

NATIONAL PARTICIPATION DAY IN THE EU STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION

A Manual for a structured dialogue with civil society in the EUSDR

WHAT IS A NATIONAL PARTICIPATION DAY?

National Participation Days (NPD, formerly national hearing) are annually held meetings of all interested active or potential stakeholders of the EUSDR on a national level. The NPDs specifically addresses civil society organisations and their networks, local actors from municipality level, academia, public authorities on local and regional level as well as national institutions active in the EUSDR and EUSDR Priority Coordinators (PACs) based in the country, as well as the National Contact Point (NCP). The NPD should be open to interested stakeholders from abroad such as representatives from PACs, academia, umbrella organisations (CoDCR, DCSF) and civil society. The NPD is the national platform in the structured civil society dialogue of the EUSDR. The NPD is the important link:

- a) between the national public actors (ministries, national agencies, NCP, PACs, etc.) and the interested stakeholders active in the country;
- b) The NPD gives stakeholders the possibility to meet and exchange information in view of possible cooperation on a macro-regional level;
- c) The NPD gives stakeholders the possibility to inform themselves about ongoing projects, calls or other possible financing programmes or instruments in the EUSDR between the supra-national activities of the EUSDR, at the Annual Fora and the annual Danube Participation Days.

On the national and regional level, the Danube Participation Days are backed by national events that bear various names differing from country to county. In Serbia and the Vojvodina the event is called National Hearing, in Austria Erweitertes Dialogforum (Enlarged Dialogue Forum), in Baden-Württemberg Donauforum (Danube Forum).

AIMS OF A NPD

The NPD should be a forum for stakeholders to report from their work, experience, perspective and planning on both state and non-state level, for mutual information and opinion building on national level.

The NPD should thematically include the annual fora and the Danube Participation Days. For this the agenda of the NPD should reflect the outcome of the previous and the agenda of the upcoming annual fora and Danube Participation Days as well as the state of implementation, reform and progress of the EUSDR as a whole.

The NPD creates by it repeated state-actor non-state actor structured dialogue and their mutual information a nucleus for an informed and active EUSDR public in the country. This contributes to a capacity building of multi-sectoral and multi-level, trans-regional, trans-national cooperation on the local, regional and national levels.

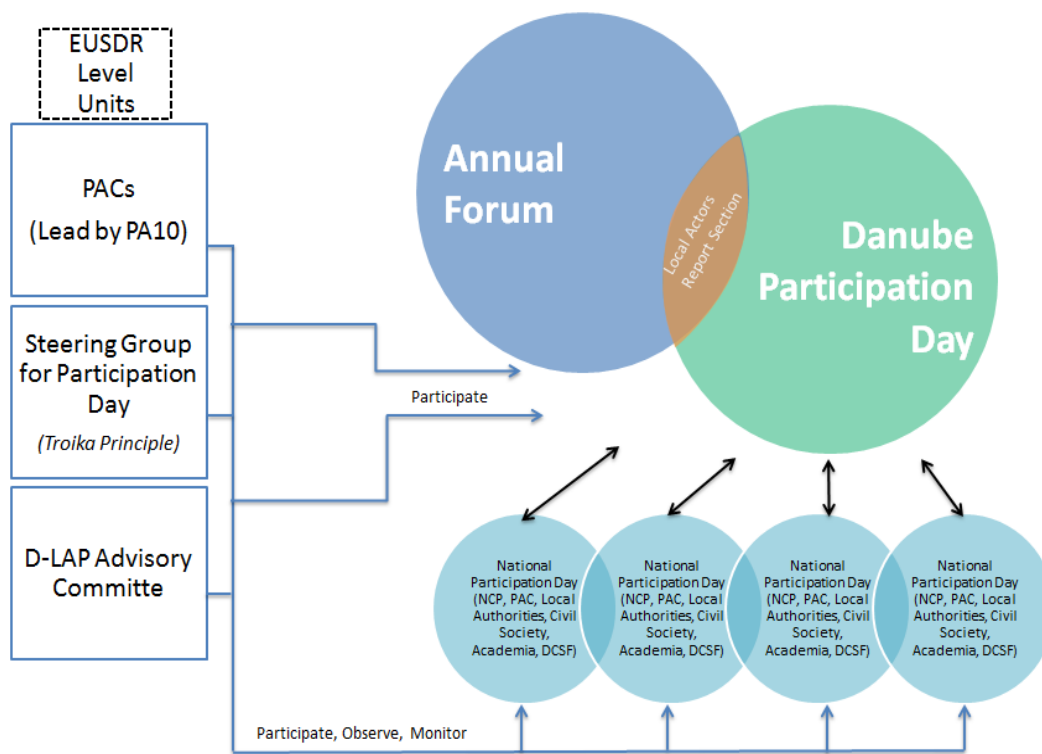
FORMAT

As a practical matter, the experiences from other NPDs held so far show that the NPD should be held at a venue easy to reach and last not longer than ¼ of a day. It should be organised either jointly by the NCP and civil society in coordination with PA 10 responsible for civil society and participation in the EUSDR or by civil society in coordination with the respective NCP and PA 10. In general, the NPD should be a low hurdle event for participants and a low cost event for the organisers. From previous experiences, attendance is between 80 and 120 persons.

OUTCOMES

The NPD should raise the level of national coordination, participation and knowledge on the national strategy within the EUSDR. It should inform participants on the current state of play of the EUSDR and foster direct links and contacts between actors from various fields of expertise (state and non-state). The NPD should raise awareness on the national level and motivate possibly interested actors to join the strategy and become active stakeholders.

Scheme of the participative structure in the EUSDR governance:



National Participation Days/National hearings have been held 2015/16 in UA, BW¹, A², BG, SRB³, MD and SK. In 2017 NPD are planned for CZ, SRB, A, MD, SK, BG, BW, and HU.

¹ Baden-Württemberg engages in a close and constant dialogue with CS and local actors with regard to the EUSDR. A network of social NGOs is meeting annually with state-actors.

² Austria held two times the Enlarged National Dialogue-Forum EUSDR, which fulfills all aspects of a NPD (National hearings).

³ Serbia held 2 NPD 2014/15.

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