



# DANUBE STRATEGY - STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR SERBIA



Edited by  
Nevenka Jeftić Šarčević  
Edita Stojić Karanović



INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL  
POLITICS AND ECONOMICS

The Institute of International Politics and Economics

**DANUBE STRATEGY  
– STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE  
FOR SERBIA**

Edited by  
Nevenka Jeftić Šarčević  
Edita Stojić Karanović

Belgrade, 2012

# Danube Strategy – Strategic Significance for Serbia

---

## *Publisher*

Institute of International Politics and Economics,  
Makedonska 25, Belgrade

## *For the Publisher*

Duško Dimitrijević, Ph.D., Director

## *Editors in Chief*

Nevenka Jeftić Šarčević, Ph.D.

Edita Stojić Karanović, Ph.D.

## *Editorial Board*

a.o. Univ. Prof. Joachim Becker, Ph.D.  
*International Economics and Development,*  
*Department of Economics, Vienna,*  
*University of Economics and Business*

Prof. Silvo Devetak, Ph.D.  
*Head, Department of International Law and International Relations,*  
*Faculty of Law, University of Maribor, Maribor, Slovenia*

Dragan Đukanović, Ph.D.  
*Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, Serbia*

## *Cover Design*

Snežana Vojković

## *Layout*

Sanja Pavlović

## *Printed by*

“Želnid”, Belgrade

ISBN 978-86-7067-167-6

# Contents

Preface to the compendium .....	7
---------------------------------	---

## Chapter I

### **STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DANUBE RIVER AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN ITS BASIN**

*Grigorij Meseznikov*

THE DANUBE REGIONAL COOPERATION AS A PLATFORM FOR BOOSTING SERBIA'S CHANCES IN EURO-INTEGRATION: SOME POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....	13
--	----

*Sandor Götz*

SHIPPING ON THE WATERS OF SEE REGION OVER-BRIDGING THE BORDERS .....	23
---	----

*Marija Knežević*

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AS A DANUBE COUNTRY .....	30
--	----

*Miloš Šolaja*

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AS A DANUBE COUNTRY – A NEW APPROACH WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE DANUBE STRATEGY .....	41
---	----

*Biljana Savić*

REGIONAL COOPERATION WITHIN THE SAVA COMMISSION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF B&H .....	54
---	----

*Zsuzsa M. Császár*

DANUBE STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR SERBIA .....	71
--	----

*Saša Čvrljak, Hrvoje Butković*

DANUBE STRATEGY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA .....	81
--	----

*Damir Demonja, Majda Rubić*

PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF EUROPEAN LAW – EXPERIENCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION IN THE DANUBE MACRO REGION .....	95
--	----

## Chapter II

### **GEOPOLITICAL POSITION OF SERBIA ON THE DANUBE RIVER**

*Florin Diaconu*

GEOPOLITICAL AND GEO-STRATEGIC STATUS OF SERBIA ON THE DANUBE: THE ROAD FROM GEOPOLITICAL PIVOT TO GEOPOLITICAL PLAYER (ACTIVE ACTOR) .....	113
---	-----

*Dragan Tančić*

RELEVANT FACTORS OF THE DANUBE AND DANUBE BASIN FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SERBIA AND EUROPEAN UNION .....	129
---	-----

*Dragan Petrović, Nataša Tomić Petrović*

PHYSICO-GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS OF DANUBE REGION IN SERBIA AS PREREQUISITES FOR OF TRAFFIC AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT .....	150
---	-----

*Nevenka Jeftić Šarčević*

IS IT POSSIBLE SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE DANUBE AND BLACK SEA REGION. THE GEOPOLITICAL POSITION OF SERBIA .....	156
---	-----

*Nenad M. Ilić*

SOCIAL CAPITAL NETWORKS IN SERBIA: STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE DANUBE RIVER .....	164
--	-----

### Chapter III

#### **ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CO-OPERATION IN THE DANUBE BASIN**

*Milovan Radaković*

THE DANUBE-MARAVA-VARDAR-AEGEAN SEA WATERWAY ..... 175

*Miljojko Bazić, Ranko Lojić, Aleksandar Bazić,*

ROLE OF MEDIA IN PROCESS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION  
IN DANUBE REGION ..... 185

*Mihajlo Vučić*

THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION OF THE DANUBE RIVER BASIN WETLANDS..... 197

*Milica Slavković*

THE DANUBE COUNTRIES LOCAL COMMUNITIES PROTECTION  
IN FLOOD EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ..... 213

*Aleksandra Tomić, Srbijanka Stojić*

ELEMENTS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN THE STRATEGY  
OF FLOOD PROTECTION IN THE DANUBE BASIN ..... 226

### Chapter IV

#### **COOPERATION IN THE DANUBE REGION IN VARIOUS FIELDS OF TOURISM**

*Damir Demonja, Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić*

DANUBE CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM (DCSF) – AN EXAMPLE  
OF INITIATIVE TO CONNECT THE DANUBE REGION  
AND OPPORTUNITIES OF CROATIA TO PROMOTE CULTURE  
AND TOURISM IN THE FRAMEWORK OF DANUBE STRATEGY ..... 233

*Pero Petrović*

ECOTOURISM – A DRIVING FORCE OF DEVELOPMENT  
IN SOME DANUBE REGIONS ..... 253

*Dragica Tomka, Gordana Đurić, Goran Tomka*

THEMATIC CULTURAL TOURIST ROUTES OF DANUBE REGION –  
LOCAL CULTURAL GOODS AS A GLOBAL ATTRACTION ..... 259

<i>Sara Stanić</i> ANTHROPOGENIC HERITAGE OF NATIONAL PARK ĐERDAP – AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IN SERBIA .....	274
<i>Snežana Štetić, Dario Šimičević, Saša Stevanović</i> VALORIZATION OF SERBIAN WATERWAYS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DANUBE REGION TOURISM .....	290
<i>Risto Prentović, Vidoje Golubović, Milutin Kovačević</i> CORRELATION BETWEEN HUNTING AND CULTURAL TOURISM IN BAČKA UPPER DANUBE BASIN .....	304
<i>Željko Bjelajac, Marijana Dukić-Mijatović, Žaklina Spalević</i> THE DANUBE STRATEGY AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE REGION AND THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA .....	321
Book of Abstracts .....	331

## **Preface to the compendium**

The actual Danube Strategy of the European Union (EU) sets the basis for the construction of the modern regional group in the international river basin of the Danube. The *EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)* provides strong support for the development of all countries of the Danube basin, regardless whether they are members of the EU or not, guided by the principles of responsible use of natural resources for sustainable development. The need to respect these principles were also indicated in previous researches that were undertaken in the *Institute of International Politics and Economics* started in the late 80-ties of last century and continued during the first decade of the 21st century.<sup>1</sup>

Perceiving the overall value of the river Danube today as an international European transport corridor, and as a water resource, the resource that will become during the 21 century the most wanted natural resource (multiple more wanted than the today overestimated oil and gas), it is clear that Serbia lacks a complex assessment, developed awareness of the importance, and a comprehensive strategy of sustainable use of the Danube. There are scientific researches, articles, some strategies, but not a sufficient public awareness, legal regulation of the conditions which would enable and force the sustainable use of the river Danube and of the water resource in general.

Serbia now needs to perceive its great opportunities arising from the fact that the Danube flows through Serbia and that Serbia participates with 10.3% in the territory of the Danube River Basin's macro region. With this percentage Serbia is sharing with Austria the 3rd and the 4th place among the countries of the Danube River Basin, after Romania (28,9%) and Hungary (11,7%). Therefore the European Union Strategy for Danube Region (EUSDR), is from strategical importance for Serbia.

### **The River and the Region needing international cooperation**

Like every great river, so the river Danube has always attracted people to settle and develop economic activities on its shores. The richness of the river as a natural resource for survival and for increasing wealth has always attracted new conquerors,

---

<sup>1</sup> See collections of papers from the First (1989) to the Twenty-first (2010) Conferences "Danube – River of Cooperation" co-published by Institute of International Politics and Economics and International Scientific Forum "Danube – River of Cooperation".



and also encouraged those communities that have previously won the position on the Danube, to keep this position. The battle for the possession of natural wealth marks the whole human history, and on the banks of the Danube there is a rich treasure of material evidence such campaigns. But also, **the river requires cooperation and offers opportunities for alliances**. Cooperation between countries along the Danube dates back to the 19th century. The first move in this direction was when the 1856 Treaty of Paris declared the Danube an international transport route, enabling unrestricted shipping and trade on the river. The still operational European Commission of the Danube was founded in the spirit of this goal.

The concept of a unified Danube region in the European development strategy first arose in the 1990s. Organized cooperation frameworks came into being between settlements, counties and regions with the co-ordination of the Working Community of the Danube Regions (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft Donauländer – Arge Donau*). The Working Community, founded on May 17th 1990, by signing of the “Joint Declaration” in “Wachau” – Lower Austria, currently operates in 37 provinces across ten countries.<sup>2</sup>

In the present program period of the European Union (EU) the central question for cohesion policy is the regional cooperation. At political level two strands of initiatives can be identified and both have working processes that connect at several points. Both of them were working towards the creation of a unified European Danube region, while striving to create a leading role for the new macro-region. Even more so, since the development of this macro-region has been uneven, its transport and energy connections poor, its security insufficient, and its education, research and innovation systems remain uncoordinated. Therefore the need for an integrated development of the Danube region is evident. It should be **considered as a single development region**, should have integrated multi-system transport routes in view of great possibilities of its utilization.

At the same time such a **development should not harm the environment** of the Danube region. These topics should become an important feature of contemporary international relations giving birth to new forms of regional project-cooperation in all fields mentioned in *EUSDR*. By that we suggest to give precedence to the ecological factors. The cooperation of the Danubian countries will promote sustainable future, solving the needs of mankind by protecting nature and all living

---

<sup>2</sup> D: Baden Württemberg, Bavaria(till 2005); A: Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Vienna, Burgenland; Slovak Republic, H: County Győr-Moson-Sopron, County Komarom-Esztergom, County Pest, Budapest, County Fejér, County Bács-Kiskún, County Tolna, County Baranya; HR: Županija Osječko-Baranjska, Županija Vukovarsko-Srijemska; Republic of Serbia; BG: Regions Vidin, Montana, Vratsa, Pleven, Veliko Tarnovo, Rousse, Silistra; RO: Union of Danube Regions of Romania (12 Regions: Caras Severin, Mehedinti, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Calarasi, Ialomita, Braila, Galati, Tulcea und Constanta); Republic of Moldavia; UKR: Odessa Region.

beings. Therefore **special emphasizes should be given to the projects of sustainable development and climate changes.**<sup>3</sup>

### European Union Strategy for Danube Region

The *Council of the Danube Cities and Regions* submits to the EU the joint wishes of members for establishing a EU macro region encompassing the whole Danube basin. The bottom-up initiative in the EU was elevated to governmental level at the Ulm summit on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The door to the preparation of the European Danube Strategy was open at the summit of the Member States' leaders in Brussels on June 17–18, 2009. In the *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions* the need for elaborating the **European Union Strategy for Danube Region (EUSDR)** was shortly defined with the following **arguments**: “The Danube Region has changed dramatically. Most recently, there have been the 2004 and 2007 waves of EU enlargement. The world’s most international **river basin is now largely a European Union space**. There are new opportunities to address its challenges and potential, especially to reinforce its efforts to overcome the economic crisis in a sustainable manner. Socio-economic development, competitiveness, environmental management and resource efficient growth can be improved, security and transport corridors modernized. The Danube **can open the EU to its near neighbours, the Black Sea region, the South Caucasus and Central Asia**. An EU Strategy for the Danube Region **can contribute to EU objectives, reinforcing major EU policy initiatives**, especially the Europe 2020 strategy.”<sup>4</sup> And what *EUSDR* means for the population of the region? European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn stated: “**In 2020, the Danube Region should become a region with an improved quality of life for its citizens, with more economic opportunities, more innovative young companies creating jobs, a better environment and a prospering cultural climate.**”<sup>5</sup> Also, with the implementation of the *EUSDR* everyone will get the prospect of a decent job and a good life in their own home region. Devoting an issue of the journal of the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Regional Policy, Dirk Ahner, Director General in his Editorial wrote: “A united response to challenges affecting a fifth of the EU and over 100 million inhabitants, the EU Strategy for the Danube Region follows in the footsteps of the

---

<sup>3</sup> The Role of Civil Society in Promotion of the Danube Basin Potential in the Light of the EU Strategy for Danube Region, Editors: Edita Stojić Karanović & Nevenka Jeftić Sarčević, Publishers: Institute of International Politics and Economics, International Scientific Forum “Danube – River of Cooperation”, ISBN 978-86-067-161-4, Belgrade 2011, pp. 203–204 (212).

<sup>4</sup> *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions*, Brussels, 8.12.2010, COM(2010) 715 final (Highlighting by ESK.)

<sup>5</sup> *Panorama – Inforegio*, No 37, 2011, p. 9.

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and builds on its good practices. No new EU funds, no new EU legislation, and no new EU structures: instead, a focus on closer synergies between authorities at all levels to maximize the impact of actions and funding. The Danube Region needs results. Four pillars set out the key goals and these are translated into action through over 200 projects which have leaders and deadlines.”<sup>6</sup>

**The *EUSDR* was endorsed by the General Affairs Council on 13 April 2011.** This result, according to the EU communication,<sup>7</sup> was achieved due to the efforts and the commitment of the Hungarian Presidency to the Strategy (during the first half of the 2011). The adoption of the Action Plan of the *EUSDR* and the First Joint Priority Area Coordinators’ meeting was organized by the Hungarian EU Presidency May 8–10th, 2011. This meeting, which started the implementation phase of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, brought together National Contact Points, Priority Area Coordinators and the Commission to discuss technical issues and establish a common future approach. The various workshops focused on issues of governance and financing and representatives of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region answered questions about their experiences on macro-regional cooperation. Finally the Strategy has been endorsed at the highest official level, by the EU Council. In its conclusions **on June 24th, 2011 the Council calls “on all relevant actors to implement it without delay”, meaning Danube Region projects should be up-and-running as soon as possible.**<sup>8</sup>

The countries in the Danube basin started with preparation of a Danube Projects Portfolio, that is to provide a comprehensive view on the current and future development trends along the river by collecting and editing in a unique form both private and public investments. These sets of pieces of creative thoughts and project ideas collected by each country will be united in a common portfolio of the whole Danube Region to be shown to as to financial policy-makers of EU working on the new budget for the period 2014–2020, as well as to the potential investors how the different communities along the river will respond to the challenges and opportunities created by the Danube. Apart from this, the portfolio also aims at facilitating strategic thinking and cooperation between the different Danube communities. As the region’s access to European union funds is limited, it is necessary to find projects that could be of use to all communities in the Danube basin and which could mobilize major private investments as well. This way the Danube Projects Portfolio supports the development of common objectives that could have beneficial results to all.

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> [http://inforegiodoc.eu/maillinglist/faces/newsletter/preview\\_newsletter.jsp?id=262](http://inforegiodoc.eu/maillinglist/faces/newsletter/preview_newsletter.jsp?id=262)

<sup>8</sup> Newsletter INTERACT Territorial Cooperation On-board with the *EUSDR*, Issue 2011-09.

## **The inclusion of Serbia in the overall EU Strategy for the Danube Region**

As all other countries situated in the Danube basin, Serbia also started to work on its' own Danube Strategy, to give contribution to EU Strategy for Danube Region with ideas and projects that could be realized in Serbia. The working group for cooperation with the EU in the Danube region was very active. It organized a meeting with representatives of 27 municipalities and cities that have a special interest in the EU's strategy for the Danube region. This meeting marked the beginning of consultations with the representatives of the local self-government, that gave basis for the Serbian government's platform for preparation of the EU strategy for the Danube region.

Inclusion of the Republic of Serbia in the development of the EUSDR contributes to enhancements of economic development, integration of sectoral policies of the Republic of Serbia into the EU development plans, improvement of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the Republic of Serbia and all other countries in the Danube River Basin. Also, Serbia through its participation in the process of preparation and implementation of the EUSDR confirms its strategic commitment for its effective membership in the European Union. In fact, the **importance of the creation of the overall EUSDR in the process of EU integration of the Republic of Serbia is multiple**. The main objective is to create the conditions for further **development of the Public Private Partnership through the preparation of the Strategy**. This objective will be achieved through the improvement of cooperation between central and local stakeholders, public and private entities, in the preparation and implementation of overall EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

Serbia should continue its very significant activities from the phase of preparation also in the phase of implementation of the EUSDR. For that there are very good opportunities. One of them is, that by linking Corridor 7 – the Danube with Corridor 10 in railway and road transport and by establishing a cargo center and through the development of multi-modal transportation, Serbia could become a logistic center in Southeast Europe. With such a position, **Serbia could attract foreign direct investments significantly easier**.

Anyhow, the outcome of the Danube Region Strategy development process is expected to be a comprehensive and consensus based activity plan defining concrete strategic and cooperative projects along the Danube. Therefore conferences about several themes around and in the field of the EUSDR are of utmost importance, especially in the Danube countries of the West Balkan. From this angle the international conference held on November 14-15, 2011 in the Belgrade *Institute of International Politics and Economics* is a very valuable contribution to awareness rising, knowledge spreading and scientifically discussing several questions important for future implementation of the EUSDR.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Duško Dimitrijević, director and to Nevenka Jeftić Šarčević, assistant director for research of the Institute of International Politics and Economics for the wise decision, not only to organize this conference, but to ensure the continuation of the Danube researches in the Institute.

Edita Stojić Karanović, Research Professor,  
President of the International Scientific Forum  
“Danube – The River of Cooperation” and President  
of the Scientific Program Committee of the Conference

## Chapter I

---

# STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DANUBE RIVER AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN ITS BASIN

Grigorij Mesežnikov<sup>1</sup>

## THE DANUBE REGIONAL COOPERATION AS A PLATFORM FOR BOOSTING SERBIA'S CHANCES IN EURO-INTEGRATION: SOME POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### ABSTRACT

One of the most important aspects of society's transformation in post-communist countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe is their participation in European integration processes. Ten post-communist states have become the full-fledge EU members in 2004–2007, and Serbia is now preparing to launch the accession process. Serbia's position in Danube region and its relations with other countries of the region can effect its ambitions and abilities to start and to complete the negotiations with EU on full-fledge membership. Inter-state (bilateral and multilateral) cooperation in Danube region can be extremely important for Serbia as a new EU applicant country. Danube region includes six EU member states: two old ones (Germany and Austria) and four new ones (Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria). Three of them are immediate Serbia's neighbors. Danube regional format of cooperation can serve as a platform for boosting Serbia's positions in EU integration. It can multiply the number of Serbia's advocates in EU, can bring Serbia together with the new EU member states which benefited themselves from the regional cooperation before entering the EU (Slovakia and Hungary within the format of Visegrad 4).

Due to specific reasons, related mostly to the break-up of Yugoslavia and the subsequent developments, Serbia could not use the benefits of regional cooperation as a favorable precondition of launching the process of accession to EU (unlike other post-communist countries, for instance Baltic states or Visegrad 4 countries). However, nowadays the Danube regional cooperation (even if it is not replicating fully the format of V4 or Baltic3) can offer Serbia unique opportunity to compensate this shortage inherited from the past. Serbia's consideration of the Danube region as its broader EU neighborhood should be one of the imperatives of country's integration agenda.

*Key words:* Inter-state cooperation, Danube region, Serbia, European Union.

---

<sup>1</sup> Grigorij Mesežnikov, Ph.D., President of the Institute for Public Affairs, Bratislava, Slovakia, e-mail: mesez@ivo.sk.

One of the most important aspects of society's transformation in post-communist countries is their participation in integration processes in Europe. Ten Central and Eastern European states have become the full-fledged EU members in 2004–2007. Serbia is now launching its own accession process.

The recent concept of EU macro-regional policies, including policy in Danube region, officially formulated in the *European Union Strategy for Danube Region* (hereafter Danube Strategy), particular EU member states' involvement into implementation of such policies, Serbia's position in Danubian geographic space and its relationships with other countries of the region can have tangible impact to Serbia's ambitions and abilities to start and to complete the negotiations with EU on full-fledged membership.

Although EU, especially of its specific constituent elements (Euro-zone), is passing currently through the serious, even critical developments, trying to seek solutions for painful economic problems, the project of European integration still remains the most successful in the continent's modern history and attractive for potential new members. Even in such disturbing and obscure situation, one can believe, the unique coincidence of factors exists for new candidate (applicant) states to energize their efforts to be included into the integration processes.

It is Serbia which would use now this momentum. Community of states, mentioned in the Danube Strategy, includes eight EU member states: two old ones (Germany and Austria) and six new ones (Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Romania, and Bulgaria). Danube regional format of cooperation therefore can serve as a platform for boosting Serbia's positions in EU integration processes.

Of course, the process of direct negotiations with the EU during the accession period, the fulfilment of general criteria for the membership and the adequate response to specific conditionality related to Serbia represent the main tools for the authentic country's involvement into European integration processes. However, Serbia's participation in the practical implementation of EU Danube Strategy, the interactions with the countries of the region, reception of experience accumulated by the new and old EU member states in different areas of society's development, can be used as practically important and politically highly significant tool.

Being a candidate country, situated in the Danube region, Serbia can benefit from:

- the existing well-elaborated mechanism of candidate countries' involvement into European integration process as a main general tool for accession,
- consequent application of EU Strategy for Danube Region, approved at the meeting of European Council in June 2011 as a final output of Romanian-Austrian initiative,
- use of experience with the regional cooperation accumulated by some countries of Danube region in other formats in the previous years – before and during the accession period,

- use of the strengthened cooperation with the “old” EU member states in the region, especially with Germany, the main engine of EU enlargement process yet,
- use of society’s transformation experience of the “new” EU member states in the region (the conducted institutional, political and socio-economic reforms) as well as their particular responses to EU conditionality,
- energizing the enthusiastic approach and advocacy positions of some Danube region’s countries supportive toward Serbia’s ambitions to reach the full-fledged membership in EU
- moderating and improving relations with Serbia’s neighbouring countries (former Yugoslavia’s republics), that would help to remedy the legacy of the past, containing poisonous elements of political distrust, ethnic and religious animosities and mutual allegations.

Let’s touch selected socio-political aspects of the above-mentioned points.

### **Contexts of European integration**

The years, which followed the collapse of communist regimes in CEE countries at the end of 80s, were marked by in-depth transformation in all areas of society. The vast majority of the former communist states in Central and Eastern Europe declared the membership in the EU their priority goal. Meanwhile, the EU has elaborated the common legislation *acquis communautaire*, introduced the common currency and has taken other important steps towards the homogenization of its internal environment. The enlargement coincided – in time – with the trends of homogenization.

For 55 years, the project of European integration brought peace, stability, prosperity and democracy to Europe, the continent that has suffered frequent wars, ethnic conflicts, poverty and brutal dictatorships in the past. After the World War II, the project of European integration has gained the strong support from Europeans – political elites and populations alike. The process of uniting the European nations had a number of dimensions. Marc Plattner wrote, that the EU meant very things to different people: “1) an institutional framework for assuring peace among the member states; 2) a way to recover the clout in international affairs that the major European powers once wielded individually; 3) an essentially economic arrangement to build a large European market; 4) a vehicle for making European economies and firms more competitive with those of Asia and The United States; 5) a tool for countering U.S. political and cultural hegemony; 6) a practical response to the increasingly transitional dimension of the problems facing European states; 7) a first step toward global governance; 8) an instrument for forging a common European culture; or 9) a framework for protecting and fostering cultural diversity, both within and among the states of Europe”.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Marc Plattner: *Competing Goals, Conflicting Perspectives* in: Journal of Democracy, October 2003, Volume 14, No. 4, pp. 43–44.



This diversity of EU image, mentioned by prominent American scholar, however, did not lead to the weakening of support for the project of European integration itself – on the contrary, it strengthened the attractiveness of this project in the countries which have not been members of EU (European Community – EC) before. This was very evident when EU prepared and carried out the last waves of enlargement (in 2004 and 2007), which has increased the number of EU members to 27.

After the collapse of the non-democratic regimes in 1989, the most popular slogan in Central and Eastern European countries became the slogan of “Return to Europe”. Although not many people in these countries at that time had a clear idea about what the formal aspects of such a “return to Europe” would entail, almost all seemed to understand that the gist of it was building the foundations of a societal order that had already existed in developed Western European countries. It was quite clear that the people of these countries must begin to build their society anew and construct it on the pillars of liberty, democracy, market economy, respect for human rights and personal responsibility. For most Central and Eastern European countries, the “return to Europe” quickly became synonymous with joining a community of states which embodied the idea of a united Europe. The general social transformation and the endeavour to join the EU became two sides of the same coin.

The close interconnection between the process of European integration and societal transformation in CEE countries has demonstrated the significance of international factors for development of these countries during a period of crucial societal changes. Jacques Rupnik noted that in no other region of the world has the impact of international factors on democratization been so apparent as in Central and Eastern Europe<sup>3</sup> He has summarized the four basic dimensions of the Central Europeans’ attempts to become the constituent parts of the united Europe:

1. Cultural: “Central Europeans ...emphasized the shared European culture, civilization and democratic values that had survived crumbling ideologies”,
2. Political: “They saw integration into the EU as an indicator of the success and irreversibility of their democratic transition”,
3. Economic: “The EU was seen as a club not only of democracies, but also of prosperous countries”,
4. Security: “The EU has a more „preventive“(or indirect) security purpose – to create such a web of interdependence among member state as to make conflict unthinkable”.<sup>4</sup>

All four dimensions, mentioned by known French analyst, are highly relevant for Serbia, which is now progressing in society’s transformation after the years of internal

---

<sup>3</sup> Jacques Rupnik: Eastern Europe: The International Context in: *Journal of Democracy*, April 2000, Volume 11. No. 2, pp. 115–116.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 123–124.

political turbulences and regional conflicts when its political elite is expressing its unambiguous intents of the country to join EU.

### **EU enlargement mechanism**

Return of the CEE countries to Europe was possible thanks to the principle of inclusion, which the EU employed when it defined its position toward the post-communist states. Immediately after CEE countries embarked on their way of democratization and transformation, the EU began to form a new type of partnership with them. First came the programs of assistance and economic cooperation; later the association agreements were signed; and finally the negotiations on the full-fledged membership of these countries took place. In the post-communist countries, achieving the full fledged membership was defined as number one priority which had a society-wide support.

During the 1990's, the EU has created a set of instruments to regulate the whole process of enlargements, which were being set up in three phases. The character of these instruments reflected the main trends of the transformation process in candidate countries. In the first phase, the EU reacted to revolutionary societal and geopolitical changes in CEE; in the second phase EU took into consideration the changed status of the post-communist states (by applying the associated membership status); and in the third phase the EU elaborated a pre-accession strategy before the negotiations about the membership began with the applicant countries. In June 1993, the European Council in Copenhagen formulated a clear position on the prospect of EU enlargement stating that if any European country showed interest to become a member state of the Union, it might do so, however, the accession process and EU enlargement could take place at a time when the accession country was able to accept membership obligations by fulfilling the required economic and political conditions. These conditions included the following:

- stability of democratic institutions, rule of law, respect of human and minority rights,
- functioning market economy,
- ability to meet the pressure from the market of EC,
- ability to accept membership obligations, which contain commitment to the goals of political, economic and currency union.

In 2000, a decision was taken at the EU summit in Helsinki to open negotiation with all candidate countries. The negotiations process and its core procedure – the closing of the particular accession chapters – was putting pressure on the candidate countries to carry out the necessary legislative and administrative measures aimed at intensifying their reform efforts.

While Central European countries were forced since beginning of 90s de facto to adjust their integration policies to the changing conditions during the whole process of formation of EU enlargement framework, coping with some ambiguity at the initial

stage of accession, the elaboration of Serbia's "road map" to the union can be guided by much more precise and stable navigation.

### **Danube strategy**

Compare to another EU macro-regional policies or models of trans-regional cooperation, regulating EU external relations and defining its priorities in the neighbourhoods, the Danube Strategy directly connects EU priorities with the process of EU enlargement. The latest waves of EU enlargement in 2004 and 2007 are mentioned in the first paragraph of the document that stresses that "the world's most international river basin is now largely a European Union (EU) space". In the chapter on challenges and opportunities the document argues that main messages proceeding from the consultation of relevant stakeholders, including the EU institutions, about the issue were as follow: „(1) this is a welcome initiative to reinforce the integration of the Region in the EU; (2) Member States and Third Countries (including candidate countries and potential candidates) commit themselves at the highest political level; (3) the Commission is key in facilitating the process; (4) existing resources can be much better used for Strategy objectives and (5) the Strategy must deliver visible, concrete improvements for the Region and its people”.

In the relevant areas, the Danube Strategy is fulfilling the provisions of the strategy *Europe 2020*, which is the key liability of EU in employment and in intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth. The added value of Danube strategy is the fact that EU is transferring all the mentioned goals to the non-member states. The key element of Danube Strategy is accord with the EU legal norms and policies.

The Danube Strategy represents a much clearer definition of *finalité* than any other EU macro-regional initiatives or policies (Europe-Mediterranean cooperation, Eastern Partnership). Strategy not only widens the approach of existing Danube regional organizations (Danube Commission and International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River) to address specific issues in order to tackle priorities in an integrated way, but also creates better conditions for such kind of regional cooperation and development which can lead to the new forms of involvement of the EU non-member states (the applicant countries) into the integration, therefore can directly boost their chances to reach full-fledged membership. The number of the applicant and potential member states, included into the Danube Strategy, alongside with the „old“ and “new“ EU member state (14 countries in total – 8 members and 6 non-members) indicates the genuine strategic consideration. The document argues that „the fall of the Iron Curtain and EU enlargement provide an opportunity for a better future [for Danube region]. It also says that „the Strategy provides a sustainable framework for policy integration and coherent development of the Danube Region. It sets out priority actions to make it an EU region for the 21st century“. The aim of the strategy is to strengthen the implementation and coordination of EU policies as well as coordination of EU legal norms in this area.

## **Regional cooperation as a factor speeding up the accession process: V4 and Danube Strategy**

Some Central European states actively used the mechanisms of regional cooperation in order to reach the basic aims of their foreign policy and integration ambitions. Since 1991, the Visegrad group of the states have existed (the official name “V4” exists since 1993). This important format of regional cooperation helped the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland to keep high level of stability in the region, to solve the problems that are occurring from time to time in relations between them, and to support mutually in their efforts to join European Union (as well as NATO). The V4 format has quickly proven to be extremely functional. Intensive cooperation was going on not only on bilateral, but also on multilateral level. At least two times a year the summits of prime ministers of four countries took place, at least one time a year there was a summit of the head of the states (presidents) and they were the regularly meetings of particular ministers (interior, transportation, defence, culture, labour, environment, agriculture, education etc.). The V4 countries were trying to coordinate their positions within EU (even if they do not have the identical views in all areas); they supported the internal reforms of EU (institutional and structural) in principle as well as its further enlargement. They stood also for closer cooperation with the countries which wanted to join EU in the future and for the support of democratization in other transforming countries.

The cooperation of Visegrad countries had several dimensions. When in 1991 the Visegrad group was established, it was the community of countries united by common historical destiny, cultural closeness, the same type of social reforms launched after the collapse of communist regimes and the pursuit of good neighbourly relations. Then, especially the security dimension came to the fore: after the demise of the Warsaw Treaty, it was necessary to ensure stability in the Central European region and to create conditions for the integration of Central European countries to Western European integration structures. Visegrad cooperation began creating an effective barrier against the old Central European illnesses – nationalism, xenophobia, ethnic and religious intolerance, and political distrust. Since the second half of 90-s the Euro-integration agenda prevailed in V4 group. It was managed in quite successfully manner, and V4 countries have become the members of EU (as well as NATO). Already during the preparations for EU membership, the Visegrad cooperation began to cross the framework, traditionally determined by the state institutions. The civic dimension was strengthened particularly, what helped to promote joint activities in the areas closest to the citizens – culture, arts, education, and media.

In comparison with another cases of regional cooperation the Visegrad cooperation was unique by its low level of formalization. Unlike the Benelux, the Nordic Council or the Central European Initiative it did not have any political or administrative structures, apart of the grant-making International Visegrad Fund, supporting multilateral projects in such areas as scientific research, culture, art, environment, civil society development etc. (it is worth noting that Serbia is among the countries eligible to apply for grants).

Although as a result of internal political turbulences within particular V4 countries and the problems in bilateral relations, Visegrad cooperation from time to time was faced with serious difficulties, the shared feeling of regional solidarity between V4 states has not gone away and it has the real chances of survival in an enlarged European Union.

Due to specific reasons, related mostly to the break-up of Yugoslavia and the subsequent developments, Serbia could not use the benefits of regional cooperation as a favourable precondition of launching the process of accession to EU (unlike V4 countries). However, now the Danube regional cooperation (even if it is not replicating fully the format of Visegrad 4) can offer Serbia unique opportunity to compensate this shortage inherited from the past. The feeling of regional solidarity was evidently higher between V4 countries than between Balkans states in 90s, however the V4 group was the formation of only applicant countries. The involvement of EU member states into implementation of the Danube Strategy (three of them are V4 countries with the rich experience of regional cooperation) can bring to Danube cooperation new development impulses.

The articulated considerations that the Visegrad group should broaden the format of traditional cooperation “V4 plus” to the countries of Danube region (namely, to non-member states, including Serbia) indicate that the whole set up of V4 group in this issue is inclining rather to synergy, not to rivalry.

### **Democracy promotion and reforms and through the integration**

After the collapse of the communist regimes, the nations of Central and Eastern European countries were faced with a necessity to carry out the fundamental changes in their societies. These groundbreaking changes included the following:

- elimination of the legacy inherited from the totalitarian/authoritarian regimes, process of political and judicial rehabilitations, property restitutions etc.,
- formation of political system based on pluralism and democracy. Introduction of efficient mechanisms of checks and balances, rule of law, multiparty political system, free and fair elections etc.
- creation of functioning system of protection of human and minority rights,
- formation of the modern civil society,
- introduction of principles of market economy (privatization of state-owned property, liberalization of economic relations). Private sector became a dominant sector in the economy as it drives the GDP production.
- introduction of the reform of public administration and decentralization, development of local-government and local democracy.

Evaluating the impact of integration process on development in Central and Eastern Europe one comes to the conclusion that the process of European integration acted as an irreplaceable catalyst of the transition in the post-communist countries. In the final

stage of the accession process, strong integration conditionality has been established aimed at achieving transformation in the societies of the accession countries. This conditionality lead to two outcomes – the policy of encouragement for those countries which met the criteria for membership or the policy of refusal for those countries which did not meet the criteria (in this case this approach was aimed to generate pressure to motivate the internal changes in these countries, which activated political forces with the alternative pro-integration program).

Serbia's way of transition to democracy was more complicated than transitional paths of other CEE countries. It was affected by the consequences of disintegration tendencies in the former Yugoslavia, and the EU conditionality was applied to Serbia (as well as to some other former Yugoslavia's constituent parts) in the previous years rather in negative than positive mode. However, the recent developments in the area of systemic changes in Serbia are encouraging. Reports and indexes of international monitoring organizations (Freedom House, Bertelsmann Foundation) indicate the progress Serbia made in the areas of political democracy, institutional development and socio-economic reforms. Positive EU conditionality, which would applied to Serbia similarly as to the countries of CEE during last decade ("democracy promotion through the integration") would strengthen its abilities to respond to challenges of integration.

### **Integration Conditionality: Case of Slovakia**

The new EU member states in Danube region have been the objects of application of positive and negative mode of EU conditionality. Slovakia experienced a combination of both. It represents good example of how the process of EU enlargement has fundamentally affected the country's domestic development. Slovakia's experience can be taken into consideration and used by Serbia.

Slovakia was the only Visegrad country that after the communist regime's 1989 collapse had to struggle for democracy and the principal character of its political regime. Due to its troubled domestic development between 1994 and 1998, Slovakia failed to comply with the political criteria for EU membership and was left outside the so-called Luxembourg group of EU candidate countries. In Slovakia, the fundamental issue became the struggle for the character of political regime. This struggle was characterized by a strong conflict between top state institutions, fierce confrontation between the governing coalition and the opposition, preparation, adoption and implementation of legislative and administrative initiatives designed to create an environment suitable for concentration of the political power in the hands of dominant political forces, aggravation of conflicts between the state institutions and civil society, tensions between the official state power and ethnic minorities and abuse of organs of state power for the benefit of party interests and goals. It was not a standard political struggle between the government and the opposition that would be conducted in compliance with generally accepted principles but a struggle over the very nature of these principles.

Building the institutional foundations of a new state was accompanied for several years by the endeavour of democratic forces to preserve the degree of freedom and democracy achieved during the initial period of transition after the collapse of communism and, subsequently, to overcome all democratic deficits that prevented the country from fulfilling its integration ambitions. This endeavour led to a change in power following the 1998 parliamentary elections. The main topic of the elections was the renewal of country's chances to integrate into EU. The results of these elections reflected all changes that had occurred within the Slovak society since the collapse of the totalitarian regime and were possible due to a high degree of political mobilization of pro-democratic and pro-integration citizens, implementation of sufficiently effective coalition strategies by democratic political forces, activation of civil society actors who effectively combined spontaneous and organized activities, an ability to capitalize on the expert potential accumulated within the non-governmental sector.

The results of the 1998 parliamentary elections caused a dramatic change in the whole development of the country and renewed its chances for comeback to Europe. Between 1998 and 2002, the country managed to eliminate most deformations from the previous period and to restore democratic mechanisms. A broad coalition of democratic parties passed and implemented laws that enhanced general stability of the country's political system and improved enforcement of human and minority rights. Launching the public administration reform that transferred important powers from central executive organs onto regional and municipal self-governments has further strengthened the decentralization trends. Slovakia successfully completed the negotiation with EU about the full-fledged membership at the same time as other nine applicant countries, including its neighbours – Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary.

High popular support for idea of membership in EU played a very important role in the successful transformation in CEE countries during the accession period. The support of Slovakia's EU accession has become the main determinant of public opinion in the field of foreign policy orientation and has consistently reached very high values. As an institution, the EU has always enjoyed a great confidence among Slovak citizens and public opinion polls have repeatedly shown trust in the EU clearly prevailing over distrust. The public support of Slovakia's EU accession oscillated between two thirds and three quarters of the population. In the referendum on Slovakia's EU accession in 2003, 92% of participating voters endorsed the country's EU membership. It was the highest rate of support among all candidate countries (turnout was 52%).

Opinion polls conducted in last years in Serbia, are signaling the declining public support for country's membership in EU. According to the Gallup Balkan Monitor, 57 percent of the respondents supported Serbia's membership in EU in 2008; however, in 2008 it was 50 percent and only 44 percent. in 2010. It is serious challenge for leaders of the country, pro-integration politicians and public intellectuals – to reverse the negative trend. Slovakia's experience with keeping public euro-enthusiasm on quite high level can be used by Serbian partners as a source of inspiration.

Sándor Götz<sup>1</sup>

## SHIPPING ON THE WATERS OF SEE REGION: OVER-BRIDGING THE BORDERS

### ABSTRACT

The navigational and transport use of Danube and its tributaries – in the European context on economic cooperation, cultural and tourist navigation has currently little benefits compared to optimally achievable. Having that in mind the regional project named “Shipping on the Waters of SEE Region: Over-bridging the Borders” is proposed.

The partners in this project are aiming to work-out a Feasibility Study for the future development of shipping on the waters of the above-mentioned rivers and canals according to EU-20/20/20 intentions, and supporting the rural-city connections, preparing the sustainable development of the regional area.

*Key words:* River Danube, the Danube Basin, Southeast Europe, the Danube–Tisa–Danube Canal, Drava-Sava navigation, sustainable development, Rural-city, agglomeration-megapolises, and International fast shipping connections.

The green shipping and the rural development in the common project area.

### The present situation

It is inevitable that in present days the navigational and transport use of Danube and its tributaries – in the European context on economic cooperation, cultural and tourist navigation has currently little benefits compared to optimally achievable.

The need of the proposed development is supported by a number of important international and national documents, as are the European Parliament Committee on Transport and Tourism, Key findings of DONAUREGIONEN EU Project, the European Commission’s planned EU Marco Polo Program, etc.

Having that in mind the regional project named “Shipping on the Waters of SEE Region: Over-bridging the Borders” is proposed.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sándor Götz, Bsc. Shipbuilding Engineer, Expert of Logistics, Awarded with the Medal of Eötvös Lóránd, President of the “Duna Express” Consortium and initiator of the project “Duna Express”, gotz.sandor@abszolut.eu, www.dunaexpressz.hu.



## **New applications in shipping**

Taking in account that

Shipping as a solution for communal transportation for megapolises

Shipping in rural city shuttle connection

Shipping combi solution for rural agriculture application

City logistic and package distribution service on intermodal solution

Parallel with the EU development intentions, people living in the border regions of Hungary – Romania – Serbia - Croatia, have also identified their national contributions to the European Strategy for Danube Region which contains project proposals of waterway development and water transport development, which may contribute to the implementation of proposed commuter shipping in the South East European region's key cities network for ensure better access and greater mobility. So, in Romania it is needed waterway development proper to UNECE IV classification to ensure improved navigability of the Bega canal, in Serbia integrated management of Bačka and Banat waterway system (Danube-Tisa-Danube Canal and tributaries). Revitalization DTD channel Becej-Bogojevo proper to UNECE IV and development of the new ship lock at Novi Bečej dam on the river Tisa is needed.

The proposed project of strengthening mutual cooperation in the field of the water transport would include the following basic directions:

1. Infrastructure analysis
2. Analysis of goods and passenger flows besides the analysis of the economic potential
3. Analysis of the appropriate legal norms and laws
4. Analysis of the possibilities of overcoming the existing barriers and defining goals and possibilities of expanding onto the wider regional level, based on the Danube Strategy Platform
5. Proposal for solving problems in stages (phases) and achieving the defined goals

*The partners in this project are aiming to work-out a Feasibility Study for the future development of shipping on the waters of the above-mentioned rivers and canals according to EU-20/20/20 intentions, and supporting the rural-city connections, preparing the sustainable development of the regional area.*

The task package contains the following issues to solve:

*What connections have to be established for time-table shipping with CNG/LNG propulsion, Where are needed new ports to plant or development with standardised port execution, Where are needed informatics waterway on-line supervision, and with what kind of functions, System engineering to work-out for designing this informatics,*

*What kind of vessel design and facilities are needed to execute to help the fast passenger and freight change of board for the special needs of transportation.*

*Water Rescue System Organization to stand-up, as internationally operated on the waterway system of the area.*

*What kind of cooperation would be useful to serve the shipbuilding, ship-repair and technical assisting functions in the region.*

*To develop by RDI work the suitable utilisation of CNG/LNG filling method of small rural and city port applications.*

*The infrastructural needs for the generation, distributing and utilization of the CNG/LNG fuel supply.*

*To develop the new waterway solutions according to the local transportation needs of the future, and the positions of the different barriers on the road transportation possibilities.*

*Where can be suggested to establish the ferry, and car-ferry connections to widen the regional economical developments between the countries.*

*How can be assumed the different transportation capacities on the waterways, taking into consideration the ongoing projects and the influences of the cooperating countries along the different routes of the waterway.*

*How will be taken into account all projects and directives of the EU, the international standards and prescriptions, and the national requirements for the unique localities in the project run.*

*What kind of administrative requirements are needed for helping the seamless cross-border flow for the passengers and the freight forwarding,*

*What kind of institutional, civil, and national cooperation can help to achieve the most efficiency getting from the development.*

*What development phases can be planned for the next planned budgeting period of the related countries, in this project.*

*What kind of results can be waited from these developments if the private stakeholders can be joined to the national planned issues.*

*What kind of advantages can be waited in the case if the waterway results will be enlarged to the road planning transportation as well, and the multimodal transportation way can be executed on the region, directing all possible transportation load onto the water, and the international context of that will be assuring the working possibility of the employees in the neighbourhood country without migration.*

*The heaviest problem what needs to solve in this project the special local environmental problems arising from the local landscape around the waterway. This problem is not serious for the shipping facilities, but mainly for the road transportation capacity barriers, and emissions arising from those, if we take into consideration the endless development of the transit route in the Danube Basin. But to find the best way of relief for the problems, what*

*could mean a very complex investigation to solve the place of the embankment and porting facilities, with the lowest investments and highest environment protection way.*

*In the project a special part is planned what needs international team as horizontal workmanship organised for discovering all national, international, and EU law rule investigations, harmonizing the different legal customs for the locally planned structures and controlling tools.*

*From above can be made suggestions for the necessary organizations for the operating services and the background administrative works.*

*From the investigation we get the following results:*

- = In which time-planning period could be waited, by what conditions,*
- = For what kind of transportation problem could be solved by the waterway solution, and the data validity conditions for the time-planning*
- = How to plan the steps of the developments and investments.*

*The analysis of the appropriate legal norms and laws (national, bilateral and international) provides legal framework for defining the goals of the study.*

- General regulations for all EU-countries*
- General regulations for the inland shipping services*
- Specific/unique regulations for the relevant territory*

*From the legal norms and laws*

- realisation process of the previous points' results should be legally and strategically possible*
- define proposals for the mitigation or removal of legal bars*

*Proposal of solving problems in stages (phases) and achieving defined goals represents the conclusive part of the study, those recommends the ways and dynamics of activities for the realization of the output results.*

- Developments on the waterway and on the shores*
- Developments on the shipping services, and ship-repairs*
- Developments on the shipping supporting infrastructural facilities*
- Developments on the state, and/or self-governmental, civil organizations supporting the secure and reliable shipping*
- These functions will give a possibility to generate a good atmosphere for sustainable economic development inside the sub-region and will leveraging the local development differences, discover all waste resources for agricultural and communal fuel generation*
- Helping the population for having higher life standard by living more environment-friendly way, and feeling the results of the European Unites' thinking and common goals.*

Proposal of the solution must be based on cost/benefit analysis and multi-criteria decision-making in accordance with the defined priorities.

The project is now in starting phase for the bidding stage, and the Association of Hungarian Industrialists and Employers will be the leader of the project with more than 10 partners from the contributing countries. Now the project budgeting is under planning for the 24 months running. During the project several professional article will be written, and naturally civil presentations will be given on the same way.

We hope that from the project lot of useful information will be resulted, and disseminated not only for the shipping area, and the related localities, but naturally for all connected utilization area as well. These results will be used for the different villages and cities in the households, for the transportation fuel, for the agricultural waste to handle and utilize, and for leveraging the life standards of the population. The project can be one of the flag-ship project for the cooperating countries and a sample for projects what have not only empiric results, but also operative goals and results on the regional utilization inside Danube Strategy.

Picture 1.

A type of cat which has different versions to utilise it on agglomeration service and on international connection as well, using different superstructure execution for the passengers on board, wit the embankment bridge connection for high-loaded purposes:



Picture 2.

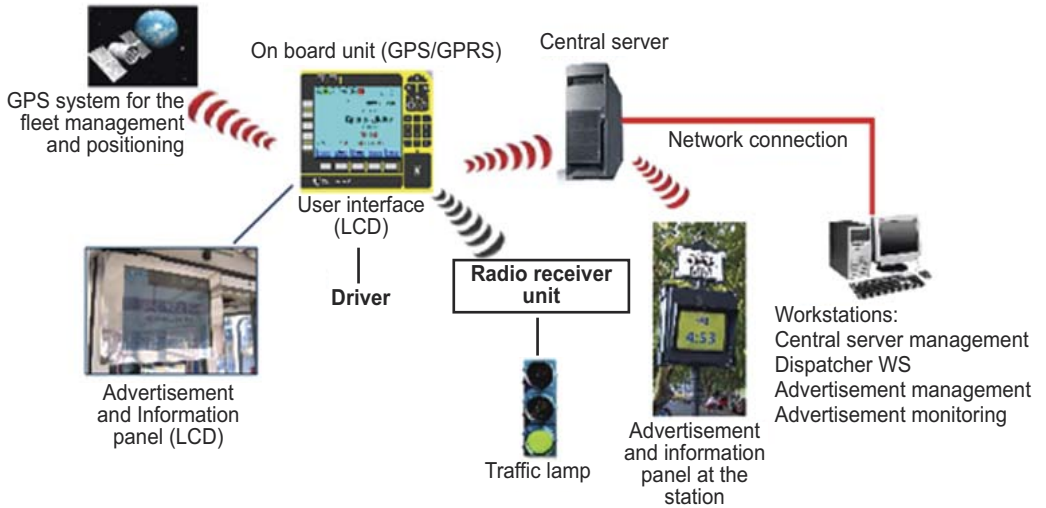
Fleet control facility of the ship service:



## TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

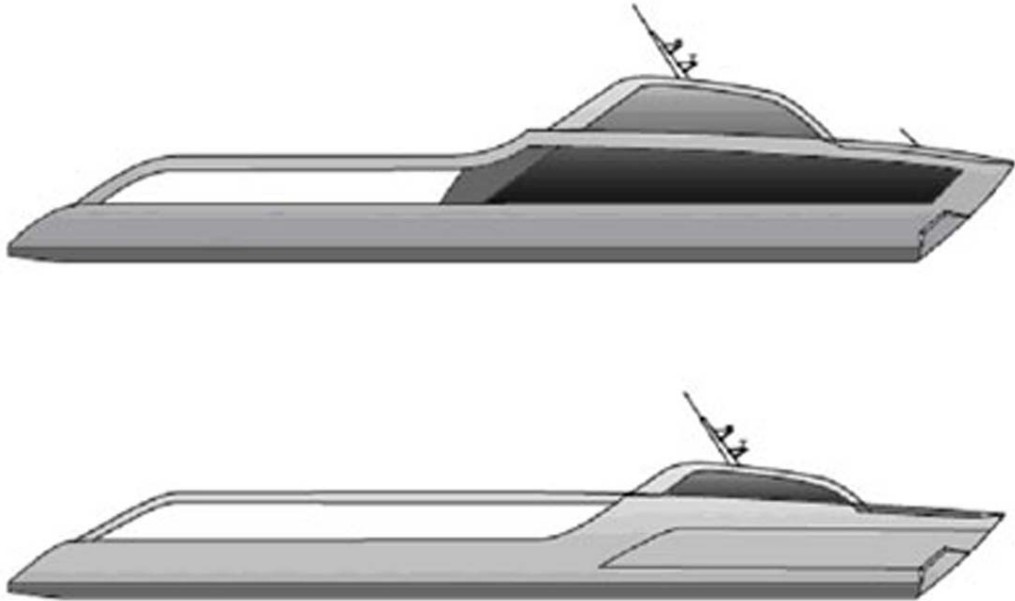


### Structure of the traffic control system



Picture 3.

The other version of the cat family what are suitable for rural transportation, or city logistic solution, or car-ferry transport on/off loading possibility from the rear ramping facilities of the vessel:



Marija Knežević<sup>1</sup>

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AS A DANUBE COUNTRY

### APSTRACT

In order for the Danube region to be attractive and desirable tourist destination, it is necessary to include all countries that gravitate towards the Danube. Bosnia and Herzegovina is among them (as well as the Republic of Srpska) because more than two thirds of the territory and nearly as much of water resources end in the Danube River. As BiH has great perspective in tourism development, because it has the potentials which, with a bit of work, will, responsible behavior and hospitality, can be turned into very attractive tourist products that can come in the top of the interest of contemporary tourists, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country that should be an integral part of a group of countries of the Danube region. Expected increase of tourism development in BiH will reflect to the broader region, and consequently, to the Danube region towards which this country gravitates in natural and geographic terms. The development of “responsible tourism”, “environmental awareness” and “sustainable development” of the Danube region will be more realistic if BiH is involved and support these tendencies, but also slow down them significantly, if left out of the development strategy of the Danube region.

Thus, this paper aims to broaden the issue of the concern about the development of the Danube region as a new tourist destination.

*Key words:* BiH, Danube region, tourism, sustainable development, waters.

### Introduction

WTO reports show increased interest of contemporary tourists for our region, which has been confirmed by the arrivals of tourists during the past ten years to BiH and neighboring countries. What attracts tourists to our region are all kinds of diversity: climate, relief, geography, culture and diversity of ethnic cultures, religions, customs. On the other hand, general orientation of modern tourists is return to the nature, search for sources of drinking water, healthy food and intact nature, which lacks in Europe and the world more and more. Actuality of the problem of tourism as a branch of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Marija Knežević Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University for Business Studies Banjaluka, Faculty for Tourism.

economy and the development generator is increased by the fact that we do not have competitive advantage in any industry that could provide a place to our country in Europe. Although tourism is not known as an area that can quickly revitalize the country, it has remained to us the only chance of economic swing in the battle to include Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European flows. Tourism is an area that does not attract big investors who are accustomed to the rapid turnover of capital and huge profits, so it remains the concern of the host people, the lower levels of society and the states determined for social aspects of the economy, states grown out of the socialist system, where this type of business is the most natural one. BiH (and the Republic of Srpska) is one of those emerging, small states and small markets that clears its path of development and entry into Europe through the transition process and the competitive advantages that can provide survival in the harsh tourist market.

Tourism is an industry classified today among the top three industries (behind petroleum and automotive industries). Tourism is a clean export, the best one: export at home! Tourism is a branch that most connects economy because one financial unit of the tourist creates two financial units in other sectors, therefore tourism is the largest income and employment multiplier. Special value of modern tourism is its pastorality, namely tourism is the economy of preserved natural values, where, with a modest investment, great economic effects can be achieved. This is particularly important for small, undeveloped countries, countries in transition and countries with preserved and intact nature, as the RS and BiH are.

## **1. Regional development as a new way of thinking**

Strengthening the awareness about the role of regional development in the overall development of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic of Srpska has been obvious in recent years, opening new perspectives in overall development and tourism development in particular. Problems that inhibit these tendencies are present in the legislation because the existing legislation does not contain a unique national legal system that would systematically address the issues of regional development throughout the national territory. Instead, there are entity laws and a series of laws within them that are relevant to the regulation and implementation of regional development. By organization of the state of BiH and the Republic of Srpska as its entity, tourism as a sector has remained at the entity level. It might mean a bit more care by the local institutions, but in any case, much less care by the state and the inability of the state to create a strategy for tourism development throughout the territory and to connect this strategy further to the tourist potentials of the surroundings.

Breaking the larger territory into small countries, entities, cantons and regions made the biggest damage to the tourism. Since we are destined to dependent development, as well as other neighboring countries, and entities are not recognized as states, possibility to act from the entity level is decreased as well as the possibility to be awarded incentive funds, without which the Republic of Srpska (BiH as well), as well as the tourism sector



will not be able to catch up with others and to build unique tourist products of the region. In the RS itself, it is necessary to equalize legally the development of certain areas in order to build tourist offer of the entities. After that comes the problem of unification of parts across the country. Some progress in this regard was made by creating Export Development Strategy of BiH (2011).<sup>2</sup> We made also a Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Srpska (2010) and the Strategy of Development of Rural Tourism, RS (2010). The only body that deals with the problems of tourism at the state level, the Association for Tourism, was established in early 2012 within the Foreign Chamber of Commerce of BiH. Institutional framework for implementing regional development at the entity level is the Ministry of Trade and Tourism under which people interested in regional development work, but they face several major problems, the largest of which are two:

- Tourism does not have its Ministry, so trade has always the priority, especially with respect to funds or personnel representing it,
- Since such Ministry is in RS, policy of regional development comes to the obstacles in the relation RS-BiH, therefore regional development has been insufficiently defined in spatial and political terms.

Other institutions that touch upon the problems of regional development are various development agencies, technology centers and similar, although they remain at the level of local development. In such an environment it is difficult to get technical and financial assistance from the European Union used by the surrounding countries, which is visible in the field.<sup>3</sup> The problems of regional development must be defined at the regional level, it is necessary to develop models to determine the level of development and ways of harmonizing the region, which precedes the recognition of tourist potential and their turning into tourist products with which we can go to the broader market. When we create a legal basis for the development, it is possible to create program base of regional development and then to apply for funding for future structural funds EU for development. In all these processes, BiH lags behind other countries in the region, although it has its positive examples that can be used as examples of good practice.

In the process of creating new legislation, it is very important that it is coordinated with the legislation of the neighboring countries, as well as with EU legislation, because the resistance to Europe present by many institutions in BiH and RS will have to

---

<sup>2</sup> Export Strategy of Development of Tourism BiH was made by the expert group with financial and consultant support EUEXPRO2 (Supporting Export Development and Promotion in Bosnia & Hercegovina. [www.euexpro2](http://www.euexpro2).

<sup>3</sup> An example of Croatia can be taken, which made a lot through the project “Strategy and strengthening capacity for regional development“ financed by EU through CARDS program: it made National Strategy of Regional Development, action plan for strategy implementation and the Act on Regional Development, which solved many problems of regional development and management: programming, partnership, evaluation, and made the models for determination of areas that lag behind in development and methods for solution of these problems.

disappear, because the isolation is not a development option. In a globalized world, the process of integrations is inevitable, so the resistance means slowing down development. In the field of tourism this is the very visible, because tourism, indeed, knows no boundaries. Contemporary tourists are interested in tourist destinations and tourist products. Therefore, it is necessary rapidly to create working groups, associations, organizations and all other regional associations, which may help the coordination of the legislation with the surroundings and EU, i.e. the strengthening of regional policy and coordination of structural instruments. This is the only possible way to get to the funds provided by the Pre-accession strategy for Balkan countries, and thus the funding from: PHARE, SAPARD and IPA. Particularly important are the IPA funds because they are targeted for development of institutions, cross-border cooperation, regional development, human resources development and rural development. And the facts show that many funds stipulated for BiH were returned or transferred for the next period, which sufficiently supports these views.<sup>4</sup> The fact that only one third of the funds stipulated for BiH was implemented speaks about some other issues in BiH, which need to be urgently solved:

- Non-existence of the development program, or programs that have not been prepared professionally or non-quality programs that do not pass barriers to the funds and
- Existence of various development inhibitors, which are mostly of political nature.

Further development of BiH is possible to be accelerated by the initiation of the separation of the Ministry of Tourism from the Ministry of Trade and the formation of a special Ministry. That would be a way to get better personnel and more people who understand what the tourist sector is and who are adequately trained for this branch of industry. The next step could be the establishment of the Ministry of Regional Development, as the surrounding countries have. This Ministry would connect tourism, agriculture, water management and ecology. In the Republic of Croatia, this Ministry deals with planning and implementing regional development policy and establishes a comprehensive system of planning, programming, management and financing of regional development. Further, it coordinates all the actors involved in planning, programming and monitoring of multi-year regional development plans and projects that are intended to regional development. The Ministry takes care of the balance of development of regions, promotes the regions lagging behind and fully cooperates with the EU in terms of projects on which they can get incentive funds for development. Besides the Ministry of regional development, the surrounding countries have other institutions that promote regional development and regional cooperation such as the Regional Development Fund and the laws that request a new form of behavior: Act on Hilly and Mountainous Areas, Act on Reconstruction and Development of Regions after the War etc.

---

<sup>4</sup> Inofficial data are that only 32% of funds stipulated for BiH were implemented in the previous years: Nezavisne novine 23.11.2011, ([www.nezavisnenovine.com](http://www.nezavisnenovine.com)).

## **2. Water potentials of BiH**

As climate increasingly affects the health of people, it becomes a significant factor in tourist trends and the development of tourism. Global climate changes cause an increase in air temperature, heat exchange regime, a regime change in rainfall and similar. These changes have a strong climatic and bioclimatic effects on humans, wildlife and overall biosystem. Strongest climate change is happening in cities that grow rapidly, are industrialized and have increased number of pollutants. The consequence of these changes is a change in lifestyle of people in those cities, that is the preference for leisure time outside the cities, or more often, living outside urban areas. The climate in BiH has some good points: high insolation (more than 2000 hours per year), moderate air humidity, rare fogs and mild winds. Such climate affects the creation and maintenance of water resources.

BiH and RS are characterized by lowland, mountainous and karst area rivers, and a considerable number of natural and artificial lakes and thermal springs and mineral waters. Each of these forms of water forms has its place in tourism development:

- Thermal waters are mostly present in RS from Novi Grad to Bijeljina and Visegrad. They are the basis of balneotourism, on the basis of the use of which we have spa centers: Vrucica near Teslic, Slatina, Laktasi and Srpske toplice near Banja Luka, Kulasi near Prnjavor, Dvorovi near Bijeljina, Mljecanica and Ljesljani near Novi, and spa Guber near Srebrenica, Vilina Vlas near Visegrad, Ilidza near Sarajevo etc. These spas are famous and present the basis for development of health tourism, which can be combined successfully with congress, sports, ethno, event and other forms of tourism.
- Other water potentials are various lakes located in high mountains (glacier lakes) and artificial lakes: Perucansko and Zvornicko on Drina and lake Bocac on Vrbas. These lakes are important to tourists due to clean, clear and cold water rich in various kinds of fishes, surrounded by magnificent woods of conifers or other kinds and present favourite places for various forms of tourism: excursion, sports, fishing.
- Important water potential are rivers, which are famous for their water courses and diversity so they present important venues for: water sports, fishing, rafting etc.<sup>5</sup> It is sufficient to mention the largerst rivers: Una, Vrbas, Bosna, Drina with many tributes. There are many underground waters as well.

## **3. Condition of tourist and water environment and biodiversity in BiH**

The environmental situation in BiH is specific because destroyed industry in the war and privatization contributed to its respectable quality, which has become an important competitive advantage in tourism. This causes the sustainability of the environment, i.e.

---

<sup>5</sup>In 2009 World Championship in Rafting on Wild Waters was held on Vrbas and in 2010 European Downhill Championship. This was immense tourist swing for this region.

**Table 1. Existing and possible forms of valuation of rivers that gravitate toward Danube basin**

<b>Waters</b>	<b>Existing forms of tourist valorization</b>	<b>Tourism possibilities</b>
Thermo-mineral waters		Sports, wellness, fitness
Vrucica	Health	Sports, wellness, fitness
Slatina	Health	Sports, wellness, fitness
Mljecanica	Health	Sports, wellness, fitness
Kulasi	Health	Sports, wellness, fitness
Dvorovi	Health	Sports, wellness, fitness
Guber	Health	
Vilina Vlas	Health	Sports, wellness, fitness
Ljesljani	Health	Sports, wellness, fitness
Srpske toplice	Sports, recreational	Health, educational
<b>Lakes</b>	<b>Existing forms</b>	<b>Possibilities</b>
Klinje	Excursion, fishing, stationary	Health, eco, educational
Gorica	Fishing	Health, eco, educational
Zvornicko	Fishing, eco, excursion	
<b>Rivers</b>	<b>Existing forms</b>	<b>Possibilities</b>
Mountainous: Drina	Rafting, fishing, education, adventure, ecotourism,	
Mountainous: Janj, Pliva, Vrbas	Eco, excursion, fishing, educational, rafting	
Una, Sana, Vrbas, part of Drina	Fishing, eco, excursion	
Sava, part of Drina, Bosna, Una	Fishing, eco, excursion	Waterway, river

the preservation of natural heritage to be more certain. The quality of water, air, land and biodiversity enable to track requests of modern tourists for these resources. In the RS, since 2000, there exists the Agency for Waters that publishes its journal, “Water and us” which constantly monitors the water quality.<sup>6</sup> According to the Regulation on the Classification and Categorization of Waters, most of the waters in BiH meet the first and second class level, which, along with the quality of land, is an important basis for the development of agriculture, and then agritourism and rural tourism, which are the forms of tourism that are at the top of their interest.

Air quality is determined by the most common contaminants that are present in other destinations as well: heating plants, hydroelectric power plants: Ugljevik, Bocac, wood

<sup>6</sup> Dokic Dragana (2009): Monitoring of waterways in RS 2000-2009. Magazine “Water and us“, Sarajevo 66/2009.

factories in Samac, Kotor, in Gradiska, Kotor Varos and Banja Luka, and the oil refinery in Brod and Modrica. On the other hand, the pollutants are roads, namely cars and agriculture, a major polluter of water, earth and air are the remnants of war.<sup>7</sup> In the perspective, we need greater collaboration throughout BiH, in order to control global pollutants and reduce them to a minimum in the interest of all, especially the development of tourism. This will be forced also by international agreements which BiH signed but it delays with their implementation.<sup>8</sup>

Heterogeneity of BiH area, geomorphological and hydrological diversity and specific geological past make ecoclimate biodiversity special. BiH has a high degree of endemism and relictness, which, according to its diversity of the natural values of flora and fauna are in the top of Europe. According to the documentation of the World Centre for Monitoring Nature Protection in BiH, there are 21 protected areas, of which a large part gravitates toward water area of the Danube region: it is a national park “Kozara”, two landscape parks, nature reserves.<sup>9</sup> All these resources have great ecological, biogenetic, conservational, educational, scientific, esthetical, social, health, and therefore the tourist value. Particularly notable has been the development of ecotourism in national parks, responsible and sustainable tourism, which include the preservation of essential natural resources and non-violation of aesthetic appearance of the environment and landscape. There are many values that a man has created, and which must be protected.<sup>10</sup> The development of these forms of tourism creates a new quality bridge between tourists – locals, where everybody take care of intact nature and that tourists are present. In this context, everyone are talking more and more about the “carrying capacity of tourist destination,” that is about controlling the number of tourists who will not disrupt the biodiversity and ecological balance, which is itself a tourist attraction and motive of those same tourists.

#### **4. Danube character of BiH**

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country of various attributes and known for its diversity in a small space. In total, about 300 km<sup>2</sup>, and has very pronounced diversity in such a small space: geographical, relief, climate, economic, cultural, national. It makes it to be very special and attractive for today`s and especially future tourists, and one predict a bright tourist future to it. Steadily increase of arrival of tourists (about 5% annual

---

<sup>7</sup> Ministrz for Physical Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology in the RS Government (2008). Republic strategy of air protection with management action plan.

<sup>8</sup> BiH entered into international agreements: UNFSSS-Framework UN Convention on Climate Change, SVD. Convention on Biologic Biodiversity), but did not realize them.

<sup>9</sup> Ljubojevic, S. Marceta, D. (2007), “Level of Usage of Woods in Protected Areas RS“, Gazette of Faculty of Forestry of the University in Banja Luka, number 7/2007.

<sup>10</sup> Kadic J. Markovic, B. (2006), “Protected areas of nature in physical plan RS, 2001-2015. Scientific Conference „Management of forest ecosystems of national parks and other protected areas. Collection of works, Jahorina – NP, Sutjeska, July 2006. pg. 305-312.

increase) is the fact that must be the signal to the policy actors to improve the place of tourism in the list of priorities of economic development to which they have been slaves for decades. Changes in the structure of the economy, ministries and regions must be in line with general developments and experiences along with using the experience from neighboring countries that can always be a good example: where we should and where we should not go, because we are behind them in terms of development.

When it comes to tourism and regionality, we must talk about Bosnia as a whole, because its completeness in the region is questionable, let alone to talk about entities and their regions, which are historically and politically often overlapping.

Here are natural predispositions of development before social and political ones, and necessary is to make certain distance from the political divisions in order to see the region as a bearer of the development for a longer period. In fact, integral regional development must be a key way of developing and thinking, if tourism is to raise to the level of interest in contemporary tourists, that is, if you want to turn this interest into economic gain.

In this context is the observation of BiH as a country of the Danube, at least when it comes to tourism development and protection of water areas, which is the main tourist potential of BiH and the Danubian countries. This tendency is accentuated in the Tourism Development Strategy of the RS 2010-2020, but it needs to be developed also in the Strategy of Development of the Danube region. If Slovenia can be a part of that strategy, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska cannot be left out, because almost 80% of the water potential ends across the Sava into the Danube, as shown by the following map:

Picture 1.  
Main basins in  
Bosnia and  
Herzegovina



This area is important for the Danube basin, also because the rivers come from the most undeveloped parts of the Balkans Peninsula, which implies at least two problems:

- These rivers are now clean enough due to insufficient industrialization and urbanization of the areas from which they come,
- But these rivers also come from the areas which expect accelerated development, especially development of tourism, and the actuality of their protection is therefore larger for the future since they may become new pollutants.

Neighbouring countries can learn something, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one may safely say, there is a long, nearly century-old tradition of the existence of state agencies and organizations formed and responsible for the care of the waters. Institutionally it all started during the reign of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in this region, when a serious development process in the field of waters started. Continued in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia with slightly reduced activity, but in the period after World War II until the beginning of the nineties of last century, water management in Bosnia and Herzegovina had important significance, more important than in other republics of former Yugoslavia, both in organizational and in material, personnel, professional and scientific terms. So the waters became public good in BiH, and were placed under special state protection, before and more seriously than in other republics of former Yugoslavia. There are basic principles of water management in BiH:<sup>11</sup>

1. non-commerciality, according to which water is basically not a commercial product, but a legacy that must be preserved, protected and treated in accordance with this
2. integrity, which takes into account natural processes and dynamics of water, and the interrelationship and interdependence of water and water-related ecosystems
3. long-term protection of quality and rational use of available water quantity,
4. protection from harmful effects of water, which stems from the need to protect citizens and their property, taking into account the effects of natural processes,
5. Economic valuation of water, which includes the cost of load, protection and water regulation and protection from flooding,
6. participation of the public in making water management plans,
7. Taking into account the best available technologies and new scientific achievements of the natural laws and best environmental practice.

Tasks of water protection are entrusted to the agencies: the Agency for Water Area of the Sava River in Sarajevo, the Agency for Water Management of the Sava River Basin in Bijeljina, Agency for Water Area of the Adriatic Sea in Mostar and the Agency for Water Area of Herzegovina in Trebinje. The first two agencies (Agency for Water Area of the Sava River in Sarajevo, the Agency for Water Management of the Sava River Basin in Bjeljina) manage also the river basin which comprises a part of an international river basin of the Danube, that is an international sub-basin of the river Sava. The largest

---

<sup>11</sup> Act on Waters (Official Gazette of BiH Federation No. 6, dated 20.11.2006, Art. 153, and Art.3.)

rivers from BiH: Una, Vrbas, Bosna and Drina belong to the basin of the Sava River, i.e. the Danube. Since these rivers make 78% water wealth of BiH, I think that is a fact from which we start when we speak about Danubian countries.

Agencies collect all relevant data on water resources, they do water quality monitoring work, monitoring the ecological status of surface water, preparing plans for the prevention of adverse effects of floods, droughts, coastal erosion, damaging pollution and similar. Activities to be encouraged and reinforced are: promotion of research work in the field of water, because water is a key resource of the future.

BiH belongs to the few countries in Europe that have drinking water, and consumption of only 15% of annual available water resources meet the needs of the state, which is significant information about the importance of this key resource for future generations, since the amount of drinking water is rapidly decreasing. It is therefore necessary to enhance public awareness about sustainable water use, water protection and the protection of aquatic ecosystems, which is the task of these agencies, but also all other social subjects.

## **Conclusion**

When these potentials for tourism development are put in the correlation to the requirements of modern tourists, there is a hope for the sustainable development of tourism in the long run. In order to recognize this generator of development, it is necessary to change the way of thinking at all levels, because tourism is a special branch of the economy: it knows no boundaries and narrow framework of thinking and operating. In tourism, the diversities are competitive advantage, and the offer is the offer of tourist destinations and regions, creating unique tourist products, which are possible to occur in European or world tourist market. In order to create this new way of thinking and new approach, it is necessary to redesign the educational system that produces personnel for the needs of contemporary tourism at all levels of education. Obvious is lagging of the personnel behind the modern tendencies in tourism, hospitality, gastronomy and restaurant business, which produces inability to monitor the increased interest of tourists in our region or gives smaller effects due to poor service. Religious tourism, adventurism, cycling, mountain, tourism in our region's waters are at the top of the interest of tourists and should be used. Therefore, we should produce program strategies of development, bearing in mind our potentials, in which, evidently, current and future customers are interested. With this strategy and the development of the Danube or the Danube region, Bosnia should be included as well, as related tourist destination primarily, and then as an area which gravitates to the Danube River, and can significantly influence the situation in the future of that region. It is possible to achieve by further development of increased cross-border cooperation, because tourism is a sector which knows no localism: economic, political, cultural, physical. Cooperation, cohesion, cross-border and regional cooperation, followed by new staff will be the only way to develop emerging small states and their even smaller markets. Linking tourism



potentials of the wider region and creating new recognizable tourist products of the potentials which we evidently possess is a safe option of development of BiH and the Danube countries.

### Reference

- Development and Promotion in Bosnia&Hercegovina. [www.euexp2](http://www.euexp2).
- EEA: The Dobris Assessment – brochure with information on environment, 1993, [themes.eea.eu.int](http://themes.eea.eu.int).
- Dokić, Dragana, (2009), Monitoring of waterways in RS 2000-2008, “Water and us“, magazine of the Agency for Water area of the Sava river, Sarajevo, no. 66/2009.
- “Export strategy of development of tourism BiH“ (2011). – EUEXPRO2 (Supporting Export).
- Gazette of the Faculty of Forestry of the University of Banja Luka, number 7/2007.
- Kadic Jelena, Markovic. B. (2006), “Protected areas of nature in physical plan RS 2001-2015. Scientific conference “Management of forest ecosystems of national parks and other protected areas. Collection of works, Jahorina – NP Sutjeska, July, 2006.
- Ljubojevic, S. Marceta, D. (2007), “Level of Usage of Woods in Protected Areas RS“.
- NEAP, Action plan for enviroment protection, March 2003.
- Framework water management base of BiH / made by Zoran Barbali... et.al. – Sarajevo: Water management of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1998.
- Lotti C.: Study for the Sava basin management, 1972.
- Republic strategy of air protection with action plan of management, (2008) Ministry for Physical Planning and Ecology in the RS Government.
- Savic, M. Novakovic. V. (2009) “Interdependence of particular physical and chemical parameters which determine the quality of underground waters of Semberija and Posavina“, “Water and us“, Magazine, Agencies for water areas of the Sava river, Sarajevo, no. 66/2009.
- Official Gazette number 42/2001.
- Strategy of tourism development RS 2010. 202., Chamber of Commerce and Industry RS, [www.privrednakomoraRS.ba](http://www.privrednakomoraRS.ba).
- Act on Waters (Official Gazette of BiH Federation No. 6, dated 20.11.2006, Art. 153, and Art.3.)

Miloš Šolaja<sup>1</sup>

## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AS A DANUBE COUNTRY - A NEW APPROACH WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE DANUBE STRATEGY**

### ABSTRACT

Although Bosnia and Herzegovina is not directly on the Danube River, it is linked with this region by many lines. The Sava River, the former Yugoslav central River is now shared by four South East European countries. As the river which flows into the Danube, it is very interesting from the point of view of interests of the Danube countries. Speaking from the point of view of the Serbian position, there are also a few important facts. BH is very important for Serbia because of the geopolitical and geostrategic reasons. The Drina River, which also flows into the Sava and finally into the Danube, divides Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina lying out along the Republika Srpska as one of BH entities with a vast Serb majority. Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are building good relations within the framework of regional security and European cooperation. The Agreement on Special and Parallel Relations between the Republic of Serbia and the Republika Srpska is of utmost importance. Serbia and BH have also very developed trading ties. BH shares a 1003 kilometres long border with Croatia and with Montenegro. The relations with both of them are very important for Serbia because of political interests, geostrategic reasons as well as because of multilateral regional cooperation. There is also a possibility of linking the Sava and Danube Rivers by building a new canal.

*Key words:* Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sava River, trading, interests, canal.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is not directly linked with the Danube River banks and it has not a broad land approach to this the longest European River. BH is not directly influenced by policies of “classic” Danube River Countries. But, in the processes of the post-socialist transition followed by raising integration process of political perception of regional initiatives has been radically changed. The first of all, in a frame of collective security models as well as neo-liberal institutionalization wave of founding different regional and intercontinental international organizations headed by European Union. It

---

<sup>1</sup> Miloš Šolaja, Ph.D., Faculty of Political Science, Banja Luka – Professor of International Relations and International Security.

means that culture of regional cooperation in the Balkans or the South East Europe takes absolutely new and unusual direction: regional cooperation and initiatives has been sparkling in order to achieve two main ways goals not posed during the Cold War as a possibility of improvement of regional policies. The first general goal is contribution to further economical, political and social development based on a more intensive regional cooperation, the second is pro-active accommodation to values, processes and joint life with other members in international environment particularly EU as the declared goals of all SEE countries including as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH).

Any regional cooperation experience is of utmost importance for BH because of a very low level of international cooperation during the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) period. The only one former Yugoslav republic contended not by one main core nation but by three and additional positioned in the ‘middle’ of federal country BH did not have any possibility and opportunity to develop particular ‘own’ republic foreign relations for difference of other republics which bordered with neigh borough countries as abroad. On the other hand BH passed a four year very intensive ethnically based civil war (1992–1995) which were ended by strong international actions and after four peace plans finally through Dayton Peace Accord (DPA) settled down in the USA military base “Wright-Patterson” Dayton, Ohio, USA and signet December 14<sup>th</sup> 1995 in Paris under the name General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP). Although recognized as the UN and OSCE member 1992. BH *de facto* was not a unified country until peace settlement 1995 after which date started to guide its foreign policy as the fully internationally recognized functional country.

Keeping in mind a fact that DPA practically ended a period of bloody Balkans, post socialist, post-Yugoslav wars means that BH started its life as the really independent state and sovereign member of international community regardless it was enveloped by few international internally oriented peace-making and peace-keeping arrangements as a precondition for internal state executive and (predominantly) legislative management. That means that internal BH sovereignty is pretty limited although formally BH has fully international sovereignty even considering a key influence of international community an all BH policies which includes foreign relations as well.

Regional relations as became of utmost importance with former Yugoslav republics as with other Balkans and near regions countries. It is a possibility for creation of many links with close countries very similar due to their historical development, experience, problems and processes for the newly became independent country without institutional prepositions and not enough experienced and educated stuff in foreign affairs.

### **Three waves of regional initiatives**

The post-cold war geopolitical changes brought the second big wave of geopolitical changes that included emerging of new countries in the Balkans. This transformed the former Yugoslav federation at first to five and then to six new independent countries. Actually, Kosovo political entity intending to become seventh new-emerged self-

declared country. The first wave of geopolitical changes was noticed after the First World War and was signed by integration processes – forming big Romania and Kingdom of Yugoslavia of Slavic parts of Austro-Hungarian Empire and independent Serbia and Montenegro. Gathering in big state agglomerations was a clear expression of security threats to unstable new states. Nevertheless, that threats were enough to push ideas for regional cooperation but they were not strong enough to strengthen attempts for regional collective security organizations such as “Little Antanta”,<sup>2</sup> an approach based on Woodrow Wilson idea about building international peace based on international relations. A realist environment in which big bellicose powers were stronger than the idea and policies of collective security pulled the region into the bloody WWII.

After the WWII the region was recognizable by ‘Balkan formula two plus two plus two’ – western democratic (Greece and Turkey), soviet style managed (Romania and Bulgaria) and self-proclaimed neutral countries (SFRY and Albania). Regardless few attempts to launch some sort of regional cooperation, better to say informal discussion, on cultural and similar issues, there was not regional identity and political will to carry on until fall of the ‘Berlin Wall’ and the end of Cold War and bipolar confrontation.

Real regional cooperation started in the fall of Cold War gathering four countries in the beginning in the Central European Initiative (CEI) which is actually framed by 18 countries including former SFRY republics, and creating Black Sea Economy Cooperation which in 1993 became a real international organization. It could be defined as the first wave of regional initiatives in which BH neither took part as the federal republic in former Yugoslavia or did not participate because of war and inability to really position itself as an actor in international relations. Characteristics of this phase are creating conditions and lessons learned for international cooperation between countries that previously belonged to two different ideological, geopolitical and economical systems of values and views on the world. “The only serious but at the same time last attempt of regional integration, the formation of South Slavic political and economic area ‘Yugoslavia’ after World War II represented also only a subregional compound of parts of the Balkans”.<sup>3</sup>

A real BH participation in regional cooperation has become possible to settle down in the period after DPA signed 1995. BH joined to existing regional international initiatives getting so a possibility to realize a membership in coming regional arrangements had been flourishing after Dayton Peace Accord. Beginning with Royaumont Process for improvement of democracy and better neighbourhood in Paris 1996, which assigned the Second Wave of regional cooperation initiatives. United States raised South East Cooperation Initiative 1996 oriented to democracy, economy and fighting against crime, particularly organized crime in the region. Very soon in June

---

<sup>2</sup> A military defense alliance of Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Romania and Czechoslovakia 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Franc-Lothar Altmann (2003), “A scheme of regional cooperation in South East Europe” pp. 123–139. Collection of works “Šipan 2003” pp. 138–159.

1999 in Cologne started the Stability Pact (SP) for South East Europe initiated by Germany. There are also some other partly regional organizations such as Danube Cooperation Process (DCP) and Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (AII). There are also security targeted organizations such as Charter for friendship between USA, Albania, Croatia and Macedonia (A-3). Few genuine SEE initiatives gave a final stamp to the regional cooperation. The first one and still existing is South East Cooperation Process (SEEC) which mainly summons summits of the head of states. The second one is the International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC) becoming internationally shared river gathering four new independent countries former Yugoslav federal republics.

Main characteristics of this period were geographically focused and functionally democracy oriented initiatives also with intentions to develop possibilities and procedures for market economy as a process of preparing for EU membership. There are also some obstacles and problems regarding regional attempts to reach more cooperation:<sup>4</sup>

1. Missing clear goals of regional initiatives and cooperation;
2. Too formal, frequently summits of heads of states (confusion, no coherence and inefficiency);
3. Unclear areas of regions initiatives related to;
4. Missing of an infrastructure for realization of goals;
5. Missing of financial support for regional activities;
6. Insufficient knowledge of public opinion about region and regional cooperation;
7. Preferring individual approach to EU and NATO;
8. Missing regional mechanisms for security and stability;
9. Missing cooperation, mutual activities and common actions for efficient crisis management.

The third, a final wave of regional cooperation has been launched by European Union and represents much more clear approach in terms of European policies towards the sub-region named Western Balkans as the artificial geopolitical imagination. Western Balkans is known due to formula “former Yugoslavia minus Slovenia plus Albania” which refers to Stabilization and Association Process from 1999. The real start of this process is linked with ‘Zagreb Declaration’ 2000 after the wave of democratic changes in Croatia and Serbia (FR Yugoslavia). SAP is common denominator for a series of Stabilization and Association agreements signed by Western Balkans Countries. Individual approach to European integrations has been encouraged on the Thessaloniki summit (Greece) 2003. In the first period 2002–2006 EU through its CARDS program invested 6,2 billion EUR in Western Balkans Countries in order to speed up their political and economy changes in the process of enlargement. From 2000 to 2011, all WB

---

<sup>4</sup> Miloš Šolaja (2006), Balkan u transatlantskoj pukotini, Centar za međunarodne odnose Banja Luka p. 285.

countries signed Stabilization and Association Agreements. Although BH signed as well because of insufficient and slow internal reforms and processes until the end of 2011 SAA has not been ratified and even the interim agreement threatened to be suspended because of lack of necessary changes in BH in the European way. EU has also been forced to strongly warn BH in terms of efficient use of Instrument of Pre-accession Funds (IPA) as the program which is continuation of CARDS projects.

It has been becoming obvious that regional initiatives on itself are not sufficient enough to provide necessary transitional changes, reforms in valuable frame which includes institutional, political and market economy accommodations. Measuring by Freedom House democracy index and index of crime and corruption BH is on the end of the tale of European Integration Processes. But, this extreme example in the Balkans is accomplished by difficulties in accession process in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Although enlargement process could have been marked as a progress, it is obvious that Balkans countries have been lagging in transformations in comparison with countries in East and Central Europe. Although being EU members, even Bulgaria and Romania are criticised for missing EU standards in many areas. Such results in South East Europe are a clear necessity to go further in deepening of European integrations as the further phase of development of EU. That is a basement for analyze a new European macro-regional strategy approach.

### **Danube Strategy**

The Danube strategy was launched in June 2001 and beside Baltic Sea Regional strategy from 2009 is the second in the clear plan of macro-regionalization of European Union. These two cases are marked as “pilot projects”, “test cases” or “models” for the EU. It is considered as an implementation of macro-regional strategies in a frame of a territorial cohesion of EU defined by Lisbon Treaty. “a macro-region can be understood as a greater region within the EU defined in terms of territory and function, in which group of member states co-operate to achieve specific strategic goals”.<sup>5</sup> Due definition EU macro-region strategies gives different and absolutely new opportunities to various actors in a different stage of European integrations from old full members through newcomers until aspiring countries. This approach absolutely changes earlier traditional perception of the regions by a new policy level emerging within the EU. That level of policy is “located between a classic nation state and supranational community, and therefore further differentiates the multilevel EU system.”<sup>6</sup> Keeping in mind as some sort of getting experiences with new macro-regional strategies this model “should be seen as a serious and promising effort to deepen co-operation in the EU over the long term without relying on further (Lisbon) Treaty revision”. These models can be tested as a “pilot

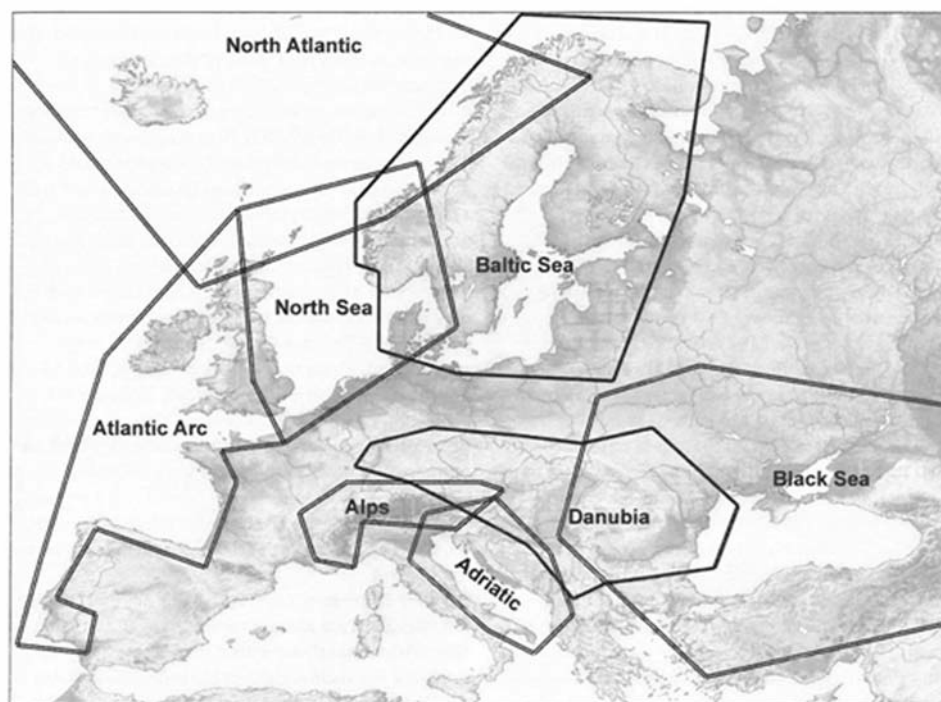
---

<sup>5</sup> Carsten Schymik: A Blueprint for a Macro-Region: EU strategies for the Baltic Sea and Danube regions (2011), German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, p. 5.

project” which, if successful, can be transferred to other cross-boarder regions within the Union.<sup>7</sup> In these strategies, European parliament recognizes “model for co-ordinating EU policies and funding in geopolitical territorial units”.<sup>8</sup> A macro-region is generally defined by European Commission as “an area covering a number of administrative regions but not with sufficient issues in common to justify a single strategic approach”<sup>9</sup> This definition matches both main characteristics of macro-region: territorial and functional.

### Existing and Potential EU Macro-Regions



Source: Autor’s Compilation, Map of Europe: Wikipedia (San Jose, April 2, 2006)

Macro-regional policies should emerged from the new designed levels emerged between national and supranational level in ‘transnational context’. A core of macro-region is planned to be created from the EU member-states guided mainly by functional purposes and accompanied by non-EU states either in the process of accession or even

---

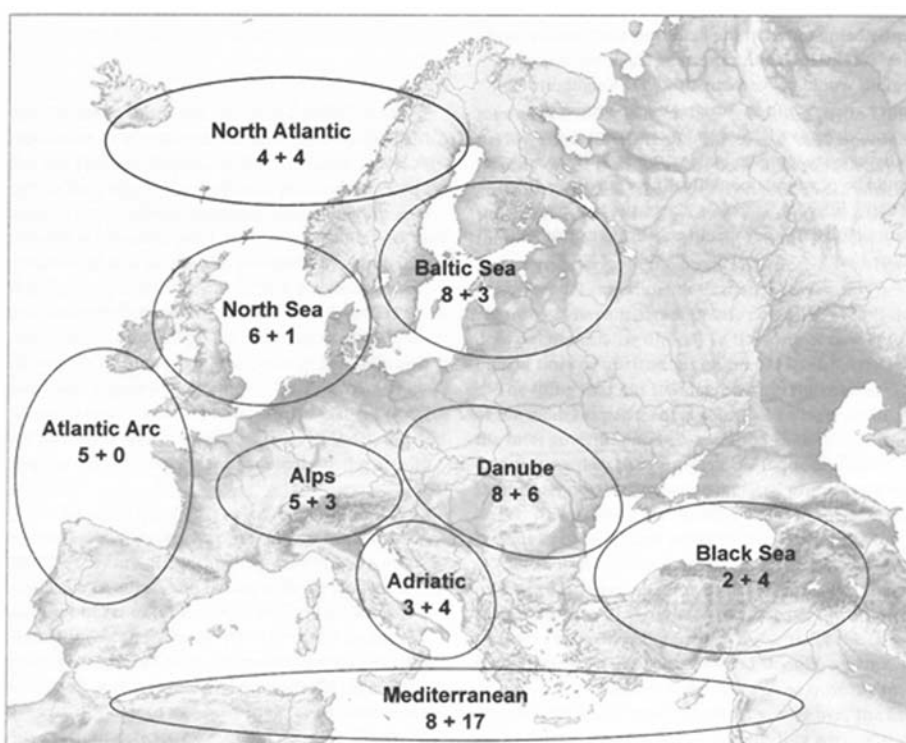
<sup>7</sup> European Commission, EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Scoping Paper for the Public consultation, Brussels, February 2. 201. REGIO/E1/EN/NV/D(2010).

<sup>8</sup> European parliament, Resolution on a European Strategy for Danube Region, Strasbourg, January 21, 2010. P7\_TA(2010)0008, Point C.

<sup>9</sup> European Commission, Communication Concerning the European strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Brussels, June 10, 2009. KOM(2009) 248/3 p. 6.

out of it. On the other hand, territorial definition of macro-region could be seen as ecosystem frame belonging to some particular region, Danube River for instance. It is close to some nature geographical definition and not identical to some catchments areas. EC insists on a flexibility of macro-regional borders in order to achieve planned functionality. This can guarantee different actors responsible for implementation of adopted policies: either subnational regional actors within EU, or regions and states beyond outer EU borders and cross-boarder regional organizations which include EU states as well as third states. The macro-regional strategy should be implemented “within the existing financial a legal-framework” through closer co-operation and co-ordination” among the participating states”.<sup>10</sup>

#### Composition Existing and Potential Macro-Regions in Relation to Member States and Third States



Macro-regional approach has been enforced after the “big-bang” – eastern enlargement 2004 and particularly after Romania and Bulgaria became EU members 2007 since this last enlargement the Danube River mainly has become EU Inland River flowing mostly

---

<sup>10</sup> European Commission, Communication on Baltic Strategy, p. 4.



through EU countries. Even with Croatia is on the way to become EU member soon, only Serbia, Moldavia and Ukraine will stay out of this circle. EU countries gathered along the Danube flow are Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia and Germany representing through it two internal regions such are: Baden Württemberg and Bavaria. This countries and regions envelope population of about 90 million on 770 squared meters. ‘third countries’ take account as members of EU Danube Strategy is Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Moldavia, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine.

Cooperation in the Danube River area is one of the oldest in the world. Commission for regulation of usage of Danube River was formed in 1856. Then Danube Commission in Belgrade for regulation of flow of the River, and then replaced to Budapest. After that, International Commission for the protection of Danube River was formed in Vienna. Finally, Danube Cooperation Process has been launched 2002 with activities in areas of economy, tourism, environment protection and traffic with priorities in infrastructure, inland navigation and environment protection. Danube Strategy launched September 2008. Drafting of the strategy started October 2009. Danube Inter-group was established in June 2009 a month after creation the European Council’s decision on the sparkling of a Danube Strategy. As the initiators of the Strategy are mentioned Romania, Austria and Serbia that in fall of 2008 joined Hungary. In the following process of consultations, all states were included with more that hundred actors participated actively. They are a form of subnational bodies in regional organizations, academy community, civil society, research institutions.<sup>11</sup> The first step was that aspiring countries contributes with their written position. All EU member states issued a written paper and additionally Croatia, Serbia and Ukraine. For difference, although agreed to join Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldavia and Montenegro did not submitted any written clarification of their position. In terms of combination of actors such are EU members and non-EU states, two Germany subnational regions: Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria represent Germany which means that Committee of Regions (CoR) tools for expression of EU position getting so opportunity to lay more important role in Danube Strategy than other regional initiatives.

Main directions of Danube Strategy Policy understand four areas: environment, economy, infrastructure and security. Before sparkling the idea, discussion took place about three main pillars– environment, economy and infrastructure. Process of previous consultation expressed necessity of “strengthening the Danube region” which largely addresses to developing security policy as the fourth pillar of strategy.<sup>12</sup> Developing activities in these areas should be a regional contribution on the way of realizing the “Europe 2020” strategy. As the one of highest priorities are Transeuropean Energy and Transport Networks (TEN). Next important policy emphasize is on security. Although security is mainly accepted as a “soft” security in terms of accidents, natural catastrophes and criminality, speaking in a framework of Danube Strategy “security is included in

---

<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/consultation/danube/consultation-en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/consultation/danube/consultation-en.htm) (retrieved on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2011)

<sup>12</sup> European Council, Conclusions, December 14, 2007. p. 17.

the strategy as an important reflection of the concerns of Germany Federal States as well as Austria. The Danube Strategy focuses in the security area on increasing on institutional capacities through qualifying activities with the judiciary, police and home affairs”.<sup>13</sup>

Political and financial positioning of European macro-regional strategies is fixed through three “no”. The first “no” is in legislative – to new EU laws. Although during the consultations in terms of institutional realization of macro-regional strategies were raised dilemmas that goals of the strategy would be achieved if would not be based on revised or additional EU laws. Instead, macro-region can influence on EU legal solutions through existing law and institutional framework more indirectly based on “law-shaping” but not on directly in a “law-making”.

The second “no” is considering financing macro-regions. It means that special financial funds and budgets should have not been created. Financing will stay based on existing sources such as predominantly European Fund for Regional Development (EFRE) and Cohesion Fund for the Convergence, Competitiveness and Employment Programmes as well as all other sources on disposal to European policies. It is estimated the 95 billion EUR is necessary for this budgetary period 2007–2013 and new sources would not be designed. In the process of creating budgetary projection for next period from 2014 macro-regional policies would be based on territorial cohesion in the EU defined in Lisbon treaty which understands the territorial cohesion goal could be better supported from funds for the so-called Objective 3 in order macro-regions to be more benefited. The possibility is in reforming structural and regional funds in line with “net balance logic” in EU.

The third “no” is giving up of new institutional macro-regional design. There would not be generating of new institutions. “Centre stage is occupied by the (European) Commission on the one hand and the Council and member states on another, while no special role is afforded to the Parliament. The Commission is responsible for the necessary co-ordination, monitoring and follow-up of the action plan, as well as regular updating of the plan and strategy”.<sup>14</sup> But, this “frozen” approach to “no” for institutions would be reconsidered by time regardless Commission did not want to take account new recommendations. There was also proposal for transformation of Council of the Danube Cities and Regions established June 2009 to Danube Council in order to increase regional co-operation within the Danube region and to represent macro-regional interest in European institutions. But, this intention was not supported by European Commission because existing of a relatively large number of so-called “third countries”. Regardless, there is consideration that Danube Council could play an important role in further EU enlargement – over the short term for Croatia, medium term for Montenegro and Serbia, and the long-term for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldavia and Ukraine.

---

<sup>13</sup> Carsten Schymik: A Blueprint for a Macro-Region: EU strategies for the Baltic Sea and Danube regions (2011), German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, p. 16.

<sup>14</sup> European Commission, Statement and Baltic Sea Strategy, p. 11.

## Bosnia and Herzegovina and Danube Strategy

Although significantly interested for regional cooperation, BH has not been working so actively on this field getting late and even avoiding written positioning in term of Danube Strategy.

Due to definition of European macro-regions, BH belongs to the Danube region and has absolutely interests to actively participate in these processes. Due to all relevant criteria BH is a part if this region: geopolitically and economically it is a Danube country because of bordering with two countries which a directly on the Danube River – Croatia and Serbia (all of them former Yugoslav republics). With Slovenia, all three countries share the Sava River flow and organized International Sava River Basin Commission (ISBRC). The Commission task is improvement and regulation infrastructure of the Sava River and improvement of cooperation between country members, economy, environment protection and all other aspects. Entire Sava river area including tributaries is the natural part of Danube region that means BH is the natural part of the region. At the same time BH belongs to the potential Adriatic macro-region as well as it has close links. Geographic position of the former Yugoslav republic and new initiatives preciously has been guiding BH to participation in all region cooperation initiatives. On of them is almost a century old canal Sava River – Danube River from Šamac (BH) to Vukovar (Croatia) which would some-how accomplish Danube region geopolitical scheme.



Source: Politika Daily Belgrade, Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. p. 5.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a huge interest to actively take part as the member of the Danube Strategy as the EU aspiring country. Although it is a part of the Stabilization and Association Process, there is still huge necessary for building capacities for European

policies in the process of accepting European values and accession procedures. Particularly in light of last three negative EU Commission progress reports for BH, it is really necessary to use a Danube Strategy as a real possibility to move faster in EU direction to reach standards for implementation of European policies such is European Neighbour Politics (ENP) but others as well. By implementation of Danube Strategy BH would enforce implementation and efficient realization of Stabilization and Association Agreement and fulfilling Copenhagen Criteria as the main precondition for EU membership. The most important areas are improvement of transport and energy networks as the parts of European and regional networks. At the same time, BH will speed up an economy development, strengthening administrative capacities and other institutions. Considering a huge index of organized crime and corruption the security pillar of the Danube Strategy emerging as very important.

On the other hand, there are some obstacles on the BH way to become a more efficient EU accession country:

1. Insufficient identification of BH as a ‘Danube Country’ – a lack of consciousness with ‘Danube political idea’;
2. too formal approach to regional cooperation which means to Danube Strategy as well;
3. irresponsible political elites not enough devoted to regional cooperation as well as Danube Strategy as the European Policy; it is clearly visible in negative three EC progress reports;
4. lack of administrative capacities for regional cooperation, participating to common institutions, co-ordination of common politics and launching projects;
5. missing of developing and others similar politics including regional approach;
6. a strong political role and influence of international community and its institutions which have a direct executive role in internal governance; slow transition of sovereignty from international to BH constitutional political system;
7. political instability which require a basic consensus between BH constitutional peoples;
8. high level of organized crime and corruption;

## **Conclusion**

Bosnia and Herzegovina is aspiring country to the European Union with a lot of shortcomings on that way. As other post-socialist countries, BH needs to convey multidimensional economy, political, security and other transformation and reforms in order to fulfil preconditions defined in Copenhagen EU Summit Criteria 1993 which went through all former socialist countries in order to become EU members. The important point of these criteria is regional cooperation. BH participated in fall-Cold War, post-Dayton and EU accession waves of South East European Cooperation. There

are about 15 regional cooperation initiatives and more than 40 regional projects has been launching since 1989. Due to European Commission estimation "the majority of transnational program regions however were obviously not created with the intention of defining strategic units. Instead the largest regions ... are bureaucratic constructs, which are meant to serve primarily to ensure a balanced distribution of European subsidies. The current regional system therefore does not provide a basis for dividing the entire EU into macro-regions."<sup>15</sup>

Macro-regional strategy potentials should to be built from above and to envelop more transnational actors not geographically size defined and with multiple states in different regions. The Danube region has relatively homogeneous composition including two Germany's Federal states composition with 23.3 million people (more than Romania as the biggest country except Germany). Just because of this and also because of composition there are many beneficial from macro-regional aspects. But, the main characteristic of the Danube strategy is that it is largely EU strategy for EU members and along with it, a few track accession strategies for candidates and other aspiring countries which need to be pulled in EU having to reach highly posed standards and changes values.

A success of the new EU Black Sea and Danube strategies will be the model for further development of macro-regional strategies in Europe using a "soft" reforms based on three "no" approach. In means more inter-governmental cooperation in EU forcing process to be more drive by member countries. In that frame Danube Strategy is of huge importance in EU as the experience which would show the further internal development in European regional policies in order to create other conceptual macro-regions policies based on territorial functional conceptions which will predominantly start as natural units but with intention to be a fully implemented principally as European internal strategies but in connection with other so called "third" countries. Moving in this direction European macro-region strategies show up as an instrument of EU foreign policy and at the same time to serve as future member countries for membership. Generally, process is mainly managed by member countries in the affected countries and co-ordination with European Commission. Depending on results there will be created new internal possibilities in EU based on a budget changes in period 2014 and further, incremental changes of laws and institutions.

The concept of European macro-regional strategies headed by Danube Strategy (as well as the Baltic Sea Strategy as well) as a litmus test is the excellent opportunity for Bosnia and Herzegovina to develop its own accession policies, primarily how to implement and fulfil Interim Agreement for Stabilization and Association Agreement, of course to work more and faster on the preparations to full implementation, and based on that, ratification of SAA by all EU countries. The third pillar, which would turn BH more to EU, is fulfilling CEFTA 2006 rules. Unfortunately, learned by last three negative

---

<sup>15</sup> European Commission, Communication on Baltic Sea Strategy, p. 5.

Progress Reports in the EU accession process, there are many questions in BH due to this. The first of all is readiness of three national elites and their readiness to achieve the basic social consensus with a new absolutely domestic and democratic constitution as the initial point for a real transition. BH has to belong to some region. Although there are some initial reasons for joining to either Adriatic or even Black Sea areas it is becoming absolute clear that Danube region is the most convenience as a natural territorial framework. On the other hand, the European Union Danube Strategy regardless its examining period could be the best opportunity just because of the highest possibilities for reforms and preparations given by the fact that it is defined as EU-members internal strategy.

### **Literature**

- Franc-Lothar Altmann (2003), “A scheme of regional cooperation in South East Europe” Collection of works “Šipan 2003” ed. Lidija Čehulić, pp. 138–159.
- Miloš Šolaja (2006), *Balkan u transatlantskoj pukotini*, Centar za međunarodne odnose Banja Luka.
- Carsten Schymik: *A Blueprint for a Macro-Region: EU strategies for the Baltic Sea and Danube regions* (2011), German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin.
- European Commission, *EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Scoping Paper for the Public Consultation*, Brussels, February 2. 201. REGIO/E1/EN/NV/D(2010)
- European parliament, *Resolution on a European Strategy for Danube Region*, Strasbourg, January 21, 2010. P7\_TA(2010)0008, Point C.
- European Commission, *Communication Concerning the European strategy for the Baltic Sea Region*, Brussels, June 10, 2009. KOM(2009) 248/3.
- [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/consultation/danube/consultation-en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/consultation/danube/consultation-en.htm) (retrieved on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2011.)
- European Council, *Conclusions* (December 14, 2007).
- *Politika Daily* Belgrade, Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008.
- European Commission: *Bosnia and Herzegovina 2007 Progress Report accompanying the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-2008* COM(2007) 663 final.
- European Commission: *Bosnia and Herzegovina 2007 Progress Report accompanying the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2009 – 2010* COM(2009) 533 final.
- European Commission: *Bosnia and Herzegovina 2007 Progress Report accompanying the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2010–2011* COM(2010) 660 final.

Biljana Savić<sup>1</sup>

## REGIONAL COOPERATION WITHIN THE SAVA COMMISSION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF B&H

### ABSTRACT

Regional cooperation between countries of South-Eastern Europe has made a qualitative shift from externally guided actions towards the active and responsible engagement with the aim of achieving sustainable development of the region. This change was accompanied by the transformation of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe into the Regional Cooperation Council. The formation of the Regional Cooperation Council, with the Secretariat in Sarajevo marks a major shift in the international community's policy towards the region. These countries began a new phase of "regional ownership and responsibility" for regional cooperation. In this regard, the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin concluded between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Republic of Slovenia and Republic of Serbia is of particular importance. Therefore, this agreement includes all the functions of water resources management – the establishment of an international regime of navigation on the Sava River and its tributaries, the establishment of sustainable water management and prevention or limitation of the hazards in the basin effects of floods, ice, droughts and incidents substances that are harmful to water. The International Sava River Basin Commission (Sava Commission) was formed as a permanent body in charge of implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin, development of the Action Plan for the Sava River Basin and the adoption of necessary legal acts and the Protocols. Cooperation in the Sava Commission is based on the application of EU directives in the field of water and harmonization of the legislation with the EU legislation.

*Key words:* regional cooperation, the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin, the Sava Commission, Sustainable Development.

### Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina forms an integral part of the Danube River Basin through the River Sava, whose name means strength and safety. Sava used to be the largest national river of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. With the disintegration

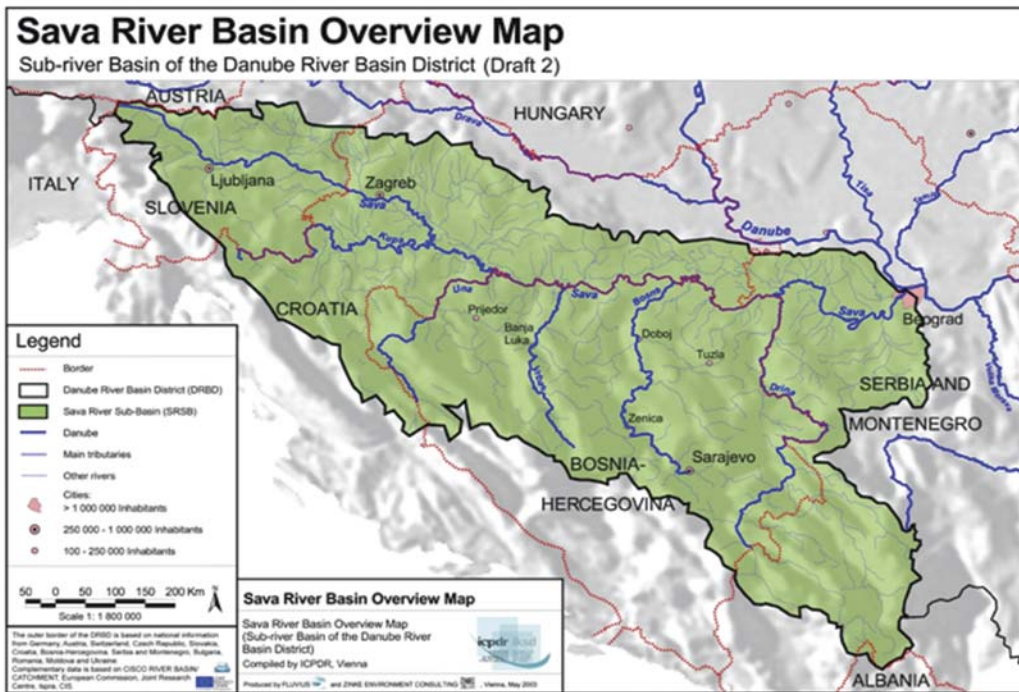
---

<sup>1</sup> Biljana Savić, M.Sc. Senior Associate, Main bank of RS, Central bank of B&H, e-mail: bsavic@bl.cbbh.ba.

of SFRY and upon establishment of the independent countries in the basin, Sava River becomes a river of a great international importance. The necessity of an integrated approach as the basis for sustainable water management in Sava River Basin includes cross-border cooperation and interaction between the above mentioned states these states, with the efforts of the international organizations and arrangements present in the Danube Basin, led to the beginning of the negotiation process known as the Sava Initiative. The formal launch of this initiative was *the letter of Intent concerning International Sava River Basin Commission*, signed in Sarajevo on 29 November 2001, by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Republic of Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Minister for the Civil Affairs and Communication of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### Natural basis for cooperation

Figure 1. The Sava River Basin Map



Source: International Sava River Basin Commission, 2009.

The Sava River Basin covers the total area of approximately 97.713 km<sup>2</sup> and represents one of the most important sub-basins of the Danube River Basin, with the share of 12%. The Sava River is the richest-in-water Danube tributary, contributing with environ 25% to the Danube’s total discharge. Its length from the main source in Slovenia, formed from the two mountainous streams, the Sava Dolinka and the Sava Bohinjka, to



the mouth to the Danube in Belgrade (Serbia) is 945 km. With 594 km of the waterway, from Belgrade to Sisak (Croatia), the Sava River contributes to the Danube inland waterway transport network. The Sava River Basin is shared by five countries: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro. Albania makes one negligible part (0.18%) of the basin area.<sup>2</sup>

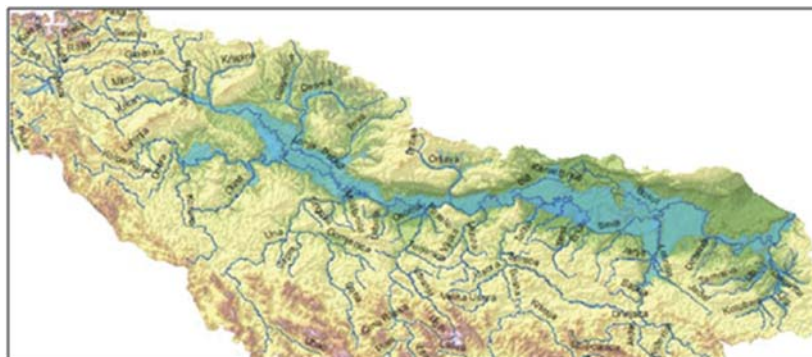
Table 1. Countries in the Sava River Basin

Country	Share (km <sup>2</sup> )	Share (%)	FASRB status
Slovenia	11.734,8	12,01	Party
Croatia	25.373,5	25,97	Party
Bosnia and Herzegovina	38.349,1	39,25	Party
Serbia	15.147,0	15,50	Party
Montenegro	6.929,8	7,09	-
Albania	179,0	0,18	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>97.713,2</b>	<b>100,00</b>	

Source: ISRBC, *Strategy on Implementation of the FASRB*, April 2009, p.10.

The hydrologic system of Bosnia and Herzegovina is very rich. The Sava River runs 345 km in Bosnia and Herzegovina and has the four main tributaries: the Una 215 km long, the Vrbas River (235 km), the Bosna (272 km), and the Drina (345 km). The Drina River is the largest and the most important tributary of the Sava River. Its course is formed in Montenegro from two mountainous streams, the Tara and the Piva. The most vulnerable areas to floods in the Sava River Basin are the middle part of the Sava River, from Zagreb to Županja, and its lower part, downstream Županja, and also downstream section of the Sava tributaries, as shown in figure 2.

Figure 2. Indicative map of important flood prone areas along Sava River



Source: ISRBC, *The Sava River Basin Analysis – Summary*, December 2010, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> International Sava River Basin Commission, *Sava River Basin Analysis Report*, Zagreb, September 2009, p. 5.

The Sava River Basin is known for the retention areas of distinct beauty, which are a habitat to rare wetland plants and animal species. According to *the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat*, so-called Ramsar Convention,<sup>3</sup> the Sava countries have designated six sites in the Sava River Basin.

Figure 3. Locations of the Ramsar sites in the Sava River Basin



Source: International Sava River Basin Commission

Those Ramsar Sites with a great ecological value are Cernica Lake (Slovenia), Lonjsko polje and Crna mlaka (Croatia), Bardača Wetland (Bosnia and Herzegovina), and Obedska bara and Zasavica (Serbia). The best known is Obedska bara, one of the biggest wild bird’s reservation areas in Europe.

### Legal Framework for Cooperation

The establishment of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (SP) in 1999 provided a solid basis for the cooperation in the region. Mutual negotiations of the Sava countries, conducted under the auspices of the SP, resulted in the signing of the *Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (FASRB)* and the *Protocol of Navigation*, on 3 December 2002, in Kranjska Gora (Slovenia), between Republic of Slovenia, Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (the later State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and than only the Republic of Serbia). The Agreement came into force on 29 December 2004 and was registered at the United Nations on 21 April of 2006. The first meeting of the Parties of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin has held on June 1 of 2007 in Zagreb and since

<sup>3</sup> *The Convention on Wetlands* was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar on 2 February 1971. Its mission is “the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world”, [http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-home/main/ramsar/1\\_4000\\_0/15/12/2011](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-home/main/ramsar/1_4000_0/15/12/2011).

then this date has been celebrated as the Sava Day. The Agreement is a result of the ambitions of the countries to create a solid framework for cross-border cooperation in the Sava River Basin for sustainable development of the region. The concept of Sustainable Development was formally introduced by the United Nation World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in its report entitled “Our Common Future“, which was published in 1987. In this report, also known as The Brundtland Report,<sup>4</sup> the sustainable development is defined as “*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*“<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin integrates all aspects of the water resource management in a sustainable way, defining the key objective and the three main goals of the cooperation as shown in Box 1.

Box 1. The key objective and main goals of the FASRB

<p>Key objective</p> <p>Transboundary cooperation for sustainable development of the region coresponding to the Sava River Basin</p> <p>Main goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishment of an international navigation regime of the Sava River and its navigable tributaries</li><li>• Establishment of a sustainble water managment in the Sava River Basin</li><li>• Prevention /limitation of the hazards in the basin (i.e. floods, droughts, ice, accidents) and elimination/reduction of related consequences</li></ul>
--

Source: ISRBC, *Strategy on Implementation of the FASRB*, April 2009, p. 7.

The cooperation in fulfilling the FASRB objectives is based on the following principles:

- Territorial integrity, sovereign equality, mutual benefit;
- Mutual respect of national legislation, organizations and institutions;
- Cooperation in accordance with the Directive 2000/60/EC (Water Framework Directive- WFD) and the Directive 2007/60/EC (Directive on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks – the Flood Directive);
- Reduction of the trans-boundary impacts caused by economic and other activates of the Parties;

---

<sup>4</sup> Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Norwegian Prime Minister, Chair of the World Commission on Environment and Development.

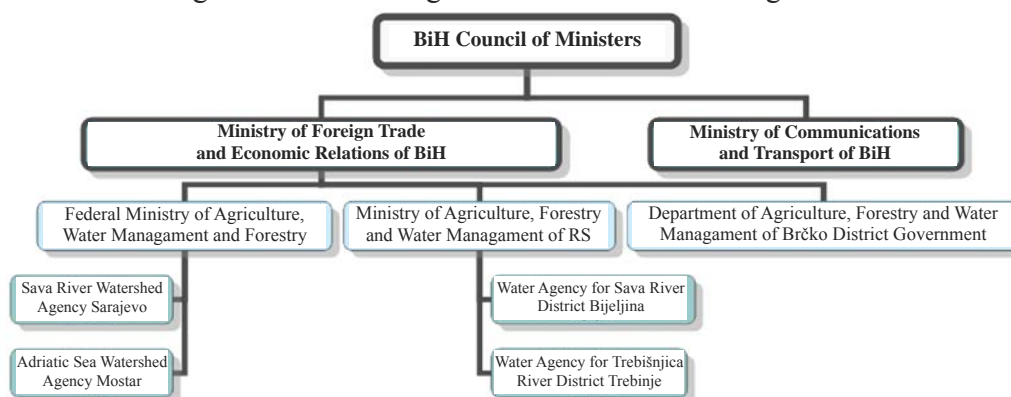
<sup>5</sup> World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future: The Brundtland Report*, <http://worldinbalance.net/pdf/1987-brundtland.pdf>, 3.12.2011.

- Respecting “No-harm rule“;
- Regular exchange of information within the basin (on water regime, navigation regime, Legislation, administrative and technical practice, organizational structure) and
- Cooperation with international organizations.

In implementation of the FASRB, the Parties cooperate especially with The International Commission for Protection of Danube River – ICPDR, The Danube Commission, The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe – UN/ECE, and with the EU’s institutions. The FASRB is consistent with the Belgrade Danube Convention of 1948 and the Sofia Convention of Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the Danube River of 1994.

The implementation of the FASRB is being undertaken by the national institutions, officially nominated by the Parties. According to the Dayton Peace Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina is comprised of two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBA) and the Republika Srpska (RS) and Brčko District as a separate administrative unit. The water management, in accordance with the Constitution of the Bosnia and Herzegovina, is under competence of the entity ministries of agriculture, water management and forestry. On the state level, Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina is responsible for navigation on rivers and sea and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BA is in charge of coordination of activities and harmonization of plans between the bodies of the entity governments, as well as for institutions on international level in the field of natural resources, environment protection, agriculture and energy (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Water management in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Source: International Sava River Basin Commission, *The Sava River Basin Analysis Report*, Zagreb, September 2009, <http://www.savacommission.org/08/11/2011>, p. 21.

From the aspect of the international law, the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin represents Pactum de Contrahendo agreement or obligation to conclude other agreements and protocols in order to regulate specific area of cooperation:

- Trans-boundary impacts,
- Accidental situations,
- Prevention of water pollution caused by navigation,
- Protections against excessive groundwater, erosion, ice, draught and water shortage,
- Water utilization,
- Exploitation of stone, sand, gravel and clay,
- Protection and improvement of water quality and quantity,
- Protection of aquatic eco-systems.

For the implementation of the FASRB, the Parties have established the International Sava River Basin Commission (Sava Commission).

### **International Sava River Basin Commission**

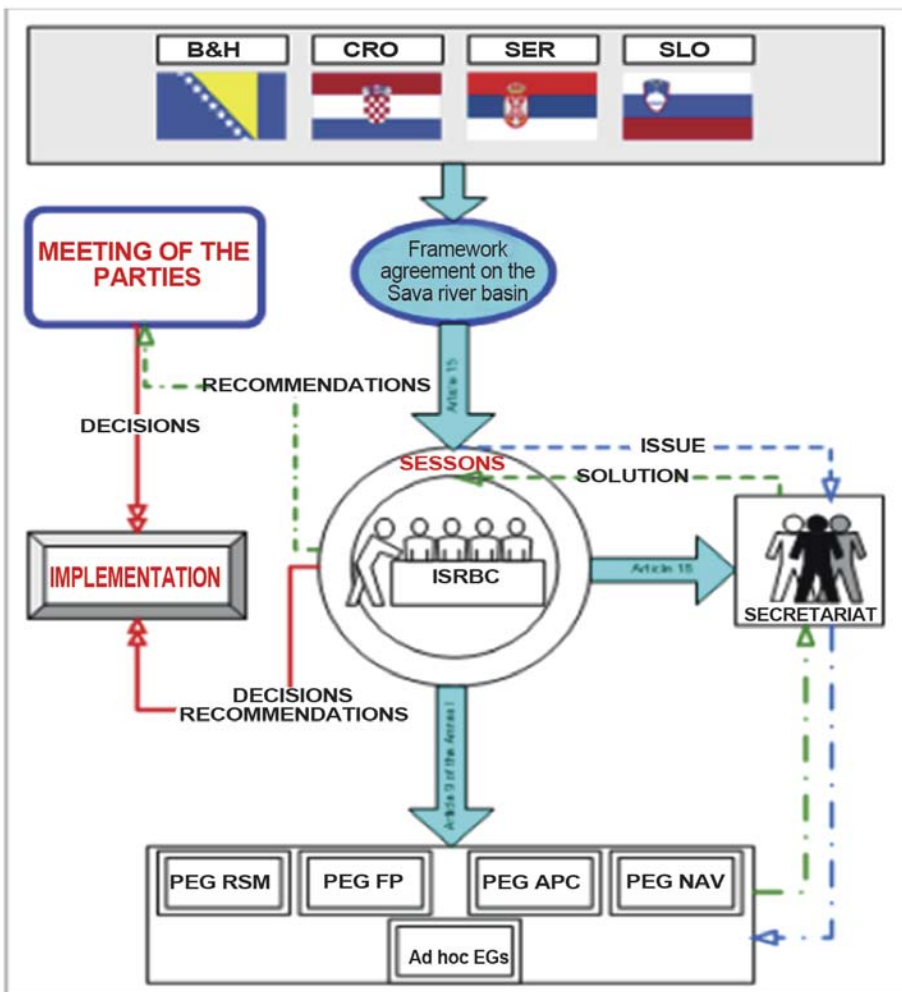
The International Sava River Basin Commission – ISRBC, has been established as the joint institution with legal status of an international organization, for purpose of the implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin. Before the establishment of the Sava Commission, the Interim Sava Commission, as temporary joint body, was formed at the Conference of the Interested Party of the Sava Basin Initiative, in organization of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, held on March 12, 2003 at Brussels. The Interim Sava Commission had provided all steps and pre-conditions necessary for the establishment of the permanent ISRBC.

The First Constitutional Session of the International Sava River Basin Commission was held in June 27, 2005, in Zagreb (Croatia). The ISRBC is an international organization with a legal international capacity and with the Permanent Secretary. The Secretary as its executive and administrative body, started to work on January 09, 2006. The Sava Commission is composed of eight representatives of the four countries (one Member and one Deputy Member of each Party), nominated by governments, having one vote in the Commission. The ISRBC is represented by the Chairman. The Chairmanship is rotated every three years, following the English alphabetical order of the Parties. Annex I of the FASRB – Statute of the Sava Commission defines the mandate and responsibilities of the Sava Commission. The ISRBC is financed by regular annual contributions of the Parties and from other sources (i.e. grants of the EC and UNECE for implementation of the projects).

The ISRBC has the capacity for making decision in the field of navigation and providing recommendations on all other issues regarding the implementation of the FASRB. On its session, the Sava Commission, according to the recommendations of the Secretariat, adopts the decisions and the recommendations to the Parties. The decisions adopted by the ISRBC in the field of navigation, with the binding character for all the Parties, have the aim to provide the conditions for safe navigation and conditions for financing the construction of the waterways and their maintenance.

In order to facilitate the cooperation, the Sava Commission has established permanent and ad hoc expert groups composed of delegated experts of each Party. There are four Permanent Expert Group – PEG, covering the key issues in the Sava River Basin: Permanent Expert Group for River Basin Management – PEG RBM, Permanent Expert Group for Accident Prevention and Control – PEG APC, Permanent Expert Group for Flood Prevention – PEG FP, Permanent Expert Group for Navigation – PEG NAV. There are five ad hoc expert groups for specific issues and tasks: legal issues, financial issues, hydrometeorological issues, GIS and RIS. A principal scheme of the functioning and decision making process of the ISRBC with its legal basis is given in the next figure:

Figure 3. Functioning of the Sava Commission



Source: ISRBC, “Strategy on the Implementation of the FASRB”, Zagreb, April 2011, p. 10.

In order to meet its tasks, the Sava Commission coordinates a broad set of activities including:

- Coordination of the development of integrated plans for the Sava River Basin (River Basin Management Plan, Flood Risk Management Plan and Contingency Plan);
- Coordination of the establishment of integrated systems for the Sava River Basin (River Information Services, GIS and Monitoring, Forecasting and Early Warning Systems for Accident prevention and control, and flood protection);
- Harmonization of national regulation with EU regulation;
- Preparation and realization of development programs;
- Creation of additional protocols to the FASRB;
- Cooperation and public participation.

The International Sava River Basin Commission and the Danube Commission signed The Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation, on January 29, 2009 at Budapest, aimed to establish mutually beneficial relationship and a better coordination in the field of the navigation on the Danube and Sava River.

### Economic basis for cooperation

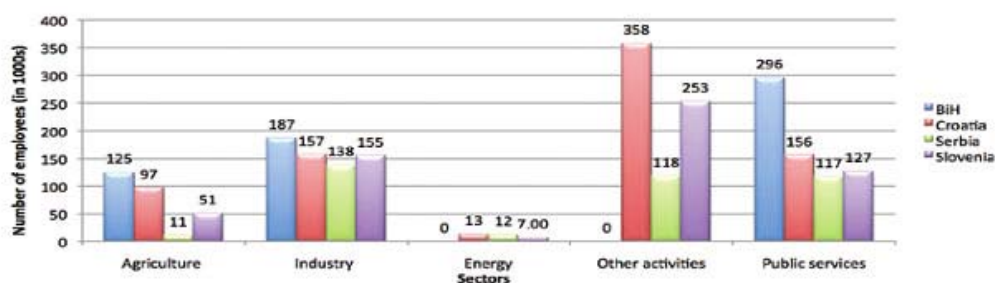
The population of the Sava River Basin is approximated at 8.176.000, which is 46% of the total population of all countries. The population of the Sava River Basin in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 75% of total population in that country, in Slovenia 61%, in Croatia 50% and in the Republic of Serbia 25%. There are 2 379.000 employed people in the Sava River Basin, which represents 29% of all inhabitants in the Sava River Basin and 45% of all employed people in the countries (Table 2).

Table 2. Population and number of employees in the Sava River Basin per country (in 1.000s)

Country	Population			Employees		
	whole country	Sava River Basin	Share (%)	whole country	Sava River Basin	Share (%)
<b>Slovenia</b>	2.003	1.230	61	921	593	64
<b>Croatia</b>	4.442	2.210	50	1.496	781	52
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	3.843	2.882	75	811	608	75
<b>Serbia</b>	7.441	1.854	25	2.069	397	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.729</b>	<b>8.176</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>5.297</b>	<b>2.379</b>	<b>45</b>

Source: ISRBC, *The Sava River Basin Analysis – Summary*, December 2010, p. 27.

Figure 3. Number of employees in the Sava River Basin by sector and country (in 1,000s)



Source: ISRBC, *The Sava River Basin Analysis – Summary*, December 2010, p. 27.

In the Sava River Basin 31% of all employed people work in the other activities sector such as: construction, wholesale and retail trade, hotels, restaurants, transport, storage and communication, financial intermediation, real estate, renting and business activities; 27% work in the industry sector, 29 % work in the public sector, 12% work in the agriculture and 1% work in the energy sector.<sup>6</sup> According to the Labor Force Survey in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the structure of employees by activity in 2011 shows that 51,5 % were employed in services, 28,9% in non-agricultural sectors (industries), and 19,6% in agriculture. The number of unemployed persons in 2011 was 310.947. The percentage of unemployed in 2011 compared with 2010 increased by 0.4% and thus the unemployment rate in 2011 was 27, 6%. The highest unemployment rate of 39.0% was in Brčko District, than in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was 29.2%, and the lowest unemployment rate of 24.5% was in Republika Srpska.<sup>7</sup>

The total gross value added (GVA) of the Sava River Basin is 40.039 million euros. The contribution of the economic sectors to the GVA is the following: the other activities sector 51%, the industry 22%, the public sector 17%, the agriculture 6% and the energy sectors 4%. The gross domestic product (GDP) in the Sava River Basin represents 53% of the GDP of all countries.

<sup>6</sup> International Sava River Basin Commission, *“The Sava River Basin Analysis – Summary“*, December 2010., p. 26.

<sup>7</sup> Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Bulletin 2/2011*, Sarajevo, August 2011. p. 46.



Table 3. GDP and GDP per capita in the Sava River Basin

Country	GDP (million EUR)			GDP per capita (EUR/ capita)	
	whole country	Sava River Basin	Share (%)	whole country	Sava River Basin
<b>Slovenia</b>	28.704	19.331	67	14.328	15.771
<b>Croatia</b>	31.255	17.212	55	7036	7.788
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	8.654	6490	75	2.252	2.252
<b>Serbia</b>	20.358	3.913	19	2.736	2.110
<b>Total</b>	<b>88.971</b>	<b>46.946</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>5.018</b>	<b>5.742</b>

Source: ISRBC, *The Sava River Basin Analysis – Summary*, December 2010, p. 27.

### New phase of cooperation

The positive developments have taken place in the co-operation processes initiated within the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe over the years. The South-Eastern Europe countries began

the new phase of “regional ownership and responsibility” for regional cooperation. The Stability Pact has been transformed into the Regional Co-operation Council (RCC), in order to reflect the increased maturity of the region. This new regionally owned cooperation framework, the RCC, was officially launched at the joint session of the final meeting of the Stability Pact Regional Table and inaugural meeting of the Regional Co-operation Council, in Sofia, on 27 February 2008. *The Joint Declaration on the Establishment of the RCC* was adopted and the RCC first Annual meeting took place on 28 February 2008, with the support from South Eastern European countries, donor countries and the European Commission. The main task of RCC is to be a facilitator of regional co-operation and support the European and Euro-Atlantic integration. With Secretariat located in Sarajevo, Co-operation Council focus its activities on six areas which the countries of the region have already identified as those where regional co-operation will be beneficial to all: Economic and social development; Infrastructure; Justice and Home Affairs; Security Co-operation and Building Human Capital (BHC) with Parliamentary Co-operation being an overarching theme that is linked with each of the other areas.

Under the auspice of the RCC, a remarkable improvement has been made in the FASRB implementation in the last few years. The new *Strategy on the Implementation of the FASRB* and *Action Plan for the Period 2011-2015* have been developed in order to synchronize these achievements with a relevant process on the Danube and European levels. In order to acknowledge and support the new *Strategy on the Implementation of the FASRB*, the Third Meeting of the Parties to the FASRB, held on May 31– June 1, 2011, at Brdo, near Kranj, in Slovenia. At the meeting, the Parties also expressed a high-level commitment for the new phase of cooperation. This phase of the trans-boundary cooperation in the Sava River Basin is characterised by the new initiatives in the field

of navigation, flood protection, pollution protection, climate change assessment, sediment management, trans-boundary impacts to the FASRB, economy etc.

A steady progress has been made in the planning of the rehabilitation and development of navigation on the Sava River waterway. The Sava Commission finished the *Feasibility Study and Project Documentation for the Rehabilitation and Development of the Transport and Navigation on the Sava River Waterway*. In accordance with the Strategy on Implementation of the FASRB, Work Plan of the ISRBC for the year 2010 and the Programme of Work of the PEG NAV, the Album of Bridges on the Sava River and its Navigable Tributaries was created. The Album provides reliable information on the bridges and their navigable openings necessary for navigation. It should be noted that the updated Album, in digital format, would be permanently available on the ISRBC web presentation ([www.savacommission.com](http://www.savacommission.com)).

In the field of flood risk management in the Sava River Basin, it is important to note that *The Protocol on Flood Protection to the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin* was signed on June 2010. By this Protocol, which is in accordance with the EU Flood Directive, the Parties have committed themselves to the preparation of the *Flood Risk Management Plan (FRM Plan)* for the Sava River Basin. The Sava River Basin has been selected as one of the three basins under the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) to receive a financial support. Therefore, “*Pilot project on climate change: Building the link between the Flood Risk Management planning and climate change assessment*“, financed by UNECE grant, started in March 2011. This project will build upon the earlier started project “*Water and Climate Adaptation Plan for the Sava River Basin*“, financed by the World Bank. In cooperation with US Army Corps of Engineers, the hydrologic model of the Sava River Basin and the hydraulic model of the Sava River have been developed and new issues of the Hydrological Yearbook of the Sava River Basin have been prepared. These three projects will contribute to implementation of the Protocol on Flood Protection, especially through the flood forecasting, warning and alarming system.

Since erosion, transport and sedimentation processes have significant economic, social and environmental impact, sediment management is an important component of sustainable water resources management. For purpose of the preparation of an efficient sediment management plan for the SRB in accordance with the *Sava RBM Plan*, the *Protocol on Sediment Management to the FASRB* has been prepared.

In terms of economy, the important project of regional economic cooperation has been launched. The Chambers of commerce have initiated the project *Economic Region in the Sava River Basin*, which comprises a market of about 6.9 million people and around 140.000 companies. The project officially began by signing the *Protocol for regional cooperation* between seventeen Chambers of commerce in April 2007 in Šabac, with representatives of the European Union, the diplomatic core and the ISRBC that were present there. The Protocol defines the general principles and areas of cooperation

including the development of economic relations, infrastructure, environmental protection, tourism and merging of science and practice.

One of the first products of this project of regional economic networking is the creation of the Sava – *nautical and tourist Guide*, which is based on the Agreement from 4th August 2010, signed in Belgrade by representatives of regional Chambers of commerce. Published in several languages, the Guide contains an abundance of information about cultural and historical monuments and tourist offerings along the Sava River's entire course. It aimed to promote not only the nautical tourism but also the Sava River Basin as a tourist destination, including agro-tourism and eco-tourism. The preparation of a project of on strengthening the contribution of the small and medium enterprises to sustainable development of the Sava River Basin has been launched too.

The ISRBC participates in the project *Waste Management for Inland Navigation on Danube (WANDA)*, which aims to ensure the protection of the Danube Basin from the pollution. Within EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Slovenia and Croatia are preparing a Pilot project of the cross-border Sava River section Krško-Zagreb, with aim to extend it upstream and downstream of the river and to its tributaries.<sup>8</sup>

Keeping in mind the undeniable fact that there is no life without water, it should be recognised that the inhabitants of the Sava River Basin are all responsible for the well-being of waters in basin. Therefore, it is important to provide public participation in the river basin management, which is also required by the EU WFD. In this regard, a project *Enhancement of the Stakeholder Involvement in the management of the Sava River Basin –towards the Establishment of the Sava Water Partnership*, is of particular importance. The project is financed by the EU, UNESCO; GWP-Med and ISRBC, includes the preparation of *Stakeholder analysis* and a *Feasibility study for the establishment of a Sava Water Partnership (SWP)*. To ensure public participation, the ISRBC has been created a wide range of mechanisms for information and consultation, such as the official web site, official bulletin (the SAVA News Flash), its promotion material and publications, press releases, press conference, celebrations of the Sava Day, conferences and other meetings.

In order to enhance a further cooperation with Montenegro, a several official contacts between the ISRBC and this country have been made. Montenegro expressed the interest to become a Party to the FASRB in due time and the ISRBC has addressed to Montenegro a proposal on transitional possibilities of cooperation till the expected full membership.

### Concluding remarks

The Sava River Basin represents a major drainage basin in the South Eastern Europe and one of the most important sub-basins in the Danube River Basin, with a high potential for development activities such as the waterway transport, tourism and recreation. The Sava River represents a unique ecosystem with high a biodiversity

---

<sup>8</sup> International Sava River Basin Commission, SAVANewsFlash, official bulletin, no.8/December 2011.p. 3.

providing habitat for the most diverse fauna and flora. In the Sava River Basin, occur 167 protected area including Natura 2000 sites and six Wetlands of International Importance, so-called Ramsar Sites. Wetlands provide a vast array of ecosystem services that contribute to human well-being and play an important role in the regulation of global climate change and in the diminishing the destructive nature of flooding. At the same time, wetlands offer a wide range of opportunities for tourism and recreation that could generate considerable income. As defined by the Ramsar Convention, wise use of wetlands involves “*their sustainable utilisation for the benefit of the humankind in a way compatible with the maintenance of the natural properties of the ecosystem.*”<sup>9</sup> The conservation and management of inland wetlands requires arrangements for integrated river basin-scale management.

Once the biggest river of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, after the great political, economic and social changes that have taken place in this region, the Sava has become an international river, which connects new countries on its way from its origin in Slovenia to the Danube in Serbia. The Stability Pact for South–Eastern Europe provided a basis for the creation of a new integrated approach to the water resources management in the Sava River Basin. Taking into the account the significance of the Sava River as a backbone of cooperation, the Sava countries have concluded a Framework agreement for an integrated approach to water resources management in the Sava River Basin. The agreement is being implemented by Republic of Slovenia, Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic of Serbia. Montenegro is expected to become the Party to the FASRB in due time. The trans-boundary cooperation under the FASRB is built on basis of principles of equal rights, territorial integrity, State sovereignty, ”No-harm” rule, mutual respect of national legislation, organizations and institutions and reduction of the trans-boundary impacts caused by economic and other activities of the Parties. Therefore, this agreement serves as an instrument of common regional stability in the Sava River Basin in economic and in political terms.

The FASRB represents the first development-oriented multilateral agreement concluded in the region in the post-conflict period after the Dayton Peace Agreement and the Agreement on Succession. This is the unique international agreement, which integrates all aspects of water resource management such as rehabilitation and development of navigation, flood protection, utilization of potentials for tourism and recreation development as well as energy production and maintenance of water quality and quantity. The FASRB involves the whole water resources management linking the navigation development and the environmental protection. Implementation of the Agreement is faced with many difficulties, such as different level of economic development and organizational structures in the decision making process of the countries, lack of harmonization of the legislation with EU *acquis communautaire* and

---

<sup>9</sup> Ramsar COP3, 1987, Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, *Ecosystem and Human Well-Being: Wetlands and Water Synthesis*, World Resources Institute, Washington, DC, 2005. p. V.

lack of appropriate institutional arrangements, and especially lack of human and financial resources as well as the provision of funds for priority projects.<sup>10</sup>

For the implementation of the FASRB, the International Sava River Commission has been established as the joint institution with international legal capacity necessary for the exercise of its functions. The ISRBC is a relevant body in the Danube Region and it has involved in the process of the *EU Strategy for the Danube Region*. Bearing in mind that the main objectives of the Danube Strategy and the FASRB are the same, *sustainable development of the region*, therefore the implementation of the projects related to the FASRB could contribute to the implementation of the EU Danube Strategy as well. Potential impact of the cooperation under Framework Agreement extends beyond the Sava River Basin and it could become a raw model for the other international river basin in the region.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is faced with numerous challenges especially the challenges of high rate of unemployment, excessive public spending, the sustainability of current account deficit, slow forming of authorities and weak innovation potential that threaten the prospects of growth and its stability. Moreover, B&H needs to strengthen its environmental protection institutions and to integrate environmental concerns in other sectors and to raise both individual and society environmental awareness. Therefore, the regional cooperation within the framework of the Sava Commission for the B&H is very important. It could speed up the ecologization of the country and facilitate its EU accession. By unlocking the growth potential within the basin, the trans-boundary linkage could contribute to increase know-how and experience transfer, increase of competitiveness of the region, and in the attractiveness for the foreign direct investments. It may be concluded that the regional cooperation under framework of the Sava Commission could contribute to the sustainable development of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as of the Sava River Basin Area.

#### ACRONYM AND ABBREVIATIONS

AL	Albania
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EUSDR	EU Strategy for the Danube Region
FASRB	Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin
GIS	Geographical Information System
HR	Croatia
ICPDR	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River

---

<sup>10</sup> Komatina Dejan, *Integrated Water Resources Management as a Basis for Sustainable Development – The Case of the Sava River Basin*, Current Issues of Water Management, Uli Uhlig (Ed.), ISBN: 978-953-307-413-9, InTech, 2011, p. 39.

ME	Montenegro
RBM	River Basin Management
RIS	River Information Services
RS	Serbia
SI	Slovenia
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
WANDA	Waste Management for Inland Navigation on the Danube
WFD	Water Framework Directive

### References

- Aralica Zoran, “*Researching National Innovation Infrastructure in the Western Balkan Region*”, International Scientific Conference “Regional Cooperation in Europe: Opportunity for the Balkans”, Dubrovnik, 21-23 September, 2011., in: Boris Tihi (editor), Special Editions Vol. CXXXVII, Proceedings, pp. 169-178., Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2011.
- Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulletin 2/2011, Sarajevo, August 2011.
- European Commission, *EU Strategy for the Danube Region*, COM(2010) 715/4, December 2010.
- International Sava River Basin Commission, *Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin*, 2002.
- International Sava River Basin Commission “*Action Plan for the period 2011-2015 concerning the Strategy on Implementation on the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin*“, Doc. No. 1S-26-O-11-5/1-2, April 2011.
- International Sava River Basin Commission, *Strategy on Implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin*, Doc. No. 1S-26-O-11-4/2-2, April 2011.
- International Sava River Basin Commission, *The Sava River Basin Analysis – Summary*, December 2010.
- International Sava River Basin Commission, *The Sava River Basin Analysis Report*, Zagreb, September 2009, Internet: <http://www.savacommission.org> 08/11/2011.
- International Sava River Basin Commission, *SAVANewsFlash*, official bulletin, no.7/May 2011.
- International Sava River Basin Commission, *SAVANewsFlash*, official bulletin, no.8/December 2011.
- IFC and WB, *Doing Business 2011*, Washington, DC.
- International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, “*Convention on Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable use of Danube River*“ (*Danube River Protection Convention*)
- Komatina Dejan, *Integrated Water Resources Management as a Basis for Sustainable Development – The Case of the Sava River Basin*, Current Issues of Water Management, Uli Uhlig (Ed.), ISBN: 978-953-307-413-9, InTech, 2011, Available from: <http://www.intechopen.com/articles/show/title/integrated-water-resources-management-as-a-basis-for-sustainable-development-the-case-of-the-sava-ri>

- Lopandić Duško, *Regionalne inicijative u Jugoistočnoj Evropi*, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Evropski pokret u Srbiji, Beograd 2001.
- Lopandić Duško, “*Regional Initiatives and Multilateral Cooperation in the Balkans*” European Movement in Serbia, Belgrade 2010.
- Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, *Ecosystem and Human Well-Being: Wetlands and Water Synthesis*, World Resources Institute, Washington, DC, 2005.
- Redžić Sulejman, Ecologization of Economy as a tool of Sustainable Development, Mitigation Consequences of Climate Changes and Precondition for Integration Process towards European Union, International Scientific Conference “Regional Cooperation in Europe: Opportunity for the Balkans”, Dubrovnik, 21-23 September, 2011., in: Boris Tihi (editor), Special Editions Vol. CXXXVII, Proceedings, pp.105-126., Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2011.
- Stojić Karanović Edita, Petrović Dragan, “*Dunavska strategija – od vizije ka ostvarenju*”, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Međunarodni-naučni forum „Dunav – reka saradnje”, Beograd 2010.
- Stojić Karanović Edita, “*Regionalna i susedska saradnja za održivi razvoj Srbije u prvoj dekadi 21 veka*”, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Beograd 2008.
- Stojić Karanović Edita, „Dunav – reka saradnje”; ”*Danube – River of Cooperation*”, Međunarodni naučni forum „Dunav-reka saradnje”, Beograd 2005.
- United Nations Environment Programme “*Desk Review of the Legal and Institutional Framework of Environmental Protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina*”, UNEP Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina, April 2011.
- Vasić Borislav, Mandić Miroslav, Nedeljko Aleksandar, “*Sava – nautical and tourist guide*”, Economic Region in the Sava River Basin – The Forum of Chambers of Commerce, International Sava River Basin Commission, Zagreb 2011.
- World Commission on Environment and Development, “*Our Common Future: The Brundtland Report*”, <http://worldinbalance.net/pdf/1987-brundtland.pdf> 3/11/2011.
- Internet: <http://www.ewp.eu/activities/water-stewardship> 05/11/2011.
- Internet: <http://www.savacommission.org> 10/11/2011.
- Internet: <http://www.stabilitypact.org/about/SpownershipprocessPortal.asp> 10/12/2011.
- Internet: [http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-home/main/ramsar/1\\_4000\\_0](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-home/main/ramsar/1_4000_0) 15/12/2011.

Zsuzsa M. Császár<sup>1</sup>

## DANUBE STRATEGY: STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR SERBIA

### ABSTRACT

The Hungarian-Serbian connections are based on geographical proximity and also on the common moments of history of the two nations. It is good for the bilateral connections that both parties consider the relations which connect them to each other a priority. The Serbians consider our country as “one of the gates to Europe“ directly (in transportation) and indirectly. Anyway, for Hungary, the Euro-Atlantic integration of Serbia is a fundamental national interest in favour of both Hungarians in Vojvodina and buoyant economic connections. And Serbia may be in need for the transfer of Hungarian experiences. In the economic relations between the two countries has been a development since the millennium. It is related to the stabilization of the Serbian economy, the launched privatization, the creation of conditions providing foreign capital inflow, though the effects of the financial crisis are still hardly predictable in the long run. In the Hungarian-Serbian economic relations – despite the development – there is still a plenty of untaken chances.

In the analysis – in this case – we examine Serbia and the Serbian-Hungarian connections. We visited the Hungarian Embassy in Serbia and we made interviews with the leaders of the embassy and of the economic representation and their officials, and we analyzed the documents recording the bilateral relations and the reports made by the embassy, and we have also accessed documents considering particular countries in the repository of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The study undertakes only the analysis of interstate relations but sometimes as references the collaboration between regions and institutions also appears, as a sign for that in these relations real connections may form.

*Key words:* Danube strategy, Hungarian-Serbian connections, Relation Contents, Euro-Atlantic integration.

---

<sup>1</sup> Zsuzsa M. Császár, Ph.D. University of Pécs, Deputy Head of the Centre for East-Mediterranean and Balkan Studies, Hungary, e-mail: cszsuzsa@gamma.ttk.pte.hu.



The Balkan connections of Hungary are deeply embedded, they go back even to the era before the Hungarian conquest and settlement. As for the stages of these connections, we can say that their intensity is variable depending on current Hungarian domestic and foreign policy and on European politics. Dealing with this issue gets to the centre of the interest of Hungarian scientific approaches from the 17th and 18th centuries. Special attention is paid on this area particularly in the 19th century and this attention is continuous in the 20th century up until 1948. From the 1990s, after the end of the bipolar world and the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the level of interest is higher again for this territory. The attention of Hungarian geographic policy is also paid on this region, it is signed by the series of basic works on the history of research related to Balkan connections (Z. HAJDÚ 2003, 2007), and works dealing with the characteristics of Hungarian-Balkan connections (N. PAP 2007, 2009).

It is well-known that the geo-strategic role of Hungary has changed after the end of the bipolar world, in a sense it has grown. By our join to the European Union in 2004, our latitude of foreign policy has extended, however the Euro-Atlantic commitment meant/means a series of challenges, tasks and opportunities for the country. For us it is of particular importance that the E.U. has decided to open towards the South-Eastern Europe, and this act meant not only turning to the East-Balkan (Romania, Bulgaria) then their inclusion into the E.U., but also it meant the preparation for the integration of countries on the West-Balkan. In this quite long and excruciating procedure Hungary may also take part, it is still a question however that whether we will manage to focus both the attention of the Hungarian foreign policy and the Hungarian society on this area. This requires a change of attitude, since the Hungarian society as a spatial community hardly defines its place in Europe, namely which nations it should live in collaboration, what role it should play in the East-West relations (N. PAP 2009).

However this study does not wish to value the Balkan policies of the Hungarian governments in the first decade of the 21st century, opportunities have been given for this on some scientific<sup>2</sup> and political conferences, events. But the relations described as follows sign that there are other areas of collaboration as well which are still unexploited; that even now, from the Hungarian public opinion, the recognition of the great opportunities given to Hungary if it turns towards the Balkan more intensively is missing and also the recognition of that huge comparative advantage gained if Hungary first appears in the region with its investments. Though, we are afraid that we have already missed this later opportunity in most of the West-Balkan countries, since now we are already proceeded not only by the Austrian, the Greek, the Turkish (through their Islam connections in Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the Slovenian but also by the West-Europeans.

---

<sup>2</sup> The PTE Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan Studies Centre (EMBSC) organized a conference entitled “Revival in the Balkan” in 2006, and there are also the Hungarian Political Geographic Conferences (I.- V.). These listed conferences have dealt with the question several times between 2000 and 2008.

## Relation Contents

The mapping of the Hungarian-Balkan relations in the early 21st century requires not only the review of historical sources but also the application of a series of analytical methods needed in recent researches. In the analysis – in this case – we examine Serbia and the Serbian-Hungarian connections. We visited the Hungarian Embassy in Serbia and we made interviews with the leaders of the embassy and of the economic representation (HITA)<sup>3</sup> and their officials, and we analyzed the documents recording the bilateral relations and the reports made by the embassy, and we have also accessed documents considering particular countries in the repository of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The study undertakes only the analysis of interstate relations but sometimes as references the collaboration between regions and institutions also appears, as a sign for that in these relations real connections may form.

## Connections of Serbia and Hungary

The Hungarian-Serbian connections are based on geographical proximity and also on the common moments of history of the two nations. Already in the Middle Ages there is substantial connection between them, in form of marriage or feudal relations, but the greatest connecting elements were/are the enlarging number of Serbian habitats,<sup>4</sup> fugitives who are escaping the Turkish and are entering the Hungarian Kingdom, and all those Hungarians who are trapped in the Royal Yugoslavia – in this case this is Vojvodina (Vajdaság) today (GULYÁS 2005). It is good for the bilateral connections that both parties consider the relations which connect them to each other a priority. The Serbians consider our country as “one of the gates to Europe“ directly (in transportation) and indirectly. However in the Serbian foreign strategy, Hungary does not play such a big role as we often think we do (J. JUHÁSZ 2009). Anyway, for Hungary, the Euro-Atlantic integration of Serbia is a fundamental national interest in favour of both Hungarians in Vojvodina and buoyant economic connections. And Serbia may be in need for the transfer of Hungarian experiences.

In the economic relations between the two countries has been a development since the millennium. It is related to the stabilization of the Serbian economy, the launched privatization, the creation of conditions providing foreign capital inflow, though the effects of the financial crisis are still hardly predictable in the long run. In the Hungarian-Serbian economic relations – despite the development – there is still a plenty of untaken

---

<sup>3</sup> Hungarian Investment and Trade Agency, the government agency of the Ministry of National Economy responsible for export development.

<sup>4</sup> Already in the King Matthias era the Serbian settlement begins – even he extends his army with Serbian warriors – the largest settlement happened in 1690 led by the Serbian Patriarch, then 50-60 thousand Serbians arrived at the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom.

chances. The measure of Hungarian-Serbian trade is less than our trade with the other neighbouring countries (Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania). Serbia is one of the highlighted target countries of Hungarian Development Programmes (INDE) and this connection may also strengthen the economic cooperation (J. JUHÁSZ 2009).

The entrepreneurs of the two countries have relevant experience, connection system and local knowledge in each other's country. The Hungarian minority in Serbia plays a significant role in the realization of market ideas of Hungarian small and medium enterprises. In Vojvodina, near five hundred Hungarian-Serbian joint ventures operate. The contractual relationship between the two countries is established, in the recent years, several bilateral treaties were signed, for example among many others there is the treaty about the avoidance of the double taxation and the investment protection agreement (2001), the economic collaboration agreement (2005). In October of 2008, the Hungarian and the Serbian ministers of agriculture signed the memorandum about the agricultural collaboration between the two countries. On 12th of October 2009, in the occasion of the Hungarian-Serbian presidential meeting, the agreement about the international, combined freight transport and logistic services was signed. An inter-departmental memorandum was also signed about the infrastructural development of the X/B railway passage. An agreement on cooperation in plant protection was signed in November of 2009 between the Hungarian and Serbian Ministry of Agriculture.

According to the Serbian Statistical Office, in 2010 Hungary was the 5th biggest exporter in Serbia (after Russia, Germany, Italy and China), the share of Hungary in the Serbian import was 4.8%. The Hungarian export to Serbia grew with 31.3% in 2010 in comparison to the same period of the previous year (in 2009 it was 462.1 million EUR, in 2010 it was 606.9 million EUR). Meanwhile Hungary is the 11th in the export of Serbia, we get 3.1% of the Serbian export. Our Serbian import grew with 25.2% in 2010 in comparison to the base period (in 2009 it was 182.6 million EUR, in 2010 it was 228.6 million EUR).

Due to the application of different methodology, the statistics of the Central Statistical Office<sup>5</sup> (KSH) show differences in comparison to the data of the Serbian Statistical Office. Based on the data of KSH, the Hungarian export to Serbia was 843 million EUR in 2010, this means 25.5% growth in comparison to the previous year. The Serbian import of Hungary was 279 million EUR in 2010, this means 20.8% growth in comparison to 2009. Based on this, the trade surplus of Hungary against Serbia is 564 million EUR, this means 28.5% growth in comparison to the previous year.

Based on the data of the Serbian Statistical Office, the export of Hungary was the most significant with the following goods: natural and artificial gas (75 365 million EUR); petroleum, petroleum products and similar material (49 353 million EUR); communications technology, sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment (28 731 million EUR); plastic raw material (26 862 million EUR); coal, coke and

---

<sup>5</sup> KSH – Hungarian Statistical Office.

briquette (21 579 million EUR). Our exports extended most dynamically in metalliferous ores and metal scrap, cellulose and waste paper, textile fiber and textile fiber waste, footwear, natural and artificial gas and electric power.

The import of Hungary from Serbia was the most significant with goods like: electric power (61 394 million EUR); sugar, sugar products and honey (17 977 million EUR); metal products (13 056 million EUR); road vehicle (12 659 million EUR); vegetable fats and oils (10 406 M EUR). Our imports extended most dynamically in other transport equipments, coal, coke, and briquette, organic chemical products, vegetable fats and oils and fertilizers.

Based on the bilateral foreign trade data considering 2010, we can say that with the decrease of the effects of the financial and economic crisis, the trade turnover between the two countries increased in which Hungary still has significant surplus thanks to the dynamic extension of Hungarian export. Although it is worth mentioning that the benchmark is the year 2009 when there was a relevant setback.

Based on official data of Serbian National Bank, in 2010 the value of direct Hungarian investments to Serbia was 22 million USD, by this Hungary is ranked 14th among the other foreign investors. In 2009, Hungary was 13th with investments valued 23 million USD, meanwhile in the 2000-2008 period, based on the data, Hungary is 10th in the ranking of investors (353 million USD).

In the past few years the investments from Hungary relatively decreased, mainly due to the economic and financial crisis which began in 2008, particularly because of the fact that Hungary had crucial economic problems even before this period. It is also important to say that the large Hungarian companies (OTP, MOL), have already entered the Serbian market, thus the direct working capital was realized to Serbia until 2006 (in 2006 244 million USD FDI arrived from Hungary to Serbia).

Of the large Hungarian companies the OTP Bank have appeared in Serbia since 21 May 2007, that is when the three Serbian banks purchased by the OTP united (these banks are the Niska banka, the Zepter banka and the Kulska banka). Their new united name is OTP Banka Srbija a.d. On purchase of the Serbian banks 167 million EUR were spent in total by the OTP. The MOL Group keeps on extending its gas station network in Serbia (at the moment it has 33 stations), and so far it invested with the value of 61 million EUR in total in Serbia. Among the most relevant investors there is the Conti Tech Rubber Industrial Ltd. which purchased 70% of the Kolubara Univerzal in Velika Crljen, a rubber conveyor belt manufacturer for the amount of 11 million EUR, and it undertook further investment with 4 million EUR. In Subotica (Szabadka) the Masterplast Group Inc. has opened its biggest factory. The Concrete Road Construction & Services Inc. (Betonút Szolgáltató és Építő Inc.) purchased the Valjevo Put road construction enterprise in 2007 for 1.57 million EUR and also undertook a five-year investment programme with a value of 2.7 million EUR. The ISOPLUS Heating Wire Manufacturing Ltd. makes projects in more Serbian towns, its total investment was more than 600.000 EUR in 2010. The Fornetti has invested 15 million EUR in the Serbian market so far.

The Serbian Statistical Office published trading data particularly about Central-Serbia and Vojvodina. For Hungary, Vojvodina is very important since here are most of the

Hungarian-Serbian joint ventures and most of the bilateral trade is realized in this province. In 2010 the export from Vojvodina was 2 615.2 million EUR (in 2009 it was 2 062.0 million EUR) this means 26.8% growth in comparison to the previous year. By this the 35.4% of the total Serbian export came from Vojvodina in 2010 (in 2009 it was 34.6%). The import of the autonomous province was 3 568.0 million EUR in 2010 (in 2009 it was 3 129.3 million EUR) which means 14% growth in comparison to the previous year. Based on this, Vojvodina gave the 28.3% of the total Serbian import (in 2009 it was 27.2%).

**Chart 1: Hungarian-Serbian economic and trade relations**  
**Goods in the Hungarian-Serbian Foreign Trade (million EUR)**

	EXPORT		IMPORT		BALANCE	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
<b>Total</b>	<b>671.8</b>	<b>843.2</b>	<b>231.0</b>	<b>278.9</b>	<b>772.9</b>	<b>441.6</b>
Food, beverages and tobacco	32.4	31.8	48.2	39.1	-9.6	-15.7
Raw materials	13.0	26.8	7.4	14.6	15.2	5.3
Energy sources	157.1	276.5	83.8	120.5	255.6	73.1
Processed products	267.3	294.6	68.4	83.4	209.5	126.9
Machinery and equipment	201.9	213.5	22.8	21.2	302.2	179.4

Source: HITA 2012.

The Serbian capital export to Hungary is still negligible, Serbia is still interested only in privatization and increase of foreign capital inflows.

E.U. resources create further opportunities for the collaboration. The IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme sees the ways of Hungarian-Serbian collaboration in economic development, tourism, development of common activity in environment protection, improvement of the access to cross-border transportation and information networks, development of cross-border water and waste management and in creation of common structures in healthcare, culture and education. Also in this programme – as in other dimensions of relations – the Hungarians in Vojvodina play an important role.

Cultural relations also are based on bilateral agreements. The participation of the Hungarian party considering cultural appearance can be detected mainly in Vojvodina. Regular meetings, joint programmes are organized in towns near the common border in Szeged, Subotica, Baja and Kanjiza (Magyarkanizsa). The effective collaboration is made difficult by the fact that Hungarian artistic groups rarely visit towns and villages far within the country – for example Belgrade.

### **The Significance of the Danube Strategy in Serbian-Hungarian Relations**

On 18-19 June 2009, the E.U. Council officially asked the European Commission to make plans about the Danube Region Strategy until the end of 2010. The Commission

presented its proposal in December of 2010, its acceptance was in the time period when Hungary was in presidency over the E.U. in 2011. The project deals with 11 areas of action, based on the following main priority topics: sustainable development of transport and energy networks, environment and water protection, social and economic development and management system development.

From the Pan-European point of view, both Baltic Strategy and Danube Strategy are symbolic. It represents that in the era of globalization, the interdependence of the particular states is growing fast. So the strategy also gives a unique opportunity to the countries in participation – Hungary and Serbia among them – for a coordinated answer to the global challenges which are solvable only by cross-border solutions (energy security, climate change, flood, drought etc.).

The goal of DRS is to grow sustainably the economy and competitiveness of the region and so the welfare of its people and to create a flourishing, developing and attractive region. The DRS helps to strengthen the feeling of belonging and to decrease the differences within the region. An important projection of it is to support the competitiveness and the expansion of small and medium enterprises in countries along the Danube. The DRS also advances the integration of the West-Balkan as an important element of Central-Europe Politics.

### **Hungarian Initiatives within the DRS**

The progress “Szeged +” helps the small and medium enterprises of the region to the integrated European market. Moreover the main goal of this initiative is to build and maintain relationships within the E.U. in the neighbouring West-Balkan region. It is also symbolical that Szeged is the closest town to Serbia. Related to this, there is an intention to develop dual trainings, to synchronize training systems and to create a Training Cluster. The goal of all these initiatives is to ease labour shortages. In the countries of the Danube region, the goal is to train professionals with the knowledge needed in the labour market by the content harmonization of the training.

The utilization of geo-thermal energy: to reveal and discover the large amounts of energy treasure of the countries in the Danube Basin which have not been used yet, to utilize this energy supplying the social and economic environment of the towns and villages and to influence sustainably the life of the people living there.

Energy efficiency, sustainability, green building and construction and energy effective “green” collaboration among sub-regions, villages, towns and self-governments – based on innovative technology: to create such green municipalities as an example which serve as samples for the habitats of countries along the Danube. The fellowship among mayors and twin towns may help the communication and exchange of experiences.

Dealing with drought and dryness in the catchment area of the Danube: it is mainly about the harmonization of drought management action plans of the countries in the Central and Lower Danube Valley, with a special attention paid on cross-border effects

and perspectives. For Hungary, it is essential to solve this problem (the damages are much larger than the investments for their avoidance would be).

For Hungary, the intercollegiate collaborations of the Rectors' Conference along the Danube, in the topics of doctoral studies, mobility of professors and students, climate change and world heritage, are really important. Furthermore special attention is paid on the challenges before the graduate schools in three-staged trainings and on the importance of research and employment of foreign guest professors.

### Summary

Nowadays, in the E.U., there is a new sub-system forming in the Balkan region. It means a connecting link between Central Europe and the Mediterranean. This fact is very significant for both Hungary and the Balkan region considering society, economy and culture.

The intensity of the Hungarian-Balkan connections is variable age by age in history. It depends on current domestic and foreign policies and high-power relations. The depth of today's connections is defined on one hand by past and former relationships, on the other hand it is influenced by the situation of ethnic groups in each other's territory (like the relations between Serbians and Hungarians). For the countries in the post-Yugoslav region, a unique opportunity arises by the Euro-Atlantic integration which brings closer Hungary and it may strengthen the existing connections.

It is a task for high politics to create the opportunities for the enduring and effective presence in the region, to provide the transfer of integrational experiences by establishing institutions with professional experts. In addition, the larger ratio of Hungarian export and investments revealed in this study which are still unexploited should be possible. In the recent economic and financial situation, Hungary should strive for greater economic activity in this region. Having scientific analyses and governmental information on the matter, those areas must be defined where a much larger economic activity is required. And related to this, we must take certain steps of diplomacy as well.

Especially important is the fact that in the Hungarian E.U. presidency era, the West-Balkan was a priority in the Hungarian and European foreign politics. It would be also important for the Hungarian foreign government to achieve that Hungary become the Balkan information Centre of the E.U. by the geographical closeness to the region and by close historical relations. Hungary should help the integration of this region by the knowledge and connections concentrated in here. And by the presence of multinational companies, it should play an intermediary role. All this may bring enduring success only by intermediation of a tinted and realistic Balkan-picture to the Hungarian society – especially to small and medium enterprises with the intention to invest.

All in all it seems that Serbian-Hungarian relations have come to a more intensive stage. It is partly because of the stabilization of Serbian politics and economy and due to the declaration of commitment to the European integration. In the development of

these connections providing a wider autonomy to Vojvodina and to the Hungarians living there is not negligible.<sup>6</sup> Besides these factors, the visa liberalization – come into force 19 December 2009 – has given a new push to the collaboration as well.

### Bibliography

- Bali Lóránt: A horvát-magyar kapcsolatok néhány fontosabb aspektusa 1991-től napjainkig. In: M. Császár Zs. (szerk.) *Balkán Füzetek Különszám II.*- PTE KMBTK, Pécs, pp. 261-268.
- Glatz F. (szerk.) 2007. *A Balkán és a Magyarország váltás a külpolitikai gondolkodásban.* MTA TTK Európa Intézet, Budapest, 430p.
- Gulyás L. 2005. *Két régió- Felvidék és Vajdaság- sorsa az Osztrák-Magyar Monarchiától napjainkig.* hazai Térségfejlesztő Rt. Kiadó p. 234.
- Illés I. 2002: *Közép- és Kelet-Európa az ezredfordulón. Átalakulás, integráció, régiók.* Dialóg Campus, Budapest-Pécs, 220. p.
- Hajdú Z. 2003: *Az intézményes Balkán-kutatás kialakulásának és fejlődésének problémái Magyarországon 1948-ig.* – *Balkán Füzetek No. 1.* Pécs, 71. p.
- Hajdú Z.- Illés I.- Raffay Z. (szerk.) 2007: *Délkelet-Európa: Államhatárok, határon átnyúló kapcsolatok, térstruktúrák.* MTA RKK, Pécs 16 1p.
- Hajdú Z- Pap N.- tóth J. (szerk.) 2001: *Az átalakuló Balkán politikai –földrajzi kérdései.* PTE TTK FI Kelet-Mediterrán és Balkán Tanulmányok Központja, Pécs 231p.
- Hóvári j. 2006: *Adriai és balkáni hatások a Balatontól a Drávaig.*- In: Pap N. (szerk.). *Balatontól az Adriáig.* Lomart Kiadó- PTE Kelet-Mediterrán és Balkán Tanulmányok Központja, Pécs, pp. 43–58.
- Juhász j. 2009: *A szerbiai politikai változások tendenciái* – [www.balkancenter.hu/pdf/juhasz\\_balkanmint01.pdf](http://www.balkancenter.hu/pdf/juhasz_balkanmint01.pdf) – Date of download: 12. 02. 2010.
- Kádár b.2007: *Az Európai Unió külgazdasága, Délkelet-Európa és Magyarország* – In: Glatz Ferenc (szerk.) *A Balkán és Magyarország – váltás a külpolitikai gondolkodásban?* MTA Társadalomkutató Központ- Európa Intézet, Budapest pp. 41–45.
- Kocsis K. (ed). 2007. *Délkelet-Európa atlasz* – FKI Bp. 136p.
- Pap n. 2007: *A Balkán „kis” politikai földrajza* – In: Reményi P. (szerk.) *Balkán Füzetek No. 5.* 126. p.

---

<sup>6</sup> In 1974, legislative, executive and judicial rights were given to Vojvodina, these rights were overruled and terminated by Milošević. Then in 2002, the Omnibus Act repealed it and 240 cognizances were given to the province. In 2008, the parliament of the province accepted the Vojvodina Constitution which was approved by the legislation in Belgrade in the autumn of 2009, and from December it came into force. By this, Vojvodina was given back further 153 cognizances, one of the greatest importance is that it provides the operation of national parliaments in Vojvodina with the establishment of equality of national communities – so equality of the Hungarian community – and national councils – so the Hungarian National Council.



- Pap n. 2009: Nyugat-Balkán- In. Pap N. – Kobilka I. (szerk.) Budapest MK KBH pp. 145-16.
- Prévélakis , G. 2007: A Balkán. Kultúra és geopolitika. Imedias Kiadó, Kozármisleny, 220 p.
- Varga i. 2009: Magyarország és Bosznia-Hercegovina kapcsolatai In. M. Császár Zs. (szerk.)
- Balkán Füzetek Különszám II.- PTE KMBTK, Pécs, pp. 217–222.
- Duna Stratégia sajtóanyaga - „3 igen” – [http://www.eu2011.hu/files/bveu/documents/Duna\\_Regio\\_Strategia\\_sajtoanyag\\_0.pdf](http://www.eu2011.hu/files/bveu/documents/Duna_Regio_Strategia_sajtoanyag_0.pdf), Date of download: 27. 02. 2012.

Saša Čvrljak  
Hrvoje Butković<sup>1</sup>

## DANUBE STRATEGY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

### ABSTRACT

Danube Strategy, being launched as the “pilot project” to intensify policy coordination among involved grouping of countries in the Danube region has a wider strategic importance. Namely, Danube Strategy is one of the major vehicles for embedding “smart, sustainable and inclusive” growth in the Danube region, thus contributing to the regionalization of the Europe 2020 strategy and enhancing perspectives for its long-term success. Additionally, Danube Strategy has important external dimension in the South-Eastern Europe (SEE) where it can supplement the EU accession process by underpinning EU-related reforms, stirring regional cooperation and empowering sub-state governmental tiers. As the upcoming EU member state, Croatia will support continuation of the EU enlargement process in the South-Eastern Europe (SEE) where Danube Strategy emerges as the potential device for sharing experiences and lessons learned acquired during the Croatian EU accession process. Additionally, Croatia aims to use the Danube Strategy as the platform to raise cooperation with its neighbours, improve competitiveness of its economy, underpin sustainable socio-economic development and secure balanced regional development, given significant regional disparities in the country. Finally, Croatia can utilize its “gateway” position between the Danube basin and the Mediterranean that offers great economic potentials for development of its transport corridors and sea ports.

*Key words:* Danube Strategy, Europe 2020 strategy, South-Eastern Europe, EU accession, Croatia, competitiveness, regional development.

### Introduction

In December 2010 the European Commission issued “European Union Strategy for the Danube Region” that was officially adopted by the European Council in June 2011.

---

<sup>1</sup> Saša Čvrljak, M.A, Hrvoje Butković, Ph.D, Institute for International Relations – IMO, Ljudevita Farkaša Vukotinića 2, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia, e-mail: sasa@irmo.hr, butkovic@irmo.hr.

The Danube Strategy should contribute in tackling common transnational challenges by shaping the coordinative integrative-framework for existing EU sectoral policies and programmes, leading to the “strategic creation” of the region based on its functional needs and interconnectivity of key policies and stakeholders.<sup>2</sup> Issuing of the EU Danube Strategy followed an extensive consultation with the stakeholders, including those from the member states and non-member states which have been involved in this process. Together with the Strategy, Commission issued an Action Plan with the aim to go from “words to actions” by identifying concrete priorities for the Danube macro-region. The Action Plan presented structure of the Danube Strategy which is built upon four pillars representing four priorities that came to light during the consultation process: (i) connecting the Danube region; (ii) protecting the environment in the Danube region; (iii) building prosperity in the Danube region; and (iv) strengthening the Danube region. Every pillar of the Strategy contains several priority areas which identify detailed actions and projects that need to be implemented. Essentially, the EU through these measures aims to foster socio-economic development, upgrade competitiveness, improve environmental management and security and modernize transport corridors, thus turning the Danube region into one of the most attractive regions in Europe.<sup>3</sup>

The Danube Strategy is founded on the “three no’s” principle – meaning that there are no new funds, no new legislation and no new institutions envisaged for its development. However, this nascent integrated and cooperative framework should secure functional coordination and more efficient usage of financial resources and already existing cooperation schemes.<sup>4</sup> The fact that no new financial resources have been created means that the Strategy has to be financed from already available funding sources, including financial institutions like the EIB, related EU policy areas like Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Competiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) or from the included member states themselves. Still, the predominant source of funding is expected to come from the EU’s Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund as well as from the pre-accession funds. In this context, positioning of macro regional strategies such as the Danube Strategy within framework of the future EU Cohesion policy (2014-2020) is of utmost importance.

Such a peculiar governance scheme embodies the multi-level governance in the EU because Danube Strategy’s implementation depends on the successful cooperation between different stakeholders at various tiers of government, spanning across

---

<sup>2</sup> Attila Ágh, “Global Governance as Multilateral Regionalised World Order: Planning for the Global Role of the EU in SBH Trio Presidency”, in: Elvire Fabry and Gaëtane Ricard-Nihoul (eds), *Think Global – Act European: The Contribution of 14 European Think Tanks to the Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian Trio Presidency of the European Union*, Paris, Notre Europe, 2010, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> “European Union Strategy for the Danube Region”, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, European Commission, Brussels, 8 December 2010, COM (2010) 715 final, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Rikard Bengtsson, “An EU Baltic Sea Strategy: Good Intentions Meet Complex Challenges”, *SIEPS-Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies*, issue 9, September 2009, p. 1.

supranational, national and sub-national levels. However, potential governance deficit created with this situation will have to be overcome by establishment of new kind of regulatory and executive agencies and by strengthening networks of cities and regions which will involve all sorts of different stakeholders.<sup>5</sup>

### **Danube Strategy as regionalization of the Europe 2020 strategy**

Building on the accomplishments of its predecessor the Lisbon Strategy; in January 2011 the EU started implementation of its Europe 2020 strategy for “smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”. Europe 2020 strategy represents the EU’s response to global crisis and a preparation tool for the EU’s economy for the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is an overarching strategy and all EU policies have to be harmonized with its goals, while the EU member states are measured on a yearly basis in reaching its targets. Danube Strategy clearly reinforces Europe 2020 strategy goals because its agenda mirrors the ambition to achieve “smart, sustainable and inclusive growth” in the Danube region. Namely, the Danube Strategy provides a sustainable framework for policy integration and coherent development of the Danube region, characterized by sharp socio-economic disparities through focusing on the main tenets of the Europe 2020 strategy. For instance, the Danube Strategy 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar “building prosperity in the Danube region” defines over 50 actions and projects which aim to lower disparities between various countries and localities through investing into people and skills or supporting competitiveness of enterprises.<sup>6</sup> In addition, other three pillars in a comprehensive manner aim to release untapped potential of the EU internal market, address transport and energy bottlenecks, make these sectors more environmental friendly, support green growth while at the same time underpinning these endeavours with the social inclusion and higher levels of employment.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, the Danube Strategy seeks to enhance competitiveness and secure socio-economic development of the Danube region through regional application of the Europe 2020 strategy. This approach yields several important advantages that should in the long-run secure better implementation and success of the Europe 2020 goals in the Danube region. Firstly, the Danube Strategy now forms a platform for creation of alliances, exchange of best practices and projects among included countries and influencing the

---

<sup>5</sup> Attila Ágh, “Danube Strategy as a challenge of globalized locality (glocality): The Europeanization of a Functional Macro-Region in the Danube Valley”, in: Attila Ágh, Tamás Kaier, Boglárka Koller (eds), *Europeanization of the Danube Region: The Blue Ribbon Project*. King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2010, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> “Action Plan”, Accompanying document to the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Commission Staff Working Document, Brussels, 8 December 2010, SEC (2010) 1489 final, pp. 55-73.

<sup>7</sup> “European Union Strategy for the Danube Region”, COM (2010) 715 final.

EU decision-making process without formally constituting an operational policy level.<sup>8</sup> Hence, this intensified collaboration creates opportunity for effective implementation of the Europe 2020 instruments such as benchmarking, monitoring, peer-reviewing etc. among involved countries, regardless of their EU membership status, given the impregnation of the Europe 2020 and Danube Strategy goals.

Secondly, the Danube Strategy essentially adjusts the Europe 2020 agenda to the Danube region, making it more tailor-made and responsive to the needs of local population. This greater regional ownership of Europe 2020 strategy should be enhanced by promotion of the decentralized governance-based decision-making which encompasses a variety of territorial and social actors. Crucial role in transforming and embedding these wider EU goals in the regional and local context have sub-state actors such as regional and local governments due to their capacity for policy and social integration. Indeed, it is argued that this concretization of the Europe 2020 strategy, i.e. “detailed elaboration from a bottom-up perspective” is necessary for its efficient implementation.<sup>9</sup>

### **Danube Strategy and the South-Eastern Europe: the role of Croatia**

Out of the six non-EU member states, the Danube Strategy encompasses four of them that are in the SEE: Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, therefore confirming its important external dimension. Despite being detached from the official EU enlargement policy towards the SEE, it is worthwhile to analyze Danube Strategy within the context of the EU accession policy towards the region, especially given the newest enlargement dynamics and the upcoming Croatian EU membership.

Croatian EU accession represents great success not only for Croatia but also for all other countries in the SEE region. It sends a clear message to the region that reform efforts demanded by the EU are worth being implemented because they are rewarded with the EU membership, confirming the consistency and credibility of the EU enlargement policy. The EU echoes importance of the Danube Strategy for the SEE region and raises hopes it can assist its EU integration process.<sup>10</sup> The Danube Strategy can supplement the EU accession process in the region by helping to embark on the EU-related reforms and further increase regional cooperation in the SEE, being an important agent of the EU integration. Danube Strategy can play an important role in deepening economic ties, stirring socio-economic development and enhancing cross-fertilization of cultural and

---

<sup>8</sup> Carsten Schymik, “Modellversuch Makroregion: Die EU-Strategien für den Ostsee- und den Donaauraum,” *SWP-Studien* 2011/S 01, Berlin, Januar 2011, pp. 6-10.

<sup>9</sup> Attila Ágh, “Danube Strategy and Europe 2020 Strategy: The organic link between the bottom-up and the top-down EU projects”, in: Attila Ágh, Tamás Kaier, Boglárka Koller (eds), *The New Horizons of the Cohesion Policy in the European Union: The Challenge of the Danube Strategy*. King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2011, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> “European Parliament resolution on the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region”, European Parliament, Strasbourg, 15 February 2011.

educational ties in the region. It can play particularly important role in upgrading administrative capabilities of the regional and local tiers of governments, which is particularly important given the current governance challenges of the SEE countries that burden their EU accession paths. The role of regional and local governments is not only essential in raising perspectives of the Danube Strategy's success in the SEE, but it has an indispensable place in enhancing the overall effectiveness and accountability of the political systems in these countries. Greater decentralization and subsequently enhanced policy capacities of the sub-state governmental levels should lead to greater political accountability and better usage of financial resources. In that sense, their empowerment can help in tackling some of the biggest challenges the SEE countries face, such as issues of good governance, rule of law or administrative capacity.<sup>11</sup> Danube Strategy can contribute to these endeavours by upgrading capabilities of the regional and local governments through their inclusion in the Danube Strategy-related cross-border, interregional and transnational cooperation schemes. In conclusion, the Danube Strategy could both through enhancing policy convergence with the EU in selected sectoral domains and by enhancing regional cooperation positively influence the EU accession process in the SEE because its agenda largely underpins the EU accession-related reforms in the region and can result in positive ramifications for them.

As an upcoming EU member state Croatia needs to strategically position its role in the EU and in the SEE region. As a new member state Croatia can provide a strong political backing to the continuation of the EU enlargement policy towards the SEE and support the SEE countries in their reforms. In another words, Croatia will seek to become a “gateway” to the EU for other SEE countries, providing them with political support, policy-transfer and technical assistance on their path to the EU based on experiences gained during its own EU accession process. Continuation of enlargement to the SEE region is already one of Croatia's foreign policy goals due to its economic and political significance but it will become even more important in the post-2013 period. Since it is likely the EU enlargement will face a longer stalemate, Croatia will bear specific responsibility for the region and to a certain extent represent “regional voice”, trying to keep the EU enlargement momentum. The Danube Strategy can serve as one of the devices for pursuing this goal because it can be used as a platform for sharing experiences of the Croatian EU accession with other countries in the SEE region.

### **Danube Strategy as the developmental vector for Croatia**

Danube Strategy has a fundamental strategic importance for the Republic of Croatia given the fact that the territory of Croatia represents natural juncture between the Mediterranean and the Danube basin which offers significant economic potentials for development of Croatian transport corridors and its Adriatic Sea ports. This is only one

---

<sup>11</sup> “Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2011-2012”, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Brussels, 12 October 2011, COM (2011) 666 final, p. 3.

of the Croatia's comparative advantages which it aims to valorise through its participation in the Danube Strategy that should generally be regarded as important developmental vector for the country.

Essentially, Croatia aims to use the Danube Strategy as leverage to increase economic competitiveness, underpin its socio-economic development with particular focus on reducing regional disparities, or in another words securing balanced regional development. Croatian competitiveness has been declining recently by falling down from the 61<sup>th</sup> place in 2008 to 76<sup>th</sup> place in 2011,<sup>12</sup> scoring only better than Romania and Greece within the EU. These negative trends, aggravated by the economic crisis have lowered employment rate in the age group 15-64 to only 54%, positioning Croatia at the last place among the all EU countries.<sup>13</sup> Relevant analyses claim that Croatia can fully utilize its EU accession only if it undertakes serious structural reforms in its economy and upgrades its competitiveness. World Economic Forum points out the low labour and goods market efficiency in Croatia,<sup>14</sup> EBRD mentions the need to “restore robust growth”, among the other by promoting a more business-friendly environment and reducing the state subsidies<sup>15</sup> while IMF urges for Croatian economy to be “significantly revamped by addressing deep-rooted structural rigidities and competitiveness problems”.<sup>16</sup> The Croatian participation in the Danube Strategy cannot comprehensively tackle entire set of Croatian competitiveness problems (e.g. fiscal policy, competition policy, labour market regulation and etc.) but it can help in tackling some of the challenges and complementing the necessary structural reforms. Croatian competitiveness when seen from the prism of Danube Strategy should be enhanced by improving business environment for the SMEs, developing clusters, fostering scientific and technological upgrading, modernizing labour market and investing into agriculture, rural tourism, transport and renewable energies. In that sense, Danube Strategy becomes one of the vehicles for embedding the tenets of “smart, sustainable and inclusive” growth in Croatia. Therefore, by spurring desired entrepreneurial dynamics, focusing on environmentally-friendly growth, utilizing Croatian comparative advantages, especially through modernization and construction of transport and energy networks, Croatian participation in the Danube Strategy represents window of opportunity for its growth perspectives and economic convergence with the EU-27.<sup>17</sup> This dynamics should

---

<sup>12</sup> “The Global Competitiveness Report 2011–2012”, World Economic Forum, Geneva, Switzerland, 2011, p. 156.

<sup>13</sup> Employment rate by gender, age group 15-64 (Eurostat 2010 data), <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&language=en&pcode=teilm020&tableSelection=1&plugin=1> (15/02/2012)

<sup>14</sup> “The Global Competitiveness Report (GCR) 2011–2012”, p. 157.

<sup>15</sup> “Crisis in Transition: The People’s Perspective”, Transition Report 2011, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), London, 15 November 2011, p. 122.

<sup>16</sup> “IMF Country Report No. 11/159”, International Monetary Fund, Washington, D.C., June 2011, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Croatian GDP per capita in 2010 (in PPS) reached 61% of the average EU-27 level (Eurostat 2010 data), <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tec00114> (15/02/2012)

particularly be analyzed bearing in mind the upcoming Croatian integration to the EU internal market.

Competitiveness at the national level embraces and intertwines with regional competitiveness and can alleviate disparities in the levels of regional development. This is the Croatian case given that NUTS2 region Central and Eastern Croatia (Pannonian Croatia), that is most directly involved in the implementation of the Danube Strategy is at the same time the least developed NUTS2 region in Croatia with its counties; Požeško-slavonska, Vukovarsko-srijemska and Sisačko-moslavačka being at the national developmental bottom.<sup>18</sup> Due to the fact that Croatian priorities within the Danube Strategy largely reflect needs and developmental perspectives of the NUTS2 region Pannonian Croatia, the Danube Strategy can have a positive catalytic effect for its regional competitiveness. Development of lagging Croatian counties in the NUTS2 region Pannonian Croatia depends on a blend of material resources, cultural and social capital. Seen through the lenses of the Danube Strategy, particularly regionally-rooted knowledge and tradition, social milieu and societal ties could be turned into the sources of economic growth through appropriate investments into transport, business and scientific infrastructure. Indeed, this potential of the Pannonian Croatia can be harnessed by investments into inland waterways and railways, developments of entrepreneurship, rural tourism, agriculture and by strengthening cooperation between local administration, business communities and academia. Essential task is to create knowledge-based growth, where innovative ideas and knowledge would be turned into market products and services with higher added value, ambition seeking involvement of all relevant stakeholders (business, academia, NGOs) and existence of necessary preconditions such as infrastructure and regulatory environment. It is obvious that regions should put knowledge in the centre of their development and strive to turn into “knowledge regions”. However, competitiveness upgrading seeks long-term regional development strategy, consistent programs and policies, cooperation during the implementation and the continuous monitoring of results.<sup>19</sup>

Danube Strategy can here be one of the regional developmental vectors because it aligns well with the newest Strategy on Regional Development of the Republic of Croatia 2011-2013. It clearly argues for a functional regional development policy that would contribute in attaining sustainable long-term growth, knowledge and innovation-based economy.<sup>20</sup> Danube Strategy can in that regard become one of the layers through which the Croatian Regional Development Strategy can be implemented and can contribute to the efficient policy-coordination between the national and regional levels.

---

<sup>18</sup> “Regional Competitiveness Index of Croatia 2010”, National Competitiveness Council, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Croatia, Zagreb, March 2011, p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>20</sup> “Strategija regionalnog razvoja Republike Hrvatske, 2011–2013.” (Strategy on Regional Development of the Republic of Croatia, 2011–2013), Ministarstvo regionalnog razvoja, šumarstva i vodnog gospodarstva, Zagreb, svibanj 2010.



### **Croatian strategic priorities within the Danube Strategy**

In 2010 Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI)<sup>21</sup> published a “Non-paper” listing Croatian priorities for cooperation within the Danube Strategy framework that have included: (i) development of intermodal transport and effective connection of the Danube region with the Adriatic coast; (ii) increasing economic competitiveness through development of entrepreneurship, modernization of agriculture and development of special forms of tourism; (iii) environmental protection, risk prevention, and renewable energy resources development; and (iv) human resources development. Furthermore, as a special horizontal measure “Non-paper” indicated (v) demining – clearing landmines in the mine-suspected areas of the Danube area.<sup>22</sup> “Non-paper” clearly underlined the role of Croatia as the “bridge” between the Danube area and the Adriatic i.e. the Mediterranean, which can through intensification of trade, transport and tourism strengthen the overall “developmental potential of the Croatian Danube region”.<sup>23</sup>

It is necessary to analyze importance of the Danube Strategy for Croatia within the broader context, depicting its potential role in enhancing Croatian competitiveness and alleviating disparities in the levels of regional development between Croatian regions. Previously mentioned Croatian Danube Strategy priorities have been selected on the basis of main Croatian developmental strategies such as Strategic Development Framework 2006-2013 (SDF), National Strategic Reference Framework 2012-2013 (NSRF) and particular sectoral strategies. Such a streamlined approach adjusted to the particular Croatian needs and strategic perspectives should target most pressing needs, upgrade necessary administrative capacities and channel available funds, raising perspectives for the successful implementation of Croatian priorities. The following brief elaboration of Croatian priorities within the Danube Strategy should be assessed in a twofold manner. Horizontally, they should enable greater policy-coordination across involved domains and amplify their strategic goals through better prioritizing and utilization of resources. Vertically, they should lead to the empowerment of sub-state structures and unleash growth potential at the regional and local levels, contributing to the balanced regional development.

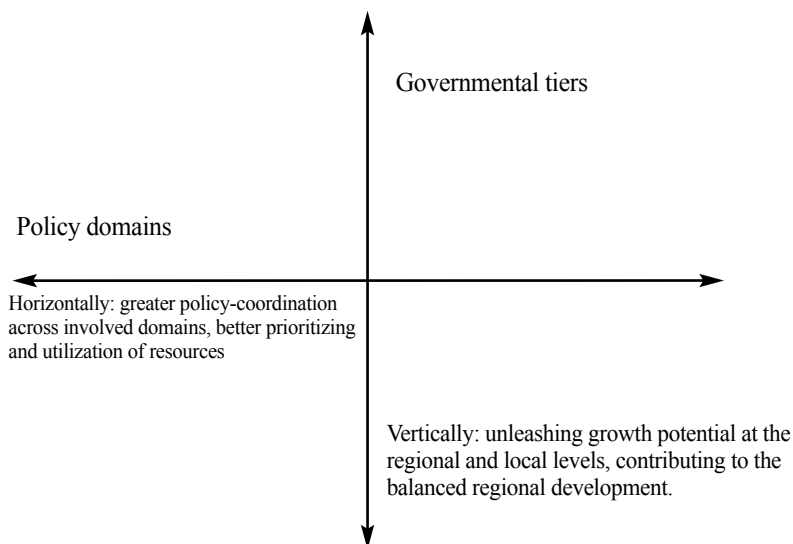
---

<sup>21</sup> Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI) was renamed to Croatian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) in December 2011.

<sup>22</sup> “Non-Paper” – Croatia’s Priorities and Cooperation in the Danube Region, Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI), 2010, pp. 3-4.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Figure 1: Assessing the impact of Croatian priorities within the Danube Strategy



Source: Authors' contribution.

*Development of intermodal transport and effective connection of the Danube region with the Adriatic coast* as the first Croatian priority goal refers to the need to restore and improve transport infrastructure in Croatia, being prerequisite to any regional development, especially of Croatian Danube area.<sup>24</sup> The aim is to create intermodal transport networks through efficient integration of inland waterways, railway and road networks, paving the way for more efficient and environmentally sustainable transport. This emphasis in the Croatian context has additional importance given the weak conditions of railway and inland waterway infrastructure that suffers from serious deficiencies and poor maintenance, causing their large underutilization if compared with the road transport.<sup>25</sup> Danube Strategy yields new perspectives for improving the transport infrastructure, by potentially turning it into pillar of economic growth, regional competitiveness and social cohesion, particularly of the NUTS2 Pannonian Croatia. With greater investments into railways and inland waterways, Croatia should better utilize pan-European transport corridors it aligns to, meaning corridors V, VII and X. Corridor V has significant meaning for Croatia because its branches Vb and Vc link Budapest with sea ports Rijeka and Ploče, while Corridor X representing the Danube river as an important European cargo transport route should be better used. Croatia clearly aims to exploit the logistics potential of its Sava, Drava and Danube inland

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>25</sup> “National Strategic Reference Framework 2012-2013”, Government of the Republic of Croatia, June 2010, p. 17, 19.

waterways that make European network of waterways and make the most of its international inland sea ports Vukovar, Slavonski Brod, Sisak and Osijek.<sup>26</sup>

*Increasing economic competitiveness through development of entrepreneurship, modernization of agriculture and the development of special forms of tourism*, represents the second Croatian priority. The Danube Strategy represents an additional impetus in enhancing capacities of the SMEs in Croatia by improving the business infrastructure, business-support institutions and helping in achieving greater networking between public, private and scientific sectors through development of clusters.<sup>27</sup> Envisaged Danube Strategy-tailored initiatives like creation of clusters and SME-networks in the Danube region<sup>28</sup> should upgrade innovation capacities of the Croatian SMEs and assist in creation of high added-value goods. Croatian Danube region due to its natural wealth and cultural-historical heritage has significant potential in the tourism that needs to be harnessed, particularly in the areas of cultural, rural, health and eco-tourism. Agricultural potential of the Pannonian Croatia is also recognized with the need to focus on agricultural capacity building, seen in the light of the upcoming Croatian participation in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

*Investment into human resources development* as the third Croatian priority is vital prerequisite for restoring economic growth and competitiveness. Acquisition of appropriate skills and competences that match the labour market needs are necessary in optimal usage of human capital, especially because Croatia suffers from underfunding of higher education and has unsatisfactory educational structure.<sup>29</sup> Croatian “Non-paper” focuses on the creation of the knowledge-based society, application of the Life-long learning principle, better matching the needs of the labour market by educational system and strengthening educational and research institutions and networks.<sup>30</sup> These goals reflect Croatian employment policy objectives, aiming to transform the labour market and ensure better accession to the EU. This policy aims to (i) attract and retain more people in employment and modernise social protection systems, (ii) improve adaptability of workers and enterprises and the flexibility of labour markets, (iii) increase investment in human capital through better education and skills and (iv) enhance the role of civil society in policy making and implementation.<sup>31</sup> Croatian participation within the Danube Strategy via intensification of cross-border and transnational cooperation and upcoming full integration in the EU should help in attaining these objective. However, these measures have to be combined with improvements in educational system in order to ensure highly qualified

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 18-19.

<sup>27</sup> “Non-Paper”, p. 10.

<sup>28</sup> “Action Plan”, SEC (2010) 1489 final, pp. 65-67.

<sup>29</sup> “National Strategic Reference Framework 2012-2013”, pp. 28, 33.

<sup>30</sup> “Non-Paper”, p. 12.

<sup>31</sup> “Zajednički memorandum o prioritetima politike zapošljavanja Republike Hrvatske” (Joint Assessment of the Employment Policy Priorities of the Republic of Croatia – JAP), Vlada Republike Hrvatske i Europska komisija, Bruxelles, 28. svibnja 2008.

and adoptable work force for employers. Croatia here adopted Development Strategy of the Vocational and Educational Training (VET) System 2008-2013, facilitating successful inclusion of students in the labour market and lifelong learning.<sup>32</sup>

*Environmental protection, risk prevention and renewable energy resources development* as the fourth priority focuses on tackling the cross-border natural and environmental threats, especially having in mind the richness of hydrological resources, biological diversity and natural assets of the river Danube and adjacent wetlands. This preservation of the waters, soil and air through waste and water management together with the protection of biodiversity is crucial asset in securing sustainable development that has also high returns in tourism.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, Croatia has good prerequisites for the usage of renewable energies due to high availability of waters, wind and sun but this potential has not been sufficiently used so far. Among the Croatian projects identified in the first phase of the Action Plan implementation are establishment of the Mura-Drava-Danube biosphere reserve; construction and reconstruction of the waste water plants in the Danube river basin; and exploring the scope for sustainable hydropower development in the part of the Sava basin shared by Slovenia and Croatia.<sup>34</sup>

Finally, *demining* is stressed as the most important horizontal measure given the amount of mine-suspected areas that hamper the normal socio-economic development, especially within NUTS2 region Pannonian Croatia and it aligns with the National Mine Action Program of the Republic of Croatia 2009-2019. Demining is necessary to improve agricultural production, facilitate tourism, prevent flooding and enable the irrigation of agricultural land, improve necessary energy infrastructure and transport corridors and successfully tackle security challenges.<sup>35</sup>

Apart of these Croatian priorities, it is important to emphasize that Croatia coordinates two Priority Areas of the Danube Strategy: Priority Area 6 - *preserving biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils* (together with the German Federal State of Bavaria) and Priority Area 8 – *supporting the competitiveness of enterprises* (together with the German Federal State of Baden-Württemberg). The institution entrusted with coordination of the Priority Area 6 in Croatia is the Ministry of Culture while on the side of Germany it is the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Public Health. According to the Danube Strategy Action plan, the Priority Area 6 is thematically divided into four sections: preservation of biodiversity and landscapes; preservation and improvement of the quality of soils; improvement of air quality and education of people on the value of natural assets, ecosystems and the

---

<sup>32</sup> “Vocational Education and Training System Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia 2008-2013”, Government of the Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, Zagreb, July 2008

<sup>33</sup> “Non-Paper”, pp. 6-7.

<sup>34</sup> “Action Plan”, SEC (2010) 1489 final, pp. 23, 37, 49.

<sup>35</sup> “Non-Paper”, pp. 5-6.

services they provide.<sup>36</sup> In the Priority Area 8 – *supporting the competitiveness of enterprises, including cluster development* in Croatia the priority area coordination is entrusted to the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship<sup>37</sup> while on the German side the coordination is yielded to the Baden Württemberg Ministry of Economy. The Action Plan calls upon forming the long term, transnational cooperation networks between innovation and business supporting institutions for the different sectors and utilizing the opportunities within the framework of the European Research Area (ERA). Furthermore, the development of clusters, and centres of excellence as well as strengthening the SMEs has been underlined.<sup>38</sup> The significance of this coordination for Croatia is in the acquisition of additional skills, competences and successful networking in two domains which are directly linked to the goals of improving competitiveness and sustainable development. Each Priority Area coordinator works on the Strategy implementation in close cooperation with the European Commission and other relevant stakeholders, that offers a significant opportunity for empowerment of Croatian stakeholders involved in the Strategy implementation.

## Conclusion

The Danube Strategy as the nascent integrative scheme for coordination of the EU sectoral policies and programmes in order to make the most of available resources, reflects the EU governance evolution and has important external dimension as well. Firstly, it embodies the Europe 2020 strategy by adapting it to the particular needs and challenges of the Danube region, thus contributing to the regionalization of the Europe 2020 strategy. In this way the macro-EU goals of “smart, sustainable and inclusive” growth are being transformed and embedded in the particular regional and local context that raises perspectives for their greater success due to “regional ownership”. Secondly, the Danube Strategy complements the EU accession process in the SEE because it supports the EU-related reforms among the SEE countries that should in the long-run have positive impacts on their EU path. Croatia as the upcoming EU member state will firmly support continuation of the EU enlargement policy and support the SEE countries with policy-transfer and sharing of its accession-related experiences.

Danube Strategy’s implementation in the Croatian context should efficiently integrate EU, national, regional and local levels and at the same time facilitate synergy between involved policies and stakeholders. Thematic consistency enshrined in the Danube Strategy’s agenda should lead to the efficient policy-coordination, targeted and feasible funding, better exploitation of human and social capital and amplifying the importance of Croatian transport, energy, business and scientific infrastructure. Through

---

<sup>36</sup> “Action Plan”, SEC (2010) 1489 final, pp. 47-53.

<sup>37</sup> Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship is since December 2011 reorganized into Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labour and Pension System and Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts.

<sup>38</sup> “Action Plan”, SEC (2010) 1489 final, p. 64.

this holistic framework, Croatia should utilize comparative advantages in the various fields, turning the Danube Strategy into one of its developmental vectors and sources of economic growth that should subsequently lead to the balanced regional development. Although the Danube Strategy's implementation cannot be a panacea for all Croatian competitiveness problems, it can play an important role in stirring necessary structural reforms across involved policy domains. This window of opportunity should be taken into account particularly in the context of the upcoming Croatian EU accession that provides additional opportunities for economic development.

## Bibliography

### *Books and articles:*

- Ágh, Attila “Global Governance as Multilateral Regionalised World Order: Planning for the Global Role of the EU in SBH Trio Presidency”, in: Elvire Fabry and Gaëtane Ricard-Nihoul (eds), *Think Global – Act European: The Contribution of 14 European Think Tanks to the Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian Trio Presidency of the European Union*, Paris, Notre Europe, 2010, pp. 152-157.
- Ágh, Attila “Danube Strategy as a challenge of globalized locality (glocality): The Europeanization of a Functional Macro-Region in the Danube Valley”, in: Attila Ágh, Tamás Kaier, Boglárka Koller (eds), *Europeanization of the Danube Region: The Blue Ribbon Project*. King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2010, p. 13-39.
- Ágh, Attila “Danube Strategy and Europe 2020 Strategy: The organic link between the bottom-up and the top-down EU projects”, in: Attila Ágh, Tamás Kaier, Boglárka Koller (eds), *The New Horizons of the Cohesion Policy in the European Union: The Challenge of the Danube Strategy*. King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2011, p. 10-54.
- Bengtsson, Rikard “An EU Baltic Sea Strategy: Good Intentions Meet Complex Challenges”, *SIEPS-Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies*, issue 9, September 2009, p. 1-9.
- Schymik, Carsten, “Modellversuch Makroregion: Die EU-Strategien für den Ostsee- und den Donaauraum”, *SWP-Studien 2011/S 01*, Berlin, Januar 2011, p. 1-40.

### *Official documents:*

- “Action Plan”, Accompanying document to the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Commission Staff Working Document, Brussels, 8 December 2010, SEC (2010) 1489 final.
- “Crisis in Transition: The People's Perspective”, Transition Report 2011, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), London, 15 November 2011.
- “Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2011-2012”, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Brussels, 12 October 2011, COM (2011) 666 final.
- “European Parliament resolution on the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region”, European Parliament, Strasbourg, 15 February 2011.

- “European Union Strategy for the Danube Region”, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, European Commission, Brussels, 8 December 2010, COM (2010) 715 final.
- “IMF Country Report No. 11/159”, International Monetary Fund, Washington, D.C., June 2011
- “National Strategic Reference Framework 2012-2013”, Government of the Republic of Croatia, June 2010
- “Non-Paper” – Croatia’s Priorities and Cooperation in the Danube Region, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI), 2010
- “Regional Competitiveness Index of Croatia 2010”, National Competitiveness Council, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Croatia, Zagreb, March 2011
- “Strategija regionalnog razvoja Republike Hrvatske”, 2011.-2013. (Strategy on Regional Development of the Republic of Croatia, 2011-2013), Ministarstvo regionalnog razvoja, šumarstva i vodnog gospodarstva, Zagreb, svibanj 2010. godine
- “The Global Competitiveness Report 2011–2012”, World Economic Forum, Geneva, Switzerland, 2011
- “Vocational Education and Training System Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia 2008-2013”, Government of the Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, Zagreb, July 2008
- “Zajednički memorandum o prioritetima politike zapošljavanja Republike Hrvatske “ (Joint Assessment of the Employment Policy Priorities of the Republic of Croatia – JAP), Vlada Republike Hrvatske i Europska komisija, Bruxelles, 28. svibnja 2008.

*On-line resources:*

- Croatian GDP per capita in 2010 (in PPS) reached 61% of the average EU-27 level (Eurostat 2010 data),
- <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tec00114> (15/02/2012)
- Employment rate by gender, age group 15-64 (Eurostat 2010 data), <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&language=en&pcode=teilm020&tableSelection=1&plugin=1> (15/02/2012)

Damir Demonja<sup>1</sup>  
Majda Rubić<sup>2</sup>

## **PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF EUROPEAN LAW - EXPERIENCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION IN THE DANUBE MACRO REGION**

### **ABSTRACT**

Cultural heritage as a legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a society presents the legacy of past generations and it must be carefully kept in order to be left as inheritance for the benefit of future generations. Heritage that has been preserved throughout the history is often unique and irreplaceable and leaves the responsibility of preserving to the next generation. In order to ensure its sustainability, which includes identification, documentation, research, maintenance, protection, utilization, as well as promotion of its values, mechanisms are developed and measures are established to protect cultural heritage.

Since the Croatian Danube Basin is rich in cultural heritage (archaeological sites/parks, the Danube limes with 22 sites, etc.) and Croatia is an active participant in the Danube Strategy as well as in other activities related to the Danube Basin such as in Process of Cooperation in the Danube to which one of the starting points is focused on cultural cooperation between member countries of the Danube Strategy, the legal framework for protection of cultural heritage is of great importance.

Considering that the Danube Strategy emphasizes the respect of cultural identity with aligning its own law on protection of cultural goods in a way to determine criteria for the protection of national treasures of artistic, historic and archaeological value, and national cultural heritage can obtain legitimacy within its own system and not in relations of mutual harmonization.

---

<sup>1</sup> Damir Demonja Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, Institute for International Relations, IMO, Ljudevita Farkaša Vukotinovića 2, HR-10000 Zagreb, Croatia, E-mail: ddemonja@irmo.hr.

<sup>2</sup> Majda Rubić, Senior Advisor, Sector for Regional Development and Cross Border Cooperation, Directorate for Integrated Regional Development, Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management of Republic of Croatia, Trg kralja Petra Krešimira IV. No. 1, HR-10000 Zagreb, Croatia, E-mail: majda.rubic@mrrsvg.hr.



In the field of cultural heritage the *Council Regulation (EEC) 3911/92 on the export of cultural goods* is binding, (1992) OJ L 395/1, lastly amended by *Council Regulation (EC) 806/2003* and the *Council Directive 93/7 EEC on return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State*, (1993) OJL 74, which among the EU member state makes easier the cooperation in the proceedings for protection of national treasures by determining the common categories of cultural objects. The Regulation and the Directive based on the Treaty on the European Union have created a presumption that restrictions and prohibition of trade in cultural goods are recognized throughout the territory of the European Union. However, the EU Treaty is the only specific criterion for assessing the compatibility constraints and these are set up by national legislations for the protection of national treasures of artistic, historic or archaeological value. By a proper division of the roles in the evaluation of the national heritage, possible negative effects of globalization can be redirected and European values will not be left on their own.

This article will briefly present the place and role of cultural heritage in the Danube Strategy, then will provide an overview of the most important cultural heritage of the Croatian Danube region as well as the most important projects that have a base in the heritage and will finally analyze the mentioned acts of the European Union with the focus on the macro-region of the Danube basin.

*Key words:* Croatia, cultural heritage, EU acts, Danube macro region.

## **1. Introduction: the new cohesion policy of the European Union**

The European Union, as one of the most prosperous economies in the world, has faced increasing differences between its Member States and regions since 2004. The fifth and the largest enlargement of the European Union was historic and symbolic because it crossed the borders to the European east. Accordingly, the Union has developed mechanisms for the preparation of future members in the pre-accession period and it has adjusted its budget in order to reform its institutions. Within the context of enlargement a new European policy towards neighbouring countries was launched, with which the European Union encourages cooperation with countries near its new external border, from the Mediterranean to Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The Union has established and implemented two important goals – the first is a harmonized development that should be realized with socio-economic and territorial cohesion, which represents a second goal. The 2011 new cohesion policy serves to pursue the development strategy Europe 2020, which aims to improve competitiveness representing a concept of development of the European Union and a new dimension of regional policy.

Starting with the global economic crisis in 2008 and 2009 it is generally considered that national governments will not be able to secure funding that would ensure development on the optimum level. Therefore, a solution would be to ensure transparent cooperation between local communities and regions within the macro-region, which would not recognize national boundaries. A region is recognized on the basis of economic and geographic characteristics, the most important being economic indicators while, in fact, there are no specific elements for defining a region.

The term macro-region appears according to the principles of system theory and mutual operational-functional coupling between regions and it serves as an argument with which the phenomenon of globalization is effectively substituted with the new phenomenon of „regionalization“. A joint action proved to be more effective than isolated actions of individual states, so the European institutions officially established regional policy. Today, the modern state, especially the one in transition, is faced with the effects of economic globalization and the decisions of international financial institutions that increasingly marginalize the role of the state, because trade assembles itself across national borders.<sup>3</sup> Subsidiarity marked integral development and international cooperation at lower levels in all areas of interest for the region are becoming a way to manage globalization. However, when it comes to development and size the problem of far too large number of regions and their imbalance does not allow regions, as autonomous communities, to face European competition on the common market. Therefore, the formation of large regions is becoming more important because they strengthen the competitiveness on the global market and the territorial cohesion policy of the European Union. Although the state remains the sole protector of the common good and individual and collective interests, macro-regions are becoming a symbol of balanced development of economy, nature and society.

The European Union gained legal personality the day the Lisbon Treaty came into force. It means that the European Union, and not its Member States, conclude international treaties and build partnerships. Thus, for the development of cooperation with neighbouring countries the European Union will in the future use a Danube macro-region in the way it was resolved in the Baltic region development strategy between the regions of the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea.<sup>4</sup> European Union Funds directly influence the development of beneficiary countries because they encourage small and medium enterprises. However, this occurs only when it is proved that it serves the economic interests of the Union through the projects that are financed by these funds. In order to successfully compete on the market, small businesses need the help of regional networks, because only through them they can reach global sources of knowledge.

---

<sup>3</sup> Neven Šimac, „Subsidijarnost, decentralizacija, dekoncentracija – načela, dometi, dileme“, *Zbornik radova Regionalizam – Pravni i politički aspekti*, Pravni fakultet, Split, 2007, pp. 18-19.

<sup>4</sup> In the statement on common interests for the Baltic macro-region, the Committee of Regions, in an effort to raise the competitiveness of the European Union and several international organizations it cooperates with, predicts that the development and realization of EU strategy occurs in a unique way. See: *European Union. Committee of the Regions. Committee of the Regions Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC), the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) and the Baltic Sea Islands Network (B7) – Declaration of common interest 2008-2011*, Internet: <http://www.cor.europa.eu/pages/DetailTemplate.aspx?view=detail&id=c03d1138-0d5a-4a66-a3d1-098d8ecf43ce>. 27/10/2011. In the opinion of the Committee of Regions on the Danube Strategy, in Article 1, it mentions that the creation of an EU Strategy for the Danube is modeled on one, which already exists for the Baltic Sea region. More in: *Opinion of the Committee of the Regions: An EU Strategy for the Danube area, CdR 149/2009*.

With the increased importance of regional development in the Union, the belief that the affirmation of cultural regionalism can positively affect the economic development of regions and local communities is reinforced. Operating programmes of cross-border cooperation, which serve the attempts of cultural tourism to integrate in the system of strategic planning within the financial framework of the European Union can get support provided that it is a regional project that brings long-term benefits beyond national borders.

The process of creating a Danube macro-region began with the adoption of national or regional programmes in the countries of the Danube river basin between the eight Member States of the European Union and six non-member countries and it was modelled on the Strategy for the Baltic.<sup>5</sup> Within the cohesion policy of the European Union the Danube macro-region is a pledge for the future development of the European Union with neighbouring countries. This is the reason why the European Union adopted its own strategy for the Danube region, including EU Member States, candidate countries, potential candidates and states that are included in the European Neighbourhood Policy. On the market of the European Union, there is interest of one segment for high quality cultural cooperation and supply along the Danube. In addition, the Danube Strategy opens up additional opportunities for expanding of the tourism supply. Tourism in the Danube macro-region needs cultural tourism, which is not only stipulated by five-star accommodation capacities. Cultural heritage, sites, archaeological findings and museums are not sufficiently represented in the promotional materials and after their expert evaluation, it could encourage other than room and board spending.

## 2. Danube Strategy and Croatian Danube region

Croatia as a Danube country fully supports the idea of creating a united European international area, as proposed by the Danube Strategy.<sup>6</sup> The Croatian Government has participated in the preparation of the Danube Strategy and adopted its final version.<sup>7</sup> In accordance with the process of Europeanization and the possibilities of

---

<sup>5</sup> The EU Member States participating in the Danube Strategy are Germany, Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania, while non-member countries are Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova and Ukraine. The European Commission has developed a Strategy for the Danube Region and adopted it on December 8, 2010, while the implementation of the Strategy began with its acceptance by member countries at the end of June 2011. More in: *Danube Region Strategy*, Internet: <http://www.danube-region.eu/>. 21/10/2011.

<sup>6</sup> The Danube Strategy, which consists of the European Communication Commission on the Danube Strategy and the Action Plan was adopted at the European Commission meeting on December 8, 2010 and by the European Council on April 13, 2011. *EU Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0715:EN:NOT>. 21/10/2011.

<sup>7</sup> *Vlada Republike Hrvatske. Sjednice i odluke Vlade Republike Hrvatske. 2010. 96. Sjednica Vlade Republike Hrvatske*, Internet: [http://www.vlada.hr/naslovnica/sjednice\\_i\\_odluke\\_vlade\\_rh/2010/96\\_sjednica\\_vlade\\_republike\\_hrvatske](http://www.vlada.hr/naslovnica/sjednice_i_odluke_vlade_rh/2010/96_sjednica_vlade_republike_hrvatske). 21/10/2011.

cross-border cooperation, Croatian counties enter regional alliances or networks such as the Adriatic macro-region and the Danube macro-region, which guarantee equal representation on all areas of the Adriatic and the Danube. By signing the Stabilization and Association Agreement and by accepting commitments related to the final alignment with the *acquis communautaire*, particular attention is given to cross-border, transnational and inter-regional cooperation in order to contribute to the economic development and to reduce the regional inequality.

In the process of creating the Danube Strategy, EU institutions participated as well as the regions and local communities in the Danube countries, international organizations, financial institutions, socio-economic partners and civil society. A large number of participants were provided for by a horizontal line that was made from different countries and organizations, while the vertical lines were made from participants at the international, national, regional and local levels. The Strategy was discussed by interested countries, which focused on the major issues in the following four directions of cooperation: connecting macro-region, environmental protection, increasing prosperity and strengthening the macro-region. The Strategy defines cross-border, interregional and transnational cooperation as a priority within the context of the enlargement of the European Union and with the aim of removing economic differences. Particular attention is devoted to islands and mountain regions and remote regions along the border. In cross-border, bilateral or multilateral co-operation between local and regional authorities in the geographical environment, development projects are expected to help overcome the potential economic isolation of islands, mountain and border areas, and strengthening their competitiveness.<sup>8</sup>

On April 29, 2011, the Vukovar Danube Conference was held in Vukovar, which was hosted by the Croatian Government.<sup>9</sup> At the Conference, support was expressed by the European Commission and by all participating countries of the Strategy and those fulfilling common initiatives and realization of projects defined in the Action Plan of the Strategy for the development of the Danube basin. The Strategy, among other things, is a framework focused on the use of EU funds.

This is a macro-regional strategy whose main objective is to create a new framework for focused coordination of all interested parties, Member States of the European Union, the European regions, European Union institutions, relevant regional organizations, financial institutions and NGOs, while society organizations should

---

<sup>8</sup> Jovan Popesku and Marija Maksin-Mičić, *Zbornik radova Municipium Malvesiatium, Skelani, Srebrenica*, Nada Jovanović (ed.), Narodna biblioteka, Srebrenica, 2009, p. 128.

<sup>9</sup> More on the Vukovar Danube Conference in: *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo vanjskih poslova i europskih integracija. Vanjska politika. Multilateralni odnosi. Strategija Europske Unije za Dunavsku regiju. Vukovarska dunavska konferencija, Vukovar, 29. travnja 2011.*, Internet: <http://www.mvpei.hr/MVP.asp?pepid=2600>. 22/10/2011. On these web pages there are many contributions - speeches by representatives, Council conclusions, lists of Croatian ministries according to the priority areas of the Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Danube region, and audio-video materials.

also help achieve a balanced development of the Danube river basin countries and areas through which the Danube river and all its tributaries flow.

The Strategy includes various policies of the European Union (regional, transport, energy, environmental, security, and others) including the culture through the so-called integrated approach. The “3 NO“ principle – no new institutions, no new sources of funding and no new legislation means that the Strategy must be developed and implemented without increasing the financial costs and with no new sources of funding. The Strategy must be funded exclusively through the existing structures and institutions and without adopting a new legal framework and forming new instruments. These are the follows: connecting the Danube region, preserving the environment in the Danube region, increasing prosperity in the Danube region and strengthening of institutional capacity and security in the Danube region.<sup>10</sup> Within the first pillar, which is connecting the Danube region, cultural and heritage component are the important areas for the realization of this pillar. These four pillars of cooperation are discussed through eleven priority areas of which one relates to strengthening of cultural cooperation. Therefore, culture, which is closely linked with tourism in the Danube Strategy with the aim of strengthening contacts between people, has a proactive role in the realization of the Strategy.<sup>11</sup>

The Croatian participation in this strategic European project opens up new opportunities for socio-economic development of Pannonian Croatia through the implementation of cross- border and transnational projects in the Danube region as well as strengthening of the institutional capacity and use of experience and knowledge gained in the Croatian accession negotiations.

In developing the Croatian contribution to the Danube Strategy, the principle of harmonization of national priorities in sectoral strategies with regional operational programmes of development was applied. Previously, the positions of Croatian counties were agreed in accordance with the county development strategies. Among the principal development priorities of Croatian counties on the Danube are

---

<sup>10</sup> *Europa. EUR-Lex Home. Id celex. Communication From the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of the Regions. European Union Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0715:EN:NOT. 22/10/2011.>, as well as: *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo vanjskih poslova i europskih integracija. Vanjska politika. Multilateralni odnosi. Strategija Europske Unije za Dunavsku regiju. Vukovarska dunavska konferencija, Vukovar, 29. travnja 2011.*, Internet: <http://www.mvpei.hr/MVP.asp?pcpid=2600. 22/10/2011.>

<sup>11</sup> More details on the four pillars of the Strategy divided into 11 priority areas with 253 activities and measures, and on the Action Plan see in: *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Priority Areas*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/priority\\_en.cfm. 21/10/2011.](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/priority_en.cfm. 21/10/2011.) The complete document of the Action plan is available at, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/danube/action\\_plan\\_danube.pdf. 22/10/2011.](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/danube/action_plan_danube.pdf. 22/10/2011.)

development of entrepreneurship, modernization of agriculture and the development of cultural tourism. The foundation of cultural tourism lies in cultural heritage resources. In a broader sense, this gives particular importance to culture in the implementation of activities and measures of the Strategy. According to the homogeneous features (natural and socio-geographic), Croatia stands out in South-Eastern Europe and it has already developed long-term efficient cooperation within certain priority areas of the Strategy, including those relating to cultural heritage.<sup>12</sup> This affirms the project activities in the field of culture and tourism in the Osijek-Baranja County and Vukovar-Srijem County.<sup>13</sup>

### **3. Cultural heritage in the Croatian Danube region: an overview, the most important projects and records of nonmaterial (intangible) cultural assets**

Croatia is one of ten countries that are marked by the Danube River. The flow of the Danube river in Croatia is shorter than in any other country and along the banks of the river, there are no large cities. The largest Croatian town on the Danube river is Vukovar with a population of around 30 000 inhabitants. The length of the Danube river in Croatia is only 188 km and it is almost completely along the border between Croatia and Serbia. However, the Croatian Danube region is a very important area for Croatia, which includes two counties, Osijek-Baranja and Vukovar-Srijem. This is one of the most fertile areas in Croatia, which due to the numerous natural and especially cultural attractions has become one of the most important continental regions of Croatia.

The cultural heritage of the Croatian Danube region is very rich and diverse, although there are no sites listed on the World Heritage List of UNESCO, as is the case with the Croatian coastal area, where there are six protected sites.<sup>14</sup> However, in

---

<sup>12</sup> More information on the Danube Strategy is available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia, Internet: <http://www.mvpei.hr/MVP.asp?pcpid=2600>. 21/10/2011. Of the recent literature see: Attila Agh, Tamas Kaiser, Boglarka Koller (eds.), *Europeization of the Danube Region: The Blue Ribbon Project*, Blue Ribbon Research Centre King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2010, pp. 260, and Saša Čvrljak, *Dunavska strategija Europske Unije i njezina važnost za Republiku Hrvatsku*, Zagreb, 2011, pp. 40 (manuscript).

<sup>13</sup> Presentation „*Osiječko-baranjska županija u kontekstu Dunavske strategije*“, Internet: <http://www.slavonija.hr/images/Dokumenti2010/hr/Osje%C4%8Dko%20-%20baranjska%20%C5%BEupanija%20u%20kontekstu%20Dunavske%20strategije.ppt>. 22/10/2011, as well as presentation „*Vukovarsko-srijemska županija u kontekstu Dunavske strategije*“, Internet: <http://www.slavonija.hr/images/Dokumenti2010/hr/Vukovarsko%20-%20srijemska%20%C5%BEupanija%20u%20kontekstu%20Dunavske%20strategije.ppt>. 22/10/2011.

<sup>14</sup> In cultural heritage those are the following: Early-Christian Euphrasian Basilica in Poreč, Historic center of Trogir, Palace of Diocletian and medieval Split, Old City of Dubrovnik, Cathedral of St. James in Šibenik and Starigrad field on Hvar, while on the tentative list there are another 16 cultural and natural resources. More in: *Croatia – UNESCO World Heritage Centre*, Internet: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/hr>. 22/10/2011.

the Croatian Danube region there is an example of nonmaterial heritage from a total of nine in Croatia protected by UNESCO, which is the Annual spring procession of queen (ljelja) in a village named Gorjani near town of Đakovo.<sup>15</sup> Also, the Croatian Danube region contains two cultural assets that are listed on the UNESCO Tentative List – the Croatian part of the borders of the Roman Empire – the Danube *limes* along the Danube river from Batina to Ilok,<sup>16</sup> and the historic-urban planned ensemble Tvrđa in Osijek from the 18th century,<sup>17</sup> which can undoubtedly be considered the most attractive cultural monument of the broader Danube region, not just its Croatian part.

Numerous heritage sites include archaeological remains from the Roman and pre-Roman period, attractive churches, fortresses, castles, ethnological heritage, old wine cellars and monuments from the recent history. The most significant archaeological monument is the archaeological site Vučedol from the prehistoric Bronze Age, which is regarded as one of the most important in Europe from that period.<sup>18</sup> This site, seriously damaged during the war in 1991, has still not been restored to be presentable to tourists.

Đakovo has the most interesting church in the entire Croatian Danube region, the cathedral of Đakovo from the 19<sup>th</sup> century built in the historicist style.<sup>19</sup> The Osijek cathedral, then the church of St. Elias on Meraji in Vinkovci, St. Anthony of Padua in Našice, John of Capistrano in Ilok and a small church of St. Peter and Paul in Topolje, Baranja are also significant.

The Croatian easternmost town of Ilok is well-known for its medieval centre with the features of a urban-fortification complex, wine cellars and the nearby Erdut where the biggest wine barrel in the world may be found. Baranja is famous for wine cellars of sand in the villages Zmajevac and Suza.

Among many preserved castles and manors in Slavonija, the most attractive are those in the small western towns of Donji Miholjac, Našice and Valpovo, then the Eltz castle in Vukovar and manors in Bilje and Tikveš near Kopački Rit in Baranja.<sup>20</sup> Županja on the river Sava is known for its unique wooden border fortresses.

---

<sup>15</sup> More in: *Turistička zajednica Grada Đakova. Manifestacije. Proljetni ophod ljelja za duhove*, Internet: [http://www.tz-djakovo.hr/manifest\\_ispis.php?s=58&j=0](http://www.tz-djakovo.hr/manifest_ispis.php?s=58&j=0). 21/10/2011, and in: *Wikipedia. Slobodna enciklopedija. Ljelje*, Internet: <http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ljelje>. 21/10/2011.

<sup>16</sup> More on this project in: *Dunavski limes u Hrvatskoj*, Internet: <http://www.dunavskilimes-amo.com.hr/index.html>. 22/10/2011.

<sup>17</sup> More on Tvrđa in Osijek in: *Agencija za obnovu osiječke Tvrđe*, Internet: <http://www.aoot.hr/?o=db&jez=hr&izb=9>. 21/10/2011.

<sup>18</sup> More: *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo kulture. Projekti Ministarstva. Projekt „Vukovar-Vučedol-Ilok“*, <http://www.min-kulture.hr/default.aspx?ID=100>. 21/10/2011.

<sup>19</sup> Dragan Damjanović, *Đakovačka katedrala*, Matica Hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009, pp. 458.

<sup>20</sup> Mladen Obad Šćitaroci, *Dvorci i perivoji u Slavoniji – od Zagreba do Iloka*, Šćitaroci d.o.o., Zagreb, 2001, pp. 380.

Rich ethnological heritage can be seen in numerous traditional celebrations throughout the region. The most important and famous are *Vinkovačke jeseni* and *Dakovački vezovi*.<sup>21</sup> Đakovo is also known for the longest tradition of horse breeding in Croatia, especially for the Lipizzaner breed. In a small village of Otok, there is a unique monument, Suvara – an old horse-powered mill.

Archaeological heritage, then castles and churches, ethnology rich in gastronomy, customs and traditional events are very valuable cultural components of the Croatian Danube region. They also present important tourist resources that can be used to further develop, strengthen and increase tourism of that area and the sustainable development of the region.

Finally, the identified cultural heritage of the Croatian Danube region is already considered the starting point for several international projects based on culture as well as those that connect culture and tourism. At this point, we identify the most important international projects based on the cultural heritage of the Croatian Danube region.<sup>22</sup>

The projects implemented under the pre-accession INTERREG IIIa Programme are Cultural-tourist cooperation between Osijek-Baranja County, Croatia and Baranja County, Hungary and cities of Osijek and Pecs (Co-Cu-Co OBP), and Digital history. The aim of the project *Cultural-tourist cooperation between Osijek-Baranja County, Croatia and Baranja County, Hungary and cities of Osijek and Pecs (Co-Cu-Co OBP)* was to strengthen the candidacy of Osijek's old town Tvrđa to enter UNESCO list of the protected world heritage. The value of the project is 432,000 EUR. From Croatian side, the project was implemented in Osijek-Baranja County (City of Osijek and Draž municipality). The aim of the project *Digital history* was to promote sacral tourist destinations in the Croatia-Hungary cross-border region through modern technology. From the Croatian side, the project was implemented in Osijek-Baranja County. The value of the project is 250,000 EUR.

The project implemented under the pre-accession INTERREG Adriatico Programme is *Ethno-brand*. The aim of the project was the development of tourist potentials of Slavonia and Baranja through strengthening social entrepreneurship in the production of indigenous handicrafts. The value of the project is 156,000 EUR. From the Croatian side, the project was implemented in Osijek-Baranja County.

---

<sup>21</sup> More in: *Wikipedija. Slobodna enciklopedija. Hrvatska kulturna baština*, Internet: [http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hrvatska\\_kulturna\\_ba%C5%A1tina](http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hrvatska_kulturna_ba%C5%A1tina). 21/10/2011, *Wikipedija. Slobodna enciklopedija. Vinkovačke jeseni*, Internet: [http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinkova%C4%8Dke\\_jeseni](http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinkova%C4%8Dke_jeseni). 21/10/2011, and *Wikipedija. Slobodna enciklopedija. Dakovački vezovi*, Internet: [http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%90akova%C4%8Dki\\_vezovi](http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%90akova%C4%8Dki_vezovi). 21/10/2011.

<sup>22</sup> More details about the projects in: *Transnational Strategy for the Sustainable Territorial Development of the Danube Area with a Focus on Tourism DATOURWAY. National Study – Croatia, Zagreb, 2010, pp. 46-48*, Internet: [http://www.datourway.eu/documents/88-701-8910-dat\\_cro\\_wp3\\_analysis\\_en.pdf](http://www.datourway.eu/documents/88-701-8910-dat_cro_wp3_analysis_en.pdf). 21/10/2011.



One of the most important tourism development project with strong cultural component implemented under other both national<sup>23</sup> and international<sup>24</sup> financial support in Vukovar-Srijem County is *Research, restoration and revitalization of cultural heritage Ilok-Vukovar-Vučedol*. The project aims are to explore, restore and present the cultural heritage, also to increase the awareness level of the population, development of the tourism supply, employment and regional development. The project includes the renovation of protected historic baroque centre of the city of Vukovar, Estate of Castle Eltz, the archaeological site Vučedol, restoration of the historic centre of the city of Ilok, and completion of the archaeological excavations. The total project value is 35.6 mill. EUR and it is financed by the Croatian Government and the Council of Europe Development Bank.

The projects mentioned above show that within the framework of the Danube Strategy Croatia can take advantage of full potential of its cultural heritage and develop it more effectively. These projects also confirm the awareness of regional and local communities on the necessity of cross-border cooperation in the fields of culture. Carrying out of these projects is focused on the sustainable development of the whole area. Furthermore, the improvement and development of culture and cultural heritage in the Danube Strategy are complementary to those of Croatia. The Danube Strategy, when it comes to the areas of culture and cultural heritage, offers numerous opportunities to take better advantage of transnational and cross-border cooperation programmes. This can help liberate the entrepreneurial potentials with which it is possible to apply for funds from the European Union.

When it comes to records of nonmaterial cultural assets, the Official Journal of the Republic of Croatia periodically, every three to four months, publishes parts of the Register that relate to specific counties. It is provided that cultural goods are entered in the Register as a preventively protected recorded collection, protected national and cultural assets.<sup>25</sup> They vary and are recorded as material cultural properties as follows: (a) immovable, (b) underwater archaeological objects/sites, (c) movable cultural property, and (d) nonmaterial cultural heritage. For the first publication of the Register, movable cultural heritage was selected. For every cultural asset the data on the address/site was entered, the type of cultural property, the date of origin and the legal status (Z-protected and P-preventively protected cultural goods).

The protection of cultural heritage has been more efficient in recent years thanks to the increasing awareness of its value as a joint act of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia, the owners of cultural goods and the local governments and

---

<sup>23</sup> As, for instance, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, Vukovar-Srijem County, cities and local municipalities and business sector.

<sup>24</sup> PHARE 2006, INTERREG IIIa, Austrian government, ADA-Austrian Development Agency.

<sup>25</sup> According to the excerpt from the Registry of Croatian cultural heritage no. 1, „Narodne novine“ 80/04, in compliance with Articles 12 and 14 of the Act, the preventively protected cultural goods of the Republic of Croatia are listed.

administration units. In order to ensure identification for protecting, a list of nonmaterial cultural goods was compiled. Croatia has a suggestion for nominating preventively protected and permanently protected cultural goods. Regarding the application of traditional customs, the factors to consider are its popularity, preparation and maintenance during the year, formal ceremonies, production and maintenance of uniforms and other details by which it is possible to recognize that this custom is considered valuable and important. This is particularly important for the use of cultural heritage in tourism, which as the largest industry in the world recognizes the value of the brand or mark, as it carries national feeling and experience. For folk customs being in the procedure of establishment of protection, which is finalized by making an administrative decision on entering the Register of nonmaterial cultural heritage, the application procedure is the same.

#### **4. Cultural heritage within the framework of EU rights**

The provisions of the Lisbon Treaty do not exclude prohibitions or restrictions on imports, exports or goods in transit, if they are meant for the protection of national treasures of artistic, historic or archaeological value. Article 36 of the Lisbon Treaty states: „The provisions of Articles 34 and 35 shall not preclude prohibitions or restrictions on imports, exports or goods in transit justified on grounds of public morality, public policy or public security; the protection of health and life of humans, animals or plants; the protection of national treasures possessing artistic, historic or archaeological value; or the protection of industrial and commercial property. Such prohibitions or restrictions shall not, however, constitute a means of arbitrary discrimination or a disguised restriction on trade between Member States.“

About the importance of cultural heritage in Article 167 of the Lisbon Treaty, the following is stated:

1. The Union shall contribute to the blooming of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity, while attributing great importance to the common cultural heritage.
2. Action by the Union shall be aimed at encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action in the following areas:
  - improvement of the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples,
  - conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance,
  - non-commercial cultural exchanges,
  - artistic and literary creation, including the audiovisual sector.
3. The Union and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organizations in the sphere of culture, in particular with the Council of Europe.

4. The Union shall consider cultural aspects in its action under other provisions of the Treaty, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures.
5. In order to contribute to the achievement of the objectives referred to in this Article:
  - the European Parliament and the Council acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and after consulting the Committee of the Regions, shall adopt incentive measures, excluding any harmonization of the laws and regulations of the Member States,
  - the Council, on a proposal from the Commission, shall adopt recommendations.<sup>26</sup>

The protection of national cultural assets today is an important issue for national identity because each country faces the risk of losing cases of non-commercial value by illegal trade. Therefore, such problems can lead to the disappearance of archaeological, artistic, historical or scientific data.

The predicted exception to the prohibition of quantitative restrictions on imports and exports or transit of goods between EU Member States, which are justified on grounds of protecting national treasures, is a possibility for the development of cultural tourism and raising the competitiveness between the Danube countries. Right now is the time to the candidates and potential candidates for full membership in the European Union to begin the preparation of national legislation in a way to anticipate the prohibitions or restrictions on transit of cultural goods, which have a value of national treasure.<sup>27</sup>

The Stabilization and Association Agreement between the Republic of Croatia and the European Community and its Member States, in accordance with the European legislation, allow restrictions on imports, exports or transit of goods, which are justified by the protection of national treasures of artistic, historic or archaeological value.<sup>28</sup> Secondary European legislation based upon the Founding Agreement of the European Union as primary European law, *ipso jure* obliges Member States for direct application in the field of protection of cultural heritage. These are the Council Regulation (EEC) 3911/92 on the export of cultural goods, (1992) OJ L 395/1, lastly amended by Council Regulation (EC) 806/2003,<sup>29</sup> and the Council Directive 93/7

---

<sup>26</sup> Translation of the original text of the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force on December 1, 2009, was published in: *Zbornik Adrias, Zavod za znanstveni i umjetnički rad HAZU*, sv. 16, Zagreb-Split, 2009.

<sup>27</sup> This paper discusses the legal acts based upon the Agreement of establishing the European Community which relates to the protection of cultural heritage. They were established before the foundation of the European Union, but have remained valid within the European Union.

<sup>28</sup> *Sporazum o stabilizaciji i pridruživanju između Republike Hrvatske i Europske zajednice, te njezinih država članica*, Članak 42, „Narodne novine – Međunarodni ugovori“, 14/2001.

<sup>29</sup> *Council Regulation (EEC) No 3911/92 on the export of cultural goods* was published in the Official Journal of the EU – “Official Journal of the European Communities (OJ)” OJ L 395/1, December

EEC on return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State, (1993) OJ L 74.<sup>30</sup> The Member States, after 1992, when these European legal acts were passed, retain the right to determine their national treasures in a single internal market of the European Union without internal borders. The Directive defines a way to protect cultural goods of states on the market of the European Union. The aim is to achieve mutual recognition of relevant national legislations as well as to establish cooperation with Interpol concerning the stolen or illegally taken artworks that make up part of their national treasures. The Regulation on export of cultural goods, along with this Directive, presents a system of the European Union for the protection of cultural heritage of the Member States. The Directive introduces arrangements that enable the Member States the return of cultural objects that are classified as national treasures and were taken away from their areas in violation of the national legislation or the Regulation on the export of cultural goods. These acts oblige relevant authorities of the Member States to cooperate in the procedures that precede the submission of the request for return, in the initiated procedures to return as well as in the procedures of implementing the decision on returning (Article 4 and 6 of the Directive). Both European acts were implemented in the Croatian Act on the protection and maintenance of cultural goods from 2003.<sup>31</sup>

For the classification of cultural goods and the development of cultural tourism, digitalization could be used in the cultural sector for the conservation of cultural heritage, because it is not unknown. However, the general impression is that digitization has not yet been used for that purpose.<sup>32</sup> Digitalization is used by most countries of South-Eastern Europe, in archives, libraries, museums and theatres, with the exception of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Instrument for pre-accession assistance IPA could financially support the projects for finishing registration of national cultural heritage. For example, in Croatia, in the field of culture, financed projects are those of civil organizations according to the regional operative programme of Istria County in the period from 2006-2010. The leader of this programme is the Istria Development Agency in cooperation with the County Working Group. The goal is to make the County a competitive region with distinctive cultural heritage.

---

31, 1992. That Regulation was amended by Regulation number 2469/96 from December 16, 1996, OJ L 335/9 from December 24, 1996, and Regulation number 974/01 from May 14, 2001, OJ L 137/10, from May 19, 2001.

<sup>30</sup> *Council Directive 93/7/ECC of 15 March 1993 on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State* was published in OJ L 74, March 27, 1993, and it was changed and amended with *Directive 96/100/EC* from February 17, 1997, OJ L 60, January 1, 1997, and *Directive 2001/38/EC, OJ L 187*, July 10, 2001.

<sup>31</sup> *Zakon o zaštiti i očuvanju kulturnih dobara*, „Narodne novine“, 69/99, 151/03, 157/03, 100/04.

<sup>32</sup> Daniela Angelina Jelinčić, „Kultura i turizam u virtuali: „Uradi sam“ u jugoistočnoj Europi“, in: Tomislav Krpan (ed.), *Zbornik radova s međunarodnog znanstvenog skupa „Mediji i turizam“*, Sveučilište u Zadru, Zadar, 2009, p. 30.

These provisions of European law mean that the national legislature kept the regime of prohibition or restrictions on imports, exports or transit of cultural goods with the status of national treasures. The state is obliged to independently choose the criteria for classification of national cultural goods, both material and nonmaterial. The law does not regulate the adjustment of the current situation; it must be subsequently defined by a subordinate act of the responsible government bodies for the protection of cultural heritage.<sup>33</sup> In this way, a list of movable objects that are considered national treasures will be established by their regulation that can be individual and/or by groups of items. A state that gives much of its cultural heritage the status of national treasures can cover their protection if they can all be subsumed under the relevant provisions of European regulations. Any state that wishes the Directive it assumed to be applied on the cultural property that has thus far not been considered a national treasure, can declare them a national treasure. Otherwise, it will not be able to claim back their illegally taken cultural goods from other Member States that do not have these items on their list of cultural goods.

## 5. Concluding remarks

By acquiring the status of full membership in the European Union, it is necessary to recognize the limitations and prohibitions of traffic of cultural property with the status of national treasures determined by the law of the Member State. In this way, the protection of cultural heritage remains within the boundaries of national legislation. In these procedures/actions, the protection of Member States of the European Union is led by the principle of extensive interpretation and application of rules on restrictions on export of valuable objects of national importance. Mandatory regulations specify only the criterion for assessing the compatibility of restrictions and these are set up by the national legislation. However, if a Member State does not declare that a cultural property has the status of a national treasure and it is unlawfully removed from its territory it will be very hard to ensure its return.

Well and professional valorisation of cultural heritage in the countries along the Danube River can be used to achieve optimum protection of various cultural heritage and the requirements for a new and better tourist supply. The establishment of intercultural understanding in cross-border cooperation and using of the existing financial aid will lead to increasing development of cultural tourism in the Danube macro-region. The usual fate of cultural heritage depends on the culture of its heir and in the new partner relationship in the macro-region Danube it is practical necessary to define priorities based on their actual needs at central, regional and local levels and in close collaboration with cultural institutions in the tourism sector.

---

<sup>33</sup> Majda Rubić, *Zaštita nacionalnog blaga u svijetlu europskog prava*, Europski pokret, Split, 2007, p. 57.

The Danube Strategy is being implemented without any new EU funds, EU legislation and new organizational structures within the Union, so it is yet to be seen how the network management will contribute to its effectiveness.

## 6. Literature and sources

- *Agencija za obnovu osiječke Tvrđe*, Internet: <http://www.aoot.hr/?o=db&jez=hr&izb=9>. 21/10/2011.
- Agh Attila, Kaiser Tamas, Koller Boglarka (eds.), *Europeization of the Danube Region: The Blue Ribbon Project*, Blue Ribbon Research Centre King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2010, pp. 260.
- Agh Attila, Ferencz Alexandra (eds.), *Deepening and Widening in an Enlarged Europe: The Impact of the Eastern Enlargement*, Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies – Together for Europe Research Centre, Budapest, 2006.
- *Croatia – UNESCO World Heritage Centre*, Internet: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/hr>. 22/10/2011.
- Burca de, G., *European Law and the Welfare State In Search of Solidarity*, Oxford, 2005, pp. 203.
- Čvrlijak Saša, *Dunavska strategija Europske Unije i njezina važnost za Republiku Hrvatsku*, Zagreb, 2011, pp. 40 (manuscript).
- Damjanović Dragan, *Dakovačka katedrala*, Matica Hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009, pp. 458.
- *Danube Region Strategy*, Internet: <http://www.danube-region.eu/>. 21/10/2011.
- *Dunavski limes u Hrvatskoj*, Internet: <http://www.dunavskilimes-am.com.hr/index.html>. 22/10/2011.
- Dulabić Vedran, *Regionalizam i regionalna politika*, Društveno veleučilište, Zagreb, 2007.
- *EnterEurope. Vodič kroz informacije o Europskoj Uniji*, Internet: <http://www.entereurope.hr/>. 22/10/2011.
- *European Commission. Commission Staff Working Document. Action Plan. Accompanying document to the communication From the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. European Union Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: [http://www.danubestrategy.eu/fileadmin/danube/media/EUSDR\\_action\\_plan\\_danube.pdf](http://www.danubestrategy.eu/fileadmin/danube/media/EUSDR_action_plan_danube.pdf). 22/10/2011.
- *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Priority Areas*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/priority\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/priority_en.cfm). 21/10/2011.
- *EUR-Lex Home. Commission Communication – EU Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0715:EN:NOT>. 21/10/2011.
- *European Union. Committee of the Regions*, Internet: <http://portal.cor.europa.eu/egtc/en-US/Pages/welcome.aspx>. 22/10/2011.

- *Europa. EUR-Lex Home. Id celex. Communication From the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of the Regions. European Union Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0715:EN:NOT.22/10/2011>.
- *Hungary-Croatia IPA Cross-border Co-operation Programme*, Internet: <http://www.hu-hr-ipa.com/>. 25/10/2011.
- Jelinčić Daniela Angelina, „Kultura i turizam u virtuali: „Uradi sam“ u jugoistočnoj Europi“, in: Tomislav Krpan (ed.), *Zbornik radova s međunarodnog znanstvenog skupa „Mediji i turizam“*, Sveučilište u Zadru, Zadar, 2009, pp. 25-35.
- Josipović Tatjana et al., *Europsko privatno pravo*, Pravni fakultet, Zagreb, 2002, pp. 342.
- „Lisabonski ugovor“, *Zbornik Adrias, Zavod za znanstveni i umjetnički rad HAZU*, sv. 16, Zagreb-Split, 2009.
- „Osiječko-baranjska županija u kontekstu Dunavske strategije“. Presentation held at local event “Open Days 2010“ in Osijek on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010, Internet: <http://www.slavonija.hr/images/Dokumenti2010/hr/Osje%C4%8Dko%20-%20baranjska%20%C5%BEupanija%20u%20kontekstu%20Dunavske%20strategije.ppt>. 22/10/2011.
- Popesku Jovan and Maksin-Mičić Marija, *Zbornik radova Municipium Malvesiatium, Skelani, Srebrenica*, Jovanović Nada (ed.), Narodna biblioteka, Srebrenica, 2009, p. 128.
- *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo kulture. Projekti Ministarstva. Projekt „Vukovar-Vučedol-Ilok“*, Internet: <http://www.min-kulture.hr/default.aspx?ID=100>. 21/10/2011.
- *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo vanjskih poslova i europskih integracija. Vanjska politika. Multilateralni odnosi. Strategija Europske Unije za Dunavsku regiju. Vukovarska dunavska konferencija, Vukovar, 29. travnja 2011*, Internet: <http://www.mvpei.hr/MVP.asp?pcpid=2600>. 21/10/2011.
- Rodin Siniša, Čapeta Tamara, *Osnove prava EU*, Narodne novine, Zagreb, 2010.
- Rubić Majda, *Zaštita nacionalnog blaga u svijetlu europskog prava*, Europski pokret, Split, 2007, pp. 62.
- Slukan Altić Mirela, *Regionalizacija kao integracija ili geografija moći*, Institut za društvena istraživanja „Ivo Pilar“, Zagreb, 2007.
- *Sporazum o stabilizaciji i pridruživanju između Republike Hrvatske i Europskih zajednica i njihovih država članica*, „Narodne novine – Međunarodni ugovori“, 14/2001.
- Šćitaroci Obad Mladen, *Dvorci i perivoji u Slavoniji – od Zagreba do Iloka*, Šćitaroci d.o.o., Zagreb, 2001, pp. 380.
- *Transnational Strategy for the Sustainable Territorial Development of the Danube Area with a Focus on Tourism DATOURWAY. National Study – Croatia, Zagreb, 2010*, Internet: [http://www.datourway.eu/documents/88-701-8910-dat\\_cro\\_wp3\\_analysis\\_en.pdf](http://www.datourway.eu/documents/88-701-8910-dat_cro_wp3_analysis_en.pdf). 21/10/2011.

- *Turistička zajednica Grada Đakova. Manifestacije. Proljetni ophod ljelja za duhove*, Internet: [http://www.tz-djakovo.hr/manifest\\_ispis.php?s=58&j=0](http://www.tz-djakovo.hr/manifest_ispis.php?s=58&j=0). 21/10/2011.
- *Vlada Republike Hrvatske. Sjednice i odluke Vlade Republike Hrvatske. 2010. 96. Sjednica Vlade Republike Hrvatske*, Internet: [http://www.vlada.hr/naslovnica/sjednice\\_i\\_odluke\\_vlade\\_rh/2010/96\\_sjednica\\_vlade\\_republike\\_hrvatske](http://www.vlada.hr/naslovnica/sjednice_i_odluke_vlade_rh/2010/96_sjednica_vlade_republike_hrvatske). 21/10/2011.
- „*Vukovarsko-srijemska županija u kontekstu Dunavske strategije*“. Presentation held at local event “Open Days 2010“ in Osijek on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010, Internet: <http://www.slavonija.hr/images/Dokumenti2010/hr/Vukovarsko%20-%20srijemska%20%C5%BEupanija%20u%20%20kontekstu%20Dunavske%20strategije.ppt>. 22/10/2011.
- *Wikipedija. Slobodna enciklopedija. Đakovački vezovi*, Internet: [http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%90akova%C4%8Dki\\_vezovi](http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%90akova%C4%8Dki_vezovi). 21/10/2011.
- *Wikipedija. Slobodna enciklopedija. Hrvatska kulturna baština*, Internet: [http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hrvatska\\_kulturna\\_ba%C5%A1tina](http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hrvatska_kulturna_ba%C5%A1tina). 21/10/2011.
- *Wikipedia. Slobodna enciklopedija. Ljelje*, Internet: <http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ljelje>. 21/10/2011.
- *Wikipedija. Slobodna enciklopedija. Vinkovačke jeseni*, Internet: [http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinkova%C4%8Dke\\_jeseni](http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinkova%C4%8Dke_jeseni). 21/10/2011.
- *Zakon o zaštiti i očuvanju kulturnih dobara*, „Narodne novine“, 69/99, 151/03, 157/03, 100/04.





## Chapter II

---

# GEOPOLITICAL POSITION OF SERBIA ON THE DANUBE RIVER

Florin Diaconu<sup>1</sup>

## GEOPOLITICAL AND GEO-STRATEGIC STATUS OF SERBIA ON THE DANUBE: THE ROAD FROM GEOPOLITICAL PIVOT TO GEOPOLITICAL PLAYER (ACTIVE ACTOR)

### ABSTRACT

Two potent concepts have been used many times within the framework of really serious geopolitical/geo-strategic analyses. These concepts – clearly explained, for example, by notorious and influential authors as Brzezinski – are that of “geopolitical pivot(s)” and that of “geopolitical player(s)”. While geopolitical pivots have a significant value based on the fact that, if controlled by a great power, they offer a free access to important regions and/or resources, while geopolitical players have the capability to control one or more pivots. Along its history, Serbia – with its significant position on the Danube – was both a geopolitical pivot and a geopolitical player. With its geopolitical status strongly diminished by the events during the past 20 years, Belgrade might be able to design and implement a set of policies aiming to make Serbia again an important geopolitical player at the regional level. But, in order to reach such a goal some requirements are to be met.

*Key words:* Geopolitical status of Serbia, geo-strategic status of Serbia, geopolitical player, Danube region.

### 1. Brief introduction: different ways to evaluate the geopolitics of the Balkans and of Serbia

In various works, belonging to authors more or less connected to different schools (or traditions) in International Relations, Geopolitics and Strategic Studies, significant statements and evaluations dealing with the geopolitical (and geo-strategic) status / position / role of the Balkans, of former Yugoslavia and of *Serbia* can be easily identified. Let me list here, in the opening stages of this quite brief study, some of the most significant – but also very diverse – opinions and evaluations of this sort:

---

<sup>1</sup> Florin Diaconu holds a Ph.D. in Political Science. He holds a BA in History (1985) and graduated from the National Defense College in Bucharest (2000). At this very moment, he is Senior Researcher (and Director for Academic Expertise) at the Romanian Diplomatic Institute, Bucharest, and Associate Professor at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest, Romania.

For example, some authors important for the *academic* literature are evaluating the geopolitical and geo-strategic value / significance of the Balkans within the notorious and influential “dichotomy” East-West. For some, Balkans are a (more or less peripheral) “part of Europe”, while for other authors, the same region is “a piece of Asia in Europe”, or at least “as the first station on the way to the East, as a paradigm of backwardness, the crude and rude Balkans”.<sup>2</sup>

Some other authors I extensively used in this study paid a lot of attention to problems (weaknesses) of all sorts, able to limit / diminish the geopolitical value of Serbia and of the former Yugoslavia. A united state of all Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was, immediately after World War I, a very attractive solution for *some* political leaders, convinced that such a state can easily survive and develop within a European world clearly dominated by “the principle of national self-determination then in vogue in diplomatic circles. But, as some authors (as Sabrina P. Ramet, already quoted along the previous lines) clearly state, there was a *major* problem in making the newly born state a fully legitimate political construction. The main argument justifying the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was that these three groups “were but three ‘tribes’ of a single, ‘tri-named’ nation”. Anyhow, three well defined and politically significant realities worked a lot against this very logic of generating fully operational political legitimacy: “first, Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes did not share a common recollection of the past...; second, Croatia, Serbia, and, for that matter, Montenegro looked to different state traditions, the Albanians of Kosovo and the Macedonians identified with neighboring states, and the Croats and Serbs at least came into the kingdom with rather different political expectations; and third, the principle of national self-determination stood on shaky philosophical foundations, in that it could not explain why the empirical fact of language difference generated a normative that a state be constituted to coincide with linguistic frontiers”.<sup>3</sup> So that, in the end, the significant – and immensely geopolitically and geo-strategically attractive – power potential of a completely united and stable Yugoslavia did not become a really full-fledged perennial reality. The unity of the mainly – but not only – Slavic and Christian peoples in the North-Western Balkans was (according to authors of the type quoted here) doomed from the very beginning.

Other authors clearly prefer to list and evaluate some features – which are significant for the geopolitical and geo-strategic point of view – for the former Yugoslavia, for Serbia and for the other former Yugoslav republics. According to such authors, different

---

<sup>2</sup> For this “dichotomy” and its consequences in shaping geopolitical and geo-strategic ideas and initiatives / actions, see Todor Kuljić, Olivera Milosavljević, Olga Manojlović Pintar, *Helsinki FILES no. 11 - The Balkans Rachomon: Historiography and literature on dissolution of SFRY*, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, “Zagorac”, Beograd, 2002, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Sabrina P. Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918-2005*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Washington, D.C., and Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2006, pp. 35-36.

elements of former Yugoslavia have a more or less obvious geopolitical value (see TABLE 1). For example, a quite recent (French edition published in 2000) geopolitical dictionary, written and published by two influential French authors, state that: *Montenegro* and *Macedonia (FYROM)* were, mainly because they are inhabited by quite large Albanian minorities, an attractive target for ultra-nationalist Albanian political forces obsessed by the idea of reviving ‘Greater Albania’<sup>4</sup> which could be – theoretically, of course – an important regional geopolitical player (in this very context, both Montenegro and Macedonia are only geopolitical pivots); *Bosnia-Herzegovina* is evaluated as a clear geopolitical pivot, without long-term geopolitical stability and with regions / parts of the total population almost naturally ‘attracted’ by two larger and more powerful actors in the region – Serbia and Croatia, which are in an almost open competition for expanding their influence in Bosnia-Herzegovina;<sup>5</sup> traditionally, *Macedonia* was an attractive target for the Bulgarian obsession for gaining superior power status and a better / more influential geopolitical role<sup>6</sup> (in this situation, Sofia attempted – in several occasions along the past two centuries – to behave like a geopolitical player, while Macedonia was only a geopolitical pivot); *Croatia* traditionally was nothing else but an attractive geopolitical pivot, while clearly more powerful geopolitical players (the Habsburgs, the Ottomans, later on Napoleon I) clashed for its domination (anyhow, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Croatian nationalist elites started to be preoccupied by the idea that Zagreb might have the capability to become the leading force of all the Southern Slavs, an idea in direct collision with both Serbian and Hungarian geopolitical interests and potential);<sup>7</sup> more recently, *Croatia* is clearly geopolitically dominated by Germany<sup>8</sup> (which means that it still is nothing else but a geopolitical and geo-strategic pivot). Macedonia – which opens both to the North (Serbia and the large plains on the shores of the Danube), and to the Aegean Sea (Mediterranean Sea) is to be regarded as an important “geopolitical axis”,<sup>9</sup> and several regional and non-regional actors of the international arena have found the desire to dominate it simply irresistible. When we are speaking about *Serbia*, say Chauprade and Thual, we have to properly take into account that, along the past 150 years (since the 1840s), Belgrade had two major geopolitical goals: first of all, to absorb / reunite with all territories inhabited by Serbs; and to become the geopolitical / geo-strategic actor able to successfully unite *all* Slavs in the Balkans in a state led by Serbia.<sup>10</sup> In more recent times, Serbia fall quite an easy prey to an increasing gap (set of significant differences and tensions), separating the richer North (Slovenia and Croatia) and a

---

<sup>4</sup> Aymeric Chauprade, François Thual, *Dicționar de geopolitică: state, concepte, autori*, Grupul editorial Corint, București, 2003, p. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Aymeric Chauprade, François Thual, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 96.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 217.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 180.

broadly underdeveloped South of Yugoslavia.<sup>11</sup> *Slovenia*, on the other hand, is traditionally (since the Middle Ages) a region placed within the very sphere of influence of Austria; along the past 5 to 6 decades, it has been the most developed and “westernized” part of former Yugoslavia, being now “solidly anchored in Europe”.<sup>12</sup>

Table 1. Geopolitical and geo-strategic status of the ex-Yugoslavian countries (according to the evaluations offered by Aymeric Chauprade and François Thual)

Country	Geopolitical and geo-strategic status (pivot OR player) according to the evaluations of the two French authors	Observations (mainly dealing with the problem of identifying other geopolitical and geo-strategic players active in the region, with interests and actions important for the fate of the country we are speaking about)
<b>Bosnia-Herzegovina</b>	Minor (regional) geopolitical pivot	Serbia and Croatia are competing for sharing influence in the region (behaving according to patterns used mainly by geopolitical players)
<b>Croatia</b>	In most occasions (traditionally) a minor regional geopolitical pivot, but sometimes attempting to be a regional geopolitical player	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As a geopolitical pivot, Croatia was the target of Habsburg, Ottoman and French imperial policies</li> <li>- As a geopolitical player, Croatia attempts to dominate / control a share of Bosnia-Herzegovina</li> </ul>
<b>Kosovo</b>	Geopolitical pivot	Its recent evolutions are nothing else but the result of the clash of will (and of interests) of more potent geopolitical players (a regional one, Serbia, which lost, and a global one, the West / USA / NATO, which won the competition)
<b>Macedonia (FYROM)</b>	Geopolitical pivot, both in the past and at this very moment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the 1990s, target for some illusory plans aiming to revive ‘Greater Albania’</li> <li>- Along the past two centuries, target for Bulgarian expansionism (Bulgaria behaving in these occasions</li> <li>- Important “geopolitical axis” leading both to North (Serbia and Danube) and to South-East (Aegean Sea)</li> </ul>
<b>Montenegro</b>	Geopolitical pivot	In the 1990s, target for illusory plans aiming to revive ‘Greater Albania’
<b>Serbia</b>	In some occasions a geopolitical pivot, in other occasions a geopolitical player (the most powerful and significant one within the ex-Yugoslavian region)	<p>Traditionally preoccupied, starting with the 1840s, to reach two main goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- first of all, to (re)unite with all territories inhabited by Serbs;</li> <li>- and secondly, to unite all Slavs in the Balkans in an entity led by Belgrade</li> </ul>
<b>Slovenia</b>	Clearly a geopolitical pivot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- placed within the sphere the influence of Austria</li> <li>- the most developed and “westernized” part of former Yugoslavia</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 183.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 303-305.

For some authors, the geopolitical position of *Serbia* has some basic features we have to take into account if we really wish to deliver an accurate evaluation (and to make accurate predictions):

- It is crossed by several road and river “axes” of the South-Eastern part of Europe;
- The geographic space of Serbia is opened mainly toward the South and the North;
- It has an important geopolitical and geo-strategic weakness too: it lacks direct access to the sea (since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when the Serbian state led by Dušan had access to both the Aegean and the Adriatic seas);
- It is an axis leading from Central Europe to the Eastern Mediterranean Sea (see, for example, the European project we usually call corridor X, potentially linking Budapest and Athens through the Balkans);
- The Danube allows quite easily access from Serbia to both Central Europe and the Black Sea.<sup>13</sup>

But all these elements and evaluations, put together, do not offer a paradigm solid and coherent enough to make us better understand the geopolitical role (and the geopolitical potential) of Serbia on the Danube, simply because they belong to different (and sometime contradicting) thinking patterns, to different schools of thought. In order to make easier our task, *I strongly preferred to rely on a very simple, coherent and clearly homogenous ‘mental tool’ – the way in which Zbigniew Brzezinski states that states (like any actors of the international arena) can be either geopolitical (and geo-strategic) pivots, or geopolitical (and geo-strategic) players*, with a limited number of occasions in which *some* states can be *both* pivots and players.

## **2. A simple and coherent taxonomy: geopolitical pivots and geopolitical players (active actors)**

On the international arena two types of actors are, geopolitically speaking, really interesting and really significant: those called by Brzezinski “geopolitical pivots” and those designated by the same capital author with the concept of “geopolitical players” (active actors). Major differences separate the two types of geopolitical statuses (see TABLE 2). First of all, usually, geopolitical players are *more potent / more powerful*, in terms of national power, than other states (and than mainly than geopolitical pivots). Sometimes, geopolitical players are really very powerful, either regionally, or on the global arena. Secondly, geopolitical players do have – and manage to maintain and use, quite often even in the very long run – *a strong and effective political will of a type* and degree of effectiveness geopolitical pivots do not have. Thirdly, geopolitical players develop and use a *grand (or superior) strategy*<sup>14</sup> with an adequate amount of effectiveness, able to reach

---

<sup>13</sup> Alexis Troude, *Géopolitique de la Serbie*, Ellipses Édition Marketing S.A., Paris, 2006, pp. 6-11.

<sup>14</sup> For the definition of great (or superior) strategy, see B. H. Liddell Hart. *Strategia. Acțiunile indirecte*, Editura Militară, București, 1973, p. 334. The same work presents, with all necessary details, the

at least some vital geopolitical and strategic goals, while geopolitical pivots either lack a real grand strategy, or are able to design and use a grand strategy able to reach only with difficulty some really significant goals. A fourth major difference is that *the actions of geopolitical (and geo-strategic) players can significantly alter the geopolitical landscape, while the actions of pivots usually can not change the geopolitical reality*. A fifth difference is that geo-strategic players can act beyond the limits of their national borders (while pivots can act without too much success). A special feature of the geo-strategic pivots is that they are not important because of their might, but because, if someone controls them, that actor is able to reach some important regions (or to deny its competitors such a chance)<sup>15</sup>

Table 2. Basic features of the geopolitical pivots and geopolitical players (active actors) do have (according to Zbigniew Brzezinski)

Feature	Geopolitical (and geo-strategic) players / active actors	Geopolitical (and geo-strategic) pivots
<b>1. POWER (the capability to influence the behavior and decisions of other actors of the international arena)</b>	- More powerful than pivots - Sometimes very powerful	- Less powerful than geopolitical players
<b>2. POLITICAL WILL</b>	Strong and coherent	Not very strong
<b>3. Existence of an effective GRAND STRATEGY</b>	It exists and generate results	A feeble reality
<b>4. WHERE they can act successfully (where they can generate changes)</b>	Beyond the state borders	Almost nowhere
<b>5. WHAT they can do (which goals can be accomplished)</b>	To alter the geopolitical landscape	To make their territory available for players

### 3. The power status of Serbia within the system of former Yugoslav states

If we are to soundly explore the geopolitical / geo-strategic role of Serbia on the Danube and within the former the system of former Yugoslav states, we have to find out, first of all, *how powerful Serbia is* (to estimate *if* it has – or it can gain and maintain – *at least a regional geopolitical player* status). In order to accomplish such a goal, I used a set of parameters / constitutive elements of national power compatible with the

---

definition and basic features of the military strategy (p. 335), enabling the reader to better understand the relation(s) of grand strategy and military strategy.

<sup>15</sup> For the definition and features of geopolitical and geo-strategic pivots and players, see Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Marea tablă de șah: Supremația americană și imperativele sale geostrategice*, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, București, 2000, p. 53.

logic of the realist school<sup>16</sup> (see TABLES 3, 3a, 4, 4a, 5, 5a). Here are the quite condensed sets of data I decided to operate with (I also presented, in separate tables, figures available for Netherlands, an almost randomly selected medium-sized power in Western Europe, to better understand the development ‘gap’ separating the Balkans and Western Europe):

Table 3. *Natural and demographic* (plus some *demo-economic*) elements of national power of the states on the territory of the former SFRY<sup>17</sup>

Country	Total Area (in square km.)	Population	Urban population (% of the total one)	Unemployment rate (% of the total population)	Population below poverty line (% of the total population)
<b>Serbia</b>	77,474 sq. km	7,310,555	Approx. 56 %	17,2 %	8,8 %
<b>Bosnia-Herzegovina</b>	51,197 sq. km	4,622,163	Approx. 49 %	43.1%	18,6 %
<b>Croatia</b>	56,394 sq. km	4,483,804	Approx. 58 %	17.6 %	Approx. 17%
<b>Kosovo</b>	10,887 sq. km	1,825,632	Not available	45 %	Approx. 30%
<b>Macedonia (FYROM)</b>	25,713 sq. km	Approx. 2,077.000	Approx. 59 %	32,3%	28.7 %
<b>Montenegro</b>	13,812 sq. km	Approx. 661,807	Approx. 61%	14.7%	Approx. 7 %
<b>Slovenia</b>	20,273 sq. km	Approx. 2,000,092 (estimate, 2011)	Approx. 50%	10.7 %	Approx. 12.3%

TABLE 3a. *Natural and demographic* (plus some *demo-economic*) elements of national power of the Netherlands (to be compared with the figures in TABLE 3, for better understanding them and their significance)

Country	Total area	Population	Urban population (% of the total population)	Unemployment rate (% of the total population)	Population below poverty line (% of the population)
<b>Netherlands</b>	41.543 sq. km	Approx. 16.840.000	83 %	5.5 %	10.5%

<sup>16</sup> The basic lecture for any such attempt is Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politica între națiuni. Lupta pentru putere și lupta pentru pace*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2007, pp. 151-188 (Chapter 9: Elements of the national power)

<sup>17</sup> The figures quoted here and in table 3a. are those available in Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook (2011)*, Internet address <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>..., pages upgraded on October 21, 2011.



Table 4. Important *economic* elements of national power of the states on the territory of the former SFRY<sup>18</sup>

Country	GDP (purchasing power parity)	GDP per capita (PPP)	Total labor force	Exports (total value)	Imports (total value)	External debt
<b>Serbia</b>	80.1 billion USD	10,900 USD	3.25 million persons	9.8 bln. USD (2010)	16.14 billion USD	33.3 billion USD
<b>Bosnia-Herzegovina</b>	30.38 billion USD	6,600 USD	2.6 million	24.4 bln. USD	9.22 bln. USD	Approx. 9.7 billion USD
<b>Croatia</b>	78.09 billion USD	17,400 USD	1.721 million	12.5 bln. USD	20.23 billion USD	Approx. 61 bln. USD
<b>Kosovo</b>	11.97 billion USD	6,600 USD	0.31 million	0.527 bln. USD	2.6 bln. USD	Not available
<b>Macedonia (FYROM)</b>	20.0 billion USD	9,700 USD	0.934 million	3.3 bln. USD	5.275 bln. USD	5.82 bln. USD
<b>Montenegro</b>	6.72 billion USD	10,100 USD	0.259 million	0.17 bln. USD	0.6 bln. USD	0.65 bln. USD
<b>Slovenia</b>	56.58 billion USD	28,200 USD	0.935 million	24.39 bln. USD	25.68 bln. USD	51.57 bln. USD

Table 4a. Important *economic* elements of national power of the Netherlands (to be compared with the figures in TABLE 4, for better understanding them)<sup>19</sup>

Country	GDP (purchasing power parity – PPP)	GDP per capita (PPP)	Total labor force	Exports (total value)	Imports (total value)	External debt
Netherlands	676.9 bln USD	40.300 USD	7.81 mln	485.9 bln USD	429 bln USD	3.73 trillion USD

<sup>18</sup> The figures quoted here are and in TABLE 4a. those available in Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook (2011)*, Internet address <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>....., most of the country pages updated on October 21, 2011.

<sup>19</sup> Figures from the same sources quoted in the previous footnote.

Table 5. Significant *qualitative* elements of national power of the states on the territory of the former SFRY<sup>20</sup>

Country	Literacy (percentage of the total population)	Total number of Internet users	Number of telephones (main lines + mobile)	Physicians per thousand persons	Hospital beds per thousand persons	School life expectancy (years, primary to tertiary)
<b>Serbia</b>	96.4 % of the total population	4.10 million	3.10 + 9.9 million	2.03 / 1,000 persons	5.4 / thousand persons	14 years
<b>Bosnia-Herzegovina</b>	96.7 %	1.42 million	0.99 + 3.25 million	1.41 / 1,000 persons	3.04 / 1,000 persons	14 years
<b>Croatia</b>	99.3 %	2.23 million	1.8 + 6.3 million	2.59	5.49	14 years
<b>Kosovo</b>	96.6 %	NA	+ 0.56 million	NA	NA	NA
<b>Macedonia (FYROM)</b>	98.2 %	1.05 million	0.44 + 1.94 million	2.54	4.63	13 years
<b>Montenegro</b>	Figures not available (NA)	0.28 million	0.36 + 0.75 million	NA	3.98	NA
<b>Slovenia</b>	99.7 %	1.29 million	1.03 + 2.1 million	2.47	4.7	17 years

Table 5a. Significant *qualitative* elements of national power of the Netherlands (to be compared with the figures in Table 5, for better understanding them)

Country	Literacy (% of the total population)	Total number of Internet users	Total number of telephones (main lines + mobile phones)	Physicians per thousand persons	Hospital beds per 100 persons	School life expectancy (years, primary to tertiary)
<b>Netherlands</b>	99 %	14.87 mln.	7.32 mln + 21.18 mln.	3.9	4.25	17 years

All these figures, put together, generate at least *three* conclusions:

- a. Former Yugoslav states are, generally speaking, less powerful / less developed than most states in Western Europe;

<sup>20</sup> The figures quoted here and in TABLE 5a. are those available in Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook* (2011), Internet address <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>..., most of the country pages / articles updated in October 2011.

- b. Serbia is – or at least *seems* to be – stronger / more powerful, when we are speaking about *some* (not very few!) elements of national power, than other ex-Yugoslav states; when we are speaking about *other* elements of national power, the superiority of Serbia within the ex-Yugoslav world is not any more obvious (on the contrary, in some fields it is weaker than other ex-Yugoslav republics);
- c. National power of Serbia, described in the tables listed above, is clearly *not enough* to offer a *clear, perennial and stable* guarantee that Belgrade will *necessarily* be, using *only* its own power resources (its own power potential), a *real and important* geo-strategic player / actor in the region. At least theoretically, it might be only a geo-strategic pivot.

#### 4. What history teaches us, if properly and extensively used

In such a situation, when available figures *do not allow* us to predict that Serbia will *necessarily* be a really important geo-strategic player / actor, a question naturally emerges: which is the geopolitically significant method Belgrade could use to improve at least its regional geopolitical status? Fortunately, history offers an almost *complete (and very strong) answer* to such a question. And let me tell you both *how* and *why*. First of all, the idea that Serbia can be regarded, from different perspectives and according to different interests and power statuses, both as a “pawn” (in geopolitical terms, a *pivot*), and as an “actor” (in geopolitical terms, a *player / active actor*) is present in quite many works.<sup>21</sup> But it is not very clear, in *many* of these works, what Serbia has to do in order to go beyond the pivot status and to gain and maintain the geo-strategic player status.

Anyhow, an important number of historical examples shows us that the *active* regional role of Serbia – that of ‘geo-strategic player’, at least a small or medium-sized one, on the regional arena of the Balkans – was based in many occasions *on actively searching a larger and more powerful protector*, beyond the geographic borders of the region. Along the history, such a protector could be the Byzantine Empire, Austria (the Habsburg Empire), the Russian Empire or France. Such *privileged strategic relations* were used by the “small” Serbian state to deny larger entities the chance to easily control its territory.<sup>22</sup> *Another solution* to become a geo-strategic player was to design, build and operate *regional alliances or partnerships*. Both solutions have a *common denominator: Serbia, alone, is not necessarily a geo-strategic player. But if the same Serbia augments its power resources with those of other states (preferably large and powerful ones), it can reach the status we call ‘part of a composite geo-strategic player’*.

According to a really important author in the field of geopolitics, Yves Lacoste, one of the most important elements in the Balkans is the “strategic axis” Morava-Vardar.

---

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Alexis Troude, *Géopolitique de la Serbie*, Ellipses Édition Marketing S.A., Paris, 2006, pp. 155-204.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 155.

This very axis, connecting Danube and the Aegean sea and being the only really facile route linking the large plains on the central and lower Danube with a significant segment of the Mediterranean Sea was, starting with the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the goal of several clearly competing ‘grand strategies’: the Turkish one, the Serbian, the Bulgarian, the Albanese and the Greek one. The same author clearly states that these regional clashes aiming to control a really significant geopolitical and geo-strategic asset were supported, more or less openly, by *some* great powers with well defined interests connected, in away or another, to the ‘question d’Orient’ (Oriental problem).<sup>23</sup>

The effectiveness of *regional cooperation* – or of augmenting *very limited* national power by means of regional alliances / regional strategic partnerships was clearly proved by both the first and the second War in the Balkans (1912 and 1913). In both occasions, the real status of Serbia alone might have been only that of geopolitical pivot. But, together with other small and / or medium-sized powers, Belgrade could operate with increased chances to reach its strategic goals. Designing, forging and operating coalitions and / or political-military alliances is a tool enabling even quite small and quite weak states to reach, *together*, a more influential status on the international arena – that of geopolitical player (significant at least at regional level). A multi-member geopolitical player (with Serbia within / inside it) managed to defeat the Ottoman Empire in the First Balkan War. And, again, Bulgarian geopolitical and geo-strategic ambitions were effectively “contained” – and defeated – by another composite geopolitical and geo-strategic player (Serbia, Romania, Greece, and Montenegro, all of them acting together).<sup>24</sup>

The geopolitical and geo-strategic status of Yugoslavia (and of *Serbia*, as a *central* element – at least in terms of political influence and political will) was significantly boosted, in some other occasions, also by *regional alliances*. The most notorious solution of this sort, which put together the power resources of three small or medium-sized actors of the European arena, each of them a well-defined geopolitical pivot (with clear ambitions and interests aiming the geopolitical player status, but broadly lacking, in most occasions, adequate resources to accomplish and maintain such a broad, complex and long-term goal) was that established in the 1920 by Romania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia and was called *the Little Entente*. This trilateral structure attempted to organize “regional security” in an international context dominated by an obvious “shortcoming of the League of Nations”, which was the “lack of actual force in case of aggression”. For almost two decades, the Little Entente managed – with *some* diplomatic help granted by France and Great Britain – to maintain “the territorial status quo”.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Yves Lacoste, *Géopolitique de la Méditerranée*, Armand Colin, Paris, 2006, pp. 295-297

<sup>24</sup> For the two Balkan Wars see Dinu C. Giurescu, Rudolf Dinu, Laurențiu Constantiniu, *Romanian Diplomacy – An Illustrated History: 1862-1947*, Monitorul Oficial R.A., București, 2010, pp. 30-31

<sup>25</sup> Dinu C. Giurescu, Rudolf Dinu, Laurențiu Constantiniu, *Romanian Diplomacy – An Illustrated History: 1862-1947*, Monitorul Oficial R.A., București, 2010, p. 42; for better understanding the very geopolitical / geo-strategic logic and of the history of the Little Entente, see also Keith Hitchins, *România: 1866-1947*

In the 1930s, *once again*, another attempt was made to both deny the revisionist powers (Germany, Italy and Hungary) the chance to reshape South-Eastern Europe according to their interests and long-term plans, and to improve the geopolitical and geo-strategic status of small and medium-sized powers in the region. In February 1934, Greece, Turkey, Yugoslavia and Romania became members of a regional pact mutually offering – and receiving – guarantees that their frontiers and territories will be maintained. The pact, clearly state important and influential authors, was directed against Bulgarian and Hungarian revisionist plans<sup>26</sup> and granted the four member states the chance to be, together, an actor with geo-strategic player (active actor) status.

Some other *more recent* historical events involving Serbia – and, more generally, Yugoslavia – had a *very* clear geopolitical and geo-strategic significance of a sort interesting for our debate. Such events are made up of two types of “ingredients”. First of all, we are speaking about lots and lots of historical details no one can replicate in different circumstances. On the other hand, such historical events do have a more perennial dimension as well, a dimension (or a set of features) we might find useful to talk about, just because there is a fair chance to identify the same perennial factors in other occasions (both past, present and future ones) as well. One of the best known historical sets events deeply involving Serbia (with its *dominant* political will within the framework of Yugoslavia) is that in late autumn of 1940 and early spring of 1941.<sup>27</sup> In 1939-1940, Belgrade quite successfully tried to establish more close political and military relations with both France and USSR, in order to be able to face the increasing strategic pressure of the Tripartite Pact grouping Germany, Italy and, far away in the Pacific, Japan. When, in early December 1940, the German request to allow almost 1,000 military trucks to cross Yugoslavia (in order to strongly reinforce the Italians fighting in difficult conditions and without adequate results in Albania) was turned down by Belgrade, Berlin tried again to make the ruling elites in Belgrade more cooperative. Yugoslavia was promised the city of Salonika (Thessaloniki) in Greece, together with its hinterland (meaning, quite clearly, not only an enlarged territory and an enlarged

---

(ediția a III-a, revăzută și adăugită), Editura Humanitas, București, 2004, pp. 497, 500-503, and Constantin Botoran, Petre Out, Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu, Emilian Bold, Mihai Retegan, “Cap. XI. Politica externă a României în primul deceniu interbelic”, in Ioan Scurtu (editor / coordinator), *Istoria românilor, vol. VIII: România întregită (1918-1940)*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 2003, pp. 436-438.

<sup>26</sup> Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *Istoria relațiilor internaționale: 1917-1941*, Editura Științelor Sociale și Politice, București, 2006, vol. 1, p. 131.

<sup>27</sup> For this set of important historical events with a strong geopolitical significance (not only for Serbia / Yugoslavia, but for the entire region of the Balkans and for the rest of Europe as well) see the very brief comments in Paul Johnson, *O istorie a lumii moderne: 1920-2000*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2003, pp. 366-377; and in Winston S. Churchill, *Al Doilea Război Mondial*, Editura Saeculum I.O., București, 1996, vol. 1, pp. 397-408; and in B. H. Liddell Hart, *Istoria celui de-al Doilea Război Mondial*, Editura Orizonturi, Editura Lider, București, f.a. (without the year in which the Romanian edition was published), volume 1., pp. 206-207; and, with many vivid and interesting details, in Martin Gilbert, *The Second World War. A Complete History*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1989, pp. 134, 143, 148-149, 157, 159-160, and 165-176.

national wealth and an enlarged number of taxpayers, but also direct access to the Aegean Sea. In the same time, Yugoslavia was geopolitically isolated: To the North and East, Hungary, and Romania, and Bulgaria sadly joined the Tripartite Pact (in November 1940; quite soon, German troops moved into Romania, in early January 1941, and in Bulgaria, in March 1941). In such a situation, Prince Paul and the Crown Council decided to join the Tripartite Pact on three conditions: sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country was to be respected by the new strategic partners; Yugoslavia was not to offer active or passive military help to the Axis; and, after the war, Belgrade was to receive a quite large share of Greece (Salonika and its already mentioned hinterland).<sup>28</sup>

If we are to summarize these early events before the March-April 1941 Yugoslav crisis,<sup>29</sup> we can easily identify several important – and clearly perennial features. We can list and briefly present at least six such potentially perennial features: a. *Belgrade was not powerful to act alone as an important geopolitical – and geo-strategic – player*, but trying to solve this very problem by establishing and consolidating an operational / effective strategic partnership with some really potent partners (major players of the European and of the global arena); b. *Belgrade's geopolitical activism (its geopolitical player behavior) strongly irritated other more important geopolitical players* (both some regional ones – see the case of Italy; and some continentally and even globally significant – see the case of Germany); c. *These more important geopolitical and geo-strategic players, with obvious – and really major / vital – interests in the western Balkans and in several surrounding regions (potential theatres of military operations) attempted to lure Belgrade in a trap, promising some territories in exchange for accepting a more passive geopolitical role, that of geopolitical pivot*; d. *Belgrade did not accept this too direct approach*, because of a mix of reasons (some of them geopolitically significant, some of them connected to national pride or to the simple desire to get more, if there really exist a serious window of opportunity), and its opponents were not in a position to make a decisive move without extra preparations (these having a clear geopolitical significance as well); e. *In such a situation, the clearly more powerful geopolitical and geo-strategic players which were seriously irritated by Belgrade's foreign policy decided to mix promises with more active (and clearly threatening / and almost openly hostile) strategic measures*, almost completely isolating Yugoslavia simply by absorbing three neighboring countries in a political and military alliance able to seriously harm Yugoslavian strategic interests.

In such a situation, Belgrade had no other chance but to accept the demands of the openly hostile and clearly superior (more potent) powers. Even in such difficult

---

<sup>28</sup> For these details of the events in 1939-early spring of 1941 see also Sabrina P. Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918-2005*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Washington, D.C., and Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2006, pp. 109-110 and

<sup>29</sup> For the diplomatic context of the events in the Balkans in 1939-early 1941, see mainly Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *Istoria relațiilor internaționale: 1917-1941*, Editura Stiințelor Sociale și Politice, București, 2006, vol. 1, pp. 211, 218-222.

circumstances, Belgrade managed to obtain *some geopolitical compensations* for accepting to reshape its foreign policy (but they were, bluntly speaking, *too minor ones*, not a really ‘fair price’ for the geopolitical *player* status which was to be abandoned and had to be replaced by the less significant and less rewarding geopolitical *pivot* status.

The significance / role for Serbia of a partnership with a larger, more potent actor of the European / global geo-strategic arena was proved again by the events in the opening states of 1941. Strongly irritated by the pact signed with the Axis by the authorities in Belgrade on March 25, 1941 (in spite of the fact that no less than three ministers resigned in protest), many Serbs – together with many other Yugoslavians – marched on the streets of Belgrade, shouting “Better the grave than to be a slave, better the war than the pact!”. The anti-Axis sentiment was so strong that on March 27, 1941, “a group of army officers led by air force general Bora Mirković overthrew the government”, and a new government was formed, under the leadership of another Air Force general, Dušan Simović. At this very moment, we clearly know that “the coup” has been “executed at British instigation and involving British intelligence operatives”. The shock (or, better said, the *possible* geo-strategic consequences of this set of events) was so strong for the Germans, that Hitler “decided to postpone his invasion of Russia”.<sup>30</sup> In that very occasion, even the not too effective partnership with Great Britain made Serbia an *important* geo-strategic player, *able* – even if not for too long – to massively alter the set of priorities of the major power controlling (and mastering, by brute force) almost the entire European continent.

A few years ago, at the end of the almost ten years long wars which split apart the former Yugoslavia (wars which were, from the point of view of Belgrade’s geo-strategic interests, “failures” and “disasters”), openly state really important authors, Serbia found itself in an “appalling, dreadful situation”, both when we are speaking about its economy and when we are evaluating its political, geopolitical and geo-strategic status on the European and global arena.<sup>31</sup> *Up to a certain point, that dramatic situation was the obvious result that Serbia decided to act alone, not together with one or more geo-strategic players, but against the will and the interests of the most influential ones in the contemporary world.*

## 5. Brief conclusions

The previous chapter of this study clearly shows that, for Serbia, gaining the status we usually call ‘geopolitical player’ is something directly – and almost compulsorily – connected to intense and extensive international cooperation. *Too small (and many times too weak) to successfully act alone, Serbia has, in many occasions, only one major chance: to build and operate what we can call ‘a composite geo-strategic player’, together with one or more actors on the international arena.* At this very moment, the

---

<sup>30</sup> Sabrina P. Ramet, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>31</sup> Yves Lacoste, *Géopolitique de la Méditerranée*, Armand Colin, Paris, 2006, p. 315.

solution of strictly regional cooperation (something as an ‘upgraded’ version of the Little Entente, for example) is not any more feasible for Belgrade, *at least* because almost all other regional minor powers already opted for integrating themselves in NATO.

But *another* road, leading *directly* from the status we usually call ‘minor and vulnerable pivot’ to the status of ‘significant part / element of an *important* geo-strategic player / active actor’ stays open. *This road could mean, for Belgrade, to join, as soon as possible, the most relevant actors on the European (and Euro-Atlantic) arena – NATO (really significant in terms of continental and global defense and security) and EU (significant, in the long run, mainly in terms of continental prosperity and positive economic growth, and also in terms of deliberately and strongly preserving cultural identities)*. Quite clearly, such a step will necessarily mean the need to abandon, sooner or later, some national priorities, some obsolete thinking patterns, and some geopolitically significant traditions as well. But it might be a really fair deal: in the end, exploring a robust future, *together* with both former regional allies / friends and former regional foes / competitors, might be a *more rewarding* long-term strategy than that of vainly trying – or simply hoping – to revive a more or less distant past which clearly *can not* be any more revived.

### Bibliography

- Brzezinski, Zbigniew, *Marea tablă de șah: Supremația americană și imperativele sale geostrategice*, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, București, 2000.
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *The World Factbook (2011)*, Internet address <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/....>, most of the country pages updated on October 21, 2011.
- Chauprade, Aymeric, François Thual, *Dicționar de geopolitică: state, concepte, autori*, Grupul editorial Corint, București, 2003.
- Churchill, Winston S., *Al Doilea Război Mondial*, Editura Saeculum I.O., București, 1996, volumes 1 and 2.
- Duroselle, Jean-Baptiste, *Istoria relațiilor internaționale: 1917-1941*, Editura Stiințelor Sociale și Politice, București, 2006, 2 volumes.
- Gilbert, Martin, *The Second World War. A Complete History*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1989.
- Giurescu, Dinu C., Rudolf Dinu, Laurențiu Constantiniu, *Romanian Diplomacy – An Illustrated History: 1862-1947*, Monitorul Oficial R.A., București, 2010.
- Hitchins, Keith, *România: 1866-1947* (ediția a III-a, revăzută și adăugită), Editura Humanitas, București, 2004.
- Johnson, Paul, *O istorie a lumii moderne: 1920-2000*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2003.



- Kuljić, Todor, Olivera Milosavljević, Olga Manojlović Pintar, *Helsinki FILES no. 11 – The Balkans Rachomon: Historiography and literature on dissolution of SFRY*, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, “Zagorac”, Beograd, 2002.
- Lacoste, Yves, *Géopolitique de la Méditerranée*, Armand Colin, Paris, 2006.
- Liddell Hart, B. H., *Strategia. Acțiunile indirecte*, Editura Militară, București, 1973.
- Liddell Hart, B. H., *Istoria celui de-al Doilea Război Mondial*, Editura Orizonturi, Editura Lider, București, f.a. (without the year in which the Romanian edition was published), volumes 1 and 2.
- Morgenthau, Hans J., *Politica între națiuni. Lupta pentru putere și lupta pentru pace*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2007.
- Ramet, Sabrina P., *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918-2005*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Washington, D.C., and Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2006.
- Scurtu, Ioan (editor / coordinator), *Istoria românilor; vol. VIII: România întregită (1918-1940)*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 2003.
- Troude, Alexis, *Géopolitique de la Serbie*, Ellipses Édition Marketing S.A., Paris, 2006.

Dragan Tančić<sup>1</sup>

## RELEVANT FACTORS OF THE DANUBE AND DANUBE BASIN FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SERBIA AND EUROPEAN UNION

### ABSTRACT

The Danube and the Danube Basin have always had a special significance exerting influence on the development of European states, the European Union, and by all this, on Serbia. The Danube river is particularly an important connecting point between the North and the South of Europe, this reflecting its special importance for Serbia. Within this context, it can be generally said that together with the Danube Basin the Danube is a kind of “substitute“ for Serbia’s direct exit to the sea. The basic significant factors of the Danube and the Danube Basin for the overall development of Serbia and the European Union can be defined from the aspects of conditions, this including general, particular and individual ones, then from the aspect of space, time as well as from the aspect of subjects – the population living in those areas – as a central factor. The relevant factors of the Danube and the Danube Basin for the development of Serbia and the European Union are the territory, the population living in this territory, the time when some phenomena and processes take place, scientific-technological, economic and other forms of development. That space can be defined as a living space where some population satisfies its needs and interests, the space where members of the population live and work arranging it in accordance with their needs and interests and in the way they can do it under the given conditions. The conditions can be favourable or unfavourable for development. For instance, since 1985 till 1988 in the territory around the narrow zone of the Danube Basin in Serbia the most developed industrial and economic centres and most populated towns were located, but then, due to the changed conditions, Serbia’s economic growth has declined and the population has stagnated in that zone.

*Key words:* Danube Basin, Serbia, North-South of Europe, scientific-technological development, population in Serbia, Serbia’s economic development.

---

<sup>1</sup> Dragan Tančić, Ph.D., Employed at the Institute for Serbian Culture, Priština – Kosovo and Metohija, Serbia, with its temporary office in Leposavić – Kosovo and Metohija.

The paper was written as a part of the project No. 178028, *Materijalna i duhovna kultura Kosova i Metohije*, which is funded by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia.

## Methodological issues and case basis

With respect to natural, social and political sciences, meta-methodology and methodology of natural, social and political sciences, all important natural, social, political, economic, cultural, and other phenomena and processes (in the context of the Danube, the Danube Basin and the countries located in this area) can and should be scientifically explored on the model of scientific research process and the model of typical case study,<sup>2</sup> on the model of conceptualization and reconceptualization<sup>3</sup> of natural, social and political studies.

### Relevant Factors

In view of the defined problem and the subject of this scientific conference, it should be emphasized that in the process of scientific study of the Danube, the Danube Basin and its countries as well as the phenomena and reality, their connections, relationships and interdependence, it is worth bearing in mind that all phenomena and processes always occur and are implemented under certain conditions.

---

<sup>2</sup> “The model of typical case study, which was established by Slavomir Milosavljević, Ph.D. and Ivan Radosavljević, Ph.D. as a general and universal one (that has been practiced and applied at many faculties of political and other sciences in the former Yugoslavia and the newly created states in this region) has all characteristics of a scientific paradigm because it is applicable in all social and political sciences and it is believed to have the same properties of generality, universality, applicability to natural, social, historical, political, psychological and other sciences. On the basis of the theoretical, empirical and methodological literature, we can say that it is a model which was put close three decades ago and is unique and original by itself“. According to Dragan Tančić, Historical method in the study of political phenomena, Doctoral thesis, Faculty of Political Science, Belgrade, 2009, p. 176.

In particular, see the following papers: Milosavljević Slavomir: Political action, the Institute of Political Studies Faculty of Political Science, Belgrade, 1977.

Slavomir Milosavljević, The study of political phenomena, the Institute of Political Studies Faculty of Political Science and Centre for youth and pioneers, Belgrade, 1980.

Slavomir Milosavljević, Ivan Radosavljević, The revision course of the methodology of social science, the Institute of Political Studies, Belgrade, 1988.

Slavomir Milosavljević, The report on scientific research, Centre of senior military schools, OS “Maršal Tito“, Strategic Research Institute, Belgrade, 1990.

Slavomir Milosavljević, Ivan Radosavljević, Fundamentals of political science methodology, Official Newspaper (Službeni glasnik), Belgrade, 2000.

Ivan Radosavljević, Hypothetical and deductive method of research policy, Newspaper for children (Dečije novine), SO Gornji Milanovac, 1996.

Dragan Tančić, Master’s thesis: The conceptualization of research in political sciences, Faculty of Political Science, Belgrade, 2006.

Dragan Tančić, Historical method in the study of political phenomena, Doctoral thesis, Faculty of Political Science, Belgrade, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Dragan Tančić, Master’s thesis: The conceptualization of research in political sciences, Faculty of Political Science, Belgrade, 2006.

The conditions can be classified into natural ones and they are as follows: some natural properties of certain areas within certain limits starting with biological ones – from the flora and fauna viewpoint and from the point of existential conditions for the biological survival of individuals and groups, states, that of geography, climate; and from the standpoint of advantages-disadvantages. An example is the land of the countries of the Danube Basin as a particularly relevant factor in the development of Europe and Serbia. It is the condition that should always be kept in mind and should be, first of all, explored from the aspect of food production, or in terms of agro-biodiversity. The question is: to what extent the land of the Danube Basin states can be used to produce food, that is to ensure the survival of individuals, groups and states in future terms if one bears in mind the fact that much land in the world, including the Danube Basin, will have to be converted into agricultural one in order to achieve food security. The situation is similar to the following relevant factor – water, which is, by significance a factor as referential as soil. There is no life without water and it can be stimulating or limiting factor both for individuals, groups, and for the communities, Europe, the countries of the Danube Basin, Serbia and the others, especially if one bears in mind the tendency of the growing population on the Earth. In Europe and in Serbia as a state of the Danube Basin, these factors should be thoroughly studied and one should predict their future use that would serve the achievement of the development of the state, population, taking the current situation into consideration. The air is also an important factor, as well as the previous two ones mentioned above, especially if one takes into account the air pollution both at the global and the European levels, but also in the area of the countries of the Danube Basin and in Serbia.

The geographical conditions are also relevant factors that should be taken into account when researching the importance of the Danube, the Danube Basin in relation to Europe and the European Union as well as the countries of the Danube Basin and Serbia. For our country, as previously said, it is especially important that the Corridor VII, Danube River, (and the Corridor X), has a basically integral role in relation to Europe, the European Union and the countries of the Danube Basin. A number of authors in social and political sciences think that Serbia has a very favourable geographical position on the basis of several arguments and they are the following: Serbia is a link between Europe and the Middle East, it has a good position in Europe via the Danube and the Danube Basin, it has significant natural, agricultural, industrial and labour resources, skilled labour force, and etc. However, it is worth reminding of Jovan Cvijić's stance, namely his assessment of the geographical position of Serbia and Vojvodina for, so to say “parking and running through” of many states, what has a valid scientific basis for understanding both the present and for the scientific prediction of the near future.

The social and economic conditions are caused by social and economic relationships and processes within a given country and among more countries, both in the territory of Europe, the European Union, the countries of the Danube Basin and in Serbia. It should be noted that they are created, customized and modified by the conscious, purposeful and targeting activity of a man, an individual, a group or a collective, which use and affect

the above mentioned according to their needs and interests. Within this context, particularly important ones are general social conditions on which living standards of the citizens of Europe, the countries of the Danube Basin and Serbia essentially depend on and they include the following: (1) production of broader social and economic importance, (2) needs, interests and aims of the citizens and the population and (3) the relationship between production and consumption. These conditions are dependent on the operation of: political and economic systems and on economic, developmental and social policy.

When exploring certain phenomena and processes related to the Danube and the Danube Basin, both at the level of Europe as a whole or in terms of needs and interests of the countries of the Danube Basin, it is necessary to identify, as particularly significant factors the environmental conditions of the population and indicators of working conditions.

The political situation is an important factor as a separate one, but at the same time, as an integral part of the conditions, which may be favourable, unfavourable or neutral for certain political processes and entities that are being or were realized with or without conflicts, it can be significant to a certain extent and intensity. The example for that is the cooperation of the countries of the Danube Basin in peacetime and wartime. As for the conditions in the area of the Danube and the Danube Basin, they may fulfil the function of integrative or disintegrative processes, what we can see in many examples from the ancient and near past. An obvious example is the trans-border cooperation between Serbia and the countries of the Danube Basin during the last decade of the 20th century when it was at the lowest level. The “hot” example is the relationship between Serbia and Croatia before and after the 1990s, that is between Vojvodina and Croatia, when the Danube at the politically peaceful time, was an integrative factor and at wartime – a disintegrative one.

Along with these factors, economic factors are also important for the scientific research of significance of the Danube and the Danube Basin at the level of Europe as a whole, the European Union or the countries of the Danube Basin. In particular, this implies the level or dynamics of economic growth rates, which, generally speaking, can be positive or negative and be impacted by the following factors:

- economic policy,
- economic systems,
- natural resources,
- volume of available capital,
- scope and quality of human resources,
- achieved level of development,
- involvement in the European and world economy,
- structural factors, etc.

Economic factors operate and achieve certain effects, whereby we consider an especially important factor economic system, understood as a theoretical model, an ideal type of economic systems, and a concrete and real one. The operation and comparison of economic systems of Europe, EU, and especially the countries of the Danube Basin

and their actual success in appropriate theoretical solutions on the matter of the functioning and achieving results are especially important for observation in Serbia. The comparison of economic systems of the Danube Basin countries and the present economies with the corresponding models would provide an overview and discover new theoretical solutions using horizontal and vertical models of the comparative research. The social and scientific objective of the comparison of economic systems of the Danube Basin countries would be related to the transformation of the economic system of Serbia from, we can say, the unsuccessful to the successful one.

Taking into account common scientific knowledge, it can be pointed out that it is possible to evaluate the success of the economic systems of the Danube Basin countries either on the whole or individually, being based on many indicators, among which the following are:

- achieved economic growth,
- economic efficiency,
- economic stability,
- market openness,
- distribution,
- level of standards and quality of the population's life.

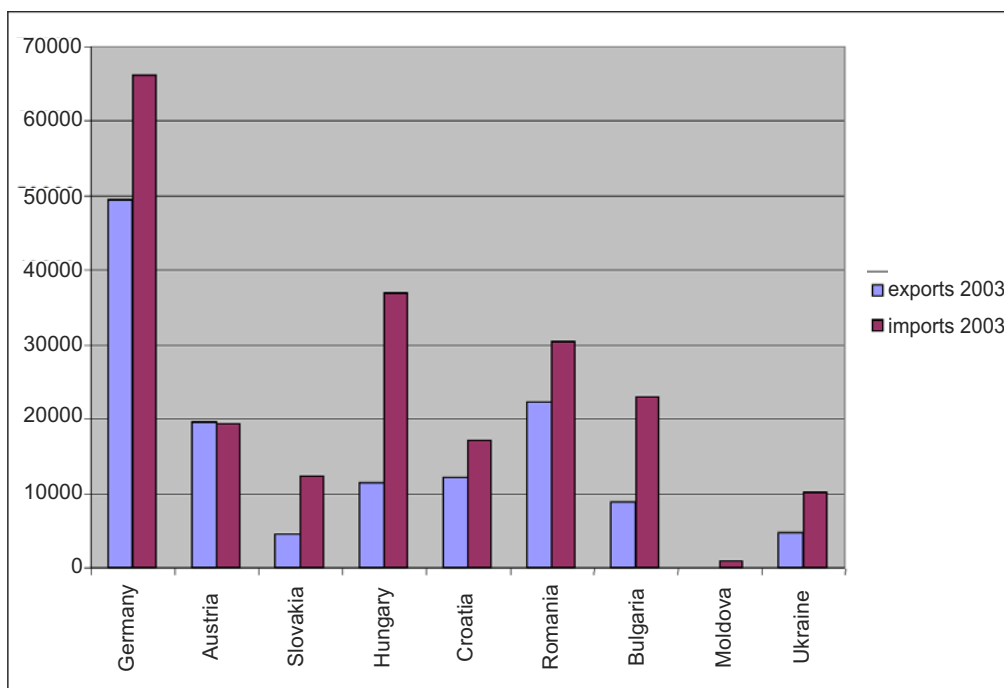
Within this context, in terms of application and importance of economic factors, ties and relations, we can see the trends in Serbia's foreign trade with the Danube Basin countries in January 2010 that will point to certain tendencies.

Table 1. Serbia's imports/exports with the Danube Basin countries  
in January 2010 (in 000 euros)

	Exports from Serbia	Imports into Serbia
Germany	49,470	66,127
Austria	19,549	19,303
Slovakia	4,603	12,274
Hungary	11,368	36,968
Croatia	12,056	17,217
Romania	22,298	30,301
Bulgaria	8,819	23,003
Moldova	39	951
Ukraine	4,692	10,113
Total (the Danube countries)	132,894	216,257
Total	398,520	738,739

Source: Statistical Office, 2010.

Graphic presentation of Serbia's exports and imports with the Danube Basin countries, I 2010



It is noticeable that the Serbia's deficit with the Danube Basin countries was 84 million Euros. On the other hand, if we take into account the above ratios of exports and imports, there is an obvious tendency towards foreign trade with the Danube Basin countries. It is also evident that we most imported goods from Germany, Hungary and Romania and least from Moldova, Ukraine and Slovakia. We exported most to Germany, Romania and Croatia.

The factor of space is relevant and should be considered in the study of phenomena, processes and problems related to the Danube and the Danube Basin countries. The spatial factor necessarily involves the determination of scope and importance of the following:

- land area and its connection with the road and rail space, and others,
- water space that necessarily includes the length of the river Danube waterway, both in the direction of Danube-East and Danube-West, its width and depth, the possibilities for traffic of sailing boats on the Danube and their relationship with the land area, e.g., with the rail traffic. It is especially important to determine the possibilities of goods movement by the sea and river waterways on the Danube, the

Danube Basin and the Danube Basin countries because of their economic development.

- The air space and its ties and relationships with the land and water space in the area of the Danube, the Danube Basin and the Danube Basin countries.

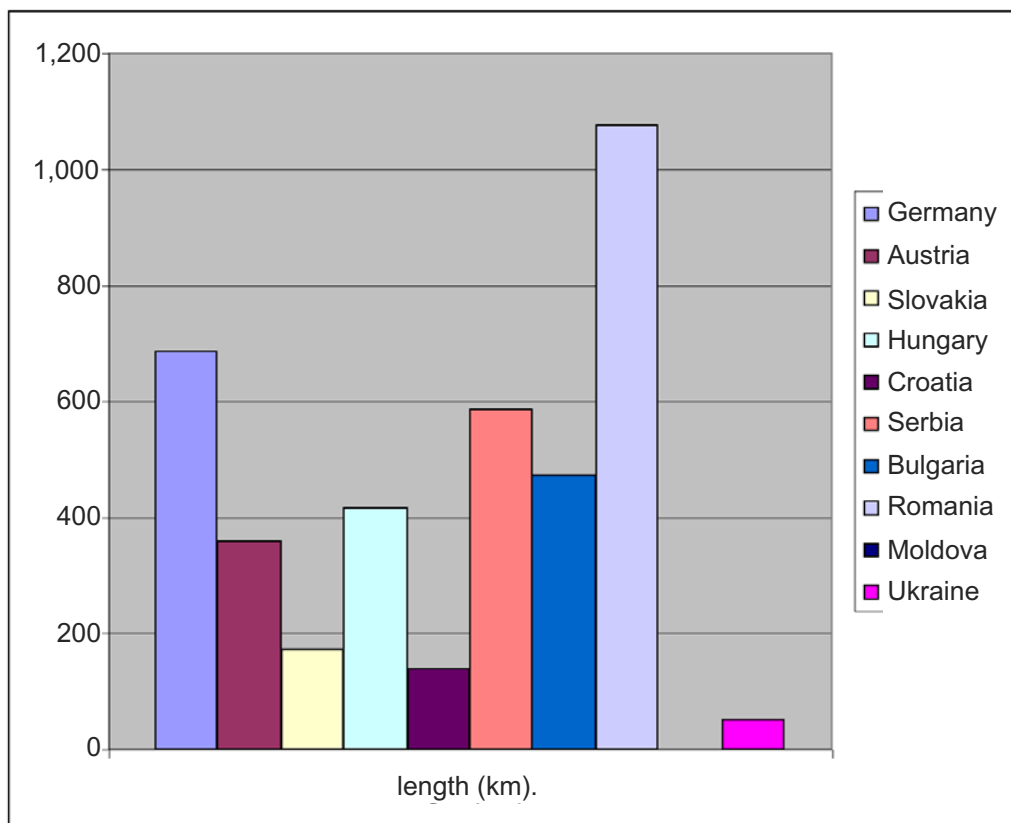
Table 2. The Danube Basin countries the Danube passes through or serves as a boundary

	The length in km <sup>2</sup>	The Danube as a boundary or just passing through %	The Danube River Basin %	On one side of the river
Germany	687	7.5		
Austria	357	10.3		
Slovakia	172	5.8		
Hungary	417	11.7		
Croatia	137	4.5		yes
Serbia	587	10.3	0.03	
Bulgaria	471	5.2		yes
Romania	1,075	28.9		
Moldova	0.57	1.7		yes
Ukraine	53	3.8		yes
Italy			0.15	
Poland			0.09	
Switzerland			0.32	
Czech Republic			2.60	
Slovenia			2.20	
Bosnia and Herzegovina			4.80	
Montenegro			0.03	
Macedonia			0.03	
Total				

Source: The DC.



Graphic presentation of the Danube length (km) in the Danube Basin countries

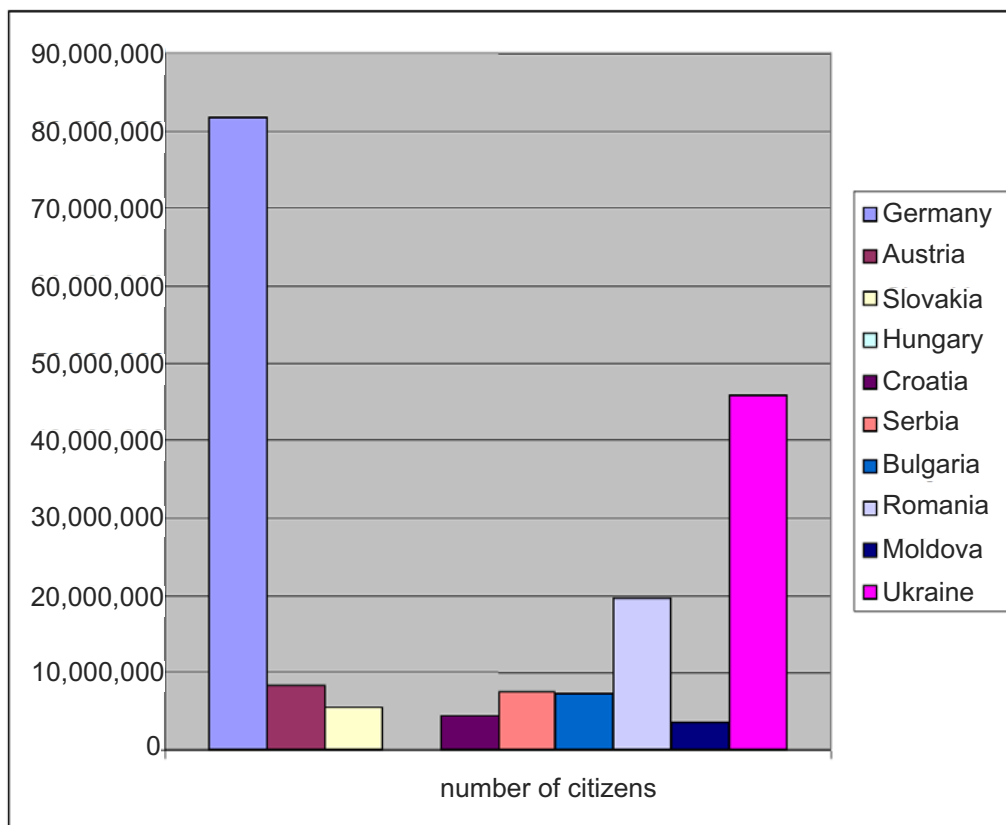


As noted, it is obvious that by length, show in kilometres, the Danube is the longest in Romania, Germany, Serbia and other states. Within this context, concerning this factor, it would be necessary to establish similarities and differences taking into account the length of the waterway that runs through Serbia. Perhaps, the effects and the level of use could be far greater than the existing ones. The important factor is also the intersection of the area and population of the Danube Basin countries. In this area, the greatest number of citizens from the Danube Basin countries belong to Germany and Ukraine, from 80 to 40 million of people, around 20 million to Romania, followed by the countries with 7 to 10 million of people in Hungary, Austria, Bulgaria, Serbia and Bulgaria, and other states with fewer than 7 million, which is reflected in the following table and chart. These properties can be also analyzed in terms of scientific and social interests and needs, a state, the European Union, etc.

Table 3. The Danube Basin countries and the number of their citizens

	the number of citizens
Germany	81,772,000
Austria	8,404,252
Slovakia	5,429,763
Hungary	9,975,000
Croatia	4,290,612
Serbia	7,524,164
Bulgaria	7,351,234
Romania	19,599,506
Moldova	3,560,430
Ukraine	45,888,000

Graphic presentation of the Danube Basin countries and the number of their citizens



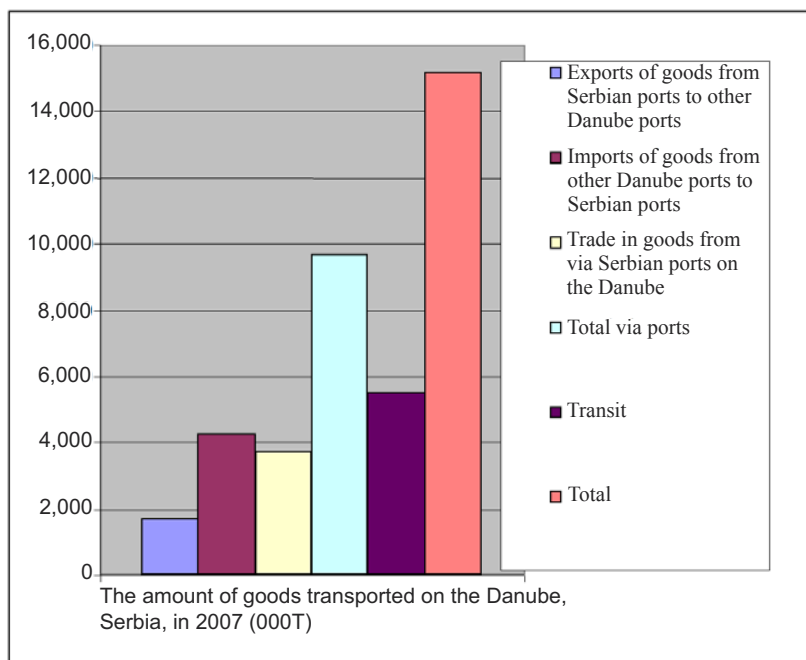
On the other hand, we can take the following example – relations and effects of space and economic factors. Namely, according to the Danube Commission in 2007, via the Danube ports in Serbia 9,668,000 tons of goods was transported, of which the largest part was raw and semi-processed ores, iron and scrap metals, what can be seen in the following table and chart. The conclusion is very clear in a negative sense, considering the degree of utilization of many resources in Serbia.

Table 4. Goods from Serbia transported on the Danube in 2007 (000 T)

	The amount of goods transported on the Danube, Serbia, in 2007 (000T)
Exports of goods from Serbian ports to other Danube ports	1,698
Imports of goods from other Danube ports to Serbian ports	4,262
Trade in goods via the Serbian ports on the Danube	3,708
Total via the ports	9,668
Transit	5,490
Total	15,158

Source: the DC.

Graphic presentation of goods from Serbia transported on the Danube in 2007 (000 T)



Source: the DC.

Taking into account the relevant regulations on space and communications (which can be considered narrower or broader), one can emphasize that the space factor and its constituent quantitative and qualitative entities (the area of a specific country or a group of states) may be the centre or the periphery of certain integration or disintegration processes. Therefore, in terms of general and special needs and interests of Serbia, as a country of the Danube Basin, one should always bear in mind Jovan Cvijić's well-known stance that Serbia has a favourable position and communication lines that pass through Serbia, that Serbia is "a house on the road", "the Eurasian Bridge", "the East gate", but in terms of geopolitics, Serbia is a transit area rather than a central one.

The time factor is also a relevant one that should be borne in mind. However, this factor must always be adapted to certain relationships and ties with position, territory and to certain individuals and their needs, motives, interests and goals. For example, the time factor had certain properties as to the overall processes and events during the 1990s and later, when we had very good opportunities to join the EU and thus we could have prevented the decay and dissolution of Yugoslavia. The period immediately after the 1990s when we did not take opportunity to use certain favourable time and other political, economic and security factors in relation to the EU, was very difficult for the former Yugoslav space, because thereafter came the time of sanctions, isolation, wars, etc., what could have been reasonably avoided.

Subjects are central factors in any scientific research. They can be seen as numerous participants who directly or indirectly, with lesser or greater intensity, orientation, willingly or unwillingly, participate in the implementation of various phenomena and processes as social, political, institutional, and other ones. They can and must be identified according to the criteria of the role and position, whether they are controlling, managerial or executive structures or if they are collective, group or individual, organized, unorganized, legal, legitimate, etc., ones.

Central-relevant entities (other than national, inter-state, political, economic and other entities), which relate to the research of significance, in general sense, of Europe, the European Union, the Danube, the Danube Basin, the countries of the Danube Basin are, indeed, the population in the area of the Danube Basin. As a particularly important space factor and, related to it, the population, (we will take Serbia as an example), it is indisputable that the Danube Basin in Serbia is the most attractive and potent area and that in this region there were the strongest economic centres and the most populated/the greatest cities and towns in Serbia. In Serbia, in 2002, in the Danube Basin cities and municipalities directly bordering the Danube, there were about a million of people in the 24 units or 29, as long as the City of Belgrade is explored through municipalities bordering the Danube. This means that with regard to the total Serbian population over 12% was located in the Danube municipalities, or if considered in terms of territory, it is over 10% of the total territory of Serbia, which is reflected in the following tables and charts.

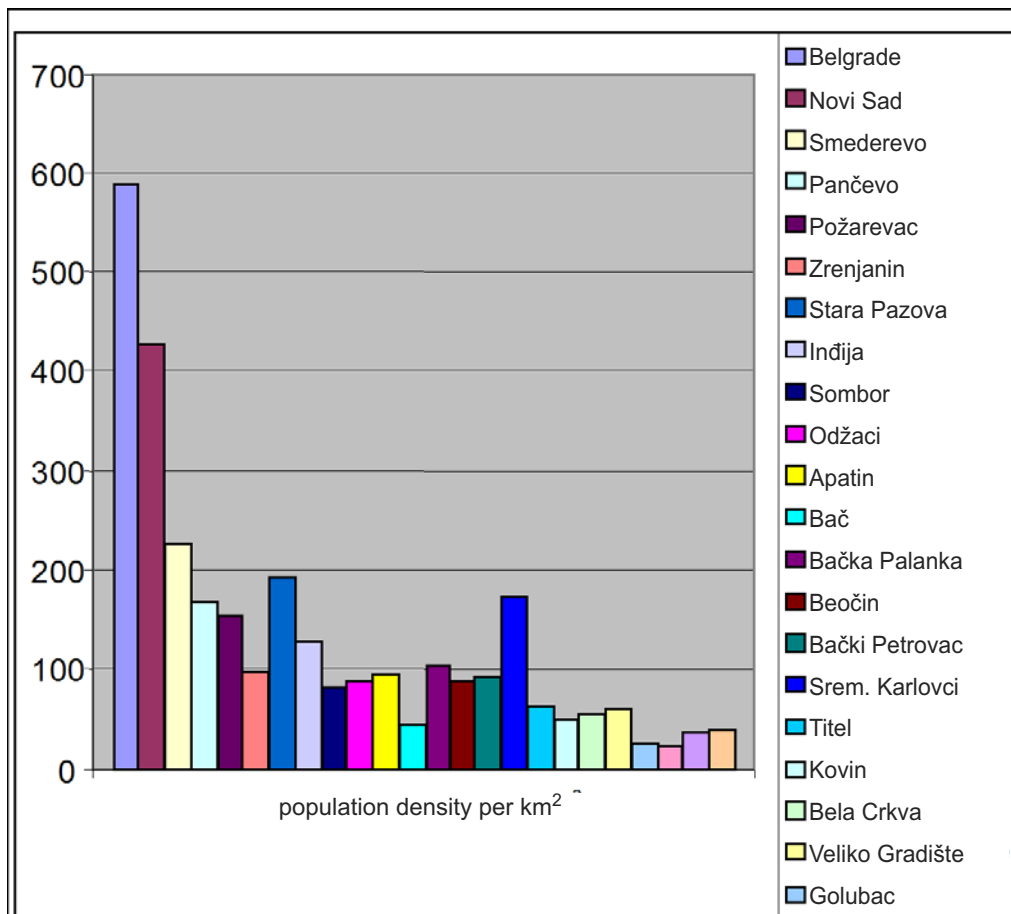
**Table 5. Territory and number of citizens of Serbia in the cities and municipalities with the density of the population having the direct access to the Danube River**

	The territory of a city, municipality km <sup>2</sup>	The number of citizens, 2002	The density of population per km <sup>2</sup>
The City of Belgrade (municipalities of Zemun, Novi Beograd, Stari Grad, Palilula, Grocka)	1,182	696,329	589
the City of N. Sad	699	299,294	428
the City of Smederevo	481	109809	228
the City of Pančevo	755	127,162	168
the City of Požarevac	481	74 902	155
the City of Zrenjanin	1,326	132,051	99
Stara Pazova	351	67 576	192
Indija	385	53 000	128
Sombor	1,178	97,263	82
Odžaci	411	35,582	86
Apatin	350	32,813	94
Bač	365	16,268	44
Bačka Palanka	579	60,966	105
Beočin	186	16,086	86
Bački Petrovac	158	14,681	92
Sremski Karlovci	51	8,839	173
Titel	262	17,050	65
Kovin	730	36,802	50
Bela Crkva	353	20,367	57
Veliko Gradište	344	20,659	60
Golubac	368	9,913	26
Majdanpek	932	23,703	25
Kladovo	630	23,613	37
Negotin	1,089	43,418	39
Totally	9,228	920,716	100

Source: Statistical Office, municipalities in Serbia 1985/1999/2002.

Statistical Office, Comparison of Population and Housing, Book 9, 2004.

Graphic presentation of the previous table



From the above tables and charts, it is evident that the largest population and highest population density are present in some cities and several municipalities (Stara Pazova, Indija, Bačka Palanka).

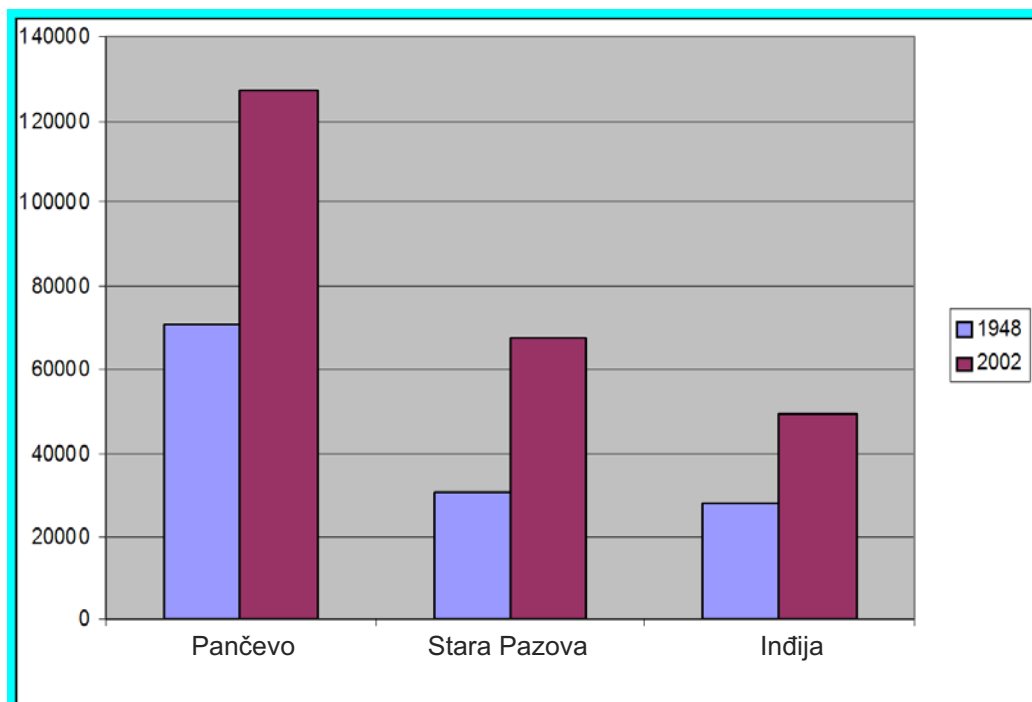
Changes in the number of the population in the Danube municipalities can be explored in several respects, but, for the purposes of this paper, we should limit ourselves to the following three municipalities: Pančevo, Stara Pazova and Indija (which gravitate towards Belgrade) and three municipalities in northern Serbia – Zapadna Bačka District, (which are not close to Novi Sad) and they are as follows: Sombor, Apatin and Odžaci, where it is supposed to find some similarities but also some differences. Thus, for example, from 1948-2002 the population in the municipality of Stara Pazova increased by 127%, followed by Indija – 80% and Pančevo - 79%, which can be seen in the following table and chart.

**Table 6. Population in the municipalities of the Danube Basin: Pančevo, Stara Pazova and Inđija from 1948-2002**

The population of	1948	2002	Base index 1948-2002
Pančevo	70,943	127,162	179
Stara Pazova	30,547	67,576	222
Inđija	27,559	49,609	180

Source: Statistical Office, Comparison of Population and Housing, Book 9, 2004.

**Graphic presentation of the population in the municipalities of the Danube Basin: Pančevo, Stara Pazova and Inđija from 1948-2002**



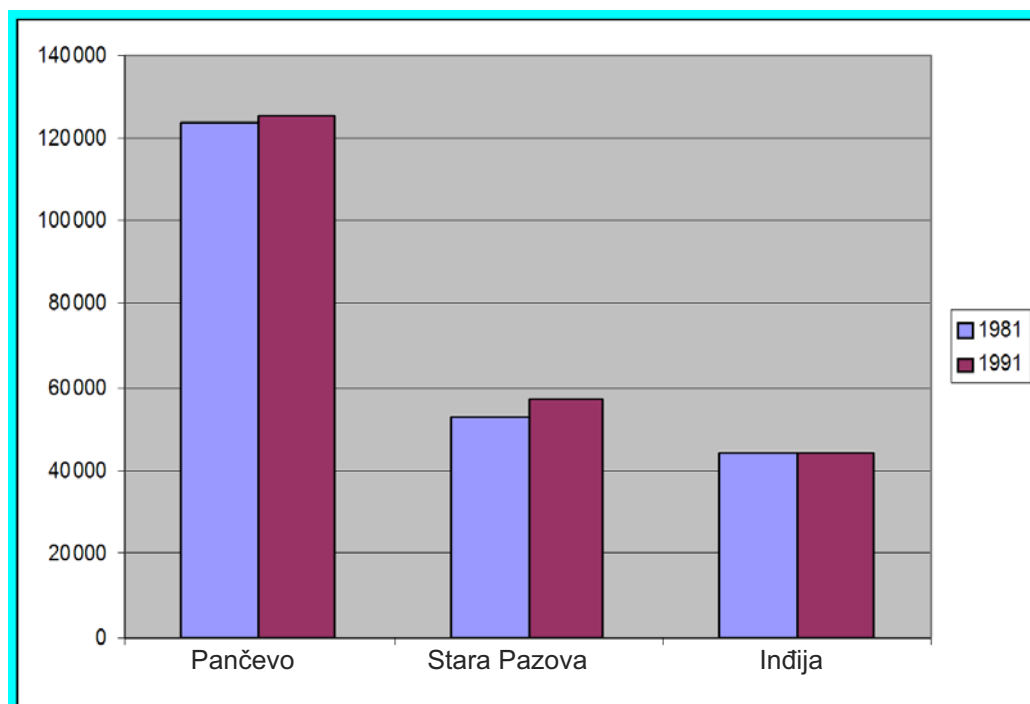
However, if we take into account the data on the growth of population in a shorter period, that is from 1981 to 1991, we will get much lower index of the population growth in relation to the data in the previous table.

**Table 7. Change in population size in the municipalities of the Danube Basin:  
Pančevo, Stara Pazova and Inđija from 1981-1991**

	1981	1991	Growth index 1981/1991
Pančevo	123,791	125,261	101
Stara Pazova	52,566	57,291	109
Inđija	44,151	44,185	100,07

Source: Statistical Office, Comparison of Population and Housing, Book 9, 2004.

**Graphic presentation of population in the municipalities gravitating towards  
Belgrade from 1981 to 1991**



As we have pointed out, far less population growth was recorded in the period from 1981 to 1991 than in the period from 1948 to 2002. Namely, in this period the largest population growth was recorded in the Danube municipality of Stara Pazova – 9%, Pančevo – 1% and Inđija – 0.7%. This means that the period from 1948 to 2002 tentatively had two phases, which considerably influenced the population growth. The first phase, from 1945 to 1980, which can be defined as the development phase in peaceful non-war conditions, and the other one, the conflicting phase, the phase of the conflict and wars, from the eighties of the past century.



These indicators could be viewed through the chain index. In this case, we can see that in all the municipalities (Pančevo, Stara Pazova and Indija) the tendency of population growth was recording in every decade from 1948 to 1981, ranging from 7% to 25%. But, in 1991, compared to 1981, we can notice a drastic fall in Indija and Pančevo. From 2002 to 1991, we still had a fall in Pančevo municipality, but growth in the municipality of Stara Pazova and Indija. The reason for population growth in the municipalities of Stara Pazova and Indija is probably the migration of population towards Belgrade and the migration flows from the territory of the former republics, taking into account the wars in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

Table 8. Population in the municipalities of Pančevo, Stara Pazova and Indija from 1948 to 2002

	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002
Pančevo	70,943	76,283	93,744	110,780	123,791	125,261	127,162
Stara Pazova	30,547	33,352	41,036	43,477	52,566	57,291	67,576
Indija	27,559	29,287	36,484	40,530	44,151	44,185	49,609

Source: Statistical Office, Comparison of Population and Housing, Book 9, 2004.

Table 9. Population growth 1948-2002 (in chain index)

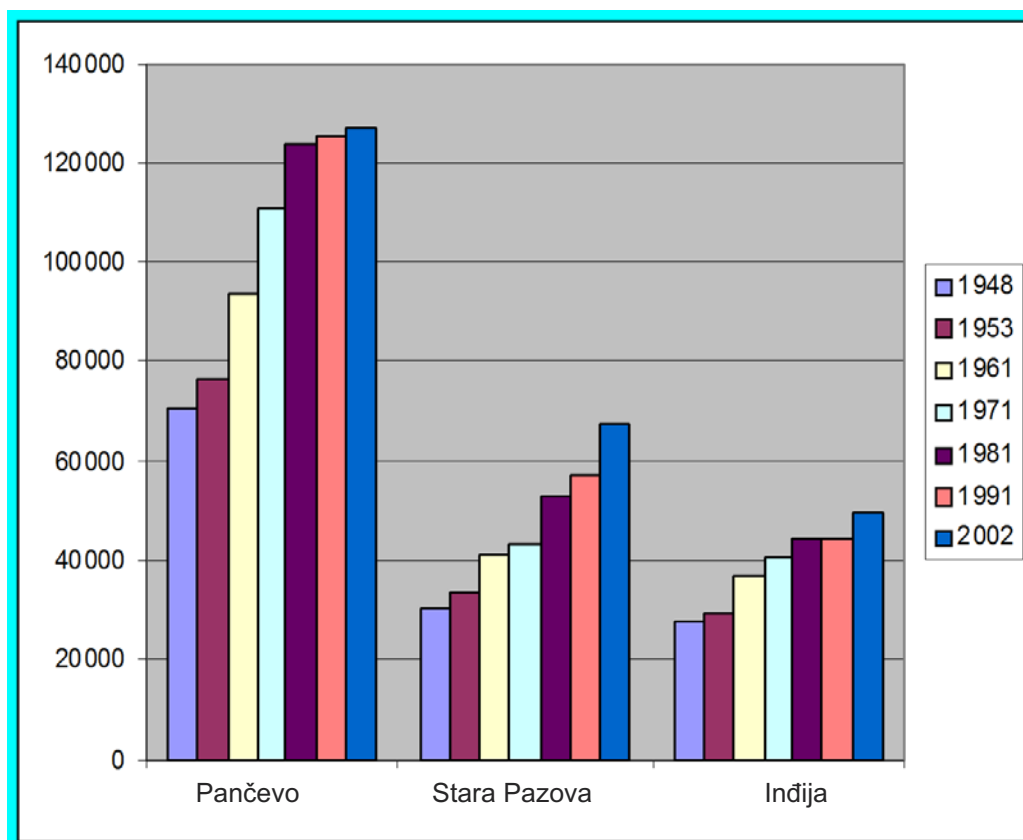
	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002
Pančevo	-	107	123	118	112	101	101
Stara Pazova	-	109	123	106	121	109	118
Indija	-	106	125	111	109	100	112

Source: Statistical Office, Comparison of Population and Housing, Book 9, 2004.

The table shows that the greatest population growth was recorded in the period from 1948 to 1981 in the so-called quiet period of social development. At the same time, population growth was the lowest from 1991 to 2002 during the so-called conflicting and war conditions.

If we look at the changes in the city of Sombor and municipalities of Odžaci and Apatin similarly from e.g. 1991 to 2002, we can notice a tendency that population growth is also small (in Sombor and Apatin increased by 3% and in Odžaci decreased by 2%). Statistically speaking, it seems so, but the question is what we personally consider probable, since there was no greater fall in the population numbers in this area because certain number of refugees settled in the settlements and thus substantially alleviated statistical decline in population. If we take into account the processes of transition and privatization, closing of companies including some very large ones, with a great number of employees and the migration for these reasons, then our attitude is probably justified.

Graphic presentation of population migration in the municipalities gravitating towards Belgrade from 1948 to 2002



In the following example, we will see the changes in the population in Zapadna Bačka district, whose municipalities do not gravitate towards Novi Sad (which are the subject of the analysis) as they are quite distant from it.

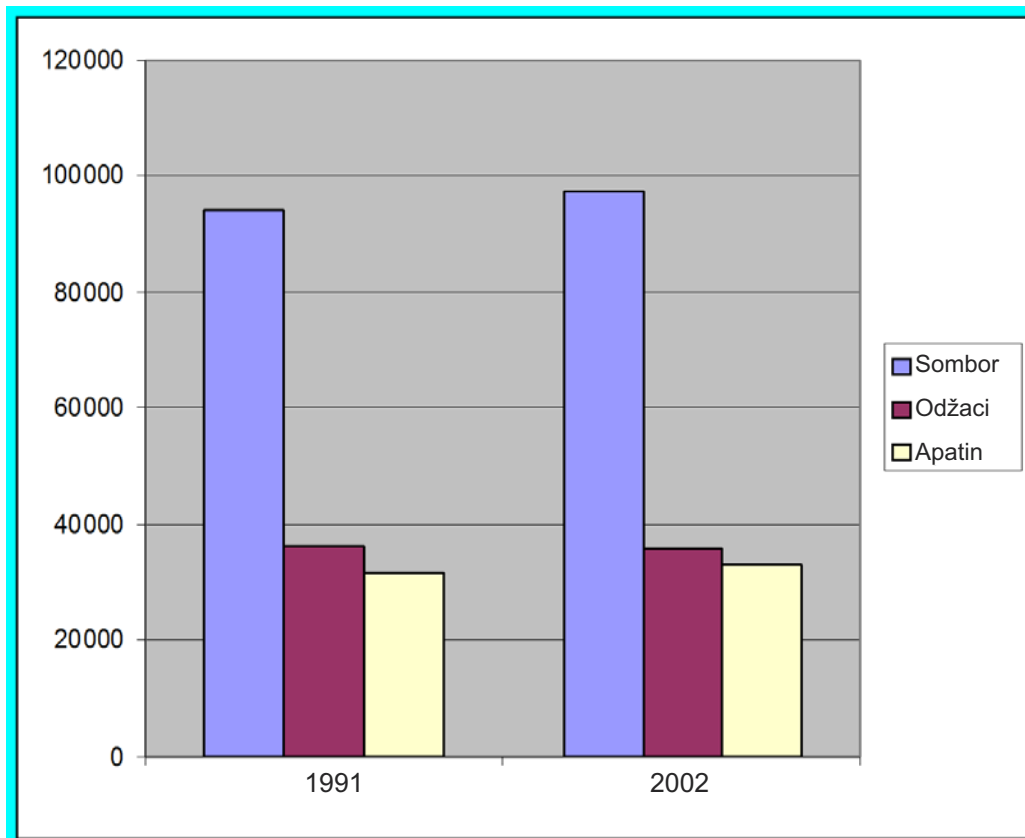
Table 10. Change in population size in the Danube Basin municipalities: Sombor, Odžaci and Apatin from 1991–2002

	1991	2002	Base index 1991–2002
Sombor	94,081	97,263	103
Odžaci	36,189	35,582	98
Apatin	31,850	32,813	103

Source: Inter-municipal strategic development plan of the social welfare for West- Bačka district (The City of Sombor, municipalities of Apatin, Kula and Odžaci), 2010–2013, Sombor, XII 2010.

By using the base index, we can see the positive growth of population in Sombor and Apatin by 3%; on the other hand we have a 3% fall in Odžaci municipality, which can be seen in the following chart.

Graphic presentation of migration of population in Zapadna Bačka district for 1991–2002



It is obvious that in the period from 1991 to 2002 population growth was recorded in the municipalities gravitating towards Belgrade and municipalities that did not gravitate towards Novi Sad, but the increase index is not significant compared to the previous movement.

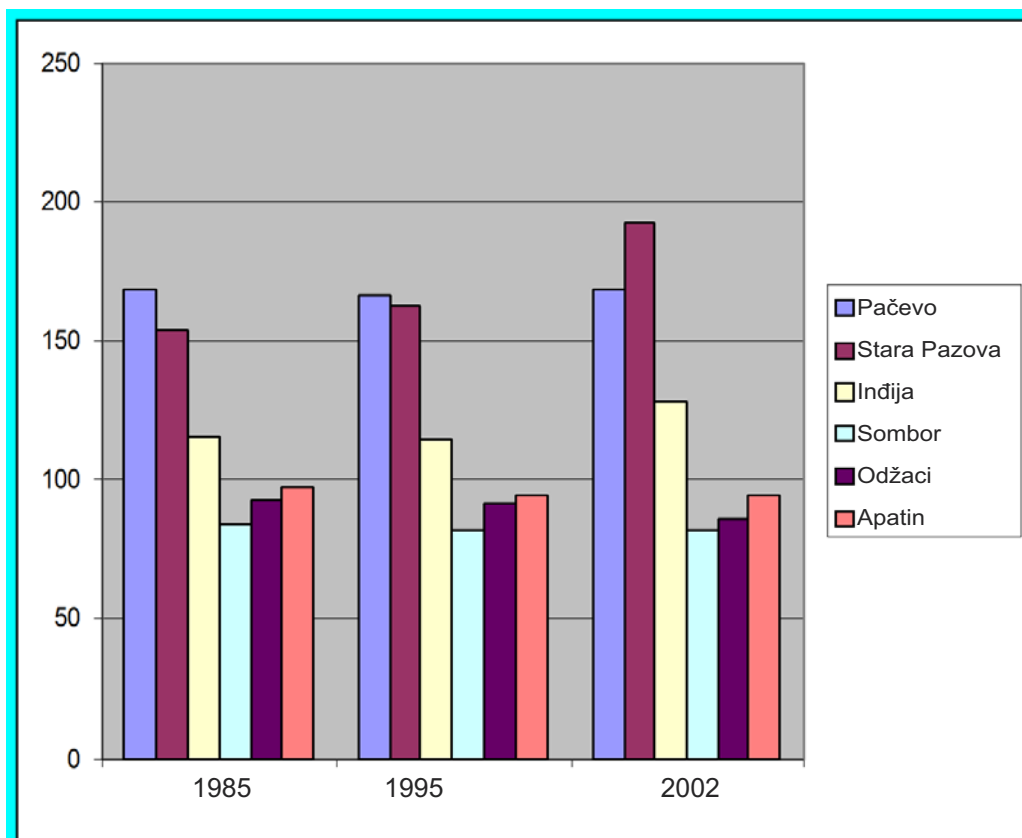
If we observe the population density in the Danube municipalities, on the one hand those which are close to Belgrade and on the other, those that are not near Novi Sad, we can notice that density growth in Pančevo in 2002 was the same as in 1985, i.e. Pazova and Inđija municipalities increased by 24% and 10%, respectively, in 2002 in comparison to 1985, what can be explained in a similar way, as is the case with the previous indicators. On the other hand, there is a fall in all 3 Zapadna Bačka municipalities (that is the city and 2 municipalities) by 2% (Sombor) 3% (Apatin) and 8% (Odžaci).

**Table 11. Density of population of the Danube Basin municipalities**

	Municipality area km <sup>2</sup>	1985	1995	2002	Base index 1985/2002
Pančevo	755	168	166	168	100
Stara Pazova	351	154	162	192	124
Indija	385	116	115	128	110
Sombor	1,178	84	82	82	98
Odžaci	411	93	91	86	92
Apatin	350	97	94	94	97

Source: Statistical Office, Municipalities of Serbia 1985/1999. Statistical Office, Comparison of Population and Housing, Book 9, 2004.

Graphical presentation of population density of the municipalities, which are close to Belgrade, and those, which are distant from N. Sad as a bigger city.



Generally speaking, it is apparent that the municipalities gravitating towards Belgrade have much bigger population density than those of Zapadna Bačka district, which are very distant from N. Sad, as a bigger city.

### **The final assessment and recommendations**

- The Danube and the Danube Basin have a special social, economic, political and cultural significance for Europe, the European Union, the Danube Basin countries and Serbia, because it the same ground for approaching, integration processes and the political and economic development of the EU, the Danube Basin countries and Serbia,
- Taking into account all relevant factors (among which we have pointed out several important ones), one can state that “the Danube with the Danube Basin is a kind of “replacement” for Serbia for a direct access to the sea” and that Serbia has to maximize this advantage in the near future,
- The European Union, Serbia and the Danube Basin countries should pay special attention to the development of the of the Danube waterway, both in the direction of the Danube-East, and the direction of the Danube-West and their connection with the land area,
- The example of Serbia leaves no doubt that settlements, which are on the sea, are overall in a better position than other settlements, cities, municipalities, etc.,
- As in the recent past and present, the Danube Basin in Serbia will in the future continue to be the most attractive area of the country and there will remain the strongest industrial and economic centres and the biggest cities in Serbia.

### **Literature**

- Vasić Smiljka: The definition and defining, Prosveta, Belgrade, 1988.
- Veber Maks, Economy and society, Prosveta, Belgrade, 1976.
- Gavranov Velibor, Stojković Momir: International relations and foreign policy of Yugoslavia, Modern Administration, Belgrade, 1972.
- Gavrilović Slavko: Methodological guidelines for the study of the history of settlements in Vojvodina to the mid-nineteenth century, Teaching History, 1996.
- The DC (The Danube Commission)
- Inter-municipal strategic development plan of the social welfare for West- Bačka district (The City of Sombor, municipalities of Apatin, Kula and Odžaci), 2010- 2013, Sombor, XII 2010.
- Milosavljević Slavomir: Political action, the Institute of Political Studies Faculty of Political Science, Belgrade, 1977.
- Milosavljević Slavomir: The study of political phenomena, the Institute of Political Studies Faculty of Political Science and Centre for youth and pioneers, Belgrade, 1980.

- Milosavljević Slavomir- Radosavljević Ivan: The revision course of the methodology of social science, the Institute of Political Studies, Belgrade, 1988.
- Milosavljević Slavomir: The report on scientific research, Centre of senior military schools, OS “Maršal Tito“, Strategic Research Institute, Belgrade, 1990.
- Milosavljević Slavomir – Radosavljević Ivan: Fundamentals of political science methodology, Official Newspaper (Službeni glasnik), Belgrade, 2000.
- Ivan Radosavljević, Hypothetical and deductive method of research policy, Newspaper for children (Dečije novine), SO Gornji Milanovac, 1996
- Statistical Office, municipalities in Serbia 1985/1999/2002.
- Statistical Office, Comparison of Population and Housing, Book 9, 2004
- Tančić Dragan, Master’s thesis: The conceptualization of research in political sciences, Faculty of Political Science, Belgrade, 2006.
- Tančić Dragan, Historical method in the study of political phenomena, Doctoral thesis, Faculty of Political Science, Belgrade, 2009.

Dragan Petrović  
Nataša Tomić Petrović<sup>1</sup>

## PHYSICO-GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS OF THE DANUBE REGION OF SERBIA AS PREREQUISITES FOR TRAFFIC AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

### ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes physico-geographical factors of the Danube region of Serbia as prerequisites for the traffic and tourism development as follows: relief, soil composition and pedological layer; climate; hydrographical factors, primarily surface and ground waters; flora and fauna as well as the significance of environmental component.

The relief of the Serbian Danube region is very suitable for the traffic development keeping in mind that it is primarily the lowlands and only in its Eastern part, foothills and lower highlands prevail. Soil composition is very favourable, because for the most part it is “chernozem“ including other forms of fertile and loose land that are suitable for different forms of anthropogenic activities and traffic and tourism, too.

The climate is favourable, because this area is primarily characteristic for moderate-continental and milder forms of continental climate. The region is abundant in river flows, where besides the Danube there are the Sava, the Tisa, the Velika Morava and the Begej of large rivers and many channels and smaller tributaries, as well as lakes, what contributes to the traffic and tourism development. The rich flora and fauna are an incentive for the tourism development, while in the area of environmental protection, a lot must be done and continuous work should be performed in the prevention of further pollution of the region is necessary.

*Key words:* Danube region of Serbia; physico-geographical factors; prerequisites for traffic and tourism development.

The Danube region of Serbia includes the northern, the most developed, predominantly plain part of the country, with the population somewhat denser than the average for the Republic. The Danube's course through Serbia is 588 km long and is

---

<sup>1</sup> Dragan Petrović, Ph.D. Senior Research Fellow, Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, Serbia.

Nataša Tomić Petrović, Ph.D. Associate Professor at the Faculty of Traffic and Transport Engineering, University of Belgrade, Serbia, e-mail: natasa@sf.bg.ac.rs.

completely navigable.<sup>2</sup> However, November and December 2011 draught in Serbia resulted in low water level and, consequentially, electricity production by water power plants has been compromised. The Danube level reached its historical minimum and the low water level of this river forced around 80 ships to anchor near Apatin and Bezdan, which blocked the passage to Bulgaria. The drop of grain prices is the direct consequence of that transport blockade.

At the beginning of December this year, an oil stain 12 km long and wide from one bank to the other was observed on the Danube near the Vukovar port. Croatia was asked to provide a formal information on that stain.

Some very important Serbian cities and economic centres are located in the Danube region. What is more important for the Serbian Danube region is that it is a natural bridge in the geographical and traffic terms between Serbia and middle Europe – Hungary, Romania and Croatia from where the roads lead further on to the West and North of the Continent. In this paper, we are going to focus on the perspectives of the Serbian Danube region for traffic and tourism development.

Traffic is an important branch of economy, since its development is an additional multiplier of better utilisation of practically all economic branches with the resultant improvement of the standard of living of population. Tourism is a branch of the tertiary economic sector with different share in the economy from one country to another, starting from very big to exceptionally symbolical. Serbia is one of the countries in which tourism capacity is far from full related to its potentials. The share of employment in the tertiary sector has been raised for about half a century and that is also the case in Serbia.

The Danube region of Serbia, as the economically most developed region in the Republic has very good physico-geographical prerequisites for traffic and tourism development, which could, with adequate investment, provide a long-term economic value.

### **Relief Structure and Pedological Layer as Determinants (Potential) for Traffic and Tourism Development of the Danube Region in Serbia**

In physico-geographical sense, the Danube region of Serbia has a predominantly flat relief of Vojvodina and the northern part of Somalia while the area to the east of Stig is hilly to reach the height of low mountains in the Đerdap region. In Vojvodina, the isolated hilly area reaching the level of low mountains – Fruška Gora has a special place in terms of tourism.<sup>3</sup>

As an important component, the morphometric structure of the relief of the Serbia Danube region is a favourable predisposition for traffic and tourism development. Plains

---

<sup>2</sup> Jovan B. Dinić, *Prirodni potencijal Srbije, ekonomsko-geografska analiza i ocena*, Ekonomski fakultet Beograd, 1997, 142.

<sup>3</sup> The lowest point of the Serbian Danube region is near the entrance of the Danube to Đerdap; the highest mountain point is Deli Jovan (1138 m) near Negotin, which is in the vicinity.



and small hills predominate in that area, which are a great advantage for traffic improvement and tourism development and economy and all sorts of activities in general.

Fruška Gora hills in the plain are no barrier to road contraction; however, it is very challenging from the tourism aspect. The soil in Vojvodina is chernozem, a very suitable soil for road construction and other activities. Plains and low hills are predominant in the Danube region to the south of the Danube as far as to Golubac with soil quality enabling the development of traffic and other activities. Higher hills and heights appear in the eastern part of the Danube region and they make road contraction difficult, especially in mountainous areas. However, these areas of the Serbian Danube region are those that are very attractive. Therefore, the whole Đerdap area is characterised by a very complex, dissected relief.<sup>4</sup>

Of particular attraction for tourism development in the Serbian Danube region are canyons, stone arches, caves and pits, which are mainly concentrated in the Carpathian area of the Danube region and Đerdap area. Those can be found in numerous locations on many mountains with exceptionally preserved environment and attractive natural phenomena, such as underground rivers and caves, forest complexes, healthy climate, porous soil, and numerous waters and underground rivers make riches of caves, crags and other rare natural phenomena. Those mountains are suitable mostly for longer summer stays full of numerous, quality contents such as tracking, hiking, fishing, hunting etc.<sup>5</sup>

The mountains Miroč, Deli Jovan, Zvižd and Homolje are located in eastern Serbia along the Danube. In prehistory (Chalk), that area was abundant with volcanoes pushing out andesite-dacite magma. The biggest karst forms are caves Rečka and Busovata on Beljanica, Torovište and Nekudovo on Kučaj. The most numerous are speleological forms (several hundred caves and pits) and the most interesting ones are stone arches that are in eastern Serbia the most numerous in the Balkans. Also, several longest caves are located in this area. Bogovinska cave (about 5 km) near the town Bor is one the biggest caves of the west Balkans with three levels of channels, nice jewellery and underground water. In addition to that, tens of other caves rich in jewellery and attractive to tourists are found in the Carpathian area of the west Balkans, i.e. Resavska, Rajko's cave, Zlotska, Dubočka and others.

Many pits are also found, such as deep – Ivko's Rečka Abyss (130 meters deep) and Mihajlo's pit more than 130-meter deep on the mountain Kučaj, and others. Six stone arches found in the karst of Carpathian Serbia are protected by law as natural rarities.

The relief structure is partly attractive to tourists, i.e. volcanic-origin mountains, caves, pits, cups, steep rocks and canyon-type forms in the Đerdap area, sands in the Banat Danube region etc.

---

<sup>4</sup> In addition to deep, narrow and high canyons alternating with spacious, open plains, numerous caves and rocks are found at the bank where the terrain is slightly wavy, sometimes deeply cut into.

<sup>5</sup> Stanković S, "Đerdapsko jezero kao turistički potencijal Srbije", 6-8 u *Teorija i praksa turizma*, Glasnik odseka za turističke nauke, Beograd, 1989.

## **Climate as a Determinant (Potential) for Traffic and Tourism Development in the Danube Region of Serbia**

The climate of the Serbian Danube region is predominantly moderate continental climate at its southern border, steppe continental in the major part of Vojvodina and changed continental in the Timok area and one part of the Negotin region. The climate of the Serbian Danube region is characterised, disregarding the differences, by relatively small annual temperature amplitudes.<sup>6</sup> The January isotherm is between  $-1^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the Danube region of Bačka and Srem and Negotin Region, about  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  in Belgrade, Braničevo and surrounding areas. The isotherm of the hottest month, July, is  $21$  and  $23^{\circ}\text{C}$ .<sup>7</sup> The climate of Vojvodina is steppe continental and, contrary to Belgrade area, its transitory seasons (spring and autumn) are less pronounced, with little precipitation. Precipitation in Vojvodina is little, almost at the level of the steppe climate (to  $500$  mm). However, their right distribution over a year related to crops (major precipitation in spring, at the time of full vegetation), provides favourable conditions for agriculture development. The northern parts of the area are drier with the most precipitation falling on the Vršac Mountains. The Belgrade region has somewhat more precipitation that is increasing as we go towards east, reaching it maximum in the Carpathian part of the Serbian Danube region.

The sands of Deliblato are especially attractive to tourists; however, it is afforested in most part. As for winds in the Serbian Danube region, the predominant wind is the south-east wind called *košava*, blowing especially during winter months.

The above-mentioned climatic factors of the Danube region are no obstacle to traffic development. There are no extreme temperatures, disastrous storms (except *košava* wind, in rare cases), long-standing snow, or frozen rivers, in particular the Danube. There are multiple potentials and predispositions for tourism development, including recreational tourism, especially in terms of weather conditions.

## **Hydrographical Factor and Plant and Animal World of the Danube Region of Serbia**

The hydrographical factor is favourable for traffic and tourism development of the Danube region in Serbia because, in addition to the Danube, which is the central river of the region, Serbia has many other important rivers and canals like the rivers Sava, Velika Morava, Tisa and the canal Danube-Tisa-Danube and some others. However, there are significant deviations of the mean monthly water level of the Danube.<sup>8</sup> After damming the Danube in the Đerdap canyon, the water level of the obtained lake is brought in line

---

<sup>6</sup> Jovan B. Dinić, *Prirodni potencijal Srbije, ekonomsko-geografska analiza i ocena*, Ekonomski fakultet Beograd, 1997, deo o pedološkom pokrivaču i posebno klimi, 60-116.

<sup>7</sup> Rakićević T, „Klimatske karakteristike đerdapskog područja”, *Zbornik radova*, XV sveska, Beograd, 1968, 15.

<sup>8</sup>  $1.5$  to  $3$  m, extreme values up to  $9$  m. The differences between the highest and lowest average monthly flows are from  $1510$  m/s near Bezdán to  $4640$  m/s near Veliko Gradiste.

with the operation of the power plant. Navigability of the Danube and other big rivers and canals in the region makes a unique internal water traffic network, which is very important for cargo transport. An enormous advantage for Danube exploitation, primarily for transportation purposes, is the fact that it rarely gets frozen and only partially in case of extremely cold winters when appropriate protective measures are implemented for navigation and anchoring.<sup>9</sup>

The pollution of the Danube and other waters in the region is evident (recent Croatian example) although not at the level that would affect recreational tourism. Nitrogen is accumulating in the rivers. The biggest cities in Serbia (Belgrade, Novi Sad, and Niš) emit not refined waste waters in rivers, because filters cost millions. It is, therefore, a must to improve the quality of the Danube and Đerdap lake water, as well as the waters in all Danube countries. That need resulted in the conclusion of a set of bilateral and multilateral agreements although a lot could be done on the national level itself.

The Convention on Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the Danube River was signed in Sofia at the end of June 1994.

In Serbia by the new Law on waters from year 2010 the legal status of waters, integral water management, water objects and water land management, wells and the manner of financing of water activity, as well as other questions significant for water management are regulated.

Environmental protection in the Danube region is one of the key ecological issues in our country in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The increase of pollution and threats that are constantly growing demand a fast and continuous action. It seems that everyone can give his/her contribution.

The most visited destinations for recreational tourism in the Serbian Danube region are the beaches in the vicinity of big cities like Belgrade and Novi Sad. In Belgrade, the Sava Lake (Ada Ciganlija) and the Danube beaches on the Gardoš and Lido are especially attractive. One of the most attractive destinations is the Silver Lake near Veliko Gradište, which became a real tourist resort. The Silver Lake is especially frequented by tourists in summer, but, owing to other tourist-attracting programmes, it is active throughout the year.

A large artificial lake was formed as a result of damming the Danube at Đerdap, which contributed to increased tourism value of the Danube owing to the improved thermal regimen of water, better conditions for upstream and downstream navigation, smaller water level amplitudes, construction of new roads and settlements and welcome and host facilities, links of Serbia with Romania, proclamation of one part for the Đerdap canyon for the national park, and archaeological digging and research and presentation of archaeological sites and objects. The temperature of the Danube and Đerdap Lake water is suitable for swimming during three or four months.<sup>10</sup> In addition, tourists can

---

<sup>9</sup> Lukić D, *Đerdapska klisura*, Srpsko geografsko društvo, Beograd, 2005, 85-90.

<sup>10</sup> Dukić D, "Klimatske karakteristike Đerdapskog područja", Zbornik radova geografskog instituta PMF, sveska XV, Beograd, 1968. 15–25.

use natural beaches and stationary facilities for swimming, lying in the Sun, water sports and anchorage of water crafts. Water level fluctuations are not big, which is the advantage for the construction of tourist facilities and tourism development. Within the wider area of Đerdap, Golubac canyon is also suitable for nautical tourism, as well as Ljubovska plain, Gospođin Vir, Donji Milanovac plain, the two Kazans, and Oršava plain. Nautical tourism is a promising discipline for the developments of the Belgrade area, Apatin, Silver Lake, several sites along the Danube up to Golubac where several marines and moors have recently been put up.

The plant and animal worlds of the Serbian Danube region is abundant. Forests can be found in areas to the east of Golubac, or in the area of Fruška Gora in Vojvodina. The flora and fauna is therefore important for the potential of tourism of the region, especially for hiking, stationary, hunting and fishing tourism.

### **Conclusion**

The physico-geographic factors of the Serbian Danube region are good prerequisites for traffic and tourism development. The relief structure and pedological cover are especially favourable, as well as the climate and hydrographical potential.

River Danube is identified as the Pan-European transport corridor 7 and vital connection between Western Europe and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the second river by size in Europe, very important traffic flow, tourist attraction and environmental artery.

It is important to insist on the realization of Danube strategy, because so far its enormous potential is used only about 10%.

In the meantime, the environment protection sector of Serbia is becoming more visible.

### **Literature**

- Dinić J, *Prirodni potencijal Srbije, ekonomsko-geografska analiza i ocena*, Ekonomski fakultet Beograd, 1997.
- Dukić D, „Klimatske karakteristike đerdapskog područja”, Zbornik radova geografskog instituta PMF, sveska XV, Beograd, 1968.
- Lukić D, *Đerdapska klisura*, Srpsko geografsko društvo, Beograd, 2005.
- Rakićević T, „Klimatske karakteristike đerdapskog područja”, Zbornik radova, XV sveska, Beograd, 1968.
- Stanković S, „Đerdapsko jezero kao turistički potencijal Srbije”, 6-8 u *Teorija i praksa turizma*, Glasnik odseka za turističke nauke, Beograd, 1989.

Nevenka Jeftić Šarčević<sup>1</sup>

## IS IT POSSIBLE SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE DANUBE AND BLACK SEA REGION

### The geopolitical Position of Serbia

#### ABSTRACT

European Union promotes the synergy of integration as a new integrative force which is part of its cohesion and good neighborhood policy. In practice, this policy is implemented in the framework of the Danube and Black Sea Synergy. For Serbia, as a member of the Danube and the Black Sea region, the synergy is the framework of regional cooperation. In the Danube region, Serbia together with other countries is linking in the Euroasian geopolitical space over the Danube River Basin and Black Sea and synergistic permeation of common goals and values.

*Key words:* synergy, Serbia, Danube region, Black Sea region, European Union.

#### EU – Danube region – Black Sea region

The term 'synergy' is derived from the Greek expression 'συνεργός': to cooperate. This Greek antics term in contemporary times even nowadays signifies the active units which provide more significant and different effects from the sum of its individual parts.

Geographic position of Danube and Black Sea regions<sup>2</sup> indicates that they are linked to each other and matched by their territories in the river basin of the Danube into the Black Sea. The European Union is connected to this geographic position of both regions by its territory via its member countries: Romania and Bulgaria.

Regarding its geopolitical significance, all three regions: the EU, Danube region and Black Sea region are mutually interconnected by regional organization and organizing (integrating) projections. The basis for these connections are mutual interests considering

---

<sup>1</sup> Nevenka Jeftić Šarčević, Ph.D., Research Fellow, Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, Serbia, e-mail: jeftic@diplomacy.bg.ac.rs.

<sup>2</sup> About the geopolitics of the Black Sea: Nevenka Jeftić, *Geopolitika Crnomorskog regiona*, journal of *Međunarodni problemi*, ed. Brana Marković, Vol. LIX, br. 2-3, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Belgrade, 2007.

circulation of people, goods and services. In Black Sea region, active Black Sea economic organization-BSEC has been active for two decades, whose members are also the Danube countries: Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria. Until now, the EU brought the Danube strategy and started the preparation of Black Sea strategy. Since in 2012 Serbia is a presiding country in BSEC, it shall specially advocate to work actively on establishing the Black Sea strategy in the EU. “In the following year, Serbia should be presiding over BSEC, organization established in 1992 whose members are Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Armenia, Moldavia, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine, and several other countries have the status of observers... Jeremić recalled that the European parliament adopted resolution in January which called for the European Commission to adopt the EU strategy for the Black Sea and according to his own words, Serbia is ready to get engaged into discussions in Brussels in order to make the Black Sea region officially macro region, established on the principles of the EU strategy for Danube region.”<sup>3</sup>

Serbian contribution to the synergic linking of these two regions is specified in declaration which was made at 26<sup>th</sup> Danube rectors’ conference: “Declaration made in Novi Sad calls for intensive networking and cooperation of all universities in the Danube region and other surrounding regions: Alps-Adriatic, Balkans, Black Sea and others, as well as enhancing the cooperation of universities and other institutions.”<sup>4</sup>

The distinctive Vienna economic forum in November 2011 is dedicated to cooperations and integrations in the Danube and Black Sea region. The Forum gathers the representatives of governments, ministries, NGO’s, institutions and multinational corporations. “Economic forum was divided in three sessions and two workshops at the following topics: economy as the engine for development of the Danube region, the Danube strategy – how to develop this region, use its potential – responsibility for economic and social development, provide financing as a precondition for realization of regional projects, the Danube strategy and the Black Sea region, etc.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Connection of similarities, differences and paradoxes**

The river Danube was always the line of separation and division of area and people in its flow between the countries. In antics, the Danube divided Persia and Skitia (Scythia), in the middle ages Byzantium and Frankish kingdom and afterwards up to the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, Austro-Ugarian and Turkish (Ottoman) Empires. Due to function of separation and division, the Danube served more for boundary lines of alienation,

---

<sup>3</sup> Jeremić and Lavrov: *Resolution 1244 the only foundation*, INFO SERBIA, Friday, 16.12.2011, 10:11, <http://www.pannonija.tv/vest.php?no=1397>.

<sup>4</sup> Vesković the chairman of Danube rectors’ conference, <http://www.smedia.rs/print/vesti/24299/univerziteti-veskovic-Veskovic-predsednik-Dunvske-rektorske-konferencije.html>, Internet November 2011.

<sup>5</sup> VIII Vienna economic forum: *Go southeast – economy as the engine of regional development*, <http://www.kombeg.org.rs/aktivnosti/komora/Komora.aspx?veza=6153>, Internet: 05.12.2012.

separation and war parths than for familiarization and linking of surrounding countries and peoples at its flow and basin. It specially refers to the Balkans flow and river basin. As well as the river Danube, thus also the river basin of this big European river separated mutually conflict peoples and regions. There was no awareness that the rivers feed, link and fertilize both river banks. It is probably one of the reasons, and probably the key one, why the bridges were not built at the Balkans basin of these rivers, because it was dreaded that they could be used for malicious purposes of the other party. Probably due to that, the river Danube and its confluent, the river Sava, within Austro-Ugarian Empire and Turkey, had no bridges. Instead of bridges, the scaffolds were built for campaigns. There was nothing to link whereas there was a lot to separate. In antics, in its war, the Persians built the bridges over the Danube for crossing to Skitia and afterwards had them demolished in order to prevent crossing of Skitians to the Persian Empire.

Were the war conflicts and destructions necessary so that the peoples of Western Balkans would change or start the changes regarding their thinking and approach to the world, i.e. thus the river basins and water surfaces are not necessarily the separating factor, as they are not, and that rivers and bridges are connectors of people and regions. The quality changes of these paradigms are basis for synergy as the new integrating force.

The European Union assumed the *think-tank* role in theoretical elaboration of concepts, strategies and managing the integrating processes of the Balkans into Europe as well as integrating process of the Danube and Black Sea regions. There are four reasons for integrations which emerged. The political level could have within it the role of establishing the ambience.

### Danube Area



<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fa/Danubemap.jpg>, Internet, 26.09.2011.

### The Danube Spills into the Black Sea



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Danube\\_Spills\\_into\\_the\\_Black\\_Sea.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Danube_Spills_into_the_Black_Sea.jpg), Internet, 26.09.2011.

Firstly, the need to increase the mutual trade by removal of customs and non-customs (political) barriers. The low prices would encourage expansion of trade and compensation of low export results of the Balkans countries towards Europe.

Secondly, integration would add to solution of issues which would be forwarded to the regional level. Regional level would at the terrain include the operations regarding migration, infrastructure, energy, ecology and transportation. Integral approach to those operations would have more significant effects and individually isolated only the partial ones.

Thirdly, integration can encourage investment due to increased political and economic region stability.

Fourthly, regional integration is a means, which could accelerate the wider integration and convergence into European and Euroatlantic economic and safety structures.

### **Change of region character**

The European Union has incorporated also the change of region character into its conceptual strategy and strategy of cohesion, cooperation and synergy from political into cooperative and synergic system.



The Balkans as a traditional conflict region is transferred into cooperation phase remaining behind itself the regional connection or conflict, resulting from the activities of political participants and political programs. 'Discovery' of SYNERGY of regions and people produced the new generation of the European Union regions: Baltic and Black Sea region (wider or more narrow range of Black Sea-Caspian region on the same basis), and the Danube region is also being formed. Synergic potentials of the river Danube in the new regionalism and new geopolitics of synergy of region and people are stronger than political power of the classical type of political domination over diverse matters. Synergy, towards its function and specification, transforms the sphere of politics to service (creation of ambience) for economics and service of people within the region as one natural unit. Instead of region of classical type, the regions based on synergy of positive effects and European values and normatives of the European Union were created.

The river Danube has existed for a long time. But it took a lot of time for identification of integrative energy of that water resource from separation line to river basin and furthermore to cooperations, integrations and synergy.

Two factors are important for the project of synergy of the European Union at the regions of the Danube and Black Sea region. The first one is a factor of integration of countries within the river basin of the Danube and formation of the Danube region. The second one is a connection factor of the Danube and Black Sea region into the synergy of people and regions and formation of cooperative structures of the new type, the structure which could not have been imagined previously.

### **Cohesion and synergy**

The new integrative synergy of the European Union, which afterwards developed into cohesion synergic one, was launched in the end of 1980's, but it was slowed down due to happenings in Eastern Europe at the event of Eastern Block dissemination and conflicts at the Western Balkans. Those events lead to delay and afterwards the acceleration of integrative processes and their conversion from integration level to cohesion and synergy levels. In those processes, the river basin of the Danube into the Black Sea makes the first factor of connection and synergy. The second factor can be marked by 'the factor of attractability of related chemical elements'. That is in the first line the energetic factor, which is mutually attracted and connected by the Danube and Black Sea region i.e. the European Union and energetic resources of Asian surroundings of Black Sea and Caspian Sea.

### **Synergy of energetic findings and energetic requirements - ideal synergy**

The Black Sea synergy was launched by the European Union in 2007 by exit to the Black Sea (admission of Romania and Bulgaria). After admission of those countries, the European Union emphasised the essential and principal significance of the Black

Sea region due to geographic position connecting Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East as well as transit region for petrol and gas. After its way out to the Black Sea, the European Union became one of Black Sea powers.

#### Eurasian continent



[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eurasian\\_continent.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eurasian_continent.jpg), Internet, 26.09.2011.

Energetic factors, with admission of Romania and Bulgaria into the European Union, represents the essence of synergy. As the entity, the European Union extended to the Black Sea into significant energetic hub – direction to East. That new reality and new direction of Europe was formulated by the author S.A.Poillard in the call: “*Go East, Young European. The Black Sea is Now Yours*“.<sup>6</sup>

For connection, cohesion and synergy of people and regions within its borders and more or less immediate surroundings, the European Union formed two own macroregions: Baltic region as a northern energetic corridor and the Danube region of Central and South-Eastern Europe as a southern energetic corridor, linked to Black Sea region and Caspian energetic region. Among those regions, the river Danuber, with the channel route Maina – Raina, makes diagonal transeuropean water transversal from Rotterdam to the Black Sea.

The Danube region is by itself the region of diversity and more than that, but also a developing cooperation. The Black Sea region is a region of controversis and so-called ‘frozen conflicts’, which the European Union directs towards cooperation and synergy.

---

<sup>6</sup> Christopher Alexandre Poillard: *Go East, Young European. The Black Sea is Now Yours: A French View on energy Strategies in the Black Sea Region*, in: “Southeast European and Black Sea Studies“, Volume 7, Number 2, June 2007, p. 237.

Serbia is also included in the energetic activities of its surroundings. It is the Serbian National Petroleum Committee as a part of *World Petroleum Council* – WPC, established at the beginning of March 2011. SNPC was established with the goal to represent the interest of petroleum and gas economy of Serbia in WPC. At the beginning of March 2012, the conference on “Research of potentials of non-conventional sources of gas and petroleum in the region“ shall be organized. The conference shall be attended by the national committees of Serbia, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and Republic of Srpska. World Petroleum Council, whose one of the members is Serbia, includes 60 countries – members of the United Nations, producing 95% of petroleum and gas. WPC was established in 1933 with the headquarters in London.

### **Synergy and correction of traditional geospatial directions**

The call to the young Europeans to conquer the Black Sea refers to the significant changes in European orientations, i.e. conversions from traditional to new approach regarding geographic coordinates. The hub and relations of Europe and Asia are changing because they are not focused only on the Middle East, i.e. energetic resources of that region, but more directly to East – eastern from the European Union towards the energetic resources of Russia and Central Asia. And the collective transporting hub of both energetic regions is the Black Sea.

It is important to point out that those changes implicitly include also the change regarding geopolitical, geoeconomic and strategic view of up to the present traditional role of western Balkans as the region linking Europe and Asia. Instead of western Balkans, the strategic importance is transferred to eastern Balkans due to the following facts: firstly, with that region, the European Union, besides Russia and Turkey, became the Black Sea power of energetic hub and secondly, because direction of the European Union towards the east directs also the main energetic and transport transversals from Europe towards eastern Balkans and Asian continent as well as the transport of energy sources from Asian and other regions towards Europe.

Serbia, regarding transeuropean transversal occupies the most significant part of the river Danube with sufficient depth and width. Considering the specified geopolitical and geoeconomic changes, the Danube represents significant and probably the most important resource of Serbia on European scale with its navigable length of 588 km, the longest part in Europe of transeuropean water Corridor 7. Serbia is as a continental country, along the river Danube, linked to the Black Sea and its region also along the channel Maina – Raina with Atlantic Ocean.

The European Union started the Master-plan for Serbia envisaging an increase of the navigable capacities of the Danube from 4,7% of the total traffic to 15% until 2015 and 30% until 2025. Master-plan of the European Union shows the significant strategic importance of the Danube as a transeuropean transversal and connector with the Black Sea.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> *DUNAV/Blic Online 27.06.2009/Danube forgotten shortcut on the way to the European Union.*

In 2010, Serbia was included in synergy of the Danube region as a potential member of the European Union. For the Black Sea of the countries outside the European Union, there are envisaged cooperation phases and introduction of synergy system. The final goal of the European Union is to have the cooperation between the Danube and Black Sea region and afterwards into the condition of synergy, i.e. condition where economics and general development have priority over politics, which in mostly traditional orientated party governments of the realsocialist countries obstructs the aforementioned goals.

Apart from the safety ones, the more significant challenges of the European Union at the relation of the Danube and Black Sea region are political, organizational and ecological one. The European Union has already met these challenges on the Balkans at the area of its macroregion. More significant challenges on its path of cooperation and synergism are expected within the Black Sea region. For both regions, the European Union established the political and economic goals which are strongly intervened with pedagogic-educational components.

### Literature

- *Jeremić and Lavrov: Resolution 1244 the only foundation*, INFO SERBIA, Friday, 16.12.2011, 10:11, <http://www.panonija.tv/vest.php?no=1397>
- *Vesković the chairman of Danube rector's conference*, <http://www.smedia.rs/print/vesti/24299/univerziteti-veskovic-Veskovic-predsednik-Dunvske-rektorske-konferencije.html>, Internet November 2011.
- *VIII Vienna economic forum: Go southeast – economy as the engine of regional development*, <http://www.kombeg.org.rs/aktivnosti/komora/Komora.aspx?veza=6153>, Internet: 05. 12.2012.
- <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fa/Danubemap.jpg>, Internet, 26.09.2011.
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Danube\\_Spills\\_into\\_the\\_Black\\_Sea.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Danube_Spills_into_the_Black_Sea.jpg), Internet, 26.09.2011.
- [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eurasian\\_continent.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eurasian_continent.jpg), Internet, 26.09.2011.
- Christopher Alexandre Poillard: *Go East, Young European. The Black Sea is Now Yours: A French View on energy Strategies in the Black Sea Region*, in: “Southeast European and Black Sea Studies“, Volume 7, Number 2, June 2007, p. 237.
- *DUNAV/Blic Online 27.06.2009/Danube forgotten shortcut on the way to the Europe.*
- Nevenka Jeftić, *Geopolitika Crnomorskog regiona*, journal of *Međunarodni problemi*, ed. Brana Marković, Vol. LIX, br. 2-3, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Belgrade, 2007.
- *The Role of Civil Society in Promotion of the Danube Basin Potential in the Light of the EU Strategy for Danube Region*, editors: Edita Stojić Karanović, Nevenka Jeftić Šarčević, Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, 2011.

Nenad M. Ilić<sup>1</sup>

## **SOCIAL CAPITAL NETWORKS IN SERBIA: STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE DANUBE RIVER**

### **ABSTRACT**

Recognizing the adequate resources for cooperation and development through the establishment of closer cooperation in the Danube Basin, we should improve social networks and support the policy in Serbia. So far, not much done has been done with that, but in order to achieve a stronger networking of CSOs, high-educated NGOs, development of poles of competitiveness, revitalization of rural areas, and therefore new investment, higher employment and balanced regional development is necessary to promote a new concept of the use of social capital. Apart from Vojvodina and Belgrade, this approach would allow for a stronger participation of stakeholders in the area of Central Serbia. In order to initiate such a process, the public and decision-makers should be first informed of the benefits of this concept, which brings stronger integration into the international, inter-regional and inter-municipal politics. On the basis of the opportunities and results, this approach of networking can produce more flexible forms of association.

*Key words:* Danube River, social capital, social networks, Serbia.

### **1. Introduction**

Social capital in the modern research has an important role of development aspects of the communities. Since 1990s, the concept of ‘social capital’ has been widely adopted in research and development. Popularized by Robert Putnam’s book on Italian civic culture (See: *Putnam, R.D et al.*, 1993) as well as by claims from the World Bank that social capital was the “missing link” in development, the phrase has entered public debate and development practices worldwide.

Coleman first defined social capital according to its function. He argued that “it is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structure and they facilitate certain

---

<sup>1</sup> Nenad M. Ilić, M.B.A., University LUM Jan Monnet (Casamassima, Italy) – International Research Doctorate in “The Economics and Management of Natural Resources” and Vice-president of Managerial Board of Center for Good Governance – Belgrade.

actions of actors—whether persons or corporate actors—within the structure” (Coleman 1988:S98, cited in Adam, F. and Roncevic, B., 2003:159). Interest in the topic has been largely stirred by the activities of World Bank, United Nation’s Development Programme (UNDP) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

By Mihaylova, Dimitrina (2004:24) many authors do not utilize the term “social capital” but rather use “networks” or others such as “network capital”, “weak and strong ties” and “social capital networks”. Some thinkers concluded that social capital has a potential “downside” (Portes, A. and Landolt, Patricia, 1996): communities, groups or networks that are isolated, parochial, or working at cross-purposes to society’s collective interests can actually hinder economic and social development.

The creation of a sustainable society depends on our relationships, on the social quality of our social fabric. We have a great need to see a more integrated society, richer in norms and institutions that facilitate cooperation between people. When we have a development of new political culture, and when create a critical, reflexive and participative spirit we can talk about improvement of civic democracy’s issues and relevant regulative.

The political culture, when it is limited by particularism, paralyzes relationships, prevents integration, weakens social cohesion, fragments and divides. Unable to put itself in the place of the other, party politics become thoughtless and irresponsible. Utilitarian values govern priorities and encourage the habit of seeking group or personal gain at the cost of others. We are unable to understand that within society we are unique individuals but at the same time, interdependent members of the same society (Martinez, C.J.J., 2005:31).

## 2. EU Danube Strategy

EU Danube strategy has a four pillars: (1) Connecting the Danube Region (including mobility, sustainable energy, culture, tourism); (2) Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region (including water quality, risk prevention, biodiversity and landscape); (3) Strengthening the Danube Region (institutional capacity and cooperation, security and safety); and for this work mach important, (4) Building Prosperity in the Danube Region to develop the knowledge society through research, education and information technologies, support the competitiveness of enterprises, including cluster development, invest in people and skills (See: *European Commission*, 2010:6).

Out of the 18 countries in the Danube River Basin, 13 countries have substantial territory within the basin. Northern Italian regions Veneto, Friuli–Venezia Giulia<sup>2</sup> (especially for the Middle Danube region) and Emilia-Romagna (especially for the Lower Danube Region) want to continue the close historical relationship in this part of Europe. Otherwise, Puglia with other regions in Southern Italy (in the context of new Pan-

---

<sup>2</sup> Venetian: *Friul–Venèxia Julia*, and Friulian: *Friûl–Vignesie Julie*.

European Corridor XI and improvement of the Balkan's Mediterranean culture in the Danube Basin) are also interested to cooperate in the Danube River region. Within the networking context, the northern parts of Serbia belong to the Middle Danube Region, while a smaller eastern part of Serbia belongs to the Lower Danube Region. In this geographic positioning, one should consider the issue of developing networks of social capital in the future and which strategy is recognized within the EU Danube Strategy.

The Map of the EU Danube River Strategy



Source: European Commission, 2011.

### 3. Middle Danube Approach

In the context of Central and Eastern Europe, authors frequently point to the existence of a “missing,” “negative,” “pre-modern” or “primitive” social capital (for example *Paldam, M. and Svendsen, G.T., 2000, Rose, R., 1999*). *Aberg, M. (2000:299)* studies how exactly the non-communitarian social capital of the former communists and new democracy impedes the building of democratic culture and democratic institutions. Exchanges are limited within closed networks such as those based on nepotism, close friendships as created during communism and culture of authoritarian government or partitocracy. *Aberg, M.* further believes that as long as institutional design and state policies do not prove to be efficient in collective problem solving, this non-communitarian social capital will function. Similar, *Rose, R. (1999)* claims that anti-modern networks are obstacles to democratization. In his view, the existence of free elections is not enough to understand the democratization process.

The main problem of the EU Danube strategy is not determining the problem and its causes. We know that today there is a large disparity between Upper Danube Areas and Lower Danube Areas, in development (GDP per capita), environmental policy implementation, rural-urban linkages, human capital resources, research and innovation field, etc. The Middle Danube Region is the largest Danube sub-region, extending from the confluence with the river Morava at Bratislava to the Iron Gate dams where the river enters a flatland area. The main interest of Social Capital Networking of Serbia in Middle Danube Area can be said to indicate by “Centrope project” experience. This is an EU Interreg III A project to establish a multinational region in the Central Europe (Germans use term: Kern des Neuen Mitteleuropa) encompassing four European countries: Austria, Slovakia, Hungary and Czech Republic (See: Figure 1). On the basis of the Kittsee Declaration of 2003 “Building a European Region”, they work jointly towards the creation of the Central European Region in this four-country quadrangle. “Centrope project” creates capacities of multinational social networking with a co-funding of 80% and leads project funded under the EU programme “Central Europe”, or alternative through European Social Fund (ESF), SEE-ERA.net, FP7, etc. Widely, “Centrope project” with Budapest Commuter Area creates a “Danube North-Center Area” (DNC Area, about population of 10.52 million; See: *Figure 1*) of Social Capital Networking and in the future should have a stronger (intercultural and technological) connection to “Danube South-Center Area”<sup>3</sup> (DSC Area, about population of 8.4 million; See: *Figure 2*). Centrope capacity in the period until 2012 it aims to create a multilateral, binding and sustainable framework for the cooperation of local and regional authorities, enterprises, academic and public institutions in this area. Specific goals consist in creating of polycentric cooperation framework, which should allow all the partners to work jointly and more effectively on the cross-border issues. Project also offers them new tools for a balanced spatial development, sustainable inter-urban and rural-urban linkages as well as integrated development strategy and action plan. “Centrope project” capacity builds on the results of two INTERREG III A projects concluded in 2007, which provided the necessary preparatory work and development steps to establish the Central European Region – “Centrope”.

As example, Western Slovakia was achieved impressive development during last 10 years. By far, the most developed region is the Bratislava self-governing region (the capital city, with best infrastructure and level of education, a part of international corridor and a cognizable regional brand), while the self-governing regions of Trnava, Trenčín and Žilina have accomplished the best results in their regional policies mainly because of their advantageous properties: they are regions which participate in the most important cross-border cooperation with the neighbouring Czech Republic; regions with a developed transportation network – the highway from Bratislava to Žilina, a good railway infrastructure, well-developed logistics centres and airports; high-grade universities and a greater population with a university degree; cultural tradition in

---

<sup>3</sup> Especially in EU membership of Serbia, Croatia and BH.



historical touch with Czech Republic / Moravia, Vienna and Budapest; and the river Váh (most of its waters being navigable) (*Stančetić, V. and Ilić, N., 2011:9*).

Global competition has stimulated more intense cross-border cooperation in Europe. As example of “Centrope project” of the cross-border metropolitan area emerging, we have Bratislava and Vienna (Vienna-Bratislava Metropolitan Area – VBMA). This area, representing a territory of 30 000 km<sup>2</sup>, consists of three Austrian states (the Vienna Metropolitan Area – VMA) and two Slovak regions of Bratislava and Trnava (the Bratislava Metropolitan Area – BMA). Unlike the well-known Austrian capital, Vienna, Bratislava has become a dynamic capital within the region only since the Slovak Republic’s independence in 1993. Its economic capacities, cultural traditions and international cooperation have helped it to regain its traditional status of a multicultural city (*Brzica, D., 2009:241*). The Vienna Metropolitan Area itself has three and half times more inhabitants (3.72 million) than has BMA (1.17 million). More than 100 research & development organizations can be found in Bratislava County, representing nearly half of all R&D organizations and researchers in Slovak Republic (*OP BC, 2007*).

*Ache P. et al. (2010)* concluded that Slovakia has in last decade a development of knowledge-based firms, in particular small and medium-sized firms and good example of hi-tech technology park Euro-Valley in the western part of Bratislava County. But generally, innovation and research infrastructure, development of knowledge-based economy and corporate social responsibility in Bratislava Metropolitan Area is still undeveloped compared with the Czech regions (Prague or Brno) and the most advanced regions in the EU (as neighbourhood Vienna Metropolitan Area).

Figure 1. Danube North-Center Area (DNC Area) in the Middle Danube Region

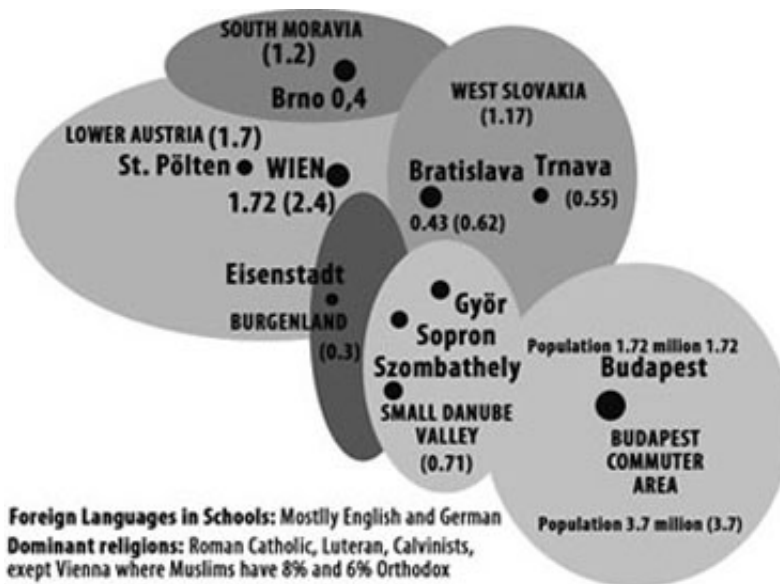
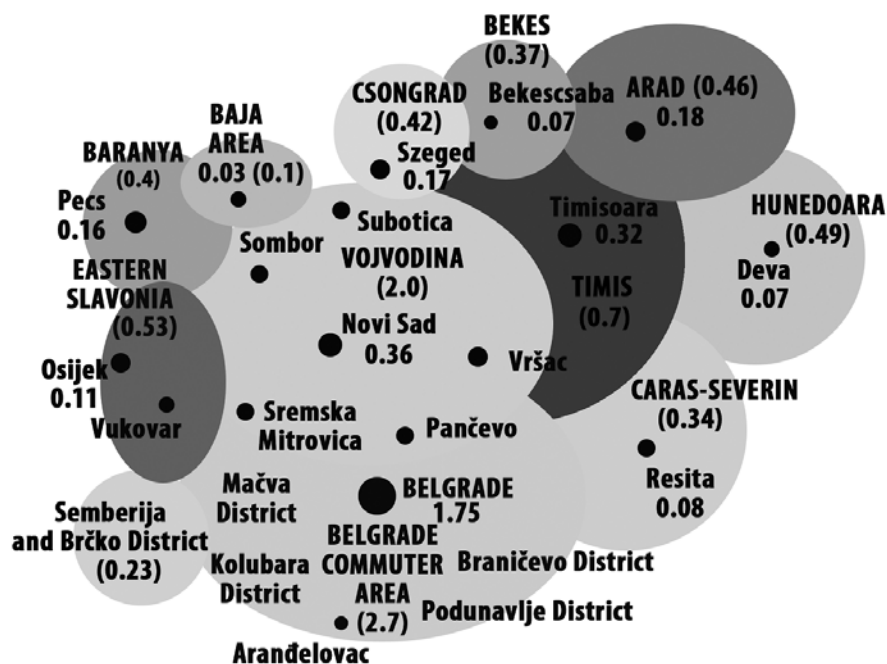


Figure 2. Danube South-Central Area (DSC Area) in the Middle Danube Region



#### 4. Social Capital Networks in Serbia

The Danube countries are differently involved in the realization of the EU Danube Strategy, depending on the level of their economic development and their existing infrastructure and social networks.

The inner strength for regional cooperation is coming from “a common sustainable use of natural resources, and since the most significant natural resource in Serbia is Danube and its tributaries, the emphasis is placed on the forms of regional cooperation in Danube region, whose significant part belongs to Serbia and its regions. Those forms of cooperation include: the Danube cooperation process, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube (ICPDR), the Danube Commission, International Sava River Basin Commission, and euro-regions<sup>4</sup> and euro-regional Danube initiatives” (Stojić-Karanović, Edita, 2008:109).

<sup>4</sup> Danube-Kris-Mure-Tisza (DKMT) is a euro-region in the focus of Danube South-Center Area’s Social Capital Networking, and good experience for better cooperation in the future.

The Danube River also represents, for all the regions in its basin, a higher degree of international cooperation. “Developed social systems are different from other systems in that they, inside or outside institutions, as individuals or groups, include a humanistic aspect and are open to the surroundings, new views, ideas and progress in general” (*Jeftić-Šarčević, Nevenka, 2010:84*).

The Middle Danube Region possesses not only developmental but also broader civilization reasons for a higher degree of networking of social capital. It needs to take into account a broader European heritage and a growing need for a greater “cooperation between the Orthodox and Catholic Church in Serbia (as well as other traditional Christian groups) and unification of Christian denominations around the figure of Emperor Constantine” (*Ilić, N. and Krmpotić, Olga, 2011:211*).

Areas in the south part of the Middle Danube Basin and especially in the Lower Danube Basin (Southern Romania, Northern Bulgaria and Eastern Serbia) have been able to afford much less development in the field of innovation, research & development and environmental responsibilities (such as municipal wastewater treatment facilities and insufficient sewage systems). EU Danube Strategy especially suggests a holistic way, cooperation and sustainable solutions for these outstanding goals.

Then we should understand the structure of democracies and building development through the context of social capital networking. *Mateju, P. (2002)* suggests that social capital in Central and Eastern Europe should be studied in the first place as weak ties and how they shape the people’s choices in life. He suggests that social capital is to be examined carefully at the individual level as it relates to the positions of the individual in the social structure (status, prestige) and to the amount of political capital a person has (members or not of the Communist party, for example). *Paldam, M. and Svendsen, G.T. (2000)* add the terms “missing” and “negative” to social capital to describe the grey/black networks after communism that have transformed from necessary survival strategies to negative networks which fall within the category of corruption. *Sandu, D. (1999)* examines (among others) that faith, association and tolerance as forming the nucleus of social capital values.

Finally we today in transition countries after more than 20 years of new democracy roles have a strengthening the positions of civil society’s actors and control instruments of political representatives which implicate a more thrust of citizens, tolerance and implementation’s capacities. There is important creation of balance between top powers (elected politicians), stronger mediation powers (civil society, universities, institutes, media, autonomous regulatory agencies, public administration etc.) and civic powers (civic democracy powers from people and communities to decision making process). Very important rule exists in high educated NGO’s which experience is not predisposed by connections or positions in former Communist party, partitocracy, monopolies, etc. But, they cumulate fine ties of societies, which exist in the professional approach to decision-makers and the media but also to the constant community work and citizens’

trust. Some OECD studies in Central and Eastern Europe found that civic participation is lower than in countries with fully developed market economies.

DSC Area requires a first stage of intercultural cooperation, particularly through strong support from main public institutions, universities and institutes, better conditions for enterprises, especially SMEs (through support for cluster integration, joint cluster branding), the institutional capacities of business support agencies, industry associations and networking of high educated NGO's.

Then the second stage should have a creation of joint cooperation's interests, such as: green municipality's project, media channel about Middle Danube Region issues, cluster building in tourism (higher Danube branding as a tourist symbol), better inter-urban and rural-urban infrastructure, industrial parks and technology parks in the rural areas surround the cities, Middle Danube Civil Society Forum, etc. In some matters were made progress and there are important contacts but they are not profiled enough and tough.

## 5. Recommendations

Recognizing the adequate resources for cooperation and development through the establishment of closer cooperation in the Danube Basin, we should improve a social networks and support policy in Serbia. Until now on this is not much done, but in order to come to a stronger networking of CSOs, high-educated NGOs, development of poles of competitiveness, revitalization of rural areas, and therefore new investment, higher employment, balanced regional development is necessary to promote a new concept of use a social capital. Apart from Vojvodina and Belgrade, this approach would allow for a stronger participation of stakeholders in the area of Central Serbia. In order to initiate such a process should first inform the public audience and decision makers with the benefits of this concept, which brings a stronger integration into the international, inter-regional and inter-municipal politics. On the basis of the opportunities and results, this approach of networking can produce more flexible forms of association.

Serbia with its current conditions (through insufficiently responsible role of Serbian Government, universities, institutes, CSO's, Vojvodina's Government, Belgrade City's regional communications to sustainable inter-urban and urban-rural linkages, Municipalities in Mačva-Kolubara and the Danube basin-Braničevo area, Municipality of Arandelovac, etc.) is not fully open for these values as Western Slovakia or the Budapest Metropolitan Area in the Middle Danube Region 10 years ago.

If Serbia, Croatia and BH achieve European integration with high level of social capital networking and competitiveness through DSC Area concept we can to improve the competitiveness of this part of EU, particularly and main objectives of EU Danube Strategy and widely, *Neu Mitteleuropa* concept. With this aim DSC Areas of Serbia, Croatia, BH, Romania and Hungary should improve university's programmes and other research programmes though EU support such as TEMPUS or Jean Monnet, own

capacities for innovation and R&D, flexicurity<sup>5</sup> of high-educated labour market in Middle Danube Area and create a networks of high-educated NGO's for better intercultural cooperation using available funds and higher corporate social responsibility.

### Literature

- Ache, P. et al. (2010) *Cities between Competitiveness and Cohesion: Discourses, Realities and Implementation*. Berlin: Springer.
- Aberg, M. (2000) Putnam's social capital theory goes East: A case study of Western Ukraine and L'viv, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 52 (2), 295–317.
- Adam, F. and Roncevic B. (2003) Social capital: recent debates and research trends, *Social Science Information*, Vol. 42 (2).
- Brzica, D. (2009) Urban Dynamism within the Vienna-Bratislava Metropolitan Area: Improving Regional Competitiveness and the Constructed Regional Advantage Concept. *Managing Global Transitions*, 2009, Vol. 7(3), 241-258.
- European Commission (2010) *European Union Strategy for Danube Region* [Communication from the commission to the European parliament, the council, the European economic and social committee and the committee of the regions]. Brussels: EC. Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0715:FIN:EN:PDF>, [oktobar 25, 2011]
- Ilić, N. and Krmpotić, Olga (2011) Značaj Panevropske unije u procesu evropskih integracija Srbije. In: Đukanović D. and Lađevac Ivona, ed. *Srbija i međunarodne organizacije*. Belgrade: Institute of International Politics and Economics.
- Jeftić Šarčević, Nevenka (2010) *Osvajanje slobode izražavanja i transformacija komunikativnog suvereniteta*. Belgrade: Institute of International Politics and Economics.
- Martinez, C.J.J (2005) *Social Quality and Sustainable Development of Rural Territories: Why must Sociability be Capitalized?* Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture: San Jose (Costa Rica).
- Mateju, P. (2002) *Social Capital: problems of its conceptualization and measurement in transforming societies*, Conference Paper, OECD/NNS Conference on Social Capital Measurement, September 26–27, London.
- Mihaylova, Dimitrina (2004) *Social Capital in Central and Eastern Europe: A Critical Assessment and Literature Review*. Budapest: Center for policy studies at Central European University.
- OP BC (2007) *Operačný program Bratislavský kraj*. Bratislava: Ministerstvo výstavby a regionálneho rozvoja Slovenskej republiky.
- Paldam, M. and Svendsen, G.T. (2000) Missing social capital and the transition in Eastern Europe, *Journal for Institutional Innovation, Development and Transition*, Vol. 5, 21–34. Available at: [http://www.hha.dk/nat/wper/00-5\\_gts.pdf](http://www.hha.dk/nat/wper/00-5_gts.pdf), [September 29, 2011]

---

<sup>5</sup> *Flexicurity* (a portmanteau of flexibility and security) is a welfare state model with a pro-active labour market policy. The term was first coined by the social democratic Prime Minister of Denmark *Poul Nyrup Rasmussen* in the 1990s.

- Portes, A. and Landolt, Patricia (1996) The Downside of Social Capital. *The American Prospect* (May-June), Vol. 26 (94), 18-21.
- Putnam, R.D. et al. (1993) *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press.
- Rose, R. (1999) *Modern, pre-modern and anti-modern social capital in Russia*, Studies in Public Policy Working Paper No. 324, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.
- Sandu, D. (1999) *Spațiul social al tranziției*. Iași: Polirom.
- Stančetić, V. and Ilić, N. (2011) The Self Governing Regions and Decentralization: Slovak Experience and Possibilities in Serbia [Policy paper]. Belgrade: National liberal network. Available at: <http://www.csdu.org.rs/images/pdf/regions.pdf>, [September 30, 2011]
- Stojić Karanović, Edita (2008) Elementi evropske strategije regionalne saradnje u Podunavlju. In: Stojić-Karanović Edita i Janković S, ed. *Elementi strategije spoljne politike Srbije*. Belgrade: Institute of International Politics and Economics. 106-133.



## Chapter III

---

# ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CO-OPERATION IN THE DANUBE BASIN

Milovan Radaković<sup>1</sup>

## THE DANUBE-MORAVA-VARDAR-AEGEAN SEA WATERWAY

### ABSTRACT

The Morava-Vardar-Aegean Sea waterway would enable the navigation from Belgrade to Thessaloniki and on the other side, from Belgrade to Rotterdam. It would shorten the route between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. With its construction, Serbia would automatically become a well-connected river state, what would significantly change its geostrategic, geoeconomic and geopolitical position. Sufficiency in electric power supply and elimination of natural disasters including floods would be definitely achieved.

*Key words:* Serbia, Danube, Morava, Vardar, Aegean Sea, Rhine-Main Canal.

### Introduction

Like all other republics of the former Yugoslavia Serbia was also connected to the European and world seas and straits through the Adriatic Sea. It also enabled it the access to the Mediterranean, all continents and seaports.

In the early 1990s, the Yugoslav state ceased to exist when some of its constituent republics proclaimed their independence. In this way, the geostrategic position of Serbia changed substantially. It was not any more a coastal country.<sup>2</sup> The fact that a country is enclosed by land can, but should not necessarily, affect its economy, especially when Serbia is concerned. Since it lies on the Danube banks, this being one of the strategically most important European rivers, that makes easier its position as a country that it is enclosed by land. Serbia could regain the status of a river-sea country if in a near or

---

<sup>1</sup> Milovan Radaković, Ph.D., Research Fellow, Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade.

<sup>2</sup> Apart from Serbia, there are also some states in Europe that have the same status. Actually, Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary are entirely enclosed by land. Romania's and Bulgaria's coasts lie on the so-called "closed seas".



distant future an idea could be carried out on connecting the Danube, the Morava and the Vardar with the Aegean Sea.<sup>3</sup>

The Danube River is of great significance for river traffic in Europe. It flows through eight European states (Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova), from Schwartzwald to the Black Sea, its length being 2,857 kilometres. On its banks, there are several capitals of the states it flows through and these are Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest and Belgrade. Apart from this, one of the Danube's parts is a natural state border between Romania and Bulgaria. The present technological achievements enable the development of a canal network or actually connecting of international and domestic waterways and the increase of their exploitation, but also the creation of a new main as well as other waterways and water flows.

### **Significance of the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal for Serbia**

The Danube was connected with the Atlantic after seventy years, during which the 171 km long canal was dug. It stretches from Regensburg on the Danube to Nuremberg on the Main.<sup>4</sup> This canal is the longest waterway in Europe being 3,505 km long that within its optimal range connects Rotterdam with Constanta. When the first ship flew along the canal on 25 September 1992 it denoted that the idea presented by Carlo the Great in the early 19th century came into being. (Picture 1)

Today, seven million tons of various cargos are annually transported on the Danube, the Canal and the Main. This route is three times shorter than the one through the Mediterranean and the Channel, what makes this transportation half as much cheaper. Apart from other things, the canal has connected the Danube-basin countries with five most developed Central European states – Switzerland, France Germany, The Netherlands and Belgium. Apart from the Black Sea ports, the countries enclosed by land can now sail with their ships to the Atlantic.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> In history, the significance of rivers is well-known. From time immemorial, rivers have had a great impact on people living on their banks, this also including the whole civilizations. They have and still do exert impact on the development of estates they flow through (for example, Gang in India, Yangtze in China, Amazon in Brazil), this also including large geographic areas and whole continents (for example, the Euphrates and the Tigris in the Middle East, the Mississippi in the USA, the Danube in Europe, etc.)

<sup>4</sup> The canal from Regensburg on the Danube to Nurnberg on the Main is 171 km long. Its flow is 55 metres wide, while its bed is 31 metres wide, and it is 4 metres deep. The canal is such that it enables comfortable two-way navigation. By connecting two longest European rivers a big waterway 3,505 km long has been made. Ships flow along the navigable part of Rhine that is 539 km long, on the Main that is 384 km long, along the 171 long canal and along the navigable part of the Danube being 2,411 kilometres long. The navigable part of the Danube that flows through Serbia is a central part of the waterway and it is 588 km long.

<sup>5</sup> For Serbia's economy the significance of the canal is immeasurable. When it was opened our experts calculated that railway transportation from Regensburg to the Austrian border would cost seventy German marks per tonn of goods. The same price would be paid for ship transportation from Regensburg to Belgrade along the route that is 1,200 km long. On the other hand, water transportation cannot be



Picture 1. States connected by the Danube. <http://www.danube-research.com/map.jpg>.

Together with Hungary, Serbia takes the central part on the Danube River. In order to make the most of Serbia's position on this river the Serbian shipbuilding will have to renew the existing fleet and invest in building of new vessels. Actually, according to the new regulations, the navigation on the Main-Danube canal will be permitted only to standardised vessels.<sup>6</sup> For all mentioned above, as early as in the 1990s Serbia planned to renew and develop its river fleet by 40 per cent. As planned, 77 vessels would be built in Serbian shipyards within a period of only two calendar years.

For Serbia, the Danube is not only a water route that leads to the world or a navigable river. Its hydroelectric power station on Đerdap provides one third of electric power supply Serbia needs for its citizens. By the construction of the network of canals between the Danube and the Tisa River Serbia has made the whole Vojvodina plain a fertile land. The Danube is an important source of drinking water for many towns in Serbia and also one of the most attractive tourist destinations in Serbia as well as a base for the development of high nautical tourism and water sports. Thus, the Danube is potentially

---

Belgrade along the route that is 1,200 km long. On the other hand, water transportation cannot be replaced by any other kind of transportation in trade of mass goods. It is inconceivable that cement, stone, numerous ores and grain are not transported by water. Good from the Far East coming from Japan, Korea and Singapore would not be competitive in Europe if they were transported in some other way than by overseas ships.

<sup>6</sup> Only two types of ships will be allowed to sail on the Main-Danube canal. The first are self-propelled ones, the so-called „European ships”, 80 metres long, 9.5 metres wide, with a draft of 2.5 metres, whose capacity should be 1,350 tons. The second type is two unit tugboats (consisting of two barges and a tugboat), 185 metres long and its capacity is 3,300 tons. The size of ships is determined by the dimensions of 18 locks in the canal.

Serbia's biggest investment project that should attract big and strong investments to the Serbian economy. On its 558 km long flow that runs through Serbia it has been planned to open free zones in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Pančevo, Smederevo and Kovin.

### The Morava-Vardar Canal

Even ancient Romans had known that the Morava valley was an important route on the Balkan Peninsula. As early as in 33 B.C., they built a road (*Via Militaris* – military road). According to some documents from the Post, Telegraph and Telephone Museum in Belgrade, the road that was in the Middle Ages called the Constantinople or the Morava road, there were numerous places for spending the night and small stations for horse and coach change. By activating the navigation connection of the Danube and the Morava rivers, the Morava valley would be one of the most significant Balkan traffic routes in Europe.<sup>7</sup>



What is the Danube for Europe the Morava River could be for Serbia.<sup>8</sup> In 1841, the navigation on the Morava had been first discussed. One of the reasons was the intention to start shipping mail traffic on this river. The French were the first that were seriously interested in the navigation on the Morava. In 1844, the French-Serbian Association for Steamship Navigation on the Danube, the Sava and the Morava had been established, while in 1859 several French companies asked exclusive rights to cruise on the Morava with their steamships for a thirty-year period. Due to the political situation in Serbia, the development of

Picture 2. The Danube and Morava rivers, chart <http://www.mojaladja.com/forum/index.php?topic=6256.0>

<sup>7</sup> The lines of communication that from the ancient times have been built in the Morava-Vardar valley confirm its significance. Apart from the above mentioned *Via Militaris*, the Turks built the Constantinople road here, while the modern times also confirm its importance. For the traffic of Serbia, this valley is of crucial relevance. A modern highway and railway were built on this route.

<sup>8</sup> The river basin of the Velika Morava occupies the area of 37,400 square kilometres, what is 42 per cent of Serbia's territory. The medium flow at its mouth to the Danube is 240 cube metres per second, what is 45 per cent of all water flows in Serbia. Therefore, the Velika Morava is almost half of an overall water potential of Serbia and so far, the works on this river have been involved the fight against erosion and flood protection. See more details in: "Vodeni resursi Velike Morave i njihovo korišćenje", Zadužbina Andrejević, Beograd, 1998.

traffic on the Morava had not been discussed for a long time. As late as in 1904, the navigation on this river became a topical issue since Germany and England were interested in the development of traffic on this river.

However, the potential building of the Morava-Vardar Canal was first mentioned in 1907 when the American government established in New Jersey the American engineering commission for the observation of the Morava-Vardar waterway. After the outbreak of the war in 1919, this project had been put aside to be put back in 1961 as one of the options for spatial planning of the economic development of Serbia. In the late 20th and early 21 century, this plan was proposed as one of the basis of the spatial planning and a very significant segment of the national programme of Serbia.

When we mention building of this canal, what actually includes the Morava-Vardar-Aegean Sea navigable waterway, we have in mind that in this way, Serbia would have an access to navigable waterways of developed Europe, while Europe's access to warm seas would be shorter by 1,200 kilometres. Connecting of the basins of the above mentioned rivers, enlarging of their beds, making of canals, building of water power plants and finally connecting the Morava and the Vardar with Thessaloniki would be significant in many ways. Actually, not only that new waterways would be created, what would be suitable for the transportation of goods and people, but the courses of our rivers would be regulated, production would be spurred, the economy would be supported and Serbia would resolve many of its problems with electric power supply. The route to the Mediterranean would be shorter by 1,180 km, what would enable to connect the traffic between the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal and Central Europe.<sup>9</sup>

According to the project, the canal with a length of 655 km would go along the Velika Morava, where it would be 151.5 km long, then along the Južna Morava from where it would go to Greece through Pčinj and the Vardar with a length of 189 km, while it would empty into the Aegean Sea by its part with a length of 70 km. The Morava-Vardar-Aegean Sea, or actually the Serbian-Macedonian-Greek navigable transversal line, would be an extension of the big Rhine-Main-Danube navigable system. By means of this project, Serbia would manage the international sea-river traffic of North and Central Europe along the Morava. In this way, it would turn the Danube basin and Vojvodina into a big source of food for Europe and the Mediterranean.

### **Investments for the Canal**

The navigable Danube-Morava-Vardar-Thessaloniki waterway would consist of five sections. The first would include the Velika Morava from the Danube to Stalać, the

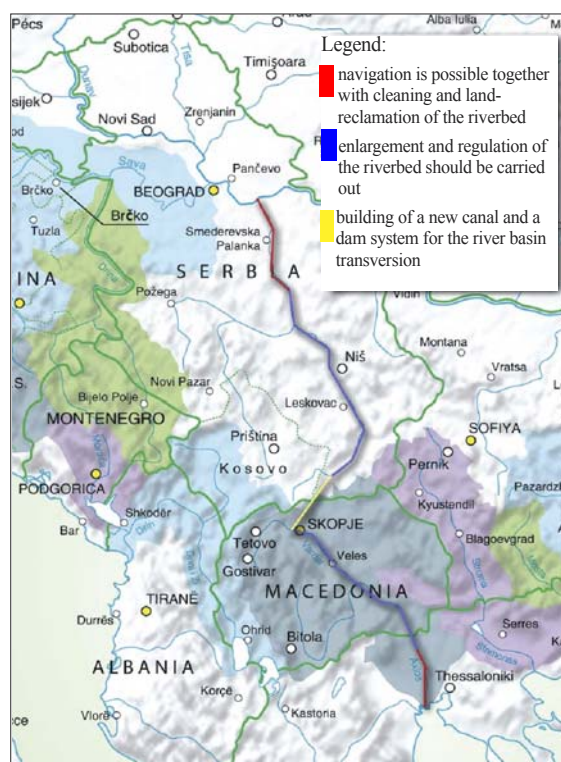
---

<sup>9</sup> Actually, the route that goes from Belgrade along the Danube and across the Black to the Aegean Sea is 1,880 km long, while the route that goes along the Morava and the Vardar to the Aegean Sea is 700 km long. The great potential of the Danube and other Serbian rivers makes realistic the expectations that the project will be profitable. Finally, the the project idea for connecting the Danube with the Aegean Sea through the Morava and the Vardar has been more than a hundred years old.

second would include the Južna Morava and the lateral canal from Stalać to the watershed at Preševo, and the third would be the very crossing over the watershed. The fourth section would connect the watershed with the regulation of the course of the Vardar and the lateral canal to Greece, while the fifth one would include the regulation of the course of the Vardar in Greece to Thessaloniki. It would be 650 km long in total, of which 345 km would be a part of the Morava sector.

The length of the canal in the area of the Velika Morava would be about 151 kilometres. Ships that can carry up to 1,350 tons could sail on this part of the canal. Apart

Picture 3. Canal routes and basic directions of construction



<http://img151.imageshack.us/img151/5984/moravavardargd5.jpg>

from the main route on the Velika Morava, this location would also involve a part of the canal along the Južna Morava with a lateral canal along the Nišava to Niš and the one along the Zapadna Morava to Kraljevo.<sup>10</sup> In order to connect the Danube with the Thessaloniki port apart from the canal, constructors should dig tunnels, build wharfs, levees for the protection of the terrain from erosion and water accumulation, they should also build locks, dams, water power plants, new roads as well as other constructions facilities. According to the estimates of the Yugoslav River Shipping from 1995, \$575 million should be invested in the construction of water power plants, dams and the protection of river banks, as well as in the construction works for hydromechanical and electric equipment, expropriation and building of locks.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> According to some projects, apart from the main canal there would be some lateral canals, too. Actually, along the riverbed of the Zapadna Morava a 73 km long canal would extend to Kraljevo, while along the riverbed of the Nišava a 15 km long canal would extend to Niš. As planned, three lateral canals would also be built on the territories of Macedonia and Greece, respectively. This system would enable building of ports in Požarevac, Velika Plana, Batočina, Čuprija, Stalać and Aleksinac. Niš, Kruševac, Trstenik and Kraljevo would be provided with wharfs for lateral canals.

<sup>11</sup> "Vodeni most Beograd-Solun", Politika, 10.07.1995.

Along the Velika Morava, the canal would, among other things, have several wharfs. They could be located in Požarevac, Velika Plana, Čuprija and Stalać, while along the Južna Morava they could be located in Aleksinac and Niš, and as for the Zapadna Morava, they could be in Kruševac, Trstenik and Kraljevo. The Morava sector would undergo an economic transformation in a short-term. Only along the part of the river course that flows to Stalać seven water power stations could be built, the river banks would be developed, irrigation systems would be built, thus laying strong and transparent foundations for the development of high tourism.

One of the biggest construction problems would certainly be the terrain configuration. It concerns, above all, different peak levels of the Morava and the Vardar. This implies building of locks that should de-level water within the range of 140 to 170 metres. Locks would be probably built on seven or eight levels. This should be done as perfectly as possible, since otherwise they would reduce the capacity of the canals what would make the navigation slower.

### **Potential investors**

The river Rhine-Main-Danube connection offers Belgrade opportunities to become a significant river port in the Balkans. By further development of the canal network during this century the Serbian economy could turn a large number of its towns into very developed river ports. In this way, Serbia would directly become a developed river-sea state.<sup>12</sup>

Serbia should certainly consider a potential partner that would participate in the greatest traffic investment in this part of the Balkans. One of the potential actors in building of this canal could be the Federal Republic of Germany. Building of the navigable Morava-Vardar-Aegean Sea waterway it could make the Rhine-Main-Danube canal optimally exploitable. By connecting the European rivers – the Rhine, the Main, the Danube, the Morava, the Vardar and the Axios in Greece a link would be created between the North and Aegean Seas, or actually between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean through the ports of Rotterdam and Thessaloniki.

Apart from FR Germany, potential investors could be the EU or Japan as one of the leading world technological and economic powers. In this way, Japan would participate in one of significant projects in Europe, while Serbia, Macedonia and Greece would provide themselves with an investor for a long term, being at the same time a stable partner they can rely on, as well. Considering the present state of affairs in the Balkan states and the economic situation in Serbia, Macedonia and Greece, this project looks rather courageous. However, it has remained vivid in the plans of many visionaries. As a construction project, it is very attractive and has been considered for many decades in broader European areas. Now, it is even more topical when the Rhine-Main-Danube canal has been completed.

---

<sup>12</sup> By building of the Morava-Vardar transversal line the status of some Serbian towns would be changed, too. Požarevac, Velika Plana, Svilajnac, Čuprija, Paraćin, Niš, Leskovac, Vladičin Han, Vranje and Bujanovac would become port towns with developed river-sea connections with the world. These ports would largely connect Serbia with the world seas.

## Concluding remarks

As with any big investment that would substantially change the geopolitical, geoeconomic and geostrategic profile of a state and the standards of its citizens, there are different opinion whether we need on the Morava-Vardar-Axios-Aegean Sea canal or not. Taking into consideration those opinions, we shall endeavour to mark several most outstanding positions that speak in favour whether this project should be carried out or not.

The most outstanding arguments against investing in this project are the following:

Enormous funds: there are different estimates, however, according to the most optimistic ones, the minimum for building of the canal would \$8 billion. Apart from the canal and other facilities that should be built, sceptics say that this waterway would „cut” Serbia. For this reason, many bridges should be built to connect roads, settlements and cultivable soils that would be cut by the canal.

Construction period: according to some estimate at least 13 years, while some experts say that even more than thirty years would take to build the canal. It took the Germans almost a century from the day when the idea had been born till the Rhine-Main-Danube canal was completed. The idea of making the Morava a navigable river was first presented in 1841.

Ecology: There are fears that building of the canal and other lateral canals it would involve would devastate the environment in Serbia. Actually, the environmental consciousness in Serbia is on a very low level and the canal and ships that would carry heavy cargo could jeopardise the ecosystem, thus destroying the idea of organic food and a healthy environment. In this regard, the canals in Amsterdam and Venice are taken as an example to corroborate this position. Actually, it is pointed out that the ecological consciousness in The Netherlands and Italy is on a much higher level. These are highly developed countries that have some environmental problems with their canals in summer, and one can only wonder how Serbia would cope with them.

Profitability of the traffic: although water transportation is definitely the most profitable it also the slowest. Serbia could not build the canal in a short period of time, and if it did, the question is what trend in goods transportation would be current at that time, or whether goods would be transported by river at all in the way it is practised today.

The most outstanding arguments that speak in favour of investing in building of this line of communication are the following:

Building of water power stations<sup>13</sup> that is provided for by the project on the navigable section would resolve the shortage of electric power in Serbia for good. Actually, as provided for by the project on the part of the canal that goes through Serbia a system of the so-called medium-sized water power stations would be built that would produce more electric power than Serbia actually needs. In this case, it could become significant electric power exporter.

---

<sup>13</sup> The canal project provides building of 42 electric power stations on the route towards the Aegean Sea, of which 24 would be built on the territory of Serbia.

By appropriate and controlled exploitation of pebble, which experts consider to be of high quality, the bed of the Morava would be prepared in such a way so to make it possible to turn it into a navigable river.

At least twenty thousand people would be engaged in building of the canal, while the effects accompanying its construction would enable Serbia to get rid off a natural disaster as floods are. Building of the canal would considerably spur the development of river tourism that could be combined with spa and mountain tourism that includes Zlatibor and Kopaonik.

By building of the canal, the route for ships that would sail from Belgrade to Thessaloniki would be shorter by 1,260 km considering that ships should not go across the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. This would ensure more efficient and economical traffic and transportation connection between Mediterranean and Northern and Central European countries.

By building and completing the canal, Serbia would directly become a high developed state in the field of river traffic.

It is certain that there are many arguments that speak in favour and against building of the canal. It is the fact that along the most important strategic route of Serbia, this being the Morava-Vardar valley, the state has for decades invested large funds in the construction of contemporary lines of communications, this above including road and railway traffic. This line of communication will, however, not be optimally exploited if a contemporary water transversal line is not built there. Yet, it is the most difficult thing one should make since it is very complicated. Objectively, there are two strong arguments why Serbia would, yet, abandon this idea. This is an enormous capital that should be invested in its construction and the ecosystem that should be in perfect condition to prevent Serbia from becoming a country of „neglected and dirty canals”.

On the other hand, there are two strong arguments that speak in favour of building the canal. Actually, by connecting the Morava and the Vardar Serbia would almost solve for good the problem of electric energy supply. In this way, the need to construct some nuclear power plants would become out-of-date. Pure energy resources would certainly strengthen the environmental consciousness of its citizens to protect the ecosystem of its state. And another important thing, building of the canal would entail the regulation of the rivers and their banks, thus eliminating floods that very often do damage to the population in Serbia. This also includes the tourist aspect of building of the canal. The possibility to sail by ship from Belgrade to Rotterdam or Thessaloniki through the central, land part of Europe is for passengers and tourists a true step forward for at least two centuries.

## Literature

- Basic Infrastructure Investments in South-Eastern Europe. Regional Project Review, Regional Funding Conference for South-Eastern Europe, Brussels, 2000.



- Dujić I. Koridor X – izazov za strategiju Srbije prema Sredozemnom moru i Sueckom kanalu, Međunarodni problemi, 1-2, IMPP, Beograd, 2009.
- European Conference of Ministers of Transportation: Pan-European Corridors, 2001.
- Grčić M. Komponente geografskog položaja Srbije. Zbornik radova Geografskog fakulteta Univerziteta u Beogradu, sv. XLIX, Beograd 2001.
- Prostorni plan Republike Srbije, Službeni glasnik RS, Beograd, 1996.
- Rathery A. The Transport Infrastructure Regional (TIRS) Study. European Conference of Ministers of Transport, 3rd IRF Congress for South-East Europe, Belgrade, 2002.
- Radovanović V.S. Jugoslavija-geografski položaj, unutrašnje i spoljne veze. Glasnik Etnografskog instituta SANU, knj. II-III, Beograd, 1953–54.
- Radovanović V.S. Geografske osnove Južne Srbije, Skoplje, 1937.
- Rečno-pomorski saobraćaj sa mogućnostima razvoja na pravcu Dunav-more. Saobraćajni fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, 1998.
- Serbia, Country factsheet, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2008.
- Šećerov V. Transgranična saradnja u oblasti Podunavlja. Geografski fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, Beograd, 2002.
- Vision Planet, Draft Final Report of the Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment. Vienna, 1999.
- Vemić, M. Sadašnje stanje i projekcija izgradnje mreže pruga dunavsko-moravskog Koridora, Geografski institut “Jovan Cvijić”, SANU, Beograd, 2005
- Urgent Investments for Basic Infrastructure in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Luxembourg, 2000.

Miljojko Bazić<sup>1</sup>  
Ranko Lojić<sup>2</sup>  
Aleksandar Bazić<sup>3</sup>

## ROLE OF MEDIA IN THE PROCESS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN THE DANUBE REGION

### ABSTRACT

We live in the world that demands better and more complete information for a businessman about everything what is going around in his narrow or wider environment. In such a way, the modern world of business destroys many old methods and techniques and introduce us with a new one. One of the new ones is media relations as an integrated system of public relations. Because of the process of economic cooperation and connection with social organization in Serbia with the economic and social organization in the Danube region, it will largely depend on the role of media.

Media provide economic and social organization in Serbia a huge contribution in the process of economic cooperation and connection in the Danube region, if it is viewed and positioned as part of the whole system of internal and external communication of the organization with its target public. It means that through media, economic and social organization should establish communication with most important segments of economy and society in the Danube region that are interested in business cooperation and networking.

Economic and social entities in Serbia should use media as primary means of transmission of messages that are sent to the target public in the Danube region. Organization's public media should be developed on mutual trust and understanding with professional responsibility in the process of telling, transfer or using information relevant for the Danube region. In communication with media, it is important to follow basic ethnic values that are mostly expressed in the form of codes.

Would media relations of economic and social subject be successful or not in the process of economic cooperation and connection in the Danube region will largely depend on their position in organization. Where media relations are seen as a part of the top management system in the organization, there is an assumption that media relations will achieve its mission and contribute to building trust and understanding between organization from Serbia and its target public in the Danube region and elsewhere.

---

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Miljojko Bazić, Ph.D., Megatrend University, Belgrade.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Ranko Lojić, Ph.D., Assistant, University of Defence, Belgrade.

<sup>3</sup> Aleksandar Bazić, MA, Ph.D. candidate, Graduate School of Business Studies, Belgrade.

We can often hear a statement like this: „If these are published by the media, it must be true”. That means that event that didn’t publish by media, didn’t happen. It is very important that management of organization from Serbia know why and how media are important for them, what media can expected from its and what management can expect from media, how would the process of economic cooperation and connections organization in Serbia and organization from Danube region would be successful.

*Key words:* Media, Public relations, Strategy, Economic cooperation, Economic development, Danube region.

## **Introduction**

Most of that business and ordinary people about events in the immediate and distant environment is usually informed through the media. The media relations of the organization are expected to transparency and public work. Organizations communicating with the media have to be adapted, on the one hand, their interests and needs, on the other hand, the interests and needs of the media. This indicates that public relations and media organizations are interdependent.

The organization uses the media as the primary means of transmission of messages that are sent to the target public. It is therefore very important for the organization to media relations, developed on the basis of both sides trust and understanding.

Managing media relations is an integral part of the overall management system with the public. Managing public relations, in turn part of the overall system management organization as a whole. Therefore, management of media relations should be considered in parallel and aligned with other management processes within the organization.

For an organization to properly manage media relations to manage it, must adjust its interests on the one hand, and target the interests of the media and the public, on the other. To accommodate them, must know their needs and the needs of the media and target audience.

This means that managing media relations must be based on an understanding that internal, and external segments that affect the organization and its target audience. It is therefore in the interest of the organization and the media, to establish their mutual cooperation, based on mutual trust and understanding, so that the public be informed promptly and objectively.

To manage media relations was functional, responsible people in the organization must be informed about all important issues for the organization and to be always prepared for any kind of public speaking.

It is particularly important to manage relations with the media in crisis situations. Since the crisis appear unannounced and often with great consequences, an organization that would mitigate these effects and more easily weathered the crisis, must have pre-prepared contingency plans to communicate with the public, and in its management plan for media relations in crisis situations.

## Management relations with the media

Like any process and process relationships with media organizations requested that it places pre-planned procedures. Planning is essential in order to more easily established and implemented quality communication with the media, which should contribute to the trust and understanding between the organization and the media. **“Media relations are a set of activities within the public relations, which are planned, and organized continuously to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and representatives of various media.”**<sup>4</sup>

In the strategic planning and management of public relations, media relations which form part of the plan and management, must be familiar with many factors related to:

- the organization,
- its operation,
- competition and
- environment.

### **Therefore, management of media relations largely depends on:**

- size of the organization,
- organizational structure,
- the activity that deals with the organization,
- the geographical position of the organization,
- attitudes and opinions that dominate the environment of the organization,
- cultural and ethical norms that characterize the environment of the organization and
- cultural and ethical norms that characterize the organization.

**Managing media relations should enable organizations to build their target audience, and then maintain its distinctive identity.** “In their work, designers and implementers of media relations must comply with all enactments relating to the media. On the other hand, the obligation of the media to accurately, fairly, fully and timely report on the events that are of interest to the public, while respecting the public’s right to know the truth adhering to basic standards of journalism.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Managing media relations means that the organization:**

- has a plan for media relations work in normal circumstances;
- has a media relations plan to work in exceptional circumstances or during a crisis;
- timely, objective and fairly inform the public under normal and emergency circumstances;

---

<sup>4</sup> Vinko Filipovic, Milica Kostic-Stankovic, *Public Relations, author’s edition*, Belgrade, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Bazic Miljojko, Bazic Alexander, *Modern Public Relations*, third edition, Belgrade, 2011.

- their attitude towards the media makes an impression in public that is responsible for all their actions;
- disclose any information as necessary to free choice of its products and SERVICES on the market;
- journalists do not give bribes to publish certain information that is beneficial to the public or the concealment of certain information that is detrimental to the public;
- avoid actions or circumstances that may jeopardize its good business conduct and
- avoid actions or circumstances that may jeopardize its good relationship with the media.

**To manage media relations is very important to understand the nature of media and journalism.** “The nature of the organization means that the media are so narrow and the general public. Therefore, the management of large companies began the day just reviewing the daily news, a continuing study of possible media coverage of their organization.”<sup>6</sup>

Compared with media organizations, media and journalists must be seen as someone who is accountable to its readers, listeners or viewers. On the other hand, in relation to the organization, the media and journalists must foster a culture of ethics and public communication.

Association of Serbian Journalists and UNS Independent Journalists Association of Serbia adopted the NUNS and brought the Code of Journalists of Serbia, which serves as the preamble to the Code states, as well as ethical standards of professional conduct for journalists. Obligation and duty of the journalist is to respect the professional and ethical principles contained in the Code and to confront pressures to violate these principles.

To better understand the attitude of journalists towards the organization, here are some ode to the principles contained **in the Code of Journalists of Serbia**:

- The obligation of a journalist to accurately, objectively, fully and timely report on the events of interest to the public, while respecting the public’s right to know the truth adhering to basic standards of journalism;
- A journalist is obliged to indicate the source of the information transmitted. If the source does not want to be discovered, journalists and editors act with due professional care and their professional authority of the barn behind the information and are responsible for its accuracy;
- incompatible with journalism publication of unfounded accusations, slander, rumours and fabricated letters or letters whose author is unknown or his identity is not verifiable;
- journalism is incompatible with accepting bribes for publication, concealing or preventing the collection and publication of information. A journalist can not be

---

<sup>6</sup> Various authors, *Media Relations*, Media Center and Pristop, Belgrade, 2004.

delayed disclosure of important information, except for the necessary verification of accuracy;

- Journalist cherishes culture and ethics of public speech, respects the right of reply, an apology and correction, and shall promptly publish an appropriate correction;
- A journalist in the collection of information must not serve extortion, threats and persecution of information sources;
- A journalist is obliged to present a source of information and provide a medium for which at the time in question;
- A journalist respects the privacy, dignity and integrity of the people he writes about. The right to privacy is narrowed when it comes to public figures, particularly public officials;
- Anyone who feels that a journalist has violated a provision of the Code, may apply to the Court of Honour and the Council for the media.

For an organization, or for employees in public relations, it is important to know their rights and obligations, and rights and obligations of journalists and media that are arranged code. Therefore, it is necessary that the organization has a code of public relations within which will be regulated and media relations and press. Existence of a code in the organization will surely contribute to the establishment of better and more successful relationships with the media.

### **Models of establishing relations with the media**

In establishing a relationship with the media, three models are met, namely:

- “defensive or reactive model
- strategic or proactive model and
- contingency model”<sup>7</sup>

#### *2.1. Defensive or reactive model of media relations*

Whether and how these relate to the media to establish an organization depends on many factors, but two are dominant. The first relates to the understanding of modern business and the addition of all the factors that affect business. The second relates to the understanding of the essence and importance of the media business organization. “Both factors indicate that if the organization wants to operate successfully it needs to be open to new ideas and new approaches. One of the new approach to modern business means that the organization should be open to cooperation with journalists and the media.”<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Bazić Miljojko, Bazić Alexander, *Modern Public Relations*, third edition, Belgrade, 2011.

<sup>8</sup> D. Vilkos L., Cameron G. T., Olt F. H. i. Age V. K, *Public Relations*, Zagreb, 2006.

The journalist's profession means that a journalist must be a researcher and critic and social events. "A journalist to inform the public about what is happening in society, what is interesting, or what could happen. Organization as part of the society are therefore always in the zone of journalistic interest."<sup>9</sup>

For organizations, that relation-reporter relationship is established in two ways. The first assumes that the initiator of these relations organizations. The second implies that the initiator of a journalist or journalists. When the organization initiates this means that these relations are offensive. When a reporter initiator of this means that the activity of defensive or reactive organization. The very word suggests a reactive to react to something that has already been done. Reactive relationship means that the organization responds to some journalists which are procedures initiated. Therefore, defensive model of media relations imply that the organization and media relations, media are the ones who have the initiative, that journalists are the ones who initiate the action.

It is because journalists often ask us to write about the organization or organizations to ask them to answer questions regarding any information or events that are of great interest to the public. At the initiative by journalists, often times, organizations avoid contact with journalists or do not want to answer their questions. Such an attitude towards the press suggesting that something is hiding from journalists and the public, or is it arrogance and lack of culture.

No matter what it comes to extremely negative impact on building mutual understanding and respect between the organization and the media. In the modern world of business or running away to hide from reporters indicates the assumption that organized much bad or illegal work. This assumption is even greater motivation and driving force for journalists to reach the inside of the organization and inform the public what really happens in it.

Under normal circumstances, labour and business organizations, the task of one who is responsible for communicating with the press not to flee or to hide from reporters, but with them regularly and openly communicate. Representatives of the Organization for Cooperation with the media as intermediaries between the organization and the media should promote, not hinder or stop the flow of information between organizations and the media. If you inhibit or stop the damage, they do to their organization.

The essence of defensive media relations should be based on the fact that the press should not be regarded as enemies, but to realize that their nature of job search for information that placed the public for its timely information. "Something more advanced form of reactive media strategy is the principle of respect for all communication with the media and professionalism in carrying them out, but only when the journalists' interest and initiative to publish something in the field of labour organization."<sup>10</sup> Business, the

---

<sup>9</sup> M. Scott Katlip, Allen H. Senter, Glen M. Broome, *Successful Public Relations*, Official Gazette, Belgrade, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Vinko Filipovic, Milica Kostic-Stankovic, *Public Relations*, author's edition, Belgrade, 2008.

relationship with the media in Serbia shows that most organizations mostly used defensive or reactive model.

### **The strategic model of relations with media**

While defensive relationship with the media is based on journalistic initiative, the strategic is based on initiatives of the organization. **This model assumes that the organization has canned a plan to communicate with the public, as part of that plan and work with the media as part of the target audience.** The strategic model assumes that the organization and the relationships with the media seen as a part of organizational management in order to create and maintain favourable image of the target audience about the organization and build mutual understanding and respect between the organizations, the media and any other target audience.

This model, except that the organization is based on the initiative in communicating with the media, is based on timely and professional response to demands, needs or issues that were brought by journalists. The Organization sees on relations with the media, as a mutually beneficial relationship both to the media and the organization.

#### **Strategic media relations model is based on the following principles:**

- information,
- reliability,
- expertise,
- Accountability,
- availability,
- behavioural culture and communication and so on.

**Informed** means that a person who is responsible for media relations entirely rules all the information relating to labour and business organizations. The person is informed if the government information relating to internal and external public organizations, which may be of interest to journalists.

In communication with the media, **reliable** sources of information concerning the organization are of decisive importance for the establishment of mutual good relations between journalists and organizations. Any attempt by presenting false information, or covering the truth will contribute to undermining the credibility of the person responsible for working with the media. A person damaged credibility of the journalists does not believe. When you lose the trust of journalists will try to find another source of information in the organization. It becomes hard for the organization, because it will not be able to controls the content and quality of information. Therefore, awareness on the conservation of reliable sources of information must always be present in a person responsible for working with the media. Otherwise, every lie or manipulation can multiply a negative return to the organization.



“The real, open and reliable communication with the media means that the person in charge of cooperation with the media boasts **expertise**. To the expert and informed and reassure people trusted journalists. Such a person, it is difficult to afford the opportunity to be irresponsible with the media, or by their organization.”<sup>11</sup>

The person in charge of working with the media must be aware of their responsibilities during the placement of information to journalists. **Responsibility** must be multiple and to the public, and the organization itself. Responsibility implies an awareness of how false or hidden information could jeopardize the organization and society as a whole. In particular, there must be an awareness of hiding or concealment of information relating to health and safety of people.

Media relations imply that the person in charge of working with the media has to be **available** for co-operation with the press. Availability does not mean to be watchful 24 hours and wait for calling from journalists, but journalists can normally obtain information from the person responsible for working with the media. I know that journalists can not and there is no need to expect that a person is available 24 hours, especially when there are no developments that would be interesting for the media and the public. Constant availability is meant when the organization found some extraordinary event.

“For successful relationships with media very important is **behavioural culture and communication** of organizations. Organization which is concerned that its employees in the work show a high level of culture and communication behaviour, for sure cares for a high level of cultural behaviour and communication with the media.”<sup>12</sup> In building a relationship of mutual respect and understanding with journalists and editors, culture and behaviour of those responsible for communicating with the media that will be helpful are important. Culture and behaviour of communication must always be present because the implementation of strategic media relations in the interest of the organization is primarily and only journalists and media. They initiate the organization and speak to the press and media. “That’s why the organization has no basis or need to be used in the initiation or uncultured illegal means.”<sup>13</sup>

If an organization has poor relations with the media, thus denying themselves the possibility that its public statements or press conferences and media covers for free publishing. In this situation, the ability of the organization media appearance will be possible only through lease payments in the media, which is very expensive for the organization.

### 2.3. Crisis model of media relations

This model assumes that the organization has canned a plan to communicate with the public in times of crisis or emergencies, as part of that plan and media relations as

---

<sup>11</sup> Luis Alvin Day, *Ethics in Media*, Media Center, Belgrade, 2004.

<sup>12</sup> Bazić Miljojko, *Business communication - the modern way to success*, Megatrend University, Belgrade, 2009.

<sup>13</sup> Group of Authors, *Public Relations: Strategies and tactics*, Faculty of Economics, Belgrade, 2008.

part of the target audience. A plan for an emergency or extraordinary events is made in order to organize the least surprised by the crisis, in case you hit it, that the organization as quickly and as successfully overcomes the crisis.

Many are inclined to say that the organization reflects its function best in times of crisis, and are therefore very important to know or perceive that the organization survives a crisis and that crisis communication is established with the press. “The notion of crisis media relations and crisis management in general is quite broad and includes treatment in case of calamity threatening the life or health of employees and other stakeholders, or cause property damage and other problems, although not directly threaten the survival of the organization. However, such events certainly affect its identity and image in the media.”<sup>14</sup>

Does the organization is serious and successful can be seen in that kind of relationship is to the crisis. Unsuccessful organizations that work and act as a crisis that they will never or can not guess. They are not thinking about the crisis and prepare for it. They think that the crisis will hit all the others will just work around them.

Organizations that are not ready to face the crisis, or are not prepared to work in times of crisis tend to be dangerous to the environment. Research shows that there are organizations in which they often happen like crises or extraordinary events in continuity. “This means that these organizations have a flippant and unprofessional approach to business. In such organizations or any other public media do not trust.”<sup>15</sup>

The task employed in media relations is the one to present to management and draw his attention to the possible consequences of lack of preparation or poor preparation for working in the field of media relations in crisis situations.

Successful organizations do and act the opposite. They believe that a crisis or special event comes unannounced and that every organization can guess the only question is when and how. That is why preparing for a crisis in all areas of labour and business organizations. Among other things, prepare for crisis communication with the media.

### **Crisis Relations with Media include:**

- pre-crisis or pre-emptive,
- crisis or the current operation and
- after crisis or rehabilitation activities.

Pre-crisis or pre-emptive, in many ways, determines how they will establish communications with the media during the crisis and how the crisis will affect one side of the business organization and the other on its image in the media. It is important that under normal or pre-crisis conditions, organizations establish mutually good relations with the media. If the media are regularly and objectively informed about the organization, and were able to convince themselves of the truth of many of the

---

<sup>14</sup> Group of Authors, *Media Relations*, Media Center, Belgrade, 2004.

<sup>15</sup> Djuric, Milenko, *Publik Relations*, Institute for Market Research, Belgrade, 1992.

information obtained from the organization, they will build confidence in the organization. Through the media, other target public organizations will build trust too.

Trust the media and the public before the crisis that has gained about the organization, during the crisis will be one of the primary means of support organization to easily and quickly overcome the crisis or emergency. If the organization before the crisis has not gained the trust of the media, it will be much harder to do during the crisis.

Relations with the media during the crisis would be best to establish if it is compiled by the forward plan for crisis media relations. Crisis media planning often rests on the following issues:

- What could be a crisis in which the organization can be found?
- Who will manage media relations crisis?
- Who will be member of a team in crisis media relations?
- Where the premises in which to do this for crisis media relations?
- How will verify the accuracy of the information will be forwarded to journalists?
- With which age group of journalists and the media will communicate during the crisis?
- What technical support is needed to access emergency communications with the media?
- Who will act on behalf of the media and whether it qualifies for this?

**During the crisis**, there is a need to take extra care of those who are directly affected by the crisis, as well as their relatives. After the outbreak of the crisis, organization should immediately notify the public and communicate the information about the crisis that are safe and reliable. This will reduce the possibility of occurrence or area, or placing any deliberate misinformation. Addressing the public through the media aims to the extent possible under the circumstances reassure the public and reduce fear and anxiety of uncertainty that crisis carries with it with all those who are in any way affected by the crisis. Public information should continue after the arrival of new information. I continue to be disclosed only proven and reliable information. Any disclosure of information, or the placement of false information by the organization, the course of the crisis and post-crisis period, can have unforeseen negative consequences.

How the crisis has hit the organization can be found out immediately after the crisis. The full image can be obtained only after several months or a year. **After crisis labour** and business of organizations, should be carried out in three directions:

**First**, you need to help those that the crisis is most directly affected. The media's role in this process including the public and to mobilize the support and solidarity with all those whom the crisis in any way affected. Elimination of the consequences of the crisis is also time-consuming process.

**Another direction** to go towards the establishment of normal flow of running an organization, the organization continued to work in as much as possible under normal

circumstances. That the media can have great importance for the organization. Their role would be reflected in the provision of media space for the placement of information to indicate that the work can continue in the organization of the pre-crisis model.

**The third line** should lead to the elimination of potential causes that can cause a crisis again. The task of the media at this stage is to show that the organization does not run away from responsibility and is ready to answer all questions concerning the causes and course of the crisis

## Conclusion

How an organization will operate in the modern business, greatly depends on its relationship with the target public. One of the dominant targets of the public that every organization has to pay special attention is the media. If the media relations involve a set of activities within the public relations, which are planned and organized continuously, establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and media, then it is evident that this is a very responsible and professional approach that does not tolerate improvisation, ignorance or manipulation.

How an organization will communicate with the media is subject to a number of factors some of which are dominant: the size of the organization, which deals with business organizations, the geographical position of the organization, attitudes and opinions that dominate the environment of the organization, culture and ethical norms that characterize the environment of the organization and the organization itself.

People in your organization who are responsible for media relations, that these relations were mutually beneficial and productive have to take care on the one hand the nature and needs of your organization on the other side of the nature of media and journalism.

In today's practice in communication with the media, most organizations can meet the three models, namely: defensive or reactive model, the strategic or proactive crisis model and the model. Which model to use the organization in establishing a relationship with the media usually depends on the understanding of modern business and the addition of all the factors that affect business organizations, as well as understanding the essence and importance of the media business organization.

So we have a situation that is between the organization-journalist relations established in two ways. One assumes that the initiator of the organization of these relations, the second implies that the initiator of a journalist. For the effective functioning of the organization and building its distinctive public image it is logical that the initiator of these relationships is an organization or to be equal initiators.

Defensive relationship with the media is based on journalistic initiatives, strategic and crisis based on the initiative of the organization. Strategic and crisis model imply that the organization has a pre-prepared plan to communicate with the public, as part of that plan and work with the media as part of the target audience. These two models imply

that the organization of relations with the media seen as a part of organizational management in order to create and maintain favourable image of the target audience about the organization and build mutual understanding and respect between the organization and the media

For the organization is especially important to have a pre-prepared a very clear plan of communication in times of crises or emergencies. For whether or not the organization has a plan relationship with the media in a crisis situation, it can be predicted and its relation to the crisis. Those organizations that do not have that plan so they work and behave as if the crisis they will never or can not guess. These organizations believe that the crisis will hit all the others will just work around them.

While the other responsible organizations and in front of him and in front of his public work otherwise. They are prepared for the crisis in all areas of work and business, including in the field of public relations and media. In the crisis related or communication with the media include pre-crisis, crisis and after crisis or rehabilitation activities. This means that the establishment of crisis communications and media relations is a long process that lasts as long as the consequences of the crisis do not mitigate, or minimize.

### Literature

- Filipovic Vinka, Kostić-Stanković Milica, *Odnosi s javnošću*, autorovo izdanje, Beograd, 2008.
- Bačić Miljojko i Bazić Aleksandar, *Savremeni odnosi s javnošću*, treće izdanje, Beograd, 2011.
- Grupa autora, *Odnosi s medijima*, Medija centar i Pristop, Beograd, 2004.
- Vilkos D. L., Kameron G. T., Olt F. H. i. Ejđži V. K, *Odnosi s javnošću*, Zagreb, 2006.
- Skot M. Katlip, Alen H. Senter, Glen M. Brum, *Uspešni odnosi s javnošću*, Službeni glasnik, Beograd, 2006.
- Dej Luis Alvin, *Etika u medijima*, Medija centar, Beograd, 2004.
- Bazić Miljojko, *Poslovna komunikacija – savremeni put do uspeha*, Megatrend univerzitet, Beograd, 2009.
- Grupa autora, *Odnosi s javnošću: strategije i taktike*, Ekonomski fakultet, Beograd, 2008.
- Grupa autora, *Odnosi s medijima*, Medija centar, Beograd, 2004.
- Đurić, Milenko, *Publik Relations*, Institut za tržišna istraživanja, Beograd, 1992.

Mihajlo Vučić<sup>1</sup>

## THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF THE DANUBE RIVER BASIN WETLANDS

### ABSTRACT

The Ecosystem approach is the most cost-efficient and environmentally sound approach to the protection and preservation of shared natural resources. Although lacking legal standing to be proclaimed a principle of law in the environmental legal branch, it has gained considerable recognition in various texts that regulate the trans-boundary share and protection of natural resources, especially those concerning international watercourses and their adjoining natural habitats. It has also been positioned in the legal doctrine as the leading principle of environmental protection, however it is not sufficiently clear what would exactly be the scope of this principle in concrete situations. The utility of the ecosystem approach is especially visible in connection with wetlands, habitats of utmost interdependence and largely threatened by the anthropocentric philosophy of sovereign territorial interests pursuit. Elements of this approach are visibly scattered through various international legal instruments that regulate the environment of the Danube River Basin. However, it is doubtful that they create a firm legal obligation on the part of riparian states to protect their wetlands, irrelevant of the occurrence of environmental harm that affects other sovereign state interests. More likely, they institute a constant process of cooperation, share of information and monitoring, which serves as a framework in which future actions of stakeholders should develop, and very important is that they introduce to this process institutions of civil society, which are the ultimate beneficiaries of wetland protection and preservation. This process might eventually lead to the formulation of hard and fast legal rules that create enforceable obligations, but it is not yet possible to foresee whether this will ever happen. This is a clear reflection of the current state of general international environmental law, and although not the optimal, it is the only currently possible international legal regime in this field.

*Key words:* ecosystem, environment, Danube, wetlands.

### Introduction

In this paper, I will give an analysis of the current international legal regime dealing with environmental protection of the Danube River Basin wetlands with the aim of offering an insight to what extent this regime adheres to the contents of the “ecosystem approach”.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mihajlo Vučić, Research Assistant at Institute of International Politics and Economics.

To achieve this, I will explain in the first part the basic concept and contents of the ecosystem approach as it is defined in legal doctrine and several legal instruments, whose primary objects of environmental protection are not only natural habitats, but other aspects of the environment as well. Therefore, I will show that this notion is well embedded in the part of the current international environmental law that deals with freshwater resources, biodiversity and habitats protection. I will argue that its importance is so overwhelming, that it inevitably has to be taken into consideration whenever legal instruments for the protection of natural habitats are being designed. On the other hand, I will offer opinions of authors who, although not denying certain degree of standing for the ecosystem approach in current international law, doubt its value since they find it as a norm *in statu nascendi* depleted from binding power and therefore, unable to be effectively applied and enforced.

In the second part, I will posit wetlands in the hierarchy of natural habitats as one of the most important due to their numerous beneficial functions and activities for the human society and the environment itself. I will also shortly display the facts on wetlands of the Danube River Basin and problems which endanger their existence in the contemporary society. Finally, I will show why is the ecosystem approach most suitable to deal with problems affecting wetlands.

Finally, in the third part, I will present legal instruments which relate to the protection of the Danube River Basin and analyse in what degree they adhere to the concept of the ecosystem approach.

### **The definition of the ecosystem approach**

Traditionally, customary and conventional rules relating to the utilization of shared natural resources have been based firmly on the notion of State sovereignty being therefore, focused on the protection of territorial interests. Generally, environmental considerations have only had legal significance to the extent that they coincide with such territorial interests. This has been particularly true in the case of shared freshwater resources where “the focus of the equitable use principle is on the balancing of different use interests in the resource and not on the protection of ecological interests” and where “rights and obligations under the equitable use rule also remain anchored in the territorial sovereignty of riparian States over the shared resource”.<sup>2</sup>

However, in recent years, many international instruments, creating regimes for the utilization and protection of international watercourses, appear to have moved beyond the traditional obligations. They now focus on utilizing international watercourses in an equitable and reasonable manner and prevent significant transboundary harm by including more purely environmental obligations such as provisions that require the adoption of a more ecosystem-oriented approach to such protection.

---

<sup>2</sup> Owen McIntyre, “The Emergence of an “Ecosystem Approach” to the Protection of International Watercourses Under International Law”, *RECIEL*, 13(1), Blackwell Publishing Ltd, Oxford, 2004, page 1.

How can we explain the contents of the principle<sup>3</sup> in short? In legal theory, few authors have written about the ecosystem principle in International Environmental Law, but they have reached a respectable degree of consensus on what it actually means and of which elements it consists. I will cite at this point the definition provided by the acknowledged authors in the field: “Simply put, an ‘ecosystem approach’ requires consideration of the whole system rather than individual components. Living species and their physical environments must be recognized as interconnected, and the focus must be on the interaction between different sub-systems and their responses to stresses resulting from human activity. Not only does interconnectedness imply management approaches that are broad-based in a spatial sense; it requires as well that human interaction with and use of the environment respect the need for maintaining ‘ecosystem integrity’, in other words, the system’s capacity for self-organization.”<sup>4</sup> We can outline several important points of this definition.

Firstly, the accent of the protection is to be put on the system rather than the individual components. In this systematic view, all the species belonging to the particular ecosystem must be taken in their entire interconnectedness, however complex it might be, since every single connection is important for the functioning of the system as a whole.

Secondly, in the ecosystem there are various subsystems which represent their own micro-worlds of interconnectedness. They must be recognized as influencing each other through the mutual interaction, while also responding to the influences coming from the exterior, mainly caused by the human activity.

Thirdly, these micro-systems are capable of organizing themselves and with that of further organizing the larger ecosystem to which they belong. Therefore, any human interaction with these self-organized units must take into consideration this ability if it wants to exploit the ecosystem integrity for the success of its purpose. This is nicely put in the provision of the Biodiversity Convention where it is stated that the “ecosystem means a dynamic complex of plant, animal, and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.”<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, examples of the ecosystem approach being formulated in the international legal instruments are plentiful and scattered through various regional or

---

<sup>3</sup> I have to make a terminology note at the moment. When discussing the ecosystem approach, the term principle should be used only in its dictionary meaning, not as a matter of a legal source. Although certain degree of legal standing cannot be denied to it in contemporary International Environmental Law, as we will see in the course of this article, there exists no agreement either in legal doctrine or in the practice of international community of its status as a general principle of law, as designated by the Statute of the International Court of Justice.

<sup>4</sup> Jutta Brunnée and Stephen Toope, “Environmental Security and Freshwater Resources: Ecosystem Regime Building”, 91(1), *American Journal of International Law*, 1997, page 26.

<sup>5</sup> *Convention on Biological Diversity*, Article 2. Integrated text can be found in the International Legal Materials, number 31, 1992, page 818.



global texts that deal with the protection of shared water resources, but they appear in some documents of a more general nature as well, such as the Agenda 21.

One of the first international agreements to reflect the concept of ecosystem integrity was the 1978 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, Article II which states its purpose to be „to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem”<sup>6</sup>. Indeed, Article I defines its area of application, the “Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem”, as „the interacting components of air, land, water and living organisms, including humans, within the drainage basin”. Further example of the definition can be found in the Article 2(2)(d) of the 1992 Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Helsinki Convention), which requires parties „to ensure conservation and, where necessary, restoration of ecosystems”, while Article 3(1)(i) requires them to ensure that „sustainable water-resources management, including the application of the ecosystems approach, is promoted”.<sup>7</sup> This Convention was very influential in the process of adoption of the Danube Convention, the results of which we will see in the third part of this paper.

Interestingly and unexpectedly, regional water resources treaties adopted by developing countries have tended to demonstrate some of the earliest and most ardent support for the ecosystem approach. I highlight this since it is a common argument in the environmental law field that the economic interests of the developing countries usually supersede the environmental concerns and even if the case is the other way round, they are certainly not inclined to look upon the environment as common heritage towards whose protection everyone should strive in unison, but rather the inevitable misgiving to their economical well-being. For example, Article 1 of the Rio Plata Basin Treaty, concluded by Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, includes among its objectives the conservation and development of the flora and fauna of the basin.<sup>8</sup> But, few international river-utilization regimes demonstrate the need for ecosystem protection more dramatically than that of the Colorado River and the resulting deterioration of the ecosystem of the Colorado Delta. Due to over-allocation of the waters of the Colorado, freshwater flows into the delta have been reduced by nearly 75% during the course of the twentieth century, resulting in a concomitant reduction of delta wetlands to about 5% of their original extent.

A broad-based ecosystem approach has also received varying degrees of support among the declarations and resolutions of international organizations and codifying bodies, including various United Nations water and environmental conferences, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the International Law Association. In 1982, the United Nations Environment Programme noted in the period from 1972 to 1982 the „increasing

---

<sup>6</sup> Integrated text available on the website, <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/glwqa/1978/index.html>, 18.11.2011.

<sup>7</sup> *Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes*, Integrated text can be found in the International Legal Materials, number 31, 1992, page 1312.

<sup>8</sup> Treaty on the Rio Plata Basin, adopted in Brasilia on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1969, text can be found in International Legal Materials, number 8, 1969, page 905.

recognition of the need for better management of water resources by treating river basins as unitary wholes”<sup>9</sup> and in 1991, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) noted the increasing number of calls for ecosystem management of international watercourses.<sup>10</sup> The United Nations medium-term plan for the period 1992–1997 expressly recognized the threats posed to international watercourse ecosystems by socio-economic development and activities, stating: „Interactions between freshwater ecosystems on the one hand and human activities on the other are becoming more complex and incompatible as socio-economic development proceeds. Water basin development activities can have negative impacts too, leading to unsustainable development, particularly where these water resources are shared by two or more States”<sup>11</sup>. The approach was expressly endorsed by Chapter 18 of Agenda 21, which stated that the general objective is: „to make certain that adequate supplies of water of good quality are maintained for the entire population of this planet, while preserving the hydrological, biological and chemical functions of the ecosystems, adapting human activities within the capacity limits of nature”<sup>12</sup> Chapter 18 goes on explaining the significance of the ecosystem approach for integrated water resources management and thus, for the effective protection of the quality and supply of freshwater resources: “Integrated water resources management is based on the perception of water *as an integral part of the ecosystem*, a natural resource and a social and economic good, whose quantity and quality determine the nature of its utilization. To this end, water resources have to be protected, taking into account the *functioning of aquatic ecosystems* and the perennality of the resource, in order to satisfy and reconcile needs for water in human activities. In developing and using water resources, priority has to be given to the satisfaction to basic needs and the *safeguarding of ecosystems*.”<sup>13</sup>

The trend whereby legal instruments require States parties to them to take an ecosystem approach for the protection of international watercourses was certainly cemented with the adoption of the framework Convention on Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses.<sup>14</sup>

As we have seen, the principle of the ecosystem approach is well established, nominally at least, in the texts of numerous treaties, conventions, declarations and other legal

---

<sup>9</sup> The World Environment 1972–1982: A Report by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 1982), cited from the article by Hubert H.G. Savenije, Pieter van der Zaag, “Conceptual framework for the management of shared river basins; with special reference to the SADC and EU”, *Water Policy*, number 2, Delft, 2000, pages 9–45.

<sup>10</sup> Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *The State of the Environment*, Paris, OECD, 1991, page 69.

<sup>11</sup> Medium-Term Plan for the Period 1992–1997, UN GAOR, cited by Stephen McCaffrey, *The Law of International Watercourses*, Oxford University Press, second edition, Oxford, 2010, page 388.

<sup>12</sup> *Agenda 21*, Chapter 18, paragraph 18.2, text available at [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/res\\_agenda21\\_00.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/res_agenda21_00.shtml) 18.11.2011.

<sup>13</sup> *Agenda 21*, Chapter 18, paragraph 18.8.

<sup>14</sup> *Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of the International Watercourses*, Articles 20, 22 and 23. Integrated text can be found in the International Legal Materials, number 36, 1997, page 719.

instruments of both international and regional background that deal with the environmental protection of water resources. This has led the International Legal Commission (ILC) to suggest that there exists a general obligation on states to protect ecosystems, regardless of any transboundary impact. However, many distinguished authors have stood against this conclusion giving the arguments which can be summarized as follows: Whatever its merits, comprehensive ecosystem protection remains an underdeveloped concept in general international law and it is not yet possible to conclude that States have a general duty to protect and preserve ecosystems in all areas under their sovereignty. In their opinion, the ILC Commentary cited precedents which could only provide evidence of recognition by States of the necessity of protecting essential ecological processes and of a long-standing concern of States with the problem of pollution of international watercourses. The Commission has shied away, however, from formulating rights that would mirror these tentative ecosystem obligations. The Draft Articles, which have preceded the adoption of the Watercourses Convention adhere to the traditional approach pursuant to which environmental harm triggers enforceable rights only where it affects another watercourse State.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, there are rather more optimistic views in relation to the status in general international law of the ecosystem approach stating that: „While this obligation may be described as ‘new’ or ‘emerging’, its basic elements are already part of general international law. The obligation, as formulated in Article 20 of the UN Convention, simply reflects advances in scientific knowledge about the interrelationships of natural systems”.<sup>16</sup>

I would side with McCaffrey at this point, but also would like to add that the principle of the ecosystem approach, in a range of ways, permits consideration of relevant and related ecological factors which would otherwise be excluded under narrower approaches based on traditional notions of State sovereignty. Besides that, irrespective of which position one takes in relation to its precise legal status, few would disagree that this scientifically sound and potentially far-reaching approach to environmental rights and obligations has much to offer in relation to the continuing evolution of international environmental law. It has particular potential in relation to the environmental protection of international watercourses, where short-term, anthropocentric ideas of the self-interest of sovereign States have traditionally taken priority over the longer-term protection of shared freshwater resources.

With this being said, in the second part I would like to continue by giving facts on the environmental importance of wetlands as specific habitats that form an integral part of a watercourse system. I will argue why the ecosystem approach is the most suitable method of dealing with the protection of wetlands, since they represent the most vulnerable habitats of the Danube River Basin.

---

<sup>15</sup> See the views of Patricia Birnie and Alan Boyle, *International Law and the Environment*, Oxford University Press, second edition, Oxford, 2002, page 314, or Ximena Fuentes, “Sustainable Development and the Equitable Utilization of International Watercourses”, *British Yearbook of International Law*, number 68, 1998, page 171.

<sup>16</sup> Stephen McCaffrey, *The Law of International Watercourses*, Oxford University Press, second edition, Oxford, 2010, page 396.

## **Environmental importance of wetlands, or why are wetlands suitable for the ecosystem approach**

Recent estimates suggest that globally there remain between 5.3 and 5.7 million square kilometres of wetlands including bogs, fens, swamps, marches, floodplain and shallow lakes. They serve a variety of functions, including flood and erosion control, water purification and shoreline stabilisation.<sup>17</sup> Wetlands are highly productive ecosystems and provide habitats for many species, including endangered ones. They are, however, sensitive ecosystems that can easily suffer from degrading riverbed erosion, pollution, intensive forestry, hunting and intensive recreational use, as well as measures for flood protection, agriculture and navigation. Besides their ecological value, floodplains can have a considerable positive effect on water quality and nutrient levels. Wetlands also serve as retention areas and help to even out flood peaks and reduce flood damage by storing surplus water. “Wetlands are the most important part of an aquatic ecosystem”, says Christine Bratrach, head of WWF’s Danube/Freshwater Programme. Wetlands serve as a link between the land and the water, and provide a range of services that benefit all aspects of river activities. Wetlands act as a sponge and aid in flood protection and groundwater recharge, by absorbing water during the wet season and slowly releasing it during the dry season. Wetlands also help keep the river clean, by acting as a filtration system, trapping nutrients, like phosphorus and nitrogen, as well as sediments. Finally, wetlands are bursting with life and provide a variety of different habitats, especially as they serve as spawning grounds for fish and nesting grounds for migratory birds.<sup>18</sup>

The loss of wetlands has been difficult to quantify, and the only country in which the rate is well documented is the United States, where estimates suggest that the wetlands in ten states fell from 895,000 square kilometres in the 1780s to 422,397 in the 1980s.<sup>19</sup> The major threats include pollution, hunting, human settlement, agricultural drainage and fishing. Wood-cutting, degradation of the watershed, soil erosion, siltation and the diversion of water supplies are additional threats.

Similar process is occurring on the level of the Danube River basin. According to a study conducted in the framework of the Danube Pollution Reduction Programme, over the last two centuries in particular, most of the larger floodplain areas have disappeared – including up to 80% of the total wetland area along the Danube and its larger tributaries, the Prut, Tisza, Sava, Drava, and Morava. The “taming” of wild rivers to improve flood prevention, navigation, agricultural production, and energy production, has shortened the length of the Bavarian Danube by 21% and the length of the River Tisza in Hungary

---

<sup>17</sup> See World Conservation Monitoring Centre, *Global Biodiversity: Earth’s Living Resources in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, WCMC, Cambridge, 2000, page 219.

<sup>18</sup> Kirstie Shepherd, “A functioning river system: incorporating wetlands into river basin management”, article available at [http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw0702\\_p\\_03.htm](http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw0702_p_03.htm), 18.11.2011.

<sup>19</sup> World Conservation Monitoring Centre, *Global Biodiversity: Earth’s Living Resources in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, WCMC, Cambridge, 2000, page 222.

by 31%. Drainage ditches and dykes were built on about 3.7 million hectares of permanently or seasonally inundated land in Hungary during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some 80% of Romania's floodplains were likewise drained under agricultural intensification schemes during the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>20</sup> In the last 150 years, the need to create farmland, generate electricity and make water transport easier has changed the dynamics of the river. Today, more than 80% of the historical flood plain areas in the Danube River Basin has been lost, according to the ICPDR's Danube Basin Analysis. The loss of wetlands means the loss of the functions they perform. "We disconnected most of the wetlands or converted them to agricultural land", says Thomas Hein, who leads a working group at the Wasser Cluster Lunz and served as Assistant Professor at the Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management at the University for Natural Resources in Vienna, Austria. "It means that the landscape hasn't the possibility to buffer, to retain water, to retain nutrients, transport processes are dominating."<sup>21</sup>

Obviously, wetlands serve the purposes too numerous and important to be disregarded, however, they have suffered from the constant and widespread environmental degradation. This is due to the conflicting values which cannot be always put into accord with the sheer purpose of the more environmentally sound objectives, such as the need for larger spaces of potent agricultural land. But, the natural cycle in which the wetlands are one of the strongest links, cannot function based on these premises. The implications of the wetlands' degradation are not only visible in the contemporary moment, but will appear in their full effect in the long run, when it will be too late to react and prevent the inevitable. In this way, the wetlands protection is similar to the ozone layer and climate changes dilemma.

So we can come to the conclusion as why wetlands are, due to their immense importance, perfect habitats to be protected through the ecosystem approach. Firstly, the protection of their shared resources is a good worth promoting, whether for instrumental or intrinsic reasons. Secondly, whenever a resource is shared, particularly a resource that can easily be exhausted or degraded, disputes between the states involved are inevitable. To put aside the potential conflicts, the ecosystem approach will focus attention on the ultimate beneficiaries of environmental security, which are not states, but individuals and communities. Protection of their resources for humanity today and in the future will take on an independent value.

### **International legal regime of the Danube River basin wetlands**

I will present various legal instruments concerned with the regulation of the Danube River Basin, its environmental protection, and the status of its natural habitats, paying most attention to wetlands. The majority of these instruments are regional in nature,

---

<sup>20</sup> Information available on the website of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River Basin <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/wetlands.htm> 18.11.2011.

<sup>21</sup> Cited by Kirstie Shepherd, "A functioning river system: incorporating wetlands into river basin management", article available at [http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw0702\\_p\\_03.htm](http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw0702_p_03.htm) 18.11.2011.

which is in accordance with the practice developed in international law for the regulation of the rights and duties of the riparians on the international watercourses. However, some of them are of European wide level, such as the two directives of the EU Council. I will also analyse briefly the globally recognized legal instrument for the protection of wetlands, Ramsar convention, due to its overwhelming importance for the formation of principles of environmental protection for these natural habitats.

The first global agreement to address the conservation of wetlands was the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, or the Ramsar convention, adopted in 1971.<sup>22</sup> The Ramsar convention offers a detailed definition of the term wetlands, which was intended to serve well the purposes of environmental protection: “areas of marsh, fen, peatland, or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres.”<sup>23</sup> Indeed, the definition includes in itself the watercourses wetlands, which are the main object of our interest in this analysis. However, in the legal doctrine is often indicated that this definition does not reflect the enormous variety of wetland types, or the fact that they are dynamic, capable of changing with the seasons and over longer periods of time, and that accordingly their boundaries are often difficult to define with any degree of precision.<sup>24</sup> Ramsar convention represents a very important breakthrough in the conception and implementation of the ecosystem principle. It reflected new international legal efforts aimed at conservation by protecting a habitat type rather than a species.

The mechanism of the Convention is the following. Each party, without prejudice to its sovereign rights, must designate suitable wetlands within its territory for inclusion in the List of Wetlands of International Importance, taking account of their international significance in terms of ecology, botany zoology, limnology or hydrology.<sup>25</sup> Each party’s basic commitments include formulating and implementing wetlands conservation and its wise use; establish nature reserves; endeavouring to increase waterfowl populations; and ensuring that it is informed of any actual or likely change in the ecological character of any of its listed wetlands, which information is to be passed on to the Convention secretariat.<sup>26</sup> We can see that, although the accent is on the protection of the waterfowl population, which is defined by the Convention as “birds which are ecologically dependent on wetlands”<sup>27</sup>, formulations such as “any actual or likely change in the ecological character” indicate that the more wholesome approach was intended by the creators of the text. This is visible further in the implementation control mechanisms.

---

<sup>22</sup> Integrated text of the convention can be found on the official website [www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org). 18.11.2011.

<sup>23</sup> *Ramsar convention*, Article 1(1).

<sup>24</sup> See for example the view offered by Philippe Sands, *Principles of International Environmental Law*, second edition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, page 543.

<sup>25</sup> *Ramsar convention*, Articles 2(1) to 3.

<sup>26</sup> *Ramsar convention*, Articles 3 and 4(1) and (4).

<sup>27</sup> *Ramsar convention*, Article 1(2).

Implementation of the Convention is reviewed by Conferences on the Conservation of Wetlands and Waterfowl held every three years. The Conference may consider problems of implementation, additions and changes to the List of Wetlands, and changes in the character of listed wetlands. The Conference may make recommendations to the parties on the conservation, management and wise use of wetlands and their flora and fauna which must be taken into consideration by the parties.<sup>28</sup> We can see that the wetlands are interconnected through the wording of this provision with their flora and fauna. They are inseparable and mutually complementary, therefore, the protection granted must be of integral character, which is in accordance with the ecosystem principle.

The connection between the Convention's monitoring system and the ICPDR is reflected in the observer status granted upon the Ramsar convention, for an unlimited period of time for all meetings and activities in the framework of the Danube River Protection Convention.<sup>29</sup> It is important to note, that in the Agreement itself, parties proclaim their awareness of the need to promote coordinated approaches to protecting and restoring wetlands and their biodiversity in the context of river basin management, particularly in the case of shared river basins and wetland systems. Obviously, the ecosystem principle was leading the parties in their declarative practice here. Besides that, most of the riparian countries and other states belonging to the Danube river catchment basin are either contracting parties to the Ramsar or are in the process of preparation for the adhesion.<sup>30</sup>

Besides Ramsar convention, other international legal instruments deal with wetlands on a more general level, such as the already mentioned Biodiversity Convention. However, more recent and for our purposes much more important are instruments of regional nature, adopted on the level of the European Union.

European Council Habitats Directive,<sup>31</sup> sets forth substantive and procedural rules to establish “a coherent European ecological network of special areas of conservation” (Natura 2000).<sup>32</sup> Once a special area of conservation is placed on the EU Commission list, the member state must take special conservation measures, including management plans, which correspond to the ecological requirements of the site. First, under Article 6(2), they must avoid the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as disturbance of the species. Secondly, under Article 6(3), they must conduct an “appropriate assessment” of the implications for the site of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary

---

<sup>28</sup> *Ramsar convention*, Article 6(3).

<sup>29</sup> Agreement between Ramsar and the International Commission for the protection of the Danube River, preamble, [http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-agreement-between-ramsar/main/ramsar/1-31%5E21270\\_4000\\_0\\_\\_18.11.2011](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-agreement-between-ramsar/main/ramsar/1-31%5E21270_4000_0__18.11.2011).

<sup>30</sup> Republic of Serbia has ratified the Ramsar as far back as 1992.

<sup>31</sup> *Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora*, 92/43/EEC of 21<sup>st</sup> May 1992, text available at [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/environment/nature\\_and\\_biodiversity/l28076\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/environment/nature_and_biodiversity/l28076_en.htm) 18.11.2011.

<sup>32</sup> *Council Directive 92/43/EEC*, Article 3(1).

to the site's management, but which is likely to have significant effects for it. This provision leans on the principle of the ecosystem approach, in so far as it includes, under its auspices, "any plan or project", even though they might not be directly connected with the particular site. Thirdly, if the plan or project goes ahead after the assessment shows "negative" implications, there are no alternative solutions, and there are "imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature" the member state must "take all compensatory measures necessary to show that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected" and inform the EU Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.<sup>33</sup> The Directive establishes the basis for the co-financing by the EU of measures which are "essential for the maintenance or re-establishment at a favourable conservation status of the priority natural habitat types and priority species on the sites concerned."<sup>34</sup>

Natura 2000, with its network of wetlands, among other protected habitats, represents a true example towards which environmental protection of these ecosystems should strive in future. Problems connected with this plan are lack of clear legal obligations on the part of participating states, and ensuing failures of strict implementation. Sites designated under the Birds and Habitats directives, as well as other protected sites should only in principle have their own management plans or some other kind of contractual framework. But in practice, they often work in isolation and not efficiently enough. Thus, the effective management helped by transnational cooperation (networking) is necessary. The action should include exchange of experience and capacity building for protected areas/Natura 2000 sites administrations; community involvement; visitor management and tourism development; coordinated management planning, implementation and evaluation. These questions all matter policy more than law.<sup>35</sup>

Another instrument which comes from regional background is the European Council Water Framework Directive (WFD)<sup>36</sup> which establishes a legal framework to protect and enhance the status of all waters and protected areas including water depending ecosystems, prevent their deterioration and ensure long-term, sustainable use of water resources. The Directive provides for an innovative approach for water management based on river basins, the natural geographical and hydrological units, and sets specific deadlines for EU Member States to produce Programmes of Measures and River Basin Management Plans.<sup>37</sup> This innovative approach is indeed a true representation of the ecosystem approach, since it takes into consideration watercourse basins as wholesome units, without differentiation between their constitutive parts. The WFD addresses inland surface waters (rivers and

---

<sup>33</sup> *Council Directive 92/43/EEC*, Article 6(4).

<sup>34</sup> *Council Directive 92/43/EEC*, Article 8.

<sup>35</sup> Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Serbia, in partnership with foreign experts, works on the project 'Strengthening Administrative Capacities for Protected Areas in Serbia (NATURA 2000)' from the beginning of 2010.

<sup>36</sup> *Directive of the European Council and the European Parliament 2000/60/EC*, text available at [http://www.wfduk.org/about\\_wfd/WFD-legislative-text](http://www.wfduk.org/about_wfd/WFD-legislative-text) 18.11.2011.

<sup>37</sup> *Directive of the European Council and the European Parliament 2000/60/EC*. Article 4(1)(c).



lakes), transitional waters, coastal waters, groundwater and, under specific conditions, water dependent terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands. It establishes several integrative principles for water management, including public participation in planning and the integration of economic approaches, and also aims for the integration of water management into other policy areas. Obviously, the object of protection is wide in its scope and among protection mechanisms designated, a great role is reserved for communities themselves, which is very important element of the ecosystem approach, bearing in mind it benefits the ultimate beneficiaries, such as civil society and the environment, more than sovereign states. This is ever more visible in further provision of the Directive in which it is stated that international districts for river basins should be created among member states, that would cover the territory of more than one EU Member State and it insists on coordination of work in these districts.<sup>38</sup> Status of wetlands in this Directive is accorded a lesser level than it is the case with other objects of protection, and this is its main flaw. That is to say, protection of wetlands is conditioned on the status of other units of river basins. This is a solution that disregards the ecosystem approach as it outwardly gives more importance to one unit of the system in comparison with the other. According to the EU WFD, pressures on wetlands are to be considered as significant and need to be addressed by measures where they are impacting negatively on the water status of adjacent water bodies.<sup>39</sup>

I have mentioned already that the provision for the protection of shared natural resources in the Danube River Protection Convention<sup>40</sup> is moulded on the example of the Helsinki Convention, so there is no need to analyse it further for present purposes. Suffice it to say that the Convention express a strong declaratory statement of the need cooperation, share of information and other forms of the implementation of the goals envisioned in its part concerned with environment. The Convention is translated on the practical level through management plans, which are periodically revisited. They are mostly concerned with procedural questions of implementation, and it can be said that they broadly follow the ecosystem approach. The current one is projected to last until 2015. It states three key hydromorphological pressure components of basin-wide importance that have been identified: a. Interruption of river and habitat continuity; b. Disconnection of adjacent wetlands/floodplains; c. Hydrological alterations. I have already discussed why the disconnection of wetlands area presents the trigger for further environmental degradation. To counter this, the plan indicates that the installation and application of appropriate control mechanisms at the national level regarding measure implementation will be important in order to achieve this basin-wide aim. Also, a respective feedback mechanism between the national and international level and vice versa will enable the further estimation of the basin-wide effect of the implemented national measures. Management plans are, in the hierarchy of the implementation

---

<sup>38</sup> *Directive of the European Council and the European Parliament 2000/60/EC*, Article 3(3,4,5).

<sup>39</sup> *Directive of the European Council and the European Parliament 2000/60/EC*, Article 11(3)(i).

<sup>40</sup> *Convention on Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable use of the Danube River*, text available at <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/drpc.htm> 18.11.2011.

process, concretized through Joint Action Programmes, which indicate specific steps to be taken for the purpose of environmental protection.<sup>41</sup>

Complementary to measures provided for by Action Programmes is the newly tailored EU Danube strategy, adopted by the European Commission, which represents a series of broad-stroke objectives such as: faster and cleaner transport connections, cheaper and more secure energy, a better environment, a more prosperous region, more tourism and a safer, better governed region. The Commission has prioritised 4 pillars as core content for the Danube strategy: Connecting the Danube Region: including mobility, sustainable energy, culture, tourism; Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region: including water quality, risk prevention, biodiversity & landscape; Building Prosperity in the Danube Region: including knowledge, education, invest in people and skills; Strengthening the Danube Region: institutional capacity and cooperation, security and safety. Important to note is that the Commission was obviously led by ecosystem approach idea when it stated that “The Danube Region is one interrelated and interdependent ecosystem, incorporating a rich and unique flora and fauna”. This is further reflected in provisions concerning prospective measures: “To be effective, the environmental measures should be planned in connection with the potential development e.g. of tourism, construction, energy, transportation and agricultural sectors. Human migration, cultural differences, urban / rural development and regional security should also be taken into consideration. The improvement of current infrastructure efficiency (energy, household consumption, transport) should be examined before new infrastructure is built. Landscape (spatial) planning is key to developing good local environment”.<sup>42</sup>

The discussion on the Strategy that occurred in European Parliament is a useful indicator as to how policy-makers perceive this kind of documents. Thus one member from Romania has emphasised the important role that local authorities should play in the implementation: “If we want to achieve economic growth and create jobs in the member states bordering the Danube, we must provide the conditions for the successful implementation of this strategy not only by involving local authorities, but also through public-private partnerships.” The notion that the strategy should take a bottom-up approach was repeated by a number of MEP’s during the plenary session. On the other side, criticisms have been expressed that there are too many different priorities in the strategy. During the debate in parliament, a Hungarian MEP presented his concern: “There are too many priorities. How will it be possible to create balance and harmony between the different priorities?” He added: “It is questionable how sometimes contradictory objectives laid down in the Danube strategy, such as water quality, improving the state of the environment, navigability, energy exploitation or eco-tourism can be harmonised.”<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Current Management plans and Action Programmes are available at <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/jap.htm> .18.11.2011.

<sup>42</sup> EU Strategy Action Plan is available at <http://www.dunavskastrategija.rs/en/?d> 18.11.2011.

<sup>43</sup> Cited from the Internet source article available at <http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/388/the-eus-danube-strategy-a-blueprint-for-the-future> 18.11.2011.

Perhaps the most important future project on the environmental protection of wetlands in this area, fully in accord with the spirit of the ecosystem approach is the plan to create the "Mura-Drava-Danube Biosphere Reserve". On 25th March 2011, the ministers responsible for environment and nature protection of all five riverine countries, in the presence of EU Commissioner for the Environment signed a joint declaration establishing a Transboundary UNESCO Biosphere Reserve along the three rivers. The Mura-Drava-Danube Biosphere Reserve will be implemented within the European Commission's Strategy. The Biosphere Reserve will support the biodiversity objectives set by the European Council of Ministers in 2010, and will correspond to the objectives of the long-term 2050 biodiversity vision and the 2020 biodiversity target. Since the three rivers are covered extensively by Natura 2000 sites, it also contributes to the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives as well as the EU Water Framework Directive. The Biosphere Reserve paves the way to create the world's first five-country protected area, consisting of about 260,000 hectares of core and buffer zones and of another 540,000 hectares of transition zones. "It is not only a significant step forward in protecting the region's natural treasures but serves as a striking example of how nature conservation can bring countries together," says Andreas Beckmann, Director of the WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme.<sup>44</sup> Although if properly established, this project will be invaluable for the promotion of the ecosystem approach in the protection of internationally shared wetlands, its current declaratory status does not enhance its legal standing from more than a future vision.

## Conclusion

The Ecosystem approach is the most cost-efficient and environmentally sound approach to the protection and preservation of shared natural resources. This is due to the fact that, in its theoretical construction, it privileges the environment as a unitary whole, as opposed to the notion of limited territorial sovereignty, currently the leading theoretical foundation on the law on shared natural resources, which is all about the balancing of interests among the riparians, where the environment usually passes as the ultimate loser. Although lacking legal standing to be proclaimed a principle of law in the environmental legal branch, it has gained considerable recognition in various legal texts and political declarations that regulate or deal with the trans-boundary share and protection of natural resources, especially those concerned with international watercourses and their adjoining natural habitats. It has also been positioned in the legal doctrine as the leading principle of environmental protection, however it is not sufficiently clear what would exactly be the scope of this principle in concrete situations. To add to this, one part of legal doctrine denies to this approach any practical value since it finds it impossible to implement. However, it must be accepted that the ecosystem approach is the only viable solution in the long run and that it is the only approach fully in accord with the ultimate goal of global community, the sustainable development. The utility of the ecosystem approach is especially visible in connection with

---

<sup>44</sup> Cited from [http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw1102\\_p\\_05.htm](http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw1102_p_05.htm). 18.11.2011.

wetlands, habitats of utmost interdependence and largely threatened by the anthropocentric philosophy of sovereign territorial interests pursuit. The destruction of major part of wetlands area in the Danube River Basin is a sad testimony to the unsustainable schemes of historical utilization, which have to be transformed if wetlands are to be preserved. Elements of the ecosystem approach are visibly scattered through various international legal instruments that regulate the environment of the Danube River Basin. These instruments are numerous and they need good coordination to be applied for the benefit of the fulfilment of their goals. However, it is doubtful that they create a firm legal obligation on the part of riparian states to protect their wetlands, irrelevant of the occurrence of environmental harm that affects other sovereign state interests. More likely, they institute a constant process of cooperation, share of information and monitoring, which serves as a framework in which future actions of stakeholders should develop, and very important is that they introduce to this process institutions of civil society, which are the ultimate beneficiaries of wetland protection and preservation. This process might eventually lead to the formulation of hard and fast legal rules that create enforceable obligations, but it is not yet possible to foresee whether this will ever happen. This is a clear reflection of the current state of general international environmental law, and although not the optimal, it is the only currently possible international legal regime in this field.

## Literature

### *Books and articles*

- Birnie Patricia, Boyle Alan, *International Law and the Environment*, Oxford University Press, second edition, 2002, Oxford.
- Brunnée Jutta, Toope Stephen, “Environmental Security and Freshwater Resources: Ecosystem Regime Building”, 91(1), *American Journal of International Law*, 1997.
- Fuentes Ximena, “Sustainable Development and the Equitable Utilization of International Watercourses”, 68, *British Yearbook of International Law*, 1998.
- McCaffrey Stephen, *The Law of International Watercourses*, Oxford University Press, second edition, 2010, Oxford.
- McIntyre Owen, “The Emergence of an “Ecosystem Approach” to the Protection of International Watercourses Under International Law”, 13(1), *RECIEL*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004, Oxford.
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *The State of the Environment*, Paris, OECD, 1991.
- Sands Philippe, *Principles of International Environmental Law*, Cambridge University Press, second edition, 2003, Cambridge.
- Savenije Hubert H.G, Zaag Pieter van der, “Conceptual framework for the management of shared river basins; with special reference to the SADC and EU”, 2, *Water Policy*, 2000, Delft.
- Shepherd Kirstie, “A functioning river system: incorporating wetlands into river basin management”, article available at [http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw0702\\_p\\_03.htm](http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw0702_p_03.htm) 18.11.2011.

- World Conservation Monitoring Centre, *Global Biodiversity: Earth's Living Resources in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, WCMC, Cambridge, 2000.

*Web sources*

- <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/wetlands.htm>, 18.11.2011.
- <http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/388/the-eus-danube-strategy-a-blueprint-for-the-future>, 18.11.2011.
- [http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw1102\\_p\\_05.htm](http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/dw1102_p_05.htm), 18.11.2011.

*Statutes*

- 1978 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/glwqa/1978/index.html> 18.11.2011.
- Agreement between Ramsar and the International Commission for the protection of the Danube River, [http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-agreement-between-ramsar/main/ramsar/1-31%5E21270\\_4000\\_0](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-agreement-between-ramsar/main/ramsar/1-31%5E21270_4000_0) 18.11.2011.
- Convention on Biological Diversity, International Legal Materials, number 31, 1992.
- Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, International Legal Materials, number 31, 1992.
- Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of the International Watercourses, International Legal Materials, number 36, 1997.
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, [www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org). 18.11.2011.
- Convention on Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable use of the Danube River, <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/drpc.htm> 18.11.2011.
- Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, 92/43/EEC of 21st May 1992, [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/environment/nature\\_and\\_biodiversity/l28076\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/environment/nature_and_biodiversity/l28076_en.htm), 18.11.2011.
- Directive of the European Council and the European Parliament (Water Frameworks Directive) 2000/60/EC, [http://www.wfduk.org/about\\_wfd/WFD-legislative-text](http://www.wfduk.org/about_wfd/WFD-legislative-text), 18.11.2011.
- EU Danube Strategy Action Plan, <http://www.dunavskastrategija.rs/en/?d>, 18.11.2011.
- Treaty on the Rio Plata Basin, adopted in Brasilia on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1969, International Legal Materials, number 8, 1969.

Milica Slavković<sup>1</sup>

## THE DANUBE COUNTRIES LOCAL COMMUNITIES PROTECTION IN FLOOD EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

### ABSTRACT

In 2002, and especially in 2006, the Danube countries suffered severe damages and losses due to high waters and floods. An estimated total cost of damage and emergency operations in 2006 amounted to € 600 million. Due to climate changes, that is, more extreme and variable weather conditions, the threat of floods in the Danube Basin is on the rise. Additionally, with the establishment of settlements in the flood risk areas, local communities are becoming more vulnerable. This paper will therefore investigate the level of the selected Danube countries' preparedness to protect civilians and local infrastructure in flood emergency situations, and to take part in the macro-regional flood action programmes. It will further focus on the division of responsibilities on the local level, in the flood affected regions, when it comes to early warning, evacuation and rescue works as well as the reinforcement of existing defence system elements. Assessments of the previous flood experiences revealed some serious deficiencies in the flood protection management, which vary between countries and are mostly due to the lack of financial assets and personnel. Finalizing the analysis, this paper will provide recommendations which could increase efficiency in the protection of the local communities in the flood-affected areas in the Danube Basin.

*Key words:* the Danube countries, high waters and floods, local communities, preparedness, civil protection.

### Introduction

As natural and human generated phenomena, floods have long been the subject of study in the fields of civil defence, water management and environmental studies. However, despite the scientific research and legislative measures towards combating the high waters and floods' disastrous effects, they seem not to be weakening. In the Danube region, the most recent severe floods, in 2002 and 2006, claimed human lives, destroyed

---

<sup>1</sup> Milica Slavković, M.A., Intern at Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, Serbia, e-mail: milica\_slavkovic@yahoo.com.

local infrastructure and property revealing numerous shortcomings in the defence (dykes and levees) and early warning systems as well as in the cooperation between the local stakeholders. These events enhanced the creation of several macro-regional and local initiatives so as to improve the Danube countries' flood risk management.

Considering the aforementioned set of problems, this paper investigates the level and manner of the local communities' protection in flood emergency situations in three selected Danube countries. The legislative framework, the division of responsibilities regarding early warning, rescue works and evacuation, logistics and know-how are compared between Germany (the Upper Danube), Serbia (the Central Danube) and Romania (the Lower Danube). This research is among others made necessary by the experts' estimates that the effects of floods may significantly increase in the future, as the society is becoming more vulnerable to the damage and destructions, and because floods are expected to become more extreme and frequent due to climate changes.<sup>2</sup> Global warming, storms, long and heavy rains, snowfall as well as other severe and changing weather conditions generate large amounts of water which the river channels more often fail to accumulate.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, due to urbanisation and settlement in the floodplain areas and in the close proximity to the river banks (mainly because of the fertile lands in these regions), livelihoods of the communities in the flood risk areas are directly and instantly threatened.

Analysing the set of conditions of the Danube countries local communities in flood emergency situations, this paper is divided into three chapters. Chapter one focuses on the living with floods – policy, that is, the shift from predominantly defensive towards preventive measures. It also gives the overview of the damages and losses stemming from the 2002 and 2006 “millennium floods” and the outline of the EU regulations for sustainable flood prevention endorsed after 2000. Chapter two focuses on case studies and compares Germany, Serbia and Romania's level of preparedness for flood situations, with regards to varying financial, logistic and social factors. Finally, chapter three provides conclusions and recommendations on how to avoid further losses in human lives, but also that of private and public property.

### **Local communities – living with floods**

The European Environment Agency (EEA) paper on sustainable water use defines floods as, “situations of extreme water run-off during which human lives, property and infrastructure are threatened”. It further depicts floods as the, “most common natural disasters and, in terms of economic damage, the most costly.”<sup>4</sup> As already mentioned,

---

<sup>2</sup> Floods, *International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River*, Internet: <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/floods.htm>, 22/10/2011.

<sup>3</sup> For details on forming of high waters and floods see: *SpektrumWasser 1 – Hochwasser – Naturereignis und Gefahr*, Bayerisches Landesamt für Wasserwirtschaft, München, 2004, pp. 14–37, Internet: [http://hnd.bayern.de/docs/spektrum\\_hochwasser.pdf](http://hnd.bayern.de/docs/spektrum_hochwasser.pdf), 20/11/2011.

floods are the outcome of natural (climate change) and numerous human factors. Rising waters, as a result of the increased precipitation, are additionally influenced by the changes in catchment and flood plains use, urbanisation and building of roads and railways as well as industrial facilities in the flood risk areas. Deforestation, which inhibits water retention in the catchment, and cutting rivers from their natural floodplains so as to curb them into man-made channels are certain to create increased floods.<sup>5</sup>

In the case of transboundary rivers, such as the Danube River, it is necessary that the countries belonging to the river basin agree on the acceptable risk. This should include particular level of tolerated damage (uniformly accepted) and certain level of required protection (jointly defined).<sup>6</sup> The desired level of protection is mainly achieved through structural and non-structural measures, whose employment depends on the type of flood. The expert team of the EEA and its European Topic Centre on Inland Waters defined positive and negative aspects of both types of measures. Structural measures, which have been used for flood prevention and the mitigation of their impacts, include, among others, afforestation, building of flood control reservoirs, river channelization, building of dams and protective dykes and cleaning of river beds. Apart from being costly, these measures have diverse impact on the communities living upstream and downstream from the built structures.<sup>7</sup> Protective dykes, for example, being especially important and effective defence elements, can easily erode or be breached under the force of water, causing immediate flooding of the areas that they once protected.<sup>8</sup> In economically less developed countries, these incidents occur more often since the financial means for regular maintenance of the dykes and levees are generally lacking. In the fields of civil defence and water management, in addition to structural measures, there has lately been a lot of support for the implementation of non-structural measures, which aim at reducing the damage caused by flooding. These measures are divided into three groups. They can aim at reducing the flood impact on already built structures by their strengthening; relate to land-use by identifying of black spots and safety areas and preventing of unrestrained building; or seek to create the real-time hydrological forecasting and develop the evacuation and flood management plans.<sup>9</sup>

However, the disastrous impacts of the 2002 and 2006 floods in the Danube Basin demonstrated that both types of measures needed to be adapted and advanced. Before introducing several European Union and Danube countries initiatives for improving the

---

<sup>4</sup> Teodoro Estrela et al., “Sustainable water use in Europe – Part 3 – Extreme hydrological events: floods and droughts”, *Environmental issue report*, no 21, Office for Official Publication of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2001, p. 10, Internet: [http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/Environmental\\_Issues\\_no\\_21/at\\_download/file](http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/Environmental_Issues_no_21/at_download/file), 22/10/2011.

<sup>5</sup> Floods, *International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River*, op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Teodoro Estrela et al., “Sustainable water use in Europe – Part 3 – Extreme hydrological events: floods and droughts”, op. cit. p. 35.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 39–40.



flood risk management along the Danube River, endorsed after 2000, the paper will briefly present the level of damages and losses from the previous flood events.

### *Reported Flood Damages from 2002 and 2006*

In 2002, in Germany, floods affected region of Bavaria causing damages to infrastructure and private property amounting to € 230 million. Utilization of reservoirs in Ingolstadt and Dillingen prevented more severe damages. These, however, took place in Austria, where 10,000 homes were damaged, infrastructure was destroyed and total damages were estimated at € 3.1 billion. Nevertheless, Romania suffered the most devastating impact of floods, with 11 casualties in flash floods. In this country, around 1,600 houses, 1,000km of roads and 567 bridges were damaged or destroyed in 2002.<sup>10</sup>

In 2006, thousands of people were involved in emergency and rescue operations, which lowered the flood impact and reduced the losses as compared to 2002. Flood protection measures were somewhat improved, but numerous risk and emergency management shortcomings were nevertheless revealed. The estimated total cost of damages and emergency operations across the Danube Basin exceeded € 600 million.<sup>11</sup> During the 2006 floods, the forecasting system in Germany functioned via German Weather Service (DWD) and the Flood Information Service (HND) in Bavaria. The defence system was in place and there were no significant damages. Only in one district was there a need of building emergency dykes, which was timely performed thankful to the engagement of 2,000 additional workers.<sup>12</sup> In Austria, around 500 people were evacuated, as many houses destroyed or damaged, infrastructure was affected, especially there where the dykes broke. The total loss exceeded € 70 million.<sup>13</sup> The 2006 floods severely affected Slovakia. There was one human loss, whereas the property damage was estimated at € 44.4 million and the operation costs at € 3 million. Helicopter, heavy machines, boats, additional engineers, technicians, soldiers and citizens were engaged in dyke reinforcement and rescue works in Slovakia. Evacuations took place in Bulgaria (2,000 people) and Serbia (1,000 people) where the damage amounted to € 40 million. In Hungary, 267 communities and 200,890 people were threatened; in Romania, 325 people were rescued, 681 dwellings destroyed and 2,598 affected with a total damage of € 200 million.<sup>14</sup>

### *Legal Framework – EU Directives and ICPDR Action Programme*

The detrimental floods in 2002 were said to have accelerated the process of establishing the long-term Action Programme for Sustainable Flood Prevention in the Danube River

---

<sup>10</sup> All data from: Floods, *International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River*, op. cit.

<sup>11</sup> *The Analysis of the Danube Floods 2006*, ICPDR – International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, 2007, p.10, Internet: [http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-files/15394\\_25/10/2011](http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-files/15394_25/10/2011).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 26–46.

Basin under the auspices of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR). The Action Programme, adopted in 2004, serves as a general framework for the Danube countries and is prone to changes and adaptations especially regarding countries in the sub-basin. The Programme is based on the UN-ECE Guidelines on Sustainable Flood Prevention, Protection and Mitigation as well as on the EU Communication for flood risk management COM(2004)472.<sup>15</sup> In its activities, the ICPDR has advocated for the shift from the defensive action against hazards towards flood risk management, that is, the promotion of the living with floods policy. It has also supported the river basin approach, as introduced by the EU Water Framework Directive (2000), as well as, joint governmental, municipal and stakeholder actions towards flood risk management, reduction of flood risks through natural retention and structural flood protection. The ICPDR has also promoted awareness-raising and solidarity in the Danube region.<sup>16</sup> The Action Programme has four main goals: firstly, it aims at improving the early warning system through interlinking of national flood warning and forecasting systems; secondly, it supports creation of sub-basin flood action plans; thirdly, it intends to create an expert forum for the exchange of knowledge and fourthly, it plans to create a common approach towards assessing of areas prone to flooding.<sup>17</sup>

The said targets directly correspond to the main goals of the Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on the assessment and management of flood risks. The provisions of the EU Flood Directive (EFD) require making of flood risk assessments, which would include description of previous floods and their impacts as well as description of the envisaged damages of future floods, until December 22, 2011.<sup>18</sup> Following the risk assessment, the Member States are requested to prepare flood hazard and flood risk maps by December 22, 2013. Finally, based on the assessments and maps, the said countries are expected to provide flood risk management plans by December 22, 2015. These should focus on, “prevention, protection, preparedness, including flood forecasts and early warning systems and taking into account the characteristics of the particular river basin or sub-basin.”<sup>19</sup>

Although EFD provides a framework for sustainable flood prevention and protection, its main particularity is the EU Member States conditionality. The non-EU states, which belong to the Danube Basin and sub-basin, make use of the cooperation programmes between EU

---

<sup>15</sup> *Report on Achievements in Flood Protection in the Danube River Basin*, ICPDR – International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, 2007, p. 4, Internet: [http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-files/15473\\_29/10/2011](http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-files/15473_29/10/2011).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks*, Official Journal of the European Union, 6.11.2007, p. 4, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:288:0027:0034:EN:PDF,25/10/2011>.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

and the accession or third countries. The activities of the ICPDR with its Action Programme, and the newly endorsed EU Strategy for the Danube Region are hereby evidently made more important.<sup>20</sup> In 2009, the ICPDR published 17 sub-basin flood action plans, which were based on 45 national documents and which covered the entire Danube Basin, demonstrating a high level of flood-threat-awareness within the Danube countries.<sup>21</sup> The sub-basin plans also provide starting point for strengthening of future transboundary cooperation.

Due to its relevance for the subject of this analysis, in its conclusion, this chapter points to a very important research study conducted in Germany, as a part of the German DISFLOOD project. The research work in question is Alexander Fekete's PhD dissertation "Assessment of Social Vulnerability to River Floods in Germany". Defining social vulnerability as, "the predisposition of society to be afflicted by hazards such as river flooding", Fekete aims at identifying the social characteristics that make people vulnerable to flood hazards in Germany, investigating, at the same time, if these characteristics are regionally specific.<sup>22</sup> The development of the Social Susceptibility Index and the Index Maps for Germany are some of the outcomes of this research, which although country-specific provides methodological and conceptual incentives for similar country-specific or river basin-specific research studies.

Shifting from general overview of the conditions during flood situations and the EU and the Danube countries' initiatives towards sustainable flood risk management, this paper presently focuses on three case studies and analyses the similarities and dissimilarities in their flood emergency responses. Geo-political, economic and social factors will especially be regarded in this analysis.

### **Local communities protection – Case study – Germany**

In Germany, the Danube River passes through two states: Baden-Württemberg and the Free State of Bavaria. The main regulative framework for flood emergency situations in both states is provided by the Law on Disaster Protection (each state has its own Law). In Baden-Württemberg, flood forecasting is performed by the Flood Forecasting Centre (HVZ) within the State Agency for Environment, Measurement and Nature Conservation.<sup>23</sup> In situations when high waters are being formed, HVZ has a 24h service with a team of one hydrologist, one IT expert and two technicians.<sup>24</sup> In Bavaria, the Bavarian Flood

---

<sup>20</sup> For details see: *EU Strategy for the Danube Region*, European Commission, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/index_en.cfm), 25/10/2011.

<sup>21</sup> *Report on Achievements in Flood Protection in the Danube River Basin*, op. cit. p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> Fekete, Alexander, *Assessment of Social Vulnerability to River Floods in Germany*, UNU-EHS Graduate Research Series, Vol. 4, Bonn, 2010, p. 3, Internet: <http://ehs.unu.edu/file/get/8069>, 12/11/2011.

<sup>23</sup> For details see: *Landesanstalt für Umwelt, Messungen und Naturschutz*, Internet: <http://www.lubw.baden-wuerttemberg.de/servlet/is/2688>, 05/11/2011.

<sup>24</sup> For details see: *Hochwasservorhersagezentrale Baden-Württemberg LUBW*, Internet: <http://www.hvz.lubw.baden-wuerttemberg.de>, 05/11/2011.

Information Service (HND), managed by the Bavarian State Office for Water Management, provides flood forecasts, when the floods stem from the high waters in river and streams, whereas in the case when floods result from severe weather conditions (rains, storms, etc) flood forecasting is the German Weather Service (DWD) task.<sup>25</sup>

The information about flood threats can reach citizens in various ways. Municipalities and cities are in charge of flood warning. They mostly receive information from the Water Management Offices through (rural) district offices.<sup>26</sup> Together with police and fire-fighter volunteers, municipal officers commence with warning of endangered citizens via phone and public address (PA) announcements, fliers, visits to neighbourhoods, or via TV, radio, press and Internet. Contrary to Baden-Württemberg, communities in Bavaria are also warned through the systems of sirens. However, in order for the early warning to be efficiently conducted, it is necessary that the preparation measures, in form of alarm and action plans, be sufficiently undertaken.<sup>27</sup>

Since the district offices and municipalities are in charge of disaster prevention, apart from timely planning, one of the measures is the appointment of the dyke brigades – usually local fire-fighters – to monitor and secure the flood protection dykes. Only in the case of disaster emergency (and only under specific conditions) are other federal organisations (Technical Relief, border police, army troops etc.) involved.<sup>28</sup> In Baden-Württemberg, the Emergency Management Agency has a local technical team leader at its disposal. In their capacities, technical team leaders can oblige each person older than 16, based on their skills and knowledge, to take part in disaster management.<sup>29</sup> Other stakeholders in the actual emergency operations are police, fire-fighters, Federal Agency for Technical Relief (Das Technische Hilfswerk – THW), German Red Cross (DRK) and other aid organisations.

Finally, the decision on evacuations lies with the local operations managers and their associates. In Bavaria, local authorities are required to enable citizens' evacuation based on the directives for evacuation published in the Bavarian State Ministry of Interior's bulletin from the year 1980. The management team would decide based on the directive and the checklist contained in it.<sup>30</sup> Evacuations are performed by the police and fire-fighters brigades into community halls and gyms in Baden-Württemberg and in schools, military barracks and nursing homes in Bavaria. The rescue works, supplies of drinking water and pumping water out of flooded dwellings are the tasks of the THW.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> For details see: *Hochwassernachrichtendienst Bayern*, Internet: <http://www.hnd.bayern.de>, 05/11/2011.

<sup>26</sup> *SpektrumWasser 1 – Hochwasser – Naturereignis und Gefahr*, op. cit. p. 69.

<sup>27</sup> Christian Diemt, *Katastrophenmanagement beim Eintreten von Hochwassersituationen entlang der Donau*, GRIN Verlag GmbH, München, 2010, p. 27.

<sup>28</sup> *SpektrumWasser 1 – Hochwasser – Naturereignis und Gefahr*, op. cit. p. 69.

<sup>29</sup> Christian Diemt, *Katastrophenmanagement beim Eintreten von Hochwassersituationen entlang der Donau*, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 28–29.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 31.

In technical terms (structural measures), since 2000, Germany has substantially improved its Danube River flood defence system. Also, in line with the sustainable flood protection provisions, considerable attention has been paid to the advancement of preventive (non-structural) measures, that is early warning, forecasting, know-how and preparedness. However, the second set of measures needs to be further improved as envisaged by the Flood- Action-Programme 2020 for sustainable flood control in Bavaria. An alleged € 2.3 billion are to be invested until 2020, out of which € 1.3 billion for the Danube catchment region.<sup>32</sup> On annual level, approximately € 115 million are invested in flood protection (the budget for the period 2006 - 2008 amounted to € 150 million annually). Around 75% of the said budget is invested in the Danube catchment area. One of the positive outcomes of larger investments was demonstrated during floods in the period 2001-2005, when, in the Danube catchment area in Bavaria, more than 200,000 additional inhabitants were sufficiently protected.<sup>33</sup>

In legal terms, Germany has closely followed in the EU guidelines, enacting in 2010 the new Federal Water Management Act. On the same day, March 1, 2010, Free State of Bavaria enacted the Bavarian Water Act. With these acts, Germany has taken all the required steps for the implementation of the European Flood Directive.<sup>34</sup>

In order to establish the actual importance of the geo-political and economic factors for the implementation of the sustainable flood risk management policy among the Danube countries, the paper further analyses local communities' protection in flood emergency situations in Serbia. Serbia is, among others, a non-EU state and belongs to the Central Danube region (greater possibility that floods affect tributaries, having much stronger impact). However, Serbia has made significant improvements regarding the flood risk management.

### **Local communities protection – Case study – Serbia**

High waters along the Danube and its tributaries, in April 2006, found Serbia's flood defence system rather unprepared. Not sufficiently built dykes and levees gave way under the flood waters force, inundating villages and cities. Ten regions in Serbia, including the capital city, Belgrade, had to declare a state of emergency.<sup>35</sup> However, in the aftermath of the disastrous flood events in 2006, Serbia opted for thorough and systematic changes in flood prevention and protection. One of the key programmes in this field took place in

---

<sup>32</sup> *Sub-Basin Level Flood Action Plan – Upper Danube – As Coordinated between Germany and Austria*, ICPDR – International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, 2009, p. 11, Internet: [http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-files/15167\\_05/11/2011](http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-files/15167_05/11/2011).

<sup>33</sup> *Report on Achievements in Flood Protection in the Danube River Basin*, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> "Serbia Passes Emergency Preparedness Law to Empower Local Responders", *DAI Success Stories*, DAI, Maryland, 2010, p. 1, Internet: [http://www.dia.com/pdf/1288980736\\_Serbia\\_Emergency\\_Preparedness\\_Nov\\_2010.pdf](http://www.dia.com/pdf/1288980736_Serbia_Emergency_Preparedness_Nov_2010.pdf), 12/11/2011.

the period 2006–2010 and was funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The \$ 19 million – Preparedness, Planning and Economic Security (PPES) Program with its hands on approach targeted municipalities at risk from natural disasters, small businesses operating in environmentally unfavourable conditions and Serbian youth. Two main operational levels were preparedness and planning and economic security.<sup>36</sup> Trainings and certification of municipalities that achieved enhanced disaster resilience are some of the programme’s main outcomes at the local level.<sup>37</sup> On the national level, the achievement was twofold. In December 2009, Serbia enacted the Law on Emergency Situations, which is in line with the EU standards. Additionally, based on the law, the authority within disaster management has been transferred to districts and municipalities. The Ministry of Interior received a new department, that is, the Sector for Emergency Management, which incorporates the National Training Centre for Emergency Management (in charge of training coordination).<sup>38</sup>

The actual flood forecasting in Serbia is performed by the Republic of Serbia Hydro-meteorological Service, Department for Water Forecast for a period of four days.<sup>39</sup> Flood prevention and preparedness are further enhanced by the Serbian Directorate for Water’s publication of Annual plan for flood defence. The Plan contains data on flood managers and criteria for undertaking regular and emergency flood defence measures. In addition, local communities are required to publish Action plans for flood protection on the local level.<sup>40</sup>

In emergency situations, there are three alarm-levels in Serbia: two regular and one exceptional. The first two levels depend on the water discharge in rivers and on the rising tendency, whereas the third alarm level precedes evacuation.<sup>41</sup> In Serbia, the decision on evacuation is reached by the district or municipality officers. It is performed by the Serbian Red Cross and state organisations. The shelters have been pre-defined and they include all public buildings and private hotel facilities. Civil Defence is regulated by the state and is a department within the Ministry of Interior.<sup>42</sup>

Although Serbia has rebuilt its Emergency Response System, the lack of money for the renewal of the personnel and advanced equipment remains a significant issue. The volunteer engagement is a novelty in Serbia. In the flood defence operations, Serbia has used to be largely dependent of the Serbian Armed Forces, especially in cases of the implementation of structural measures.

---

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>38</sup> *Report on Achievements in Flood Protection in the Danube River Basin*, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Christian Diemt, *Katastrophenmanagement beim Eintreten von Hochwassersituationen entlang der Donau*, op. cit., pp. 75.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., pp. 75–81.

However, since 2006, Serbia has considerably improved its flood risk management system. The main outcome of the processes and programmes in this period has been the decentralization, that is, sharing of responsibility between state and local governments in flood emergency situations. There is also an improvement in the volunteer involvement, mostly through the Serbian Red Cross. Nevertheless, more needs to be done regarding implementation of laws and directives, coordination between local stakeholders as well as in the areas of early warning and forecasting, capacity building and preparedness.

The final part of the analysis on local communities' protection focuses on Romania.

### **Local communities protection – Case study – Romania**

The Danube River in Romania extends over 12 counties, making it the longest among the Danube countries. Romania has had a rather negative record of the flood disaster effects, especially during the 2002, 2006 and 2010 floods. However, similarly to Serbia, Romania has ventured upon regulating the flood defence and disaster prevention systems.

In the field of flood warning and forecasting, there are currently two important USAID-sponsored projects: Hydrologic Information-Decision System and Information System for Integrated Water Management. The aim of the former is to create integrated information-decision system for prevention and alleviation of the disastrous flood consequences. The latter intends to facilitate development of a flood damages evaluation system as well as to improve the public administration preparedness for flood situations.<sup>43</sup> Of national programmes, there is currently, a structural protection programme of the Romanian Waters called the Annual National Investment Programme, which focuses on the recovery activities after flood events.<sup>44</sup>

Romanian flood protection plans and records on hazards and pollution, which are made at the local, basin and county level, are being updated every four years. The last plan was finalized in March 2010, for the period until 2013.<sup>45</sup> In 2005, the country established the National Programme for prevention, protection and mitigation of flood events. In August 2010, the National Strategy for Flood Risk Management on mid and long-term basis was adopted by the government.<sup>46</sup> This project has been given the highest priority due to the frequency of the devastating flood events in the country. Remaining in line with the European Flood Directive, the said strategy advocates the shift from defensive measures towards flood risk management. In 2010, as well, Romania enacted a new Water Law, whereas the Ministry of Environment and Forests established the National Authority for Inundation and Water Management, whose main aim is the implementation of the National Flood Risk Management Strategy.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> *Report on Achievements in Flood Protection in the Danube River Basin*, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

With regards to the flood emergency situations, the key role in civil protection in Romania lies with the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations. This body also coordinates activities of organisations participating in emergency management.<sup>48</sup>

At the local level, community warning is performed in line with alarm reporting scale. There are three flood alarm reporting levels in Romania. During the first reporting level, certain reduced time is left for taking necessary protective measures against high waters; the second level announces that the first objects have already been flooded (Local Committee for Emergency Situations starts its work and tries to minimize the danger situation); whereas at the third level, there is the highest level of danger for people and their property (evacuation and blocking of streets is necessary). Warnings are conducted through nationwide system of electronic sirens. Evacuations take place according to evacuation plans, which differ with the levels of danger.<sup>49</sup>

Speaking about structural measures in flood protection, it is evident that Romania, despite considerable efforts, still has not reached the satisfactory level of flood defence. This is partially due to lacking financial assets and expertise as well as due to outdated system elements, which have to be replaced. However, Romania has been successful in conscientisation of citizens, professionals and stakeholders when it comes to flood risks. The enactment of the aforementioned series of directives, programmes and laws provide previously missing legal framework for the proper implementation of the flood risk management elements. In the region, Romania has achieved a significant initiator's position, especially after the endorsement of the FLOODRISK Project in 2007.

The FLOODRISK project was initiated under Romania's presidency of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPRD) and was supported by all Danube countries at the ICPDR Ordinary Meeting in December 2007. The starting point for the future cooperation was defined by the "Flood Risk Mapping in the Danube River Basin" strategy.<sup>50</sup> The main strategy, however, is stakeholder oriented flood risk assessment, a programme that is to be carried out under the auspices of the Romanian Ministry of Environment. The overall goal of the project is improvement of socio-economic conditions of the Danube floodplain inhabitants with the utilization of flood risk maps. It also aims at harmonization of data and methods within the Danube countries. For the Danube River Basin, the importance lies in the fact that the implementation of the ICPDR programmes is the responsibility of the Member States,

---

<sup>48</sup> *The Structure, Role and Mandate of the Civil Protection in Disaster Risk Reduction for South Eastern Europe*, UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction EUR, 2009, p. 126, Internet: [http://www.unisdr.org/files/9346\\_Europe.pdf](http://www.unisdr.org/files/9346_Europe.pdf), 10/11/2011.

<sup>49</sup> Christian Diemt, *Katastrophenmanagement beim Eintreten von Hochwassersituationen entlang der Donau*, op. cit., pp. 87–95.

<sup>50</sup> "Stakeholder oriented flood risk assessment for the Danube floodplains", *Danube Floodrisk, South East Europe Transnational Programme*, Bucharest, p. 1, Internet: [http://www.mmediu.ro/actualitate/danube\\_floodrisk/DANUBE-FLOOD-RISK-SEE.doc](http://www.mmediu.ro/actualitate/danube_floodrisk/DANUBE-FLOOD-RISK-SEE.doc), 15/11/2011.



which in the case of the Danube River Basin excludes several important partners. The FLOODRISK project, on the other hand, includes all Danube states.<sup>51</sup>

## Conclusions and recommendations

Flood emergency situations along the Danube River differ depending on the country's position in the Basin. As the latest flood events have demonstrated, there is a higher probability that the flooding in the Central and Lower Danube is made much more destructive than the one in the Upper Danube, due to simultaneous floods in the Danube multiple downstream tributaries. Local communities in the floodplains are to be differently affected with regards to the type of floods, type of defensive system in place and their proximity to the river banks. One of the main tasks of the Danube countries is banning of the uncontrolled and illegal building in the floodplains. The land and the catchment use have changed the natural river flow, creating conditions for frequent severe floods.

The Danube countries have enhanced their cooperation, especially in creation of integrated flood warning and forecasting system. However, stronger cooperation is needed regarding social factors, that is, the assessment of vulnerable communities and strengthening of solidarity. Currently prevailing strategy is a move from defensive to preventive measures and towards the implementation of the living with floods policy. This policy implies utilization of non-structural measures, education, awareness-raising and capacity building.

In the field of civil defence, it is necessary to accelerate the process of accessing endangered people and to train more volunteers for basic defence and rescue works. Local communities in many areas still lack the information on rules of conduct in the emergency situations. Different media should be used to educate local communities on responsible behaviour before, during and after flood events. Accepting of individual responsibility among the local community members is necessary for further improvement in flood risk management as well as providing the floodplain inhabitants with the knowledge of how to protect their property and employ defence measure elements individually.

In countries, such as Serbia, decentralization and allowing for more volunteerism are positive outcomes of the enactment of new laws and action plans towards sustainable flood risk management.

## Bibliography

- Diemt, Christian, *Katastrophenmanagement beim Eintreten von Hochwassersituationen entlang der Donau*, GRIN Verlag GmbH, München, 2010.
- *Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks*, Official Journal of the European Union, 6.11.2007, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:288:0027:0034:EN:PDF>, 25/10/2011.

---

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

- Estrela, Teodoro et al., “Sustainable water use in Europe – Part 3 – Extreme hydrological events: floods and droughts”, *Environmental issue report*, no 21, Office for Official Publication of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2001, Internet: [http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/Environmental\\_Issues\\_no\\_21/at\\_download/file22/10/2011](http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/Environmental_Issues_no_21/at_download/file22/10/2011), pp. 1–44.
- *EU Strategy for the Danube Region*, European Commission, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/index_en.cfm), 25/10/2011.
- Fekete, Alexander, *Assessment of Social Vulnerability to River Floods in Germany*, UNU-EHS Graduate Research Series, Vol. 4, Bonn, 2010, Internet: <http://ehs.unu.edu/file/get/8069,12/11/2011>.
- *Floods, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River*, Internet: <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-pages/floods.htm>, 22/10/2011.
- *Hochwassernachrichtendienst Bayern*, Internet: <http://www.hnd.bayern.de>, 05/11/2011.
- *Hochwasservorhersagezentrale Baden-Württemberg LUBW*, Internet: <http://www.hvz.lubw.baden-wuerttemberg.de>, 05/11/2011
- *Landesanstalt für Umwelt, Messungen und Naturschutz*, Internet: <http://www.lubw.baden-wuerttemberg.de/servlet/is/2688>, 05/11/2011.
- *Report on Achievements in Flood Protection in the Danube River Basin*, ICPDR – International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, 2007, Internet: <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-files/15473,29/10/2011>.
- “Serbia Passes Emergency Preparedness Law to Empower Local Responders”, *DAI Success Stories*, DAI, Maryland, 2010, Internet: [http://www.dia.com/pdf/1288980736\\_Serbia\\_Emergency\\_Preparedness\\_Nov\\_2010.pdf](http://www.dia.com/pdf/1288980736_Serbia_Emergency_Preparedness_Nov_2010.pdf), 12/11/2011.
- *Spektrum Wasser 1 – Hochwasser – Naturereignis und Gefahr*, Bayerisches Landesamt für Wasserwirtschaft, München, 2004, Internet: [http://hnd.bayern.de/docs/spektrum\\_hochwasser.pdf](http://hnd.bayern.de/docs/spektrum_hochwasser.pdf), 20/11/2011.
- “Stakeholder oriented flood risk assessment for the Danube floodplains”, *Danube Floodrisk, South East Europe Transnational Programme*, Bucharest, Internet: [http://www.mmediu.ro/actualitate/danube\\_floodrisk/DANUBE-FLOOD-RISK-SEE.doc](http://www.mmediu.ro/actualitate/danube_floodrisk/DANUBE-FLOOD-RISK-SEE.doc), 15/11/2011.
- *Sub-Basin Level Flood Action Plan - Upper Danube – As Coordinated between Germany and Austria*, ICPDR – International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, 2009, Internet: <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-files/15167,05/11/2011>.
- *The Analysis of the Danube Floods 2006*, ICPDR – International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, 2007, Internet: <http://www.icpdr.org/icpdr-files/15394,25/10/2011>.
- *The Structure, Role and Mandate of the Civil Protection in Disaster Risk Reduction for South Eastern Europe*, UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction EUR, 2009, Internet: [http://www.unisdr.org/files/9346\\_Europe.pdf](http://www.unisdr.org/files/9346_Europe.pdf), 10/11/2011.

Aleksandra Tomić<sup>1</sup>  
Srbijanka Stojić<sup>2</sup>

## ELEMENTS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN THE STRATEGY OF FLOOD PROTECTION IN THE DANUBE BASIN

### APSTRACT

It is necessary to establish regional cooperation for the sake of safety from flooding. The Danube Basin covers an area of 817, 000 km<sup>2</sup> (of which Serbia's part is about 10% or 82,000 km<sup>2</sup>). The catchments area stretches from the west to the east, this being 1690 km long and from the north to the south - 820 km. As 80 million people live in the Danube Basin, it is necessary to coordinate activities and take measures to protect residents from flooding, which would reduce damage and the losses that were particularly pronounced in 2002, 2005, and 2006. In order to strengthen security of the population that lives in the areas threatened by floods, it is necessary to strengthen the activities of flood defence. Prevention and flood control is a complex activity and the main tasks in that area are performed by the water management. Measures should be taken as preventive ones and as well as those taken during coming of high water. In doing so, the action of EU member states is regulated by the Water Framework Directive<sup>3</sup>, while in Serbia the Law on Water and the by-laws (general and operational plans of flood control) measures are defined, they implying the defence against flooding. By signing and ratifying 2003 Danube Convention Serbia has committed itself to implement the provisions set out in the Directive. The elements of a strategy incorporate the basic settings of crisis management.

*Key words:* Danube basin, flood, crisis management, strategy, protection, prevention.

---

<sup>1</sup> Aleksandra Tomić, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Faculty of Trade and Banking, Alpha University, Belgrade, e-mail [alekto.office@gmail.com](mailto:alekto.office@gmail.com).

<sup>2</sup> Srbijanka Stojić, Public Water Management Company Srbijavode, Beograd, e-mail: [srbijanka.stojic@srbijavode.rs](mailto:srbijanka.stojic@srbijavode.rs).

<sup>3</sup> Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council – Framework for Community action in the field of water policy, Official Journal (OJ L 327).

It is necessary to establish regional cooperation for the sake of safety from flooding. In the last decade in the Danube region dozens of projects have been launched, being financed from the European, bilateral and/or multilateral funds. Some of these projects were successfully completed, some are in progress or just prior to their implementation. However, at this moment, there are no organized forces that would be capable of efficiently performing concerted, complex, preventing and defence activities in several countries simultaneously by the same standards.

Floods are the risks that occurred in the past, but because of climate change the risk of flooding is increasing. The changes in the Danube Basin have resulted from the unplanned exploitation and degradation of the river and the urbanization of the river valleys. Specific measures should be taken to improve the environmental conditions on the Danube and its tributaries such as the reduction of the effects from the objects that have changed the structure of the river, the reduction of organic pollutants and the pollution from nutrients, the improvement of municipal sewage systems, the introduction of phosphate-free detergents and the effective risk management of accidents.

In order to reduce the risk of flooding on 18th January 2006 the European Commission proposed Directive 2007/60/EC<sup>4</sup>, commonly called the Floods Directive. Pursuant to this Directive, all member states are to assess the river basins where there is a risk of flooding and are to determine the flood hazard line. The deadline for this action is 2011. By 2013, they should establish the flood risk maps for the areas that are at risk of flooding. By 2015, they should make plans to manage flood risk. The plans include the measures to reduce the risk of flooding, which are primarily related to prevention such as that in areas where there is a risk of flooding houses, factories and other infrastructural facilities should not be built.<sup>5</sup>

In order to strengthen the preparedness for flood protection it is pointed to the information and public participation through the availability assessments, maps and plans. The flood should be managed by the local community.

The actions that are taken should be coordinated among the countries that share a common basin. This applies to the Member States and third countries. Mutual solidarity is necessary so that the activities of a country do not increase the risk of flooding in the neighbouring countries.

The Convention for Protection and Sustainable Use of the Danube was signed in Sofia on 29 June.1994. The signatories to the Convention are 11 Danube countries. Serbia as part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia did not sign the document. In 1994, Serbia was not a member of the United Nations. By signing and ratifying 2003 Danube Convention Serbia made a commitment to respect the principles and goals of the Convention and to implement the provisions set out in the Water Framework Directive

---

<sup>4</sup> Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks, Official Journal (OJ L288, 06.11.2007, p. 27).

<sup>5</sup> [http://c.europa.eu/environement/water/flood\\_risk/index.htm](http://c.europa.eu/environement/water/flood_risk/index.htm) (31.08.2011).

and other directives relating to water issues. One of the objectives contained in the Convention is the cooperation of the Danube countries through the improved control, prevention and reduction of the risk of occurrence of adverse risks such as floods, ice, etc... For this purpose the activities and measures that include the regulation of levels in river flows, management levels in the reservoirs, flood control and ice are provided in order to improve functioning of the existing hydraulic structures and systems.

Over the past decades as a consequence of industrialization, the population in the flooded areas has increased in the Danube basin. Thus, in these areas the risk of increasing the value of invested assets grows. This requires a greater scope of protection, this leading to a further increase in value and therefore, a risk of potential damage grows. This risk assessment used the field data from the previous periods, the size of the flooded areas, the degree of damage to facilities, the resources needed to repair the damage to facilities, the access to the existing protection systems, the means for increasing safety of the existing buildings, upgrading of defensive lines and construction of new facilities. For the lack of financial resources there should be found cost-effective measures to reduce the risk of flooding.

When planning the finances, first of all, one should consider internal and external factors. Internal factors are available funding sources (fees for water, budget funds and other sources of funding), management (knowledge, skills, motivation), employees (education, experience, motivation, manpower) organization (flexibility, degree of centralization or decentralization), technological and IT equipment, water charges taxpayers, participants in the flood protection.

Since external factors can not be influenced, the process of business planning should be adapted taking into account the inflation rate, interest rate, fiscal policy, wage policy, legislation (increase or decrease in water charges).

Available funds for financing the works for flood protection are allocated according to the priorities determined on the basis of important areas that are defended and based on the value of goods. At the same time, the possibility of participation in the works funded by the local government should be taken into account. Also, relatively low costs make significant effects for the objects that make up the technical and technological unity.

In Serbia, the system for flood protection should be improved, which has been managed primarily on the experience acquired in the previous years of defence. However, due to the lack of financial resources, the system as a whole is not sufficiently developed and has not reached the necessary level of protection. This is especially true in cities, where the greatest risk of damage is typically caused by floods. During the period from 1994 to 2004, due to the limited financial resources the construction of new facilities was not only interrupted, but capital maintenance was also minimized. The regular maintenance of the facilities was below 50% of the prescribed standards. There are also sections that are not constructed in full and the weak places in the defence. A worse situation was even in the protection of internal waters. Drainage systems are not able to receive and evacuate the whole amount of water from precipitation. For the duration of flood precipitation, it has repeatedly exceeded the criteria by which the systems are

designed.<sup>6</sup> In the area around Belgrade 50% of pumping plants are older than 60 years and some units were manufactured as early as in 1911.

The value of works from the Programme for Construction, Reconstruction and Maintenance of Water Facilities of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for 2008 amounted to 3.83 billion RSD. A part of the programme is implemented through the Water Management Company “Srbijavode” and it amounts to 1.17 billion RSD, or 31%. The value of works from the Programme for Construction, Reconstruction and Maintenance of Water Facilities of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for 2009 amounted to 3.57 billion RSD, of which the funds of protection against water amounted to a billion RSD.

6,098,287,732 RSD is planned for water management program in 2011. 2,008,287,732 RSD of this sum is planned to be used for the regulation and protection from harmful effects of water for the following activities:

ACTIVITIES	Financed from the Budget found for water
4.1. Maintenance of water facilities for the regulation of water flows, water facilities to protect against flooding, erosion and flood	800,000,000
4.1.1. Regular maintenance	700,000,000
4.1.2. Investment holding	100,000,000
4.2. Maintenance of water facilities for drainage	546,287,732
4.2.1. Regular maintenance	496,287,732
4.2.2. Investment holding	50,000,000
4.3. Construction and reconstruction of water facilities for the regulation of water courses and water facilities to protect against flooding, erosion and flood	300,000,000
4.4. Rehabilitation of water facilities for the regulation of water flows, water facilities to protect against flooding, erosion and flood and water drainage facilities	152,000,000
4.5. The implementation of flood protection from external and internal water and ice congestion	180,000,000
4.6. Execution of protective works - biological and biotechnical works	20,000,000
4.7. Actualization of norms for maintenance and implementation of standards for flood	2,000,000
4.8. Control of the amount of extracted sand and gravel and the like with water land	8,000,000
Total:	2,008,287,732

Source: Uredba o utvrđivanju Programa upravljanja vodama u 2011. godini, Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije broj 20 od 25.03.2011.

<sup>6</sup> Škorić, M.(2000) Uroci poplava unutrašnjih voda u Vojvodini, Poplave od unutrašnjih voda, Poljoprivredni fakultet, Novi Sad, s. 1–12.

In Serbia, flood protection as well as obligations of the Republic of Serbia, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Trade, Forestry and Water Management, of the Province, public enterprises and local governments are regulated by the law. The Water Law provides for the adoption of the following planning documents for water management: The Water Management Strategy, the Water Management Plan, the Annual programme Management as well as the plans to regulate the protection against the harmful effects of water (a risk management plan of flood, general and operational plan for the defence of floods). However, the Water Strategy and Water Management Plan have not yet been adopted. The deadline for the adoption of these planning documents is the 2012.

The Water Management Plan shall be made separately for the Danube Basin as well as for water catchments areas. The Danube River Basin includes the Drina and the Kolubara, the Tisa sub-basin, the sub-basins of the Great, Southern and Western Morava with the Ibar, the sub-basin of Tamiš Banat and other waterways, a part of the direct catchments of the Danube River, with the Mlava, the Pek, the Porec and the Timok River.<sup>7</sup> The Management Plan for the Danube River Basin establishes specific measures to be implemented by 2015 in order to improve the environmental conditions of the Danube and its tributaries. The measures include the reduction of organic and nutrient pollution, reducing of the effects of objects that have changed the structure of the river, the improvement of municipal sewage systems, the introduction of phosphate-free detergents and the effective risk management of accidents.

The Water Law stipulates the adoption of the Management Plan Flood Risk (still under construction, the deadline for adoption is 2012).

The preliminary flood risk assessment was conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Trade, Forestry and Water Management. A risk assessment includes the evaluation of flood consequences of future floods on human health, environment and cultural heritage. It contains a list of past floods and the likelihood of similar events in the future. Taking into account the topographic, hydrologic and geomorphic characteristics and location of watercourses, including floodplains, the effect of the existing buildings on flood, the location of settlements and industrial zones, long-terms development plans and climate change affect the occurrence of floods.

The general plan of flood control regulates the organization of flood control and management in stages, which include regular defence, flood alert and emergency flood protection, duties, responsibilities and authority – persons who manage flood control, responsibility and accountability – companies and other entities participating in the implementation of flood control, process monitoring and recording of hydrological and other data relevant to flood protection and the declaration of the abolition of the flood control, prevention works and measures to be taken out during the period of flood.

---

<sup>7</sup> Zakon o vodama, Službeni Glasnik Republike Srbije broj 30/10 od 07.05.2010. godine.

The operational plan of flood control is regulated by the flood protection to external and internal waters and the waters of I and II class.

The water line and plan is to keep the water areas and streams where there are protective water facilities, but there were identified the parts of watercourses where these facilities did not exist and where flood protection could be promptly implement, if technically and economically feasible. The domestic water plan includes the melioration areas where systems are built for protection.

The operational plan lists all the data required for the implementation of flood control such as the following: the name of the sector and shares, protective facilities, flood plains, prevailing water meters, the criteria for declaring an ordinary and extraordinary flood, the name of flood control managers, headquarters for flood defence, the name of legal entities that carry out flood protection and other data of importance for the operational implementation of defence. For inland waters, these are as follows: irrigation area, the names of the persons, facilities, drainage system, the criteria and conditions for the declaration of ordinary and extraordinary flood.

Local governments are responsible for the implementation of Water II and they adopt an operational plan. It contains the names of managers, the criteria for declaring regular and special defence, the alert and notification way.

Regular flood protection is declared when the water level in the river reaches the prescribed limit (which is determined for each river sector) and has a tendency of further growth. Regular flood is declared by a competent water management centre and it involves continuous observation and monitoring of embankments and structures.

Emergency flood protection is declared when the water level reaches the prescribed limit and tends to further increase, or when required by other reasons (long duration of water levels above the flood alert, state of embankments and structures, the possibility of danger from the accumulation of ice, etc.). Flood alert centre is responsible for water management and it involves continuous monitoring of defence of embankments and structures and elimination of negative effects on them. In the event of a spill or uncontrolled penetration of embankments and dykes controlled cuts, the state of emergency is declared. The state of emergency is declared by the authorised municipality and it includes the construction of embankments, evacuation, etc. As for the duration of the flood, the Hydrological Service of the Republic Hydrometeorological Service introduces extraordinary hydrological monitoring, submission of additional data, hydrological and meteorological information and forecasts of flood control subjects and the public.

The Emergency Act, which regulates the action and declaration of the Emergency Management, has defined the precise role of all subjects of the public administration in emergencies. The role of the local government is clearly defined role concerning the action it should take in emergencies, including flooding as a regular occurrence.

The Law on Emergencies<sup>8</sup> is clear in terms of emergency and contingency. The extraordinary event of accidents caused by natural disasters, which may endanger the

---

<sup>8</sup> Zakon o vanrednim situacijama, Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije broj 111 od 2009.



health and lives of people and the environment and the consequences can be prevented or remedied by a regular action. Ordinary and extraordinary flood protection is an extraordinary event. Emergency is a condition of this scale and intensity of occurrence or consequences that cannot be prevented or remedied by a regular action. Emergency is declared when the forecast is so unfavourable that technical and other measures for flood defence cannot be avoided. In case of emergency, the Emergency Department is involved in taking of preventive and operational measures of protection and rescue of persons and property.

### **Conclusion**

Risk reduction in large international river basins and minimization of potential adverse effects on human health, environment, cultural heritage and economic activity can only be achieved through a transnational and interdisciplinary approach by stakeholders in the joint project. It is necessary to strengthen security of lives of the people in the areas that are threatened by flooding for the purpose of mitigating a lack of structures for flood protection. Joint programmes should include monitoring, sharing of available data, establishment of warning systems, and declaring a general alarm in the event of flooding in the basin in order to mitigate the adverse events that have a trans-boundary impact. Danube countries are at a different level of development of water resources and they have various clothing level of maintenance of waterworks systems and facilities. However, they should work on establishing a common database that would be available to all partners, depending on their needs. Management should be organized from a central point, but other systems (urban, economic, infrastructure, etc.) should be arranged at directing their development in the protection against harmful effects of water.

## Chapter IV

---

# COOPERATION IN THE DANUBE REGION IN VARIOUS FIELDS OF TOURISM

Damir Demonja<sup>1</sup>  
Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić<sup>2</sup>

### **DANUBE CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM (DCSF) - AN EXAMPLE OF INITIATIVE TO CONNECT THE DANUBE REGION AND OPPORTUNITIES OF CROATIA TO PROMOTE CULTURE AND TOURISM IN THE FRAMEWORK OF DANUBE STRATEGY**

#### ABSTRACT

The Danube Strategy is one of the most important initiatives of the European Union, which is designed to realize the unused potential of economic and social development of the Europe's largest river waterway. The Strategy has the task to strengthen territorial cooperation and interaction between the Danube regions, to ensure sustainable development of each region through better transport and social cohesion, environmental protection, raising the level of education, culture, human rights, tourism, security, energy, labour, minorities, etc., as well as to build prosperity and strengthen institutional cooperation within the region. The Danube Strategy project provides Croatia with new opportunities for strengthening its economy, regional cooperation and development of infrastructure.

Local and regional initiatives are very important initiators of sustainable development of the Danube Region. The Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF), established in Eisenstadt, Austria, in July 2011, is an example that stands out. DCSF is a network of NGOs, civil society organizations of the Danube basin with the intention to act as a platform in promoting and increasing the participation of civil society and their networking within the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

Accordingly, this article presents and analyzes the structure, objectives, tasks and methods of work of the DCSF, as well as the role of Croatia in the respective network, especially in the segments of culture and tourism. Rich cultural heritage and natural beauty of the Danube basin can be further exploited through joint activities in the improved tourism offer that the Strategy promotes, while, in general, the Danube microcosm of people,

---

<sup>1</sup> Damir Demonja Ph.D. Senior Research Associate, Institute for International Relations, IMO, Ljudevita Farkaša Vukotinića 2, HR-10000 Zagreb, Croatia, E-mail: ddemonja@irmo.hr.

<sup>2</sup> Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić, Social anthropologist, Croatian Academy of Science and Art, Institute in Rijeka, Ružičeva 5, HR-51000 Rijeka, Croatia, E-mail: tihana.fabijanic@post.t-com.hr.

languages and religions is an excellent platform for a wider cultural, educational and scientific cooperation, promotion of intercultural dialogue and strengthening of civil society. Thus, the Danube can become a “European brand” and strengthen the identity of inhabitants in the region. In this sense, the article presents Croatian projects, which are important for the promotion of the Croatian culture and tourism, such as, for example, the archaeological parks Vučedol and Sopot, “The Cultural Map of the Danube”, “The Limits of Roman Empires – Limes”, “The Danube Bicycle Route EuroVelo6”, and others, as priority development projects of the Croatian Danube within the Danube strategy.

*Key words:* Danube Strategy, Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF), Danube Region, Croatia, culture, tourism.

## 1. Introduction

Today, the Danube as a European river has a new role, where it no longer only presents a link between the countries and local communities along its flow, but is becoming an enlivened symbol of the Old Continent. The “EU Strategy for the Danube Region” (EUSDR), or the “Danube Strategy”, clearly shows new tendencies on connecting more tightly a vast area of Europe along the river Danube, creating a corresponding frame for a better and more open social, economical, environmental and cultural development.

The *Danube Strategy* is a programme for the macro-region where 8 EU Member States are participating (Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania) together with 6 Non-member States (Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Ukraine and Moldavia), a total of 14 countries with some 115 million people connected through the Danube river. The point is, in fact, in establishing a functional macro-region along the Danube, a particular new project in Europe and a challenge for old and new members of the Union. The *Action plan* of the European *Strategy* for development of the Danube Region sets relevant activities with a goal to start and carry out a sequence of projects that should finally add to the quality of life of all inhabitants of that area.

The purpose of the present article is to analyze the *Danube Strategy* and its goals, as well as its importance for Croatia. Also, since local and regional initiatives create a very important driving force for sustainable development in the Danube Region, the non-governmental organization of the *Danube Civil Society Forum* (DCSF) will be presented here and analyzed as an important participant in the development of the *Danube Strategy*. DCSF could serve as an appropriate platform for transnational cooperation in the Danube basin and as an example of intensive collaboration and engagement of civil society as an important agitator for achieving the goals of the *Danube Strategy* and connecting people living in that area, characterized by plurality, diversification, conflicts and paradoxes. Furthermore, special attention will be given to possibilities, which Croatia should use in promoting culture and tourism as part of

the Danube *strategy*. In that sense, several examples of culture and tourism projects will be mentioned related to the development of the Croatian Danube area.

Since the activities related the *Danube Strategy* are presently “under way”, a number of documents are available on-line, while ideas/texts/articles about the actual *Strategy*, although presented at a number of conferences and meetings, are left mainly unpublished, which could describe them as “grey literature”. A small number of works/texts exist, namely analyses, reports and references related to the *Danube Strategy*, which are published in Europe,<sup>3</sup> while in Croatia the research on the theme of the *Danube Strategy* has only just started from the academic point of view.<sup>4</sup> For this reason, the present article represents a rare input towards research of this theme in Croatia.

## 2. The *Danube Strategy* and its importance for Croatia

### 2.1. The Danube Strategy

The *Strategy*, meant to reinforce development of the Danube area, was proposed by the European Commission on the 8th December 2010,<sup>5</sup> while on the 3rd February 2011 it was announced in Budapest which countries and regions will coordinate priority areas in the frame of the EUSDR. The Member States have accepted the EUSDR on the 13th April 2011 at the Council of Ministers meeting,<sup>6</sup> while the European Commission has given support to the *Strategy* in its Presidency Conclusions on the 24th June 2011,<sup>7</sup> what indicates the beginning of its implementation.

The *Danube Strategy* is designed to secure the sustainable development through an integrated approach and to stimulate social and economical prosperity, increase

---

<sup>3</sup> Macro-regional researches along the river Danube is engaged in „The Blue Ribbon Research Centre“ (BRRC) established in 2009, in Budapest, Hungary, where one of the topics is the *Danube Strategy*. This is an academic network aligned to research of the *Danube Strategy* as a new European project. See more at: Attila Agh, Tamas Kaiser, Boglarka Koller (eds.), *Europeization of the Danube Region: The Blue Ribbon Project*, Blue Ribbon Research Centre King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2010, pp. 260. There is also an interesting research: Carsten Schymik, *Blueprint for a Macro-Region. EU Strategies for the Baltic Sea and Danube Regions*, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Tedesco Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, 2011, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> The Institute for International Relations (IMO) in Zagreb has started a systematic research of the *Danube Strategy* and one of the first texts is by Saša Čvrljak, *Dunavska strategija Europske Unije i njezina važnost za Republiku Hrvatsku*, Zagreb, 2011, pp. 40 (manuscript).

<sup>5</sup> *Europa. EUR-Lex Home. Commission Communication – EU Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0715:EN:NOT>. 8/10/2011.

<sup>6</sup> *Council conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region, General Affairs Council meeting, Brussels, 13 April 2011*, Internet: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/121511.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/121511.pdf). 8/10/2011.

<sup>7</sup> *Europa. Press Room. Press Releases. European Commissioner Hahn announces priority area coordinators for EU Strategy for Danube Region*, Internet: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/124&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>. 8/10/2011.

competitiveness, rise degree of environmental protection, improve transport corridors, develop and jointly promote attractive tourist and cultural destinations, while enlarging the security of the Danube Region in 14 European countries.<sup>8</sup> The *Strategy* has for its goal a better coordination of financing policies, while a considerable amount of finances is already present in the Region, especially through numerous EU Programmes.<sup>9</sup> Cooperation on similar identified objectives is very important and the use of already present assistance has a considerable effect showing how a macro-regional cooperation can help in solving the local problems, which is one of key principles of the *Strategy*.

The *Danube Strategy* is a result of intensive talks and discussions in respective countries with relevant participants in the Region (including regions, municipalities, international organizations, financial institutions, socio-economic partners and civil society), as well as with relevant services in the European Commission. Also, some other European institutions were closely involved in the development of the *Strategy*.

The *Danube Strategy* offers a specific, concrete and integral frame for cooperation. This is stated in the proposal of the *Strategy* of the European Commission and in the accompanying *Action Plan*. The aim is effective resolving of regional challenges like dangers for the environment, insufficient use of navigability potentials on rivers, as well as the generally weak traffic communication, insufficient power-supply connection, uneven socio-economic development, uncoordinated educational system, also research and innovation system, and finally, inadequate security and protection methods, especially regarding the problems of organized crime.<sup>10</sup> Following the mentioned, the *Strategy* is based on the four main pillars for action:

- connecting the Danube region,
- protecting the environment in the Danube Region,
- building prosperity in the Danube Region and
- strengthening the Danube Region.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Comprehensive data with a list and links to strategic documents related to the *Danube Strategy* are available at: *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/index_en.cfm). 8/10/2011.

<sup>9</sup> For example, 100 million Euros is redirected from the Cohesion Funds (European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund and European Social Fund) between 2007 and 2013. Also, 41 Territorial Cooperation Programmes cover the geographical area of the Danube region. More on financing of the *Danube Strategy* in: *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Funding*. Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/funding\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/funding_en.cfm). 8/10/2011.

<sup>10</sup> In details in: *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for the Danube Region. What's the issue?*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/index\\_en.cfm#1](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/index_en.cfm#1). 8/10/2011.

<sup>11</sup> *Europa. EUR-Lex Home. Id celex. Communication From the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of*

These four pillars are divided into 11 priority areas with 253 activities and measures, which are mentioned in the *Action Plan*.<sup>12</sup> These 11 priority areas are the key areas of the *Strategy* and the progress is possible to achieve through an integrative approach, connecting with other areas, while the operational side is achieved through projects and activities. Activities are disputable questions that require the engagement of countries and partners who are needed to perform the goals of a priority area, this not requiring additional financing, but including implicitly a new and different approach, a better coordination and support. The *Action Plan* is rather important in the *Danube Strategy* because it ensures that activities and projects are realistic, technically and financially sustainable, coherent and supportive.

An integrated approach is the key for the feasibility of the *Strategy*. It covers different policies connecting them together and concentrating on the main problems, which concern the whole macro-regions. The *Strategy* has been prepared following the initiatives/proposals of the Danube countries and it is upon them to take responsibility for its implementation. The European Commission is assisting the Danube countries to achieve the goals they have set together. This makes the implementation of the *Action Plan* easier through the assistance relating the use of EU funds, the overall planning, monitoring, evaluation and guiding.

## 2.2. The Danube Strategy and Croatia

When we speak of Croatia, the country is a member of the *Danube Strategy* from the time of the Danube Conference started.<sup>13</sup> Croatia is active on different levels within the framework of the *Danube Strategy*. There is an explicit involvement of the Osijek-Baranja and Vukovar-Srijem Counties, which, being aware of the potentials of the *Danube Strategy*, presented their priorities inside the *Strategy* with a set of events, thus showing their consciousness about the importance of the local levels of government.<sup>14</sup>

---

*the Regions. European Union Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0715:EN:NOT>. 9/10/2011.

<sup>12</sup> *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Priority Areas*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/priority\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/priority_en.cfm). 8/10/2011. The complete *Action Plan* document is available on, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/danube/action\\_plan\\_danube.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/danube/action_plan_danube.pdf). 09/10/2011.

<sup>13</sup> *European Commission. Regional Policy. Territorial Co-operation. Danube Strategy. First Conference on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Ulm (Germany) 1/2 February 2010*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperation/danube/conference/ulm\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/danube/conference/ulm_en.htm). 9/10/2011.

<sup>14</sup> The Regional Development Agency of Slavonia and Baranja in Osijek organized a presentation of the *Danube Strategy* at the local event “Open Days 2010” on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010. On that event, the priorities of the Osijek-Baranja and Vukovar-Srijem Counties in the *Danube Strategy* were presented. For more information see: *Regionalna razvojna agencija Slavonije i Baranje. Dunavska strategija*, Internet: [http://www.slavonija.hr/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=91](http://www.slavonija.hr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=91). 9/10/2011.

The *Danube Strategy* in Croatia has also a strong political support, which has been shown especially at the Danube Conference held on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2011 in Vukovar.<sup>15</sup> The conclusions of the Vukovar Danube Conference emphasize the following: continual political support to the execution of the *Strategy*, continual engagement of participating countries in all priority areas so to give impulse to its feasibility oriented to achieving direct results and realizing the goals of the *Strategy*, involvement of public and private sector, as well as the engagement of regional and local governments and participation of civil society.<sup>16</sup> Out of 11, Croatia engaged itself in coordinating activities in two priority areas – in the protection of biodiversity, landscape and quality of air and soil, as well as in market competition, thus deciding on the proactive co-operation and participation in all other activities.

The main development priorities of the Croatian Danube area are as follows: promoting of inter-modal transport and effective linking of the Danube area with the Adriatic enlarging the economic competition through the development of entrepreneurship, modernizing of agriculture and the development of special forms of tourism, environmental protection, risk prevention and the development of renewable energy sources as well as strengthening of the human potential.<sup>17</sup> The Croatian priority projects for the first phase of the implementation of the *Action Plan* are the projects for demining, also including construction, annexing and renewal of waste water system in the Danube river-basin, improving the management of the river eco-system Mura-Drava-Danube and multi-purpose management and utilization of the river Sava in a part of the Croatian-Slovenian border up to Sisak.<sup>18</sup>

There are numerous opportunities for Croatia in the *Danube Strategy*. The Danube Region is a vast market which will certainly still grow and has great potentials, hereupon there are opportunities in ecology, tourism, also important is the security field as well as the collaboration between universities, but for a successful realization of these potentials quality ideas and projects are needed. The Danube Region offers a number of development and prosperity opportunities in which all segments of society should be involved, from governmental institutions to local and regional governments and to inhabitants themselves. The *Danube*

---

<sup>15</sup> The Conference was attended by representatives from 14 Danube countries involved in the *Danube Strategy*, Commissioner of the European Commission for Regional Policy Johannes Hahn, President of the Committee of the Regions Mercedes Bresso and the Croatian national political leadership. Detailed reports, text and audio documents related to the Conference as well as for the *Danube Strateg*, are available at *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo vanjskih poslova i europskih integracija. Vanjska politika. Multilateralni odnosi. Strategija Europske Unije za Dunavsku regiju. Vukovarska dunavska konferencija, Vukovar, 29. travnja 2011.*, Internet: <http://www.mvpei.hr/MVP.asp?pepid=2600.9/10/2011>.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem.*, and especially Vukovar Danube Conference, Vukovar, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2011, Conclusions of the Presidency.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem.*

*Strategy* could help Croatia in reinforcing the economy enlarging the competition and capacity building in local and regional governments. Also, through the *Danube Strategy* Croatia can better apply the EU cohesion policies in cross-border and transnational programmes. This could, in turn, enhance the socio-economical development of Pannonian Croatia, ensure a more up-to-date infrastructure in transport and energy supply and a more functional management of river navigation and environmental protection. By its participation in the *Danube Strategy* Croatia can build up her own Danube identity, make further valorisation of its traffic location between the Danube basin and the Mediterranean, ensure its sustainable development, make use of complete potentials of Pannonian Croatia and raise its competitiveness. In this way, Croatia can achieve a better integration into the European Union and strengthen its membership, since regional and local governments are responsible for the implementation of projects. Besides, the *Danube Strategy*, with its explicit dimension of regional cooperation, should certainly contribute to a better cooperation of Croatia with Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The *Danube Strategy* is a responding and acceptable platform, which sets the existing models of cooperation into a unified network creating synergy between cross-border and transnational cooperation. It represents a functional integration of different EU sectoral policies and participants on different levels, thus offering a new incentive and making a strategic unity needed for better management of resources and coordination of activities. The *Danube Strategy*, which was created on the basis of needs of people in the Region, shows its functionality, flexibility and concentration on the basic problems in the Region, while at the same time it is connected with all participants (national and local governmental bodies, business partners, academic society, and non-governmental organizations). Additionally, the *Danube Strategy*, as an innovative macro-regional strategy and a new form of cross-border cooperation and initiatives, should establish functional areas on the basis of their comparative precedence. Its greatest importance is, first of all, in increasing the competitiveness, research, development and innovation as incentives for economic growth in the area. The Danube Region, with its special features and some common features of participating countries, will represent a particular experiment for macro-regional initiatives of the EU for regional cohesion and for increasing competitiveness through regional development.

### **3. The *Danube Civil Society Forum* (DCSF): an example of the initiative to connect the Danube Region**

Civil society plays an important role in the realization of the concept and contextual frame of the *Danube Strategy* has. As shown by research so far, almost all public participants (Member States and those that are not, also the European Commission) are calling, in this or that way, to involve civil society into the realization



process of the *Strategy*, although it seems that they do not have a quite clear idea how to accomplish it.<sup>19</sup>

The organizations of civil society, regardless of the fact whether they are regional, national or international, which are trying to engage themselves in the *Strategy*, are left on the informal margins of participation, mainly related to their own capacities of networking and financing, attending the occasions of decision making, for example participating in conferences. Here, we will present in more detail the *Danube Civil Society Forum* (DCSF), a platform for dialogue of civil society and networking in the Danube basin within the context of the EUSDR.

### 3.1. What is DCSF?

The *Danube Civil Society Forum* (DCSF) was founded on the 30th June–1st July 2011 in Eisenstadt/Kismarton/Železno, Austria. It has 112 members, 74 regular members and 38 observers as of 1st August 2011.<sup>20</sup>

The DCSF is the platform for civil society dialogue and networking in the Danube basin under the *EU Strategy for the Danube Region* (EUSDR). It is an action provided for by the 4th pillar “Strengthening the Danube Region“ in the *Action plan* of the EU Commission for the EUSDR. DCSF is functioning as the interface for structured consultations between civil society and public and private authorities on the regional, national and EU level, as well as to international and intergovernmental organizations, which are active in the region. The DCSF is dedicated to support civil society organizations in the Danube basin. It aims to promote and enhance civil society participation and networking within the framework of the EUSDR.<sup>21</sup>

### 3.2. Objectives and activities

Within the framework of the EUSDR and the subsequent documents as well as within the framework of co-operation between the EU and relevant European countries the *objectives* of the DCSF are as follows:<sup>22</sup>

- To support and promote the *Danube Strategy* following the principles of respect for democracy and human rights, the rule of law, good governance, principles of market economy and social and environmental sustainable development.

---

<sup>19</sup> Stefan August Luetgenau, Civil society participation in the European Danube Strategy, in: Attila Agh, Tamas Kaiser, Boglarka Koller (eds.), *Europeanization of the Danube Region: The Blue Ribbon Project*, Blue Ribbon Research Centre King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2010, pp. 188-205.

<sup>20</sup> *Danube Civil Society Forum. First General Assembly of the Danube Civil Society Forum*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/danube-civil-society-forum/1st-general-assembly-of-the-dcsf/>. 9/10/2011.

<sup>21</sup> *Danube Civil Society Forum*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/>. 9/10/2011.

<sup>22</sup> More about DCSF objectives see in: *Statutes of the Danube Civil Society Forum*, Internet: [http://www.danubestrategy.eu/uploads/media/Statutes\\_Danube\\_Civil\\_Society\\_Forum.pdf](http://www.danubestrategy.eu/uploads/media/Statutes_Danube_Civil_Society_Forum.pdf). 9/10/2011.

- To support the existing non-governmental, non-profit organizations and their networks, the creation of independent and autonomous non-governmental organizations, to strengthen the capacity of civil society and to support, assist and coordinate the efforts of its members.
- To promote a culture of dialogue and cooperation between civil society organizations and between civil society and public and private actors in the Danube Basin.
- To promote dialogue and solidarity between peoples and cultures.  
In order to achieve its objectives, the DCSF *takes* the following *activities*.<sup>23</sup>
- Holds regular meeting of the General Assembly of DCSF at least every second year.
- Cooperates with all public or private, international or regional institutions whose activities are related to the objectives of the DCSF.
- Launches relevant research and documentation activities.

### 3.3. How does DCSF work?

The DCSF focuses its networking and project-related actions on its Working Groups. So far, four Working Groups have been formed along the 4 pillars of the EUSDR.<sup>24</sup> This is to ensure that the creativity and action built up in the Working Groups is compatible with the overall *Danube Strategy*.

These 4 pillars of the *Strategy* and the 4 Working Groups (WG) are the following:<sup>25</sup>

#### WG 1: Connecting the Danube Region

This WG deals with the issues of mobility of people and goods, transport on water, rail, street and future transport and mobility scenarios, energy, including sustainable energy production, the question of nuclear power plants, new energy use and efficiency strategies, culture & tourism, cultural awareness and protection, culture production, green tourism and development of tourism strategies, encouraging people-to-people contacts and building cross- border bridges of dialogue and understanding.

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>24</sup> *European Commission. Commission Staff Working Document. Action Plan. Accompanying document to the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. European Union Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: [http://www.danubestrategy.eu/fileadmin/danube/media/EUSDR\\_action\\_plan\\_danube.pdf](http://www.danubestrategy.eu/fileadmin/danube/media/EUSDR_action_plan_danube.pdf). 9/10/2011.

<sup>25</sup> Detailed on: *Danube Civil Society Forum. 4-pillar strategy*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/strategy/4-pillars/>. 9/10/2011, and *Working Groups*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/danube-civil-society-forum/working-groups/>. 9/10/2011.

## WG 2: Protecting the environment in the Danube Region

Among other things, this WG focuses on water quality in the entire Danube Basin, environmental risk management like flood prevention and safeguarding natural river banks, preservation of air, water, landscapes and soil, including the issues of GMOs and genetic engineering, the future of agriculture in the Danube basin.

## WG 3: Building prosperity in the Danube Region

This WG deals with all aspects of a knowledge-based society, education, life-long learning, research, how to invest in people and skills, the question of competitiveness in the region. This includes question of education, labour market, demographic and migration questions.

## WG 4: Strengthening the Danube Region

This WG focuses on institutional capacity building, including the establishment of the DCSF and the improvement of public administration and services and the fight against corruption and fraud. Furthermore, the WG deals with security issues in terms of border security and fight against organized crime. In addition to this the question, food security is a part of this pillar.

All four thematic areas follow a broad interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach. In order to enable civil society to network on focused issues of trans-regional importance, each WG established Sub-Working Groups (SWG) along special thematic or regional areas.<sup>26</sup> These WGs and SWGs are the greenhouses of networking, cooperation and innovation in the DCSF.

The DCSF conceives the fact that it will not be able to cover all aspects of the *Danube Strategy* from the very beginning. The WG action and networking will be linked by the General Assembly (GA) of all members (regular and partners) convened every second year, the elected Executive Committee (EC), as well as the President and the Vice-President. If sufficient funding is secured a secretariat with an executive secretary will coordinate the various WGs, prepare the GA and assist the EC and the president/vice-president/treasurer in executing the GA decisions.<sup>27</sup>

### 3.4. Main outcomes of the DCSF

The DCSF will act as an interface to public and private authorities on the regional, national and EU level, as well as to international and intergovernmental organizations that are active in the Region. It strives to be one of few truly European and

---

<sup>26</sup> More about Working Groups, their Sub-Working Groups and their members as well as presentation of each of the Working Group in: *Danube Civil Society Forum. Working Groups*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/danube-civil-society-forum/working-groups/>. 9/10/2011.

<sup>27</sup> DCSF Organizational Chart can be seen in: *Danube Civil Society Forum. Key Documents*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/danube-civil-society-forum/key-documents/>. 9/10/2011.

transnational actors in the Danube Region promoting and shaping the idea of the European integration and the concept of the *Danube Strategy*.

The main expected outcomes of the establishment of the DCSF are:

- Increased inter-regional and international cooperation and networking among civil society in the Danube Region,
- Increased influence of civil society in democratic decision-making processes on the issues related to the Danube Region,
- Strengthened capacity of civil society to further their agenda and communication,
- Increased capacity of civil society to opinion building and promoting the EU *Danube Strategy* and its aims in the Region,
- Improved capacity of civil society in service delivery,
- Strengthened cooperation between civil society and public and private authorities in the Danube Region and the EU,
- Raised public awareness of the role of civil society and fostering active citizenship and participation in the Region.

The DCSF will offer cooperation to all stakeholders in the Danube Region. It fully acknowledges the fact that the principles of respect for democracy and human rights, the rule of law, good governance as well as the principles of market economy, social and environmental sustainable development are closely related to the economic structure and development of the region as well as to its economic actors and the business community.

While the DCSF is open to exchange and cooperate with the business sector, it will limit its own outreach to the non-profit sector. The establishment and work of the DCSF will offer leverage to the concepts of active citizenship, participation, transparency and good governance in the *Danube Strategy*. Furthermore, the support for the DCSF by private and public authorities in the Danube Region on the regional, but mainly on the national and EU level will be seen as the litmus test for nation states and the EU to be able to include a structured civil society in the *Danube Strategy*.

In the first phase of implementing EUSDR, the DCSF will need the continued clear political support from EUSDR stakeholders. The DCSF should be met by the EU and the stakeholders of the EUSDR, especially the EU Members States as well as the partner states and the respective cities and regions on three levels:

- as a partner in the implementation and future monitoring of the EUSDR,
- as a partner in building interregional dialogue and understanding, and
- as a partner in building civil society and active citizens in the Region.

At the end, the DCSF is one among the first actions in the *Danube Strategy* that is ready for implementation.

#### **4. Possibilities to promote culture and tourism of Croatia in the Danube Strategy within the context of the DCSF**

As already mentioned, one of the goals of the DCSF is to increase the inter-regional and international cooperation in the Danube Region, and this should be done through an action and creativity of each particular group out of four established Working Groups related to the four pillars of the EUSDR.

In the frame of the Working Group 1 of the DCSF, several Sub-groups were formed and Croatia, at this moment, is involved in a Sub-group dealing with, among other themes, culture and tourism. A culture is one of the elements of identity, the projects undertaken by Croatia in the context of culture and tourism should express her connection with the Danube River and with people living along its river basin. This is possible to achieve only by taking practical actions, although there still miss completed methods for an integrated approach. Besides, such projects can show that Croatia has overcome her narrow national interests and involves appropriate partners, which are entitled to develop and carry out quality projects. Tourism on the other hand, as part of culture, is also an important catalyst in building the identity. Getting to know and understand others by travelling around and making contacts with national customs, myths, historical and traditional heritage and art as well as one's own private experience add and help towards accumulating positive perceptions of a new positive stereotypes. Cultural heritage, like castles and fortresses along the shores of the Danube are a very useful "raw material" which should be rediscovered and branded as a particular "Danube brand" and also be recognized as the "Danube consciousness".

The above said should be carried out through culture and tourism projects in close cooperation with local inhabitants, since culture and tourism are the key elements to build an identity. This is why we will have chose here a few Croatian projects of culture and tourism in the Danube basin, which are already being carried out and could serve as acceptable examples for a deliberate action through the *Strategy*.

##### **4.1. Examples of projects in culture and tourism with the aim of developing of the Croatian Danube Region**

In the Croatian part of the Danube area, a number of different projects in culture and tourism are already under way, mainly developing as transnational projects, which show a pro-active role of Croatia in the Danube Region. These projects are presently in various phases of development or implementation, with practical and recognizable results, which contribute to the sustainable development of that area. At the same time, they prove the so-called "Danube identity" of Croatia. The projects are mainly undertaken by the Vukovar-Srijem County and the Osijek-Baranja County, together with their Development Agencies, while in some of them institutions of the National Government are also involved (Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism). Among the actual culture projects we can mention, for example, "Danube *Limes* in Croatia",

a digital culture map “Danube – a Path of Culture”, “Vukovar-Vučedol-Ilok”,<sup>28</sup> the archaeology park “Sopot” and others, while among tourism projects most prominent are “Datourway”, “Danube Cycling Route Euro Velo 6”, and other.

Aiming to bring the European standards into the research of *limes* in Croatia within the context of the project “Danube *Limes* in Croatia”, an office for *limes* was opened in 2008 in the Archaeology Museum in Osijek. It functions as an organization, which collects the existing data on *limes* – publications, archive materials and maps of *limes* localities. Some areal photographs and geo-maps are already made. On the basis of these materials, the present state of the matter will be traced after which analyses in the field and a selection of sites will be chosen to be put on the map of protected areas. Thus, the location of *limes* will be determined in relation to other cultural groups from different periods and to the Nature Park “Kopački rit”. Thanks to the Ministry of Culture of Republic of Croatia, the Croatian part of *limes* has been reported for the tentative list of the UNESCO World Heritage. It is important to also point to the cooperation of the Ministry of Culture with the County and Municipal governments and other institutions in the Danube area. At the moment, our knowledge about the Croatian part of *limes* derives from the actual scientific research and accidental findings, protection works and written sources, while its complete investigation is a long-term activity, which has only started. With the possible use of magnetometer, any part of *limes* could be put on the World Heritage list at the moment of its documenting and publishing in this way, so that the archaeological research is not indispensable. In the meantime, by the negotiation of the information and direct communication this new (old) Danube identity should be spread around and protected, especially in the consciousness of the local population, since this is first of all, their and also our common heritage.<sup>29</sup>

A cultural and tourist map “The Danube – the Path of Culture” is being prepared by the Working group “Culture and Science” of the Working Community of the Danube areas in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia. The map comprises sites in the Danube area, which are some 50 kms away from the river flow. There are 41 sites in Croatia with 187 cultural goods, each illustrated with some 40 photographs.<sup>30</sup>

The project “Datourway” is an example of the transnational cooperation related to development of tourism along the river Danube in its middle and south-east part in Croatia. Special attention is given to the protection of natural and cultural resources in

---

<sup>28</sup> See in more details in: *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo kulture. Projekti Ministarstva. Projekt „Vukovar-Vučedol-Ilok“*, Internet: <http://www.min-kulture.hr/default.aspx?ID=100>. 10/10/2011.

<sup>29</sup> More about this project: *Dunavski limes u Hrvatskoj*, Internet: <http://www.dunavskilimes-am.com.hr/index.html>. 10/10/2011.

<sup>30</sup> *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo kulture. Kulturna baština. Dunav – put kulture*, Internet: <http://www.min-kulture.hr/default.aspx?id=1717>. 10/10/2011.

the area with this huge European navigation path. The concept of tourism in this project has been considered in a broad sense – as a complex activity oriented towards recreation, relaxation and free time, cultural education, enjoying the natural beauties and physical mobility, regardless of whether it is for a short or a long term. Besides, the aim of the project is to strengthen and support transnational cooperation in tourism related to diverse tourist potentials of the river, its shores and natural values in the area and to built heritage of the settlements, towns and villages along the river Danube. The functioning of the “Datourway” will be organized on the bases of transnational agreements on the common tourism strategy and integration of policies and pilot projects into national, regional and local as well as general European plans and policies.<sup>31</sup>

The “The Danube Cycling Route” or “The Danube Route” is part of the international bicycle route “EuroVelo 6” of the European bicycle network “European Cycle Route Network”, which extends from the Atlantic Ocean to the Black Sea. It is also part of the international Danube bicycle route “Cycling the Danube” which is financed from the Programme IPA II Component for cross border cooperation. The aim of the project “Route Danube” is to stimulate recreational cycle-tourism in the cross border areas, which as one of the forms of selective tourism, which is showing a considerable growth. The partners in the project in Croatia are the Tourist Association of the County of Vukovar-Srijem and the County of Osijek-Baranja, while in Serbia the leading partner is the Municipality Bačka Palanka. In Croatia, checking on the cycling trail of the “Route Danube” was done in 2005 through both Counties in the length of 138 km, where also appropriate signalization has been installed. A very interesting part of this route is in Ilok (17 km) because of differences in height and diverse landscape quality.<sup>32</sup>

The Vukovar-Srijem County is very active in projects on the regional level.<sup>33</sup> From 2004, the County has been a member of the Working Group of the Danube Region, which was organized in 1990 in Wachau, Austria. The goal of this Working Group is to use the cross border cooperation of the regions in the Danube area to stimulate development of economy, transport, spatial planning, tourism, culture, science and environmental protection. By initiating cooperation of its members, this Group gives incentive to development in the Danube Region in the interest of the local population and for the development of peaceful relations in Europe. Up-to-date, 38 regions which cover 650 000 km<sup>2</sup> with 80 million inhabitants of Europe, have been involved in the membership of this association in the Danube Region. The most important projects of this association in Croatia, initiated by the working groups

---

<sup>31</sup> *Transnational Strategy for the Sustainable Territorial Development of the Danube Area with special regard to Tourism*, Internet: <http://www.datourway.eu/>. 10/10/2011.

<sup>32</sup> *EuroVelo 6*, Internet: <http://www.eurovelo6.org/>. 10/10/2011.

<sup>33</sup> See the presentation held at a local event „Open Days 2010“ in Osijek on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010, Internet: <http://www.slavonija.hr/images/Dokumenti2010/hr/Vukovarsko%20-%20srijemska%20%20C5%BEupanija%20u%20%20kontekstu%20Dunavske%20strategije.ppt>. 10/10/2011.

“Economy and Tourism” and “Culture and Science”, are the concepts of bicycle routes along the Danube and the digital culture map “Danube – the Path of Culture”.<sup>34</sup>

The Osijek-Baranja County, relating to the area of tourism within the context of the *Danube Strategy*, has provided for stronger development of special forms of tourism, this including the development of new tourism products like bicycle routes, vine roads, restoration of castles, honey paths, old crafts, revitalization of Osijek fortress, etc.<sup>35</sup>

All these projects show that Croatia can use its full potentials in culture and tourism in the frame of the *Danube Strategy* and thus, make them even more effective. Besides, the goals of development and use of culture and tourism in the *Danube Strategy* are complementary to those in Croatia. The *Danube Strategy* in this area offers numerous opportunities through a better use of transnational and cross-border programmes, which could release entrepreneur potentials and “pull in” finances from the EU funds.

## 5. Conclusion

The *Danube Strategy* is a European macro-regional strategy with a goal of realization of the huge and insufficiently used potentials of the Danube, the longest European river path, which demands cooperation and coordinated action of all participants involved. The aim is to create an attractive, safe and prosperous Danube Region through a successful resolving of challenges, which are encountered on the way, like environmental protection, nature conservation, transport infrastructure (especially river navigation and railway), energetic security, rural development, culture, tourism, quality management, food security, migrations, population and climate change. The *Strategy* has clearly presented in the *Action Plan* the measures and activities that have been taken in order to achieve its efficient implementation.

The *Danube Strategy* integrates different sectoral policies and participants according to the functional needs of the Danube Region with a primary goal to establish the sustainable development. The participation of all institutional levels in the realization of the *Danube Strategy*, that is synergy of the existing capacities, is an innovative element in the macro-regional approach, while its cross-border character represents a part of the process of Europeization.

The key element of the *Danube Strategy* is that it identifies in an appropriate manner strategic interests of all participating countries as well as means for their

---

<sup>34</sup> More in: *Službene stranice Vukovarsko-srijemske županije. Radna zajednica podunavskih regija*, Internet: <http://www.vukovarsko-srijemska-zupanija.com/vsz.php?stranica=114>. 10/10/2011.

<sup>35</sup> Presentation „*Osiječko-baranjska županija u kontekstu Dunavske strategije*“, held at event „Open Days 2010“ on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010 in Osijek, available at, Internet: <http://www.slavonija.hr/images/Dokumenti2010/hr/Osje%C4%8Dko%20-%20baranjska%20%C5%BEupanija%20u%20kontekstu%20Dunavske%20strategije.ppt>. 10/10/2011.



realization. In the same way, the *Danube Strategy* offers a possibility of implementing the experience of other already implemented European regional initiatives, which gives it a new value, making it at the same time open for cooperation with new European initiatives. The *Danube Strategy*, or more precisely its *Action plan*, is a “living” document, which could constantly be controlled and verified, occasionally also replenished by its member countries.

A special emphasis is in the *Strategy* place on civil society or on organizations of civil society, having a great economic and social importance in the Danube Region on macro-economical level. Civil society or organizations of civil society should work on building an efficient cooperation and participation of civil society in the *Strategy*. As a good example there could be mentioned the *Danube Civil Society Forum* (DCSF). The DCSF is the platform for civil society dialogue and networking in the Danube basin under the *EU Strategy for the Danube Region* (EUSDR). It will function as the interface for structured consultations between civil society and public and private authorities on the regional, national and EU level as well as for international and intergovernmental organizations, which are active in the region. The DCSF is dedicated to support civil society organizations in the Danube basin. It aims to promote and enhance civil society participation and networking within the framework of the EUSDR. The DCSF will work in four Working Groups (WGs), mirroring the four pillars of the EUSDR as well as in specific thematic or regional Sub-Working Groups (SWGs). Civil society participation and consultation should be mainstreamed throughout the EUSDR and its implementation, steering and revision processes. The EUSDR action plan has set high standards in demanding participation of civil society on all levels of the *Danube Strategy*.

The position of Croatia in the *Danube Strategy* is important, since Croatia is a Danube Region country, but also because she will soon accede to the European Union as a full member.

In the practical implementation of the policy of macro-regional cooperation through the *Danube Strategy*, Croatia has recognized two important privileges. First of all, this is related to the original political process in the European Union, which coincides with the request for active participation in different forms of regional cooperation as a political pre-condition in the negotiating process. Secondly, uneven socio-economic development of regions is also evident in Croatia, therefore, inter-regional and cross border linking are ideal means of presenting and carrying out projects which aim at erasing the regional irregularity. Croatia is defining itself as an Adriatic, Central European and Danube country, while as an additional dimension, which could be ascribe within the context of the *Danube Strategy*, should be a specific bridge between the Danube Region and the Adriatic, or the Mediterranean. This fact can offer a new perspective in the overall cooperation in the Danube basin, which will add to a better development of Danube countries, especially strengthening the exchange of goods, traffic and transit, as well as tourism. Further on, the *Danube Strategy* is important for Croatia in the context of strengthening its economy, rising

of competitiveness and, especially, supporting capacities of local and regional governments. Also, the *Danube Strategy* will enable a better use of means of the EU cohesion policy in Croatia through cross border, transnational and other programmes.

The task of Croatia, and the responsibility of other countries of the Danube Region, is to attain the main goal of actual participation in the European integration processes and to contribute to the achievement of the common European identity, economic rise and the improvement of common links. It is especially important that the activities in the *Danube Strategy* are not the exclusive area for the European Union Member States. Although the cohesion policy has been meant as a means of achieving even development in all parts of the Union, broadening of the *Danube Strategy* on the non-member countries as well gives an additional legitimacy to the goals of the cohesion policy and shows a clear intention to define itself as an area of interest of the European Union. From this derive legitimate endeavouring of the *Danube Strategy* to help in the development of all countries of the Danube basin, including Croatia, and to spread the cohesive results also beyond the formal borders of the Union related to the programme of activities, the *Danube Strategy* could be defined as the key mechanism for the cooperation in this part of Europe. Croatia has undertaken the task of coordinating the priority area of strengthening the competitiveness in entrepreneurship and development of economic clusters as well as in the priority area of protection and conservation of bio-diversity. In this way, Croatia has undertaken responsibility for improvement of the quality of life in the Region and for the care for natural environment. The participation of Croatia in the *Danube Strategy* is a continuation of Croatian proactive approach to the regional cooperation, which will add immensely to empowering neighbourhood relations, to reaffirming of the economic and strategic multidimensionality of this area, linking together the Pannonian and the Adriatic basins, and finally, creating an added value in connecting the Central and South-Eastern Europe. With such international cooperation on the regional level, Croatia has raised its ability of adaptation to new achievements, of confrontation with the actual challenges and its possibility to strengthen the application of European norms and standards. Besides, the *Danube Strategy* will integrate Croatia additionally into the Danube basin as a politically active participant and the creator of a part of cohesion policy of the European Union. In this way, Croatia is becoming a factor of the European Union politics and its legal interlocutor.

Finally, through its participation in the *Strategy*, Croatia can empower its Danube identity, evaluate its transport location, improve sustainable development, enlarge competitiveness and intensify regional cooperation. This is shown also by the above mentioned examples in culture and tourism, which are already being carried out in Croatia within the context of the present transnational and cross-border programmes of cooperation, affirming the potentials of culture and tourism in the Croatian Danube Region.

## 6. Literature and Sources

- Agh Attila, Ferencz Alexandra (eds.), *Deepening and Widening in an Enlarged Europe: The Impact of the Eastern Enlargement*, Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies – Together for Europe Research Centre, Budapest, 2006.
- Agh Attila, Kaiser Tamas, Koller Boglarka (eds.), *Europeization of the Danube Region: The Blue Ribbon Project*, Blue Ribbon Research Centre King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2010, pp. 260.
- Busek Erhard, Gjoreska Aleksandra, “The Danube Region: transformation and emergences“, *Eastern Journal of European Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, Centre for European Studies – Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Iasi (Romania), 2010, pp. 9-20.
- *Council conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region, General Affairs Council Meeting, Brussels, 13 April 2011*, Internet: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/121511.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/121511.pdf). 8/10/2011.
- Čvrlijak Saša, *Dunavska strategija Europske Unije i njezina važnost za Republiku Hrvatsku*, Zagreb, 2011, pp. 40 (manuscript).
- *Danube Civil Society Forum*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/>. 9/10/2011.
- *Danube Civil Society Forum. First General Assembly of the Danube Civil Society Forum*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/danube-civil-society-forum/1st-general-assembly-of-the-dcsf/>. 9/10/2011.
- *Danube Civil Society Forum. 4-pillar strategy*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/strategy/4-pillars/>. 9/10/2011.
- *Danube Civil Society Forum. Key Documents*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/danube-civil-society-forum/key-documents/>. 9/10/2011.
- *Danube Civil Society Forum. Working Groups*, Internet: <http://www.danubestrategy.eu/danube-civil-society-forum/working-groups/>. 9/10/2011.
- *Dunavski limes u Hrvatskoj*, Internet: <http://www.dunavskilimes-am.com.hr/index.html>. 10/10/2011.
- *Europa. EUR-Lex Home. Commission Communication – EU Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0715:EN:NOT>. 8/10/2011.
- *Europa. EUR-Lex Home. Id celex. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of the Regions. European Union Strategy for Danube Region*, Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0715:EN:NOT>. 9/10/2011.
- *Europa. Press Room. Press Releases. European Commissioner Hahn announces priority area coordinators for EU Strategy for Danube Region*, Internet: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/124&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>. 8/10/2011.

- *European Commission. Commission Staff Working Document. Action Plan. Accompanying document to the communication From the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. European Union Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: [http://www.danubestrategy.eu/fileadmin/danube/media/EUSDR\\_action\\_plan\\_danube.pdf](http://www.danubestrategy.eu/fileadmin/danube/media/EUSDR_action_plan_danube.pdf). 9/10/2011.
- *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for the Danube Region*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/index_en.cfm). 8/10/2011.
- *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for Danube Region. Funding*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/funding\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/funding_en.cfm). 8/10/2011.
- *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Priority Areas*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/priority\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/priority_en.cfm). 8/10/2011.
- *European Commission. Regional Policy – Inforegio. EU Strategy for the Danube Region. What's the issue?*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/danube/index\\_en.cfm#1](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/index_en.cfm#1). 8/10/2011.
- *European Commission. Regional Policy. Territorial Co-operation. Danube Strategy. First Conference on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Ulm (Germany) 1/2 February 2010*, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperation/danube/conference/ulm\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/danube/conference/ulm_en.htm). 9/10/2011.
- *EuroVelo 6*, Internet: <http://www.eurovelo6.org/>. 10/10/2011.
- Giffinger Rudolph, Suitner Johannes, “Danube Region Strategy – Arguments for a Territorial Capital Based Multilevel Approach“, *SPATIUM International Review*, 23, Institute of Architecture and Urban & Spatial Planning of Serbia, Belgrade, 2010, pp. 9-16
- Luetgenau Stefan August, *Civil society participation in the European Danube Strategy*, in: *Agh Attila, Kaiser Tamas, Koller Boglarka (eds.), Europeanization of the Danube Region: The Blue Ribbon Project*, Blue Ribbon Research Centre King Sigismund College, Budapest, 2010, pp. 188-205.
- „*Osiječko-baranjska županija u kontekstu Dunavske strategije*“. Presentation held at a local event “Open Days 2010“ in Osijek on 26th October 2010, Internet: <http://www.slavonija.hr/images/Dokumenti2010/hr/Osje%C4%8Dko%20-%20baranjska%20%C5%BEupanija%20u%20kontekstu%20Dunavske%20strategije.ppt>. 10/10/2011.
- *Regionalna razvojna agencija Slavonije i Baranje. Dunavska strategija*, Internet: [http://www.slavonija.hr/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=91](http://www.slavonija.hr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=91). 9/10/2011.
- *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo kulture. Kulturna baština. Dunav – put kulture*, Internet: <http://www.min-kulture.hr/default.aspx?id=1717>. 10/10/2011.
- *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo kulture. Projekti Ministarstva. Projekt „Vukovar-Vučedol-Ilok“*, Internet: <http://www.min-kulture.hr/default.aspx?ID=100>. 10/10/2011.
- *Republika Hrvatska. Ministarstvo vanjskih poslova i europskih integracija. Vanjska politika. Multilateralni odnosi. Strategija Europske Unije za Dunavsku regiju. Vukovarska dunavska*

*konferencija, Vukovar, 29. travnja 2011*, Internet: <http://www.mvpei.hr/MVP.asp?pcpid=2600>. 9/10/2011.

- Samardžija Višnja, Butković Hrvoje, *From the Lisbon Strategy to Europe 2020*, Institute for International Relations (IMO), Zagreb, 2010, pp. 312.
- Schymik Carsten, *Blueprint for a Macro-Region. EU Strategies for the Baltic Sea and Danube Regions*, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, 2011, pp. 31.
- *Službene stranice Vukovarsko-srijemske županije. Radna zajednica podunavskih regija*, Internet: <http://www.vukovarsko-srijemska-zupanija.com/vsz.php?stranica=114>. 10/10/2011.
- *Statutes of the Danube Civil Society Forum*, Internet: [http://www.danubestrategy.eu/uploads/media/Statutes\\_Danube\\_Civil\\_Society\\_Forum.pdf](http://www.danubestrategy.eu/uploads/media/Statutes_Danube_Civil_Society_Forum.pdf). 9/10/2011.
- *Transnational Strategy for the Sustainable Territorial Development of the Danube Area with special regard to Tourism*, Internet: <http://www.datourway.eu/>. 10/10/2011.
- „*Vukovarsko-srijemska županija u kontekstu Dunavske strategije*“. Presentation held at a local event “Open Days 2010” in Osijek on 26th October 2010, Internet: <http://www.slavonija.hr/images/Dokumenti2010/hr/Vukovarsko%20-%20srijemska%20%C5%BEupanija%20u%20%20kontekstu%20Dunavske%20strategije.ppt>. 10/10/2011.

Pero Petrović<sup>1</sup>

## **ECOTOURISM – A DRIVING FORCE OF DEVELOPMENT IN SOME DANUBE REGIONS**

### **APSTRACT**

This paper presents necessary growing, structure and priorities of external transactions as the most important aspects of economic cooperation. The present state of our economy and tourist industry clearly indicates the necessity to carry out the reform. Changes are required in the field of organization and financing. New globalization tendencies in the world economy system create new conditions for tourist activities. The emergence of countries in transition, which present a new quality in tourist demand and well established tourist markets that are in harmony with supportable development, has created a necessary form of ecotourism. Ecotourism as a constituent part of return of the man to his roots for the first time succeeded in unifying the environment and the man in the common use, preservation and development of all socio-economic links of unity between ecology and economy. The regions that are not content with their economic development are in all countries in the world, this including our country, too, and they are becoming a challenge for creating new attractive destinations of ecotourism with no unwanted effects. That is why ecotourism integrally connects all ecological resources with the aim of achieving their optimal development. Serbia's rich resource base should create favourable conditions for the affirmation and development of ecotourism. Generally, people are the most important aspect of all types of tourism where communications and interaction between people is accounted on.

*Key words:* Sustainable development, ecotourism, space, development, need, optimization.

### **Introductory notes**

The world's largest number of tourists generated by cities and tourism is emerging as a product of urban areas for the most part. Eco contrast areas are still very poor travel demand generators, but there are receptive areas that can meet recreational and other needs of the urban population. Ecotourism in the area, or "green tourism", has now become an international phenomenon, especially when it comes to the Danube region.

---

<sup>1</sup> Pero Petrović, Ph.D., Professorial Fellow, Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, Serbia.

This development brings a range of economic, environmental, social, cultural and psychological effects. Some of these effects can be positive, some negative, therefore, in that sense, it is necessary to implement such a strategy development and planning that will maximize the first and minimize other effects. Bearing that in mind, there is an imperative limitation of spatial development, identification of the supporting capacity of the space as well as policies for sustainable development of ecotourism. It may also be a way to recognize new rural areas of cultural values and of traditional and historical significance. At the same time, these can be privileged places where people can spend their leisure time and gets in contact with nature, what is of importance for the environment as a vital element of the ecological balance.

On the other hand, an eco region can become a place where the environment is integrated with culture and economic values.

### **Recreational and tourist function of ecospace**

Eco tourist destination area is characterized by a greater degree of diversification in relation to the recreational function. It is empirically established that tourism exerts impact on different types of eco space variations. Bearing that in mind, it is possible to distinguish three main types of impacts of tourism on the transformation of ecospace:

(1) Areas with high tourist concentration (specific activity cannot be exercised except in a very limited space, being, however, suitable) as a result of natural conditions and benefits as well as proper equipment can lead to an almost complete abandonment of agriculture;

(2) Tourism function has a moderate impact and complements some other activities (for example, the maintenance of agricultural activities), and tourism emerges as an additional source of income and seasonal activity;

(3) Tourism functions are poorly manifested in the ecoregion, they have a secondary, auxiliary nature and do not affect the substantial transformation of the environment or the contents, organization and arrangement of a given space;

For the development of a tourist office in the environmental area certain social, environmental and economic conditions should be created and they should be explored before taking up development planning. These aspects can have macro and micro dimensions and the conditions during making of a survey, inventory and evaluation should be considered and they should not only include a broad geographic coverage. It is necessary to identify the attitudes and condition of a micro region in the Danube region in order to develop tourism and recreational functions.

From an ecological point of view, deepening of the awareness of the psychological, physical, and spiritual values of the nature (the return to nature) as well as the need to protect the rural environment should be continued.

Finding sensitization in favour of protecting the historical, architectural and cultural heritage of the region and country is necessary. Avoiding of the risk of colonization and

urbanization of rural areas and land speculation is also indispensable. Inclusion of the urban population in the rural area with respect to the supporting capacity of the space is also necessary to be done. Harmonious planning and equipping of premises for the local population and tourists should also be done.

### **Concentration or dispersion of ecotourism in the area (region)**

Between tourism and space (region), and in their interrelationship, there are contradictory factors. With a view to their proper understanding is necessary to set up tourist activity in the double context of the physical environment (nature) and socio-economic environment (human activity). The first problem arises from the concentration of tourism, because it is *sui generis* tourism demand and pressure in time and space. Travel concentrations, in addition, a consequence of rising living standards and democratization of the rest. This imbalance between the limited capacity of a given carrier space and the ever-increasing tourist demand leads to the phenomenon of concentration and travel accessories hypertrophy and development of space, causing congestion of space. All this is contrary to the requirement to establish not only the harmony between man and space, but also between people (tourists and hosts) in the receptive area. The question is whether it is better to transform the attractive parts of rural areas in nature reserves with strict protection and contribute to depopulation or desirable to allow certain forms of tourism and other complementary activities (which phenomenon is more degraded nature, the performance of certain economic activities in rural areas or to completely abandonment);

In contrast to these factors, some factors influence the harmonization of relations between tourism and environment. For example, one of the important aspects in this regard is the relationship between agriculture in rural areas (whether tourism destroys agriculture or not because most people give up agricultural activities and take up easier and more profitable jobs related to tourism). The impact of agriculture on tourism varies depending on the specific situation in the Danube region. In some regions and places its contribution to the agricultural development and further presence of the man in nature is positive, while in other regions agriculture has been completely abandoned. Next to food (food functions) eco space is becoming more and more a recreational and tourist destination, keeping in place younger generation more than that agriculture. At the worst, eco space can be saved if it is abandoned by the people that inhabit and keep it up. Farmers are conservationists and they are necessary. The task of “protecting the protectors” results from what has been mentioned above and one of the activities to do so is tourism.

It is well-known that concentration-tourism crystallized around tourist poles (centres). This is because of their reciprocal relations and tourist demand causes (secondary concentration). The consequences of the concentration must be evaluated both by the supply and demand sides. This means that the physical environment and



socio-economic environment are interdependent. Bearing this in mind it is possible to examine three possible models for the spatial organization of ecotourism in the area.

(1) Concentration

- Some comparative advantages in achieving better profitability due to the increased traffic equipment reviews, better allocation of fixed costs, lower infrastructure costs and cleaning up that is necessary for the construction and recreation, and so on.

(2) Deconcentration

- Common requirement is ecologists and politicians rather than investors who are guided solely by economic interests and profits;

(3) Deconcentrated concentration

- Middle ground between the excessive waste of resources and concentration with the aim to preserve the advantages of concentration and deconcentration and reject weakness;
- This policy is based on four basic principles (regional development policies, measures to encourage local economy, a healthy economy of effort and concentration dispersion effects);

There is a necessity to attain coordination between institutional reforms and effective economic cooperation due to the lack of resources. The current state of our economy and tourist activities suggests the inevitability of necessary reforms. Measures are needed in order to do transformation in the sphere of organization and funding of tourism activities. In this sense, the development of eco regions should start up the local economy and public investments. Therefore, in applying this theory some flexibility is required, where tourism is the main driving force. However, both measures should be taken in order to avoid mono-cultural development and to provide simultaneous, harmonious development of agriculture, traditional crafts and other complementary activities in the eco region.

Based on this model eco-tourism can expect the renewal of rural (eco) space. From the point where they are concentrated, tourists are located on regional and local roads, while urban or marked trails may occasionally disperse in the open air in order to smoothly achieve a direct contact with nature. In addition, this concept allows the optimal way to reconcile the limited financial resources with the existing social and economic situation in a given area, while preserving the natural environment.

### **The main tasks of ecotourism marketing**

A tourism product or service is the result of interaction of a large number of interdependent factors. Marketing, as a modern and developing business concept offers opportunities for some active service delivery and therefore, planning of eco tourism should especially take into consideration the following tasks:

- To clearly define the objectives (of financial and economic importance);

- To prioritize segments of demand;
- To take first opportunities that are at hand;
- To offer quality;
- To develop themselves (offer innovate);
- To use elements of the pricing policy;
- To learn from positive examples and collect information in order to extend the horizon;
- To make the promotional appearance that should be targeted and tailored according to the selected segment of demand;
- To visit companies that develop successful eco tourism;

In order to achieve good results and thus, the effects of developing eco tourism in the Danube region, it is important to apply the marketing concept, which is based on meeting human needs where the primary activity is one of the human factor. All participants in eco tourism should be continuously informed and trained in order to achieve mutual satisfaction and better results, including tourists here, too.

### **Conclusion**

The development of eco tourism can provide a number of social, environmental and economic effects in the regions in which it develops. These effects can be positive or negative depending on the degree of concentration and distribution of tourism activities in the area. However, if we allow the spontaneous and uncontrolled development of tourism in a certain area, it may happen that after the initial economic benefits for such a rise in the total costs (economic, environmental and social) that they exceed the total benefits. There are numerous examples of negative multiplier effects of tourism for the lack of planning and they are not inherent in the nature of tourism. Then, the task of spatial planning in the eco region is not only to neutralize the negative effects, but to simultaneously maximize all possible positive effects. This means that it is necessary to increase at the same time the total revenue and foreign exchange inflow, to preserve the local culture and customs, to ensure the social development and the use of comparative advantages. Altogether, this is a very difficult and responsible task, but it is also a great challenge to develop eco tourism in the coastal area of the Danube.

### **Reference**

- Ahmetović, T., (1995) Turizam u zaštićenoj prirodi – marketing koncepcija, PMF, Novi Sad.
- Čerović, S., (2002) Strategijski menadžment turističke privrede Srbije, Želind Press, Beograd.
- Čomić, Đ., (2002) Geografija zatvorenog kruga, Viša hotelijerska škola, Beograd.
- Lješević, M., (2001) Zaštita prirode i održivi razvoj – premise i kontroverze, Zaštita prirode, br.52/2, Zavod za zaštitu prirode Srbije, Beograd.

- jovičić, D., (2000) Turizam i životna sredina – koncepcija održivog turizma, Zadužbina Andrejević, Beograd.
- Petrović, P., (2003) Prestrukturiranje turističke privrede i mogući modeli finansiranja, drugi forum “Ruralni turizam i održivi razvoj Balkana”, Kragujevac, 7-9.05.2003., Zbornik radova.
- Petrović, P., (2008), Turizam i poslovna diplomatija, PMF, Novi Sad.
- Petrović, P., (2009), Ekonomika turizma, Geografski fakultet, Beograd.
- Roseland, M., (1996) Economic Instruments For Sustainable Community Development, Local Environment, London.
- Wood, M.E. (2002) Ekoturizam – principi, postupci i politika za održivost, CenORT, Beograd.

Dragica Tomka<sup>1</sup>  
Gordana Đurić<sup>2</sup>  
Goran Tomka<sup>3</sup>

## THEMATIC CULTURAL TOURIST ROUTES OF DANUBE REGION – LOCAL CULTURAL GOODS AS A GLOBAL ATTRACTION

### SUMMARY

Tourism is a means of individual and collective fulfilment and a chance for connecting different cultures. Especially significant is the contribution of tourism to mutual understanding and respect between the peoples and societies that come into touch via tourism. Currently prevalent attitude in the world is the one that globalisation, modern technology and everything related to them necessarily leads to homogenisation and extinguishes all differences. Although this is true in some cases, it is not always so. If we only scratch beneath the surface and peek beyond the media noise and advice we are given by the lecturers at corporate trainings, we find an entire hidden world – vivid, various and increasingly bigger and stronger, full of grassroots projects, creative associations, local self-sustainable market economies... Vision is what sets them apart.

The examples of numerous cultural routes, with new topics emerging each day, are just some of the proofs that cultural heritage is a pivot of intercultural connection, of connecting local values with the global tourist currents. The Danube region, as a European region, which has connected and still connects different cultures is a desirable area that can offer local cultures to tourists on global routes, and bring together the shores, the people, the cultures by connecting the territories “divided” by Danube, thus bringing and creating new values.

*Key words:* Globalisation, local values, cultural legacy, thematic routes, tourism.

### Introduction

The very attempt of defining globalisation (if one tries to be “objective”) points to the particular complexity of this term, but also to an array of occurrences that stand

---

<sup>1</sup> Dragica Tomka, Ph.D., Faculty of sport and tourism tims., Novi Sad, Serbia, [www.tims.edu.rs](http://www.tims.edu.rs), [dragica.tomka@tims.edu.rs](mailto:dragica.tomka@tims.edu.rs).

<sup>2</sup> Gordana Đurić, Ph.D., Faculty of sport and tourism tims., Novi Sad, Serbia, [www.tims.edu.rs](http://www.tims.edu.rs), [gordana.djuric@tims.edu.rs](mailto:gordana.djuric@tims.edu.rs).

<sup>3</sup> Goran Tomka, MSc, Faculty of sport and tourism tims., Novi Sad, Serbia, [www.tims.edu.rs](http://www.tims.edu.rs), [gotomka@tims.edu.rs](mailto:gotomka@tims.edu.rs).

behind it. If we were to cite here a large number of definitions from the entire possible range, it would require more space than foreseen for this paper. Also, the question of comprehensiveness when defining globalisation poses an additional difficulty. The reason for that is that each author observes this complex process from a scientific perspective. Thus, for instance, Soros, in his book *On globalisation*, says: “[Globalisation] I equated with the free movement of capital and the increasing domination of global financial markets”. Some would say, “Yes, that is an economic globalisation”. Culturologists are more ready to see globalisation as a process of meeting and “growth of interdependence of peoples and nations”, (which would then be a cultural globalisation), while sociologists perceive the decrease of role of state and traditional institutions, which, in turn, leads us to a new kind of globalisation. We could define globalisation in tourism through mass movements, large chains of hotels and tour-operators, appearance of significant share of yet “unspecified” travels for resting purposes... This kind of dissection of reality, especially in the modern interwoven world, makes us lose from sight the important facts and not see the proverbial forest for the trees. Hence, this paper aims towards an integral outlook on the globalisation process and its influence on the contemporary global culture, global tourist travels and the significance of connecting people through the theme tours.

### **Globalisation is a two-way process**

In the broadest sense of the word, globalisation can freely be described as a process of connecting people, resources, ideas and institutions on a global level. However, following the idea of the paper stated in the introduction, we aim to show that connecting is not a single-faceted process. Although fitting parts into a whole is not the only product of globalisation, connecting (communication-wise), can also mean breaking up the whole into parts. Not seeing the multifacetedness of every state, at least as a possibility would be the same as seeing an ice cube as the only possible aggregate state of water, or an atom as an entirely stable structure. We do, however, know that among the molecules of water or within the atom, there are forces that could, given different circumstances, lead to significant changes. If we see global culture and its developmental course, single-faceted and simplified, conclusions must be taken with an even greater pinch of salt.

Although from the WWII until now globalisation has significantly contributed to the homogenisation of global culture, it would be wrong to conclude that the processes, institutions and technology that make it possible would not (in somewhat different circumstances) also lead to the reverse process – heterogenisation of global culture. If we see globalisation as a process of connection and attraction of different cultures, it is as old as the man himself, and the first human settlements. Connection has been realised in many ways: through travel, warfare, miscegenation, migrations...

In the paper titled *Globalisation: Cultures merging into a global voice* published in the National Geographic magazine, the authors cite a disturbing piece of data that

a half of the existing 6912 languages used on our planet today are seriously endangered (as they are spoken by fewer than 5,000 people). Language is one of the fundamental traits of man as a cultural being. However, integration and merging (or, rather, disappearance) of languages only points to a much wider trend of cultural homogenisation. This also means the reduction of cultural values on a global scale. Even more important is the influence of such processes on an individual. “The roots of globalisation may lie in trade, but its effects are very personal... what can feel lonelier than the last living native speaker of a language?”

Globalisation often leaves people with a diminished choice, forcing them to take one way, often the one on which they have to fit into default models and give up their essence. This process is in part done automatically and unwillingly. However, certain players on the world stage find this “ironing out of the differences” rather suitable and they wholeheartedly try to support it. One of the key reasons of these aspirations is the economy of volume.

*“If one would want to make the streams sprinkle the territories through which they pass, then the aim would not be to bind them into a large body of water, but, on the contrary, to divide them into millions and billions of drops, which is called sprinkling – the action that stands for the light and life-bearing technology.”<sup>4</sup>*

This vivid description from the book *The Future is Within Us* by Denis de Rougement nicely illustrates the importance of diversity and the necessity of its preservation and development. Diversity means freedom of choice, difference of experience, fertile cooperation (identical persons have nothing to exchange). Currently prevalent in the world is the attitude that globalisation, modern technology and everything related to them necessarily leads to homogenisation and kills all diversity. Although this is true in some cases (as shown in the previous part), it is not always so. This image is projected on purpose, along with the conclusion that it is the only possibility, the imminence towards which the entire humankind strives. If we only scratch beneath the surface and peek beyond the media noise and advice we are given by the lecturers at corporate trainings, we find an entire hidden world – vivid, various and increasingly bigger and stronger, full of grassroots projects, creative associations, local self-sustainable market economies. What is especially interesting is that they are based on the very same technology that moves the large corporation systems. Vision is what sets them apart.

One of the occurrences on a global level, which enabled an unbounded dispersion of various ideas and offered new models of active involvement of individuals in their political, economic and cultural environment is tourism, especially the cultural and creative tourism.

---

<sup>4</sup> De Rougement Denis, *Budućnost je naša stvar*, Niro “Književne novine”, Beograd, 1989.

## **Tourism is a need for exchange and communication on a global level**

Tourism is the phenomenon of our times. Today, everyone is a potential tourist – the elderly and the toddlers, the disabled, the visually and mentally challenged, the poor and the rich, countryside- and city-dwellers. The spaces, information, accommodation and services have all been customised for them in the most developed tourist destinations and most means of transport. Both the kind that just likes to lie on the sunny sand and listen to sea waves, as well as those stiffening with fear at the oncoming tornado or the volcanic crater are included in tourism. In tourism, people sleep in a room on a tree, the one made of ice or an old sewage pipe, as well as the ones glistening with gold and diamonds. Tourism is also a lonely man watching sunset from the seashore, as well as the one screaming and jumping to the music with thousands of other people cramped in a venue. A tourist is a hermit and a sociable jovial fellow, a philosopher, a grumbler and the one who does not mind. All of them have something in common, however. All tourists expect something from a tourist travel and tourism – an adequate space designed and arranged according to their needs, the one in which they could satisfy their needs. They expect a host, hospitality, kindness, patience, intuitive reaction to their very thought, unconditional adjustment to their “whims”. All of them expect good food, comfortable bed and a quality drink, at least as good as, if not better than, the one at home. All of them expect of tourism to be a *Host*, and a much better one, at that, than they would be for themselves, so that they have a possibility to creatively express themselves through tourism. They expect tourism to provide them with an experience and a full display of emotions, all professionally done and adjusted to them, as they have “paid for it all” and “spent all their precious time” on it. Furthermore, it often happens that tourists expect, from their travel and tourist space, something unseen, unusual, authentic, old, small, dimmed, something that can only be seen and experienced there.

Tourism is a global occurrence as every year an increasing number of people takes part in the tourist movements at the constantly new, “undiscovered” destinations and new forms of travel. The proof for this is the constant and very intensive increase of the number of travels on a yearly basis in the world. Year by year, the number of new motives for travel increases, reflecting on the ever new forms of tourism and tourist products in the sense of increase of travels motivated by rest, recreation and fun; while new, unspecified journeys also appear, their motive being related to entirely unusual occurrences and things, such as observing autumn leaves, volcano craters, steep cliff climbing, learning old culinary skills, etc.

According to the research by WTO, the basic motives that incite people to tourist travels are the same basic groups of motives as have been observed so far. However, these global explorations do not deal with the matter in depth and do not explore the changes occurring within tourism. Some other scientific investigations report numerous changes in the sphere of tourism: with the expectation of people, their readiness to create themselves, to accomplish, experience and touch.

The profile of a new tourist is, according to the same source, the following: he/she is independent, experienced, active, technologically-minded, seeks value for money, wishes to learn from other cultures, takes more and more short breaks and is environmentally and socially sensitive. He/she is not anymore a rich nobleperson who wishes to enjoy under the warm rays of sun, while the servants attend to him/her in the opulent seaside mansion. The new tourist wishes to be active, to study, research, hear and becomes increasingly involved in creating a story about a cultural space, thematising his/her own experience.

### **Thematic tourist routes**

In the last couple of years, a tendency to unite the elements of tourist offer into the so-called thematic routes has appeared. They are evidenced destinations of cultural tourism, especially adapted for tourist purposes, which can be visited with the wish to tell a story related to a topic during one or more travels. The European Institute (*European Institute of Cultural Routes*),<sup>5</sup> with a seat in Luxembourg, was also formed as a very powerful institution, which gathers increasingly many members, but also supports an entire array of new projects and programmes across Europe.

Puczko and Ratz define thematic routes in tourism as a “...tourist product that connects a chosen subject with the natural or created attractions which can be reached via different means of transport”.<sup>6</sup> As Puczko and Ratz claim, the notion of thematic route is a broad one as they can include *various sights of natural environment, sights of material or intangible cultural legacy, different ways of movement, travel, etc.*<sup>7</sup> (Other theoreticians and researchers in tourism, such as du Cross and McKercher, observe that cultural routes have become interesting and laden with a potential for tourist organisations – on a local, regional or national level, as through their designing and organisation, tourist activities should be incited.<sup>8</sup> Such an attitude surely stems from the need to innovate the cultural-tourist product of certain destinations due to a constant pressure of differentiated tourist demand, or perhaps, due to its decline and increased competitiveness on the tourist market.

The very same authors point out that cultural routes are a higher and more complex level of organisation of cultural-tourist products with regard to the necessity of intentional linking of several attractions into a single topic. This is especially useful in spaces where there are no primary tourist attractions that would be as attractive to

---

<sup>5</sup> Internet: <http://www.culture-routes.lu> 5/09/2011.

<sup>6</sup> Puczko Laszlo and Rátz Tanar., *Trailing Goethe, Humbert, and Ulysses: Cultural Routes in Tourism?* In G. Richards (ed.) *Cultural Tourism: Global and Local Perspectives*. Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press, 2007, pp. 131-148.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pp. 131-148.

<sup>8</sup> McKercher, B, du Cros, H, *Cultural Tourism - Partnership Between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management*, The Haworth Hospitality Press, New York, London, Oxford, 2002.



tourists as to initiate tourist movements on their own or, if they exist in a space of dispersed cultural values, which can be linked, by a common topic or “story”. Such routes are primarily linear and, according to the aforementioned authors, their diversity is limited only by the limits of inventiveness and creativity of individuals and organisations that are in charge of tourism organisation there as well as tourist agencies.

Theory, as well practice in tourism, shows that thematic tourist routes have a role of attracting tourists and integrate a greater number of attractions that have no possibility to independently attract tourists to spend their time and money due to the insufficient attractiveness of certain tourist resources or the inadequate organisation in the functioning of a tourism supply. Theory would certainly not have followed this phenomenon of thematic tourist routes on such a scale if the benefit for tourists had not been observed through the incitement of a greater mobility and experiencing of cultural values in a certain area.

However, cultural routes are not important for Europe only, but also for the entire world culture and cultural tourism. Thus, in 1998, ICOMOS (*International Council of Monuments and Sites*) established the *International Scientific Committee for Cultural Routes*, with the function of monitoring practice and theory related to cultural routes. UNESCO was also activated on the fields of cultural routes by adopting routes as cultural goods, but also by launching numerous projects of forming of cultural routes, both in Europe and the rest of the world. UNESCO projects link thematic routes with *roads*, associating the journey with hitting the road in the physical sense and with being the spatial link, hence such routes usually follow the roads taken during the course of history by goods, ideas, armies, slaves and alike. The first cultural route to be included in the UNESCO list as *cultural goods* was *The Pilgrimage Route of Santiago de Compostela* (1993.). This route was also the first one started by a programme of the European Council. The *Silk Road* was supported by WTO (*World Tourism Organisation*), which pointed to its importance in the part related to attracting the tourism industry to the numerous cultural spaces not previously known and visited. The importance of *Silk Road* lies in its historical contribution to acquainting with the cultures of various peoples as well as in establishing the exchange of products, goods, cultures, languages, customs, etc.

Examples of numerous thematic routes organised in Europe and around the world show that the *goals* of their creation and organisation are as follows: (a) presenting authentic or common cultural heritage through travels; (b) protecting cultural goods and cultural resources in general; (c) advancing and innovating tourism supply of the existing destination or destinations; (d) preserving cultural identity of local communities; (e) realising economic effects – primarily for the local communities and stakeholders participating in functioning of the cultural tourist route; (f) creating support for entering the tourist market to the lesser tourist attractions – destinations by including them in the thematic route; (g) organising tourist travels.

By analysing the existing theories and examples from practice, cultural routes should contain the following:

1. Material and intangible cultural values with the contents related to the central theme of the route as a primary activity.
2. Additional tourist attractions along the route with the aim of enriching the contents and increasing the attractiveness of the trip, but also as a possibility to unite various service providers into an integrated tourist product.
3. Tourist service providers, important for realising tourist movements along the route,

*Founders and the organisers of thematic routes* are very diverse and can include: (1) international organisations, institutes or associations in the field of culture and/or tourism (*UNESCO, ICOMOS, European Institute for cultural routes*); (2) *national ministries for tourism, culture, etc*; (3) foundations, associations, clusters (4) regional tourist bureaus or organisations (within a country); (5) local tourist organisations and/or tourist information centres.

Upon creation each cultural or thematic tourist route, in order to be practically applicable in a certain area, should be based on: (a) clear vision and attainable goals; (b) touristically attractive theme around which everything is organised (in accordance with the expectations of certain target groups) and which is representative of the cultural identity of the area; (c) preserved, touristically arranged, available and activated cultural resources; (d) implemented elements of the intangible culture of the area in which the route is organised; (e) established organisational structure of participants/executors; (f) the existence of sources of financing – maintaining, realising and, above all, presenting – promoting; (h) environmental, cultural and economic sustainability.<sup>9</sup>

### **Linking cultural values of border regions through tourism**

Parallel to the increase of individual and collective awareness of the necessity of the global, interest grows in the matter of regionalisation, as well, along with the harmonised regional development. Regionalism is a way of adjusting to global changes, seeing that the increasing number of countries do not have the capacities and the resources to cope independently with the challenges imposed by these changes. Following the systematic following of globalisation and regionalisation on the territory of the Union (1998-2005) and their influence, it was established that the spatial categories, such as centre and periphery, distances, locations, territorial borders and regions are not rendered worthless, but get a new meaning.<sup>10</sup> In the process of

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.international.icomos.org/xian2005/culturalroutes-draft.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Knežević R.: „Regionalizacija prostora kao proces“, u: Blažević (ur) *Turistička regionalizacija u globalnim procesima*. Fakultet za menadžment u turizmu i ugostiteljstvu, Opatija, 2009, str. 95-120.

globalisation, regions gain new statuses and begin to compete on a worldwide level. The goals of EU financing for the period 2007-2013 are in accordance with that. Those are convergence, regional competitiveness and employment as well as the cross-border and territorial cooperation of a region. European integration policy includes the vision of a *Europe of regions* in which a system of functional and harmonic border regions serves to connect European peoples and improve the regional competitiveness on various levels. In the rhetoric of the European committee, tourism was presented as a real possibility for the development of border regions. Travels abroad and tourism are considered one of the fastest-growing global industries.

From the beginning of the 1990s, EU pays special attention to the economic help to cross-border cooperation in the field of tourism through the Union initiatives and the financial help of Structural funds within and without its borders, also including the border areas of the future EU members. The measures of its policy support the development of tourism based on the cross-border regional identity, integrated cultural, ecological and agricultural products, development of new tourist products as well as their joint promotion.

When in 2004, a concept of Neighbourhood Programmes for the outer borders of the expanded EU was introduced, direct involvement and cooperation of border regions of participating countries of the EU and the Western Balkans was enabled.

Cross-border cooperation Hungary – Serbia started in 2003 within the preparatory PSPF – Pilot Small Projects Fund within the PHARE national programme for Hungary. In the same year, cooperation started between Romania and Serbia. The main factor in the programme area is the one that the river Danube flows through a large part of that area. There are also 3 Euro-regions in the territory of the corresponding region – Danube 21, Đerdap – Middle Danube and Danube – Karaš – Mureş – Tisa.

A smaller number of projects in the field of tourism were financed in this period with the aim of strengthening the regional identity through preservation and revitalisation of natural and cultural resources of the region. With regard to the financed projects in the area of tourism on the Danube, Romania – Serbia and Hungary – Serbia 2004–2006, the following ones stand out:<sup>11</sup>

- *A part of the bicycle track near Sombor (3km long bicycle track which links the Bezdán bridge with Hungary)*
- *Tracing of thematic cultural routes in the Euroregion of DKMT*
- *Sustainable development of Hungarian – Serbian border area aquatory*
- *Health insurance without borders in the Euroregion of DKMT*
- *Development of quality of tourism supply of the Golubac micro-region*
- *Tabula Traiana – from the past to the future*
- *Revival of the Golubac fortress*

---

<sup>11</sup> Ministarstvo finansija Republike Srbije, DAKU sektor, 2008. god.

The evaluation of the effects of cross-border cooperation shows that the implemented projects had a positive influence on the sustainable development of the region. With regard to that, there occurred the innovation of a tourist product, revitalisation of rural areas and cultural heritage, forming of border thematic routes with a special accent on the synergy of nature-culture –tourism, bicycle tracks, picnic areas and info centres.<sup>12</sup> The majority of border regions in the Danube region possess the resources, which offer the possibility to develop tourism - interesting history, diverse cultural heritage, various ethnical groups and green natural environment. In the border areas, there are various social and cultural factors, which for decades have shaped the lives of local communities. Giving significance to that category is also visible in the goal of the UNESCO *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, passed in 2001 and stating that “The Declaration aims both to preserve cultural diversity as a living, and thus renewable treasure that must not be perceived as being unchanging heritage but as a process guaranteeing the survival of humanity”.<sup>13</sup> The importance and synergetic effects of the unity of diversities are also emphasized in the newer 2006 study: *Tourism, Culture and Sustainable Development*.<sup>14</sup>

Starting from the officially proclaimed strategic goal of the countries of the Danube region in the field of culture that the cultural-historical resources are used in the programmes of sustainable development, it should be noted that the cultural heritage is an important social resource and can be used in developmental programmes in many local communities. In this respect, tourism offers the greatest opportunities, as the development of cultural tourism entails and financially enables more quality preservation and enrichment of cultural heritage and monuments.<sup>15</sup> Tradition of cultural cooperation is present between the cities and municipalities in the Danube region. Cooperation potential is evident in the spheres of art and creative industry, including cultural legacy, theatre, local groups, traditional dances, music, publishing, fine arts, education in the fields of design and architecture. Many cultural and traditional events are held in these regions. Tourism leans on the already existing values and possibilities and can help in reviving the already extinct traditions, renewal of cultural heritage, old crafts, gastronomy, organising of common events, festivals, exhibitions, linking of cultural institutions, development of a new culture of related products, services and events, creation of an integrated cultural product and joint promotions.

---

<sup>12</sup> Đurić Gordana, *Faktori razvoja turizma pograničnih regija – Studija slučaja Vojvodine*, doktorska disertacija, Fakultetu za sport i turizam, Novi Sad, Univerzitet “Metropolitan”, Beograd, 2010, str. 173-189.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/15/09/2011>.

<sup>14</sup> Mike Robinson and David Picard “Culture, tourism, development”, Division of cultural policies and intercultural dialogue, Culture Sector, UNESCO, 2006, Internet <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001475/147578e.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Edita Stojić Karanovic, „Regionalna i prekogranična saradnja za održivi razvoj Srbije,” *Međunarodni problemi*, vol. LIX, br. 2-3, 2007. str. 341.

## **Cultural values of Vojvodina – a basis for thematising cultural routes in the Danube region**

Vojvodina is a part of a large European Danube basin. With such a status, numerous developmental possibilities are opened for it as well as possibilities for linking, intercultural contacts, developmental projects and tourism development.<sup>16</sup> As a part of once great empire of Austria-Hungary, the territory of Vojvodina still bears visible traces of artistic styles, urban surroundings, rural-ethnic legacies that are an ideal background for thematising cultural tourist routes. Befallen with problems and not following the contemporary tendencies in the development of tourism demand on the market, Serbia still stays behind in positioning new, current, attractive cultural values, which it has inherited from the earlier epochs. There are numerous reasons for that, but it is important overcome them.<sup>17</sup>

For the purpose of this research, the criterion used in choosing the most attractive cultural values that could be thematised into linear corridors along the Danube River was that of the location in the immediate zone of the Danube, with the topic still being significant for the European cultural space or its part.

The results of the INTERREG project that covered some of the suggested topics were used as a useful basis for this research.<sup>18</sup>

This paper presents the suggested thematic routes, which should be developmentally prioritised and given support in activating and profiling in order to get the adequate strength for inclusion in the European courses. The most significant resources in the Danube region in Vojvodina, based on the European cultural legacy of the Danube region being thematisable into tourist routes, are in the opinion of the authors of this paper, presented further in the text:

*On the path of Neolithic* – The oldest and the richest *archaeological sites* date back to the period of late or new Stone Age: Gomolava (near Hrtkovci); Gradina on the Bosut River; Starčevo (near Pančevo); Vatin (near Vršac); Grad and Dubovac (near Kovin); localities near Odžaci, Bač and Sombor and down the Danube River all the way to Lepenski vir.

*Roads of Roman culture and Roman emperors* – as Serbia and partly Vojvodina is the territory on which 16 Roman emperors were born and lived. The ancient Roman

---

<sup>16</sup> Tomka Dragica, Đeri, L. *Tourism in Vojvodina – A Chance for integration Among Countries of Danube Region*, III Internat. Conference: Multiplicative Effects in Tourism Development, Faculty of tourism and hospitality, Ohrid, 2001.

<sup>17</sup> Tomka Dragica, *Kulturni turizam danas – ili gde je mesto kulturnog turizma Jugoslavije u svetu*, Časopis Turizam, br.3/1999, Institut za geografiju, PMF, Novi Sad, 1999.

<sup>18</sup> Tomka, D., Volić, V., Prentović, S., Trifković, A., Krneta, J.: Projekat: “Formation of thematic tourist route groups in the DKMT Euroregion-HU-RO-SCG 1/306“, Trasiranje tematskih turističkih ruta – VATI, Budimpešta, TIMS-Novı Sad, Interreg IIIa project, Evropska agencija za rekonstrukciju I razvoj, 2007.

city of Sirmium is in Vojvodina, but on the other side of the Danube there are other locations as well, such as the already famous and developed Viminacium, along the Danube to the already famous Đerdap gorge.

*Serbian Holy Mount* – the most famous and the most touristically presented cultural monuments are 16 monasteries of Fruška Gora, built in the period from the XVI century (some were first built in the XII century) to the XIX century. Those are Krušedol, Grgeteg, Jazak, Mala Remeta and Velika Remeta, Hopovo, Ravanica, Rakovac, Beočin, Pribina glava, Petkovića, Kuveždin and Šišatovac. In addition to these monasteries, the monasteries of Kovilj and Bač, found in the immediate Danube region, should certainly be included as stops on the route.

*Roads of Baroque* in small urban environments – Out of all cultural heritage the most interesting ones and the most attractive for tourism, but not valorised are the *old city centres*, which in other culturally and touristically developed environments are popular and very attractive sites – culturally, communication-wise and event-wise. The most original and preserved cores are in Sremski Karlovci (preserved by a special law as a monument of Baroque and the Vojvodina culture), Novi Sad, Sombor, Vršac, Pančevo, Bački Petrovac, Bačka Palanka.

*Roads of Secession* – Parts of urban ambient of some Danube region cities are built in the style of Hungarian secession (Novi Sad, Apatin, Sombor...). Having started in the period of XVIII and XIX century, Secession produced a vivid architecture that was preserved until our times. A European cross-border project for the DKMT Euro-region had Secession as its main theme.<sup>19</sup>

*Roads of water, grain and wine* – they are present in the countryside. Especially attractive in tourism should be the numerous *granges* in Bačka. The peasant art is also attractive, such as naive art, artistic carpentry, luthier crafts, sewing, weaving, embroidering of clothes and household items.

*On the path of creativity of the Danube region greats* – Especially interesting for tourists are the *birth houses* of famous people from the sphere of culture, redesigned into art collections and galleries. Those are birth houses of scientist Mihajlo Pupin in Idvor; poets and writers Đura Jakšić (Srpska Crnja), Jovan Sterija Popović (Vršac), J.J. Zmaj (Sremska Kamenica) and Miroslav Antić (Mokrin); painters: Paja Jovanović (Vršac), Uroš Predić (Orlovat), Konstantin Danilo (Zrenjanin), Arsa Teodorović (Perlez), Milan Konjović (Sombor), Sava Šumanović and others. Some of the greatest sites of cultural heritage of the 20th century in Banat are the worldwide famous Slovak *naive art* school in Kovačica and Romanian women in Uzdin.<sup>20</sup>

*Fortresses and cities of the Danube region* – Every river, especially great ones like the Danube, were once targets of conquests, raids of the invading armies, hence

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Tomka Dragica, *How to overcome the lack of the network of cultural destinations on the tourist map of Serbia*, ATLAS Annual conference, Naples, 2004.

the sites of forts, towers and vistas that served as forts or observation posts. In the Vojvodina part of the Danube region, there are traces of such goods, as well. The Bač, Petrovaradin and Ram forts on one side and Kalemegdan, Smederevo fortress on the other... although not as preserved as some other fortresses in Europe, they have a story of their own, local people and events that can offer experience to tourists.

Additionally, the long-attractive subject (yet inactive in Serbia), the *industrial legacy*, should be mentioned. Vojvodina, as an agricultural, but also the industrial region has a tradition of its own and the preserved edifices of water-processing industry (locks, pumps), textile industry (silk cultivation, fabric, cloth), meat-processing industry, brick industry, beer brewing and even mining, grain milling and meat curing. Such edifices, renewed and redesigned for visits, unite numerous tourists across Europe on the transnational European routes of industrial legacy. Vojvodina can be a part of those, if some initiative is shown.

## Conclusion

Starting from the officially proclaimed strategic goal of the Danube countries in the field of culture that cultural-historical resources should be used in the programmes of sustainable development, the paper points to the possibility of including the cultural heritage in developmental programmes of local communities in the Danube area. Shaping and market positioning of the thematic cultural routes in the global frames of an acceptable tourist product of the Danube region presents a real opportunity for the development of tourism in this region and opens space for the development of the inner regions, which have fewer opportunities.

The accent is on the theoretical and practical comprehension of the specificities of the regional positioning of tourism as an answer to the global changes, with the region being perceived as an open system in the interaction with the surroundings. It means that in shaping of the thematic routes, the frame of administrative borders is not followed, with the accent placed on the resource, historical and cultural factors instead. Realising that an increasing number of countries is left without capacities and resources to independently cope with the challenges imposed by globalisation, regionalism occurs as a way of adjustment to these changes. Many infrastructural needs of a region can be solved only in cooperation with other neighbouring regions. In the process of globalisation, regions gain new statuses and start to participate in the global process of competitiveness. The Danube region, as a European region, which has made connections and is still making them with different cultures is a desirable area that can offer local cultures to tourists on global routes as well as connect shores, peoples and cultures of various areas “divided” by the Danube. Thus, it is creating new values.

Currently prevalent attitude in the world is the one that globalisation necessarily leads to cultural homogenisation as well as to homogenisation of products, lifestyles and ideas. This very fact gives space for emphasizing the cultural identity, this

especially including products, territories and regions. This offers a significant possibility for the development of thematic cultural tourist routes of the Danube region.

In this paper, cultural values of Vojvodina were discussed as a basis for thematising the cultural routes of the Danube region as well. The cultural heritage of Vojvodina lies in its specificity and richness as a basis for the tourist identity of the region. Vojvodina is a part of the great European Danube basin, a member of the Council of European regions in the EU Parliament and, starting from 2004, a border region of the EU. It is a co-founder and member of the DKMT Euro-region (Danube – Karaš – Mureș – Tisa). With this status, numerous developmental possibilities are opened, intercultural contacts and developmental projects enabled along with the possibilities of development of tourist cultural routes.

Besides the numerous predispositions, the river Danube, which is a natural boundary for 17 municipalities in Vojvodina, has remained unused and undeveloped regarding tourism purposes. Activities taken in this field so far have not been intensive in any region and there is no strong identity or efficient marketing and promotion. Better planning and programming should be done in order to secure the synergy between the cross-border programmes and macro-regional strategies, especially the Danube strategy. It is of great importance that the concept of strategic projects with clear cross-border effects is developed, but it is also important to enable the development of common local initiatives and projects. By taking common management activities on local and regional levels, through forming networks of cultural routes that would bind the communities and institutions in the broader Danube area through common themes and interest, sustainable development of these resources can be achieved as well as the affirmation of culture and dispersion of knowledge in this unique European region.

## Literature

- Anonymous, *Cultural/heritage tourism – searching for the real experience*. California Division of Tourism, Sacramento, 1999. Internet <http://gocalif.ca.gov/research/historic.html>.
- Avramović Zoran, *Kultura*, Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, Beograd, 2006, str. 201.
- Du Cros Hilary and McKercher Bob *Cultural tourism. The Parthnership between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management*. The Haworth Hospitality Press, New York, 2002.
- De Rougemont Denis, *Budućnost je naša stvar*, Niro Književne novine, Beograd, 1989.
- George Susan, *Another world is possible if...*, Verso, New York, 2004.
- George, Susan, *A short history of neo-liberalism*, Conference on economic Sovereignty in a globalising world, Bangkok, 1999. Internet, <http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/econ101/neoliberalism.html>.
- Đurić Gordana, *Faktori razvoja turizma pograničnih regija – Studija slučaja Vojvodina*, doktorska disertacija, Fakultet za sport i turizam, Novi Sad, Univerzitet Metropoliten, Beograd, 2010, str. 173-189. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/15/09/2011>.



- Edita Stojić Karanovic, „Regionalna i prekogranična saradnja za održivi razvoj Srbije,” *Međunarodni problemi*, vol. LIX, br. 2-3, 2007. str. 341.
- Knežević Rade, „Regionalizacija prostora kao proces“, u: Blažević (ur.) *Turistička regionalizacija u globalnim procesima*. Fakultet za menadžment u turizmu i ugostiteljstvu, Opatija, 2009, str. 95-120.
- Larsen Svein, “Aspects of a Psychology of the Tourist Experience Scandinavian“, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 2007, Vol. 7, No. 1, 7–18.
- Mec Gettigan Frances. *An analysis of Cultural Tourism and its relationship with Religious Sites*, Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage, ATLAS – Special Interest Group, First expert Meeting, Portugal, Fatima, 2003, 13-23.
- McKercher, B, du Cros, H, *Cultural tourism- Partnership Between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management*, The Haworth Hospitality Press, New York, London, Oxford, 2002.
- Mike Robinson and David Picard “Culture, tourism, development”, Division of cultural policies and intercultural dialogue, Culture Sector, UNESCO, 2006, Internet, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001475/147578e.pdf>.
- Ministarstvo finansija Republike Srbije, DAKU sektor, 2008. god.
- Richards Greg, *Creativity: A new strategic resource for tourism?*. Tourism, creativity and development- ATLAS Reflections, Arnhem, 2005.
- Puczkó Laszlo and Rátz Tanar., Trailing Goethe, Humbert, and Ulysses: Cultural Routes in Tourism? In G. Richards (ed.) *Cultural Tourism: Global and Local Perspectives*. Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press, 2007, pp. 131-148.
- Puls Planete, specijalno izdanje, časopis National Geographic, Beograd, 2008.
- Sen, Amartya, *Development as freedom*, Anchor books, New York, 1999.
- Soros Džordž, *O globalizaciji*, Samizdat B92, Beograd, 2003.
- Stiglic, Džozef, *Protivrečnosti globalizacije*, SBM-x, Beograd, 2004.
- Tomka Goran, *Dve strane globalizacije: istost vs. raznovrsnost*, *tims.acta*, Tims Acta Vol4 (No1), Novi Sad, 2010, pp. 26-32.
- Tomka Dragica, *Kulturni turizam danas - ili gde je mesto kulturnog turizma Jugoslavije u svetu*, časopis Turizam, br. 3/1999, Institut za geografiju, PMF, Novi Sad, 1999.
- Tomka Dragica, *How to overcome the lack of the network of cultural destinations on the tourist map of Serbia*, ATLAS Annual conference, Naples, 2004.
- Tomka Dragica, Đeri, L. *TOURISM in Vojvodina –A Chance for integration Among Countries of Danube Region*, III Internat. Conference: Multiplicative Effects in Tourism Development, Faculty of tourism and hospitality, Ohrid, 2001
- Tomka, D., Volić, V., Prentović, S., Trifković, A., Krneta, J.: Projekat: “Formation of thematic tourist route groups in the DKMT Euroregion-HU-RO-SCG 1/306“, Trasiranje tematskih turističkih ruta – VATI, Budimpešta, Tims-Novi Sad, Interreg IIIa project, Evropska agencija za rekonstrukciju I razvoj, 2007.

- Vederil Rob, *Kolaps kulture*, Clio, Beograd, 2005.
- [www.unwto.org](http://www.unwto.org).
- [http://www.unesco.org/culture/heritage/intangible/treasures/html\\_eng/method.htm](http://www.unesco.org/culture/heritage/intangible/treasures/html_eng/method.htm).
- <http://www.international.icomos.org/xian2005/culturalroutes-draft.pdf>.
- <http://www.icomos.org/tourism/charter.html>.
- [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org).
- [http://www.culture-routes.lu/php/fo\\_index.php?lng=en](http://www.culture-routes.lu/php/fo_index.php?lng=en).

Sara Stanić<sup>1</sup>

## ANTHROPOGENIC HERITAGE OF NATIONAL PARK ĐERDAP – AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IN SERBIA

### ABSTRACT

The National Park Đerdap represents the unity of natural and cultural heritage of Serbia because the specific natural features of the area have granted a very valuable cultural heritage. The coastal area of the Danube in the Iron Gate was inhabited in the Neolithic period, while the discovered archaeological sites – from monumental Neolithic culture, Lepenski Vir, over ancient monuments and medieval period to modern times speak of the continuity of life. Đerdap, the Iron Gate, has been a challenge for travellers, traders and warriors for thousand years. The territory of the national park is protected for a large number of cultural and historical values together with its environment. Some of these values were declared to be of great importance and are the subject of special protection by the state. The Đerdap area is particularly interesting for school trips as the most wanted destination. It is also significant for boat cruises as a supplement of the program and also as various individual and group excursions, both domestic and international. Activities and projects of the Strategy for the Danube region, the promotion of tourism resources in the Iron Gate, changes in the global tourism market demand and the strengthening of new types of tourism developments aimed at sustainable development and protection of natural heritage and cultural heritage contribute to the positioning of tourist destinations and the Iron Gate as a unique brand in European tourism market.

*Key words:* heritage, Đerdap, tourism development, Danube Strategy.

### Introduction

National Park Đerdap was declared in 1974 after the dam construction (in 1972 the Iron Gate I Dam was opened as the construction of the joint Romanian-Yugoslavian mega project). It is located in the south-eastern part of Europe, in the north-eastern part of Serbia, at the international border with Romania. The National Park includes the area of Đerdap gorge (the Iron Gate) in the middle of the Danube. The National Park covers parts of the Golubac, Majdanpek and Kladovo municipality (a total area of 63.608.45 ha), and the protective area surrounding the Park has surface

---

<sup>1</sup> Sara Stanić, M.Sc. Research Assistant, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Geography, Belgrade, Serbia, sara.stanic.zemun@gmail.com.

of 93.968 ha. The largest national park in Serbia, National Park Đerdap, covers a distance of 100 kilometres of the right bank of the Danube and is 2-8 kilometres wide between Golubac and Karataš near Kladovo. The largest and the longest gorge in Europe, the miraculous Iron Gate is called the wild botanical garden. It is also called the largest European natural archaeological museum.

Access to Đerdap to the west is located near medieval fortress of Golubac town. From the east, it is located near the village of Karataš, or ancient forts Diana and the “Đerdap I”, and from the south from the direction of Majdanpek near the centre of the national park in the village Donji Milanovac. Main road Požarevac-Golubac leads to a national park, which follows the entire length of the Danube gorge up to Kladovo. Southern edge of the Iron Gate passes also the main road Požarevac-Majdanpek-Negotin-Kladovo. The specificity of the Iron Gate is its direct attachment to the Danube, which is an extremely important part of European international waterway (connection with Europe, Black Sea and the Mediterranean). The Đerdap border region with Romania and great anthropogenic heritage offer many opportunities for tourism development of the national park and the whole region.

### **Natural Characteristics of the National Park Đerdap**

Đerdap gorge was formed by the successive cut of Danube in the Carpathian mountain range, leaving steep spots and vertical sides that rise above the river level. The largest gorge in Europe, Đerdap gorge consists of four canyon-gorge valleys: Golubačka, Gospodin Vir with the canyon of Boljetin River, Kazan (Great and Small Kazan), Sip Canyon, and three open valleys: Ljupkovska, Donjomilanovačka and Oršavska valley. Among geomorphologic objects particular areas of the Small and the Great Kazan (Mali and Veliki Kazan – “the gates of Europe”) stand out. The Great Kazan (kazan meaning “boiler”) is the most famous and the most narrow part of the Đerdap gorge, where the Danube is the narrowest (about 140 m) and deepest (about 90 m). Prior to the formation of hydro-accumulation Đerdap I in Sipska gorge, there were many rapids who built the giant pots and this part is called the Iron Gate. In Turkish Gerdap means dangerous place for navigation, and the Romans and the Slavs called it the Iron Gate, and that’s where the whole canyon’s name comes from.

Moderate-continental and continental climate has been caused by the influence of the great mass of the entire Danube and the shelter of the Đerdap areas both north and south. Mountainous hinterland of the gorge is characterized by modified mountain climate. The most favourable conditions for visiting the National Park are from middle May to late September, when the air temperatures are above 15°C, which among other benefits of climate elements makes a special tourist value.

The greatest hydrological characteristic of the National Park Đerdap is a lake formed by damming of the Danube for the production of electricity and for improving the conditions for navigation. The construction of dams and the lake formation improved conditions of navigation, because the lake water sinks underwater rocks,

whirlpools and giant pots. Water bath in Đerdap Lake is possible in June, July, August and September according to the average monthly temperature.<sup>2</sup>

Flora of the Đerdap area is extremely diverse, as there are over 1000 species in the narrow coastal area. There is a significant incidence of rare plant species, among which are especially significant tertiary relict species whose distribution area and abundance in Europe has been significantly reduced. In the National Park are located nine nature reserves in the area of first degree of protection and a Landscape with special natural characteristics. These are Golubac town, Bojana, Tatarski vis, Bosman-Sokolovac, Šomrda, Gypsy stream, Coka Njalta with Pesač, Lepenski vir, River Boljetin Canyon – Reef, Great and Small Štrbac.

In secluded parts of the Đerdap forests, on inaccessible rocky cliffs, in dark caves, in shadowy river gorges, in dark depths and on surface of the river Danube, lives numerous and wonderful population of unusual, small and large creatures – one of the wealthiest faunas in this part of Europe.

National Park fauna is characterized by great diversity of species. Because of the diversity of bird fauna and the presence of rare, endangered bird, the national park Đerdap is called “Iron Gate” on the list of important bird areas – areas of IBA (Important Birds Areas). The richness and diversity of the Đerdap fish world are very important for the local population, since the earliest days fishing has been important to the people.

### **Historical Development of the Đerdap Area**

Thanks to specific and favourable conditions for life in the Đerdap gorge, the continuity of material life and of the development of spiritual culture is present from prehistoric to the present time. Numerous archaeological sites, preserved cultural and historical monuments from the Roman, medieval and Ottoman periods are interspersed with new settlements on the banks of the Danube. The oldest archaeological sites of the Middle Stone Age – proto neolithic, have been incurred during the period from 7000 to 5000 BC, in the limestone valleys of the Gospođin vir and Kazan (Lepenski vir, Vlasac, Padina and Hajdučka Vodenica). During the conquest of north-eastern area of the Balkans, the Roman legions were caught in the Đerdap area. The neolithic and bronze culture and settlements are formed around the copper sites, mainly at the confluences of the Danube tributaries. For the Romans, the Danube was a natural protective barrier to barbarian Europe that Tiberius, Claudius, Domitian and Traian strengthened by forming a strategic chain, Limes I. Between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD there was a cut in the road from Golubac to Kladovo in the steep cliffs on the right bank of the Danube that was connected by the system of forts, bridges and docks.

---

<sup>2</sup> Stevan Stanković, Nacionalni park Đerdap – polifunkcionalna turistička regija, Glasnik srpskog geografskog društva, Beograd, 2003, str. 47.

Limes strategically relied on several large castrums: Lederata near Ram, Cuppae near Golubac, Novae in Čezava, Taliata near V. Gradac and Diana at Kladovo, which were linked to each smaller fort at the same or at the opposite bank of the Danube. Upon arrival of the Byzantine Empire, between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, in paleo-Byzantine period, much of Roman buildings have experienced modifications. At that time, in Đerdap area many of the indigenous population moved early to Christianity, as evidenced by early Byzantine church in Čezava, Boljetin and elsewhere. The dismissal of centuries of culture, the Slavs who started from the sixth century settlement in the Balkans, due to inaccessibility of the Đerdap area, began to settle in the ninth century. Their first settlements were exclusively preserved antique or paleo-Byzantine fortifications. Between 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries Slavs – Braničevci rebuilt several fortifications, raised a number of Christian churches and a large fortress Golubac in the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The State and the territory's political system throughout history had gone through changes in the development of the cultures and the population (in the early Middle Ages belonged to the Byzantine Empire, inhabited by the Slavs, won by the Bulgarian rulers, ruled by the Hungarians, Serbs and Turks). A particular influence on the development and changes in the Đerdap area nowadays is carried out by the dam construction (1964-1971). The negative effects of the construction unfortunately are a large number of submerged archaeological sites and cultural and natural resources as well as the relocation of several villages. Planned built new settlements on the shores of the lake have preserved their names and the people and follow their traditions in the new conditions.<sup>3</sup>

### **Anthropogenic Heritage**

National Park Đerdap represents the unity of natural and cultural heritage of Serbia, because the specific natural features of the area granted a very valuable cultural heritage. The coastal area of the Danube in the Iron Gate was inhabited in the Neolithic period. The continuity of life is testified by the discovered archaeological sites – from monumental Neolithic culture, Lepenski Vir, over ancient monuments and medieval period to modern times. Đerdap, the Iron Gate, for thousand years is a challenge for travellers, traders and warriors. The largest number of cultural and historical monuments (even 95%) has been situated on the right bank of the Danube in the Đerdap gorge. The first organized research began in 1956, while excavations began planning prepared in 1964 due to increase of the hydroelectric Đerdap I. The excavations had to be limited only those sites that are at a level below 75m and many cultural goods and many sites have been submerged or dislocated in order to systematically study and made available to present to the public. The territory of the national park has a large number of protected cultural and historical sites together

---

<sup>3</sup> Grupa autora, Predlog plana upravljanja područja Nacionalnog parka Đerdap (2011-2020 god.), Javno preduzeće „Nacionalni park Đerdap“, Donji Milanovac, 2010, str. 17-18.

with its environment. Some of these sites were declared to be very important and received special protection by the state.

### **Lepenski Vir**

Lepenski Vir is an important Mesolithic archaeological site located on the right bank of the Danube in Serbia in the central Balkan peninsula. The first excavations were made on the site in 1965 and in 1966, it was listed as a cultural monument of Yugoslavia. It was only in 1967 that its importance was fully understood after the discovery of the first Mesolithic sculptures. The evidence suggests the first human presence in the locality around 7000 BC with the culture reaching its peak between 5300 BC and 4800 BC. Numerous sculptures and interesting architecture are testimony to a rich social and religious life led by the inhabitants and the high cultural level of these early Europeans. The excavations ended in 1971 when the whole site was relocated 29.7m higher to avoid flooding from a new artificial lake created in the Đerdap gorge. The archaeological site on the terrace of the Danube in the Đerdap gorge is one of the most important prehistoric archaeological sites in Serbia. During the archaeological excavations in the sixties, they discovered archaeological finds, sacred architecture and monumental sculpture that changed the world's ideas about the beginnings of civilization. The main contribution to exploration of this site was through the work of Professor Dragoslav Srejović of the University of Belgrade. Buildings, settlements and altars were found in the initial excavations in the period from 1965-1970. Under the settlement of the first farmers and herders in the period between 5300 and 4800 BC, they revealed seven successive settlements of hunters, fishers and food gatherers each built on top of the other. Artefacts found in the form of a number of habitats, reflecting the unusual graves funeral rituals, various tools and ornaments of stone, antler and bone, stone sculpture of sandstone and tiles with engraved signs like letters, were indicators of primitive hunter-gatherer communities inhabited a terrace near Lepenski Vir. They established complex social relations and made a distinctive style of architecture and monumental sculpture modelled from large pebbles. Archaeological research has discovered 136 objects, which have a truncated form of the sector at an angle of 60 degrees. Villages have been systematically constructed, and their harmonious shapes demonstrate functionality of a developed sense of architecture. The original architectural and monumental sculptures put the Lepenski Vir culture in one particular and very early phase of prehistoric culture of Europe. Lepenski Vir was declared a Monument of Culture of Exceptional Importance in 1979, and it was protected by the Republic of Serbia.

The main site consists of several archaeological phases starting with Proto-Lepenski Vir, then Lepenski Vir Ia-e, Lepenski Vir II and Lepenski Vir III, whose occupation spanned well over a millennium from the Mesolithic to the Neolithic period. A number of satellite villages belonging to the same culture and time were discovered in the surrounding area. These additional sites include Hajdučka Vodenica,

Padina, Vlasac, Ikaona, Kladovska Skela and others. Found artefacts include tools made from stone and bones, the remains of houses, and numerous sacral objects including unique stone sculptures. The first settlement on the low plateau dates back to 7000 BC, a time when the climate became significantly warmer. The development of the settlement was strongly influenced by the topology of the surrounding area. It sat on a narrow plateau on the banks of the river, squeezed between cliffs and the flow of the Danube. As such, it offered only limited resources in terms of food, raw materials and living space. This is reflected in the findings from the earliest layer. Proto-Lepenski Vir represents only a small settlement of maybe just 4 or 5 families with fewer than a hundred inhabitants. The primary food source of the inhabitants was probably fishing. Fishing communities of this type are typical for the wider Danube valley region during this period. The village of the Lepenski Vir Ia settlement is well planned. All houses are built according to one complex geometric pattern. These remains of houses constitute the distinct Lepenski Vir architecture, one of the important achievements of this culture. The main layout of the village is clearly visible. The basic layout of the settlement consists of two separate wings and a wide empty central space, which served the purpose of a village square or meeting place. The settlement is radially divided with numerous pathways leading to the edge of the river. The outer edges of the village are parallel to the surrounding cliffs. The most remarkable remnants are pis-cine sculptures, unique to the Lepenski Vir culture, which represent one of the first examples of monumental sacral art on European soil. Lepenski Vir gives us a rare opportunity to observe the gradual transition from the hunter gatherer way of life of early humans to the agricultural economy of the Neolithic. Lepenski Vir III is representative of a Neolithic site and is more typical of other sites across a much wider area. The construction and opening of the Visitors Centre at the archaeological site Lepenski Vir is completed in 2011. This site is protected with modern roof structure, which consists of a building and the amphitheatre, exhibition hall, office space and toilet facilities of adequate capacity for the reception of visitors.

### **Tabula Traina**

Emperor Traian's tablet (Tabula Traiana) is part of an assemblage of Roman monuments on the Roman Road through Đerdap, raised to commemorate the completion of works on two huge construction projects in the gorge, namely a road through Đerdap and a Roman channel near the present day Đerdap I hydroelectric power plant. The rectangular tablet is carved into the rock, with an engraved inscription in Latin devoted to Roman Emperor Traian. Tabula Traiana monument is part of the Roman Limes I and the Roman road, which was built in the period of 98-117 AD, in the narrow of Small Kazan. It has a tablet commemorating the great construction projects, the construction of Traian's road and bridge near Kladovo.



Far away from Rome, on the unpredictable Danube, the Roman Empire established its frontier – the *limes*. In about two hundred years, starting from the third century, the Upper Moesia and Lower Pannonia turned from marginal border provinces into the centre of the Empire's life. Among the monuments preserved mostly in documentation is the Roman road through the Iron Gates gorge. The road along the right Danube bank was of great importance not only for economic reasons but for the security of this part of the Roman frontier. It connected military camps, provided safe navigation and protected Roman territory from the invasions of the barbarians from the left river bank. Construction works started in the time of Tiberius and this enterprise was commemorated on the tablet carved in the rock near Gospođin Vir. Second Tiberius tablet was discovered at Lepenska rock near Boljetin River. The section of the road constructed by Tiberius starts at Gospođin Vir and goes to Taliata (Donji Milanovac) and from there the road was going over Miroč Mountain to Egeta (Brza Palanka). Traian constructed the section of the road through the Lower George in 101 AD and it was recorded on the tablet, carved into the rock at the end of the gorge. The route of the Trajan's road started 700 meters upstream of Vrbica and was going through the Kazan passing Hajdučka Vodenica and to the Tabula Traiana. The Roman road was largely destroyed when the modern road Dobra – Kladovo was constructed in 1961 and when the dam was constructed it was completely covered by water.

Traian's Bridge or Bridge of Apollodorus over the Danube was a Roman segmental arch bridge, the first to be built over the lower Danube. For more than a thousand years, it was the longest arch bridge in the world, in terms of both total and span length. The bridge was constructed by the Greek architect Apollodorus of Damascus for the deployment of Roman troops in the war against Dacia, in 105 AD. The bridge was situated east of the Iron Gates, near the cities of Drobeta-Turnu Severin (Romania) and Kladovo (Serbia). The structure was 1,135m in length (the Danube is 800m wide in that area), 15m in width, and 19m in height (measured from the river's surface). At each end was a Roman castrum, each built around an entrance (crossing was possible only by walking through the camp). The bridge was destroyed by Aurelian, after the Roman Empire withdrew its troops from Dacia. The twenty pillars were still visible in 1856, when the level of the Danube hit a record low. Only the entrance pillars are now visible on either bank of the Danube. In 1979, Traian's Bridge was added to the Monument of Culture of Exceptional Importance, and in 1983 on Archaeological Sites of Exceptional Importance list, and by that, it is protected by Republic of Serbia.

Traian's tablet – Tabula Traiana was carved into the rock, rectangular in shape, and it is dedicated to the Roman Emperor Traian in Latin: "Emperor Caesar son of the divine Nerva, Nerva Traian, the Augustus, Germanicus, Pontifex Maximus, invested for the fourth time as Tribune, Father of the Fatherland, Consul for the third time, excavating mountain rocks and using wood beams has made this road". Originally, it was set to 1.5 meters above the Roman road along the Danube River. The inscription on the tablet is in six lines, but only three can be seen clearly. It used

to be rich in relief decorations; however, the only remaining adornment is a frieze depicting an eagle and figures of winged genies. Below the inscription is a kneeling figure, probably depicting Danubius (a river divinity), with a tympanum above and coffered ceiling. The Roman road was flooded after the construction of the Đerdap hydroelectric power plant (1963-1972). Traian's Tablet was cut from the rock, moved 50 meters higher and now it is visible only from the river.

Just opposite of the Traian's Script on the left side of the Danube River there is the stone-carved sculpture of Decebel's head, last Dacian ruler who was fighting with Traian that was carved in inaccessible cliff in the last decade of the 20th century for the cost of one million dollars by twelve alpinists-carvers as per order of rich Romanian amateur-historian Josif Konstantin Dragash.

### **Diana**

Diana, an archaeological site built on the site Karataš, is one of the largest and best preserved Roman forts – fortress on the Danube. It is located on cliffs (Đerdap) above the Danube in the Karataš archaeological site near Kladovo. It is built of stone, dressed stone, probably from 100-101 AD, at the time of Emperor Traian, during digging the channel, enabling safer navigation on the Danube. At one time, Diana was the most significant finding of the Gornjomezijski limes. It was raised on a significant strategic location; a permanent military garrison had the task to guard the border and to provide entry into the downstream channel. Diana is a rectangular castrum, which measures 100 by 200 meters with walls on the tower. Its final appearance Diana gets by adding walls with protruding towers stretching to the Danube, sealing and protecting a part of the coast in the late third and early fourth centuries.<sup>4</sup> In the middle of fifth century the Roman castles were destroyed by the Huns, and in about 530 AD, it was rebuilt by Emperor Justinian. Inside the fort, except for the rest of the walls with gates and towers, they found military barracks and other buildings and beyond the walls, they revealed the existence of small villages, temples and necropolis. The sculptures in marble and bronze, various articles of daily use found in Diana indicate that this was a Roman fort and except fortification interest, it had a significant economic centre with a pier. In 1983, Diana Fortress was added to the Archaeological Sites of Exceptional Importance list, protected by Republic of Serbia.

### **Golubac Town**

Golubac town or Golubac fortress is cultural monument located on the right bank of the Danube, at the entrance of the Đerdap gorge. Nine massive towers up to 25 meters are interconnected by a wall and arranged so as to defend the city from land

---

<sup>4</sup> Sanja Ćirković, Turistička valorizacija arheoloških lokaliteta u Srbiji, Glasnik Srpskog geografskog društva, Beograd, 2005, str. 55.

and from water. The first known record of Golubac fortress dates back to 1335 AD when it was mentioned as Hungarian military fortification although it is not known when precisely it was built or who built it. Byzantines used it to fortify its northern borders, Hungarians to protect its estates across the Danube and Serbs to guard its territory from Hungarian invasions. Due to exceptional strategic location, over centuries, many times it was a target of various conquerors and battlefield of different armies. The first fort in Golubac on the Danube was built by the Romans in the first century AD. Roman emperor Diocletian lived in the fort around 299 AD, the city was later destroyed by the Huns, to be rebuilt by Justinian again. Peace was achieved after the territory had come under Serbian rule, during the reign of King Dragutin. Because of lack of conflicts, there is very little written data from that period. Until Battle of Kosovo, it had been under Serbian rule but after the Battle, it came under Turkish rule – the Fortress was occupied by Ottoman sultan Bayazit and it would stay under Ottoman rule, with shorter interruptions, until 1867 AD. One of interruptions was during the rule of Despot Stefan Lazarević. He was inherited by his younger brother Đurađ (son of Vuk Branković), who had been obliged to return Mačva, Belgrade and Golubac to Hungarians. However, during his life, Despot Stefan gave the town to Duke Jeremija as collateral for loan of 12.000 golden ducats. When Stefan died, Hungarian King Sigismud had come to take over agreed lands, but Jeremija refused to hand over the town – although he was ordered to do so by his ruler, Despot Đurađ Branković – until he gets 12.000 golden ducats. Sigismud had refused to pay requested sum and Jeremija handed over the town to Turks without battle. Then, in 1428, Sigismud attacked Golubac with huge army from land, water and Laszlovar castle, which is today in Romania. After the Battle of Kosovo, Golubac town fell into Turkish hands, and the Hungarians and the Turks have been fighting over it for a long time. The Fortress had been heavily damaged, but Turks kept it and stayed in it until 1444 when, according to the Peace of Szeged signed between Hungarians and Ottomans, Serbian Despotate was restored and Golubac was included in it. Turks conquered it again in 1456, when Despot Đurađ died, then Hungarians re-seized it in 1481, but left it soon. It stayed under Ottoman rule until 1867 when Turks gave it, together with some other towns, to Prince Mihailo Obrenović.

There are some legends associated with the name of the fortress. According to one of them, once upon a time, gorgeous princess Golubana lived in a palace. She had refused Turkish pasha's love and he chained her to Baba Kaj rock and left her to die. After pasha's screams: "Babo, pokaj se" ("Women, repent"), the rock was called "Baba Kaj" and town was named Golubac after Golubana. With the aid of strong chain, town was connected to Baba Kaj rock allowing for total regulation of water and road traffic through the gorge. Another legend claims that Byzantium princess Eirene (Despot Đurađ's wife) bred many pigeons in the Fortress and thus name Golubac (town of pigeons). Yet another story tells that towers of the Fortress look like pigeons on a cliff. Then, Šešir Kula (Hat Tower) was built so that carrier pigeons could more easily take off and land on. Then, wild pigeons settled there. Even today,

name of the town is derived from “golub”, which is Serbian for “pigeon” or “dove” and this is even true for translations to German, Hungarian, Turkish and other languages. Therefore, a pigeon is a symbol of the town and it is represented in municipal coat of arms. The Fortress was built on a high rock, at the head of the Đerdap gorge, overlooking entire surroundings. Medieval Golubac was not built on remains of some antic fortification but was erected according to plans on very important strategic spot. Nearby the fortress, there are remains of Turkish bath and mosque as well as a commemorative plaque dedicated to Zawisza Czarny, a Polish knight who died nearby the Fortress while defending it from Turks. After World War I, the main road was constructing that went through both of portcullises of the Fortress.

### **Importance of Anthropogenic Heritage for Tourism Development in the Area of National Park Đerdap**

Đerdap gorge and the natural area along the gorge, as well as spatial units, is an increasingly important destination in the tourism market in Europe, because of its exceptional cultural and historical values, beside significant natural ecosystems in composition of exceptional value and rarity, which have been since 1974 placed under the state protection as the Đerdap National Park. In its overall tourist offer, Đerdap National Park is a separate and complete travel unit, which is in many ways unique in Europe and worldwide. Đerdap gorge offers visitors rare, unique and attractive tourist facilities throughout the year due to its morphological and hydro-graphic characteristics, attractive Danube landscapes, which are based not only on relief diversity but also at the wealth of cultural and historical heritage and the very specific ethnological features of the region. Đerdap as a tourist destination because of unity of its extraordinary tourism potentials (national park, plenty of geological and morphological motives, flora and fauna wealth, valuable cultural and historical heritage of the past and specific ethnological heritage areas), is a really united and above all unique region offer of the Danube countries in the European tourism market. More intensive development of nautical tourism, a growing number of tourist boats that sail in Serbia on the Danube, greater promotion of Đerdap, adoption of the Danube strategy, changes in the global tourism market in terms of demand for some different kind of tourism and improved chances of European integration; all contribute to the positioning of Đerdap as a unique tourist destination in European tourism market. In its overall tourist offer National Park, lake and gorge, Đerdap is presented as a special and complete tourist unit. The tourist attraction and aesthetic values of the Iron Gate can not be compared with similar phenomena in the national parks of Europe. The visitors of Đerdap National Park are most interested in the attractive lookout points, monuments of great significance and richness of nature, which can be complemented by the experience of cultural, manifestation and restaurant offer. Tourism based on nature has precisely the focus on natural resources. Preserved natural environment, offers the possibility for different aspects of the tourist offer. Đerdap Lake and its coastal area,

as the part of the Đerdap National Park, offer various forms of tourism. In the National Park, there are excellent conditions for the development of many types of complementing tourist activities. In that way, you can expand the basis of economic growth and valuation of natural and created regional development.

On the territory of the National Park, there are nine regulated and marked walking trails of various lengths passing through attractive landscapes, the nature which often ends at the lookout. These trails are the following: River Canyon Brnjica, Bosman – Sokolovac, Gypsy stream – Šomrdski stone, River Canyon Boljeton – Reef, Lake Baltu alu Šontu – Glavica, Cave Gradašnica, Buronov sink, Large and Small Štrbac and Kovilovo. Walking, hiking, stay in the fresh air, relaxation, recreation in natural surroundings and photographing the extraordinary vantage points, are just some of the activities that could be excellent combined with the anthropogenic heritage in the offer of tourist destination Đerdap.

The Iron Gate is one of the 35 identified IBA (Important Bird Areas) areas in Serbia. Three species of birds make the Đerdap area internationally important: pygmy cormorant, lesser spotted eagle and miniature eagle. Services of professional guides and the use of observation of birds in Small Štrpce, is provided by the public corporation “National Park Đerdap”. In cooperation with local bird lovers, you can find accommodation facilities and local food and drink specialties, as well as the cultural heritage of the past.

The bike path that connects the 6 Euro Velo Atlantic and the Black Sea is passing through the National Park in the length of 100 kilometres, which is why this protected area is registered in the cycling map of Europe. The Danube route is one of the most popular cycling routes in Europe. A system of designation for Danube cycling route (DBR) that runs through Serbia has unique characteristics and design different than in other Danube countries, and that’s why it is original on European scale. It is also the first such system in Serbia, and so far, the only internationally recognized one. Passing through the National Park, cycling tourists are often staying in the local neighbourhoods and they are especially interesting for visiting some of the cultural and historical monuments in Đerdap gorge or in the environment.

Events are an important component of integral tourist product and content elements of tourist stay, so the hunting event ‘‘Hunter’s encounter with a wolf’’ in Dobra, ethnic heritage festivals such as the ‘‘Lilac fest’’ on the Miroč or ‘‘Ethno Festival’’ in Golubac, then ‘‘Gold plop of Đerdap’’ in Tekija, represent only part of the tourism-sport-culture and entertainment-events that bring together a large number of participants and visitors. Those events and their programs represent a significant potential for tourism in the total offer of Đerdap National Park. The tourist events are particularly important to familiarize visitors with the identity of the destination that organizes the event, but also with tangible and intangible cultural heritage on it. In that way, Đerdap events tourist offer represents a great opportunity for introduction, as well as for popularization and promotion of the anthropogenic heritage of the area.

The number and variety of wild game, the quality of trophies, especially the full natural behaviour of wild animals are a real sport hunting experience in the almost untouched natural hunting environment “Đerdap”, which is part of the National Park Đerdap. As a result of prudence of game that behave completely natural, hunting in the Đerdap area has all the elements of a real primal experience, requiring good physical condition and profound knowledge of the habits of wild animals from the hunter. The hunting ground has all the necessary professional staff, as well as the technical facilities of the hunting to ensure a successful hunt. Beautiful Iron Gate gorge with all its secrets offers many opportunities for fans of both commercial and sport fishing. Trout, sturgeon, perch, catfish, carp, pike, bream and others are major challenge for anglers to demonstrate their skills. With the appropriate daily, weekly or seasonal fishing licenses, it is possible to fish from the shore or from a boat with the unselfish help of local fishermen. Also, participants in hunting and fishing tourism, in moments of leisure may enrich the contents of their stay in the national park by visiting some of the cultural and historical monuments.

The development of nautical tourism needs spacious and quiet areas of a lake, so boating is very suitable for both large and small objects. Ports in Tekija and Donji Milanovac, as well as ship locks at the dam ensure the safe anchoring of vessels and smooth sailing for most of the year. It seems that the biggest market for nautical tourism are Austria and Germany when it comes to tourists on their own vessels, and the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Russia, when it comes to participants in the larger tourist trips on the Danube waterway objects.<sup>5</sup> In addition, sailing, rowing, sports competitions in the water and swimming areas complement the tourist offer. Navigation on the Danube used to regulate the bubble station, and one of them, Varnica, has been converted into a tourist information centre and a dock for boats and yachts. Beaches with showers in the sector of the National Park Đerdap enable the development of water sports during the summer months when temperatures and climatic conditions allow swimming, sailing, water-skiing etc. Participants in nautical tourism are particularly attracted to the rich cultural heritage of the past.

Stationary tourism is most developed in Donji Milanovac Tekija, Golubac and nearby Kladovo. In these settlements, there are modern tourist and catering facilities. Donji Milanovac has singled out as a centre of tourism in the Đerdap Lake after the construction of the hotel “Lepenski Vir”. Donji Milanovac has the function of a tourist base because of the hotel with auxiliary facilities, sports facilities, dock, beach, restaurants, a picturesque village, a good position and attractive locations, as well as the recent construction of a wellness centre and spa within the hotel. Stationary tourism is developed in Golubac (Hotel “Golubac Town”), Kladovo (Hotel “Đerdap” and “Akvastar Danube”), Karataš (Youth Camp), Dobra and Tekija (motels), as well as in the private houses. Rural tourism in recent years appears more intensity in the

---

<sup>5</sup> Stevan Stanković, Nacionalni Park Đerdap – Polifunkcionalna turistička regija, Glasnik Srpskog geografskog društva, Beograd, 2003, (54-55).

region, since there are more and more individual guests beside organized groups who are interested to get to know about the cultural heritage of the Đerdap.

Youth and school tourism is well developed in the area because a large number of young people (participating in school trips, excursions and classes in nature) come to visit the Đerdap area. This type of tourism is in addition particularly interesting to primary and secondary school students and to students of tourism, geography, biology, forestry, geology, hydraulic, transport, history, art and other groups. Besides the selection of recreational classes for children, (children in kindergartens and preschools) Đerdap is a tourist destination for group travels of retirees or other closed, homogeneous groups like the collectives of different companies, in terms of cultural movements.

Excursion tourism in Đerdap in the form of organizing individual and group tours that include visits to many cultural and historical monuments and nature reserves is very well developed. In addition to the aforementioned excursion sites, Đerdap attractions include the following: cave tours (“Rajko’s cave”, “Gradašnica”, “Dubočka”, “Ceremošnja”, “Ravništarka”); nature monuments (“Vratna gates”, “Valja prerast”); visit to Đerdap I Hydroelectric Power Station; Kladovo Fish Combine; archaeological sites (Viminacium, Felix Romuliana), fortresses (Fetislam, Ram), monasteries (Vratna, Koroglaš, Bukovo, Gornjak, Vitovnica, Tumane, Zaova); locations on the wine route (Rajačke, Rogljevske, Smeovačke and Stubicke wine cellars). That is why the excursion tourist area of the Đerdap attractions expands and complement both in content and quality. Possible excursion movement in the Đerdap area and environment are determined by the use of certain types of vehicles (bus, car, boat, and bicycle). In this way, visiting of the archaeological sites, fortresses, monasteries and protected areas of the historical heritage, are together representing some of the integral and complementary aspects of cultural tourism in the region.

Cultural movement as every movement that is motivated and inspired by culture, visiting cultural sites, cultural and historical sites and learning about civilizations of the past is very important for the tourism development of the National Park Đerdap. Heritage as one of the major tourist motives attracts significant number of tourists and represents important source of tourism income.

Heritage stands as primary and also as secondary tourist motive and this fact additionally enhance necessity of skilfully and knowledge based management of heritage as integral part of tourist destination. Cultural tourism products are culturally themed tourist routes, visits to cultural events, religious tourism, visiting the old city cores. Benefits from the investment (cost) for the cultural tourism development are significantly higher than the same for other forms of tourism. Cultural tourism promotes other forms of tourism on destination. That means that cultural tourists have income from tourism to other tourism products, often used accommodation services, wellness and spa centres in the destination, consumption is achieved with the purchase of souvenirs, books and brochures of gastronomic services, strengthening the private sector, employ new labour equalizes regional underdevelopment. In this regard, the

best way of promoting of cultural tourism on destination is the revival of local cultural and tourist valuables. These are events, artist colonies, organizing international conferences in museums, cultural centres, visitors' centres on cultural sites. Protected areas in Serbia, where Đerdap as a national park has important place, representing good background for sustainable tourism development. With great natural potentials and cultural-historic heritage, Đerdap is a place interesting for numerous people different structure, age and education. With all this potentials Đerdap can develop strong tourist offer in way of echo-tourism development and natural and cultural resources protection. Heritage tourism as a tourist product is not enough profiled. It is necessary to network with countries in the region based on the same or similar cultural heritage in order to make better position themselves in regional and European tourism markets.

### **Conclusion**

National Park Đerdap has become a unique brand in European tourism market because of the following factors: activities and projects of the Strategy for the Danube region, the promotion of tourism resources in the region, changes in the global tourism market demand and the strengthening of new types of tourism development aimed at sustainable development and protection of natural and cultural heritage. All of it is contributing to the positioning of Đerdap as a tourists destination. This is particularly evident in sustainability and mutual cooperation when it comes to the tourism sector of the Danube countries. Setting Đerdap as a cultural destination in the Danube region may result in an increase in the demand of the international tourist market around the world and it may attract a lot of tourists. The use of modern means of communication such as the Internet can help a better representation of the Danube as a tourist destination and its promotion of new tourist clientele. Joint marketing, promotion and management of tourist destinations in the Danube region will contribute to the development of the tourism destination of Đerdap as a unique offer at European and world tourist market.

The global economic crisis and the lack of free time have resulted in the changes of the tourism sector. On the one hand there is a high unemployment rate, which is represented by the population with insufficient funds to travel, on the other hand, employees in most European countries have no longer holidays and leisure time for travel. Therefore, short tourist trips or weekend excursions are a great solution for this problem and because of their features, they do not require a lot of money and time. Such active excursions and cultural weekend tours can be well developed in the national park and environment area in different forms and through different means of transportation (car, bicycle, boat, bus). Intensifying the promotion of active excursion tourism contributes to raising awareness of healthy lifestyle as well as expansion of educational and cultural level of the tourist clientele. An integral cooperation of all sectors of the tourism industry contributes to the promotion of the



cultural tourism. Multiple effects on the development of field trip and other forms of tourism in the Danube region can be achieved by collective acting of economic sector in the tourism of Danube region countries (tour operators, hotels and others), strengthening mutual ties and cooperation in educational and scientific research activities in the field of tourism and integrated operation of tourism development holders at local, regional, national and international level. Planning of tourism through the repair and maintenance of existing and future tourism infrastructures in Đerdap sector advances the development of heritage tourism. The development of cultural tourism of Đerdap requires connecting the accommodation facilities, port infrastructure, walking trails, information centres, bike trails, lookouts in the Danube area and road network along the major tributaries of the Danube with the important cultural and heritage sites of the past. That should put emphasis on protected areas and sites that belong to the cultural heritage.

Improvement projects of the tourist cruises on the Danube and the realization of the Danube promenade as proposed by the Danube Tourist Commission are particularly important for the development of heritage areas of Đerdap. The promotion of sustainable tourism in the Đerdap area can be achieved by a combination of transport and a visit to the tourist attractions of the cultural sites. The establishment of quality criteria and the establishment of tourism associations and campaigns may include support of improving the quality of products and the development of regional supply chain strategy for sustainable heritage tourism. Brand promotion of Đerdap as a cultural tourism destination can contribute to the development of the entire Danube region, through the development of joint tourism products and promotion policies, which will eventually affect the positioning of Đerdap as a unique offer in the European tourist market.

## References

- Grupa autora, Strategija EU za Dunavski region, Akcioni plan, Prilog uz Saopštenje komisije Evropskom parlamentu, savetu, Evropskom ekonomskom i socijalnom komitetu i komitetu regiona, Brisel, 2010.
- Grupa autora, Predlog plana upravljanja područja Nacionalnog parka Đerdap (2011-2020. god.), Javno preduzeće „Nacionalni park Đerdap“, Donji Milanovac, 2010.
- Lazić Lazar, Košić Kristina, Turistička geografija, Univerzitet u Novom Sadu, Prirodno-matematički fakultet, Departman za geografiju, turizam i hotelijerstvo, Novi Sad, 2004.
- Romelić Jovan, Ćurčić Nevena, Turistička geografija Jugoslavije, Univerzitet u Novom Sadu, Prirodno-matematički fakultet, Geografski institut, Novi Sad, 2001.
- Stanic Sara, Značaj i organizacija izletničkog turizma u turističkoj ponudi Srbije, Master rad, Univerzitet u Beogradu, Geografski fakultet, Departman za turizmologiju, Beograd, 2010.

- Stanić Sara, Antevski Miroslav, Tourism as a Cohesive and Integrative Factor, Paper in International Scientific Conference – Western Balkans: from Stabilization to Integration, IMPP, Belgrade, 2011.
- Stanić Sara, Šimičević Dario, Pavlović Sanja, Đerdap as an Excursion Destination – A Unique Offer in the European Tourism Market, Collection of Papers – CTTH, Novi Sad, 2011.
- Stanković Stevan, Nacionalni Park Đerdap – Polifunkcionalna turistička regija, Glasnik Srpskog geografskog društva, Beograd, 2003.
- Ćirković Sanja, Turistička valorizacija arheoloških lokaliteta u Srbiji, Glasnik Srpskog geografskog društva, Beograd, 2005.
- Štetić Snežana, Turistička geografija, L I, Beograd, 2008.

Snežana Štetić  
Dario Šimičević  
Saša Stevanović<sup>1</sup>

## VALORIZATION OF SERBIAN WATERWAYS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DANUBE REGION TOURISM

### ABSTRACT

Global tourism has influenced the remarkable diversification both in tourism supply and in tourism demand. The emergence of new forms of demand was also a precondition for the creation of various forms of travel as opposed to the then existing “classic forms”. At the turn of the century, waterways became especially interesting for tourism development. Once the backbones of transport power of the big industrial countries, today waterways are unstoppable encouragement for tourism development in many countries. Rivers are a very powerful tourism motive. The density and number of waterways in our country, especially in Vojvodina, offer great opportunities for river traffic and river tourism development. Their distribution provides favourable conditions for river traffic development, especially in transportation on the Danube, which plays an important role in connecting Central and Eastern Europe. These advantages have not been sufficiently used which shows not only the underdevelopment of river transport in our country, but also the slow development of tourism on water. Today, there are almost no facilities for tourism vessels on our rivers, despite the exceptional opportunities that our natural and anthropogenic resources provide.

The Danube Region is the most interesting aquatic transversal of various tourism forms development. Today, when all countries in the Danube Basin are willing to cooperate and to create new forms of cooperation through tourism, we unfortunately cannot offer them a lot, not because we do not have anything to offer, but because we do not know how we do want or not want to do so. Taking into consideration the previous tourism development in our part of the Danube Basin, the authors of this paper will attempt to give some suggestions on how and what should be developed in the Danube Region, how to cooperate and who to include, so that Serbia could also get in line with the developed tourist countries in the region.

*Key words:* waterways, the Danube region, evaluation, rivers and canals, tourism, regional cooperation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Snežana Štetić, Ph.D., Faculty of Sciences, University of Novi Sad, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, College of Tourism, Belgrade, e-mail: [snegics@gmail.com](mailto:snegics@gmail.com).

Dario Šimičević, M.A., College of Tourism, Belgrade.

Saša Stevanović, M.A., Tourist organization of Belgrade.

## Introduction

Only a decade ago, the World Tourism Organization forecasts were that a billion and five hundred million tourists would take part in the international tourism movements by the year 2020. In 2010, this number was already 924 million tourists.<sup>2</sup> The economic crisis and the recession that has begun to knock at the door of the world economy will undoubtedly have an impact on the development of tourism, but tourism even in crisis has shown great vitality. Namely, although the number of tourists in foreign tourist movements slightly reduced, this number multiply increased in domestic tourist movements. Tourism is basically a positive activity, which through significant revenues raised by local communities affects the possibility to protect and preserve the space, water resources and biodiversity and becomes a force for environment protection especially in the developing countries. Regulating watercourses, revitalizing drainage network, developing shores, parks and nature reserves are some of the examples how tourism can impact positively and profitably on the development of certain areas. That is why, among other things, tourism development through regional cooperation in the Danube Basin is important.

The Danube is our most important waterway, and at the same time one of the most important European river corridors. Creating Corridor 7, it is the only connection of Serbia as a continental country with the Black Sea and through the Main-Danube Canal with the Rhine and the North and Baltic Sea as well as the Atlantic Ocean. The Danube is a connection among Serbia and other Danubian countries: Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia, Austria, Germany, and downstream, Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine. With its course 2845 km long, it runs through 10 countries connecting four major cities.

Serbia has a very developed network of inland waterways, which consists of international rivers and canal network, making nearly 2,000 kilometres of navigable routes. The Danube, Corridor 7 is the main European internal corridor connecting Eastern and Western Europe. The network of inland waterways in Serbia also involves the Sava River with its 207 km flow through Serbia and the Tisa River in the length of 169 km, as international tributaries of the Rhine-Danube axis. The hydro-system Danube-Tisa-Danube is a local network of inland waterways in Vojvodina, but also a great potential for future network of European waterways. Although in naval sense Serbia has the best part of the Danube, which is sufficiently deep and wide, the country is neither generally turned to river traffic, nor it pays attention to the potentials that this river has. The Danube with its characteristics is some sort of highway, unfortunately, ships, ports and goods are lacking. Other forms of transportation do not have even remotely such a perspective, and cannot be developed without enormous investments, as opposed to water transport and tourism development opportunities.

---

<sup>2</sup> UNWTO (2011) Tourism Market Trends: Europe 2010 Edition; World Tourism Organization: Madrid.

## Hydrographic Potentials for Tourism Development in Our Country

Serbia's natural resources provide ideal conditions for the development of tourism on water. However, our tourism offer is not such that we could be competitive with the offers of other Danube countries. The Danube flows through eight European countries and it is the most important and one of the most international river roads in Europe, and natural connection with the whole continent is achieved through Pannonia. It is an integral part of the Trans-European navigation system the Rhine-Main-Danube, which, with the length of 3,505 km of its waterway connects the Atlantic and the Mediterranean linking western and Eastern Europe and thus provides the Europeans almost unlimited opportunities for sailing. Vojvodina is situated in the southern part of the Pannonian Plain where the largest river hydro junction in Europe is also located. On the territory of our country, there is an important crossroad of international roads and it represents a bridge between Europe and Asia, and Europe and Africa. The shortest routes between Central Europe and the Middle East have always led through this lowland area.

General state of the waterway at the Danube through Serbia related to other national sectors can be characterized as good (there is over 80 km of hydro-facilities that provide quality and waterway maintenance, set and maintained system of waterway signalization, etc.). There are 44 international ports with various specializations, technical and technological capacities and equipment levels on the Danube.<sup>3</sup> In the Danube sector flowing through Serbia (588 km of waterway) 9 freight ports and piers have been built (Apatin, Bogojevo, Bačka Palanka, Novi Sad, Belgrade, Pančevo, Kovin, Smederevo and Prahovo). The greatest opportunities for tourism development on our rivers are offered by the Danube, but these opportunities must be made attractive to tourists at the same time. This can be achieved through the construction of particular facilities, which would affect the improvement of tourist traffic and tourist spending in the entire area of the Danube. The abundance of water in Serbia is not sufficiently exploited to the present.

According to European Commission evaluation, the waterway through Serbia is considered to be in the sixth and seventh highest class. The average navigation period at the Danube sector through Serbia amounts to 302 days.

For the development of nautical tourism on the Danube, it is necessary to build facilities essential for tourism traffic development. The significance of the Danube as a waterway and an important tourist direction are also proved by master plans of Serbian development that include the Danube into tourist positioning of Serbia. This approach is based on the following assumptions and/or components:

- the exchange value and recognizability of the Danube as a strategic European continental tourist resource which, in its most attractive part, integrates numerous Serbian tourist attractions;

---

<sup>3</sup> Štetić S., 2007. *Specific Forms of Tourism*, 35-39 LI, Belgrade.

- key attraction advantage of Belgrade, which, after Vienna and Budapest, represents the third “Danubian” metropolis with strong features of cosmopolitanism, hedonism and gastronomy;
- key geo-strategic position of Serbia within Middle and Southeastern Europe, whose stability in great measure influences the stability of the European Union as a whole.

As it is noted in the Strategy for Tourism Development, the Danube should be used in the slogan for tourist positioning of Serbia, because tourist valorization of the Danube also involves an additional affirmation of Belgrade and Novi Sad in tourist aspect. Moreover, none of the Danube countries uses this idea in its tourism slogan, although it is very imposing and noticeable.

Along the whole Danube course, there is only one pump, and there is not any free yacht sailing under foreign flags. The reason why foreign navigators do not visit Serbia is administrative. According to the Law on State Boundaries Crossing, crews and passengers on ships or boats sailing under foreign flag are obliged to pass customs control each time they dock at the shore.

The opportunity for nautical tourism development in Serbia, first of all at the Danube, is really tremendous. The landscape where the Danube flows through our country abounds in prominent natural-tourist resources (protected natural resources in riverside belt of the Danube – special nature reserves, nature parks, strict natural reserves, national parks, etc.), attractive hydrography (canals and the remaining smaller rivers), rich flora and fauna.

Hydrographic potentials of Vojvodina are exceptional. Besides the Danube, there are also the rivers Sava, Tisa and Begej, with its numerous tributaries as well as smaller rivers such as Bosut (in Srem), Tamiš (in Banat) and other smaller rivers: Karaš, Zlatica, Nera, Krivaja, Čik, Mostonoga and Plazović. They make this area one of the most distinctive waterpower areas in Serbia, even in Europe. Among these rivers, an extensive network of canals for irrigation, drainage and transport has been dug in the total length of 939 km of which 673 km is navigable. Although the canal network is primarily designed and constructed to prevent flooding and to direct the water for irrigation, its potentials and opportunities for utilization are much greater.

### **The Importance of Nautical Tourism Development**

Nautical tourism develops faster than other forms of tourism recording high growth rate. This also affects the occurrence that demand is greater than the available supply. The massification of these tourist developments have been influenced by the contemporary technological solutions of vessels construction involving more people with less financial investments in nautical tourism. Nautical tourism has not found its proper place in the overall tourism development and construction to the present day in Serbia because its economic and tourism importance has not been sufficiently perceived, and therefore it has not been treated enough as a prospective tourist activity. Although Serbia

has great potential for developing nautical tourism owing to its geographical position, the current development is rather modest, which must be changed in the next period.

The countries with developed nautical tourism (Great Britain, France, Germany, and Austria) have an extremely large number of vessels. In the early 1990s, the potential demand in Europe was about 6 million nautical vessels, and today it is about 15 million. This is an exceptional opportunity to develop not only riverside but also inland countries whose water resources meet the needs of yachtsmen. The need of these tourists is heterogeneous and variable. The participants in this form of tourist movements consume considerably more funds than “classic” tourists, which makes them especially interesting for tourism offer countries. Annually several million of vessels are produced in the world, so that the average annual growth rate of this production is over 10% in France, Austria, Great Britain and Germany. The fact that nautical tourism is constantly increasing and that it is more and more differentiating as a specific form of tourist traffic also affects the creation of requirements that this offer should meet. This means that it is necessary to create a specific offer, such as constructing piers and ports for nautical tourists, activating the banks and investing in the most basic needs for nautical vessels, extending the network of yachting ports and marinas.

Nautical tourism is already clearly differentiated as a specific type of tourist traffic. This is mainly tourism of the groups with higher standard of living which influences greater tourist consumption. Therefore, tourism offer must also comply with the requirements of tourist demand. In addition, many countries already possess a significant own fleet, which is rented to participants of these movements. Thus, these countries expand the assortment of tourist offer and include that circle of potential consumers who do not have their own funds to purchase a vessel. According to official data, only in the Mediterranean there are over 2 million vessels with 250,000 large sailing facilities. In addition, the number of vessels at European rivers and canals is extremely large and the real expansion of tourism on continental waters arose at the turn of this century. Consequently, the expansion of the nautical tourism also occurs on rivers and canals.

Before the advent of airplanes, cruising by ship was a usual mode of transportation. In the 1920s and 1930s cruises were a popular form of travel involving economic elite and classes of the developed world. The glamour and elegance were shown off and the prices were very high. After World War II, the cruise market began to decline in the world due to the presence of competitive plane travel. Since the 1980s, international cruising tours have experienced a true renaissance.

Today according to some estimates, there are currently over 15,000 kilometres of navigable waterways in Europe, including canal network. The demand is largely focused on the Danube, Rhine, Neva, Volga, Elbe, Seine, Ron and Po. This tendency is manifested in the tourism market due to the increased living standards of certain countries (countries of North, West and Central Europe and the U.S.), the increasing competition of ships with a lower price of tourist services (particularly ships from Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, etc.), the segmentation of tourist demand and offer in order to discover

new tourist activities, the need for safe travel (especially after the terrorist attack in the U.S. in 2001). In the development of global tourism, a vital role belongs to the Danube since it has a significant place in the development of nautical tourism and it is way ahead of the rivers Nile and Yangtze. Participants of the cruises at the entire Danubian course are tourists from various countries. Tourist traffic on the Danube in Serbia is measured by the number of passenger ships in particular ports. These are the ports in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Donji Milanovac. All passenger ships are foreign ships because in our country there is not a single vessel registered as a passenger cruise ship.

### **Opportunities for Tourist Valorization of Serbian Waterways**

Tourism valorisation is a very important issue of the tourism theory. How much is a tourist motive worth, whether it pays to invest in tourism in a place are just some of the questions to which tourist evaluation gives answers. During valorisation most often quantitative estimates are sought, which, in my opinion, are often disputable. First of all, because the marks of tourism development opportunities are difficult to be quantified as some other activities based on the exploitation of natural resources. With tourism, it is essential that the potentials for tourism development can hardly be viewed in its entirety. Since attractiveness is the feature of tourism resources that distinguishes them from other resources, it allows them to be compared with other similar or different resources used in tourism development. The degree of attractiveness can be observed through the number of tourists who visit a certain tourist motif. Depending on that, we can talk about more or less attractiveness of a certain tourist offer. In addition to the intensity of the effect, we can also talk about the quality of the effect, which implies its secondary feature reflected through different structure of visitors.

If the concept of tourist valorisation means the evaluation value of resources in tourism it is certain that there are different types of evaluation. Firstly, we can talk about qualitative and quantitative methods. On that occasion, it seems to me that the advantage should be on the side of qualitative methods because of strong subjectivity of tourist demand. In the procedure of valuation, attractiveness should be considered within the overall development of an area as well as in their mutual relationship. Most often, it is spoken about four attributes that determine the attractive properties of motifs such as recreational, aesthetic, curious and prominent.

Since tourist values are in fact relative categories, the comparative method is very significant so that it should determine the comparative advantages of a resource related to another resource of the same type. In addition, it is necessary that:

- the resources are compared to specific criteria;
- the elements on which the comparison will be made are accurately determined;
- already affirmed resources are included (according to visitation);
- the proximity of the same type and value motifs is included (the principle of correlativity).



Using the comparative method, a ranking list or a position in relation to other motifs is determined. Ranking by territorial importance is a clearly defined objective in tourist valorisation, which can be used in relation to investment activities, protection, economic development, placement on the tourism market, etc.

Considering tourism potentials of our waterways, especially in Vojvodina, it is obvious that many programs of cooperation in tourism may be encouraged through their valorisation at both global and regional levels. Modelled after long tradition of using canals in France, the Netherlands and Great Britain where local economy was formed along them, the idea arose that the constructed local resources could be innovatively used in order to enhance and improve the tourist offer of Serbia. The first canals were built in Vojvodina during the time of Maria Theresa, and a third of the current system was completed in the period from 1795 to 1870, but has never been used for tourism purposes as in Europe. Tourism is potentially the basic business activity of the Serbian economy, and the rivers make its backbone; the constructed canals are another public good that is not sufficiently utilized and exploited. The examination of tourism potential of Danube-Tisa-Danube hydro system also involves an attempt that tourism links local communities and develops rural tourism and yachting. Tourism on the waters is one of the greatest potentials of Vojvodina. In addition to nautical tourism, it is possible to develop other forms of tourism (fishing, hunting, sports and recreation, excursion and health). A significant potential are ponds that are habitats for rare species of birds. Large problems are underdeveloped infrastructure and poor condition of tourist facilities along the rivers. The canals are great artificial resources that in addition to their primary objectives, i.e. irrigation, drainage and industrial transportation, have never been used for passenger transport. It is probably a fascinating experience to sail by canals 200 years old, see the landscape, the old industrial structures, mills, windmills, silos and farms.

The river traffic in Vojvodina has outstanding potentials, and the main rivers are the Danube and Sava navigable along the whole course through Vojvodina. As regards the number of transported passengers, the river traffic is almost negligible. Until the bombing, river transport was mainly used for transporting goods and raw materials. After 1999, the volume of river non-passenger transportation has been reduced to a minimum. Since the beginning of this season, Belgrade has received 26 international passenger ships with about 3,000 foreign tourists. Those tourists are mainly from Germany, USA, Scandinavian countries and France. The season on the Danube begins on March 15<sup>th</sup> and lasts until the end of October. It is expected that in this period about 430 ships will arrive sailing along the Danube. Last year, Belgrade was visited by about 50,000 tourists on so-called cruisers, and more tourists are expected this year. More and more passenger ships sail along the Danube mostly under foreign flags and with a large number of passengers. In 2006, 300 ships stopped in the Belgrade port with approximately 42,000 passengers, while about 150 ships with 30,000 passengers paused in Novi Sad. More than 600 passenger ships pass through Bezdan and Apatin. Due to customs control they retain there from 5 to 6 hours and in this interval, they should be offered a quality tourist program with sightseeing and cultural and historic attractions.

## **The Importance of the Danube for Tourism Development**

A planned approach to tourism development is the backbone for its successful development. The complexity of the tourism sector with all its specificities affects the constant need for taking new actions aimed at adjusting tourism product to the requirements of tourist demand through recognition of tourists' needs and prudence in creating a tourism product, its implementation and performance in the tourism market. A tourism destination should create a team for the development of tourism including the entire local community in it in order to initiate new actions and to prevent negative phenomena. Besides the Rhine, Rhone and Volga, the Danube is a river with the largest tourism importance in Europe, because it appears as an outstanding natural tourist motif and flows through the tourist attractive landscapes, which exactly on our territory reach great variety and attractiveness. In addition to the fact that the Danube as a waterway represents an exceptional economic and tourist value, an increasing number of urban areas and cultural monuments lie on its banks in Serbia. Regarding landscape and space, several types of coastal sectors can be distinguished that differ in characteristics of the shore relief and other geographic features. In addition, anthropogenic resources and ethnographic motifs of this area make the Danube an exceptional tourism area. Let us mention the national parks Fruška Gora and Iron Gate, the special nature reserve "Upper Danube Basin", prehistoric site Lepenski Vir, Trajan's Board and the remains of Trajan's bridge, the medieval fortress of Petrovaradin, Belgrade and Smederevo, as well as Bač, Ram, Golubački Grad, Fetislam. Bačka Palanka, Veliko Gradište, Kladovo, Donji Milanovac, etc. are also places of special interest for tourism, apart from Belgrade, Novi Sad and Smederevo.

Taking into consideration the importance of waterways, especially the Danube, and the fact that navigation on the Danube and Iron Gate Lake is a great tourist experience, it is necessary to revive river passenger traffic. The significance of introducing our tourist passenger fleet on the Danube lies in the possibility of improving the overall tourism industry. When considering the possibility of development of tourist passenger fleet on the Danube it is primarily thought about the transportation intended for tourist-recreational traffic. Therefore, development programs should be directed to international tourist navigation, sailing, tourists' walks and nautical tourism.

The implementation of this program is based on the rise in tourist demand for cruises in Europe, including even the Danube. Russian Federation, Hungary, Germany, Austria and even Bulgaria are already on this market. It is estimated that these ships can achieve net income of approximately \$ 400 million a year. It is also believed that the investments in the construction of passenger-tourism fleet would be at a higher level of profitability than the investments in hotel facilities. It is important that our river shipyards are able to build ships that would sail on international routes, where 92-95% of the material would have domestic origin. The Institute of Technical Sciences of SASA designed a catamaran modular river passenger ship with outstanding opportunities for application in tourism.

Cruises on the rivers and canals as a specific form of tourism attract an increasing number of tourists. In their programs tour operators single out the Danube, Nile, Volga, German and French rivers, which comprise nearly 90% of global river cruises. In addition, in the UK, France, the USA, Canada and many other countries canals are excellent resources which are valorised more and more. The increase in the number of tourists who cruise the rivers can be seen on the example of the Danube. In the period from 1994, when 83,500 tourists cruised this river, this number has increased by about twice in 2000, while in 2010 a triple growth was recorded.

Our country was very attractive for ship docking, so that Belgrade was included in the programs of these cruises. However, due to the introduction of sanctions to our country (1992-1995) and because of NATO bombing (1999), the implementation of these programs was sporadic. About 160 ships with 20,000 tourists arrived at the Sava Port in 1998, and after that, our part of the Danube was completely neglected. Only in 2001, Belgrade and Novi Sad were again involved in these movements docking just one ship. In the last ten years, the situation has changed and the attractiveness of our part of the Danube has influenced that this year, 2011, 442 ships arrived in Belgrade Port.<sup>4</sup>

Table 1. *The number of vessels in The International Passenger Port (“Belgrade Port”)*

YEAR	Ships
2003	141
2004	290
2005	381
2006	349
2007	396
2008	401
2009	411
2010	390
2011	442

Source: The Tourist Organization of Belgrade, 2011.

According to official data, the participants in cruises have a high consumption (more than 1000 euros per passenger). This is extremely important for all countries aspiring to participate in these tourism movements. Belgrade and Novi Sad are included in the programs of tour operators who organize these trips. This is an exceptional opportunity for the promotion and propaganda of these towns, which should be used properly

---

<sup>4</sup> The official data of Belgrade Port authority in 2011

because a cruise along the Danube is attractive for tourists from many countries<sup>5</sup> who, while staying in Belgrade, visit historical, cultural and entertainment facilities. The average retaining is about 15 hours, during which travellers usually visit the Belgrade Fortress, the Temple of Saint Sava, Skadarlija, Museum 25<sup>th</sup> May, Knez Mihailova Street, see the panoramic sights of the city, while some of them organize visits to the city by bike or go on day trips. During the evening hours, folklore performances of local artists are organized on some of the ships. Due to a special regime of foreign cruise ships docking, Novi Sad and Belgrade are the only destinations in Serbia. Belgrade Port annually accepts about 400 ships with nearly 40,000 visitors. In the future, their number should grow, and it is up to us to create conditions that more tourists visit our city.

During the nautical season the Tourist Organization of Belgrade, which promotes Belgrade as an attractive tourist destination on the Danube on specialized international markets and fairs, has organized several cultural and entertainment events such as Belgrade Boat Carnival and Belgrade Latino marathon at the river banks around the pier. Also, through its activities it has supported Fish Fest and Day of the Danube, which have enriched the contents of the Sava pier ambience contributing to the creation of even better impression on maritime passengers at the same time. According to the current announcements, in December one ship will sail into the international passenger pier of Belgrade Port, whose passengers will enjoy Pre-New Year's atmosphere of Belgrade.

### **Opportunities for Regional Cooperation in the Development of Tourism**

As we know, the Danube belongs to pan-European Corridor 7 creating the best link of Serbia with the connection to Corridor 10. In Danubian countries, there are numerous events that are international in character and aimed at presenting the importance of waterways, the Danube and tourism. Our country should be involved in such activities in order to spread awareness of foreign tourists about the importance and the beauty of Serbia as a tourist destination. There are many foundations that finance or co-finance these events, because that is the easiest way to increase the importance of the Danube on its entire length.

One of the major sports and recreational activities is cycling. For a long time cycling is a popular sport, because you can enjoy the combination of sport and recreation in the fresh air while passing by the beautiful natural landscapes and attractive areas. Research has shown that many tourists and yachtsmen, who float rivers in their boats and yachts, carry bikes with them for recreational needs. Also, if tourists travel by large ships, they also offer the possibility to pack them on board, and use them during the trip, which is very important for many tourists when they go ashore. A large number of travel agencies

---

<sup>5</sup> According to Belgrade Port Authority, most tourists are from Germany, the United States, Great Britain, Austria, France, Italy, Scandinavia and other countries.

and tour operators have narrower specialization in this type of tourism recommending a wide range of routes, bicycle routes with accommodation, even a combination of cruise vacation and cycling.

The awareness of the need for sustainable development and so-called green tourism is slowly starting to spread in Serbia, and some destinations are investing funds for the construction of such cycling and trekking trails. There are several paths along the Danube shore in our country (Upper Danube Basin) and it is necessary that local authorities and tourist organizations animate yachtsmen and promote this form of recreation and rest.

Serbia has not succeeded to fully use its hydrological potential to the present day. Waterways have not reached the position of national priorities. A lack of serious investment has led the network of inland waterways in Serbia in difficult condition, causing an increased risk for navigation safety. While other countries had their infrastructure upgraded their waterways with modern and advanced solutions, Serbia was not able to respond to such challenges.<sup>6</sup>

Regional cooperation in tourism development on Serbian waterways is most prominent through cruises on the Danube. There are various programs on the Danube such as *the Beautiful Blue Danube - MS Danubia*<sup>7</sup>, *The Legendary Danube*<sup>8</sup>, *Black Sea Voyage*<sup>9</sup>, *Grand Danube Cruise*, etc. Besides cruises, an outstanding role in regional cooperation on tourism development also belongs to numerous events such as Greet the Danube, IAD International Waters Unite Bicycle Tour,<sup>10</sup> Danube Box Project organized by the ICPD and Coca Cola through the conference on the importance of the Danube. This event and project are implemented in Austria, and the plans are to be held in Romania, Hungary and Serbia.

The World Conference on canals (WCC 2009) was held in our country in 2009. For the first time, such a conference was held in Serbia on the stretch of blue highway from Hamburg to the Black Sea. The main slogan of this conference was: “A Meeting of East and West”, and the main motto was: “Open the Waterways of the Middle Danube Region”. The special value of this conference was in gathering a large number of participants from our country and from abroad. The representatives of 17 countries took

---

<sup>6</sup> The result of these circumstances is a decrease of the transport volume on waterways from 22 million tons in 1990 to eight million tons in 2000.

<sup>7</sup> This is an arrangement consisting of a 15-day cruising from the town of Passau to Vienna, Budapest, Mohač, Belgrade, Iron Gate, Svistav, Ruse, Koral, Oltenita, Novi Sad, Mohač, Kaloha, Komarno, Bratislava, Krems and to Passau again.

<sup>8</sup> 12-day navigation along the Danube and its canals. The embarkation point is Nuremberg after which they sail through the Main Danube Canal to Prague. The price of the cruise is 1400 – 2200 €, and the additional services are not included.

<sup>9</sup> This is a combination of air and water transport. The total package takes 15 days and tourists choose the combination of transport with different prices.

<sup>10</sup> Cycling route from Krems to Đer where Austria, Slovakia and Hungary take part and where the promotion of natural resources is carried out.

part in the conference: Austria, Hungary, Italy, Germany, Poland, Netherlands, Sweden, France, England, Ireland, Canada, America, China, Korea, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Serbia. Unfortunately, due to administrative problems the meeting was not attended by representatives from Egypt, Benin and Belgium. A large number of domestic and foreign participants contributed to exchanging knowledge and creating a basis for further cooperation in developing waterways, tourism and sustainability.

WCC 2009 Conference organizers with their work managed to influence the creation of five visitors' centres with museum rooms in Bezdan, Mali Stapar, Bečej, Klek and Sremska Kamenica. Two visitors' centres in Kladovo and Požarevac were initiated. A set of brochures in English for each visitors' facility was made, as well as a special brochure for Iron Gate and Čarda on the Danube. The revitalization of the Mill and the administration building at the lock of Mali Stapar was done. Easy construction works were made on other facilities and the green belt was arranged so that beautiful parks are there now. Furthermore, information boards are set on road routes and at the facilities themselves.

## **Conclusion**

The Danube Strategy of the EU represents a strong signal for economic development, because by means of this river Serbia became a strategically important country for further development of the common market in Europe and the EU. There is almost no area of economics that is not touched by this topic: transportation, construction, tourism, shipbuilding, agriculture, ecology and others. The Danube is an unexploited resource of Europe, but also a great opportunity for Serbia. Joint appearance and other forms of association are a chance for Serbian companies to strengthen their positions in their attempt to attract investments in the most effective way.

Water and aquatic ecosystems have always attracted people, from their exploitation, through traffic and transportation, to simple enjoyment of the beauty and usage of water in recreational and leisure purposes. Although there is no an outlet to the sea in our country, it possesses a great wealth of water which is not sufficiently utilized. For the development of nautical tourism on the rivers, nautical tourism infrastructure is necessary. It consists of waterways and the facilities for receiving, supplying, storing, maintaining and repairing vessels on the shore. These are anchors, piers, moorings, river marinas, tourist ports and yachting centres. It can be concluded that the current situation on the Danube and other rivers as well as the Danube – Tisa – Danube Canal is not satisfactory because there are very few such facilities. The authorities in some municipalities have made a megalomaniac projects for the development of ports and marinas. However, such a megalomaniac ideas should be transformed into realistic objectives. It is necessary that every settlement located on the shores builds smaller piers and moorings with basic needs (pumps, electricity, water) so that ships and boats can dock. Serbia offers ideal conditions for the development of this type of tourism. It abounds in rich natural and anthropogenic values on the shore itself, whose quality could

be compared with other places on the Danube abroad, which are much better utilized. However, our tourist offer is not such that it could be competitive with offers of other Danubian countries.

If we want the tourist traffic on the Danube to be at an enviable level, it is necessary that every local tourist organization, primarily the state and the Tourist Organization of Serbia, comprehend the importance and significance of the Danube. It is necessary to train and educate personnel in tourism, especially in tourism organizations. One of the problems of insufficient development of this tourism type is the lack of awareness among people about the potentials of the Danube. Also, foreign tourists are not versed in the possibilities of visiting our part of the Danube. Serbia needs to present its product at nautical tourism fairs abroad, to promote the Danube in Serbia, to organize events on the Danube, and to devise suitable routes. In order to have a positive influence of nautical tourism on the economy, it is necessary to segment the market, in other words to choose the clients that will achieve the highest consumption. For the development of nautical tourism in Serbian part of the Danube, it is necessary to allocate not only more financial resources, but also will, knowledge, experience and persistence. This is all possible with the help of other international organizations dealing with this kind of help.

### Bibliography

- Crouch G.I. (2007): *Modeling destination competitiveness: A Survey and Analysis of the Impact of Competitiveness Attributes*, Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism, Gold Coast, Queensland, Retrieved on May, 14<sup>th</sup> 2011 from [www.crctourism.com.au/WMS/Upload/Resources/bookshop/Crouch\\_modelDestnComp-v2.pdf](http://www.crctourism.com.au/WMS/Upload/Resources/bookshop/Crouch_modelDestnComp-v2.pdf).
- Crouch, G. I., Ritchie, J. R. B. (1995): *Destination competitiveness and the role of tourism enterprise, Working paper*, The University of Calgary, Calgary.
- Davidson R. (2009): *EIBTM 2009 Industry Trends and Market Share Report*, Reed Travel exhibitions, retrieved on September 21<sup>st</sup> 2011 from [www.iccaworld.com/dbs/eibtm/files/3464\\_eibtm\\_industry\\_report\\_print\\_2009\\_v6\\_notrim.pdf](http://www.iccaworld.com/dbs/eibtm/files/3464_eibtm_industry_report_print_2009_v6_notrim.pdf).
- D’Hauteserre, A. (2000): *Lessons in managed destination competitiveness: the case of Foxwoods Casino Resort*, *Tourism Management*, 21 (1), pp. 23-27.
- Hobson, J. 1993 Analysis of the US Cruise Line Industry. *Tourism Management* 14(6):453–462.
- Holloway, C. 2002 *The Business of Tourism*. Harlow:Financial Times-Prentice Hall.
- *Investment Guide to Serbia – Questions and Answers* (2011), Serbia Investment and Export Promotion Agency, Belgrade, Retrieved on October 29<sup>th</sup> 2011 from [www.siepa.gov.rs/files/pdf2010/ENG\\_Brochure\\_FAQ\\_2010.pdf](http://www.siepa.gov.rs/files/pdf2010/ENG_Brochure_FAQ_2010.pdf).
- *Investor’s Profile Serbia, 2011*, Serbia Investment and Export Promotion Agency, Belgrade.
- *Progress and Priorities 2009-10*, World Travel & Tourism Council, London, 2011.
- *Statistical Yearbooks of the Republic of Serbia 2000-2011*.

- Štetić S. Šimičević D. and Nicić M., 2009. *Management of tourist destination*, SGD, Belgrade.
- Štetić S., 2002. New tendencies of world tourism trends, *Contemporary trends in tourism*, Novi Sad.
- Štetić S., 2003. Strategy development and marketing of tourist destinations in Serbia, *Contemporary trends in tourism*, Novi Sad.
- Štetić S., 2007. *Specific Forms of Tourism*, LI, Belgrade.
- *Tourism Development Strategy of Belgrade*, (2008), Institute of Economic Sciences, Belgrade, Retrieved on February 10<sup>th</sup> 2011.
- Vengesai S. (2003): *A conceptual model of tourism destination competitiveness and attractiveness*, ANZMAC Conference Proceedings, Adelaide, 637-647.
- Zečević R.(2009): *International relations and tourism*, Author, Belgrade.
- UNWTO (2011) *Tourism Market Trends: Europe 2010 Edition*; World Tourism Organization: Madrid.



Risto Prentović<sup>1</sup>  
Vidoje Golubović<sup>2</sup>  
Milutin Kovačević<sup>3</sup>

## CORRELATION BETWEEN HUNTING AND CULTURAL TOURISM IN BAČKA UPPER DANUBE BASIN

### ABSTRACT

The area of the Upper Danube Basin (Bačka region) represents one of the most denotative hunting tourism destinations in our country and in the surrounding area. Moreover, this area is rich in various cultural amenities. Hunting tourism clientele in this area, since being highly solvent, is dedicated to collecting expensive hunting trophies. As hunting tourism practice tells us, a significant number of hunters and members of their families are keen on visiting cultural landmarks during their stay in hunting tourism destination. This paper represents an overview of possibilities for making correlations between hunting and cultural tourism in the Bačka Upper Danube Basin.

*Key words:* hunting tourism, cultural tourism, correlation, Bačka Upper Danube Basin.

### Introduction

Bačka Upper Danube Basin is the area that encompasses the territories of the municipalities of Sombor and Apatin and that symbolizes one of the comprehensive tourism destinations in Vojvodina, which is the most prestigious destination in both Serbia and former Yugoslavia.<sup>4</sup> This area with all its pedological, hydrographical and climatologic features, forests, marshes, bogs, fields and specific ecological characteristics represents a unique entity whose natural impeccability and biological diversity are potentially endangered. That is why Serbian Government, almost three

---

<sup>1</sup> Risto Prentović, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Science, Novi Sad, e-mail: risto.prentovic@dgt.uns.ac.rs.

<sup>2</sup> Vidoje Golubović, Ph.D., Institute for International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, e-mail: dr\_vgolubovic@yahoo.com.

<sup>3</sup> Milutin Kovačević, Research Assistant, Faculty of Science, Novi Sad, e-mail: milutin.kovacevic@dgt.uns.ac.rs.

<sup>4</sup> Risto Prentović and Vladimir Markovic, *Hunting tourism image of Vojvodina*: "Improvement of tourism as a factor in the development of the Serbian economy, (thematic collection of papers), Institute for International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, 2010.

decades ago, proclaimed and constituted in the part of this area a protected natural asset named Special Nature Reserve “Upper Danube Basin”.

According to archaeological and other available sources, the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin has evidences of the traces of human colonies, which makes the area rich in important anthropogenic formations. That means that the combination of natural and cultural values in this area favours, if all the relevant standards of the environmental protection are applied, the development of different forms of tourism such as: hunting, fishing, spa, nautical, recreational, eco, ethno, excursion, manifestation and cultural tourism.

The most prestigious hunting destination in our country is located on the territory of Bačka Upper Danube Basin. Hunting tourism clientele in this area, since being highly solvent, is dedicated to collecting expensive hunting trophies. Our researches show that a significant number of hunters and members of their families are keen on visiting cultural and spiritual landmarks during their stay in hunting tourism destination. A large number of hunters are accompanied by members of their family or some other type of entourage. Those accompanying persons most usually do not take part in hunting activities but require a range of additional services and activities. Apart from sports and recreational activities, these could be as well activities connected with cultural tourism. Which contents and activities are going to be offered depends on the conditions and resources in the specific tourism destination.

A modest pretension of this paper is an attempt to segment characteristic elements of hunting and cultural tourism in the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin.

## **2. Tourism and Geographical Position of Upper Danube Basin**

The area of Upper Danube Basin is situated in the peripheral north-western part of Vojvodina. It borders Hungary in the north, Croatia in the west, territory of the municipality of Odžaci in the south, territory of the municipality of Subotica in the northwest, territory of the municipality of Bačka Topola in the east, and territory of the municipality of Kula in the southeast. The left bank of the River Danube (from 1367 km to 1433 km) makes a natural border towards Croatia and allows the existence of a number of meanders, oxbow lakes, channels, marshes, bogs, as well as water, swamp, meadow and forest ecosystems that emerged as the result of the influence of this big European river that represents one of the most significant water ways in Europe.

Communication link of Upper Danube Basin is reflected in the fact that its area is in direct contact with the Danube and confluence by the channels of Danube-Tisza-Danube system. Sombor-Kula-Novi Sad and Sombor-Subotica travel ways connect this area with Corridor X. These travel ways connect Upper Danube Basin with E-75 high-way that is the integral part of Corridor X. Moreover, this destination is connected with international road E-70 (Budapest-Subotica-Novi Sad-Belgrade) that passes through Vojvodina in the length of 85 km and joins E-75 high-way at

Belgrade. Regional road Bačka Palanka-Odžaci-Sombor-Bački Breg, connects Upper Danube Basin (directly or indirectly with other traffic roads) to other big settlements in Bačka. Smaller roads between different settlements in the area make Upper Danube Basin easily accessible from Bogojevo in the southwest to Bački Breg in the north as well as from the very west to the very east points. Important communication advantages of Upper Danube Basin are the following: Bački Breg-Herecsanto, Bezdan-Batina and Bogojevo-Erdut as well as the port in Apatin with its new and improved marina that represents the base for the development of all forms of tourism (especially nautical tourism).

The only limiting factor for the optimisation of communication in the area of Upper Danube Basin is a relative distance of 150 km to the nearest airport (“Nikola Tesla”).

### **3. Natural and Geographic Characteristics of Upper Danube Basin**

Natural and geographic conditions in Upper Danube Basin<sup>5</sup> are based upon geomorphologic and geologic conditions, climatic conditions, hydrological characteristics, soil, flora and fauna.

#### **3.1 Geomorphologic and geologic conditions**

The terrain of Upper Danube Basin stretches across: loess plateaus, loess terraces, and alluvial plains. The altitude ranges between 80 m and 100 m.

*Loess plateaus* represent the highest orographic lifts in this area. It belongs to the municipality of Sombor and covers around one third of its territory. Its surface is “characterised by inter-ravine depressions, valleys and dales, as its most prominent forms”.<sup>6</sup> Several big flood areas with few settlements are located in the places where dales meet loess terrace.

*Loess terrace* is a lower geomorphologic formation, which in fragments can be seen in the part between Bezdan and Bački Monoštor and in some parts between Prigrevica and Senta. It covers a small part of Upper Danube Basin. Its surface is not perfectly smoothed. Its geological composition is rich in dry, marsh and deposited loess of diluvium age while the surface is rich in sand hills and arched cavities which are thought to be of fluvial origin.

*Alluvial plain* of the Danube is the lowest geomorphologic formation in this area and it represents low, wet and flooding surfaces. Gentle and sheer slopes divide it

---

<sup>5</sup> More detailed about this issue in: Branislav Bukurov, *Physical and geographical problems of Bačka*, special edition of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Department of Sciences, book 43. Београд, 1975.

<sup>6</sup> Ljupče Miljković, “Geomorphological conditions“, in: Jovan Ćuričić (editor) *the Municipality of Sombor*, Faculty of Sciences, Institute of Geography, Novi Sad, p. 7.

from loess terraces. Geological composition of alluvial plain is rich in deposited loess and sand. Old river basins and side hills are the main morphological characteristics of alluvial terrace.

A special and the smallest part in the area of Upper Danube Basin is the southwestern part of Subotica Sands that is characterised by fluvial-aeolian plain relief.

### 3.2. Climatic conditions

The climate in the Bačka Upper Danube Basin is of humid-continental character. Climate is determined by various elements: position in mild climatic belt, location along the banks of the Danube, geological surface and vegetation. Lower mean temperatures in July and higher mean temperatures in January are characteristic for this area (air temperature oscillations are lower than in other parts of Vojvodina). Average air temperatures vary between  $-1.6^{\circ}\text{C}$  in January to  $21.1^{\circ}\text{C}$  in July. Mean temperature in vegetation period is about  $18^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Mean annual insolation is about 2010 hours. Most frequent are winds that blow from the north and north-west while the strongest are those which blow from south and south-west. About 600 mm of atmospheric deposition reach surface on the territory of Upper Danube Basin. The greatest precipitations are during summer period while springs record the lowest precipitation activities.

### 3.3. Hydrography

The area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin is characterized by numerous shallow subterranean waters and a large number of various hydrological objects. The Danube is the main water accumulation in this area. Most of all hydrological and biogeographical phenomena in this area are in direct correlation with the changes of the water level of this big river. Floods and high water level are of great significance for plant and animal world in this area. These hydrological activities occur most often in the vegetation period and they represent a limiting factor for the existence and renovation of plant cover. For animals that inhabit the area, they can be catastrophic. The regime of the Danube water is one of the most important factors for plant and animal world survival in this area because frequent water oscillations change the conditions of the ecosystem from favourable to very unfavourable.

Apart from the Danube, other important hydrological objects are Plalovič or Kidoš, Greta Bačka Channel, Channel Bezdán-Prigrevica and other numerous river arms, lakes and marshes.

### 3.4. Soil composition

The soil in the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin is made of chernozem, alluvial soil, meadow chernozem, marsh chernozem, gley soil, and types of saline soil. It consists of two distinctive systematic units:

- Automorphic soil – soils exposed to atmospheric precipitation (chernozem) and
- Hydromorphic soil – soils exposed to the influence of floods and subterranean waters (meadow chernozem, marsh chernozem).
- Two different types of soils are dominant in the region:
- Class of deposited soil (alluvial soils in lower areas) and
- Class of saline soil which is present in depressions that are exposed to lionizationon.

### 3.5. Biogeographical characteristics<sup>7</sup>

All the above mentioned natural and geographic conditions allow the area of Upper Danube Basin to be the home to the diversity of plant and animal species (52 plant communities with 156 sintasomatic units). Dominant are Skunk Cabbage communities (38 communities or 74.5%), while forest and bush communities count much less (13 or 25.5%). This area is also famous for its rich fauna (about 1,000 animal species).

Natural and geographic conditions of Bačka Upper Danube Basin represent favourable conditions for the existence of a large number of animal species: entomofauna, fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. For the aspect of hunting tourism especially important are as follows:

- Ornithofauna with approximately 280 species (or 80% of the entire bird fauna in Serbia)<sup>8</sup> and
- Mammals with almost 30 species categorized within 5 genera and 11 families.<sup>9</sup>

### 3.6. Special Nature Reserve “Bačka Upper Danube Basin” – protected area as a respectable tourist attraction

A part of the territory of Bačka Upper Danube Basin is located along the left side of the Danube and covers an area of 19,605 ha. It includes “numerous meanders, oxbow lakes, channels, marshes, bogs, as well as water, swamp, meadow and forest

---

<sup>7</sup> These issues are explained in more details in: Jadranka Delić, *Tourism valorisation of hunting area in Special Nature Reserve “Upper Danube Basin“*, Faculty of Sciences, Novi Sad, 2010. Vladimir Stojanović, *Special Nature Reserve “Upper Danube Basin“*, Faculty of Sciences, Novi Sad, 2002, pp. 38-41; Pavle Bugarčić “Flora and Fauna“ in Živan Bogdanović (editor) *“The Municipality of Apatin“*, Faculty of Sciences, Institute of Geography, Novi Sad, 1994, pp. 68-76; Ljupče Miljković *“Plant and Animal World“* in: Jovan Ćuričić (editor) *the Municipality of Sombor*, Faculty of Sciences, Institute of Geography, Novi Sad, 1996, pp. 55-56.

<sup>8</sup> Types of birds interesting from the aspect of tourism: pheasant, wild ducks, wild goose, quail, turtle dove, collared dove, partridge and woodcock.

<sup>9</sup> Types of mammals interesting from the aspect of tourism: Red deer, wild boar, roe deer, fox, jackal, marten and rabbit.

ecosystems that emerged as the result of the influence of this big European river”.<sup>10</sup> Due to the apparent risks for potential degradation and according to the regulation passed by the Government of Serbia (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 45/2001), this area was proclaimed to be a protected natural asset. It is the only bigger complex of bog forests in the upper stream of the Danube in Serbia, which makes this area “rich in forest elements (48.8%) and poor in farmable surfaces (7.7%)”.<sup>11</sup>

According to the present Law on the Environmental Protection (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 36/09), special nature reserves belong to protected areas that are identified by zones and where four different regimes and three levels of protection are applied:

1. Ia – the highest level of protection,
2. Ib – high level of protection with the possibility of population management,
3. II – active protection with the possibility of population management,
4. III – active protection with the possibility of sustainable usage.

According to the regulations of the mention law, hunting tourism activities in accordance with the principles of sustainable development are allowed in the zones of the II and III level of protection.

The importance of this natural asset can be seen in the fact that it represents:

- IBA area – in the registry of international important bird area;
- IPA area – important botanical area in Serbia;
- Ramsar area – on the list of international important wetlands since 2008;
- Future national reserve of biosphere;
- In 1998, it was included with its 11,506 ha into the project UNESCO EURONATUR for the proclamation of biosphere reserve “Drava-Mura”, which includes natural resources along the two rivers (part of Danube) within the five riparian countries.

## **4. Social and Geographic Conditions in Upper Danube Basin**

### **4.1 Historical development<sup>12</sup>**

According to archaeological findings, the oldest traces of human colonies on the area of today’s Sombor date back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium B.C. (Bronze Age).

---

<sup>10</sup> Vladimir Stojanović, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup> Vladimir Stojanović, p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> Historical development of this area is discussed in numerous scientific papers. A thorough overview of this subject is provided by the following authors: Milan Stepanović, “History and Development“, in: Jovan Plavša (editor), *Sombor on the Palm of Your Hand*, Faculty of Sciences, Department of Geography, Tourism and hotel Industry, Novi Sad, 2006, pp. 18-35, and Milan Bukvić, *Apatin Through Centuries*, Cultural and Educational Community, Apatin, 1969.

Sarmatians, Celts, Goths and other nations inhabited during the course of history the area of present Apatin and Bačka Upper Danube Basin. This area experienced vast migration of Nomad Barbarian tribes at the turn of the Iron Age (at the beginning of the first millennium B.C.). Influenced by local population, majority of them abandoned their barbarian habits and stayed permanently in the area.

Romans enter this area in the 1<sup>st</sup> century after other great conquests. As Bukvić emphasises, the settlement on the place of present Apatin was transformed into military ditch and had an important role in the defence of province of Pannonia. Huns entered the area of present Bačka in the 4<sup>th</sup> century while Slavic peoples came there in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Hungarians, who established their own state in the area of Pannonian plain, came to the area at the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Despite the above mentioned, Slavic peoples were in majority in the area of Bačka and Upper Danube Basin.

According to Bukvić, Apatin is mentioned in written documents for the first time in 1011. It was conquered by the Turks in 1541 where under it for the following 140 years. According to Stepanović, Sombor was known as Szent Mihalj. The oldest written documents testifying this date back to the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Sombor was just like Apatin conquered by the Turks in 1541. It remained under Turkish governance until 1687. Part of refugees from the Great Serb Migration under the Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević inhabits this area in 1690 (Sombor, Apatin and Prigrevica).

Organised migrations of German population started in 1748 when Apatin became the transit centre for final settling of the population of colonists in the area of present Vojvodina. The Empress Maria Theresa signed in 1749 Liberation Charter, which allowed Sombor to become a free royal city, which provided their citizens with more important political, legal, economic and educational independence. That caused rapid development of Sombor and its surrounding area in the years to come. Sombor then became economic, educational and administrative seat of Bačka.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, Sombor developed into an educational and cultural centre.<sup>14</sup>

Due to its significant role in the mentioned colonization, Apatin received economic and political support by Austrian-Hungarian authorities. This allowed also Apatin to experience rapid development, which resulted in Apatin being proclaimed a city and market centre with special status in 1760. Apatin and its surrounding area experienced vast economic development after the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Dominant activities were trade and commerce, crafts, ship building, and beer production (breweries).

---

<sup>13</sup> Sombor became the seat of Bačka-Bsaroška County in 1786.

<sup>14</sup> First educational institutions were established in Sombor in that period: Four-year and Higher Grammar School, Latin School “Narma“ (before the famous Pregarandija, which was later transformed into Teacher Training School and Faculty of Education) etc.

Further development of the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin has been rather uneven since it has been interrupted by numerous administrative changes,<sup>15</sup> changes in social organisation and wars. Severe devastation of economic and social occurrences in this area happened after the break of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, since when the process of political and economic transition has been still in progress (two decades). Due to its location and in the context of the Danube Strategy, this area has significant chances for future economic, social and cultural revival.

#### 4.2 Population and settlements

According to the last census that was conducted in 2011, this area is the home to 114.223 people which include more than 20 different ethnic groups (Serbs, Croats, Bunjevci, Šokci etc.). Most of them (over 50%) are Orthodox Christian and Catholics (approximately 30%). The main demographic characteristics of the population that inhabits the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin are negative natural increase, rather unfavourable age structure with average age of more than 40 years, larger number of households with less than three members and larger number of households with no young members.

Apart from the municipality centres, Sombor and Apatin, there are 70 different settlements identified in the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin. Just as any other typical settlement in Vojvodina, most of them were built following the pattern of rectangular or squared base with grid structure. However, some of them differ due to relief, hydrography and vegetation specifics.

Residential, administrative, sacral, cultural, artistic, and other objects in these areas are distinguished by various architectural styles, from famous Byzantine, Baroque, Secession, old rural architecture to thatched houses that can be seen (in a small number) even today in the villages in this area.

#### 4.3 Economy

Contemporary economic activities in the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin are agriculture (crop husbandry, cattle farming, fruit and wine growing), food industry and ship building. A bit less developed are tourism (dominant are hunting and spa tourism), trade and commerce, crafts, transport services, etc. Dominant economic activities in the area of Special Nature Reserve “Upper Danube Basin” are forestry,

---

<sup>15</sup> Since then, when (until 1918) was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, this area was composed of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later Kingdom of Yugoslavia), (1941 in Securities of Hungary (1941-1944. years), communist and socialist Yugoslavia – until 1992, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro – until 2006, when Serbia was part of the autonomous province of Vojvodina.



fishing and hunting. Forests and hunting grounds in this area are managed by Public Company “Vojvodinašume”. Two hunting grounds outside the area of protected natural assert are managed by hunting associations, which are both members of Hunting Association of Vojvodina.

## 5. Possibilities for the Correlation Between Hunting and Cultural Tourism

All the above presented communication, economic, social and geographic conditions in Bačka Upper Danube Basin tell us that there are apparent possibilities for the development of numerous forms of tourism, especially hunting and cultural tourism. This presumption implies certain unknown issues that can be formed as one question: Is it possible to achieve correlation between hunting and cultural tourism in the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin? In order to find the answer, it is necessary to present all the relevant potentials from the side of both the hunting and cultural tourism and study all possible correlations.

### 5.1. Potentials of hunting tourism

Hunting tourism symbolises movement and active stay of hunters-tourists in specific ambience – hunting ground as a healthy natural environment used for the purposes of game hunting, which makes them satisfy their primary motif (hobby activity or even passion for some hunters). Apart from fees for shot game (trophies, meat, fur, etc.), accommodation and food, they also have to pay for other accompanying services according to valid price lists.<sup>16</sup>

The area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin represents the most prestigious hunting-tourism destination in Vojvodina and in wider Serbia. Hunting has been present in these areas since the first human colonies. The beginning of organised and legally regulated hunting dates back to the beginning of 1890s, when State Hunting Association (1881) was established and Law on Hunting (1883) was passed.<sup>17</sup> This period is the beginning of the intensive growing of game (deer especially) and development of hunting activities. This area is, well-known for quality and trophy game. For example, a deer graded with 248.55 CIC<sup>18</sup> points was shot in hunting

---

<sup>16</sup> Risto Prentović, *Ethics of Hunting Tourism*, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry, Novi Sad, 2008, p. 15.

<sup>17</sup> Discussed in more details in: Risto Prentović, *Hunting Tourism*, chapter: “Emergence and Development of Hunting Tourism“, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry, Novi Sad, 2005, pp. 7-19.

<sup>18</sup> CIC (Conseil Internacionalde la Chase = International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation. This organisation determined the methodology and formulae for game trophy grading that are applied in all member countries.

ground “Kozara” in Bački Monoštor in 1946. This deer held the world record until 1968 and shared the first place until 1970 in this class of trophies.

Beginnings of hunting tourism in our country are just associated with hunting grounds in Bačka Upper Danube Basin. As it was written in the article published in the magazine “Lovac”, No. 5 from 1952, hunting grounds in Apatin and Bezdán (now the part of Special Nature Reserve “Upper Danube Basin”) were visited by nine hunters from Switzerland who shot 11 deer (two silver medals and nine bronze medals). The organisation of these hunting activities and the game shot were charged a total of 11,400 dinars. This event was the beginning of intensive development of hunting tourism, which reached its peak just before the break of the former Yugoslavia (1990).

Rapid decline in hunting and tourism activities happened in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was the result of war surrounding, economic sanctions and overall break of economic system in the country. A slow revival of hunting tourism in this area (and in the whole Serbia) began in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Despite many positive trends, it has not yet achieved the level of development it had in the “golden period” of hunting tourism (period between 1980 until 1990). Yet, hunting-tourism destination of Bačka Upper Danube Basin represents today the most perspective hunting area in Vojvodina and it can be compared to the most prestigious hunting-tourism destinations in the surrounding and wider area. Hunting areas of Bačka Upper Danube Basin consist of four different hunting grounds:

1) *“Kozara” Bački Monoštor*

Hunting ground “Kozara” is located in the area between the present stream of the Danube and its old arms. It covers the area between 1,407 km to 1,432 km of the Danube stream. Vegetation present in the hunting ground is the following: aquatic plants, marsh vegetation, meadow and pasture plant communities and forest communities (communities of bog, soft and hard forests). Deer, wild boar and roe deer are offered to hunting-tourists. Accommodation is in a comfortable hunting house “Štrbac”. Other hunting services are individual or group hunting, hunting with the use of tandem etc. Hunting ground is fenced and its area is 11,764 ha. Hunting ground is managed by the Forest Household “Sombor” that is the integral part of the Public Company “Vojvodinašume”.

2) *“Apatinski rit”, Apatin*

Just like “Kozara” hunting ground, hunting ground “Apatinski rit” is located along the left bank of the Danube and covers the area between 1,367 km to 1,400 km of the Danube stream. Vegetation present in the hunting ground is the following: aquatic plants, marsh vegetation, meadow and pasture plant communities and forest communities. Deer, wild boar and roe deer are offered to hunting-tourists. Accommodation is in a comfortable hunting house “Mesarske livade”. Accompanying services are the same as

in the hunting ground “Kozara”. Hunting ground is fenced and its area is 6,579 ha. Hunting ground is managed by the same body as the hunting ground “Kozara”.

### 3) *Hunting ground “Zapadna Bačka”, Sombor*

Hunting ground “Zapadna Bačka” is located on the territory of the municipality of Sombor, outside the inhabited places and area that belongs to Special Nature Reserve “Upper Danube Basin”. Vegetations present in the hunting ground are mainly crop cultures, meadow plants etc. Tourist offer resembles the offer in two previously mentioned hunting grounds: roe deer, rabbit, pheasant, partridge, quail, collared dove, turtle dove and common wood pigeon. Accommodation is in the Hotel “Internacion” in Sombor or in rural private households that are near this hunting ground. Apart from individual deer game hunting, the ground offers all standard ways of small game hunting. The hunting ground is not fenced and its total area is 112,781 ha. It is managed by the Hunting Association “Zapadna Bačka” from Sombor.

### 4) *Hunting ground “Kruškovac”, Apatin*

Hunting ground “Kruškovac” is located on the territory of the municipality of Sombor, outside the inhabited places and area that belongs to Special Nature Reserve “Upper Danube Basin”. Vegetations present in the hunting ground are mainly crop cultures, and grass, bushes and small forests. Tourist offer is similar like the one in the hunting ground “Zapadna Bačka” with addition of wild duck. Accommodation is possible in the receptive object in Spa Junaković in the boarding house of the “Palas” object in Apatin and in rural private households within the hunting ground. Hunting offer is the same as in hunting ground “Zapadna Bačka” from Sombor. The hunting ground is not fenced and its total area is 28,812 ha and is managed by the Hunting Association “Kurjačica” from Apatin.

Characteristic for hunting and tourist destination of Bačka Upper Danube Basin is that it is rich in various types of attractive game and predators such as foxes and jackals that can as well be interesting types of game. Good game offer, well-developed communication conditions and accommodation capacities enable the satisfaction of requirements of different categories of hunters.

## 5.2. Potentials of cultural tourism

There are many available definitions of cultural tourism in the available literature. In order to precisely define and understand the concept of cultural tourism, we shall start from the definition of terms of “culture”<sup>19</sup> and goods of cultural heritage

---

<sup>19</sup> Culture in a broader sense is “...communication of creative activities of individuals and communities in past and present. The creative activities have forms through centuries system of values and tastes – factors that identify the uniqueness of every individual...”

provided by UNESCO: “archaeological findings, goods with monumental and artistic features, spatial cultural and historical entities, significant places and memorial sites, folklore heritage, manifestation values, cultural institutions and their activities, cultural landscapes and cultural routes, underwater cultural heritage, documentation and digital heritage, beliefs, music, songs and literature”.<sup>20</sup> These assets represent important tourist attractions and motif for tourist movement in the relevant destinations that enables acquirement of a desired cultural event. In that context, Richards’s definition of cultural tourism seems rather appropriate: “Cultural tourism denotes movement of people who seek satisfaction of their cultural needs. That movement is caused by cultural attractions outside their usual place of residence and that is aimed at gathering new experiences and knowledge”.<sup>21</sup>

Taking into consideration social and historical values of the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin, it is evident that this area is rich in different assets of cultural heritage, which represent tourist attractions and movement potentials. Starting from physical, artistic and historical features, and taking into consideration possibilities of tourist valorisation, assets of cultural heritage in this area can be classified into several groups: 1. archaeological sites, 2. monuments and works of art, 3. spatial historical and cultural entities, 4. important places, 5. folklore heritage (achievements of ethno and spiritual creation, 6. cultural manifestations, and 7. cultural institutions.

### *Archaeological sites*

The oldest archaeological traces on the territory of the city of Sombor<sup>22</sup> date back to the second millennium B.C. and contain house bases, fireplaces, and pits with ceramic material and bronze tools in them. Sarmatian necropolis with the remains of jewellery, ceramic utensils, iron knives, silver fibula form the Roman type, which were found on several different localities in this area, date back to the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Archaeological findings that testify about the existence of Eastern Gothic and Slavic people (5<sup>th</sup> century), Avars (from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> century), and Hungarians (10<sup>th</sup> century) were found in the area of today’s Sombor. Unlike the area of the municipality of Sombor, the municipality of Apatin has no significant archaeological findings. The reason for that lies probably in catastrophic floods that occurred at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and that ruined the centre of Apatin “together with all object and half of the cemetery”.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Olga Hadžić et al., *Cultural Tourism*, Faculty of Natural Sciences – Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry, Novi Sad, 2005, pp. 8-9.

<sup>21</sup> According to: *Ibid*, p. 21.

<sup>22</sup> Milan Stepanović, “Historical Development” in: *Sombor on the Palm of Your Hand*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>23</sup> Milan Bukvić, *Apatin Through Centuries*, p. 6.

### *Monuments and works of art*

The most important monuments and works of art on the territory of Sombor are the following *works of architecture*.<sup>24</sup>

- *City Hall* – built in Neo-classicist style and proclaimed a cultural asset of great importance. The most important events in the history of Sombor occurred in this building. Numerous important cultural manifestations are held nowadays in the building.
- *County House* – built in Eclecticism style and as well proclaimed a cultural asset of great importance. Apart from many other works of art, the most important painting is “Battle at Senta” painted by Ferenc Ajzenhut. Today, this building is the seat of Sombor City Authority.
- Administrative building of *the City Library* “Karlo Bjelicki” – built in Neo-classicist style with elements of Eclecticism, suitable for various cultural events
- Building of *National Theatre* – built in Classicist style but thanks to many alternations, it has today certain Eclectics elements. It is a cultural asset of great importance with especially significant interior (painted ceiling, revolving stage, etc.)
- The building of *Preparandija* is bestowal of patriarch Georgije Branković, built in 1895. It is a very interesting building from the architectural point of view with its circular base, first floor characterised by Ionic columns between windows decorated with Baroque ornamental elements, mouldings above windows, and stylobates with decorative embroidery. This part of the building is covered with hemispherical dome.
- *Kronić Palace* – built in Eclecticism style and it represents one of the most beautiful buildings in Sombor with its rich decoration and ornaments. It belonged to family Kronić and was built at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- *Sacral objects*: Temple of St. George the Martyr, Church of St. John the Baptist, Roman Catholic administrative offices with the Church of St. Holy Trinity, Chapel of St. Ivan, Church of St. Stephen, Monastery of St. Stephen the Protomartyr and large number of sacral objects in other settlements.

The most important monuments and works of art on the territory of Apatin<sup>25</sup> are:

- *City Hall*, the Art Nouveau style – the seat of the municipal administration. This building was built in the period from 1907 to the 1909th
- Building of *the local elementary school and music school*. It was built by architects Ferenc Rajhl and Đula Partoš

---

<sup>24</sup> Overview of this and other cultural values is provided in: Pavle Vasić, *Artistic Topography of Sombor*, Matica Srpska, Novi Sad, 1984; Milan Stepanović, Old City Centre in: Lazar Lazić, “*Sombor on the Palm of Your Hand*”, pp. 42-137 and Marina Đurić, *Cultural Amenities in Sombor*, final bachelor paper, Faculty of Sciences – Institute of Geography, Novi Sad, 2001, pp. 18-42.

<sup>25</sup> Display of this group and other cultural goods is given in: Boris Masić, Apatin area, Tourist Organization of “Apatin”, Apatin.

- *Churches* are the oldest and most representative buildings in Apatin in settlements of this municipality. Especially important are the following: Church of Assumption of Mary (built in so-called style of “Pannonian Baroque”) with beautiful Baroque interior and famous Lady of Apatin, late Baroque Church of St. Anne in Kupusina and St. Lawrence in Sonta, Church of St. Stephen in Svilojevo built in Neo-Gothic style, Church of Sacred Heart built in Neo-Roman style, the Assembly of St. Apostles built in Byzantine style, Synagogue and other sacral objects such as Špajzer Mausoleum and Fernbah Chapel.

### *Spatial cultural and historical entities*<sup>26</sup>

Major cultural assets belonging to this category on the territories of the municipalities of Sombor and Apatin are:

- *Old city centre of Sombor* with objects of great architectural value and cultural and historical importance – under the protection of the Provincial Secretariat for the Protection of Cultural Monuments
- *Main street in Apatin* with chestnut alleys
- *Houses of important people*: writers Laza Kostić and Veljko Petrović and painter Milan Konjović in Sombor and pianist and composer Pol Abraham, painter Anton Kuman, writer Ervin Šinko in Apatin.

### *Important places*

This group includes the following sites in Sombor: Partisan and Red Army memorial cemetery dedicated to the killed in Batinska battle at the end of 1944, monuments of Laza Kostić and Veljko Petrović, monument in “Park Heroja” in the centre of the city, and busts (in front of the Faculty of Education) of famous pupils of Sombor Teacher Training School: Dušan Vukasović, Žarko Zrenjanin and Veljko Dugošević, all made by our renowned sculptor Jovan Soldatović.

Analogue cultural assets in Apatin are Statue of Goddess Nike, work of sculptor Dragan Radenović, memorial at Lavač, which was the home to writer Miodrag Borisavljević, and sculpture of grey heron Anja – symbol of Upper Danube Basin, work of sculptor Nikola Simijanović.

### *Folklore heritage*

Folklore heritage implies folk art as part of traditional material and spiritual culture. Especially interesting from the aspect of folklore heritage in this area are

---

<sup>26</sup> These cultural assets on the territory of Bačka Upper Danube Basin are presented with sources in footnotes 23 and 24.

costumes, music, dance, and straw painting and modelling. True examples of folklore heritage are provided by: Cultural and Artistic Association “Vladimir Nazor” from Sombor, Cultural and Artistic Association “Dunav” from Apatin and similar associations from the majority of settlements. This group also includes traditional national manifestations such as “Dužijanica” (harvest festivities of Bunejvci and Šokci) and “Kupusina Wedding Manifestation”, as well as National Creativity Association of Needlewomen “Zlatne ruke” from Apatin, etc.

### *Cultural manifestations*

The most important cultural manifestations in Sombor are:

- *Sombor Music Evenings* – the most important music manifestation in the town that is held at least once a year (in spring)
- *Concerts of mixed youth choirs* “Inventus Cantata”, a member of the European Federation of Youth Choirs performing sacred music from Renaissance to contemporary authors;
- *Theatre marathon* – held in summer (at the end of theatre season). Apart from local Sombor Theatre, other theatre troupes and choirs perform in the manifestation
- *Festival “Interfer”* (International Festival of Reportage) that is held once a year (in September)
- *International Fair of Poultry and Hare Farming* – it has been held since 1977 and it represents a large show of cattle, poultry, as well as of agricultural machinery and tools forms in the country and abroad. Fair is held once a year (at the end of January)

The most important cultural manifestations in the municipality of Apatin are:

- *Children Creativity Days* – manifestation of pre-school children from the kindergarten institutions on the territory of the municipality of Apatin
- *Apatin Fishermen Nights* – entertainment manifestation that is aimed at promoting tourist offer in Apatin
- *Gypsy Night* – cultural and artistic manifestation that is organised by Cultural and Artistic Association “Beli Golub” from Roma settlement in Apatin and Cultural Centre from Apatin and sponsored by the municipality of Apatin.

### *Cultural institutions*

The area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin is the home to several important cultural institutions that symbolise rich cultural and historical heritage of this area and that represent contemporary cultural and educational achievements not just in this area but in whole Vojvodina and Serbia as well. The most significant are: City Museum in

Sombor, Gallery “Milan Konjović”, City Library “Karlo Bjelicki” in Sombor, National Library in Apatin, Cultural Centre “Laza Kostić” from Sombor, Cultural Centre in Apatin, etc.

## 6. Instead of Conclusion

From all the above mentioned, it can be concluded that there are some basic presumptions for achieving relevant correlation between hunting and cultural tourism in the area of Bačka Upper Danube Basin. However, these possibilities have not been exploited yet. The most possible reason for that lies in the stereotype that hunting and culture have no meeting points which is a huge misapprehension because hunting (and especially tourism hunting) symbolises the concept of *sui generis* culture<sup>27</sup>. Moreover, incoherent relationship between authorising bodies is evident: hunters and hunting association on the one side and tourism and cultural organisations on local and regional level on the other side. Even marketing promotions are insufficiently competent, not just in the domain of hunting and cultural tourism but as well in the domain of tourism in general.

Presumption about possible significant positive correlation between hunting and cultural tourism (not just in the area discussed in this paper) should be seriously taken into consideration by all the relevant subjects of tourism economy (tourism organisations, travel agencies, hunting organisations, hunters and other entities that offer hunting and tourism services) in order to achieve full coordination and cooperation and seek realisation and verification in the market. Moreover, as it can be concluded from discussion above, the problem of possible correlation between hunting and cultural tourism, which has been identified in this paper and whose solution is presently only at the level of scientific hypothesis, requires and deserves an empirical scientific approach which can at present be observed as an introduction into an organised research in the future.

## 7. References

- Bukurov Branislav, *Physical and geographical problems of Bačka*, special edition of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Department of Sciences, book 43. Beograd, 1975.
- Bukvić Milan, *Apatin Through Centuries*, cultural and educational communities, Apatin, 1969.
- Vasić Pavle, *Art topography of Sombor*, Matica srpska, Novi Sad, 1984. godina.
- Delić Jadranka, *Tourist valorization of hunting areas in the Special Nature Reserve “Upper Danube”*, Faculty of Science, Novi Sad (MSc thesis), 2010.

---

<sup>27</sup> The issues is discussed in: Risto Prentovic, *Ethics of Hunting Tourism*, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Novi Sad, 2008.



- Djuričić Jovan et al., *The municipality of Sombor*, Faculty of Sciences – Institute of Geography, Novi Sad, 1996.
- Olga Hadžić et al., *Cultural Tourism*, Faculty of Science – Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Novi Sad, 2005.
- Mašić Boris, *Apatin area*, Tourist Organization, Apatin.
- Miljković Ljupče, “Geomorphological conditions“, in: Jovan Čuričić (editor) *the Municipality of Sombor*, Faculty of Sciences, Institute of Geography.
- Prentović Risto, *Hunting Tourism*, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry, Novi Sad, 2005.
- Prentović Risto, *Hunting tourism product*, “Tourism”, no. 9, Novi Sad, 2005.
- Prentović Risto, *Fundamentals of hunting*, Faculty of Science – Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Novi Sad, 2006.
- Prentović Risto, *Hunting ground – a kind of tourist destination*, “Tourism”, no. 10, Novi Sad, 2006.
- Prentović Risto, *Hunting tourism in Vojvodina (Badeker)*, the Tourist Organization of Vojvodina, Novi Sad, 2007.
- Prentović Risto, *Possible model evaluation of hunting ground destination*, “Tourism”, no. 11, Novi Sad, 2007.
- Prentović Risto, *Ethics in hunting tourism*, Faculty of Science – Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Novi Sad, 2008.
- Prentović Risto and Marković Vladimir, *Hunting tourism image of Vojvodina: “Improvement of tourism as a factor in the development of the Serbian economy”*, (thematic collection of papers), Institute for International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, 2010.
- Stepanović Milan: “History and Development”, in: Plavša Jovan (ed.), *Sombor on the Palm of Your Hand*, Faculty of Science – Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Novi Sad, 2006.
- Stojanović Vladimir, *Special Nature Reserve “Upper Danube”*, Faculty of Science, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Industry, 2002.

Željko Bjelajac  
Marijana Dukić Mijatović  
Žaklina Spalević<sup>1</sup>

## THE DANUBE STRATEGY AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE REGION AND THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

### ABSTRACT

The authors of this paper have given retrospective and current view of strategic measures and activities which are of importance for the region and the Republic of Serbia in relation to the economic development, natural resource management, and safety of navigation and environmental protection of the Danube, which flows through our country in the length of 587.4 km. The authors have analyzed the opportunities provided by the Danube Strategy and the modalities through which the EU seeks to form the Danube region and prosperity, provided by such homogenization. The authors have pointed to the necessity of adopting an appropriate strategic and legal framework in the field of water transport in accordance with European standards and practices as well as to the completion of works on fundamental national infrastructure projects, which will provide necessary conditions for smooth and economically prosperous navigation on the Danube in the region.

*Key words:* Danube strategy, economy, safety, environment.

### Introduction

In theory, the strategy represents a method for decisions rendering by means of which the basic postulates are being defined and the perspectives are being created for the

---

<sup>1</sup> Željko Bjelajac, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, University Business Academy Novi Sad, advdrzb@eunet.rs.

Marijana Dukić-Mijatović, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law, University Business Academy Novi Sad, marijana.dukic.mijatovic@gmail.com.

Žaklina Spalević, Assistant, Faculty of Law, University Business Academy Novi Sad, zaklinaspalevic@gmail.com.

purpose of systematic solving of interrelated social – economic issues not only on the regional level but on the level of each state as well. Current integration processes of European and World markets and great limitations which characterize domestic economic ambient clearly point as for the need of integration of single national strategies with suitable ones on the regional level. Due to the stated reasons, it is necessary to give consideration to all aspects which the Danube strategy offers<sup>2</sup> in the direction of faster economic development, more economical management of natural resources, increased safety of navigation, more quality environmental protection of the river Danube, affirming the rule of law and economy of knowledge, viewed from the macro aspect and from the aspect of its significance for the Republic of Serbia as well.

### **I Danube strategy, genesis of origination, regulation and aims**

An overall strategy of European Union is the Danube strategy and it has been systematized in six unique sub strategies, which regulate improvement in relation to the regions interconnection regarding traffic, energy and information, environmental protection, strengthening of social and economic potentials of the Danube region, rule of law and legal security and economy of knowledge which are being expounded in eleven fields of priority. By means of the first sub-strategy, basic parameters in relation to the establishment of the system of transport and the accompanying infrastructure are being set up.<sup>3</sup> Second sub strategy is based on the solutions which provide safe navigation. Third sub strategy points out the modalities of environmental protection and sustainable usage of natural wealth. By means of the fourth sub strategy economic

---

<sup>2</sup> See: <http://www.dunavskastrategija.rs/srp/strategija/>

<sup>3</sup> “Serbian representatives pointed out a need that this concept should be amended by the following two: rule of law and “*smart Danube*”, in the sense of science significance for realization of Strategy aims, i.e. pointing out of the “economy of knowledge”. A representative of Croatia pointed out that a significant segment should be clearance of mines in the land for farming near the Danube, and afterwards connecting the transportation network from the Danube region with the Adriatic Sea but also a joint activity for the purpose of flood defence. From Slovakia, one could hear agitations that the Strategy should be more oriented towards the transportation issues and safety concerning energy. Intercession for the joint activities for the purpose of protection against flood was supported. Also, it was pointed out how significant cultural cooperation is with a suggestion that “Danube cultural festival” should be held in Bratislava. Serbian Chamber of Commerce presented a thought regarding a cooperation of chambers in the Danube region, based on concrete measures aimed for the increase of competitiveness, commercial growth and development of the countries in the Danube region. It was presented that businessmen support rendering the Strategy, however more important are steps that lead towards its implementation. A participant from Hungary highlighted that the Strategy reposes on “multilevel governance” (*multilevel governance*) i.e. cooperation of numerous participants from different horizontal levels of governance and different social subjects for the purpose of project implementation. That gives to the Strategy an effect of “trust building” – See more Suggestions and conclusions of International Conference *Danube – The strongest connection with European Union – Danube strategy of European Union and contributions of Serbia*, in organization of European movement in Serbia and the office of Friedrich Ebert foundation in Belgrade in cooperation with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce which was held on May 7, 2010 in Belgrade.

development was stressed out and strengthening of regional cooperation and partnership in the region. The fifth strategy affirms legal security and law of right, whereas the sixth one offers all possibilities of the economy of knowledge.

Today, the river Danube is a waterway of EU, especially after 2007 and joining of Romania and Bulgaria to EU. The Danube is one of the Trans European corridors (corridor 7). Via the Rhine River, it is connected by channels with the North Sea and represents a direct water connection between the North and the Black Sea. In the basement of the river Danube 115 million citizens of EU live. The basement of the river Danube encompasses the spatial area of 800 000 km<sup>2</sup>, and the life of about 20 million citizens directly depends from the very river, however the navigation on the Danube represents just one tenth of the scope of navigation that occurs on the Rhine river. By the increase of the navigation capacity in the direction Black Sea – North Sea a third of about 5 billion tons of load might be transferred to this water road.

Out of the foretasted, a significance of the system of safe navigation and development of transportation and the accompanying infrastructure organized by the Danube strategy comes out. In the segment of environmental protection, the accent is placed on application of the Rough Directive of EU within the field of waters, especially by means of cooperation within the scope of activities of ICPDR<sup>4</sup> and the Danube commission.<sup>5</sup> Danube strategy presents a plan of social and economic development, by means of which the borders among the states are becoming loose, protection of the human rights are promoted, rule of law, economy of knowledge and multiculturalism.

Even operationalisation of all sub strategies for the whole Danube basement is significant for EU, bearing in mind a heterogeneous characteristic of this field in economic, ecological and cultural sense, and that it encompasses 14 states, from Germany at the source up to the Ukraine at the mouth of the Danube into the Black Sea, out of which, 8 countries are members of the EU. Due to the very same, the Danube strategy is based on the macro approach of solving disputable issues in the whole Danube region, so, according to the well established modality of joining and development in EU in the form of economic incubators that integrate regions, municipalities, international

---

<sup>4</sup> See: <http://www.icpdr.org/>

<sup>5</sup> The Danube Commission is an international organization established for the needs of implementation of the Convention on navigation on the river Danube, executed in Belgrade on August 18, 1948. The basic aim of the Danube commission is to promote activities by means of which free navigation development is abetted for all vessels that float under the flags of the very countries. Countries – members of the Danube Commission are Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine, and Russia. Since 1954, the office of the Danube Commission is located in Budapest. Official languages are Russian, French and German. Country-members participate in the work of the Danube commission through the expert groups from various fields of interest for navigation, as well as through the main session on the ambassador level. The experts of the Direction for water roads “Plovput” participate in the work of the main session of the Danube commission, as well as the Expert group for hydro technical issues.

organizations, financial institutions and social-economic partners, it was being established in significant segments according to the very same patterns.

Most significant aims of the Danube strategy are improvement of the transportation infrastructure and energy connections, environmental protection and fight against pollution; improvement of economies cooperation and sustainable development and cultural cooperation and tourism, improvement of cooperation within a field of natural disasters prevention as well as strengthening of cooperation in the safety sector.<sup>6</sup>

## **II Presentation of strategic measures and activities of the Republic of Serbia within the scope of the Danube strategy**

Serbia has actively participated in the work regarding the Danube strategy. Viewed in the retrospective sense, the Danube has always had a strategic significance for Serbia and the current Danube strategy as an idea existed two hundred years ago, as a project of constructing of *a waterway Danube – Aegean Sea from 1909*.<sup>7</sup>

However, if we view under the current circumstances the project of the Waterway Danube-Aegean Sea from 1909, geopolitical and economic position of Serbia is significantly different. Serbia is not an EU member and it could not directly participate in the process of adoption of European action program of internal waterways – NAIADES (*Integrated European Action Programme for Inland Waterway Transport*)<sup>8</sup> and defining and activating the platform for its application (PLATINA project).<sup>9</sup>

Parallel presentation and chronological and teleological analysis of the project Waterway Danube-Aegean Sea from 1909 and the Danube strategy from 2011 empirically underline market theories and rules of Adam Smith: “When the market is

---

<sup>6</sup> See: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperation/baltic/pdf/macroregional\\_strategies\\_2009.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/baltic/pdf/macroregional_strategies_2009.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> By constructing of the waterway from the north to the south of Europe, river and river sea traffic would be directed through the Morava River. Constructing of such a channel is a very intricate and huge project, which would include anti-erosive and hydro melioration works in the basement of the river Morava. By constructing a hydro melioration systems from the highest mountain green fields up to the lower landscapes by means of agro technical works, agricultural production in the basement of river Morava would be improved. Also, Požarevac, Velika Plana, Svilajnac, Svetozarevo, Čuprija, Paraćin, Niš, Leskovac, Vladičin Han, Vranje and Bujanovac would become harbour cities with river – sea connections with the world. Little artificial accumulations as being integral hydro – constructional facilities, with the channel system for irrigation would represent a base for water management on the whole catchment area and waterway with a possibility of constructing little hydroelectric power plants. By means of this project, regulation of Morava And Vardar river was planned, with constructing a connection channel by means of which a waterway to Thessaloniki would open having an overall length of 612 km, by which the distance (former and current) through the Black Sea up to the Mediterranean region would shorten for around 1.200 km, that is for three days of driving – See more: Veljković N, Danube strategy – old idea for a new century, [www.sepa.gov.rs/download/odrziviRazvoj/Dunav.pdf](http://www.sepa.gov.rs/download/odrziviRazvoj/Dunav.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> See: [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/inland/promotion/naiades\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/inland/promotion/naiades_en.htm).

<sup>9</sup> More on Platina project see <http://www.naiades.info/platina/page.php?id=1>.

little, nobody can have an abatement to dedicate himself to one occupation because there is a lack of substitution possibility of the whole extra product of his labour, which surpasses his consumption for those very parts of the labour products of other people that he needs”.<sup>10</sup> Those very legitimacies are being the postulates of the Danube strategy, in the part that governs social and economic development.

Abstracts from the European Parliament Resolution due to the Danube Strategy point out that Contract from Lisbon<sup>11</sup> certifies social – economic prosperity as being an aim, highlighting that the strategy of EU in relation to the Danube region might significantly contribute to the accomplishment of better coordination between regional and local authorities and organizations which operate in the Danube region.

Position of Serbia for the participation in the performance of the overall strategy of the European Union for the Danube region is being comprised of a sequence of strategic activities on its territory within a scope of all priority fields. In that very direction, establishment of the “*living laboratory*” would be positive, where all the problems related to the Danube might be discussed interdisciplinary. The best example related to the possible positive effects of the very decision is an example named “*Danube Circle*” which has given very positive results during its impact in Hungary since 1984.

In order to improve connection and the system of communication it is necessary to improve adequate strategic and legal framework in the field of water transportation in conformity with European standards and practice and accomplish necessary condition for undisturbed navigation via establishment of prescribed overall dimensions of the waterway in critical sectors.<sup>12</sup> Due to this, it is important to construct a part of Pan European oil pipeline (*PEOP – Pan European Oil Pipeline*)<sup>13</sup> on the connecting route through Republic of Serbia, finalize the construction of highway on Corridor 10, as well as all the other road directions and ring roads which provide better traffic availability and connection with terminals, but also to reconstruct, revitalize and modernize railroad network and terminals which gravitate towards the Danube. Also, it is important to upgrade the level of technical equipment of harbour captaincy and perform in a quality manner inspection activities related to the safety of navigation, establish National harbour

---

<sup>10</sup> See: Smith A, Research of nature and a cause of nations’ wealth (1776).

<sup>11</sup> Lisbon contract (full name: Contract from Lisbon on amendment to and supplements of the Contract on European Union and establishment of European Union), is an international contract executed in Lisbon on December 13, 2007 with the aim of solving an issue of further institutional functioning of European Community. Lisbon Contract amends the existing contracts on European Union and European Community without substituting the very same. The Contract became effective on December 1, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> This especially refers to the clearance of unexploded explosive devices and drowned objects from the Second World War and NATO intervention on the whole flow of the river Danube. Previous activities were preconditions for serious infrastructural projects in the field of energy network infrastructures in the aim of regional connecting of networks in the aim of regional connecting of networks for the transportation of oil and gas i.e. transfer of electric power.

<sup>13</sup> On Pan European oil pipeline see more on [www.transnafta.rs/en/home/dev\\_projects/peop/](http://www.transnafta.rs/en/home/dev_projects/peop/)

administration as a state regulatory authority jurisdictional for administrative and strategic management of the harbour system of the Republic of Serbia, support initiatives for arrangement of the existing and formation of new marines on the Danube, improvement of the level of technical conditions of navigation in channels and reconsider a possibility of opening channels for free international navigation and investing in the development of energy infrastructure network in the aim of regional connecting of networks for the purpose of oil and gas transportation i.e. the transfer of electric power.

In the domain of safety and legal security in conformity with the Danube Strategy, strategic measures of the Republic of Serbia are furnishing the precinct of the border police with adequate equipment for the purpose of securing the state border on the river Danube, formation of an independent unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs which would have jurisdiction in the domain of securing an international waterway – the river Danube, establishment of the unique data base, within a scope of River informative services: about legal entities, vessels and interesting entities regarding security, as well as the evidence about vessels, load and passengers direction of movement in the aim of more efficient prevention and repression of criminal acts, above all smuggling and illegal trading, formation of a unique system for early alarm, accomplishment of cooperation and joint action for the purpose of flood prevention, and establishment of standard operational procedure for joint action in case of over the border technical and technological navigation accidents.<sup>14</sup>

In the priority field of environmental protection, fulfilment of requests and satisfaction of European Union standards in the field of waters is a very important condition in the process of European integrations of our country. One of the activities which leads towards the adjustment with European standards is applications of the EU directives within a field of waters, especially via the cooperation within the activities of ICPDR and the Danube Commission. Republic of Serbia in 2003 joined the membership of International Commission for the protection of the river Danube and ratified the Convention on cooperation in relation to the protection and sustainable usage of the river Danube.<sup>15</sup> In December 2009 Plan on governing the basin of the river Danube was adopted,<sup>16</sup> by means of which country members obliged themselves that in a period up

---

<sup>14</sup> On the basic legal provisions which represent a platform of strategic measures in the safety domain see more in Panel Code (“Off. Gazette of RS“ no. 85/2005, 88/2005, 107/2005, 72/2009 and 111/2009).

<sup>15</sup> Law on acknowledgement of Convention on cooperation regarding protection and sustainable usage of the river Danube (Off. Gazette of FRY, no. 2/2003).

<sup>16</sup> A five-year plan for the management of the river Danube basin has been officially adopted and executed in Vienna by ministers from 14 countries of the river Danube basin Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Check Republic, Germany, Hungary, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. The plan envisages specific measures which are to be applied until 2015 in order to establish healthy ecosystems and sustainable usage of water in the Danube and its confluents. This document refers to the basic requests of the Water Framework directive of the European Union (Water Framework Directive), being a part of ambitious legislation of EU on water, and the aim is to achieve a good status for the freshwater ecosystems in Europe.

to 2015. They have to realize the very measures. In that direction it is necessary to provide an adequate legal and strategic framework within a field of sustainable usage of natural resources and goods and environmental protection,<sup>17</sup> to ratify a sequence of International conventions, as well as to promote environmental protection and European standards within this field, to develop potentials of national parks and protected areas, to bring and implement measures in the aim of improvement of the quality of waters in the basin of the river Danube, establish and implement measures in relation to the provision of suitable water supply of population at the basin of the river Danube, establishment of the research system, accomplishment of the generally planned document, principles of usage and exploitation of the components of biodiversity of flora and fauna, and develop the system of acceptance cells for ship waste collecting by means of which ecological and communal problems on the waterways would be solved. A step ahead is certainly rendering The Law on Waters,<sup>18</sup> which is in concordance with the water framework Directive.<sup>19</sup>

Regarding strategic measures within a field of social and economic development, apart from new basic company law, which is being improved,<sup>20</sup> it is necessary to establish connection with other European cities on the Danube, whose basic task is

---

<sup>17</sup> Ecological aspect of the naval traffic was presented and it was emphasized that the awareness concerning a need of having ecologically correct ships is not on the satisfactory level. One of the messages was that it is necessary to adapt ships to the river, and not to adapt the river to the ships. Out of the banking circles, it was emphasized that infrastructural investments are especially being emphasized when the issue regarding the projects of the support to the development of the river Danube is considered, being a base of the overall development, as well as the aspect of the environment, especially with usage of water. An approach of financial organizations will be exclusively economic and oriented towards the customers (*customer oriented*), and thus giving special emphasis mainly towards a high quality of water and industrial waste treatment.” – See more Recommendations and conclusions of International conference “*The Danube – The strongest connection with the European Union*” – *Danube strategy of European union and contributions of Serbia*, in organization of European movement in Serbia and the office of Friedrih Ebert foundation in Belgrade in cooperation with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce which was held on May 7, 2010 in Belgrade.

<sup>18</sup> Law on waters (“Off. Gazette of RS”, no. 30/2010).

<sup>19</sup> See more: Walsh A, The Water Framework Directive, Environmental Protection Agency 2007; Bloch, H. 2000. EU policy on nutrients emissions: legislation and implementation. In: *Wastewater and EU Nutrient Guidelines*, pp. 52-59. International Water Association, London; Farmer, A.M. 1999. The proposed EU water framework Directive with particular reference to the coastal zone. *Marine Environmental Management*, 6: 41-48; Farmer, A.M. 2000. Integrating the EU’s water policies. *Inland, Coastal and Estuarine Waters*. 2: 6-7; Farmer, A.M. 2001. The EC water framework Directive: an introduction. *Water Law*, 12: 40-46; Farmer, A.M. & Wilkinson. 2001. The EU Sixth Environmental Action Programme: Implications for Water Management. *Water Law*, 12: 236-239; Lanz, K & Scheuer, S. 2001. *EEB Handbook on EU Water Policy under the Water Framework Directive*. EEB, Brussels; Stern, A. 1995. *Water in Europe: What to expect from the EU policy review*. Club de Bruxelles; WWF. 2001. *Elements of Good Practice in Integrated River Basin Management*. WWF, Brussels; Water Director’s Group. Common Strategy on the Implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

<sup>20</sup> Law on Commercial Associations (“Off. Gazette of RS,”no. 36/2011).



acknowledgement of European values and common European inheritance, establishment of cooperation with EU countries within a framework of EGTC (European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation), and to create a framework for application of this new instrument of European regional politics for the purpose of accomplishment of territorial cohesion and cooperation, to stimulate diversification of rural economy and to improve efficiency of local economy through strengthening of capacities of local community and development of tourism (village, agro, eco), development of local crafts, improvement of agricultural production in the Danube region, an increase of abetting means for the purpose of village development supporting the Danube region through investing in rural tourism and investment in village infrastructure, promotion of small and medium enterprise development, as being one of the backbones of the Danube region economic development, improvement of tourist offer by means of valorisation of tourist potential via uplifting the activities in the region (development and usage of tourist potentials of fortresses on the Danube, national parks and protected areas), to invent and realize thematic routes (wine roads, cultural road of Roman imperators, walking paths), enabling an entrance into the Danube channels, integration of tourist product and support of development of new and maintenance of the existing bicycle routes up to the Danube (“Eurovelo“ and “Eurovelo 6“), and brand the Danube as being an attractive tourist destination for domestic and foreign tourists.<sup>21</sup>

In the field of interest of knowledge economy it is necessary to intensify the research and development and to enrich study programmes, intensify scientific cooperation between the countries in the Danube Region, stimulate the mobility of the students, teaching staff and researchers within the Danube Region, organize the continuous education and learning, stimulate innovations and transfer of technologies in all areas of regional priority in regard to improving the connections and communicational systems, ecological matters and decrement of natural hazards, as well as to strengthen the potential for social and economic development, intensify scientific cooperation in the field of realization of doctoral studies and specialization of young scientists, establish complete control of traffic on the Danube through the development of River Information Services (RIS) and Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) and encourage innovations and promote larger investments in further development of informational and communicational technologies.

---

<sup>21</sup> “Developmental potential in nautical tourism, creation of larger number of ports on the Danube and its confluents, but also the cross-border tourist exchange. Specific type of cooperation which coincides with the adoption of the Strategy represents the establishment of the Danube Competence Center where six Danube countries are involved, with its seat in Belgrade within the Tourist Organization of Serbia. The support for the start of project has been received from the governments of all six countries, as well as the civil sector. The centre has been imagined as a place for exchange of information about tourism, culture, sport, entertainment, as well as the development of a number of projects which are in connection with the mentioned themes”. – See more: Recommendations and conclusions of International conference “The Danube-the strongest link with European Union” – The EU Danube Strategy and Serbian contributions, organized by European movement in Serbia and the office of Friedrih Ebert Foundation in Belgrade in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia which was held on May 7, 2010 in Belgrade.

It is very important for Serbia that implementation of the Danube Strategy does not anticipate special assets, instead of that it is the more efficient use of existing instruments and funds of EU which are being counted on.

### III Final reflections

Danube Strategy is an extraordinary possibility and prospect for a country of Danube region. Syllogistic conclusion on the basis of initial premises, to which we have come by analyzing the sole idea, and then its instrumentalization through Danube Strategy, we come to the conclusion that Corridor 7 brings prosperity to the Republic of Serbia in many fields, which represent its accelerant of development, and those are improvement of connections between the regions in traffic, energy and information, environment protection, strengthening of social and commercial potentials of the Danube region and strengthening of the Danube region, rule of law and legal safety, and knowledge economy.

In that direction we point at the necessity of adopting, adapting to commercial and legal reality and implementing the adequate strategic and legal frame in the area of water right, criminal law and commercial law according to European standards and practice, as well as the completion of works on domestic fundamental infrastructure projects, which will allow necessary conditions for unrestricted and economically prosperous navigation on the Danube in Serbia and in the region.

### Literature

- Bloch, H. 2000. EU policy on nutrients emissions: legislation and implementation. In: *Wastewater and EU Nutrient Guidelines*, pp 52-59. International Water Association, London.
- Farmer, A.M. 1999. The proposed EU water framework Directive with particular reference to the coastal zone. *Marine Environmental Management*, 6: 41-48.
- Farmer, A.M. 2000. Integrating the EU's water policies. *Inland, Coastal and Estuarine Waters*. 2: 6-7.
- Farmer, A.M. 2001. The EC water framework Directive: an introduction. *Water Law*, 12: 40-46; Farmer, A.M. & Wilkinson. 2001. The EU Sixth Environmental Action Programme: Implications for Water Management. *Water Law*, 12: 236-239.
- Lanz, K & Scheuer, S. 2001. *EEB Handbook on EU Water Policy under the Water Framework Directive*. EEB, Brussels.
- Recommendations and conclusions of International conference “The Danube-the strongest link with European Union” – The EU Danube Strategy and Serbian contributions, organized by European movement in Serbia and the office of Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Belgrade in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia which was held on May 7, 2010 in Belgrade.
- Smit A, Research of nature and the cause of the nations' wealth (1776).

- Stern, A. 1995. Water in Europe: What to expect from the EU policy review. Club de Bruxelles.
- Walsh A, The Water Framework Directive, Environmental Protection Agency 2007.
- WWF. 2001. *Elements of Good Practice in Integrated River Basin Management*.
- WWF, Brussels; Water Director's Group. Common Strategy on the Implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

*Laws:*

- Law on Commercial Associations ("Off. Gazette of RS" no. 36/2011)
- Law on waters ("Off. Gazette of RS" no. 30/2010)
- Panel Code ("Off. Gazette of RS" no. 85/2005, 88/2005, 107/2005, 72/2009 and 111/2009).
- Law on ratification in relation to the cooperation and sustainable usage of the river Danube ("Off. Gazette of FRY" no. 2/2003)

*Sites:*

- <http://www.dunavskastrategija.rs/srp/strategija/>
- <http://www.icpdr.org/>
- [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperation/baltic/pdf/macroeconomic\\_strategies\\_2009.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/baltic/pdf/macroeconomic_strategies_2009.pdf)
- [www.sepa.gov.rs/download/odrziviRazvoj/Dunav.pdf](http://www.sepa.gov.rs/download/odrziviRazvoj/Dunav.pdf)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/inland/promotion/naiades\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/inland/promotion/naiades_en.htm)
- <http://www.naiades.info/platina/page.php?id=1>
- [http://www.transnafta.rs/en/home/dev\\_projects/peop/](http://www.transnafta.rs/en/home/dev_projects/peop/)

INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND ECONOMICS  
HANNS SEIDEL STIFTUNG

**International Scientific Conference**

**DANUBE STRATEGY - STRATEGIC  
SIGNIFICANCE FOR SERBIA**

**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**



*Grigorij MESEŽNIKOV, Ph.D.*

## **THE DANUBE REGIONAL COOPERATION AS A PLATFORM FOR BOOSTING SERBIA'S CHANCES IN EURO-INTEGRATION: SOME POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **ABSTRACT**

One of the most important aspects of society's transformation in post-communist countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe is their participation in European integration processes. Ten post-communist states have become the full-fledge EU members in 2004–2007, and Serbia is now preparing to launch the accession process. Serbia's position in Danube region and its relations with other countries of the region can effect its ambitions and abilities to start and to complete the negotiations with EU on full-fledge membership.

Inter-state (bilateral and multilateral) cooperation in Danube region can be extremely important for Serbia as a new EU applicant country. Danube region includes six EU member states: two old ones (Germany and Austria) and four new ones (Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria). Three of them are immediate Serbia's neighbors. Danube regional format of cooperation can serve as a platform for boosting Serbia's positions in EU integration. It can multiply the number of Serbia's advocates in EU, can bring Serbia together with the new EU member states which benefited themselves from the regional cooperation before entering the EU (Slovakia and Hungary within the format of Visegrad 4).

Due to specific reasons, related mostly to the break-up of Yugoslavia and the subsequent developments, Serbia could not use the benefits of regional cooperation as a favorable precondition of launching the process of accession to EU (unlike other post-communist countries, for instance Baltic states or Visegrad 4 countries). However, nowadays the Danube regional cooperation (even if it is not replicating fully the format of V4 or Baltic3) can offer Serbia unique opportunity to compensate this shortage inherited from the past. Serbia's consideration of the Danube region as its broader EU neighborhood should be one of the imperatives of country's integration agenda.

*Key words:* Inter-state cooperation, Danube region, Serbia, European Union.

*Sándor GÖTZ, Ph.D.*

## **SHIPPING ON THE WATERS OF SEE REGION OVER-BRIDGING THE BORDERS**

### **ABSTRACT**

The navigational and transport use of Danube and its tributaries – in the European context on economic cooperation, cultural and tourist navigation has currently little benefits compared to optimally achievable. Having that in mind the regional project named “Shipping on the Waters of SEE Region: Over-bridging the Borders” is proposed.

The partners in this project are aiming to work-out a Feasibility Study for the future development of shipping on the waters of the above-mentioned rivers and canals according to EU-20/20/20 intentions, and supporting the rural-city connections, preparing the sustainable development of the regional area.

*Key words:* River Danube, the Danube Basin, Southeast Europe, the Danube–Tisa–Danube Canal, Drava-Sava navigation, sustainable development, Rural-city, agglomeration-megapolises, and International fast shipping connections.

*Marija KNEŽEVIĆ, Ph.D.*

## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AS A DANUBE COUNTRY**

### **APSTRACT**

In order for the Danube region to be attractive and desirable tourist destination, it is necessary to include all countries that gravitate towards the Danube. Bosnia and Herzegovina is among them (as well as the Republic of Srpska) because more than two thirds of the territory and nearly as much of water resources end in the Danube River. As BiH has great perspective in tourism development, because it has the potentials which, with a bit of work, will, responsible behavior and hospitality, can be turned into very attractive tourist products that can come in the top of the interest of contemporary tourists, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country that should be an integral part of a group of countries of the Danube region. Expected increase of tourism development in BiH will reflect to the broader region, and consequently, to the Danube region towards which this country gravitates in natural and geographic terms. The development of “responsible tourism”, “environmental awareness” and “sustainable development” of the Danube region will be more realistic if BiH is involved and support these tendencies, but also slow down them significantly, if left out of the development strategy of the Danube region.

Thus, this paper aims to broaden the issue of the concern about the development of the Danube region as a new tourist destination.

*Key words:* BiH, Danube region, tourism, sustainable development, waters.

*Miloš ŠOLAJA, Ph.D.*

## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AS A DANUBE COUNTRY - A NEW APPROACH WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE DANUBE STRATEGY**

### **ABSTRACT**

Although Bosnia and Herzegovina is not directly on the Danube River, it is linked with this region by many lines. The Sava River, the former Yugoslav central River is now shared by four South East European countries. As the river which flows into the Danube, it is very interesting from the point of view of interests of the Danube countries. Speaking from the point of view of the Serbian position, there are also a few important facts. BH is very important for Serbia because of the geopolitical and geostrategic reasons. The Drina River, which also flows into the Sava and finally into the Danube, divides Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina lying out along the Republika Srpska as one of BH entities with a vast Serb majority. Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are building good relations within the framework of regional security and European cooperation. The Agreement on Special and Parallel Relations between the Republic of Serbia and the Republika Srpska is of utmost importance. Serbia and BH have also very developed trading ties. BH shares a 1003 kilometres long border with Croatia and with Montenegro. The relations with both of them are very important for Serbia because of political interests, geostrategic reasons as well as because of multilateral regional cooperation. There is also a possibility of linking the Sava and Danube Rivers by building a new canal.

*Key words:* Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sava River, trading, interests, canal.

*Biljana SAVIĆ, M.A.*

## **REGIONAL COOPERATION WITHIN THE SAVA COMMISSION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF B&H**

### **ABSTRACT**

Regional cooperation between countries of South-Eastern Europe has made a qualitative shift from externally guided actions towards the active and responsible engagement with the aim of achieving sustainable development of the region. This change was accompanied by the transformation of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe into the Regional Cooperation Council. The formation of the Regional Cooperation Council, with the Secretariat in Sarajevo marks a major shift in the international community's policy towards the region. These countries began a new phase of "regional ownership and responsibility" for regional cooperation. In this regard, the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin concluded between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Republic of Slovenia and Republic of Serbia is of particular importance. Therefore, this agreement includes all the functions of water resources management – the establishment of an international regime of navigation on the Sava River and its tributaries, the establishment of sustainable water management and prevention or limitation of the hazards in the basin effects of floods, ice, droughts and incidents substances that are harmful to water. The



International Sava River Basin Commission (Sava Commission) was formed as a permanent body in charge of implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin, development of the Action Plan for the Sava River Basin and the adoption of necessary legal acts and the Protocols. Cooperation in the Sava Commission is based on the application of EU directives in the field of water and harmonization of the legislation with the EU legislation.

*Key words:* regional cooperation, the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin, the Sava Commission, Sustainable Development.

*Zsuzsa M. CSÁSZÁR, Ph.D.*

## **DANUBE STRATEGY: STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR SERBIA**

### **ABSTRACT**

The Hungarian-Serbian connections are based on geographical proximity and also on the common moments of history of the two nations. It is good for the bilateral connections that both parties consider the relations which connect them to each other a priority. The Serbians consider our country as “one of the gates to Europe“ directly (in transportation) and indirectly. Anyway, for Hungary, the Euro-Atlantic integration of Serbia is a fundamental national interest in favour of both Hungarians in Vojvodina and buoyant economic connections. And Serbia may be in need for the transfer of Hungarian experiences. In the economic relations between the two countries has been a development since the millennium. It is related to the stabilization of the Serbian economy, the launched privatization, the creation of conditions providing foreign capital inflow, though the effects of the financial crisis are still hardly predictable in the long run. In the Hungarian-Serbian economic relations – despite the development – there is still a plenty of untaken chances.

In the analysis – in this case – we examine Serbia and the Serbian-Hungarian connections. We visited the Hungarian Embassy in Serbia and we made interviews with the leaders of the embassy and of the economic representation and their officials, and we analyzed the documents recording the bilateral relations and the reports made by the embassy, and we have also accessed documents considering particular countries in the repository of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The study undertakes only the analysis of interstate relations but sometimes as references the collaboration between regions and institutions also appears, as a sign for that in these relations real connections may form.

*Key words:* Danube strategy, Hungarian-Serbian connections, Relation Contents, Euro-Atlantic integration.

*Saša ČVRLJAK, M.A., Hrvoje BUTKOVIĆ, Ph.D.*

## **DANUBE STRATEGY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

### **ABSTRACT**

Danube Strategy, being launched as the “pilot project” to intensify policy coordination among involved grouping of countries in the Danube region has a wider strategic importance. Namely, Danube Strategy is one of the major vehicles for embedding “smart, sustainable and inclusive” growth in the Danube region, thus contributing to the regionalization of the Europe 2020 strategy and enhancing perspectives for its long-term success. Additionally, Danube Strategy has important external dimension in the South-Eastern Europe (SEE) where it can supplement the EU accession process by underpinning EU-related reforms, stirring regional cooperation and empowering sub-state governmental tiers. As the upcoming EU member state, Croatia will support continuation of the EU enlargement process in the South-Eastern Europe (SEE) where Danube Strategy emerges as the potential device for sharing experiences and lessons learned acquired during the Croatian EU accession process. Additionally, Croatia aims to use the Danube Strategy as the platform to raise cooperation with its neighbours, improve competitiveness of its economy, underpin sustainable socio-economic development and secure balanced regional development, given significant regional disparities in the country. Finally, Croatia can utilize its “gateway” position between the Danube basin and the Mediterranean that offers great economic potentials for development of its transport corridors and sea ports.

*Key words:* Danube Strategy, Europe 2020 strategy, South-Eastern Europe, EU accession, Croatia, competitiveness, regional development.

*Damir DEMONJA, Ph.D., Majda RUBIĆ*

## **PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF EUROPEAN LAW - EXPERIENCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION IN THE DANUBE MACRO REGION**

### **ABSTRACT**

Cultural heritage as a legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a society presents the legacy of past generations and it must be carefully kept in order to be left as inheritance for the benefit of future generations. Heritage that has been preserved throughout the history is often unique and irreplaceable and leaves the responsibility of preserving to the next generation. In order to ensure its sustainability, which includes identification, documentation, research, maintenance, protection, utilization, as well as promotion of its values, mechanisms are developed and measures are established to protect cultural heritage.

Since the Croatian Danube Basin is rich in cultural heritage (archaeological sites/parks, the Danube limes with 22 sites, etc.) and Croatia is an active participant in the Danube Strategy as well as in other activities related to the Danube Basin such as in Process of Cooperation in the Danube to which one of the starting points is focused on cultural cooperation between member countries of the Danube Strategy, the legal framework for protection of cultural heritage is of great importance.

Considering that the Danube Strategy emphasizes the respect of cultural identity with aligning its own law on protection of cultural goods in a way to determine criteria for the protection of national treasures of artistic, historic and archaeological value, and national cultural heritage can obtain legitimacy within its own system and not in relations of mutual harmonization.

In the field of cultural heritage the *Council Regulation (EEC) 3911/92 on the export of cultural goods* is binding, (1992) OJ L 395/1, lastly amended by *Council Regulation (EC) 806/2003* and the *Council Directive 93/7 EEC on return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State*, (1993) OJ L 74, which among the EU member state makes easier the cooperation in the proceedings for protection of national treasures by determining the common categories of cultural objects. The Regulation and the Directive based on the Treaty on the European Union have created a presumption that restrictions and prohibition of trade in cultural goods are recognized throughout the territory of the European Union. However, the EU Treaty is the only specific criterion for assessing the compatibility constraints and these are set up by national legislations for the protection of national treasures of artistic, historic or archaeological value. By a proper division of the roles in the evaluation of the national heritage, possible negative effects of globalization can be redirected and European values will not be left on their own.

This article will briefly present the place and role of cultural heritage in the Danube Strategy, then will provide an overview of the most important cultural heritage of the Croatian Danube region as well as the most important projects that have a base in the heritage and will finally analyze the mentioned acts of the European Union with the focus on the macro-region of the Danube basin.

*Key words:* Croatia, cultural heritage, EU acts, Danube macro region.

*Florin DIACONU, Ph.D.*

## **GEOPOLITICAL AND GEO-STRATEGIC STATUS OF SERBIA ON THE DANUBE: THE ROAD FROM GEOPOLITICAL PIVOT TO GEOPOLITICAL PLAYER (ACTIVE ACTOR)**

### **ABSTRACT**

Two potent concepts have been used many times within the framework of really serious geopolitical/geo-strategic analyses. These concepts – clearly explained, for example, by notorious and influential authors as Brzezinski is – are that of “geopolitical pivot(s)” and that of “geopolitical player(s)”. While geopolitical pivots have a significant value based on the fact that, if controlled by a great power, they offer a free access to important regions and/or resources, while geopolitical players have the capability to control one or more pivots. Along its history, Serbia – with its significant position on the Danube – was both a

geopolitical pivot and a geopolitical player. With its geopolitical status strongly diminished by the events during the past 20 years, Belgrade might be able to design and implement a set of policies aiming to make Serbia again an important geopolitical player at the regional level. But, in order to reach such a goal some requirements are to be met.

*Key words:* Geopolitical status of Serbia, geo-strategic status of Serbia, geopolitical player, Danube region.

*Dragan TANČIĆ, Ph.D.*

## **RELEVANT FACTORS OF THE DANUBE AND DANUBE BASIN FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SERBIA AND EUROPEAN UNION**

### **ABSTRACT**

The Danube and the Danube Basin have always had a special significance exerting influence on the development of European states, the European Union, and by all this, on Serbia. The Danube river is particularly an important connecting point between the North and the South of Europe, this reflecting its special importance for Serbia. Within this context, it can be generally said that together with the Danube Basin the Danube is a kind of “substitute“ for Serbia’s direct exit to the sea. The basic significant factors of the Danube and the Danube Basin for the overall development of Serbia and the European Union can be defined from the aspects of conditions, this including general, particular and individual ones, then from the aspect of space, time as well as from the aspect of subjects – the population living in those areas – as a central factor. The relevant factors of the Danube and the Danube Basin for the development of Serbia and the European Union are the territory, the population living in this territory, the time when some phenomena and processes take place, scientific-technological, economic and other forms of development. That space can be defined as a living space where some population satisfies its needs and interests, the space where members of the population live and work arranging it in accordance with their needs and interests and in the way they can do it under the given conditions. The conditions can be favourable or unfavourable for development. For instance, since 1985 till 1988 in the territory around the narrow zone of the Danube Basin in Serbia the most developed industrial and economic centres and most populated towns were located, but then, due to the changed conditions, Serbia’s economic growth has declined and the population has stagnated in that zone.

*Key words:* Danube Basin, Serbia, North-South of Europe, scientific-technological development, population in Serbia, Serbia’s economic development.

*Dragan PETROVIĆ, Ph.D., Nataša TOMIĆ PETROVIĆ, Ph.D.*

## **PHYSICO-GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS OF THE DANUBE REGION OF SERBIA AS PREREQUISITES FOR TRAFFIC AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

### **ABSTRACT**

The paper analyzes physico-geographical factors of the Danube region of Serbia as prerequisites for the traffic and tourism development as follows: relief, soil composition and pedological layer; climate; hydrographical factors, primarily surface and ground waters; flora and fauna as well as the significance of environmental component.

The relief of the Serbian Danube region is very suitable for the traffic development keeping in mind that it is primarily the lowlands and only in its Eastern part, foothills and lower highlands prevail. Soil composition is very favourable, because for the most part it is “chernozem” including other forms of fertile and loose land that are suitable for different forms of anthropogenic activities and traffic and tourism, too.

The climate is favourable, because this area is primarily characteristic for moderate-continental and milder forms of continental climate. The region is abundant in river flows, where besides the Danube there are the Sava, the Tisa, the Velika Morava and the Begej of large rivers and many channels and smaller tributaries, as well as lakes, what contributes to the traffic and tourism development. The rich flora and fauna are an incentive for the tourism development, while in the area of environmental protection, a lot must be done and continuous work should be performed in the prevention of further pollution of the region is necessary.

*Key words:* Danube region of Serbia; physico-geographical factors; prerequisites for traffic and tourism development.

*Nevenka JEFTIĆ ŠARČEVIĆ, Ph.D.*

## **IS IT POSSIBLE SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE DANUBE AND BLACK SEA REGION**

### **The geopolitical Position of Serbia**

#### **ABSTRACT**

European Union promotes the synergy of integration as a new integrative force which is part of its cohesion and good neighborhood policy. In practice, this policy is implemented in the framework of the Danube and Black Sea Synergy. For Serbia, as a member of the Danube and the Black Sea region, the synergy is the framework of regional cooperation. In the Danube region, Serbia together with other countries is linking in the Euroasian geopolitical space over the Danube River Basin and Black Sea and synergistic permeation of common goals and values.

*Key words:* synergy, Serbia, Danube region, Black Sea region, European Union.

*Nenad M. ILIĆ, M.Sc.*

## **SOCIAL CAPITAL NETWORKS IN SERBIA: STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE DANUBE RIVER**

### **ABSTRACT**

Recognizing the adequate resources for cooperation and development through the establishment of closer cooperation in the Danube Basin, we should improve social networks and support the policy in Serbia. So far, not much done has been done with that, but in order to achieve a stronger networking of CSOs, high-educated NGOs, development of poles of competitiveness, revitalization of rural areas, and therefore new investment, higher employment and balanced regional development is necessary to promote a new concept of the use of social capital. Apart from Vojvodina and Belgrade, this approach would allow for a stronger participation of stakeholders in the area of Central Serbia. In order to initiate such a process, the public and decision-makers should be first informed of the benefits of this concept, which brings stronger integration into the international, inter-regional and inter-municipal politics. On the basis of the opportunities and results, this approach of networking can produce more flexible forms of association.

*Key words:* Danube River, social capital, social networks, Serbia.

*Milovan RADAKOVIĆ, Ph.D.*

## **THE DANUBE-MARAVA-VARDAR-AEGEAN SEA WATERWAY**

### **ABSTRACT**

The Morava-Vardar-Aegean Sea waterway would enable the navigation from Belgrade to Thessaloniki and on the other side, from Belgrade to Rotterdam. It would shorten the route between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. With its construction, Serbia would automatically become a well-connected river state, what would significantly change its geostrategic, geoeconomic and geopolitical position. Sufficiency in electric power supply and elimination of natural disasters including floods would be definitely achieved.

*Key words:* Serbia, Danube, Morava, Vardar, Aegean Sea, Rhine-Main Canal.

*Miljojko BAZIĆ, Ph.D., Ranko LOJIĆ, Ph.D., Aleksandar BAZIĆ, M.A.*

## **ROLE OF MEDIA IN PROCESS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN DANUBE REGION**

### **ABSTRACT**

We live in the world that demands better and more complete information for business man about everything what is going around in his narrow or wider environment. In such way, modern world of business destroys many old methods and techniques and

introduce us with new one. One of the new one are media relation, as integrated system of public relations. Because of process of economic cooperation and connection with social organization from Serbia, with economic and social organization in Danube region will largely depend from the role of media in that process.

Media provide economic and social organization in Serbia huge contribution in process of economic cooperation and connection in Danube region, if it been viewed and positioned as part of whole system of internal and external communication of the organization with its target public. It means that through media, economic and social organization should establish communication with most important segments of economy and society in Danube region who are interested in business cooperation and networking.

Economic and social entities in Serbia should use medias as primary means of transmission of messages that are sent to target public in Danube region. Organization's public media should be developed on mutual trust and understanding, with professional responsibility in process of telling, transfer or using information relevant for Danube region. In communication with media it is important to follow basic ethnic values that are mostly expressed in the form of codes.

Would media relations of economic and social subject be successful or not in process of economic cooperation and connection in Danube region, will largely depend on their position in organization. Where is media relation seen as a part of top management system in the organization, there is the assumption that media relations will achieve its mission and contribute to building trust and understanding between organization from Serbia and its target public in Danube region and otherwise.

We can often hear a statement like this: „If these are published by the media, it must be true“. That means that events that didn't publish by media, didn't happened. It is very important that management of organization from Serbia know why and how media are important for them, what media can expected from its and what management can expect from media, how would process of economic cooperation and connections organization in Serbia and organization from Danube region would be successful.

*Key words:* Media, Public relations, Strategy, Economic cooperation, Economic development, Danube region.

*Mihajlo VUČIĆ*

## **THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF THE DANUBE RIVER BASIN WETLANDS**

### **ABSTRACT**

In the course of this essay, I will analyse various aspects of the current international legal regime dealing with environmental protection of the Danube River Basin wetlands, with the aim of offering the insight, to what extent this regime adheres to the contents of the principle of “ecosystem approach”. Ecosystem approach is the leading principle in the law on the environmental protection of shared freshwater resources. Simply put, an ecosystem approach requires consideration of the whole system rather than individual components. On the other hand, wetlands are the most important part of an aquatic ecosystem. Wetlands serve as a link between the land

and the water, and provide a range of services that benefit all aspects of river activities. Unfortunately, some of the instruments of the current legal regime do not mention wetlands in their provisions, most notably the EU Water Framework Directive, which is a driving force in water management, and all countries within the Danube River Basin have committed to it, whether they are legally required to or not. This is even more problematic, bearing in mind that about 80 wetlands of the Danube River Basin are included in the list of Ramsar sites of international importance. However, the Danube River Basin Management Plan introduced by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, brings with itself provisions based on the integrated river basin management, which will, if properly implemented, ensure the observance of the ecosystem approach in the in the wetlands protection regime.

*Key words:* Ecosystem Approach, Environmental Protection, Danube River Basin Wetlands.

*Milica SLAVKOVIĆ, M.A.*

## **THE DANUBE COUNTRIES LOCAL COMMUNITIES PROTECTION IN FLOOD EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

### **ABSTRACT**

In 2002, and especially in 2006, the Danube countries suffered severe damages and losses due to high waters and floods. An estimated total cost of damage and emergency operations in 2006 amounted to € 600 million. Due to climate changes, that is, more extreme and variable weather conditions, the threat of floods in the Danube basin is on the rise. Additionally, with the establishment of settlements in the flood risk areas, local communities are becoming even more vulnerable. This paper will therefore investigate the level of the selected Danube countries' preparedness to protect civilians and local infrastructure in flood emergency situations, and to take part in the macro-regional flood action programmes. It will further focus on the division of responsibilities on the local level, in the flood affected regions, when it comes to early warning, evacuation and rescue works, as well as, the reinforcement of existing defence system elements. Assessments of the previous flood experiences revealed some serious deficiencies in the flood protection management, which vary between countries and are mostly due to the lack of financial assets and personnel. Finalizing the analysis, this paper will provide recommendations which could increase efficiency in the protection of the local communities in the flood-affected areas in the Danube basin.

*Key words:* the Danube countries, high waters and floods, local communities, preparedness, civil protection.



*Aleksandra TOMIĆ, Ph.D., Srbijanka STOJIĆ, M.A.*

## **ELEMENTS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN STRATEGY FLOOD PROTECTION IN THE DANUBE BASIN**

### **ABSTRACT**

Regional cooperation is needed in terms of safety from flooding. Danube Basin covers an area of 817 000 km<sup>2</sup> (of which in Serbia about 10% or 82 thousand km<sup>2</sup>). Catchments area stretches from west to east, a distance of 1690 km and from north to south 820 km. As in the Danube Basin has a population of 80 million people, it is necessary to take coordination activities and measures to protect residents from flooding, which would reduce damage and losses were particularly pronounced in 2002., 2005, and 2006. year. In order to strengthen the security of the population lives in areas threatened by floods, it is necessary to strengthen the activities of defense flood. Prevention and flood control is a complex activity, and the main tasks performed by the water management. Measures should be taken as preventive measures foreseen and measures taken during the arrival of high water. In doing so, the action of EU member states is regulated by the Water Framework Directive, while in Serbia the Law on Water and the by-laws (general and operational plans of flood control) measures are defined and means of defense against flooding. By signing and ratifying the Danube Convention 2003rd The Serbian has committed to implement the provisions set out in the Directive. Elements of a strategy to incorporate the basic settings crisis management.

*Key words:* Danube basin, flood, crisis management, strategy, protection, prevention.

*Damir DEMONJA, Ph.D., Tihana STEPINAC FABIJANIĆ*

## **DANUBE CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM (DCSF) – AN EXAMPLE OF INITIATIVE CONNECT THE DANUBE REGION AND OPPORTUNITIES OF CROATIA TO PROMOTE CULTURE AND TOURISM IN THE FRAMEWORK OF DANUBE STRATEGY**

### **ABSTRACT**

Danube Strategy is one of the most important initiatives of the European Union intended to realize the unused potential of economic and social development of the Europe's largest river waterway. Strategy has the task to strengthen territorial cooperation and interaction between the Danube regions, to ensure sustainable development of each region through better transport and social cohesion, environmental protection, raising the level of education, culture, human rights, tourism, security, energy, labor, minorities, etc., as well as with building prosperity and strengthening institutional cooperation within the region. The Danube Strategy project provide Croatia with new opportunities for strengthening its economy, regional cooperation and the development of infrastructure.

Local and regional initiatives are very important initiators of sustainable development of the Danube Region. The Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF),

established in Eisenstadt, Austria, in July 2011, is an example that stands out. DCSF is a network of NGOs, civil society organizations of the Danube basin with the intention to act as a platform in promoting and increasing the participation of civil society and their networking within the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

Accordingly, this article presents and analyzes the structure, objectives, tasks and method of work of DCSF, as well as the role of Croatia in the respective network, especially in the segments of culture and tourism. Rich cultural heritage and natural beauty of the Danube basin can be further exploited through joint activities in the improved tourism offer that Strategy promotes, while, in general, the Danube microcosm of people, languages and religions is an excellent platform for a wider cultural, educational and scientific cooperation, promotion of intercultural dialogue and strengthening civil society. Thus, the Danube can become a “European brand” and strengthen the identity of the inhabitants in the region. In this sense, the article presents Croatian projects important for the promotion of Croatian culture and tourism, such as, for example, archaeological parks Vučedol and Sopot, “The Cultural Map of the Danube”, “The Limits of Roman empires – Limes”, “The Danube bicycle route EuroVelo6”, and others, as a priority development projects of Croatian Danube within Danube strategy.

*Key words:* Danube Strategy, Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF), Danube Region, Croatia, initiatives, projects, development, culture, tourism.

*Pero PETROVIĆ, Ph.D.*

## **ECOTOURISM – A DRIVING FORCE OF DEVELOPMENT IN SOME DANUBE REGIONS**

### **APSTRACT**

This paper presents necessary growing, structure and priorities of external transactions as the most important aspects of economic cooperation. The present state of our economy and tourist industry clearly indicates the necessity to carry out the reform. Changes are required in the field of organization and financing. New globalization tendencies in the world economy system create new conditions for tourist activities. The emergence of countries in transition, which present a new quality in tourist demand and well established tourist markets that are in harmony with supportable development, has created a necessary form of ecotourism. Ecotourism as a constituent part of return of the man to his roots for the first time succeeded in unifying the environment and the man in the common use, preservation and development of all socio-economic links of unity between ecology and economy. The regions that are not content with their economic development are in all countries in the world, this including our country, too, and they are becoming a challenge for creating new attractive destinations of ecotourism with no unwanted effects. That is why ecotourism integrally connects all ecological resources with the aim of achieving their optimal development. Serbia’s rich resource base should create favourable conditions for the affirmation and development of ecotourism. Generally, people are the most important aspect of all types of tourism where communications and interaction between people is accounted on.

*Key words:* Sustainable development, ecotourism, space, development, need, optimization.

*Dragica TOMKA, Ph.D., Gordana ĐURIĆ, Ph.D., Goran TOMKA, M.Sc.*

## **THEMATIC CULTURAL TOURIST ROUTES OF DANUBE REGION – LOCAL CULTURAL GOODS AS A GLOBAL ATTRACTION**

### **SUMMARY**

Tourism is a means of individual and collective fulfilment and a chance for connecting different cultures. Especially significant is the contribution of tourism to mutual understanding and respect between the peoples and societies that come into touch via tourism. Currently prevalent attitude in the world is the one that globalisation, modern technology and everything related to them necessarily leads to homogenisation and extinguishes all differences. Although this is true in some cases, it is not always so. If we only scratch beneath the surface and peek beyond the media noise and advice we are given by the lecturers at corporate trainings, we find an entire hidden world – vivid, various and increasingly bigger and stronger, full of grassroots projects, creative associations, local self-sustainable market economies... Vision is what sets them apart.

The examples of numerous cultural routes, with new topics emerging each day, are just some of the proofs that cultural heritage is a pivot of intercultural connection, of connecting local values with the global tourist currents. The Danube region, as a European region, which has connected and still connects different cultures is a desirable area that can offer local cultures to tourists on global routes, and bring together the shores, the people, the cultures by connecting the territories “divided” by Danube, thus bringing and creating new values.

*Key words:* Globalisation, local values, cultural legacy, thematic routes, tourism.

*Sara STANIĆ, M.Sc.*

## **ANTHROPOGENIC HERITAGE OF NATIONAL PARK ĐERDAP – AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IN SERBIA**

### **ABSTRACT**

The National Park Đerdap represents the unity of natural and cultural heritage of Serbia because the specific natural features of the area have granted a very valuable cultural heritage. The coastal area of the Danube in the Iron Gate was inhabited in the Neolithic period, while the discovered archaeological sites – from monumental Neolithic culture, Lepenski Vir, over ancient monuments and medieval period to modern times speak of the continuity of life. Đerdap, the Iron Gate, has been a challenge for travellers, traders and warriors for thousand years. The territory of the national park is protected for a large number of cultural and historical values together with its environment. Some of these values were declared to be of great importance and are the subject of special protection by the state. The Đerdap area is particularly interesting for school trips as the most wanted destination. It is also significant for boat cruises as a supplement of the program and also as various individual and group excursions, both domestic and international. Activities and projects of the Strategy for the Danube region, the

promotion of tourism resources in the Iron Gate, changes in the global tourism market demand and the strengthening of new types of tourism developments aimed at sustainable development and protection of natural heritage and cultural heritage contribute to the positioning of tourist destinations and the Iron Gate as a unique brand in European tourism market.

*Key words:* heritage, Đerdap, tourism development, Danube Strategy.

*Snežana ŠTETIĆ, Ph.D., Dario ŠIMIČEVIĆ, M.A., Saša STEVANOVIĆ, M.A.*

## **VALORIZATION OF SERBIAN WATERWAYS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DANUBE REGION TOURISM**

### **ABSTRACT**

Global tourism has influenced the remarkable diversification both in tourism supply and in tourism demand. The emergence of new forms of demand was also a precondition for the creation of various forms of travel as opposed to the then existing “classic forms”. At the turn of the century, waterways became especially interesting for tourism development. Once the backbones of transport power of the big industrial countries, today waterways are unstoppable encouragement for tourism development in many countries. Rivers are a very powerful tourism motive. The density and number of waterways in our country, especially in Vojvodina, offer great opportunities for river traffic and river tourism development. Their distribution provides favourable conditions for river traffic development, especially in transportation on the Danube, which plays an important role in connecting Central and Eastern Europe. These advantages have not been sufficiently used which shows not only the underdevelopment of river transport in our country, but also the slow development of tourism on water. Today, there are almost no facilities for tourism vessels on our rivers, despite the exceptional opportunities that our natural and anthropogenic resources provide.

The Danube Region is the most interesting aquatic transversal of various tourism forms development. Today, when all countries in the Danube Basin are willing to cooperate and to create new forms of cooperation through tourism, we unfortunately cannot offer them a lot, not because we do not have anything to offer, but because we do not know how we do want or not want to do so. Taking into consideration the previous tourism development in our part of the Danube Basin, the authors of this paper will attempt to give some suggestions on how and what should be developed in the Danube Region, how to cooperate and who to include, so that Serbia could also get in line with the developed tourist countries in the region.

*Key words:* waterways, the Danube region, evaluation, rivers and canals, tourism, regional cooperation.

*Risto PRENTOVIĆ, Ph.D., Vidoje GOLUBOVIĆ, Ph.D., Milutin KOVAČEVIĆ*

## **CORRELATION BETWEEN HUNTING AND CULTURAL TOURISM IN BAČKA UPPER DANUBE BASIN**

### **ABSTRACT**

The area of the Upper Danube Basin (Bačka region) represents one of the most denotative hunting tourism destinations in our country and in the surrounding area. Moreover, this area is rich in various cultural amenities. Hunting tourism clientele in this area, since being highly solvent, is dedicated to collecting expensive hunting trophies. As hunting tourism practice tells us, a significant number of hunters and members of their families are keen on visiting cultural landmarks during their stay in hunting tourism destination. This paper represents an overview of possibilities for making correlations between hunting and cultural tourism in the Bačka Upper Danube Basin.

*Key words:* hunting tourism, cultural tourism, correlation, Bačka Upper Danube Basin.

*Željko BJELAJAC, Marijana DUKIĆ MIJATOVIĆ, Žaklina SPALEVIĆ*

## **THE DANUBE STRATEGY AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE REGION AND THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

### **ABSTRACT**

The authors of this paper have given retrospective and current view of strategic measures and activities which are of importance for the region and the Republic of Serbia in relation to the economic development, natural resource management, and safety of navigation and environmental protection of the Danube, which flows through our country in the length of 587.4 km. The authors have analyzed the opportunities provided by the Danube Strategy and the modalities through which the EU seeks to form the Danube region and prosperity, provided by such homogenization. The authors have pointed to the necessity of adopting an appropriate strategic and legal framework in the field of water transport in accordance with European standards and practices as well as to the completion of works on fundamental national infrastructure projects, which will provide necessary conditions for smooth and economically prosperous navigation on the Danube in the region.

*Key words:* Danube strategy, economy, safety, environment.

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији  
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

339.923:061.1EU(082)

332.1(4-924.5)(082)

338.48(282.243.7)(082)

338.1(497.11)(082)

DANUBE strategy : strategic significance  
for Serbia / edited by Nevenka Jeftić  
Šarčević, Edita Stojić Karanović. - Belgrade  
: Institute of international politics and  
economics, 2012 (Belgrade : Želnid). - 348  
str. : graf. prikazi, tabele ; 25 cm

Tiraž 300. - Str. 7-12: Preface / Edita  
Stojić Karanović. - Napomene i bibliografske  
reference uz tekst. - Bibliografija uz svaki  
rad.

ISBN 978-86-7067-167-6

1. Jeftić Šarčević, Nevenka [уредник]

а) Европске интеграције - Зборници б)

Регионална сарадња - Подунавске државе -

Зборници с) Регионални развој - Подунавске

државе - Зборници д) Туризам - Подунавље -

Зборници е) Привредни развој - Србија -

Зборници

COBISS.SR-ID 191817228



ISBN 978-86-7067-167-6