

PRIORITY AREA 2 NEWSLETTER

2021

Dear Readers,

You have just received the newsletter of Priority Area 2 of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) of the year 2021. The Priority Area 2 (PA2) “To Encourage More Sustainable Energy” is coordinated and designated by Hungary and the Czech Republic in order to ensure the implementation of the Strategy in the field of energy.

In 2021 the PA2 has put emphasize on strengthening the communication among the members of the Steering Group and the core stakeholders in order to jointly achieve targets of the European Green Deal and its follow-up policy initiatives in the field of energy.

Our newsletter keeps updating about our development and activities.

Stay tuned and read more about us!

Your PAC Team



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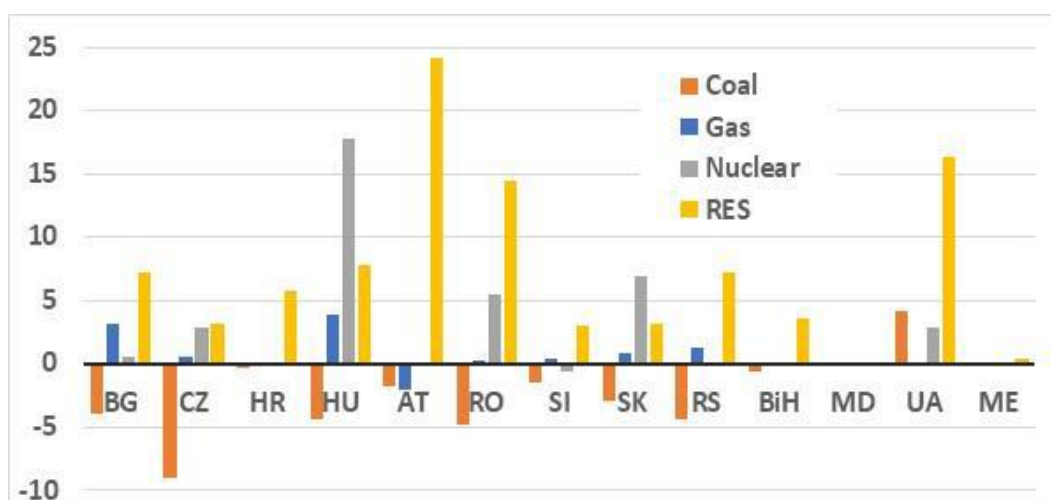
➤ ABOUT US

- ✓ PA2 coordinates regional energy policies in various topics in order to exploit the full potential of integrated energy market in the Danube Region.
- ✓ PA2 supports the integration of the energy markets of the non-EU countries and supports them in the implementation of the EU energy acquis.
- ✓ PA2 is committed to launch cutting edge technology developments, which will increase the energy efficiency of the region.

➤ STUDIES

NATIONAL ENERGY AND CLIMATE PLANS OF DANUBE REGION COUNTRIES (NECP)

This study was conducted by the HU Coordination in the first half of 2021 to provide a comprehensive assessment of the targets, measures and expected outcomes laid down in the National Energy and Climate Plans in the Danube region. The study focused on most important areas such as electricity and gas markets, heating and cooling, transport, buildings and the industry sector. The results of the study were presented at 2 online workshops organized in May 2021 and summarized in 4 policy briefs. The main key findings were presented at the 22nd and 23rd SG Meeting. Further details might be found under the [link](#).



Change in the power mix of Danube Countries 2017-2030 (TWh)

Source: NECP Study

ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS IN THE EUSDR – OVERVIEW OF NEW AND EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS STOCK

„Another universal trend is shrinking of new built apartments. Regardless of actual figures, an apartment built in 2020 is smaller than one inhabited 10 years ago.“

Source: SEVen Energy s.r.o.

1 INTRODUCTION

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4 Residential Building Stock and Trends in the Construction

5 Energy Consumption Trends

6 Regulatory Framework

7 Renovation Rate and Depth

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9 CONCLUSIONS- Compliance with Documents, Identified Barriers

An ongoing study initiated by the CZ Coordination is divided into 2 phases. The first phase focuses on mapping of current measures in the fields of energy performance of residential building stock based on the Renovation Wave Initiative in each Danube region/country. The

second phase aims at identifying the best practice cases and their potential spread out in other Danube countries/regions. As conclusion, barriers and mix of measures will be provided for all countries of the Danube Region. Final results of the study will be presented at an expert workshop to be held in June 2022. Comments or remarks are highly welcomed directly by the CZ Coordination.

➤ ONGOING AND FUTURE PROJECTS

SET-UP Project

PA2 HU coordination participates in the 1-year extension of an Interreg Europe project, called SETUP „Smart Energy Transition to Upgrade Regional Performance “. The main project’s objective has been the improvement of energy performance of the 6 partner regions based on an interregional exchange regarding the regional competencies on smart grids. The continuation will focus on the possible tools for balancing the power grids, mainly on battery storage and hydrogen and it will last from October 2021 until October 2022.

SET-UP can provide answers to policy makers related to the role that smart grids play in balancing the grid and battery storage, and hydrogen can provide flexible and fast-acting supply and demand balance to the network. Both solutions can stock energy when in excess and convert it again when the demand increases. This new trend must be constantly monitored and supported by appropriate public policy, which is the focus of interregional exchange during the 1-year extension of SET-UP. More information can be found at this [link](#).

DANUP-2-GAS

The DanuP-2-Gas project is supported by the Danube Transnational Programme; its main goal is to drive energy security and diversity in the Danube Region via combination of bioenergy with surplus renewable energy. DanuP-2-Gas will advance transnational energy planning by promoting generation and storage strategies for renewables in the Danube Region by coupling the electric power and gas sector. DanuP-2-Gas will bring together energy agencies, business actors, public authorities and research institutions via the Danube Energy Platform. PA2 HU coordination is participating in the project as Associated Strategic Partner.

Currently the consortium is working on the development of the platform which will incorporate all pre-existing tools and in the form of an online Atlas, mapping prior unexamined available biomass and energy infrastructure. See for further information at the [link](#).

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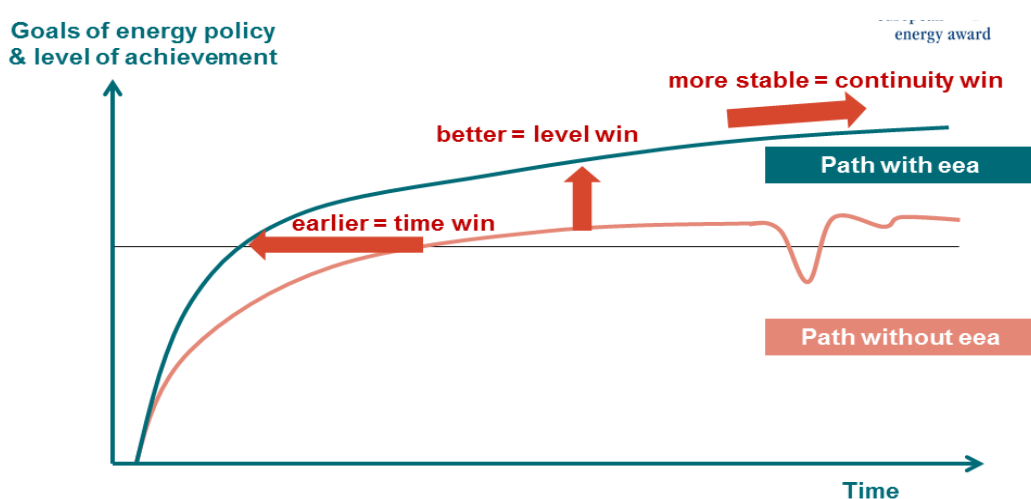
The project consortium of the DanuP-2-Gas project decided to step further and expand its activities towards green hydrogen production and energy efficiency. The proposal is coordinated by Technology Centre Energy - University of Applied Sciences Landshut (Germany), and the former DanuP-2-Gas consortium is enlarged by new partners from Poland, Czechia and Hungary. PA2 HU coordination supports the work as an Associated Strategic Partner, likewise in the DanuP-2-Gas project. The new project – to be submitted to the first call of the Central Europe Program – aims to analyse various green hydrogen production methods and models (especially related to the placing of the electrolyzers, thus allowing a bigger flexibility to link them to local renewable energy production sites) as well as the use of waste heat in the energy conversion processes. In addition to the technical aspects, the proposal puts a big emphasis on the analysis of the socio-economic characters, as well as transnational strategy development and formulation of policy

recommendations and action plans in the field of hydrogen production and utilisation, tailored to the needs of the Central European region. The topic perfectly fits Act 1 (Promoting renewables) and Act 7 (Subsurface energy storage) of the PA2 Action Plan, therefore the PAC-s were pleased to have this new initiative on board.

INNOVANCE

PA2 was supporting another interesting proposal with the issue of a Letter of Recommendation. This proposal – which was submitted to the LIFE-2021-CET-INNOFIN Call – aims to establish innovative financing schemes to secure investments in RES projects, especial in geothermal ones. The proposal is coordinated by the European Geothermal Energy Council and members also include some EUSDR countries (Hungary and Germany). PA2 shares the project’s focus on allowing renewable energy market development by establishing innovative financing schemes all over Europe, in order to increase the contribution of renewables to a climate neutral economy. The expected work and outcomes of the project are indeed relevant to the current work and planned future activities of EUSDR PA2, notably to develop new approaches on de-risking and investment for renewable energy projects; and to produce new tools and test them for renewable energy investment.

EEA along the Danube



Benefits of the eea for the national level

Source: Danube Office, EEA

The project EEA along the Danube co-funded by State Ministry of Baden-Württemberg will focus on the promotion of distribution and application of quality management and awarding system based

on the European Energy Award in the Danube countries. Interested regions are welcomed to take part in the quality management and certification procedure. This procedure has been already established in the European reference framework and offers a practice-oriented approach to the topics of climate protection and Green Deal at the local level. This project has been supported by PA2. For more information contact the Danube Office Ulm-Neu Ulm or EEA Office (n.rapp@donaubuero.de, valentin.graf@european-energy-award.org).

➤ **THE MAIN OUTCOMES OF 22nd SG MEETING on 29th June 2021**

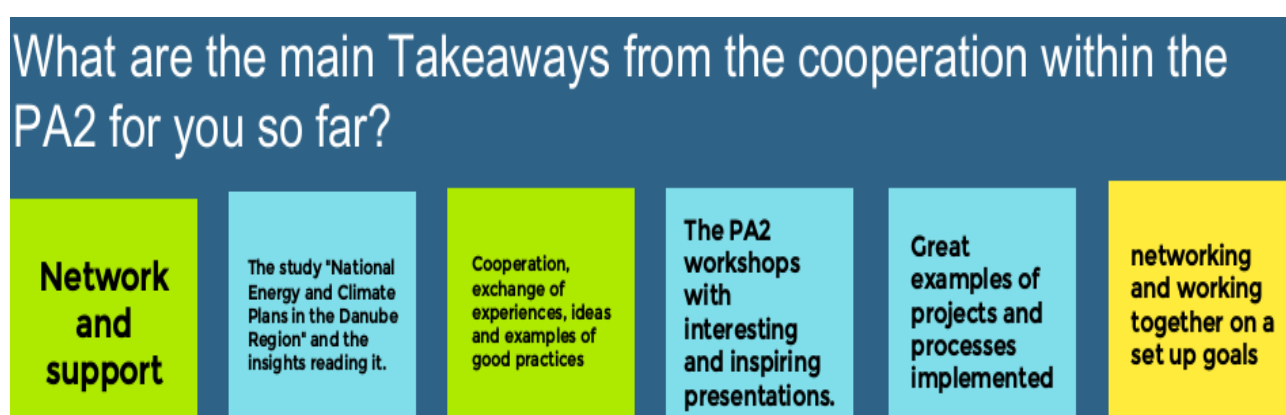
The agenda of the virtual 22nd SG meeting was crucial, in particular the discussion between the PAC's and SG members on results of the survey aiming at improving the communication strategy within PA2. This survey was circulated among the SG members beforehand. As a result, both sides approves the following steps in the second half of the year that will positively contribute to the development of PA2. Find more about the agenda [here](#).

• **SERIES OF PROJECT GENERATION'S SESSIONS, OCTOBER 2021**

Among other things, one of the outcomes was to put emphasis on the generation and support of future projects that are related to PA2 activities. Therefore, the HU Coordination has started organizing a series of sessions for SG members and core stakeholders to provide them a general overview of the upcoming funding opportunities in the programming period 2021-2027. The first round of presented calls for project proposals was on 3 LIFE Calls (sustainable energy, energy governance and clean energy transition). After that, our SG member Ms Sarah Biechele (Ministry of the Environment, Climate Protection and the Energy Sector, Baden-Württemberg) together with Ms Simone Burster (Project Manager, Danube Office Ulm/Neu-Ulm) introduced the project idea "*EEA along the Danube*", which will be co-financed by State of Baden- Württemberg and will meet the objectives of PA2. The PA2 supported this project idea via Letter of Recommendation sent to State of Baden-Württemberg. Furthermore, the project and its objectives were further introduced at the 23rd SG Meeting (see below for more details).

- **BRAINSTORMING WORKSHOP “LET’S TALK ALL TOGETHER!”, NOVEMBER 2021**

A brainstorming session managed by the CZ Coordination addressed SG members and core stakeholders to evaluate the current year of PA2. Moreover, the agenda included the question of meaning of PA2, identification of expectations and needs of the SG members and stakeholders for functioning of PA2. **Accordingly, the key outcomes, such as enhancing visibility on social media & providing promoting materials with targets of PA & sharing new projects and actual energy topics among each other, were implemented in the plans for the year 2022.**



- **NEW TERMS OF REFERENCE, NOVEMBER 2021**

The CZ Coordination elaborated the Terms of Reference that might be a crucial basis for well-functioning of PA2. This guideline determines rules and procedure within the PA2. Hence, the roles and tasks of all involved actors as well as organization and objectives of SG meetings were defined in order to strengthen the communication way and enhance the decision-making process.

➤ **THE MAIN OUTCOMES OF 23rd SG MEETING on 15th December 2021**

The second SG meeting in 2021 was held in an online format and its agenda was dedicated mainly to the presentations of the key findings of the „NECP Study“ and ongoing study (Energy efficiency in buildings, see on the first page), supported project ideas and events in 2022 organized by PA2. Additionally, the PAC’s underlined the importance of roadmap for PA2 and the preparation of the new PAC Project from 2023 onwards, to which the input from SG members will be necessary.

- **NEW EDITION OF BRAINSTORMING WORKSHOPS INDICATED TO THE ENERGY SUBTOPICS IN 2022**

THE PAC's will organize an edition of brainstorming workshops related to the energy subtopics in order to discuss the relevance and added value of including them under main topics of the upcoming PAC project 2023 onwards. The topic suggestions for those workshops will be selected by PAC's according to the results of the poll addressed to SG members. For further information follow the PA2 website.

➤ **EVENTS IN 2022**

- **WORKSHOP "FOSTERING THE RENOVATION WAVE IN THE DANUBE AND ADRIATIC-IONIAN MACRO-REGIONS" 9th March 2022**



The European Commission organizes the third edition of Macro-regional strategy week to highlight Youth, European Green Deal and Social Change in the framework of macro-regional strategies. Therefore, PA2 will take the opportunity to organize a

workshop aiming to the contribution of the Renovation Wave in the Danube Region and to the European Green Deal. This session initiated by CZ Coordination will bring together actors from several stakeholder groups, such as academia, public sector, funding, energy community, policy administration **to give an overview and discuss the current status quo in the EUSDR, the policy developments on the carbon-neutrality goals and funding opportunities.** The session will also provide a cross-MRS approach by looking at concrete examples and the best practices from Croatia (Member country in EUSDR & EUSAIR). The registration is open under the [link](#).

- **EXPERT WORKSHOPS “ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN BUILDINGS”, JUNE 2022**

The objective of this workshop is to present the key findings of the study “Energy efficiency and performance in new and existing residential building stock in the Danube Region”, which has been conducted by CZ Coordination. Additionally, the status quo and compliance of national policy law and the European based on the Renovation Wave will be through the best practices and recommendations presented. For more information check our website <https://energy.danube-region.eu/>.



- **HYDROGEN EVENT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UKRAINIAN PRESIDENCY 2022, AUTUMN 2022**

Hydrogen has been one of the crucial topics in these turbulent times. Therefore, the PA2 is going to organize a **session related to the green hydrogen economy which contributes to the priorities of the Ukrainian presidency 2022, decarbonization and transformation of the economy**. The aim is to discuss how to increase awareness and trigger potential of use and production of hydrogen in the Danube Region. An invitation and agenda will be published later on.

➤ **CALLS FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS OPEN UNTIL SPRING 2022**

The European Commission has launched new calls for project proposals under the HORIZON Programme. The calls will support clean and competitive solutions for all transport modes with cross-cutting approach. Deadline is until 26th April 2022. More information under the [link](#). Additionally, the calls for project proposals under the LIFE Programme with regard to contribution to the shift towards a sustainable, circular, energy-efficient, renewable based, climate neutral and resilient economy. Deadline is until 16th June 2022. More information under the [link](#).

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