

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of National Development and Economy

Preparation of the EU Strategy on the Danube Region – Hungary's second contribution

This paper aims at presenting cooperation areas, programs, sub-programs, as well as related projects which Hungary proposes for the preparation of the EU Danube Region Strategy (EDRS).

Hungary forwarded first thoughts and ideas on the EDSR to the European Commission in December 2009. In that document she set forth ideas on macro-regions, key issues related to the formulation of macro-regional strategies, basic characteristics of the Danube Region which she thinks deserves attention of the strategy-makers. The first Hungarian contribution drew a picture on future development of the region, suggested strategic goals, areas of cooperation, interventions according to the priorities of the EDRS, than she elaborated on their substance, strategic and legal interconnections in details. The preparations of a version of the detailed Hungarian study explicating this concept come to end, its presentation to the Commission is due in the first half of 2010.

The present second contribution identifies 11 areas of cooperation taking into consideration the major problems of the Danube Region, whereas it lays down several projects according to the program domains and sub-programs.

The sequence of the proposed cooperation areas indicates their order of importance for the Hungarian side and is in accordance with the Hungarian priorities formulated at the Danube Summit in Budapest on 25th February. We are convinced that the realization of these proposals can contribute to the strengthening of the competitiveness of the Danube Region, hereby that of the European Union to a large extent, can reveal latent reserves of economic growth and development in accordance with the values, the principles and the goals of the Union. These proposals enable closer forms of cooperation, to which certain development projects can be attached reflecting the endeavors of the EU in the field of sustainable development and cohesion policy.

These initiatives contain program and project proposals worked out through a broad national consultation process, the international cooperation aspects of which are partially already determined or are going to be developed in the near future. The intervention areas presented on the program sheets have been developed on the basis of domestic goals and priorities. By virtue of her environmental, transport, geographical, geopolitical situation Hungary vindicates a leading role in the following areas of cooperation:

- Realization of the concept of a „seamless Europe” which has been formulated as an European goal, namely that of safeguarding the transmissivity and functionality of borders, elimination of still existing trade barriers and obstacles hindering the development of human contacts.
- Management of fresh-water resources,

- Development of transport networks in the Danube Basin (fast train routes, intermodal transport updated with the newest information technologies)

Program-areas proposed for harmonization:

Under Hungarian leadership:

1. Seamless Europe – no more barriers, bottlenecks – but “kissing links”
Removal of transport bottlenecks and trade barriers (Horizontal aspect 3: Promotion of the single and consistent EU market)
2. Sustaining the values of our living waters in the Danube river basin – protection - management – mitigation – “Pure water” (I. Priority – Strengthening the security of the Danube Region within the borders and across the borders)
3. Environment-friendly transport in the Danube Region – “Trans-Port” (II. Priority: Sustainable economic development)

With Hungarian participation:

4. Biodiversity along the Danube – Conservation of natural heritage and ecological services (I. Priority: Strengthening the security of the Danube Basin within the borders and across the borders)
5. Green economy along the Danube (II. Priority: sustainable economic development)
6. The mitigation of the effects of climate change in the Danube catchment area (Horizontal aspect 2: Mitigation of the socio-economic and environmental effects of climate change)
7. Danube Science – Danubian Scientific Cluster and Research field – “Science – Work network!” (III. Priority: Strengthening of the Danube identity and cooperation)
8. Secure Danube Region (I. Priority – Strengthening the security of the Danube Region within the borders and across the borders)
9. Institutional cooperation in the Danubian region – “MacrosCOOPe” (III. Priority: Strengthening of the Danube identity and cooperation)
10. Strengthening the Danube regional identity – protection of heritage, cooperation (III. Priority: Strengthening of the Danube identity and cooperation)
11. Tourism from the Black Forest to the Black Sea – “Black To(ur) Black” (II. Priority: Sustainable economic development)

Budapest, 30th April 2010

Annex: Program sheets