

# 29<sup>th</sup> Steering Group Meeting of EUSDR Priority Area 2

20 November 2024 | Budapest, Hungary and online



# DSP support frame

- ❖ Support for EUSDR core-stakeholders
- ❖ **Embedding & Funding**
- ❖ **Monitoring & Evaluation**
- ❖ **Communication**
- ❖ **Capacity Building**
- ❖ **Youth**





# WHY Embedding & Funding

- ❖ 3 NOs & policy framework for cooperation
  - ❖ establish much stronger links between funding programmes and macro regional strategies
  - ❖ EUSDR priorities into programme objectives
- ‘embedding principle’: means that any funded programmes should be able to support EUSDR cooperation actions.



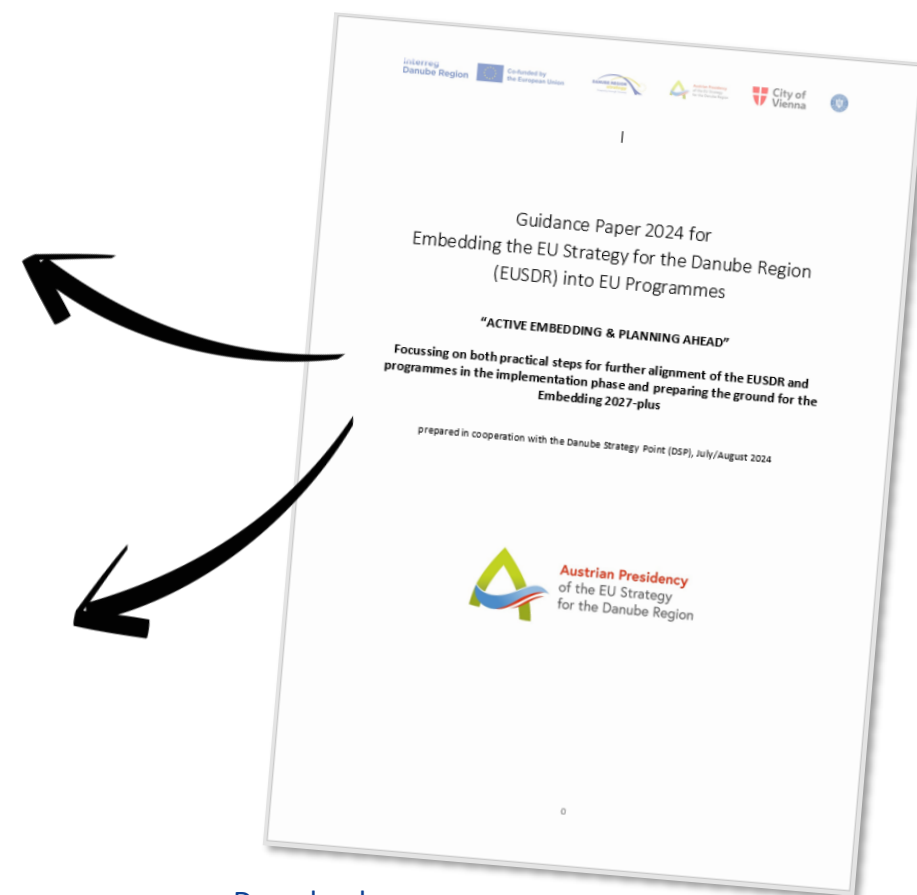
# Embedding / Funding

**practical steps for further alignment of the EUSDR and programmes in the implementation phase**

- ❖ Learnings from the strategic implementation, further development and utilisation of the EUSDR embedding process
- ❖ Active embedding in the programme cycle - state of play and proposals

**preparing the ground for the Embedding 2027-plus**

- ❖ Conclusions for active embedding 2021-2027
- ❖ Further process and utilisation for 2027-plus



[Download](#)

# Embedding / Funding

> > *active embedding from a Strategy point of view* < <

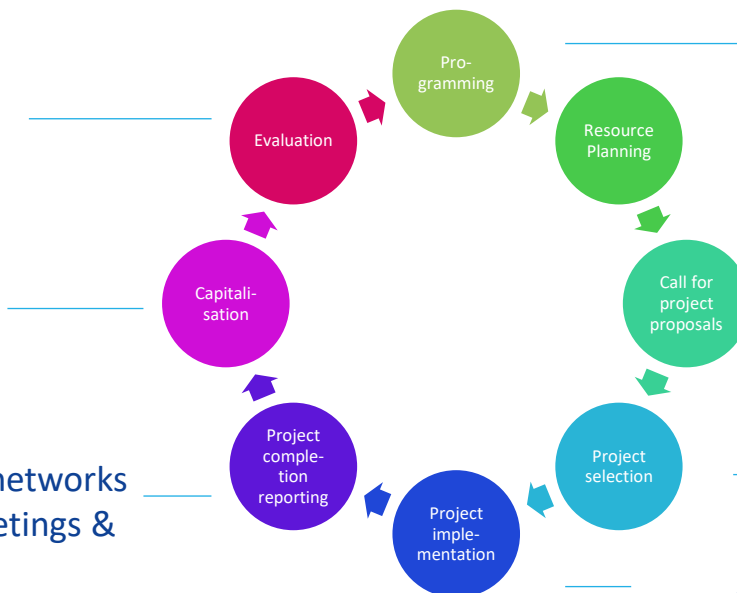
> > *room for implementation and impact* < <



- ✓ EUSDR PAC/NC reporting
- ✓ EUSDR Evaluations
- ✗ Coordination of Evaluation

- ✓ EUSDR PAC/NC reporting
- ✓ EUSDR Evaluations
- ✗ Capitalisation Strategy

- ✓ Participation in EUSDR/PA networks (Knowledge networks), meetings & events



- ✓ EUSDR MA Networks
- ✗ Coordination Platform

- ✓ EuroAccess Calls
- ✗ Tendering Platform coordination between the programmes

- ✓ EUSDR Embedding tools
- ✓ EUSDR Action Plan and shortlisted topics
- ✓ SMF Call 2024: PAC co-evaluation

- ✗ Platform for project communication and awareness-raising measures

# The Embedding Paper

> > *active embedding in the EUSDR and beyond* < <

> > *room for implementation and impact* < <



Alignment of existing EUSDR activities and the proposals developed for concrete active involvement in the various areas of the (Interreg transnational/CBC) programme cycle

Programming	Calls	Implementation, Information & Communication	Capitalisation	Evaluation	Capacity Building
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Interact tool</a> on cooperation actions aims at unlocking joint activities; in the EUSDR <a href="#">Embedding tools, managing/programming authorities Networks</a> (ESF, ERDF/CF, IPA/NDICI) and yearly <a href="#">Embedding Weeks</a> were established.	EUSDR (PA 8)/ EUSBSR/EUSALP synchronised call and further options discussed in detail in the <a href="#">UA EUSDR PCY Embedding Paper</a> and in the yearly <a href="#">EUSDR MA Network meetings</a> ; <a href="#">EuroAccess</a> calls dissemination. <a href="#">Interreg SMF Call</a> 2024: PAC co-evaluation.	<a href="#">EUSDR website and social media channels</a> ; yearly <a href="#">EUSDR Embedding Weeks</a> ; mutual participation in PA events/(SG) meetings/project events, EUSDR/PA networks; participation in <a href="#">EUSDR Annual Fora</a> .	Participation EUSDR/PA networks; biennial reporting of PACs and NCs and assessed in the <a href="#">EUSDR Implementation Reports</a> , Interreg DRP <a href="#">Lead Partner Seminar</a> 2024.	EUSDR <a href="#">Policy/Impact and Process/Implementations evaluations</a> every three years; biennial <a href="#">EUSDR Implementation Reports</a> .	<a href="#">EUSDR Embedding tools</a> ; yearly <a href="#">EUSDR Embedding Weeks</a> ; participation in Interact cross-MRS Working Group 'Embedding'.
✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
The programming process will be further analysed with the <a href="#">Interact tool</a> in the monitoring of the EUSDR Embedding process (2025).	No further examples of coordinated/ synchronised calls for projects financed via EU/national/regional funded programmes; no joint Tendering Platform coordination between programmes and EUSDR.	No institutionalised joint communication measures of programmes and EUSDR.	No coordinated capitalisation strategy and capitalisation platform of programmes and EUSDR.	Embedding the EUSDR into EU programmes will be further analysed in the monitoring of the EUSDR Embedding process (2025); no coordination of an evaluation platform for explicit collaboration of programmes and EUSDR.	Further support of Interact a follow-up of EUSDR Embedding Weeks and the revival of <a href="#">EUSDR Financing Dialogues</a> may be envisaged.



# Embedding tools

**Guidance Paper for Embedding of the EUSDR** : comprehensive instructions for the EUSDR Embedding process including a table filled in by Priority Areas to provide up to three strategic topics (per PA) and detailed description of each strategic topic (shortlist). Initiated under the HR EUSDR PCY together with the DSP.

**EUSDR Embedding Tool (Annex 1a)**: Actions of the EUSDR AP and of the shortlisted strategic topics, which have been in each case allocated to possible EU funds, IPA III and NDICI funds as well as to the Annexes D of the Country Reports 2019 and 2020.

**Sources for content of funding instruments (Annex 1b)**: a compilation of funding instrument sources to support PACs in their selection of strategic topics and NCs in approaching the MAs.

**MA Leaflet to embed the EUSDR into EU programmes 2021 – 2027**: the how, the why, the what summary of EUSDR embedding for representatives of managing/programming authorities, NCs, PACs and other stakeholders working on embedding into EU programmes

**Guidance Paper for Embedding the EUSDR into EU Programmes - FROM WORDS TO ACTION!** Discussion paper on further potential tools and processes for embedding initiated under the SK EUSDR PCY together with the DSP.

**Overview of surveys of EUSDR MA Networks (ERDF/CF and IPA/NDICI)**: Based on the results of the surveys conducted in spring 2021, documents were designed to better align priorities of the programmes to the actions/shortlisted strategic topics of the EUSDR

**Guidance Paper for Embedding the EUSDR into EU Programmes - FROM ACTIONS TO FUNDING**: further possible course of action, also putting emphasis on embedding the EUSDR in non-EU countries. Initiated under the UA EUSDR PCY together with the DSP

**Guidance Paper for Embedding the EUSDR into EU Programmes - FROM PROGRAMMING TO IMPLEMENTATION**: concrete steps from the programming to the implementation phase with a focus on embedding in non-EU countries, cross-cooperation between MRS and cross-cooperation between the Priority Areas. Initiated under the SI EUSDR PCY together with the DSP.

**Guidance Paper for Embedding the EUSDR into EU Programmes - ACTIVE EMBEDDING & PLANNING AHEAD**: focus on practical steps for the further alignment of the EUSDR and funding programmes in the current implementation phase and contribution to the discussion on embedding post-2027. Initiated under the AT EUSDR PCY together with the DSP



For EUSDR embedding process and the EUSDR tools elaborated, please visit:

<https://danube-region.eu/projects-and-funding/embedding-2021-2027/>



# Embedding / Funding

Planned strategic implementation, further development and utilisation of the EUSDR embedding process



11.2024

DG REGIO Harvesting  
event on post-27  
(Brussels, BE)

12.2024

EUSDR NC-PAC  
meeting (Vienna, AT)

09.2024

EUSDR PAC meeting  
and seminar (Neusiedl  
am See, AT)



11.2024

EUSDR MA Network  
meeting (online)



10.2024

Cross-MRS WG on  
Embedding (online)



10.2024

Interreg IPA working  
group (Bucharest, RO)



# WHY Monitoring & Evaluation

- ❖ basis for decision-making
- ❖ support for strategic coordination
- ❖ keeping an overview of the participation and achievements within the EUSDR
- ❖ targeted stakeholder support from PACs/DSP



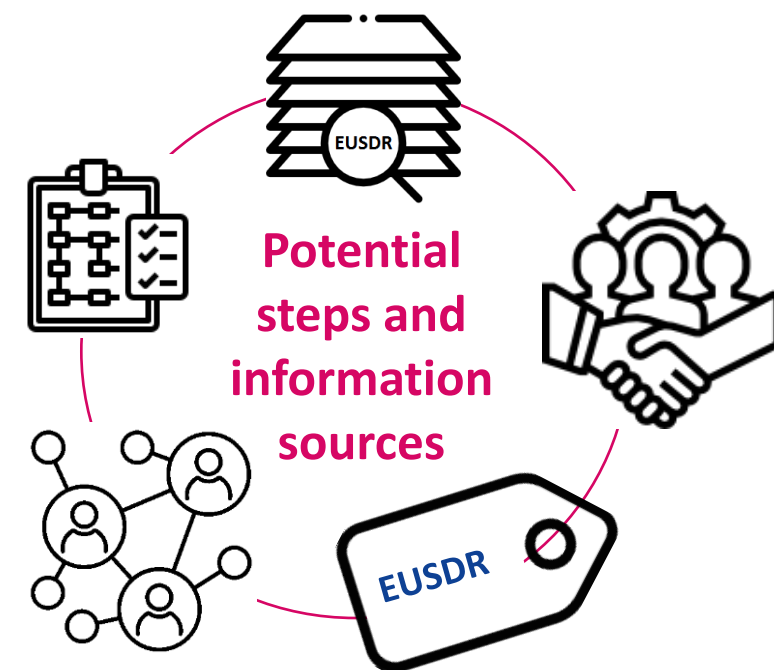
# Monitoring the outcomes of the embedding process

## Programming Phase

- Mapping of cooperation actions, including MRS embedding, by INTERACT (based on EC screening of ERDF programmes)
- Additional input from EUSDR Evaluations, NCs (e.g. Task Force EMB-DR) and managing/programming authorities (MA network meetings)

## Implementation Phase

- Scanning calls for EUSDR relevance via [EuroAccess](#)
- Monitoring of projects via PAC Reporting Tool
- Monitoring of projects via managing/programming authorities (e.g. labelling of projects, extra points for project proposals with MRS relevance, a standing point at programme MC meetings?)
- Keeping track of programme evaluations



→ Interim and final report/analysis on outcomes of Embedding (2025 & 2028)

# Monitoring/Reporting

## **PAC Reporting (spring 2024)**

- Via online reporting tool
- Progress and Achievements of the EUSDR Priority Areas, including questions from the EC

## **NC Reporting (spring 2024)**

- Questionnaire directly from/to the EC
- Kind request to send a copy to DSP

**→ EUSDR Implementation Report 2022-2023 to be published in December 2024**



Inputs also provide the basis for other reports and follow-up activities, i.e.:

- 5<sup>th</sup> Commission report on the implementation of macro-regional strategies
- EUSDR Process/Implementation Evaluation



# Evaluation

EUSDR **Evaluation Plan 2023-2028**, developed in close cooperation with SG DANUVAL, available on the [EUSDR Website](#).

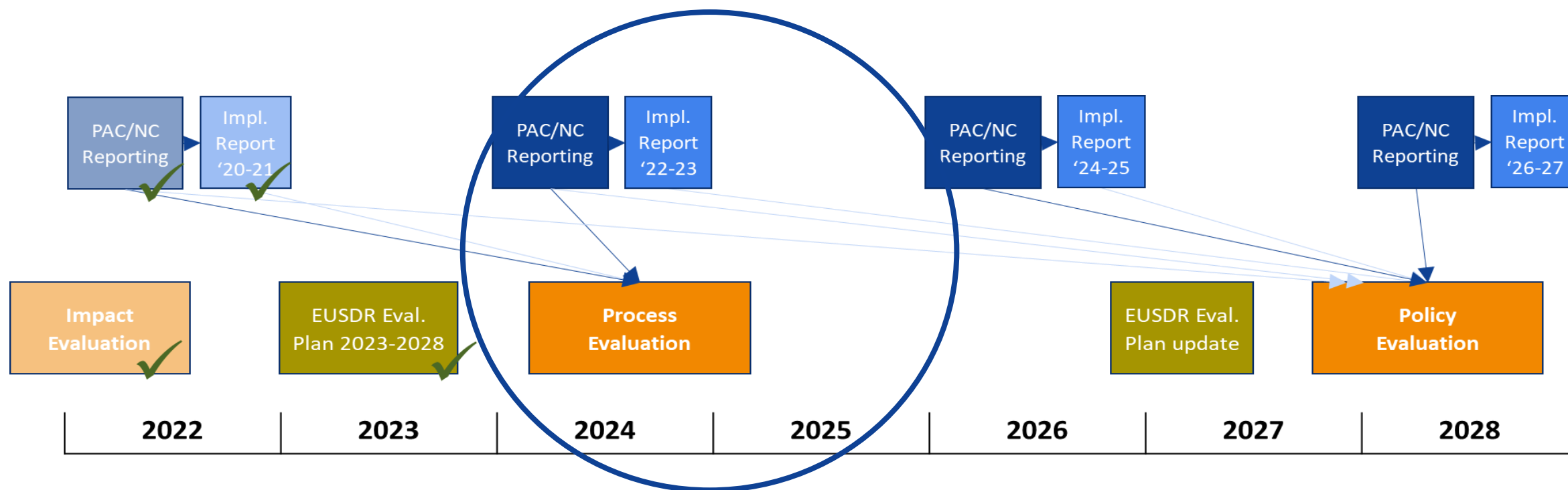
## EUSDR Process/Implementation Evaluation 2024/2025

- Evaluation topics: political commitment, governance, implementation, funding, policy impact
- External evaluator: M&E Factory
- Data collection conducted in Summer 2024 – **THANK YOU** to all stakeholders who contributed
- Final Evaluation Report in March 2025

## EUSDR Policy Evaluation 2027/2028

- Focus on policy impact and embedding/funding

# Monitoring & Evaluation timeline



# WHY Communication

- ❖ tool for sharing thoughts, ideas, opinions and plans / sharing information
- ❖ building relationships & meet expectations
- ❖ streamline decision-making & boosts productivity



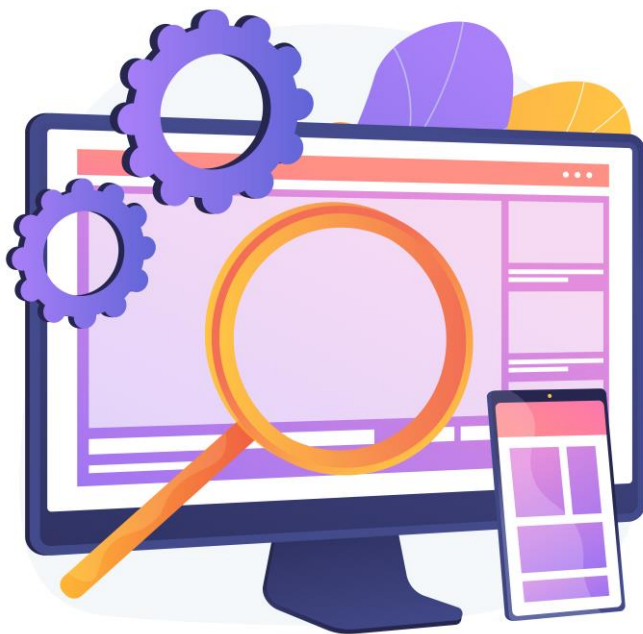


# Communication



- **Social media platforms** constantly updated (Followers: 3605 on LinkedIn, 7474 on Facebook, 1482 on X, 372 on Instagram, as of 16 Sept 2024)
- Videos & e-banners produced in January 2024 to promote Flagships 2023 & relevant PAs
- **Social media campaign to promote Flagships 2024** on social media channels managed by DSP (starting 15 October 2024)
- Align **communication** activities more with the Austrian EUSDR PCY for more **visibility** and future Bosnian & Herzegovinian EUSDR PCY (promoting events through posts social media and articles on the main EUSDR website, on the dedicated sub-page)
- **Relaunch of the EUSDR website** (including 12 PA sites)

# Estimated time plan for relaunching the website



- First version: **end of 2024** → tests will follow with the provider and DSP
- Testing phase for PACs (duration: 1 month) → **February/ March 2025** → during the testing phase a workshop will be offered to PACs
- New website(s) expected to go live → **March 2025**

# Danube Strategy Flagships



## Overview

Projects/processes that contribute to the implementation of the EUSDR, have a clear macro-regional dimension and a MLG approach.

**List of Danube Strategy Flagships 2023:**  
<https://danube-region.eu/projects-and-funding/eusdr-strategic-projects/>



## 2024

Identification of **Danube Strategy Flagships 2024** according to the [Guidance Paper](#) in 03.2024 – 06.2024



## Definition

- of high importance for the Danube Region's economic, social and territorial cohesion and for improving the quality of life therein.
- strengthen internal and external communication of the Strategy and the visibility of initiatives
- illustrate the progress achieved in implementing the EUSDR
- demonstrate exemplarily significant improvement induced by cooperation.



# Danube Strategy Flagships

## Why Danube Strategy Flagships?



strengthen internal and external communication of the Strategy and the visibility of the topics, initiatives and prospects in the Danube Region



illustrate the progress achieved in implementing the EUSDR and demonstrate exemplarily significant improvement in the Region that is induced by cooperation



strengthening a sector or branch, generating value chains or model solutions to important common challenges faced within the Danube Region



# Danube Strategy Flagships

## How to exploit Danube Strategy Flagships?

### Stakeholder consultation



- newsletters
- internally within units
- externally with stakeholder groups

### Promoting EUSDR's added value through concrete examples



- DSP campaigns (videos, social media posts, articles etc.)
- PA campaigns

### Future orientations/ activities/ projects



- work plans
- platform creation
- project/proposal generation

# Danube Strategy Flagships 2022-2024

- **Danube Strategy Flagships social media campaign by DSP :**

<https://www.linkedin.com/today/author/eusdr>

<https://www.facebook.com/DanubeRegionStrategy>

<https://x.com/eusdr?lang=en&mx=2>

[https://www.instagram.com/p/C6xzCsxiTke/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/C6xzCsxiTke/?img_index=1)

- **Danube Strategy Flagships videos 2023 by DSP:**

<https://www.youtube.com/@DanubeRegionStrategy/videos>

- **Danube Strategy Flagships promotion in a leaflet for SG members & in newsletters/on the website for stakeholders 2022 and 2023 by EUSDR PA 10:**

<https://capacitycooperation.danube-region.eu/revealing-the-stars-of-progress-the-2023-flagship-projects/>

- **Danube Strategy Flagships certificate ceremonies 2023 and 2024 by EUSDR PA 8:**

<https://competitiveness.danube-region.eu/>





# Danube Strategy Flagships 2024

## EUSDR PA 2



**Diversification of gas supply in the EUSDR (updated & [promoted](#))**

[Read more](#)  
[Certificate](#)



**Enhancing hydrogen economy in the EUSDR (updated)**

[Read more](#)  
[Video](#)  
[Certificate](#)



**Promote local low-carbon energy actions in the EUSDR (updated)**

[Read more](#)  
[Certificate](#)



# Capacity Building

- **Development of a capacity building (CB) framework :**

a Capacity Building Need Assessment (CBNA) is currently ongoing in order to develop a CB framework for the EUSDR core stakeholders in respect to their roles, responsibilities and collaboration relationships:

- **first phase (concluded):** collect data for a capacity building analysis using three methodological tools:
  - ✓ **exploratory interviews** (March/April 2024)
  - ✓ **focus groups** (April/May 2024)
  - ✓ **questionnaires** (May/June 2024)



# Capacity Building

- Development of a capacity building (CB) framework :
  - second phase (concluded):
    - ✓ analyse data for a capacity building assessment
    - ✓ develop a framework for improving capacity building through tailored trainings.

→ From 2025 on: based on the CBNA, **five training sessions** will be provided for EUSDR core stakeholders



# WHY Youth involvement

- ❖ propose concrete actions and projects and suggest topics
- ❖ bring ideas to the attention of high-level politicians from EUSDR states and regions
- ❖ contribute to the EUSDR priorities and policies, participate in events
- ❖ raise attention for the special features of their regions at the transnational level

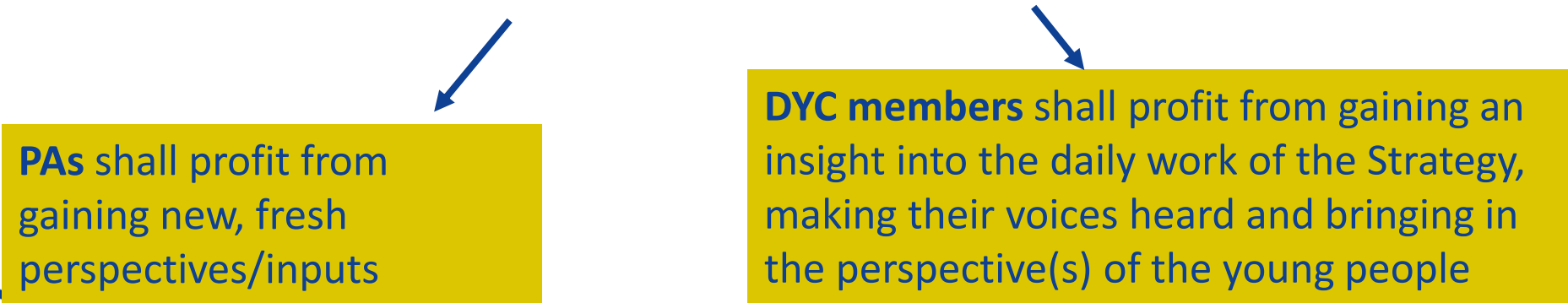




# Danube Youth Council (DYC): Involvement in PAs

- Professional background in the field of the PA is **not** a prerequisite.
- Possible ways of meaningful involvement:
  - Letting the DYC members give their input on documents, projects, processes...
  - Involving the DYC members in drafting reports, studies, agendas...
  - Inviting the DYC members to meetings, conferences, events and (if possible) giving them an active role

## Mutually beneficial exchange



**PAs** shall profit from  
gaining new, fresh  
perspectives/inputs

**DYC members** shall profit from gaining an  
insight into the daily work of the Strategy,  
making their voices heard and bringing in  
the perspective(s) of the young people

# DYC current developments



second **DYC mandate** year ended on **31 October 2024** (one-time 50% of DYC members remain – WP as of 02.2024).



**Peer learning, transfer of knowledge and inclusion of the new members** as a crucial task **within the DYC** (a concept for this was elaborated by the DYC at the 3rd Danube Youth Camp, 27-29 October 2024, Vienna)

- Kind request to PACs/teams to be patient with the new members while they learn the ropes 😊



**Meetings between PAs and (new) DYC members** can be facilitated by the DSP (beginning of 2025).

# DYC switch of members as of 1 November 2024



Approx. **18 experienced DYC members** will remain for one more year;  
approx. **10 new ones** will be appointed.



Call for Participation (closed): [application form](#) was open until mid-October for candidates from **AT (1), BA (1), HR (1), CZ (1), DE (1, only BY), HU (1), MD (1), RS (1) and SK (2)**



**New members will choose PAs**, depending on fields of interest, until end of 2024

- Kind reminder to PACs/teams: professional background in the field of the PA is not a prerequisite 😊

# DYC: Financing of SG meeting attendance

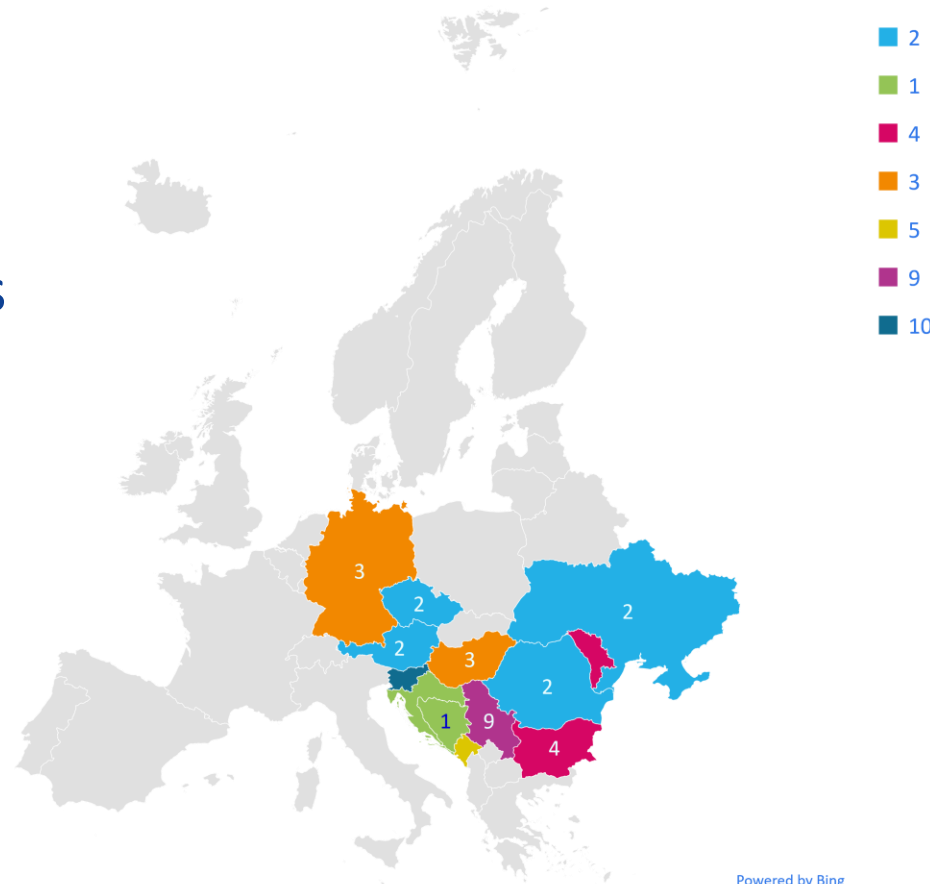
- Youth involvement as a horizontal priority in the 2023-2028 PAC projects
- The endorsed long-term DYC financing concept foresees that the **on-site participation of min. 1 selected DYC member in 1 SG meeting per PA per year** shall be funded via the PAC budgets (travel & accomm. costs for 1 person per year).
  - Above that:
  - Online participation of DYC-members in SG meetings
- **In those cases where no budget for youth activities was foreseen at the time of the elaboration of the PAC projects, it is possible to shift budget or add additional budget!**
- Online consultation with DRP was held on 8 March 2024 to clarify open questions – report was sent to all PACs



# Danube Youth Organisations Network (DYON)

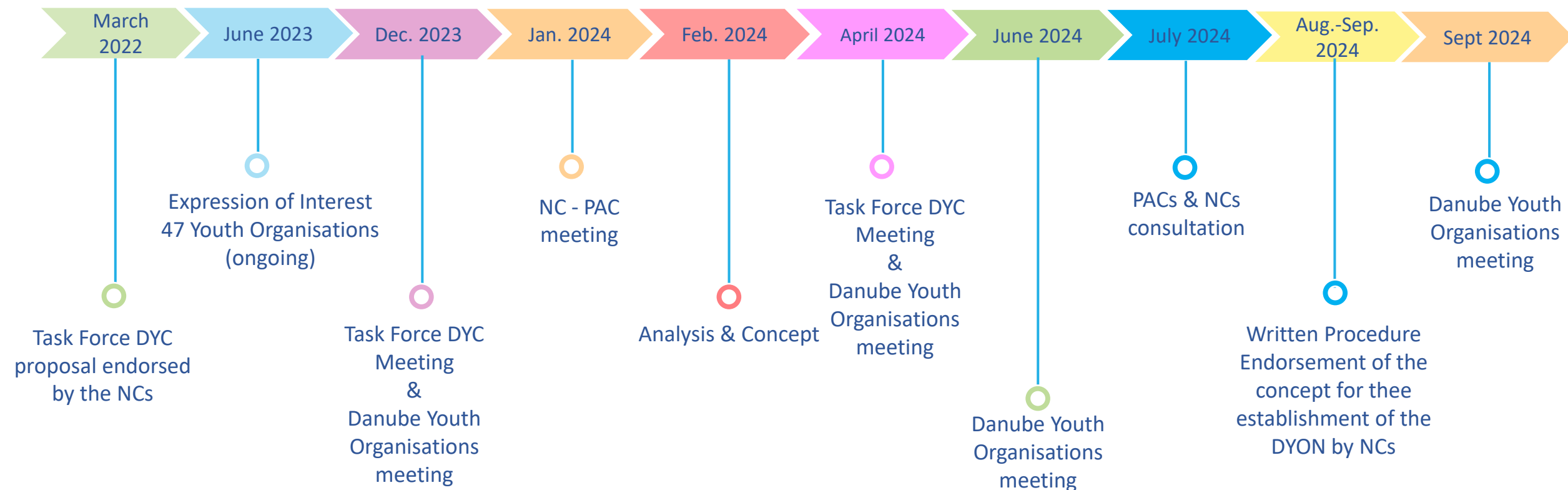
- Open network, complementary structure to the DYC.
- Established in 2024, under the coordination of AT PCY.
- Provide framework for partnerships for joint projects and initiatives, exchange of good practices and experiences, and organisation of joint events.
- Exact setup, scope and activities of the DYON remain to be defined.
- Next DYON meeting scheduled for 30 September 2024.

Regional distribution



<https://danube-region.eu/dyon/>

# Danube Youth Organisations Network (DYON)



# Summary: What's next?

## Monitoring & Evaluation

- Process/  
Implementation  
Evaluation  
2024/2025  
Q3-Q4/Q1
- EUSDR  
Implementation  
Report  
Q4

## Capacity Building

Capacity Building  
Need Assessment  
(CBNA) trainings  
Q1/Q 3-4

## Youth

- DYON  
development  
meetings 2025  
Q1
- 3rd DYC Danube  
Youth Camp/  
follow-up  
Q4
- Onboarding of  
new DYC  
members  
Q4/Q1

## Communication

- Promotion of  
Danube  
Strategy  
Flagships  
Q3-Q4
- Updates of  
EUSDR/PA  
websites  
Q4/Q1-2

# EUSDR events

Scope	Date	Location
<b>28<sup>th</sup> International Danube Navigation and Tourism Conference</b>	25-27 November 2024	Budapest, Hungary
<b>NC-PAC Meeting</b>	10-11 December 2024	Vienna, Austria
<b>27<sup>th</sup> ICPDR Annual Meeting</b>	11 December 2024	Vienna, Austria
<b>Danube Youth Leadership Stakeholders Roundtable Empowering the Next Generation in Water Management</b>	26-27 November 2024	Bratislava, Slovakia
<b>Enhancing Regional Cooperation in the Danube basin: EUSDR PA 5 consultation with EU accessing countries - Republic of Serbia</b>	27-28 November 2024	Belgrade, Serbia and online
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Danube Region Transport Days (DRTD)</b>	3 December 2024	Ljubljana, Slovenia
<b>IDM Conference: Cooperation &amp; Integration in the Danube Region</b>	5 December 2024	online
<b>14<sup>th</sup> EUSDR Annual Forum</b>	Autumn 2025 (tbc)	Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (tbc)

	very important ☺		cross-MRS
	PA-related		EUSDR-internally

SG meetings	Date	Location
PA 2	20 November 2024	Budapest, Hungary and online
PA 5	21 November 2024	Budapest, Hungary and online
PA 10	28-29 November 2024	Stuttgart, Germany
PA 3	5 December 2024	online
PA 1a	13 December 2024 (tbc)	online
PA 11	17 December 2024	online



Download at: <https://danube-region.eu/communication/events/> &  
visit the: [EUSDR Calendar of events](#)



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