



Press Release

Undetected Pearl: Exploring the potential of soft tourism in the Danube Delta

Participants from 9 European countries jointly visited the Danube Delta and explored the region's potential for soft tourism and sustainable mobility

(Ulm, 16 October 2018) – Around 40 participants and representatives from the tourism and mobility sector visited the Danube Delta in Romania during a study visit in the project Transdanube.Pearls. Together they explored existing mobility and tourism services in the region. The trip was followed by a partner meeting in which first success stories, such as the mobility information center in Slovenia were presented.

Altogether 40 participants explored the Danube Delta in the course of a study visit in the project Transdanube.Pearls from 1st to 3rd October 2018. The study visit was organized by the Romanian project partner, the South-East Regional Development Agency (SER DA). In these days, partners had the chance to experience a unique adventure and visit one special future Danube.Pearl: The Danube Delta. This region, where the Danube enters the Black Sea after having encompassed 10 countries is characterized by untouched nature, a diversity of species and high attractiveness for soft tourism.

The participants travelled from Tulcea, to Crişan and Sulina, the easternmost point in Romania where in former times the European Danube Commission was established with the common goal to improve river transport in the Danube region. In the course of kayak or bicycle tours on the Danube shore, participants experienced the potential of the area in fostering sustainable mobility in tourism and thereby, protecting the natural and cultural heritage. Moreover, a hike through the Letea Forest, the oldest natural reservation in Romania and meetings with representatives of Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve underlined the necessity to protect natural and cultural heritage. The last days have been spent in the village of Sfântu Gheorghe that is surrounded by many river channels, seas and a beautiful landscape that is most of the year home of different species of pelicans. The goal of the study visit was to get to know this very special future Pearl that is listed as World Heritage site and to collect practical experiences on sustainable mobility and tourism services that are in line with the



protection of the natural environment and habitats. Besides, representatives and strategic partners from the tourism and mobility sector were encouraged to learn more about the project and the pilot actions the partners are working on. The trip was followed by a partner meeting from 3 – 5 October 2018 in which the partners reported about first success stories in implementing pilot actions, such as the mobility information center that was opened in Murska Sobota in June 2018 or the new bus line on the last mile from the tram station to the lake Neusiedl in Austria. Besides, they fixed the next meeting for representatives of the future Pearls who already met in July 2018 in Neu-Ulm, Germany and will implement a transnational network of Danube.Pearls, dedicated to sustainable mobility in tourism.

About the Project Transdanube.Pearls

The EU-project started at the beginning of 2017 and will last for 2,5 years. The Interreg – Danube Transnational Programme is co-funding Transdanube.Pearls with an overall budget of 2.9 million euros. The project is led by the Environment Agency Austria. Altogether 15 organizations from 9 European countries and 24 associated strategic partners are part of the project and committed themselves to the concept of sustainable mobility in tourism. Until the project end in June 2019, each destination will foster sustainable mobility in tourism through a comprehensive set of actions. These include the implementation of mobility information centers and mobility managers, the elaboration of dedicated capacity building measures for local and regional stakeholders and the improvement of information on mobility and tourism for inhabitants and tourists. Additionally, pilot actions on bike rental, carriage, parking systems or cycling paths will be carried out, in order to enhance sustainable mobility along the Danube.

Picture 1: Participants of the study visit at the famous light house in Sulina, Romania ©

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Picture 2: Kayak tour on Danube sidearm close to Sfântu Gheorghe, Romania © Transdanube.Pearls

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