



4th DFD in Zagreb

Promising projects in the Danube region opened this year's funding dialog

The fourth event of the series "Danube Financing Dialogue" (DFD) brought together excellent project ideas with financial institutions and partners from across the Danube region. A project exhibition opened this year's dialogue. Opportunities and challenges for the implementation of these project ideas were discussed, including funding opportunities such as EU funds and bank loans.

The Fourth Danube Financing Dialogue took place on 23 and 24 April 2015. In the inspiring premises of the Croatian State Archives project promoters, private financiers, representatives of the European Commission and the Public Administration met. Kurt Puchinger, as coordinator of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Priority Area 10, opened the project exhibition together with Hrvoje Marušić in his capacity as Croatian National contact point for the EUSDR and Assistant Minister of Foreign and European Affairs. With the words "A regional development strategy and especially a macro-regional strategy without projects is like the Croatian kitchen without garlic, nearly unimaginable." Kurt Puchinger described the core element of the event. He underlined the importance of innovative, transnational projects to further enhance the promising Danube region as a political and socio-economic region. Hrvoje Marušić stressed that the EUSDR strategy examines the conditions for transnational cooperation and create synergies between diverse actors in the 14 participating States of the Danube strategy. The first call for proposals for the Danube Programme will be announced in the autumn of 2015 which will significantly facilitate the search for funding to project stakeholders.

This year, particular attention was paid to the project exhibition, which was held in this setting for the first time. Especially unique and relevant projects for the Danube Region were presented. Marlene Hahn, Metis GmbH and Irena Lukač, Center of Excellence in Finance opened the project exhibition in an interactive way. By involving the project promoters in the dialogue, participants of the event could get insights into 20 promising projects. The impressive project posters showed the ideas behind cooperative projects in order to achieve common interests and new initiatives in the Danube region.

The second day was devoted to a number of networking activities and group discussions, presentations and business-to-business meetings. Speakers presented deeper insights about a range of financing instruments in the Danube Region. These were stakeholders such as Marco Onida, Coordinator of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Hubert Cottogni, Deputy Director of the European Investment Fund, Ralf König, representatives of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) and Desiree Pecraz, representative of the Centre for Social Innovation.

Edina Csanyi, representative of the European Investment Bank emphasized what it takes to successfully implement projects: "Patience, persistence, resources and commitment. In addition, a thorough preparation is essential to provide technically feasible, financially viable projects with an acceptable economic return that meet social legislation and environmental standards". Other speakers illustrated challenges and opportunities of financing investment projects in the Danube region. These included Tomislav Belovari, Head of the EU programmes at the Croatian Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds and Johann Sollgruber, Acting Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Austria.

Once again a successful dialogue with promising and inspiring approaches to funding sources could be completed. It furthermore enabled an exchange of outstanding project ideas which contribute to promote the Danube region even further. The fifth Danube Financing Dialogue is already under discussion and is expected to take place in Bratislava.



A review of the 4th Danube Financing Dialogue as well as images, presentations and documents can be found here: <http://www.danube-capacitycooperation.eu/pages/4th-danube-financing-dialogue>

Photos: Day 1





Day 2





Programme

Day 1 | Project exhibition | 23rd April 2015

Promising Projects - Financing Options

This year's Danube Financing Dialogue is all about promising projects. Already the registration phase was dedicated to pick out 20 promising projects which will be presented in the inspiring atrium of the Croatian State Archives.

At the project exhibition, the selected project promoters will be given 5 minutes to convince the audience of the uniqueness and the relevance of their project for the Danube Region. The participating project promoters, financial institutions, funding agencies and high level public actors will be given the chance to learn more about the projects in an interactive question and answer round.

For those whose interest has been sparked, a networking dinner will allow for further informal discussions.

16:30 Registration

17:00 Welcome and opening of the project exhibition

Hrvoje Marušić, Croatian National contact point for the EUSDR and Assistant Minister of Foreign and European Affairs
Kurt Puchinger, EUSDR PA 10 Coordinator from the City of Vienna

17:30 Promising projects in the Danube Region

Promising Projects– Financing Options: Selected project promoters present their unique ideas:

- Why is this project important for the Danube Region?
- What is the objective and the innovation?
- What have you done so far?
- What do you still need for your idea to realize it?

Facilitator: Irena Lukač, Center of Excellence in Finance | **Marlene Hahn**, Metis GmbH

19:00 Buffet and networking

21:00 End of the 1st conference day

Day 2 | Match-making day | 24th April 2015

09:00 Registration and welcome coffee

10:00 Welcome

Vesna Pusić, Croatian Minister of Foreign and European Affairs
Franz Nauschnigg, European Affairs and International Financial Organizations of the National Bank of Austria

10:30 Getting an overview of what the Danube Financing Dialogue offers to its participants

10:45 Session 1 | Which financing instruments are offered to project promoters in the Danube Region?

Marco Onida, Coordinator of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, European Commission

Vedrana Jelušić-Kašić, Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in Croatia

Hubert Cottogni, Deputy Director of the European Investment Fund

Ralf König, Representative of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG)

Désirée Pecarz, Representative of the Centre for Social Innovation

Chair: Marlene Hahn, Metis GmbH

12:00 Lunch break

12:40 Guided tour through the Croatian State Archives

13:00 Session 2 | Meet and greet: Share your story and know-how

Small group discussions between representatives of financial institutions, project promoters and public actors on the topics of

- Financial needs and challenges of project promoters in the Danube Region
- Access to financial products in the Danube Region
- Innovative Financial Instruments

Facilitator: Irena Lukač, Center of Excellence in Finance | **Marlene Hahn**, Metis GmbH

14:30 Coffee break

15:00 Session 3 | Challenges and opportunities of financing investment projects in the Danube Region

Tomislav Belovari, Head of EU programmes at the Croatian Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds

Johann Solgruber, Acting Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Austria

Edina Csanyi, Representative of the European Investment Bank

Chair: Marlene Hahn, Metis GmbH

16:00 Session 4 | Concluding statements and outlook

Kurt Puchinger, Priority Area 10 Coordinator of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region

16:30 Business-to-business meetings and networking

19:00 End of the conference

