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Working Community of the Danube Regions



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ДУНАВСКИ СТРАНИ
РАБОЧА СПІВДРУЖНІСТЬ
ПРИДУНАНСЬКИХ КРАЇН

NON-PAPER

DECLARATION

**of the Working Community of the Danube Regions
for the development of a
EU Strategy for the Danube Region**

Original: German

The Working Community of the Danube Regions represents 38 regions along the river Danube with about 75 million people from 10 riparian states of the Danube, six of them being members of the European Union. For the future development of Europe and the European Union, the Danube region is of special importance: it is part of the trans-European axis from the North Sea to the Black Sea and connects the European Union with candidate states, potential candidate states, and states that are integrated within the European Neighborhood Policy, especially with the Black Sea region and central Asia. All of them are important strategic partners of the European Union. A greater political and economic stability in the entire area is a point of great interest to all states and regions concerned.

The partnership in the Danube region and beyond it has proved already that it is possible to continue the dialogue also in difficult times. This partnership which is marked by mutual dependence, reliability, and faith, has to be enhanced and strengthened because of the intricate international environment.

The Working Community of the Danube Regions therefore welcomes the decision of the European Council from June 18/19, 2009 in Brussels for a reevaluation of the Danube region on a European level and for a mandate to develop a European strategy for the Danube region and supports the development of a EU Strategy for the Danube region within the limits of its competences and capabilities. The strategy is meant to provide a dynamic, creative, guiding framework that the players in the Danube region can fill with life at their own discretion.

The Working Community of the Danube Regions explicitly advocates a sustainable development of the Danube region and supports sustainability as a statement of environmental, economic, employment, and social policy that is long-term oriented and leading beyond governments' terms of office or national borders, and that therefore should underlie the entire EU Strategy for the Danube region. A healthy environment, economic prosperity, and social cohesion should be common goals to ensure a high quality of life for all people in the long term. In its "EU Strategy for Sustainable Development", the EU itself has proclaimed sustainability as an overall goal of the EU that is authoritative for all policy fields and measures of the union.¹ **In the conviction of the Working Community of the Danube Regions, this principle of sustainability forms the basis for all strategic considerations, fields of action, and measures named and implemented within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Danube region.**

I.) Strategic position of the Working Community of the Danube Regions

Strategic basic considerations of the Working Community for an EU Strategy for the Danube region with goals and challenges are as follows:

- The Danube region is of outstanding importance as the connection from the Atlantic Sea to the Black Sea and Central Asia. The instrument of the Eastern Partnership with the Caspian and Central Asian area should be used increasingly within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Danube region.
- In the course of the enlargement of the European Union from 15 to 27 states, the Danube region has profited during the last years like no other region, and many people were able to enjoy the advantages of the enlargement. The river Danube is therefore a symbol and important element for a stronger EU integration and enlargement.

¹ Revised EU Strategy for Sustainable Development, Council of Europe, June 15-16, 2006, document of the Council of the European Union, 10917/06.

- The Danube region is an important economic engine within Europe. The current heavy crisis that leaves almost no state excluded offers – if it is seen as a chance for progress – many possibilities for an integrated, sustainable ecological and social growth of economy and a further positive economic evolvement of the Danube region.
- The Danube functions as an axis of economic development between Middle and Western Europe and Eastern Europe. A crucial approach therefore must be to use synergies and cooperation potential beyond borders. Cooperation and increase of quality also increase the added value along the Danube. The common goal is the development of the Danube region into a common economic area. Especially small and medium-sized enterprises are the backbone of the economy in the Danube region. The dynamics of the economy in the macro region are further substantiated by numerous business formations and a high potential in the field of creative economy. The cooperation culture and practice of the companies in the Danube region is an excellent basis for an enhancement of the networks beyond the respective borders.
- The river Danube is part of one of the most important arterial roads in Europe, the trans-European inland waterway from Rotterdam to Constanta. The Danube region therefore is a turntable between different cultures and economic areas and highly influenced by the European flows of traffic. To master the challenges for the future, an integrated, sustainable, and intelligent mobility and traffic concept is required to be able to manage the future flows of traffic with special consideration of the Danube waterway. An integrated traffic concept with water, rail, road, and air must connect the Danube region with the decisive markets of the future; it must support the expansion of intelligent traffic infrastructure, the economy, and the quality of life in the region as well as in all of Europe. Inland navigation on the Danube, being an environmentally friendly means of transport, must gain in importance; fast expansion of high performance connections on the rail is another crucial condition for further progress with the economic, political, and cultural integration of Eastern and Western Europe as well as for the sustainable development of the Danube region.
- Due to the high dependence on imports in the energy sector, the security of the energy supply – especially as a consequence of the long-term increasing demand and the limited fossil resources – is of growing importance. The Danube and its tributaries are an important source of renewable energy of Europe and a valuable potential for hydropower that contributes to the energy security in Europe and particularly in the Danube region. Furthermore, the Danube region has high potential in terms of energy efficiency. The expansion of intelligent energy infrastructure is one of the most important pillars not only of a sustainable energy system, but also for the enhancement of energy security.
- The Danube region signifies a sustainable development with careful resource management in the fields of water and sewage, air and soil, climate protection and energy. Energy efficiency, security of supply, development, and peace keeping must and can be united and open various new future-oriented economy potentials. Climate and environment protection is seen as a chance for sustainable development, economic growth, and new future-oriented jobs. Clean water is a basis for our life and a crucial economic good of the future.
- The Danube region is a diverse habitat with a richness of culture and nature as well as a high quality of living. The common cultural heritage, reaching from common traditions and values to well-known historic sights, encouraged among other things the forming of a tourist region with worldwide fame. Every country and every region also profits from the advantages and projects of its neighbors.

- The Danube is a connecting link to strengthen social solidarity in the Danube region and to bridge the differences between nations and peoples. These opportunities should be increasingly used to promote integration, understanding, and peace in the Danube region and beyond.
- The Danube region houses a high potential in the fields of education, science and research that can collectively be used and expanded to the advantage of all sides. These three elements are the power for sustainable growth and form the basis for the continued story of success: for the future creation of jobs, for the maintenance of compatibility, for economic growth and therefore for prosperity and social security.

II.) Priority fields of action

On the basis of the presented strategic positions, the following priority fields of action from the point of view of the Working community of the Danube Regions can be identified, sorted by the three overall topics suggested by the EU:

II.a) Field "Connectivity" (transport, energy, information technology)

- ***Sustainable Mobility***

The additional value for the Danube region and for Europe is the creation of effective and efficient traffic and transport systems that comply with economic, social, and ecological standards, as well as the comprehensive interconnectedness of the carriers of traffic in one of the most important arterial roads of Europe. Essential points of focus are:

- expansion of harbors, modernizing the fleet, securing a perennial navigability
- sustainable development and more efficient use of the waterway Danube
- development of the Danube harbors into tri-modal centers of logistics and focal points of the development activities of regional economy
- improved connection with the international seaports Rotterdam and Constanta as well as conjunction of the Adriatic ports of Koper and Trieste with the waterway Danube
- optimizing the framework conditions for combined traffic
- expansion of the rail infrastructure along the Danube passage; expansion of an interoperable rail network, sufficient capacities and railroad companies with market compatible supply
- expansion of a broadband highway and mobile broadband access for swift data communication along the Danube
- intensifying the virtual interconnectedness of the Danube region

- ***Sustainable Energy***

The additional value for the Danube region and for Europe is the crucial contribution for reaching the European goals of climate protection, energy, and energy efficiency, furthermore the improvement of the European competitiveness facing high energy prices, carbon emission limits, and stronger competition for resources; the cost saving at emission reduction, and the enhancement of independence of energy supply. Essential points of focus are:

- setup of a knowledge-based world competence center for renewable energy for developing new technologies to create a competitive, ecological, and sustainable energy economy by a network of economy, science, and research

- construction of a sustainable, intelligent energy concept for the entire Danube region, particularly considering security of supply on the basis of affordable and competitive sustainable technologies for the production and use of energy
- expansion of intelligent energy networks
- sustainable and low-carbon energy production (water, biomass, bio gas, geothermics, solar)
- expansion of intelligent information networks in the Danube passage, enhanced cooperation of the existing cluster and networks of renewable energy and energy efficiency
- modernizing renewable energy carriers, especially hydropower plants along the Danube and its tributaries

II.b) Field "Environment and Risk Prevention"

• Environment

The additional value for the Danube region and Europe is that by sustainable measures in the environmental field the variety of life in one of the biggest natural spaces in Europe is protected, that the quality of life for the inhabitants is improved, important contributions to meeting the European Kyoto commitments are made, and long-term locational advantages are created. Essential points of focus are:

- cooperation and networking in the field of environmental and climate protection
- protection and safeguard of the future water resources in the Danube region
- protection and development of the ecological and agricultural potential
- preservation of the diversity, character, beauty, and recreation value of the landscape
- protection of endangered species and habitats, protection of the particular diversity of species in the Danube region, networks of the protected areas
- promotion of the small-scale biological agriculture and forestry in order to preserve the natural character of the Danube region
- sustainable land use and cultivation
- security of supply in the field of high quality foods

• Risk Management

The additional value for the Danube region and Europe is the improved protection of the inhabitants and the natural space as well as the development of competences for coordinated reaction to threatening situations. Essential points of focus are:

- trans-border flood management
- expansion of cooperation and information about dangerous plants along the Danube
- security of supply in the field of raw materials, foods, and energy
- protect and secure the not multiplied ground resource with particular attention to the establishment and support of a transnational network to the ground consciousness

II.c) Field "Socio-economic Integration"

• Economy

The additional value for the Danube region and Europe is the promotion of a prospering, innovative, competitive, and ecologically efficient economy; enhanced resource efficiency and a higher worldwide market share of Europe particularly in the field of environmental

technology and ecological innovation create advantages in competition. Essential points of focus are:

- development and regional incorporation of Danube-wide business cooperation networks
- orientation of the Danube region as innovation region for technology-based enterprises, reinforcement of innovation by cooperation
- strengthened cooperation of clusters and networks, especially in the fields of automotive, synthetic materials, furniture and wood construction, health, mechatronics, human resources, design and media, environmental technology, and food, as well as cross-industry thematic networks
- cooperation of economy and science
- expansion of the cooperation in the field of creative economy
- support of small and medium-sized enterprises by networks with internationally experienced big enterprises and by international cooperation
- expansion and strengthening of centers of excellence
- security of local supply

• **Tourism**

The additional value for the Danube region and for Europe is the development of the Danube region as a tourist destination that has advantages for economy and reputation of the macro region, within Europe as well as globally. Essential points of focus are:

- creation of a touristic macro-destination "Danube Region"
- intensification of the sustainable touristic use of the Danube

• **Education, Science, and Research**

The additional value for the Danube region and Europe is the emergence of a knowledge-based society that is necessary for the realization of a sustainable development, that can cope with the socioeconomic, demographic, ecological, and technological challenges of the future, that can better react to changes, and that is cosmopolitan; excellence, attractiveness, and competitiveness of Europe and the people educated in Europe increase. Essential points of focus are:

- expansion of research cooperation in the Danube region
- promotion of cooperation between economy, university and non-university research facilities
- construction and expansion of trans-border open innovation and research spaces for linking science, art, education, and economy in the form of intergenerative and interdisciplinary structures
- creation of networks between universities and colleges of different countries, motivation for "peer-learning"
- intercultural exchange of students and courses at universities and colleges
- development of joint training courses/joint degrees
- targeted promotion of young scientists with international reputation and high innovation potential

• **Society and Culture**

The additional value for the Danube region and for Europe is the creation of a healthy, secure, and fair society that rests upon integration and solidarity and respects cultural diversity. Essential points of focus are:

- cooperation and information in the field of migration, strengthening of integration
- activation of the cultural potential in the Danube region

- cooperation and networking between cultural institutions in the Danube area, in particular theaters, museums, and music schools
- nomination of the Danube limes as World Cultural Heritage of the UNESCO
- cooperation with and support of the Danube region in the rescue, restoration, conservation and sustainable touristic use of the rich cultural heritage

III.) Existing activities

Concerning the mentioned fields of action and points of focus, within the members of the Working Community of the Danube Regions there are already the following activities:

III.a) Field "Connectivity"

- **Sustainable Mobility:**
 - expansion strategy at the harbor Ennshafen
 - construction of a European waterway information center Ennshafen
 - survey of existing commercial and industrial areas along the Danube including the existing infrastructure, mentioned by the Chambers of commerce of the riparian states (in Austria: survey of the potentials in the harbors by VIA DONAU)
 - expansion of the software DoRIS (Donau River Information System) in the entire Danube region
 - measures in the TEN corridor VII (Danube waterway), river control project Vienna-Bratislava
 - expansion activities within the framework of the TEN-axis 17 (Paris-Bratislava) – Linz – Vienna
- **Sustainable Energy:**
 - strategies and their implementation for a sustainable energy future on regional level in the member regions of the Working Community of the Danube Regions
 - promotion of the use of sustainable energy
 - initiatives and projects of single actors

III.b) Field "Environment and Risk Prevention"

- **Environment:**
 - existing company activities for the protection and development of the ecological and landscape potential in the Danube region
 - projects for ecological permeability of the Danube hydropower plants until 2021
 - projects for ecological improvement of the riverbank structures
 - protected areas including management in the valleys and hillside areas of the Danube
 - promotion sustainable agriculture and forestry and the strengthening of small-scale and biological agriculture on regional level in the member regions of the Working Community of the Danube Regions
 - activities on regional level in the fields of agriculture and water management for example protection of drinking water)
 - coordination of the cultivation plans of all Danube states by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (Convention on cooperation for the protection and sustainable use of the river Danube)
 - implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive
 - "Partnership for Joint Action Against Climate Change" of the Working Community of the Danube Regions, in this context exchange of experiences, joint projects,

positioning with its own paper for the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, December 2009

- ecological network of wildlife habitats
- implementation of the European Soil Alliance
- **Risk Management:**
 - coordination of the cultivation plans of all Danube states by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (Convention on cooperation for the protection and sustainable use of the river Danube)
 - implementation of the EU Flood Directive

III.c) Field "Socio-economic Integration"

- **Economy:**
 - expansion of existing networking activities
 - activities in the field of cluster development
 - activities in the field of creative economy (interregional project CREA.RE – Creative Regions)
- **Tourism:**
 - activities of the new Working Community Danube Austria (ARGE Donau Österreich, comprising Werbegemeinschaft Donau OÖ, Donau Niederösterreich Tourismus GmbH, Oberösterreich Tourismus, Niederösterreich Werbung and Wien Tourismus) for positioning, coordination of product and proposal preparation (for example further development of the bike lane infrastructure) as well as execution of joint marketing activities
 - "Danube River – The Blue Belt of Europe", example for a brand name for tourism activities in the closer Danube region
 - nomination of the so-called "wet" LIMES as World Cultural Heritage
 - "Straße der Kaiser und Könige" ("Street of Kings and Emperors"), historical travel road along the Danube from Regensburg to Budapest
 - hiking tourism: for example long distance hiking trail "Donausteig" – goal: proposal preparation and international marketing (analogous to the Danube bike lane)
 - economic and cultural contacts of Linz as European Cultural Capital 2009
- **Education, Science, and Research:**
 - existing networks
 - European Cluster Observatory – project about the meta-region Danube
 - single projects between regions in Austria, Hungary, Romania
 - new orientation and widening of existing networks, fields of activity and reference areas; analogies for example to trans-border technology platforms
 - compilation of databanks about science and media in the Danube region by the Working Community of the Danube Regions
 - existing contacts of the Universities of Applied Sciences, the Pedagogical Colleges, the universities in the regions of the Danube area; reciprocal visits and excursions, development of joint programs and joint degrees, joint course for study "Molecular Chemistry)
 - CEEPUS Project – Central European Exchange Program for University Studies with the goal of constructing a network of the six participating universities, implementation of student and teacher mobility, summer courses, intensive program (1-2 weeks)
 - planning of the European waterway information center Ennshafen

- existing logistics offers: University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria – campus Steyr (International Logistics Management, Supply Chain Management), professorship of Logistics at the Kepler University Linz
- Navigation Academy: existing city partnerships, ongoing talks (among others with Passau), study "Model Region Danube-Vltava" of the Working Community of the Danube Cities
- NELI: "Network for logistics and nautical education and training focusing on Inland Waterway Transport in the Danube corridor supported by innovative solutions" in the SE program
- EWITA: European Web Platforms and Training Concepts for Intermodal Inland Waterway Transport
- scientific cooperation like the Danube Academy Ulm and the Andrassy University Budapest
- Networking of schools in the Danube region, cooperation in education exhibitions
- **Society and Culture:**
 - twinning, pupil and youth as well as music and sport exchange programs
 - programs for pupil and youth cooperation
 - isolated exchange within the Danube region in the framework of "Youth in Action"
 - activities for the nomination of the Danube limes as World Cultural Heritage; (possibly transnational) regional exhibition 2017 "Romans and Limes"
 - transnational exhibition "Danube – curse and blessing" (Donau – Fluch und Segen)
 - existing city partnerships in the Danube region with the focus on cultural exchange
 - compilation of a databank of cultural institutions in the Danube region by the Working Community of the Danube Regions
 - transnational exhibition "Home on the Danube" (co-operation of the Donauschwaben Museum Ulm and the Museum of Vojvodina in Novi Sad)

IV.) Necessary measures

From the point of view of the Working Community of the Danube Regions, concerning the priority fields of action (point II.)) the following further measures are necessary – as an expansion of the already existing activities (point III.)) and as new initiatives:

IV.a) Field "Connectivity"

- **Sustainable Mobility:**
 - minimum standard of infrastructure along the Danube: expansion of harbors, fairway depth 2.5 meters, removal of bottlenecks (such as Straubing – Vilshofen), restricting bridges for three-ply container ships
 - further development of the navigation information services in the direction of fleet management, harbor and terminal management, steering and monitoring of multimodal logistic chains
 - establishment of an inter-modular route planner
 - set-up of scheduled lines of transport on the waterway Danube – RoRo and container
 - establishment of a scheduled container line on the Danube between Rotterdam and Constanta
 - logistics: logistics cost-cutting and ecologically efficient logistics solutions by enhanced cooperation between carriers of logistics hubs on and offside the Danube (for example ChemDelta Bavaria, Cargo Center Graz – CCG, Ennschafafen – harbor Galatz)

- establishment of a focal point for coordination and information tasks in the field of navigation
 - awareness: improvement of the information about the potentials of the Danube waterway – information center (target group politics, public sector, private sector)
 - increasing the quality of loading infrastructure with the goal of at least 1-2 harbors in every country with the same high standards (equipment for container loading etc.) and good regional traffic connection in all adjacent states
 - better traffic connection with the backcountry: railway up to the quay wall, connection to the high-level road network, proximity to international airport with freight traffic
 - strategic protection and development of the area for business and industrial areas at the trimodal logistic hubs
 - location of big shippers and industry at the quay wall of the harbors
 - improvement of the railroad connection – expansion and modernization; expansion especially in these areas:
 - Wels - Passau – Nuremberg
 - Wels – Salzburg – Munich
 - Romania – Vienna
 - complete, coordinated expansion of the grids and pipelines for electricity/gas/oil
 - change of the electricity grid "Danube Rail" in all Danube states to 380 KV – starting with Bavaria, Austria, and Hungary
 - promotion of cooperation in the field of renewable energy-based mobility
 - enhanced expansion of broadband access in the Danube region
 - creation of a virtual Danube region that makes the cooperation region visible from the outside and provides a cooperation platform within
- **Sustainable Energy:**
 - modernization, expansion and build-up of hydropower plants considering the potentials that can be used ecologically compatible – interdisciplinary infrastructure and ecology projects
 - enhanced use of biomass and bio gas
 - use of the geothermics potential
 - use of the solar potential
 - strengthening of sales networks in the field of renewable energy
 - strengthening of the cooperation between eco-energy and environmental technology enterprises
 - creation of a network of energy saving agencies and clusters, strengthening of the existing clusters in the fields of energy and environmental technology (Eco-energy Cluster, Environmental Technology Network, Network Energy Efficiency)
 - promotion of the development of new technologies for the use of renewable energies and energy efficiency
 - enhanced promotion of low-carbon energy production, carbon reduction by minimized energy consumption

IV.b) Field "Environment and Risk Prevention"

- **Environment:**
 - enhanced measures for reaching the goals of the Kyoto Protocol and its subsequent agreement
 - monitoring of the ecological performance of the Danube (water structures, water quality, ecological habitat) – standardizing ecological monitoring
 - measured for improved ecological and landscape potential of the Danube and its most important tributaries
 - exchange of experience with neighboring regions and states

- implementation of innovative projects in the field of "culture-creativity-land-art" in order to create ecological awareness in broad levels of the population
- connecting the protected areas along the Danube, for example cooperation of the National Parks
- development and implementation of infrastructure projects always integrated in ecological projects
- strengthening the promotion of sustainable, small-scale agriculture
- exchange of knowledge about ecological agriculture and forestry as well as biological agriculture
- strengthening the exchange of information and cooperation in the field of sewage and waste management
- strengthening cooperation of enterprises in eco-energy, environmental technology, and creative economy (ecological architecture, ecological design)
- extension of the European Soil Alliance ELSA on all member countries and member regions in the Danube region with particular emphasis on awareness and networking
- **Risk Management:**
 - transnational flood management in the entire Danube region (protection measures and prevention strategies by networking of the neighbors of the upper and the lower reaches of the Danube)
 - coordination in information about SEVESO II factories in the Danube region (survey of the existing factories / danger potentials, information in the event of damage)

IV.c) Field "Socio-economic Integration"

- **Economy:**
 - survey of strengths and potentials of the single regions (priority industry, fields of strength etc.)
 - promotion of the international business networks; achieving great leverage and synergy use with market and technology development
 - strengthening the cooperation between economy and science/development institutions, strengthening of technology transfer from research into economy and feedback of production development into research
 - establishment and connection of new initiatives of a medium-term cooperation of economy and science
 - enhanced installation and connection of technology and competence centers in fields of high development potential
 - international cooperation promotion and initialization project, promotion of innovative cooperation projects in the framework of clusters and networks
 - cooperative development of new international markets by cooperation of experiences and inexperienced enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises
 - enhanced international cooperation and connection of enterprises of creative economy
 - establishment of an interregional and multi-language proposal platform for service and products of creative economy
 - enhanced initiatives for securing local supply
- **Tourism:**
 - establishment of the Danube region as a big destination (analogous to the Alps, the Mediterranean)
 - positioning the Danube region as an entity (including big cities, culture, economy)

- development of networks that allow coordination between the single tourism actors in the partner countries and regions in order to appear as the single brand "Danube Region" worldwide
 - using the cultural heritage Danube also in tourism, development of high quality offers in culture tourism
 - further development – intensification and expansion of activity fields:
 - river cruise tourism combined with land experience programs
 - hiking tourism
 - bike tourism
 - excursion tourism in cooperation with railway
 - city tourism, culture tourism – middle and big cities
 - enhanced networking of existing competences
 - necessary are: coordinated proposal development, organization development, quality standards
- **Education, Research, and Science:**
 - survey of the strengths and potentials of the single regions (focal points, fields of strength, destination route, etc.)
 - establishment of a databank with an overview of existing institutions in the Danube region
 - networking and cooperation of learning centers
 - creation of critical masses (inwards and outwards) of existing research, technology, and education institutions in order to better use synergies (in human resources, organization, investment, and techniques)
 - promotion of lifelong learning
 - enhanced orientation of education offers on the requirements of the economy
 - enhanced promotion of learning the languages of the Danube region
 - common transnational research activities using synergies
 - joint project submission in the 7th Framework Program, INTERREG etc.
 - for students and extra occupational learners:
 - promotion program for cultural and intercultural exchange
 - exchange of data of contact persons, networking for joint project development, establishment of web-based social networks and communities analogous to the field of logistics education
 - enhanced exchange programs for students
 - development of joint summer schools
 - language networking by joint language schools etc.
 - development on joint courses of study (universities, universities of applied sciences, pedagogical colleges)
 - development of joint training courses and further education in the field of creative economy as well as the focal point "cultural communication Danube region"
 - creation of attractive framework conditions for graduates of creative economy studies in the Danube region, securing the creative potential in the region
 - network logistics education: creation of a network of training and further education institutions in the field of logistics and transport , cooperation of University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria, Enns-shafen, Kepler University Linz
 - development of a Navigation Academy together with Passau: education for persons connected to goods and passenger navigation (captains, sailors, logistics experts,...)
 - **Society and Culture:**
 - migration and integration: cooperation between target and source regions
 - exchange of experience about measures in the field of demographic change, integration etc.

- promotion of tolerance, cosmopolitanism, and creativity of the inhabitants of the Danube region
- measures for targeted immigration and mobility of creative heads in order to increase the innovative energy of the regions along the Danube
- enhanced use of "Youth in Action" in the Danube region
- establishment/finalizing a databank with an overview of cultural institutions and cultural activities in the Danube region
- promotion of artistic and cultural exchange
- cultural activities (such as artistically valuable films about the Danube region that take part in international film competitions) as a contribution to the awareness of the people of their common cultural space
- enhanced promotion of cultural communication offers about the Danube region
- nomination of the Danube limes as UNESCO World Cultural Heritage (as part of the Roman limes from Hadrian's Wall along the Danube and through the Near East until Morocco)

The Working Community of the Danube Regions is convinced that by considering the mentioned strategic points and the derived priority fields of action and measures in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, a positive development can be set in motion or crucially enhanced that implies immense advantages for inhabitants, economy, and environment of the macro-region Danube, the European Union, and all of Europe.