

ENERGY BARGE

Building a Green Energy and Logistics Belt

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Deliverable 4.3.1

Transnational implementation plan for B2B meetings bringing together stakeholders from the bioenergy industry and the Danube logistics sector

8 October 2018

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I. About the ENERGY BARGE project

The Danube region offers a great potential for green energy in the form of biomass. The main objective of ENERGY BARGE is to exploit this potential in a sustainable way, considering the Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC, thereby increasing energy security and efficiency in the Danube countries. The project will bring together key actors along the entire value chain, biomass companies and Danube ports as well as relevant public authorities and policy stakeholders. The project maps value chains and facilitates the market uptake of biomass, supports better connected transport systems for green logistics and provides practical solutions and policy guidelines. FNR coordinates the project with its fourteen partners from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania.

Project coordinator

Agency for Renewable Resources

Fachagentur Nachwachsende Rohstoffe e.V.	FNR	Germany
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Project partners

BioCampus Straubing GmbH	BCG	Germany
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Deggendorf Institute of Technology	DIT	Germany
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Austrian Waterway Company	VIA	Austria
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Port of Vienna	PoVi	Austria
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Bioenergy2020+ GmbH	BE2020	Austria
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International Centre of Applied Research and Sustainable Technology	ICARST	Slovakia
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Slovak Shipping and Ports JSC	SPaP	Slovakia
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National Agricultural Research and Innovation Center	NARIC	Hungary
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MAHART-Freeport Co. Ltd.	MAHART	Hungary
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International Centre for Sustainable Development of Energy, Water and Environment Systems	SDEWES Centre	Croatia
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Public Institution Port Authority Vukovar	PoVu	Croatia
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Technology Center Sofia Ltd.	TCS	Bulgaria
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Romanian Association of Biomass and Biogas	ARBIO	Romania
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Federation of owners of forests and grasslands in Romania	Nostra Silva	Romania
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II. About this document

This document corresponds to D 4.3.1, a transnational implementation plan for B2B meetings bringing together stakeholders from the bioenergy industry and the Danube logistics sector in order to initiate new biomass supply chains along the Danube waterway. It has been prepared by:

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Editor(s)	Benedikt Grath (VIA), Simon Hartl (VIA), Bettina Matzner (VIA)
Author	Benedikt Grath (VIA), Simon Hartl (VIA)
Quality reviewer	Birger Kerckow (FNR)

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III. Executive Summary

The current implementation plan is a valuable and practice-oriented guideline for the organization and implementation of Business-to-Business (B2B) meetings. This document provides useful information and a comprehensive checklist which actively support the respective project partners BCG (Straubing), VIA, PoVi (Vienna), SPAP (Bratislava), MAHART (Budapest) and PoVu (Vukovar) in the organisation of their regional B2B meetings. Further, a draft agenda and a possible concept for a successful B2B meeting complement the implementation plan.

1. Background and objective

In Activity 4.3 (“Assessment of potentials and strategies for a modal shift towards Danube logistics by market actors”) five regional B2B meetings have to be organized by all logistics partners, namely BCG, VIA, PoVi, SPaP, MAHART and PoVu. The objective of the B2B meetings is to offer a low-threshold opportunity for new business contacts between the Danube logistics sector and cargo owners from the biomass and bioenergy industry.

The project partners are fully responsible for the organization and implementation of the regional B2B meeting. In order to actively support the project partners in their organization of the regional B2B meetings, a transnational implementation plan for B2B meetings (D 4.3.1) is provided by VIA. The document covers the most pressing issues such as the set-up of an agenda and the definition of thematic priorities for regional B2B meetings. It provides useful guidelines (checklist) for a successful organization of B2B meetings and accompanying B2B matchmaking tools. So far following dates and locations of the five planned B2B events have been specified by the project partners in the respective WP4 coordination meetings:

Project partners	Dates
→ VIA & PoVi (Vienna)	10-11 October 2018 (Danube Business Talks)
→ SPaP (Bratislava)	22 November 2018
→ MAHART (Budapest)	30 January 2019
→ PoVu (Vukovar)	05 February 2019
→ BCG (Straubing)	20 March 2019

Required participation of project partners

In general, the project partners BCG, VIA, PoVi, SPaP, MAHART and PoVu will participate in all five regional B2B events in order to actively contribute to the transnational exchange and to foster a multiplier effect. The inventory of potential users of Danube logistics from the bioenergy industry (D 4.1.2) shall be used in addition to existing contacts and networks (with focus on Danube logistics service providers) in order to reach potential participants from both sectors.

The remaining project partners, namely FNR, DIT, BE2020, ICARST, NARIC, SDEWES Centre, TCS, ARBIO & Nostra Silva will support the B2B meetings by involving stakeholders from the bioenergy industry and will participate in the regional B2B event in their specific country.

Concept implementation plan

The implementation plan introduces with a (1) general overview of the characteristics and benefits of a B2B meeting (“B2B meeting at a glance”), continues with detailed information on the (2) basic structure of a B2B event with its four key elements (opening, technical session, B2B matchmaking and closing), and concludes with (3) useful guidelines and a checklist for a successful organization of the regional B2B meeting.

2. Business-to-Business (B2B) meetings at a glance

Objective of B2B events

In the ENERGY BARGE project, the foreseen Business-to-Business (in short B2B) meetings offer a low-threshold opportunity to facilitate new business contacts between the Danube logistics sector and cargo owners from the biomass and bioenergy industry. A targeted involvement of stakeholders from the biomass and bioenergy industry is guaranteed by the unique cross-sectoral approach of the ENERGY BARGE project. The B2B network platforms respectively events will be carried out in a neutral (!) manner and on regional level. Thus no single market actors will be favoured or disadvantaged.

The cost-effective and sustainable transport of biomass (bio-based raw materials and bioenergy products) on the Danube can be easily promoted and fostered within the frame of the planned B2B events.

B2B meeting platforms and events are a very useful and well suited tool to offer the logistics service providers and cargo owners (potential users from the biomass and bioenergy industry) a customized and effective meeting opportunity to facilitate sustainable business contacts and support a modal shift towards the Danube waterway – one of the main objectives of the ENERGY BARGE project.

Furthermore B2B meeting events are organised in order to:

- ➔ enable an exchange between experts, political stakeholders and business representatives
- ➔ deepen know-how of relevant stakeholders on a thematic field (biomass logistics)
- ➔ enable business-focused speed-dating meetings (matchmaking)

Type and duration of a B2B event

In general, B2B meetings can be organised as a separate regional event, as part of a conference, fair or expert meeting. The duration of a B2B event can be set individually, however most B2B events show durations such as a full day, two half days or one half day.

Target groups of B2B events

An essential task in planning a B2B event is the determination and definition of the desired target groups (which the B2B event will address) in order to establish a clear profile of the B2B event. In the ENERGY BARGE project, the addressed target groups are obviously:

- ➔ Danube logistics service providers (port and terminal operators, shipping companies, ship brokers, forwarding companies)
- ➔ cargo owners interested in using Danube logistics services (with focus on the bioenergy and biomass industry)
- ➔ additionally: lobby & interest groups, economic chambers, associations, political representatives (ministries of transport or economics)

The first two mentioned target groups are obvious as the B2B meeting addresses the Danube logistics sector and potential users of logistics services from the biomass and bioenergy industry. The latter target group (lobby & interests group, associations, political representative) also constitutes essential stakeholders as they might act as keynote speakers with high-profile publicity or as multipliers distributing information on the event to their network. Well selected representatives (with expertise in the given thematic focus) can raise the interest in a particular B2B event.

3. Basic structure of a B2B event (draft agenda)

Each conference or event needs a meaningful and a well elaborated programme structure. In general, the four key elements are sufficient to form a solid agenda basis for a successful B2B event: (1) opening/ key notes, (2) technical sessions/ expert presentations, (3) B2B matchmaking and finally (4) summary/conclusion. The fourth agenda item can be regarded as optional as the implementation of B2B events should be organised in an effective and time-saving manner ("Time is money!"). A draft agenda is illustrated in Figure 1 which shows a typical structure of an established B2B event. Please keep in mind that lunch and/or coffee breaks between the agenda elements are highly recommended in order to keep the participants attention on high level during the entire event.

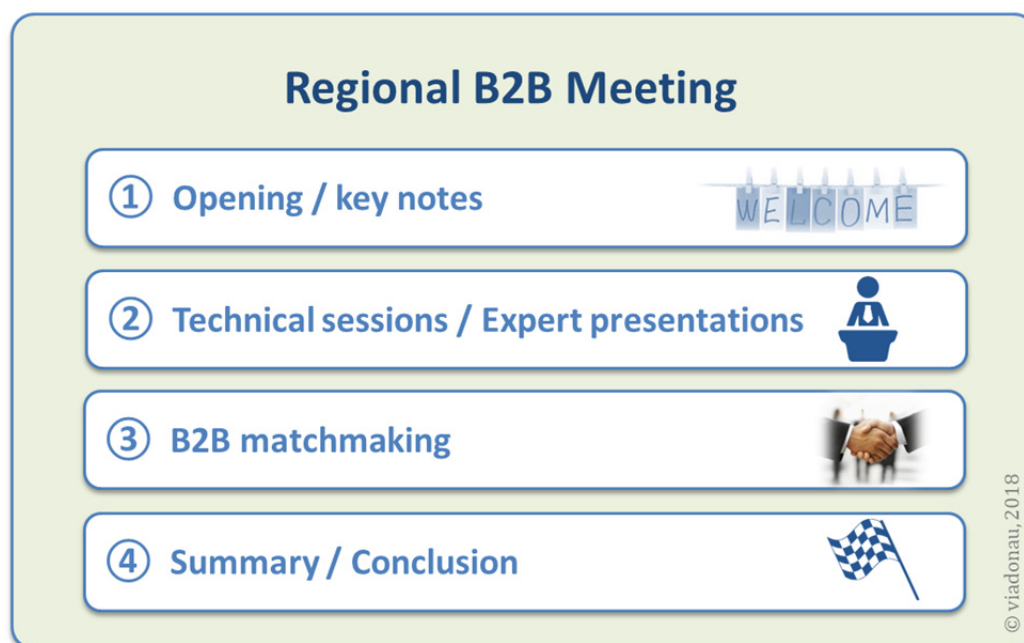


Figure 1: Draft agenda of a regional Business to Business/ B2B meeting not including coffee or lunch breaks, © viadonau

The following structure of the current implementation plan (chapter 3.1 to 3.4) is fully based on the draft agenda structure (Figure 1) in order to provide practice-oriented and clear guidance for all organizers of the foreseen B2B meetings. In the following, all four key elements are divided into subchapters which are described in detail.

3.1. Opening / Keynote

The opening session marks the official beginning of the B2B event. Further, the opening session should be supported by high-level representatives and keynote speakers such as political decision-makers with a meaningful and topic-related core message, or cargo owners (from the biomass and bioenergy industry) presenting their business portfolio and needs in terms of logistics, or logistics service providers highlighting the potential of Danube logistics for the bioenergy and biomass industry. It contributes to a positive and constructively event atmosphere when the keynote speakers give the following discussions and meetings a positive drive, meaning that the benefits of Danube logistics services are communicated towards the potential users or demonstrated by describing practical examples. It is beneficial to brief the speakers in advance so that their contributions are tailor-made to the B2B meeting!

Opening / Keynote speakers in brief

- political decision-makers
- cargo owners (from biomass & bioenergy industry)
- Danube logistics service providers

The purpose of an outstanding keynote presented during the opening and keynote session is among others (1) to establish the framework of the upcoming event programme/agenda and (2) to deliver the core message of the event (what is the aim of this event? → to offer a low-threshold opportunity for all participants to make new business contacts). Prominent keynote speakers as a leading force can significantly increase the interest in the B2B event.

3.2. Technical session / expert presentation

The second part of a B2B event is usually carried out in form of technical sessions or expert presentations with a predefined thematic focus. The main purpose of these sessions is to enable a lively discussion and to activate know-how exchange between demand and supply side of both sectors (Danube logistics sector and biomass respectively bioenergy industry sector). To support the promotion of Danube logistics, a presentation of “success stories” consisting of successful biomass transports along the Danube at present and in the past supports the involved participants to realize the broad possibilities that Danube logistics and Danube navigation offer.

Technical sessions and expert presentations are especially foreseen for following target groups:

- (1) the biomass and bioenergy sector
- (2) logistics service providers (shipping companies, ship brokers, ports etc.)
- (3) representations of interest and associations such as biomass network groups, port unions, chamber of economy etc.

The relevant business sector, meaning the (1) biomass and bioenergy sector, shall be addressed directly during the technical sessions, in order to gain the opportunity to define the logistics requirements towards the Danube logistics services and to get into direct contact with experts from the Danube logistics sector. Further, the (2) Danube logistics sector will use these sessions

to present their professional service portfolio to potential customers. The last stakeholder group, (3) representations of interest and associations, has the overall knowledge and know-how of the general needs in both sectors (biomass & bioenergy industry and logistics service sector) and ensures the participation of its members within its strong networks and associations.

3.3. B2B matchmaking

The most essential and probably most long-lasting event part is the B2B matchmaking session. The B2B matchmaking tool is a quick and easy way to meet potential business partners, where people perform business meetings at high speed. Only 15 minutes are enough to build first connections, while further details are clarified during in-depth conversations after the event.

B2B matchmaking at a glance

- create an exclusive opportunity for bilateral networking activities during the event (supply meets demand) → matchmaking tool to facilitate contacts
- concept: speed dating method used for B2B contacts
- aim: establish a first contact; details to be clarified afterwards
- Danube logistics service providers and potential users (cargo owners, forwarding companies) are brought together in an efficient manner

B2B matchmaking – characteristics

The B2B matchmaking meetings are arranged weeks ahead of the event (with fixed time slots). The meeting request can be accepted or declined by both participants and each participant can decide on its own whom to meet with in advance. Every participant has to fill out an online registration form in which their offers, needs, special requirements and current & planned projects are described. This leads to a very efficient matchmaking process which allows the participants to directly identify the preferred meeting partner on the basis of the registration form as the information will be provided to other participants.

In general, one meeting only lasts 15 until 20 minutes. The short meeting duration allows the participants to join as many B2B meetings as possible during a day. The B2B matchmaking tool is a great opportunity to gain several new business contacts in a very short time period due to its structured and efficient meeting format.

B2B matchmaking – how it works

In this section, the registration procedure and the organisational structure of the B2B matchmaking tool is introduced briefly. Further, the registration procedure is schematically illustrated in Figure 2.

Registration procedure:

- (1) Registration is mandatory for all participants
- (2) Company profiles are visible for all other event participants
- (3) Specified company and participant profile and sectors of interest
- (4) In a given time period the participant can select the meeting partners & send meeting requests (via digital platform or e-mail to organisers)
- (5) Participants are able to accept or decline the requests
- (6) Final meeting schedule is sent some days before the event



Figure 2: Schematic overview of registration procedure, © viadonau

Organisational structure

The B2B matchmaking session contains several meeting slots with the same duration (from 15 to 20 minutes). These meetings are held at a location which is suitable for business to business meetings, meaning that sufficient tables, seats and space are available. As the different business to business meetings run in parallel, several tables for at least 2-4 persons need to be provided and organised. Each meeting table has an individual number in order to be easily found by all participants (orientation guide).

Please keep in mind that the meeting tables should be protected from environmental and conversation noise (caused by other meeting participants) in order to allow an untroubled meeting session (sufficient distance between tables and if possible room partitions). Further, a clearly segregated meeting area ensures confidentiality for the business negotiations taking place during the event.

The total amount of possible meetings is directly influenced by the number of available tables and the defined meeting duration. The more persons participating at the B2B matchmaking meetings, the more tables and slots will be needed.



Figure 3: B2B matchmaking meeting sessions in Linz (Austria), © viadonau 2016

3.4. Summary/ conclusion

During the last agenda item “summary/ conclusion” the findings and conclusions of the current event are summarized in a nutshell. The event host presents a short outline of the presented and discussed transport opportunities discussed between the biomass respectively the bioenergy industry and the Danube logistics sector. Another focus of the summary/ conclusion session is to place again the core message of entire event and to point out the relevance of B2B conferences and B2B networking for the Danube logistics and biomass respectively bioenergy industry sector.

Summary/ conclusion in brief

- ➔ summary of findings and insights from the event
- ➔ outline of transport opportunities
- ➔ repetition of the core message
- ➔ point out the relevance of B2B conferences and B2B networks (see following text)

The overall objectives of B2B meetings in the frame of ENERGY BARGE are firstly the provision of neutral meeting platforms in order to facilitate regional B2B contacts between the biomass and bioenergy industry and the Danube logistics sector. Secondly, the B2B meetings are a good opportunity for the participating companies from the biomass and bioenergy industry to meet potential transport operators, port respectively terminal operators. With this meeting platform, a transnational exchange and interdisciplinary interaction is initiated and an increased exploitation of synergies between the biomass and bioenergy industry and the Danube logistics sector will be fostered.

4. Guidelines for B2B meeting organization

This section presents in brief the major and essential bullet points and aspects for the preparation and organizing of a successful B2B meeting in your country. To support the project partner as designated hosts of the regional B2B meetings, VIA provides a comprehensive checklist for an easy meeting organisation (see chapter 4.1). Please note that the checklist provides useful recommendations based on long-term experience. It is however not obligatory for other project partners to use it.

Organisational guidelines in brief

- Checklist for event organization (recommendations - not obligatory)
- Definition of event type, target group and date
- Recommended: integration in larger conference format
- Content (thematic focus, possible speakers)
- Structure (agenda)
- Public procurements (to be started as soon as possible)
- Venue, moderation, catering, technical equipment
- External event management required?

First of all, a reasonable **event date** and an appropriate **event venue** (suitable for the planned thematic focus and expected group of participants) have to be determined by all project partners. Please have a check in the event calendar of your sector or of the several interest groups/networking platforms if there are no major conflicting schedules with the planned event date. Otherwise the number of participants will remain low and the concept of a sustainable B2B meeting might fail. Another very essential aspect during the first step is the definition of the **planned event type and duration**, meaning that the event can be implemented for example as a conference, fair or expert meeting and with a half or full day agenda.

So far following dates and venues of the five planned B2B events have been specified by the project partners:

Project partners	Dates
→ VIA & PoVi (Vienna)	10-11 October 2018 (Danube Business Talks)
→ SPaP (Bratislava)	22 November 2018
→ MAHART (Budapest)	30 January 2019
→ PoVu (Vukovar)	05 February 2019
→ BCG (Straubing)	20 March 2019

In the first phase, a first draft programme (based on the draft agenda in chapter 3, Figure 1) needs to be set up by all project partners in which the planned thematic focus of the event is visible. The draft is essential for the targeted invitation of appropriate speakers to the B2B event. Further, the invited speakers will get a good idea of the planned B2B meeting and are more open to confirm their participation. Key participants have to be contacted directly and beforehand. It is beneficial to brief the speakers in advance so that their contributions are tailor-made to the B2B meeting.

Contracting/ organisational framework (venue, catering, event equipment)

The procurement procedure for the catering, venue, equipment or external event management should be started as soon as possible. It is also possible to have the event organized by an external company. There is a number of international and national service providers that offer the organization and implementation of B2B meetings. After the ideal venue is found, the venue has to be booked as soon as possible in line with the applicable procurement regulations.

Further, the catering has to be organized. After collecting the final number of participants and considering a buffer in the number of participants ("reserve"), the information should be submitted to the caterer timely. This approach ensures a sufficient supply of food & drinks during the entire event. Please always check before the event, if the required technical equipment (microphones, beamer, etc.) is available at the venue. Further, a technical support on-site is absolutely recommended and should be requested.

Mailings/ announcements/ press releases & PR

The possible participants are identified in a timely manner previously to the B2B meeting and the type of invitation (email, paper invitation etc.) is defined. If desired, the announcement for the B2B event can be disseminated by conventional media, social media or articles in newspaper and specific magazines or newsletters (of other associations).

Time table of preparations in brief

→ Setting up an event date	at least 5 months before
→ Finding a venue, set up of agenda, inviting speakers	4 months before
→ Sending out first information to possible participants	3-4 month before
→ Reminder including agenda and speakers	2 month before
→ "One month to go" - reminder including final agenda	1 month before

Please keep in mind that the project partner PoVi will collect all meeting documents (agenda, LoP, minutes, pictures, presentations) for the reporting and the compilation of the deliverable D 4.3.2 (assessment report).

Figure 4 schematically illustrates the key tasks before and after the implementation of the regional B2B meetings. The post processing step helps the event organiser to receive targeted feedback (evaluation), to be self-critical (lessons learnt) and to improve the event for the next time. The checklist for the overall implementation and organization of the B2B meeting is found in chapter 4.1.

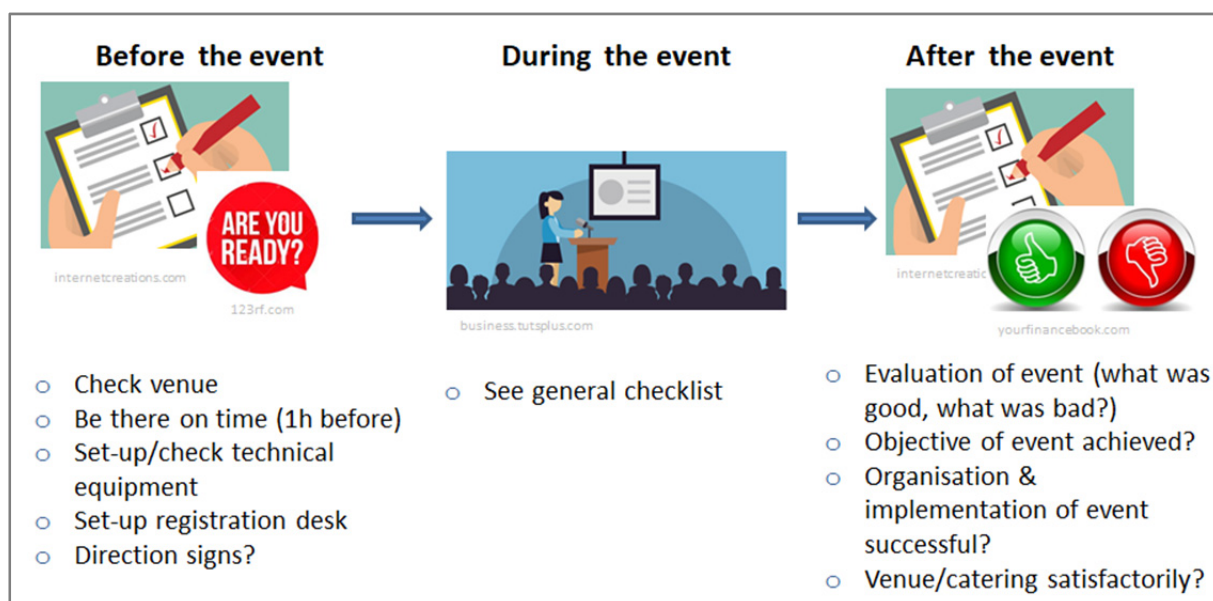


Figure 4: Schematic illustration of key tasks before, during and after the regional B2B meeting, © viadonau

In addition to the evaluation of the event mentioned in Figure 4 (organisational issues), the WP4 team will also assess the impact of the regional B2B meetings after implementation according to the following criteria (in line with the main objectives of the ENERGY BARGE project):

- ➔ Number of participants in all regional B2B meetings
- ➔ Number of B2B matchmaking contacts in the Danube region
- ➔ Requests for transports on the Danube waterways after the implementation of B2B meetings
- ➔ Success factors and required guidance according to the participants' feedback

The number of transport requests which resulted from the B2B meeting can be assessed by the B2B organisers in form of personal feedback from the participants (personal conversation, phone call or email contact). A targeted and neutral follow-up support for promising participants by the B2B organisers might lead to a successful transport on the Danube.

The findings and conclusions will be integrated in D 4.3.2 assessment report on potentials and barriers for the establishment of sustainable logistics services.

4.1. Checklist for B2B meeting organization

Topic	Check	Who?	When?
Target definition	Definition of event objective		
	Which format is suitable?		
	Schedule: conflicts with other events? (check event calendar of network, etc.)		
	Set up of meeting plan: time, duration, methodology, format, task distribution, required material & documents		
Task distribution	Main responsibility for organisation		
	Moderation		
	Minutes		
	Coordination of internal & external speakers		
Venue & Catering	Who presents? (key speakers!)		
	Definition of scope of services: coffee/ lunch/ dinner break, technical equipment, seating plan, etc.		
	Registration desk		
	Spatial requirements		
Communication	Catering order		
	Preparation e-news, social media, press release		
Registration	Photographer		
	Online registration – website or e-mails		
	Contact essential participants directly		
Final invitation & final agenda	Badges/ table signs, etc.		
	Send final invitation and agenda of event latest 3-4 months before		
	Send reminder(s) of deadline for registration		
Moderation	Briefing of moderation and speakers (topics, duration)		
	Call for prepared presentations		
B2B matchmaking	See chapter 3.3		
Documents during events	Prepare meeting folder		
	Print documents and assign responsible persons		
Post processing	Reflexion of the meeting by the intern project team and/ or the participants		
	Can preparation be improved?		
	Can the operational practices be improved?		

Contact

Austrian Waterway Company (VIA)

Simon Hartl

Donau-City-Straße 1

1220 Wien

E-mail: simon.hartl@viadonau.org

<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/energy-barge>