

THE DANUBE REGION TRANSPORT DAYS 2012
Towards coordinated efforts for efficient transport in the Danube Region
18-19 November, Ljubljana / Slovenia

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I would like to congratulate you for organising the first annual stakeholder conference, "The Danube Region Transport days 2012 - Towards coordinated efforts for efficient transport in the Danube Region". I wish you success and I am sure that the conference will have an important contribution to the implementation of the EU Danube Strategy.

Your contribution is very important for us, as we debate in the European Parliament the proposals for Structural Funds, for Connecting Europe Facility and TEN-T guidelines. All these regulations will complement each other, in order to offer a wide range of opportunities and the needed financial resources for the development of Trans-european transport infrastructure.

Therefore, having in mind the great need of Danube riparian countries to develop their transport infrastructure, we believe that efforts should be done to include strategic transport projects for the Danube region in the core TEN-T network as well as in the comprehensive network. From this perspective, it is crucially important to work closely with the coordinators for Priority Area no. 1 - ***Improve mobility and multimodality of inland waterways, road, rail and air*** and to include the identified flagship projects into the Operational Programmes for the transport sector for the financial period 2014-2020.

We ask the Commission and the Member States to improve the infrastructure and economic performance of the Danube region and to complete the implementation of multimodal transport corridors and the projects related to the Danube Region being part of the core and comprehensive trans-European transport network - on time and in an environmentally sustainable way.

The European Parliament requires the integration of the EU transport system with those of the EU's neighbouring countries in the Danube region and stresses the importance of making provision for co-modality projects.

The European Parliament regards the inland waterway navigation system as an important aspect of the development of transport in the Danube region, whilst recognising the decrease in inland navigation, which is mainly due to the strong economic downturn, and emphasises the importance of eliminating the bottlenecks on the Rhine/Meuse-Main-Danube waterway axis and improving the entire intermodal transport system along the Danube, while focusing on the combination between improved inland ports and logistics, inland navigation and rail transport and taking into account the additional possibilities of short sea shipping.

The Transport and Tourism committee from the European Parliament supports the development of the Corridor no 10 - Strasbourg - Danube - from the Regulation regarding Connecting Europe Facility as well as the improvement of the inland waterway, road and rail transport in the Danube Region.

The European Parliament is and will always be a permanent partner in the process of further developing and implementing the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and giving a higher priority of the Danube River within the EU policies.

I wish you good luck!