional and civil organizations will have an important role to play in developing the details and tangible projects. This would ensure that the strategy is realized with the widest possible support.

Commission communication about strategy on the Danube region

Commission working document - Action plan for the Danube region

Conclusions of the General Affairs Council on European Union Strategy for the Danube Region - 13 aprilie 2011

The Danube

Strategia Dunarii (RO)

Useful links

Â <http://www.mae.ro/strategia-dunarii>

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