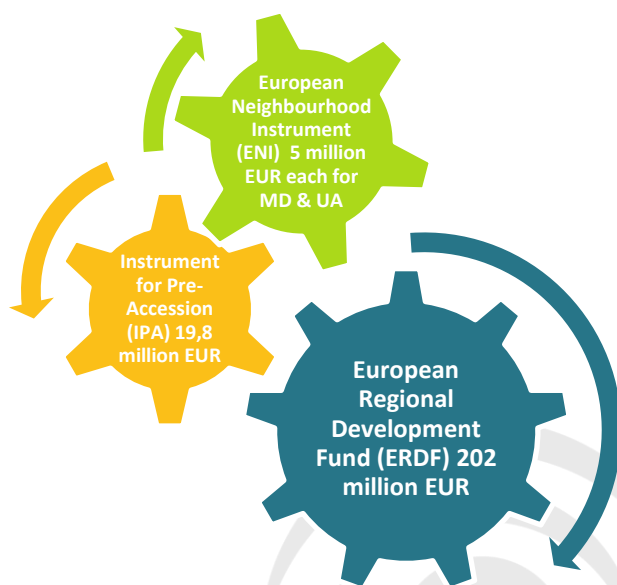


### Citizens summary

The Danube Transnational Programme (DTP) is a financing instrument of the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), better known as Interreg. ETC is one of the goals of the European Union cohesion policy and provides a framework for the implementation of joint actions and policy exchanges between national, regional and local actors from different Member States.

The programme area covers **nine Member States** (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany with two lands Baden-Württemberg and Bayern, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia) and **five non-EU Member States** (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Republic of Serbia and four provinces of Ukraine: Chernivetska Oblast, Ivano-Frankiviska Oblast, Zakarpatska Oblast, Odessa Oblast), being composed of 69 regions.

The implementation of Danube Transnational Programme is supported by the European Union with an allocation of **EUR 231,924,597.00**, originating from three main sources: (*see graphic*). These amounts will be complemented by the **national contributions** of the countries participating in the programme (except technical assistance funds for ENI which follows a different procedure).



The year 2017 has been crucial for the implementation of the Danube Transnational Programme. The core objectives of the 2017 programme implementation have been successfully achieved:

- Successful implementation of the contracted projects (1st call and Priority Area Coordinators (PACs) of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region): 1st call projects reported the double of the estimated amount (a little over 9 million EUR of ERDF and a little less than half a million EUR of IPA) and are running smoothly;
- The management and control system has been set up, all important elements of the programme management system are fairly regulated;

- The monitoring system (e-MS) has been set up by mid-2017 and has been fully functioning;
- The national control system of the partner states (besides Moldova and Ukraine) have been considered compliant by the Audit Authority;
- All three IPA Financial Agreements have been signed and the implementation of the IPA project parts is running smoothly. The control system of all IPA countries has been designated and is operational;
- ENI full integration became a real option after the modification of the Cooperation Programme (CP) and the signature of the Financial Agreement with Ukraine on the 15th December 2017.

The indicators that state the success of the 2017 tasks are:

- First payments: by the end of 2017, 3.33 million EUR of ERDF and 240 thousand EUR of IPA were reimbursed to contracted 20 projects;
- In December 2017, the Certifying Authority submitted its first Application for Payment per fund for requesting 4.15 million EUR of ERDF and 263 thousand EUR of IPA from the EC, aiming to receive the payments out of the 2017 EU budget;
- The second call for projects has been launched in May (overall 128 valid proposals have been submitted, out of which 119 were eligible and were under quality assessment at the end of 2017).

The Cooperation Programme has been revised and finalised in June 2017. This revision allowed the inclusion of the ENI funds for Ukraine and Moldova in the 2nd Call for Proposals.

#### PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES



The participating Member States and IPA countries have submitted their first Verification Report (VR) to us on the proper functioning of the national control system, the payment of state contributions if any, and eventual irregularities and recoveries. Based on these reports, the MA/JS has prepared its own first VR at programme level to draw up and submit the

first payment applications to the European Commission by the Certifying Authority at the end of the year.

The tender for the operational evaluation was launched in July 2017 with a deadline set for the end of August 2017. The contract has been signed in November 2017.

The partner countries were requested to submit documents for contracting and all of their Technical Assistance (TA) project data was included into the DTP e-MS. The modification of TA budget, as well as the revision of the TA Manual, took into account the additional resources and tasks related to IPA and ENI. In December 2017, the first NCP TA Progress Reports have been approved by the MA/JS for reimbursement.

The Seed Money Facility (SMF) Application Package has been finalised with its application modelling in the e-MS during the summer 2017. Much effort were shown to prepare the e-MS for the SMF application as it was



the first time for the DTP to use the e-MS in an open call. Before the official opening of the SMF call, a launch event was hosted in the premises of the EU representation in Austria and included the active presence of the European Commission, the EUSDR PACs and representatives from the most relevant funding instruments present in the Danube region. Over 100 participants attended the launch event and gave excellent feedbacks on the fruitfulness of it. By its deadline, 65 proposals have been submitted. The eligibility check started in 2017 and was finalised by the spring 2018.



The 6th Annual Forum of the EUSDR has been organised by the EUSDR Presidency, the European Commission and the DTP and took place in Budapest for two days mid-October. Over 1,000 people attended at least for one day to the event and provided great visibility to the DTP. The DTP organised a plenary session, several workshops and had its own stand in the exhibition area.

