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Project Information

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Lead partner: BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH

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<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/godanubio>

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Press release 1

20.08.2020

Successful start of the GoDanuBio project

On 1st July the Danube Transnational Programme project “Participative Ecosystems for fostering the revitalization of rural-urban cooperation through governing Danube Circular Bioeconomy”(GoDanuBio) started its activities

The Kick-of-Meeting, hold online on 30th July and with more than 40 attendees, was the official start of the GoDanuBio project. The wide consortium includes 19 project partners and 6 associated partners from 10 countries (AT, BG, CZ, DE, HR, HU, RO, SI, SK, RS) of the Danube macro-region. Nearly 70% of the participants are Clusters, Cluster associations and/or Business support organisations. The local authorities are represented through 3 partners and in a major degree by 6 Associated Strategic Partners.

Danube regions and cities face major societal transitions regarding demographic change. The rural exodus is caused by better employment opportunities for the youth and the prospect of a better life in cities. The movement of labor leads to depopulated areas leaving an aging and increasingly unskilled population behind. With the support of GoDanuBio activities the Danube regions can make a significant transformation. Co-creating ongoing and future strategies to increase the attractiveness of rural areas will be the key to give the youth new incentives for a rural renaissance.

During the project implementation the Circular Bioeconomy will be used as a tool to foster regional development: It is a concept focusing on the transition of a fossil-resource based economy towards an economy making use of sustainable production of biological resources and processes to develop new products and services, thus setting rural areas and their development into focus. The concept catalyzes interdisciplinary cooperation between different policy areas and productive sectors to actively address demographic change. In this sense, GoDanuBio will create value through participative governance, knowledge exchange, untapping biobased value chains and, ultimately, raising the attractiveness to stay and even move to rural areas.

The project partners will join forces till December 2022:

- ✓ To identify the local actors, establish cross-sectoral collaborations and prove the benefits of the “bioeconomisation” of the regional excellence, demonstrating the economic and societal values of the biobased ecosystems;
- ✓ To reveal the rural-urban, cross-regional and transnational opportunities for cooperation to put the circular bioeconomy in practice throughout the Danube macro-region;
- ✓ To develop an ecosystem for systematic multi-level governance with actors from the regional policy level, industry, academia and civil organisations. This approach aims at leveraging the institutional capacity of the participating regions and support transformative processes to tackle demographic change and brain drain.

The duration of the project is 30 months. The total financed budget is 2,713,796.50 Euro.

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Project partners: BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg (Lead Partner), Cluster Agentur Baden-Württemberg, ClusterAgentur Baden-Württemberg, hosted by VDI/VDE IT , Poly4Eml/Anteja ECG d.o.o, Romanian Cluster Association, IFKA Public Benefit Non-profit Limited Company for the Development of the Industry Bulgarian Employers' Association of Innovative Technologies (BRAIT), Ministry of Education, Science and Sport – Slovenja, Bioeconomy Cluster – Slovenija, Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment of Romania, National Cluster Association – CZ, Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency, Croatian Wood Cluster, Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts of the Republic of Croatia, Ghelinta Commune, Business Upper Austria – OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur Ltd, Styrian Technology Park, City of Sigmaringen, Kosice Self-governing region, Regional Agency for the Development of Small and Medium Size Enterprises Alma Mons Ltd,

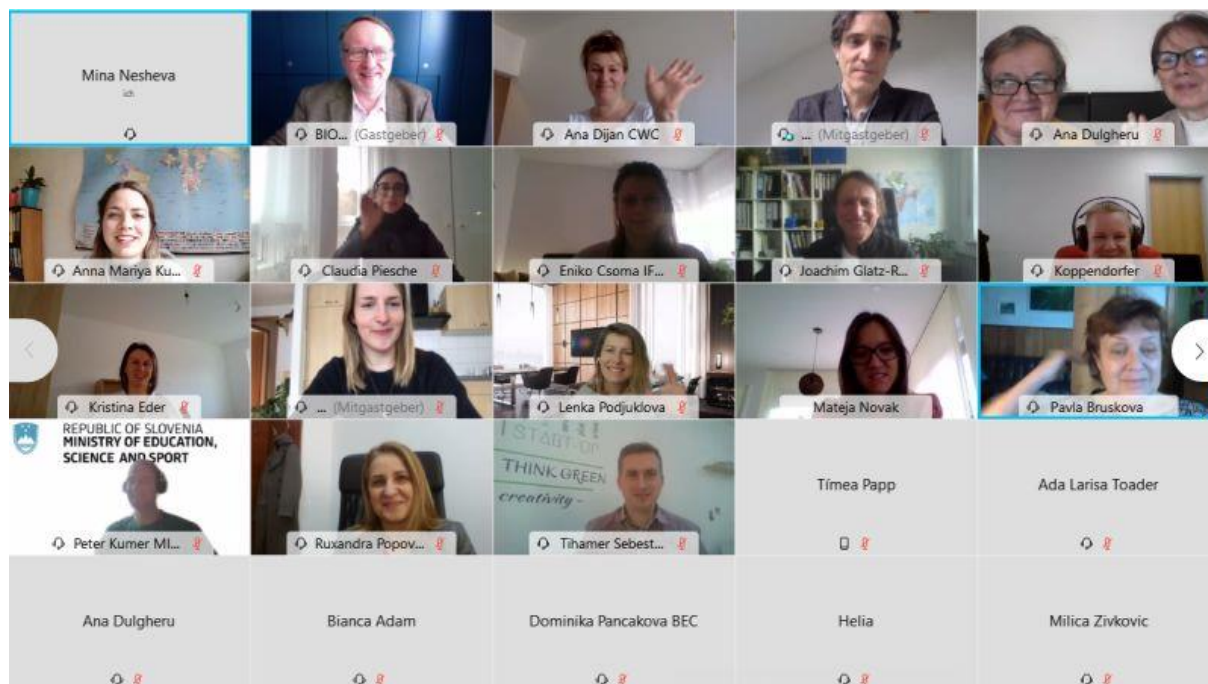
Strategic Associated partners: Provincial Secretariat for Regional Development, Interregional Cooperation and Local Self-Government, Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic, Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia, EUREGIO Bayerischer Wald - Böhmerwald / Regionalmanagement Mühviertel, Association of communes of Romania, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, European Secretariat

GoDanuBio – The initial phase is over!

The first period is over and we would like to share with you what we have been up to. Also feel free to check out our outputs in the library.

PSG Meeting February 2021

At the beginning of February, we had our second PSG meeting. The partners and the associated strategic partners were present. Furthermore, interesting insights were given by external speakers. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting had to be held online.



After opening remarks from the lead partner, inspirational talks were given by two external speakers. Dr. Barna Kovács (BIOEAST Secretary General) spoke about the mission of the BIOEAST initiative. Its vision for 2030 is to develop knowledge and cooperation based circular bioeconomies, which helps to enhance the inclusive growth of the regions and to create new value-added jobs especially in rural areas, maintaining or even strengthening environmental sustainability. This talk was followed by the presentation of Igor Kos (WCYCLE Institute, Maribor). He spoke about the circular economy development there and the numerous projects, which should help to establish close cooperation between local government, public companies, industry and citizens. Afterwards, the first project results of GoDanuBio were presented. You can find further information on them below and in our [library](#). The partners' reports revealed unanimously the current status and problems in the respective regions in the fields of

bioeconomy, demographic change and rural development and the importance of GoDanuBio activities to tackle the identified challenges. A brief overview on further work packages was given. This was followed by two portrait presentations. Blaz Barboric (Geodetic Institute of Slovenia) gave an interesting insight into the results of the Attractive Danube Interreg DTP project, which can also be capitalized for GoDanuBio. Afterwards, Blanka Dvoráková presented Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic (ASP in GoDanuBio), an association certified by the World Health Organization. Through nationwide networking, member municipalities can share experiences and good practices at local and regional level.

Our first outputs are available in the library!

We are happy to announce that our first deliverables are now available in our [library](#). Feel free to check them out if you are interested. In the first deliverable the partners from the respective regions worked together. From a list of completed and ongoing EU projects and macro-regional documents, they selected what had already been capitalized in the regions in the form of strategies, action plans and guidelines. Accompanying this capitalization, current strategies in the regions were mapped in the second deliverable as a synthesis report. The output was that bioeconomy is of great interest in the regions, but the perception of the topic shows differences. Only a quarter of 35 strategies and documents found are directly related to bioeconomy, demographic change or rural development, the rest are more general and cross-cutting. If you want to know more, feel free to download the documents and browse through them!

You can find us on social media!

We are also active on [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#). We would be happy to get in contact with you!

Capitalisation of existing results and mapping of governance structures in the Danube macro-region

At the beginning of the project, the policy framework conditions in the areas of circular economy, rural development and demographic change in the project participating regions¹ were analysed in order to later determine strengths and weaknesses within the Danube macro-region. Important key messages were identified, which are important for the later course of the project in order to identify missing links for regional circular bioeconomies and to follow up where necessary.

The work was of an analytical nature. Using a list of completed or ongoing EU projects or macro-regional documents, the partners presented in their reports the extent to which results have already been capitalised in current policies and strategies. Frequently mentioned here were the projects DanuBioValNet (2017-2019), FORESDA (2017-2019) and MOVECO (2016-2019) from the Interreg Danube Transnational Programme and the macro-regional documents "Bioeconomy development in EU regions" (European Commission, 2017), "European Commission Report on the Impact of Demographic Change" (2020) and "How to use RDPs to support rural bioeconomy?" (European Network for Rural Development, 2019). The existing strategies containing the project topics in the regions were summarised and presented in a synthesis report. In general, 35 strategies were identified within the regions, of which about a quarter dealt specifically with one of the project topics and the majority had a broader scope.

Main challenges in the areas of bioeconomy, rural areas and demographic change

While some regions already have a bioeconomy strategy (Baden-Württemberg and Slovakia), the topic is mostly only touched upon in strategies of a more generic nature in the other regions. As a result, there is a different understanding of the term bioeconomy, especially where there is no strategy. Another problem that was frequently mentioned by the partners is a difficult or lacking communication between relevant actors.

Regarding rural areas and demographic change, the reports were more consistent. In most regions, rural areas are characterised by poor income opportunities and the quality of life is often in need of improvement. One of the reasons given for this was that rural areas are usually not high on the list of priorities of political decision-makers and that the focus of companies is too much on production and less on raw (or regional) materials. Among other things, this results in rural depopulation, especially of highly specialised workers, and an ageing population. Reasons for this are, for example, the lack of digitalisation, but also a lack of a political framework. None of the regions has a specific strategy regarding demographic change.

Consequences for GoDanuBio

¹ Austria (AT, Upper Austria), Bulgaria (BG), Croatia (HR), Czech Republic (CZ), Germany (DE, Baden-Württemberg), Hungary (HU), Romania (RO), Serbia (RS), Slovakia (SL), Slovenia (SI)

Based on the reports and the capitalisation of existing projects and macro-regional documents, it was found that it is important to demonstrate that the bioeconomy can be a key to solving the problems mentioned above. On this path, it is important to involve different actors. Above all, clusters need to be bioeconomised more in the future and their role needs to be strengthened. The way for long-term cluster policies must be paved. In rural areas, new jobs must be created through the digital transformation, but also through bioeconomisation². Participatory governance should also serve for this purpose. For this, policy decision-makers must be specifically influenced and stakeholders from various sectors must be involved. Improving synergies and communication between the actors is indispensable. Ultimately, the main task is to create a link between the topics of bioeconomy, rural development and demographic change to overcome the current territorial unbalances in the Danube macro-region.

² The full deployment of the bioeconomy potential lies in the engagement and participation of all related-industries and stakeholders through the bio-based value chains. Missing gaps should be identified and integrated.

Challenging the status quo: The GoDanuBio Kick-off conference on Participative Governance, Bioeconomisation, and Policy Framework

The kick-off conference gave an interesting insight into the current state of and the challenges that lie ahead of implementing the concept of circular bioeconomy in the Danube macro-region. Among the topics discussed at the conference were Policy Framework, Bioeconomisation, and best approaches to Participative Governance. The international hybrid event took place on 20th & 21st May in Sofia, Bulgaria and also online and was organised by BRAIT. The event was attended by national and local government representatives and policy officials, members of national and transnational organisations, clusters, NGOs, and representatives of the private sector. The majority of participants joined online. However, there were also quite a few participants from Bulgaria, Romania, and Serbia who attended the conference in person.

At the first day of the conference various internationally recognised experts presented on the topics of Policy Framework, Bioeconomisation, and Participative Governance. The second day of the conference was more interactive and gave participants the opportunity to discuss their findings and conclusions from the previous day in three thematic breakout sessions based on the aforementioned topics.

The conference managed to involve the key stakeholders of the GoDanuBio project and provided them with an excellent opportunity to learn more about the concept of Circular Bioeconomy and how it can be used as a tool for fostering sustainable regional development in the Danube region. In addition, the conference paved the way for interdisciplinary cooperation between different policy areas and sectors of production in order to address demographic change in a participative, multi-governance way.

The conference managed to achieve its aim to inform participants about the main goals of the project which are:

- ✓ To use Circular Bioeconomy in the Danube region as a tool for fostering regional development by focusing on the transition of a fossil-resource based economy towards a more sustainable economy that uses biological resources and processes to develop new products and services, thus focusing on rural-urban areas and their development.
- ✓ To co-create current and future strategies to increase the attractiveness of rural areas in the Danube region and thus provide incentives for young people to remain and revive those areas.

- ✓ To develop an ecosystem for systematic multi-level governance with actors from the regional policy level, industry, academia and civil organisations. Thus, leveraging the institutional capacity of the participating regions and supporting transformative processes to tackle demographic change and brain drain.

Furthermore, during the second day of the event the participants had the opportunity to discuss their findings from the previous day in three thematic breakout sessions - Policy Framework, Bioeconomisation, and Participative Governance. During the breakout sessions the attendees arrived to the following conclusions:

Policy framework:

- ✓ Strategies and policy papers are drafted by national authorities. Nonetheless, regional authorities and local municipalities are crucial for their implementation. Additionally, when it comes to implementation, clusters and business support organisations can provide valuable expertise. In this sense, a practical and holistic approach is needed. Lastly, not having a common definition within the Danube region is an obstacle which is further exacerbated by the fact that within the region bioeconomy is often handled by different ministries.

Bioeconomisation:

- ✓ In order to improve the prospects for Bioeconomisation there needs to be a common understanding about its importance for the future, better education on the subject, and an active involvement of all stakeholders. In addition, transfer of know-how, local supply chains, and better support for SMEs is needed to facilitate the implementation of region-wide Bioeconomisation.

Participative Governance:

- ✓ In order to facilitate and establish an effective and participative multi-governance system stakeholders such as Clusters, Hubs, Local Action Groups, EU Funding beneficiaries, and local “Champions” need to be actively involved. Furthermore, the circular bioeconomy concept can benefit from participative governance by using a multi-stakeholder approach that would see the sharing of experience and best practices in order to implement policies and foster business development.

The GoDanuBio kick-off conference not only familiarised participants with the aims of the GoDanuBio project, but also provided them with in-depth knowledge about the concept of circular bioeconomy - particularly, the challenges and opportunities for its implementation in the Danube region. On their part, the participants shared valuable insights that would be of great benefit in the future of the project.

Train the trainer: How to communicate the bioeconomy properly Linz, 15/06/2021



Der Schulungspartner Studia brachte den Teilnehmer*innen bei, wie man eine rege Bürgerbeteiligung in Workshops fördern kann. © Business Upper Austria

Lehren will gelernt sein. Das wissen auch die Projektpartner im Interreg-Projekt „GoDanuBio“ und haben ein entsprechendes Ausbildungsprogramm für Trainer*innen entwickelt. Am 5. und 18. Mai fanden die ersten zwei Workshops statt.

Unter den Teilnehmern befanden sich auch die Projektmanager*innen des Cleantech- und Lebensmittel-Clusters Kristina Eder, Gabriele Wolkerstorfer, Ashna Mudaffer und Dorian Wessely. Ihr Fazit nach zwei spannenden Schulungstagen: „Wir fühlen uns bestens geschult und vorbereitet, eigene Workshops zum Thema Bioökonomie mit den wichtigen Stakeholdern und Player der Region durchzuführen.“

Mitreden der Bevölkerung erwünscht

Denn genau darum geht es im Projekt. Der Cleantech- und Lebensmittel-Cluster der Business Upper Austria entwickelten gemeinsam mit 23 Projektpartnern aus zehn Ländern ein Ausbildungsprogramm sowie Schulungen zu partizipativer Governance rund um das Thema Bioökonomie. Bürgerbeteiligung und Mitsprache in den Projektregionen sollen gelebt werden.

Ländliche Regionen aufwerten

„Innovative Projekte im Bereich Bioökonomie lassen Regionen wirtschaftlich wachsen und schaffen auch neue Arbeitsplätze“, sind die Projektpartner überzeugt. Dadurch werden vor allem Regionen aufgewertet, die ländlich geprägt sind und sehr oft mit Abwanderung zu kämpfen haben. Mit neuen Ideen und Initiativen will man insbesondere die jungen, aktiven Bürgerinnen und Bürger in den ländlichen Regionen verankern.

Oberösterreich macht mit

Nachdem ihre Projektmanagerinnen nun bestens geschult sind, werden der CTC und LC Ende 2021/Anfang 2022 auch in Oberösterreich Workshops durchführen, in denen sie gemeinsam mit der Bevölkerung neue, innovative Bioökonomieideen entwickeln wollen. Dazu werden verschiedene Bürgergruppen, gemeinsam mit Stakeholdern und der Wirtschaft an einen Tisch geholt. Das garantiert einen 360° Blickwinkel auf die Sichtweisen aller und schafft Verständnis füreinander.

>> [Mehr Info zum Projekt](#)

GoDanuBio Kick-off Konferenz - Bioökonomie und partizipative Regierungsführung in der Donauregion

Die internationale Hybrid-Veranstaltung fand vom 20.-21. Mai in Sofia, Bulgarien, und online statt. Der Fokus lag auf den politischen Rahmenbedingungen der Bioökonomie in der Makroregion Donau und der Bioökonomisierung verschiedener Sektoren. Außerdem wurden einige Beispiele zur partizipativen Regierungsführung („Participative Governance“) vorgestellt. Ziel der Konferenz war es, den Teilnehmern die Projektziele von GoDanuBio näherzubringen und diese zu vertiefen. Die Mehrheit der Teilnehmer nahm aufgrund von COVID-19 online teil.

Inspirierende Vorträge und thematische Diskussion

Die Kick-off Konferenz fand im Rahmen des Projektes „GoDanuBio“ statt. In diesem Projekt geht es darum, durch partizipative Regierungsführung den demografischen Wandel auf regionaler und lokaler Ebene zu bewältigen und dadurch ländliche Räume zu stärken. Die Bioökonomie nimmt hier eine Schlüsselrolle ein. Die Veranstaltung wurde von nationalen und lokalen Regierungsvertretern und Politikern, Mitglieder nationaler und transnationaler Organisationen, Clustern, NGOs und Vertretern des privaten Sektors besucht. Am ersten Tag der Konferenz wurden die Bereiche „Politische Rahmenbedingungen“, „Bioökonomisierung“ und „Partizipative Regierungsführung“ durch jeweils drei Präsentationen unterschiedlicher Sprecher näher beleuchtet. Die Themen wurden dann am nächsten Tag im Rahmen von Breakout-Sessions unter den Teilnehmern diskutiert. Ziel war es, basierend auf den Vorträgen des ersten Tages und der daraus entstehenden Diskussion, Kernaussagen zu formulieren und diese allen Zuhörern am Ende mit auf den Weg zu geben.

Konferenzteilnehmer formulierten Schlussfolgerungen

In den Breakout-Sessions konnten die Teilnehmern zwischen den Themen „Politische Rahmenbedingungen“, „Bioökonomisierung“ und „Partizipative Regierungsführung“ wählen. Im Bereich der politischen Rahmenbedingungen arbeiteten die Teilnehmer heraus, dass regionale Behörden und lokale Gemeinden entscheidend für die Umsetzung der Strategien sind, die von nationalen Behörden entworfen werden. Auch z.B. Cluster können zur Unterstützung der Umsetzung wertvolles Fachwissen beisteuern. Die fehlende gemeinsame Definition der Bioökonomie in der Donauregion wurde hier jedoch als Hindernis identifiziert. Um die Perspektive der Bioökonomie langfristig zu verbessern, braucht es ein gemeinsames Verständnis über deren Bedeutung für die Zukunft, bessere Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten und eine aktive Einbindung aller Akteure. Dies kann beispielsweise durch effektive Politikgestaltung auf mehreren Ebenen („Multi-level governance“) funktionieren. Das bedeutet, dass Entscheidungen nicht nur von einer Instanz getroffen werden, sondern viele Akteure auf unterschiedlichen politischen Ebenen beteiligt sind. So werden Erfahrungen ausgetauscht, um politische Maßnahmen gewinnbringend umzusetzen. Die GoDanuBio-Kick-off-Konferenz machte die Teilnehmer nicht nur mit den Zielen des GoDanuBio-Projekts

vertraut, sondern vermittelte ihnen auch vertieftes Wissen über das Konzept der Bioökonomie - insbesondere über die Herausforderungen und Chancen für deren Umsetzung im Donaoraum. Die Teilnehmer teilten wertvolle Erkenntnisse, die für die Zukunft des Projekts von großem Nutzen sein werden. In den zwei Konferenztagen, besonders während der Breakout-Sessions, wurden einige Fragen zuden momentanen Herausforderungen in der Makroregion Donau diskutiert. Das Projektkonsortium wird einige der Schlüsselbotschaften in den nächsten 12 Monaten von GoDanuBio aufgreifen. So sind unter anderem folgende Veranstaltungen geplant:

Herbst 2021 - Eine Aktivität zum Kapazitätsaufbau für Institutionen und Stakeholder zum Thema partizipative Regierungsführung, organisiert in 10 Donauregionen

Dezember 2021 - Interregionale Veranstaltung, die sich hauptsächlich an Cluster richtet und voraussichtlich in Moldawien stattfinden wird

Winter 2022 - Co-Creation-Workshops zu partizipativer Regierungsführung mit regionalem/lokalem Fokus; 3 in jeder teilnehmenden Donauregion

Sommer 2022 - Politikdialog mit transnationalem Charakter

The state of Circular Bioeconomy in the Danube macro-region: How do countries differ, what challenges are they facing, and what can be done to facilitate the transition to a more sustainable future?



Photo credit: Pixabay

By the end of June 2021, the GoDanuBio project consortium concluded with activities on Work Package T1 entitled »Analysis of Circular Bioeconomy Framework Conditions«. The last activity was the preparation of the [“Macroregional framework conditions report”](#). The aim of the report was to analyze regional readiness in the field of circular bioeconomy and to identify active stakeholders and their position in the circular bioeconomy ecosystem.

This synthesis report comprises of seven main sections. In the first section, the EU Strategy for the Danube Region in the framework of the project's objectives was analyzed. Two objectives of the strategy were found to be relevant for the project's objective: “Counteracting climate change” and “Stimulating sustainable development”. In addition, five relevant priority areas were identified: “Sustainable Energy”, “Biodiversity and Landscape, Quality of Air and Soils”, “To develop the Knowledge Society”, “Competitiveness and enterprises” and “Institutional capacity and cooperation”.

In the second section, regional policies with regard to circular bioeconomy were analyzed. There are three types of regions in the project: regions with circular bioeconomy policy in place (e.g. Baden Württemberg), regions with circular economy policy in the planning stage (e.g. Bulgaria, Serbia and Slovenia) and regions without circular bioeconomy but with topic-related policy. It was found that, out of ten regions, eight belong to the last group, which means that they do not have a circular bioeconomy policy framework, even none in the planning stage. In these regions, the topic is most likely addressed in Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3), in Environmental programmes or within the circular economy framework.

In the third section, the respective regional circular bioeconomy definitions were described. It was established that only one region (Baden-Württemberg) has its own definition¹, while most of the other regions use the definition provided by the European Commission's, with Serbia being the only country without a circular bioeconomy definition. Within the partner regions, circular bioeconomy is addressed in different policy documents: Strategies in the field of climate, energy and environment (e.g. Hungarian "National Energy Strategy 2030 – with outlook to 2040"), Development strategies (e.g. Serbian "Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia until 2030"), Innovation strategies (e.g. Slovenian "Slovenia's Smart Specialization Strategy"), Strategies in the field of agriculture (e.g. Romanian: "National Strategic Plan on Common Agricultural Policy until 2027) and Strategies in the field of low-carbon economy (e.g. Serbian "Industrial Policy Strategy of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2030").

The fourth section elaborated on the specific importance of the stakeholders, that were identified by the partners of the project, for the implementation of GoDanuBio.

The fifth section addressed the challenges that different regions are facing in terms of implementing circular bioeconomy. For example, the need for a clear common understanding of the circular bioeconomy concept, the importance of multi-stakeholder cooperation, the focus on the relationship between demographic change and bioeconomy, and strengthening the role of local education systems in keeping young professionals in rural areas were identified.

In the sixth section, the opportunities that regions have in circular bioeconomy were analyzed. to begin with, it was established that the knowledge gathered from previous projects and activities has not been sufficiently disseminated. Secondly, it was pointed out that Local Action Groups² have great potential for encouraging local innovation. Lastly, it was argued that capacity-building initiatives and implementation of multi-level participative governance are needed in order to bring actors together in a targeted way and enhance the socio-economic status of the regions.

The final section offers a presentation of four different best practice examples of participative governance in the sphere of circular bioeconomy: "Policy Learning Platform", Interreg Europe (Europe wide), "Participation portal", Baden-Württemberg (Germany), "Linz Innovation Main Square", Upper Austria (Austria) and "Participatory Budgeting", Maribor (Slovenia).

In conclusion, the report, provided by the partners from the GoDanuBio project managed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the macroregional framework conditions in the examined macro-region that would be a valuable tool for defining and improving the implementation of the concept of circular bioeconomy, as well as addressing the challenges faced by different regions.

¹ Upper Austria as a federal state of Austria is participating in the project. Austria also has a circular bioeconomy definition, which is why Upper Austria could also be counted here.

² https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader-clld/lag-database_en, last accessed 20/07/2021

GODANUBIO and EUSDR PA8 EVENT "BIOECONOMIZING THE DANUBE REGION: ALL STAKEHOLDERS HAND-IN-HAND" (Zagreb, 20/10/2021)



On 20 October, the GoDanuBio project held a joint event together with EUSDR Priority Area 8 on the topic of 'Bioeconomizing the Danube Region'¹. The host and co-organiser of the event was the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Croatia.

The conference was organised in a hybrid format; 43 participants online, as well as 36 participants in-person at the Hotel International in Zagreb, were able to receive valuable insights into the topic of circular bioeconomy and how its deployment can improve the economies in the Danube macro-region.

¹ EU Strategy for the Danube Region. The Priority Area 8 (PA 8) aims to support the competitiveness of enterprises in the Danube region

The joint event had two parts: a session concentrating on bioeconomy in the Danube macro-region in the morning, and a Steering Group meeting of the GoDanuBio consortium in the afternoon.

The morning session opened with a presentation by Ms. Anita Sever-Koren (Croatian Ministry of Agriculture) on the topic of 'A vision for circular economy in Croatia'. She spoke about Croatia's potential in production of biomass for the production of food and beverage, as well as the processing of biomass. She also shared interesting insights into Croatia's National Development Strategy.

Ms. Anamarija Šopron Bogнар from the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Croatia gave information on reforms, investments and planned calls on bioeconomy from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. Her presentation was followed by the online participation of Prof. Dr. Orest Kiyko from the Furniture and Wooden Products Technology Department of the Ukrainian National Forestry University. His presentation was an excellent opportunity for attendees to learn more about the bioeconomy strategy of the region of Lviv in Ukraine. He spoke about the challenges the region is facing and the various strategies and initiatives which are being implemented there.

Dipl. Ing. Bernhard Zenz from the Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Austria also gave an engaging presentation on how the Austrian government governance model for the circular bioeconomy looks like and how it is being implemented.

After the presentations, two panel discussions were held. The first one was on the topic of 'The role of bioeconomy clusters in the implementation of a strategy: pros and cons' and the second one on 'Resilient circular bioeconomy business models'. The participants in the panels were business representatives (such as Dr. Jasmina Ranilović from Podravka d.d., Croatia) and government officials (such as Vadym Tabakera from Lviv, Ukraine), as well as cluster representatives (such as Daniel Acs from Bioeconomy Cluster in Slovakia).

In the afternoon session, the GoDanuBio consortium had the opportunity to meet physically for the first time since July 2020 and discuss the status of the project implementation.

After introductory words from BIOPRO, the individual work packages were presented. Daniel Cosnita (CLUSTERO) spoke about the current status of WP T2. This was followed by a discussion in which the other partners asked questions on how to proceed with one of the deliverables. Mateja Dermastia (Poly4EmI) then spoke about WP T3, and again there was an interesting discussion which focused on the differences in the sent tables about current funding programs and their contact persons. Regarding WP T4, Dorian Wessely (Biz-Up) presented the current status and the possibility for all partners to contact Biz-Up if they have any questions. He presented the approach that Biz-Up is taking in planning the training on participative governance in Upper Austria. Sergi Costa (BIOPRO) presented the approach of Baden-Württemberg. Thereafter, there was a mutual exchange between the partners, in which it turned out that some partners already have ideas and concrete plans regarding these

trainings i.e. Hungary, Romania and Serbia. The meeting was closed by Teodora Atanasova (BRAIT) with the presentation of the action plan of the WP C till February 2022.

Overall, the event was very successful sharing insights on circular bioeconomy aspect of EUSDR and how GoDanuBio can contribute to its PA8. All participants agreed that it was a dynamic day, filled with many engaging sessions which gave the opportunity to expand their knowledge on topics related to bioeconomising the Danube region with mutual efforts.



International SME Conference
CLUSTERS as drivers of Resilient, Digital and Green Economic
Competitiveness
Chisinau, R. of Moldova
December 7-8
online

Against the current global challenges and in line with the EU and national industrial policies, the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Moldova and the EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Program, with the support of the Organization for Small and Medium Enterprises Sector Development (ODIMM), the Romanian Cluster Association and the DTP “GoDanuBio” project are organising between 7-8 December 2021 the international SME conference covering the topic of "CLUSTERS as drivers of Resilient, Digital and Green Economic Competitiveness".

The event is held online on an international level with broad participation of clusters, businesses, academia, research, public administration, and remarkable speakers that will provide not only valuable knowledge but also opportunities for connecting entrepreneurs and innovation providers at international level.

The first day (**December 7**) highlights the role of clusters as drivers of green, digital, and resilient economic competitiveness in the Republic of Moldova and will address the following topics:

- Conceptualization of the national cluster development policies
- Emerging cluster initiatives in Moldova: challenges and opportunities
- Funding opportunities for supporting cross-regional value chains
- Towards an integration plan: best practices on mobilizing bioeconomy regional excellence

The second day (**December 8**) debates on the role of clusters in triggering circular bioeconomy processes in the regions putting the emphasis on funding opportunities and best practice examples from the Danube Macro Region highlighting the approach of DTP “GoDanuBio” Project.

The conference is done in cooperation with the European Clusters Alliance (ECA). On the 8th of December, prior to the conference, we invite you to take part in the Morning Session debate of ECA on bioeconomy taking place between 09:30 – 10:30 EET via the link <https://www.gotomeet.me/europeanclustersalliance>

To participate in the event, please register on the following [Registration](#) link. Details about the agenda can be found at <https://www.conferintaimm.odimm.md/>
NB! All times in the agenda correspond to EET Time Zone.



Conferința internațională a IMM-urilor
“ CLUSTERELE, motor al competitivității economice verzi, reziliente și digitale”
Chișinău, Republica Moldova
Decembrie 7-8
online

Pentru a face față provocărilor globale actuale și în conformitate cu politicile industriale ale UE și naționale, [Ministerul Economiei din Republica Moldova](#) și [Programul EU4Moldova regiuni-cheie](#) cu sprijinul [Organizației pentru Dezvoltarea Sectorului Intreprinderilor Mici și Mijlocii \(ODIMM\)](#), [Asociației Clusterelor din România](#) și proiectului DTP “[GoDanuBio](#)” organizează în perioada **7-8 decembrie 2021**, Conferința internațională a IMM-urilor cu tema “CLUSTERELE, motor al competitivității economice verzi, reziliente și digitale”

Evenimentul internațional se desfășoară [online](#), cu o largă participare a clusterelor, întreprinderilor, mediul academic, cercetării, administrației publice și a unor prestigioși speakeri, care vor împărtăși din experiența acumulată și vor oferi oportunități pentru întărirea cooperării între mediul economic și cel de cercetare-dezvoltare-inovare la nivel internațional.

În prima zi (**7 decembrie 2021**) va fi evidențiat rolul clusterelor ca motor al competitivității economice verzi, reziliente și digitale în Republica Moldova și vor fi abordate următoarele subiecte:

- Conceptualizarea politicilor naționale de dezvoltare a clusterelor;
- Inițiative emergente de cluster în Republica Moldova: provocări și oportunități;
- Oportunități de finanțare pentru sprijinirea lanțurilor de valoare transregionale;
- Către un plan de integrare: cele mai bune practici privind mobilizarea excelenței regionale în bioeconomie.

În a doua zi (**8 decembrie 2021**) se va dezbate rolul clusterelor în catalizarea proceselor de bioeconomie circulară în regiuni, cu accent pe oportunitățile de finanțare și exemplele de bune practici din Macroregiunea Dunării, evidențiindu-se abordarea Proiectului DTP “[GoDanuBio](#)”.

Conferința este organizată în cooperare cu Alianța Clusterelor Europene (ECA). În data de 8 decembrie 2021, înainte de conferință, vă invităm să participați la ECA Morning Session pe tema bioeconomiei, ce va avea loc între orele 09:30 – 10:30 EET prin linkul <https://www.gotomeet.me/Europeanclustersalliance>.

Pentru a participa la eveniment, vă rugăm să vă înregistrați [Registration](#).
Detalii despre agendă găsiți la <https://www.conferintaimm.odimm.md/>
NB! Toate orele din agendă corespund fusului orar EET.

How are the participation and the bioeconomy in the municipal sphere related? (Prague, 2 December 2021)

Prague, 2 December 2021 - The answer to the question in the title was provided by the national training seminar of the GoDanuBio project, whose partner for the Czech Republic is the National Cluster Association (NCA). The topic of the online seminar was the use of participatory governance tools for the implementation of appropriate bioeconomy solutions in municipalities and cities in the Czech Republic. The broader goal of the event was to raise awareness of the bioeconomy and the potential of renewable biological resources (RBR) for building a post-oil society.

For the second time in the last four years, NCA is a partner in a project focusing on the bioeconomy of the countries of the Danube Region, led by the state agency of Baden-Württemberg - BIOPRO. Through project activities and outputs in the GoDanuBio project, the latter seeks to transfer its own experience and methods to assist municipalities and regions in capitalizing on local RBR. One of them is the promotion of new bio-based innovative projects, cooperation with SMEs and research. However, a key impulse for this pathway is the fact that Baden-Württemberg has its own bioeconomy strategy, which forms one of the important components of the state's policy on sustainable development and reducing dependence on fossil resources. After the opening remarks of the President of the NCA, Jiří Herinek, and Petr Švec, Director of the National Network of Healthy Cities, associate partner of the GoDanuBio project, the project manager Lenka Podjuklová introduced the project. The main output of the project will be a joint bio-economic strategy of the countries of the Danube Region.

In the first part of the seminar Dana Diváková, Director of the Institute of Community Development, opened the issue of Participative Governance. Iva Hájková from the Prague 10 Municipal District, Irena Vodičková from the Healthy City Litoměřice and Petr Holý from the Regional Development Department of the Vysočina Region presented the benefits of this approach involving all other actors, such as the public, officials and experts, in decision-making with illustrative examples from their practice.

While participatory governance already has a firm place in the municipal sphere and a number of successful results, the topic of bioeconomy is still relatively new and almost unknown in the Czech Republic. This fact was also stated by Pavla Břusková, NCA consultant for the GoDanuBio project, in her presentation during the second part of the seminar focused on bioeconomy. According to the Bioeconomy Strategy of the European Commission from 2018, the bioeconomy is understood as an economy based on the production of BRB and the conversion of these resources and bio-waste into value-added products such as food, feed, various products made from biological materials and bioenergy. The bioeconomy thus goes beyond the scope of a single sector in its value chain and requires coordination of all involved and interested sectors such as agriculture, industry, local development, education and environment. The Czech Republic does not yet have such a coordinating body for the bioeconomy and the public and the state and public administration are virtually unaware of the important role of the bioeconomy and its potential.

Yet the European Commission has high expectations for the bioeconomy and invests billions of funds in projects for its development in the Horizon, Interreg Central Europe and other financial programmes. This is evidenced by the POWER4BIO project, where the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice was the Czech partner, and whose output is the South

Bohemian Association for Bioeconomy, the only regional institution of this type in the Czech Republic so far. This practical example of linking participatory governance and bioeconomy was presented at the seminar by Assoc. Eva Cudlínová. A great success was the assignment of the Society to act as the Regional Innovation Platform for Bioeconomy and the inclusion of the smart specialisation "bioeconomy" in the regional and national RIS3 Strategy.

The bioeconomy part of the national seminar of the GoDanuBio project was concluded by Petr Novotný from the Institute of Circular Economy - INCIEN in his presentation Bio-waste as a source. It is certainly worth following the success of the Veselíčko municipality awarded in the Municipality 2030 competition with its closed bio-waste cycle, where compost produced by collecting bio-waste from its residents and from neighbouring municipalities is then distributed free of charge to citizens for their gardens and fields and also used for public greenery. The success of the City of Brno's pilot project to use energy from waste to power urban transport, "BioCNG for Brno", has raised great hopes for the recovery of bio-waste (sewage sludge and biodegradable residues from residents and industry).

In the GoDanuBio project, further "co-creation" workshops are planned for the first half of 2022 to develop common practices for innovative pilot projects in the field of circular bioeconomy with the aim of economic revitalisation of rural areas. We look forward to your creative participation!

Media contact person for NCA:

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The GoDanuBio project, with the full title "Participatory ecosystems for reviving rural-urban cooperation through the guided development of a circular bioeconomy in the Danube Region", is implemented by 19 partners from 11 countries in the Danube Region for a period of 30 months (7/2020-12/2022) within the framework of the Danube Transnational Programme (DTP).

<https://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/godanubio>

6th December 2021

PRESS RELEASE

GoDanuBio presented in the event “Sustainable Value Creation in the Danube Region” organized in Stuttgart on 16th November 2021



© General Consultat of Hungary in Stuttgart

The dialogue and knowledge exchange with institutions and companies committed to sustainability between Baden-Württemberg and Hungary was held as a hybrid event in Stuttgart on 16th November 2021. It was a good opportunity to get a grasp of the sustainability plans in both regions from a political perspective and to learn about good practices related to themes such as circular (bio)economy, sustainable tourism, and social innovation. The event was organized by the General Consultate of Hungary in Stuttgart and the PA8 of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region. It was attended by around 45 attendees, from which 15 attended physically in the “Haus der Wirtschaft” in Stuttgart.

The keynotes of Mr. Johannes Jung (Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Tourism Baden-Württemberg) and Mr. Attila Steiner (Ministry of Innovation and Technology of Hungary) referred to the status-quo of both regions on initiatives supporting sustainability and the European Green Deal. The programme was followed by three best practice examples regarding the implementation of the sustainability goals of the regions through Interreg DTP projects such as [GoDanuBio](#), [Transdanube Travel Stories](#) and [RESTART 4Danube](#).

Sergi Costa, senior project manager at BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH, presented the current status of GoDanuBio after sixteen months of implementation. Through a helicopter view he summarized the achievements so far of a project that advocates for more participative governance and strives for a rural renaissance in the Danube macro-region. According to him, the deployment of policies related to bioeconomy should help to lever the untapped bioeconomic potential of the region and counteract territorial imbalances. The final part of the presentation focused on the contribution of GoDanuBio towards the United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals, the socio-economic awareness achieved, and what outcomes are expected once it finishes by the end of 2022.

Fig. 1: Contribution of GoDanuBio project to the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals



The ceremony concluded with an array of projects related to sustainability with participation of partners from Baden-Württemberg and Hungary. The presentation of the Innovation park model for a green economy by Tihamér Tóth (University of MOL-Pannon) should be highlighted for its specific interest for GoDanuBio. This Innovation park, that follows a systemic approach related to circular economy, hydrogen economy, and waste and water management, is being implemented through a public-private partnership in the Hungarian county of Zala.

The event was moderated by Dr. Judit Schrick-Szenczi from the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Tourism Baden-Württemberg, who is also coordinator of the Priority Area 8 (Competitiveness of SMEs) of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, and concluded with [a short video](#) compelling the best moments of the day.

For further details:

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The GoDanuBio consortium is composed of: BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg (Lead Partner), Cluster Agentur Baden-Württemberg, Poly4Eml/Anteja ECG d.o.o, CLUSTERO - Romanian Cluster Association, IFKA - Public Benefit Non-profit Limited Company for the Development of the Industry, BRAIT - Bulgarian Employers' Association of Innovative Technologies, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of Slovenia, Bioeconomy Cluster of Slovakia, Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Tourism of Romania, NCA - National Cluster Association, BSMEPA - Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency, CWC - Croatian Wood Cluster, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable development of the Republic of Croatia, Ghelinta Commune, Business Upper Austria, Styrian Technology Park, ISC Konstanz e.V., Kosice Self-governing region, and Alma Mons Ltd.

17th December 2021

PRESS RELEASE

International Conference of SMEs „Clusters as drivers of resilient, digital and green economic competitiveness”

Approximately 200 representatives of companies, clusters, RDI organizations, and regional and national public authorities took part in the International SME Conference, entitled „**CLUSTERS as drivers of Resilient, Digital and Green Economic Competitiveness**”, on 7th and 8th of December 2021, organized in Chisinau online by the [Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Moldova](#) and the [EU4Moldova: Focal Regions](#) Programme with the support of the [Organization for Small and Medium Enterprises Sector Development \(ODIMM\)](#), [Romanian Cluster Association \(CLUSTERO\)](#), and the [Danube Transnational Programme “GoDanuBio” project](#).



© ODIMM / CLUSTERO

On the first day, the role of clusters as drivers of green, resilient and digital transition was highlighted. This was done in the context of the [new European industrial policy](#) of the European Commission, through interventions by officials the Government of the Republic of Moldova, the European Commission and the European Cluster Alliance (ECA).

During the thematic workshops an exchange of good practices was made between the Romanian clusters and the emerging initiatives in the Republic of Moldova. The thematic fields concerned were tourism, agri-food, textiles, wood and furniture.

The second day was dedicated to the bioeconomy. BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg (Lead Partner) presented the project GoDanuBio in the ECA Morning session with around 35 attendees. Later on in the plenary session (around 80 attendees), some funding programmes and funds to support the deployment of bio-based value chains in the Danube region were discussed. Among them was the new [Interregional Innovation Investments \(I3\)](#) and the [Green Innovation Programme](#) of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The second part of the second day was dedicated to the best practices on mobilising bioeconomy regional excellence in countries such as Bulgaria, Hungary, Serbia and Slovakia.

The conference was largely viewed online and can be revisited at:

<https://www.facebook.com/clustero>

<https://www.facebook.com/odimm.md/videos>

<https://www.facebook.com/Afaceri.ro>

Conclusions

During the event, new models of collaboration that would accelerate economic development by revitalizing key sectors and providing a necessary environment for regional research, innovation and development were discussed. In this regard, more attention has been paid to opportunities to incorporate the dimensions of "circular economy" and "digitalisation" in the context of cluster development.

A key takeaway is that the sustainable development of clusters and the growth of their international competitiveness must be the result of the development and application of new technologies and principles. This can be done by updating the technological process, while respecting the principles of environmental protection.

For more information about the debates from the conference and its results, please visit (only in Romanian language):

<https://odimm.md/ro/presa/comunicate-de-presa/5326-clusterele-un-nou-model-de-competitivitate-regionala-sustinut-de-uniunea-europeana>

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The GoDanuBio consortium is composed of: BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg (Lead Partner), Cluster Agentur Baden-Württemberg, Poly4Eml/Anteja ECG d.o.o, CLUSTERO - Romanian Cluster Association, IFKA - Public Benefit Non-profit

Limited Company for the Development of the Industry, BRAIT - Bulgarian Employers' Association of Innovative Technologies, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of Slovenia, Bioeconomy Cluster of Slovakia, Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Tourism of Romania, NCA - National Cluster Association, BSMEPA - Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency, CWC - Croatian Wood Cluster, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable development of the Republic of Croatia, Ghelinta Commune, Business Upper Austria, Styrian Technology Park, ISC Konstanz e.V., Kosice Self-governing region, and Alma Mons Ltd.

A new social enterprise was launched in Ghelinta - Új szociális vállalkozás indult Gelencén

Introduction

In the presence of local young people, the GoDanuBio project was presented and highlighted a local best practice example, as a new social enterprise launched in the municipality. Mr. Daniel Coșniță, President of the Romanian Cluster Association – project partner in GoDanuBio project, Mr. Lajos Vajda, President of the Green Energy Innovative Biomass Cluster, Ms. Christina Leucuța, Vice-President of the Romanian Cluster Association, and Mr. Miklós Levente Bagoly, President of Asimcov Association of Small- and Medium Size Enterprises of Covasna County, were also present at the meeting.



Mr. Tihamér Sebestyén, the project responsible of the GoDanuBio project, in frame of Interreg Danube Transnational Programme, greeted the participants and said that the main goal of the meeting was to present the circular and bioeconomy based opportunities in Ghelinta, the local social and economic resources of the village, from which to start and develop the settlement. He also highlighted the importance of involving the younger generation in the next period. During his presentation we learned that according to demographic indicators, the population has risen to 5,172 in the recent past, albeit not spectacularly, with a slight increase in the number of newborns, with about 620 children,

preschoolers and schoolchildren and more than fifty university students living in the village. A total of fourteen NGOs are active in the village.

Gelence is at the forefront of wood processing at the county level, with more than twenty sawmills operating in Ghelinta, but also guest houses, chalets, catering establishments and bakeries. There are 278 companies officially registered, and in 2020 they generated a net profit of nearly two million euros. Among the tourist attractions, Tihamér Sebestyén mentioned the monumental church of St. Imre, the Jancsó Mansion and the Fejér manor house in Haraly as local attractions.

Mr. Daniel Coșniță spoke about the clustering process started in Covasna County, highlighting the pioneering role of Mr. Lajos Vajda.

A 36-year-old entrepreneur Mr. Mihály Akácos presented the new social enterprise he started, which is the first of its kind in the village of Ghelinta. The young entrepreneur said he won a non-refundable grant of € 100,000 in September last year thanks to Asimcov Association of Small- and Medium Size Enterprises of Covasna County. The company is involved in landscape architecture, maintenance of parks, green areas, maintenance of sidewalks and yards, and with five employees they convert the green waste into biomass fuel and sales on local market.





The press release was published by Háromszék, regional press.

Entrepreneurs' workshop in Ghelinta - Gelence a környezettudatosság útján

Introduction

The Entrepreneurs' Workshop held its first meeting in the Hall of Councils in Municipality of Ghelinta. The event marks the beginning of a new series in Ghelinta, where young entrepreneurs and those who want to start business are invited to think together, develop the local economy and encourage young people to take advantage of the opportunities from circular bioeconomy approaches. The motto of the first event held recently was New Period, New Competitions.



More than fifty local stakeholders attended the meeting. The professional organization of the event took place in the framework of the GoDanuBio project, in frame of Interreg Danube Transnational Programme in which the municipality of Gelence also participates as the only project partner of all the municipalities from Romania. In this partnership, the project partners want to bring as many new topics and development guidelines to Ghelinta as possible, involving the young generations, to provide new information about the

upcoming business opportunities with circular bioeconomy, sustainable community development, and the use of renewable energies.

Mayor Mr. Botond Ilyés greeted the guests at the event, followed by Jakab István Barna, Vice-President of the Covasna County Council, on the results of the Youth Consultation in Covasna County, highlighting the importance of building the future of the region together with young people. Afterwards, Andrea Szász, an agricultural engineer from the Székely Farmers' Organization, gave a detailed presentation and gave good examples of starting successful businesses with young people. Finally, Attila Péterfi, consultant and regional representative of Goodwill Consulting Ltd, presented the business opportunities and technical support.

The press release was published by Háromszék, regional press.

Ghelinta on the parth of environment-consciousness - Gelence a környezettudatosság útján

Ghelinte Commune has been at the forefront of utilizing wood waste as biomass fuel for many years, and most of the public institutions in the town, businesses and more and more private homes are heating the boilers with wood waste in an environmentally friendly way, using waste to energy approach.

Introduction

Between 2016 and 2019, Ghelinta Commune and the neighboring village of Estelnic had jointly participated in Bioenergy Village project, thanks to which their leaders took part in study trips to European countries. Most recently, the French Embassy in Romania honored Ghelinta community, and the recognition was accompanied by a study tour in French.

The French example

In more developed regions of French, best practice examples on how to use biomass waste, how to recycle of biomass and wood waste, as well as the solar energy related installations were presented in operation. During the study visit were found that in less developed countries are similar gaps while the conclusions were used in Ghelinta Commune. This study visit was recently recognized in late 2021, after winning the award called Sustainable Town 2021 organized by the French Embassy in Bucharest and the French-Romanian International Chamber of Commerce. Ghelinta Municipality received the award for its innovation in green energy and circular economy sectors.

Mr. Botond Ilyés, the mayor of Ghelinta explained: we were in French in the first half of November 2021, and their visit coincided with a meeting of the mayors of the European Union. “We were there for five days, we also attended a huge fair and conference for small- and medium size municipalities. The point of this was that all activities related to the municipalities were involved, including digitalized public administration, the maintenance of the public spaces and parks or the operation of the local police and how to develop sustainable and circular economy based solutions on local levels. The organizers suggested wide variation of green solutions to the local decision makers. We were also in a small town of 6,200 inhabitants a pioneer municipality in the use of bio- and renewable energy, which is rare in French so far. Residents live in passive houses, they generate electricity with solar panels, and the heat needed for heating is obtained from geothermal wells as well as the public buildings are heated by woodchips based plants. The houses are block of flats, it is interesting that the corridors connecting the flats are open, they are not heated. We visited

a school center, the roof structure of which is covered by a solar system, which covers the electricity and heat needs of the educational institution,” Ilyés Botond explained. There are also two large biomass based heating systems in the settlement, one of which serves the swimming pool of the village and the other the educational institutions. “Everything that can be refurbished is also given priority, as the water in the said pool is used to clean the roads,” said the mayor, who said that they were trying to put this example into practice in the Ghelinta Commune as far as possible.

The Ghelinta’s pathway

According to the local decision maker in Ghelinta, the French are curious about what is happening in Ghelinta, as well as many partners from the Interreg Danube Region, therefore we are involved in a further project focusing on circular bioeconomy developments in rural areas. “This fills us all the more with pride, as we have been competing with other projects, but now Ghelinta has also been put on the map of Sustainable Communities. They were also amazed that a settlement with a population of 5,200 was open to such innovative approaches. It is note to mention that a French rural municipality with similar size has a budget of EUR 6.5 million, and Ghelinta has a million and a half euros. They have much greater financial capacity for everything.

Ghelinta will develop its bioenergy infrastructure as in December 2021 will be installed a 125 kW biomass boiler to cover the space heating and domestic hot water demand at the buildings of the kindergarten and later on at the cultural center. With the technical support of of the GoDanuBio project, new opportunities for young people is discovering, the aim of the project is to find new business opportunities in line with the circular bioeconomy principles.

The new biomass based micro-scale district heating system will be handed over in the presence of László Borbély, Vice-President of the European Network for Sustainable Development. The current boiler was purchased on its own, spending 90,000 lei.

The mayor explained that their example is attractive also for other mayors from several counties in Romania, such as Harghita, Suceava, Buzau and Neamț, signing up to visit, as they wonder what steps can be taken in this direction. “Together with Buzau Municipality, we won the Sustainable Town 2021 Award, I feel that we have a pretty good relationship with the mayor from Buzau, we will initiate joint projects. They have a very innovative circular economy based education project, while we have bioenergy facilities, we share the

information with each other. It is interesting that they also want to introduce the Norwegian education system, and we have been open to that for four years, "he explained.

This is not the only new green investment in Ghelinta, they applied for a PV solar system through the Angustia Association - Local Action Group. "It's a 3.8 kW PV system, now is running on the roof-top of the Mayoralty. It will be equipped with batteries, our plan is to supply our biomass-based heating system with electricity from PV system, which will make it completely nZEB building. We have also installed a system for the production of hot water, equipped with a 4000 liter buffer tank, the systems complement each other.

The press release was published by Székely Hirmondó, regional press.

New Boiler Provides Bioenergy – Új kazán szolgáltatja a fűtést

In the last few days of last year, the boiler has been officially handed over to provide the domestic hot water and for space heating at the buildings of kindergarten and cultural center in Ghelinta Commune. The micro-scale heating plant is based on biomass.

Ghelinta Commune - as well as Estelnic - has been involved in a former project called Bioenergy Village. Today, in most of the town's public buildings, private businesses and in more and more private homes, boilers are heated in an environmentally friendly way with wood waste and solid biofuel. In December 2021, another biomass-fired boiler was put into operation, with sufficient capacity to serve the kindergarten and, later, the nearby cultural center.

The mayor of Ghelinta, Mr. Botond Ilyés said: the boiler house was built next to the kindergarten, and it was replaced by a high-energy efficient, modern boiler with 125 kW capacity. "We have already seen the effectiveness of this at the mayoralty, which is why the choice was made for this equipment," explained the mayor for the general public.

The system was launched by László Borbély, Vice-President of the European Network for Sustainable Development.

Moreover, through its GoDanuBio project, Gelence Commune is committed to facilitate the bio-based economy with best practice examples on local level, to ensure an adequate framework for bioeconomy development for the younger generation.



The press release was published by Székely Hirmondó, regional press.

Regionale Partizipationsansätze zur Bioökonomie und Impulse für die Zukunft

Im Rahmen des Interreg-Donauraumprogrammprojektes „GoDanuBio“ fand am 27. Januar 2022 die Online-Veranstaltung „Regionale Partizipationsansätze zur Bioökonomie – Gemeinsam in eine nachhaltige Zukunft“ statt. 46 Teilnehmer aus 29 Institutionen nahmen teil. Während der Veranstaltung, moderiert von Dr. Dirk Scheer (KIT ITAS), wurden verschiedene nationale Best-Practice Beispiele zu Partizipation und Kommunikation im Bereich Bioökonomie präsentiert. In der anschließenden Paneldiskussion ging es dann mit Vertretern aus Baden-Württemberg um regionale Anknüpfungspunkte und Sektorkopplung.

Die Bioökonomisierung mag in Baden-Württemberg weiter fortgeschritten sein als in anderen Ländern. Dennoch ist es wichtig, die allgemeine Wahrnehmung der Bioökonomie zu stärken und bereits vorhandene Ansätze in die Industrialisierung zu bringen, wie Ministerialdirigent Günther Leßnerkraus vom Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Arbeit und Tourismus in seinen Grußworten betonte. Im Laufe des Vormittages wurden hierzu verschiedene Herangehensweisen vorgestellt.

Durch die [Dialogplattform Industrielle Bioökonomie](#) (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Klimaschutz) kann die Zusammenarbeit verschiedener Akteure in der Phase der notwendigen Transformation der Wirtschaft optimiert werden. Prof. Dr. Ralf Kindervater von der BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg erläuterte, dass im Rahmen der Dialogplattform momentan Dialog- und Partizipationsmaßnahmen für die Bioökonomie-Beispielregionen¹ in Entwicklung sind. Da durch die Bioökonomie auch neue Produkte auf den Markt kommen, ist es elementar, auch direkt auf den Verbraucher zuzugehen. Dr. Christian Klar von der Koordinierungsstelle BioökonomieREVIER berichtete, wie dies im Rheinland aktiv umgesetzt wurde. Dort werden [Bürger aktiv abgeholt](#) – zum Beispiel durch [mobile Ausstellungsorte](#), ein Regionalmagazin zur Bioökonomie und Bildungs- und Kommunikationsangebote. Auch durch [Pop-up Stores](#) kann Bürgern die Bioökonomie näher gebracht werden, wie durch den Vorstand der BIOCUM AG, Dr. Boris Mannhardt, erläutert wurde. Institutionen wie der Wissenschaftsladen Bonn, vorgestellt von Tabea Waltenberg, tragen als [Brückenbauer zwischen Zivilgesellschaft und Wissenschaft](#) ebenfalls zu einer verbesserten Wahrnehmung der Bioökonomie bei. Laut Frau Waltenberg ist die Bioökonomie ein komplexes und mehrdeutiges Konzept, das greifbar und konkret umgesetzt werden soll, um die Wahrnehmung zu steigern.

„Es kommen Dinge zusammen, die eigentlich nicht zusammengehören“

Im zweiten Teil der Veranstaltung diskutierten Jochen Ehlgötz (TechnologieRegion Karlsruhe GmbH), Dr. Marcus Ehm (Stadt Sigmaringen), Stefan Kesenheimer (IHK Bodensee-Oberschwaben) und Prof. Dr. Ralf Kindervater (BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg) zu Anknüpfungspunkten für eine regional verankerte Bioökonomie. Die Schlussfolgerungen der Diskussion lassen sich mit denen der ganzen Veranstaltung gut vereinen: Sektorkopplung ist elementar – und die Bioökonomie beinhaltet weitaus mehr Sektoren als nur die Land- und

¹ <https://www.bmwi.de/Redaktion/DE/Dossier/industrielle-biooekonomie-wachstum-und-innovation.html>

Forstwirtschaft. Dies muss vor allem den Bürgern als Konsumenten der Produkte der Bioökonomie näher gebracht werden. Da die Produkte nicht nur anders aussehen, sondern auch durch andere Prozesse hergestellt werden, ist es wichtig, die Wahrnehmung der Bioökonomie ganzheitlich zu verbessern. Herr Ehlgötz meinte, dass die Bioökonomie die Betrachtung ganzer Systeme erfordert, anstatt lediglich einzelne Technologie zu betrachten. Mit diesem Impuls sollen im Jahr 2030, beginnend mit den Beispielregionen, aus „Bioökonomie-Inseln“ flächige Strukturen entstanden sein. Ohne die Akzeptanz der Produkte lassen diese sich nicht auf den Markt bringen (die Kosten spielen hier ebenfalls eine große Rolle). Ein besonderer Fokus soll hier vor allem auf die junge und alte Bevölkerung gelegt werden. Gerade für ältere Menschen ist es wichtig, direkt in ihrem Umfeld Veränderungen zu sehen, während die jungen Menschen als Zukunftsmacher gelten. Die Einbringung von Know-How und neuen Produktideen, aber auch finanzielle Anreize (z.B. Voucher) und Impulse sind notwendig. Laut Kindervater ist es wichtig, die regionalen Wirtschaftsprofile jeder Region zu kartieren, damit man die Bioökonomie effektiv umsetzen kann.

Das Projekt GoDanuBio läuft seit Juli 2020 und wird im Dezember 2022 enden. In allen beteiligten Donaauraum-Projektregionen fanden bis Anfang 2022 Workshops dieser Art zur partizipativen Regierungsführung mit regionalen Akteuren statt. In Baden-Württemberg stellt diese Veranstaltung den Auftakt für drei weitere im Laufe des Jahres dar. Diese werden dann in ausgewählten Bioökonomie-Beispielregionen mit lokalen Akteuren durchgeführt.

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The GoDanuBio consortium is composed of: BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg (Lead Partner), Cluster Agentur Baden-Württemberg, Poly4EmI/Anteja ECG d.o.o, CLUSTERO - Romanian Cluster Association, IFKA - Public Benefit Non-profit Limited Company for the Development of the Industry, BRAIT - Bulgarian Employers' Association of Innovative Technologies, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of Slovenia, Bioeconomy Cluster of Slovakia, Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Tourism of Romania, NCA - National Cluster Association, BSMEPA - Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency, CWC - Croatian Wood Cluster, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable development of the Republic of Croatia, Ghelinta

Commune, Business Upper Austria, Styrian Technology Park, ISC Konstanz e.V., Kosice Self-governing region, and Alma Mons Ltd.

Co-creation Workshop on Participatory Ecosystems in the Bioeconomy (11/02/22)

Ministerul Economiei în parteneriat cu Asociația Clusterelor din România și Comuna Ghelița au organizat în data de 11 februarie 2022, în municipiul Piatra Neamț - județul Neamț un workshop cu tema “ **Ecosisteme participative in bioeconomie**” la care au fost prezenți 45 de participanți din mediul economic, administrație publică locală și regională, societatea civilă și mediul academic.





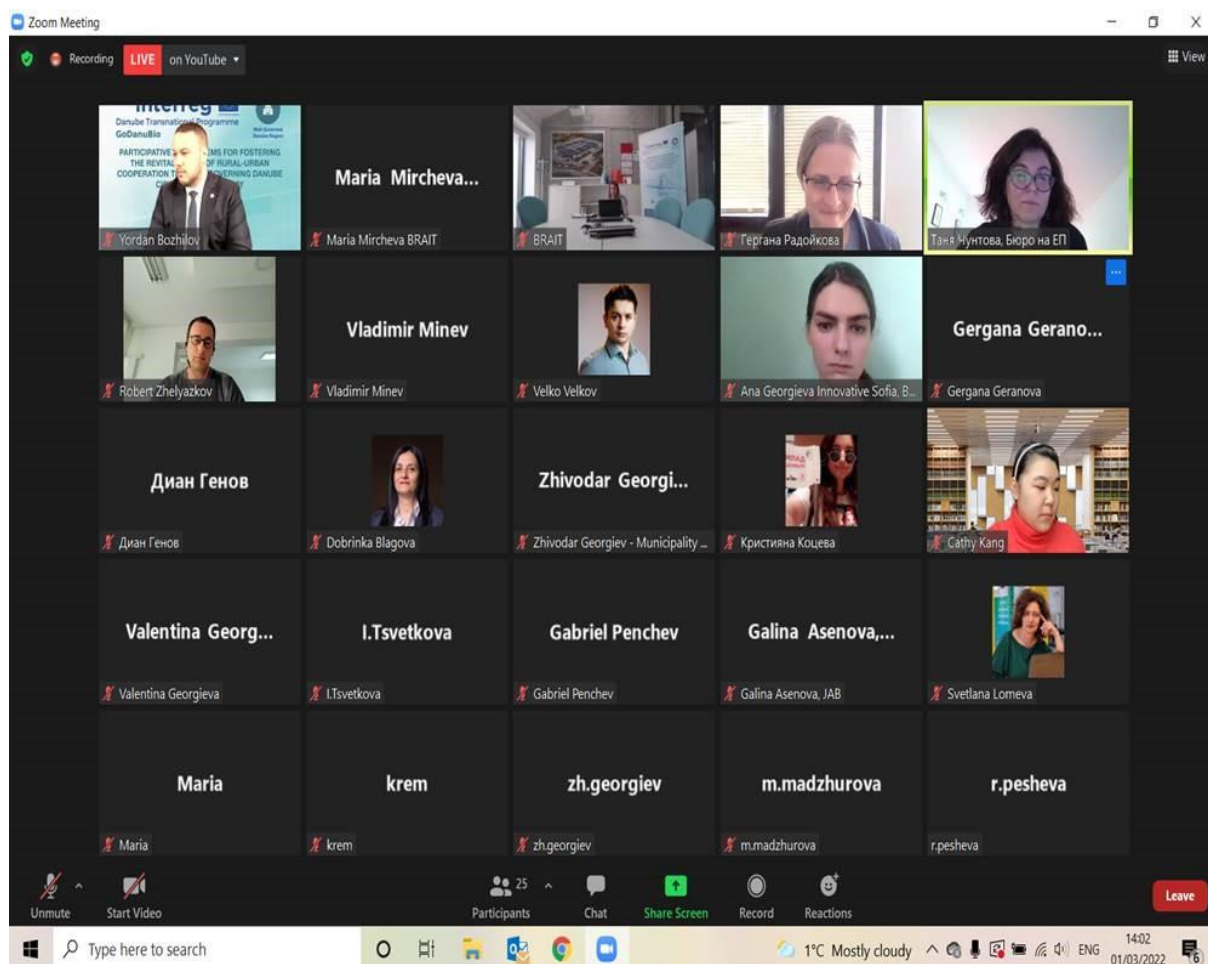
În cadrul workshop-ului au fost discutate proiecte în derulare în domeniul bioeconomiei și posibile scenarii de dezvoltare ale unor ecosisteme regionale de inovare bazate pe bio-economie prin intermediul clusterelor. Participanții s-au axat în principal pe dezvoltarea competențelor comunității locale în tranziția către bioeconomie și dezvoltarea cooperării urban-rural în vederea atingerii obiectivelor de dezvoltare durabilă. S-a subliniat în cadrul unei prezentări că România are deja o strategie locala de bioeconomie in județul Covasna realizată în cadrul proiectului BE-Rural <https://be-rural.eu>

Evenimentul a fost organizat în cadrul proiectului GoDanuBio *“Ecosisteme participative pentru stimularea revitalizării cooperării rural-urban prin guvernarea bioeconomiei circulare in regiunea Dunării”*, finanțat prin Programul de Cooperare Teritorială Interreg Danube.

Mai multe informații cu privire la Proiectul GoDanuBio se pot găsi la <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/godanubio> .

Онлайн уъркшоп на тема „Гражданско участие“ - Workshop on “Participative Governance”

(01/03/2022)



На 1 март 2022 г. се проведе онлайн уъркшоп, посветен на темата „Гражданско участие“. Събитието се организира от Българска Работодателска Асоциация (БРАИТ) и Изпълнителната агенция за насърчаване на малките и средните предприятия, като част от проекта GoDanuBio.

В уъркшопа се включиха 25 участници от различни сфери на обществото – от представители на неправителствени организации и местна изпълнителна власт до активни студенти. Модератор на събитието беше Йордан Божилов – председател на Софийски форум за сигурност, заедно със студент от Университета за Национално и Световно Стопанство – Веселин Ташев. Събитието беше излъчено и на живо в Ютуб, като там зрителите бяха над 50.

Първоначално бяха представени нормативните рамки на гражданското участие на европейско и национално ниво, а след това бяха обсъдени различни примери за добри практики от България. В дискусиата взе участие и студентка от Южна Корея, която сподели нагласите на корейското общество към гражданското участие. Също така, участниците дискутираха възможните причини България да е на едно от последните места по доброволчество. Обсъдиха се и потенциални решения на този проблем, като темата остана отворена за последващи уъркшопи.

Сред презентаторите бяха г-жа Гергана Радойкова – доктор по политология в Софийски Университет, г-жа Таня Чунтова – Представителство на Европейски парламент в България, г-н Робърт Желязков – Фондация Дари Време и г-жа Светлана Ломева - директор на Асоциацията за развитие на София.

Редом с оживената дискусия по темата гражданско участие, беше представен и самият проект GoDanuBio, който предизвика значителен интерес сред участниците.

БРАИТ е сред водещите партньори в проекта GoDanuBio, който е съфинансиран от ЕС и има за цел да използва кръговата биоикономика в дунавския регион, като инструмент за ревитализиране на селските райони и насърчаване на регионалното развитие. Дългосрочната цел на проекта е да подобри социално-икономическия статус на региона, допринасяйки за опазването на околната среда, климата и ресурсите, както и за насърчаване развитието на селските райони.

В проекта участват 19 партньори и 7 асоциирани партньори от 10 страни (AT, BG, CZ, DE, HR, HU, RO, SI, SK, RS) в Дунавския макрорегион. Близко 70 % от участниците са клъстери, клъстерни асоциации и/или организации за подкрепа на бизнеса. Местните власти са представени от 3 партньори и 6 асоциирани стратегически партньори.

Co-creation Workshop

"Digitization, the bioeconomy and the green transition"

Ministerul Economiei în parteneriat cu Asociația Clusterelor din România și Comuna Ghelintă au organizat în data de **7 aprilie 2022** la Universitatea Petrol-Gaze din Ploiești sala AP9, un workshop de co-creare cu tema “ **Digitalizare, Bioeconomie și Tranziție Verde**” la care au fost prezenți 30 de participanți din mediul economic, administrație publică locală și regională, societatea civilă și mediul academic.





În cadrul workshop-ului au fost prezentate proiecte, inițiative, idei și rețele în domeniul bioeconomiei, oportunități de finanțare și posibile scenarii de dezvoltare ale unor ecosisteme regionale de inovare bazate pe bio-economie.

Evenimentul a fost organizat în cadrul proiectului GoDanuBio *“Ecosisteme participative pentru stimularea revitalizării cooperării rural-urban prin guvernarea bioeconomiei circulare în regiunea Dunării”*, finanțat prin Programul de Cooperare Teritorială Interreg Danube.

Mai multe informații cu privire la Proiectul GoDanuBio se pot găsi la <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/godanubio> .

The use of participative governance to strengthen rural bioeconomies

Participative governance is key to improve institutional capacities. It increases the political involvement of stakeholders and ensures that all relevant local and regional actors have the possibility to actively engage in the political decision-making system. Within the project [GoDanuBio](#) several trainings on participative governance were conducted, the results of these trainings are summarized in this press release.

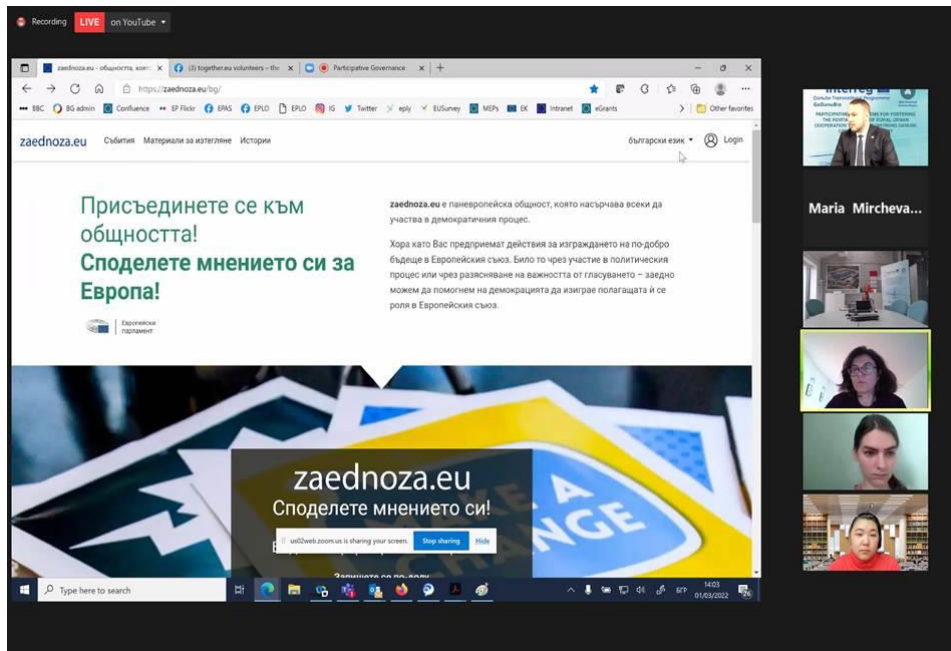
10 training sessions with almost 300 participants conducted in the Danube macro-region

In total, 10 trainings were conducted by the members of the GoDanuBio project, each training in a different region. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic many project partners chose to conduct the training online, two were able to conduct it physically. In total, 279 participants attended and were able to get to know the basics of participative governance. The main target groups reached within the trainings were local public authorities, business support organisations, and SME's.

A special focus of the training sessions was set on how participative governance can strengthen the bioeconomy. New opportunities for the bioeconomy were evaluated on regional and/or local level. Circularity and sustainability of the bioeconomy were also main topics of the sessions. Another aspect of the sessions was how politics, industry, and society at local and regional level can be involved in the bioeconomy transition and how citizens and other stakeholders can be encouraged in shaping their region.

Effects of the training sessions

Participative governance in general is a bottom-up approach, which gives all stakeholders a feeling of being heard and respect. This enhances the acceptance of political approaches and decisions. After the trainings, the participants understood to be proactive towards new policies and regulations. Due the respectful atmosphere in the trainings, the dialogue between stakeholders could be strengthened. The diverse methods of participative governance also lead to standardized participation processes and intensified cooperations between stakeholders.

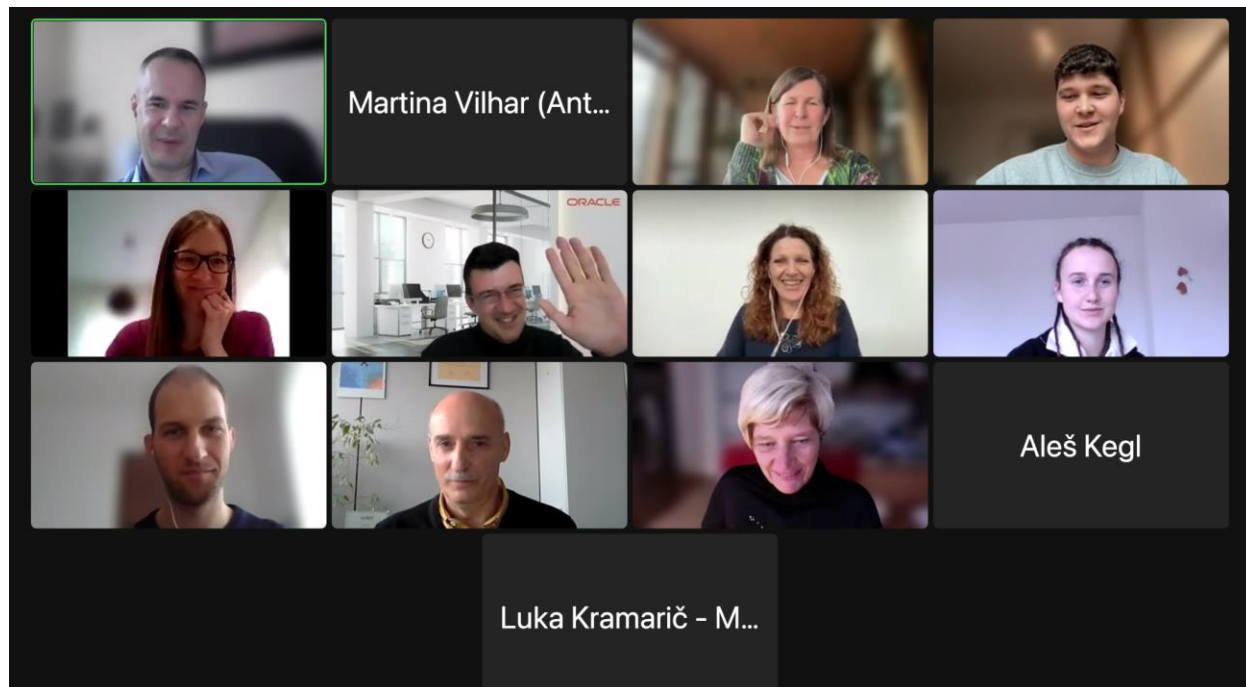


Regional training Bulgaria



Regional training Serbia

Online workshop: Accelerating the transition to circular bioeconomy in Slovenia using digital tools (Ljubljana, 31.3.2022)



On the 31st of March 2022 we held an online workshop "Accelerating the transition to a circular bioeconomy in Slovenia using digital tools". The workshop was organised within the framework of the [Interreg GoDanuBio project](#). 14 participants gained valuable insights into the topics of the circular bioeconomy and an understanding of how digital tools can be used to accelerate its development in Slovenia.

The event was divided into three key parts:

1. three speakers presented their circular bioeconomy projects and challenges in their companies or organisations
2. a presentation of the Value Chain Generator digital tool
3. a discussion on digital tools for creating new circular value chains.

Ms. Mateja Dermastia, Director of Anteja ECG, gave an opening speech to introduce the broader context of the event, particularly the opportunities and challenges of the circular bioeconomy in Slovenia and Europe. She emphasized that the Danube macro-region can support Slovenia in its efforts to develop a circular bioeconomy.

After that, three representatives of companies and organisations, operating in Slovenia, presented their bioeconomy projects and highlighted some of the barriers they face.

Ms. Nina Barbara Križnik, Head of Agriculture at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Chamber of Agricultural and Food Enterprises, presented best circular practices of the Slovenian agricultural and food processing industry. She highlighted the fact that new technologies can solve many problems and enhance the transition to a circular bioeconomy, such as ensuring the competitiveness of agricultural enterprises, efficient use of resources and energy, safety and quality management, health care control, process optimisation, etc.

Dr. Maja Berden Zimec, researcher at Algen d.o.o., presented the outstanding applicability of algae in various industries and their suitability in circular systems.

Mr. Nino Novinec, Oracle's Cloud Platform Customers representative, presented Oracle's sustainability and circular projects. Oracle Slovenia helps Slovenian technology companies to develop digital tools in order to accelerate the transition to a circular bioeconomy.

These presentations were followed by a short moderated discussion where participants listed the main challenges for the transition to a circular bioeconomy in Slovenia, among others:

- low awareness about the competitive advantage if companies engage in the circular bioeconomy
- lack of cross-sectoral integration
- lack of infrastructure for the full circularity of raw materials
- small businesses lack the capacity to engage in the circular bioeconomy
- lack of a stimulating environment for the development of the bioeconomy
- lack of new, circular value chains.

Mr. Jon Goriup Dermastia presented the digital tool Value Chain Generator, which was designed in 2021 within the framework of the project [Interreg AlpLinkBioEco](#) and developed by Anteja ECG and the Swiss Institute of Complex Systems, School of Engineering and Architecture of Fribourg (HES-SO//FR HEIA-FR). Value Chain Generator is a software solution that creates new circular value chains and identifies new business opportunities. It also addresses some of the challenges raised by the workshop participants.

A discussion followed on the benefits of such digital tools for the Slovenian bioeconomy and participants agreed that the main added values of such a tool are:

- in addition to businesses, the Value Chain Generator can benefit policy makers
- finding new customers and suppliers
- linking different sectors to each other
- availability of new data and new knowledge to companies



- compiling high quality and responsive companies' contacts.

At the end of the event, Ms. Mateja Dermastia presented the next steps to accelerate the transition to a circular bioeconomy and expressed the possibility of repeating this workshop in the coming months.

Co-creation workshop

Circular bioeconomy - opportunities for rural areas

Ministerul Economiei în parteneriat cu Asociația Clusterelor din România și Comuna Ghelinta au organizat în data de **30 mai 2022** la Universitatea Spiru Haret din București, un workshop de co-creare cu tema **“Bioeconomia circulară - oportunități pentru mediul rural”** la care au fost prezenți peste 35 de participanți din mediul economic, administrație publică locală și regională, societatea civilă și mediul academic. Totodată, evenimentul a reunit reprezentanți din partea Guvernului României, Departamentul pentru Dezvoltare Durabilă, Ministerului Agriculturii și Dezvoltării Rurale, Ministerului Mediului, Apelor și Pădurilor, Ministerul Antreprenoriatului și Turismului și Ministerului Economiei.



La deschiderea evenimentului au participat *Domnul Secretar de stat Flavius Nedelcea* - Ministerului Economiei, *Domnul Consilier de Stat László Borbély* - Departamentul pentru Dezvoltare Durabilă, *Domnul Prof.dr.Costin Lianu* – prorector Universitatea Spiru Haret și președinte al Clusterului Bio Concept Valea Prahovei și *Domnul Daniel Coșniță* – președinte CLUSTERO.



În cadrul workshop-ului au fost prezentate modele de business bazate pe bioresurse și cele mai bune practici în valorificarea agrobiomasei în scop energetic. Scopul evenimentului a fost acela de a disemina rezultatele proiectelor în domenii legate de bioenergie și bioeconomie și a discuta strategiile regionale aferente, de a formula recomandări de politici în domeniul încălzirii cu agrobiomasă. Tranziția către o bioeconomie circulară, gestionarea durabilă a bioresurselor presupune o responsabilitate și o implicare din partea tuturor factorilor interesați. Un rol esențial este conștientizarea potențialului de care dispun regiunile rurale din România și oportunitățile de dezvoltare în acest domeniu.

Evenimentul a fost organizat în cadrul proiectului GoDanuBio *“Ecosisteme participative pentru stimularea revitalizării cooperării rural-urban prin guvernarea bioeconomiei circulare în regiunea Dunării”*, finanțat prin Programul de Cooperare Teritorială Interreg Danube.

Mai multe informații cu privire la Proiectul GoDanuBio se pot găsi la <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/godanubio> .

GoDanuBio PSG Meeting and Transnational Event ‘The Danube Region at the Turn of the Times - Economic policy impulses from the EU Strategy for the Danube Region’ (Ulm, 30/06/2022 – 01/07/2022)



On 1 July 2022, the GoDanuBio project held its first transnational dialogue as part of the event 'The Danube region at the turn of times: Economic policy impulses from the EU strategy for the Danube region' in Ulm, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. The organiser of the event was The Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Tourism of Baden-Württemberg (BW).

During the event experts from politics, business and science discussed the impact of the war in Ukraine on the Danube region and how cross-border value chains can be made more resilient.

The conference kicked off with welcome addresses by State Secretary Dr. Patrick Rapp – Member of the State Parliament BW – and Gunter Czisch, Lord Mayor of the city of Ulm. The keynote speech was given by Alberto Valenzano from European Commission – DG GROW, who

spoke about the Commission's actions to strengthen European value chains' resilience in the turn of challenging times.

Afterwards, Dr. Gerd Meier zu Köcker and Mr. Benedikt Seldmayr presented the upcoming project Danube Alliance for SME Competitiveness, which has a goal to increase the resilience of the supply chains in the region. The flagship project of Priority Area 8 of the European Danube Region strategy (EUSDR), running since February 2021, will build on smart services and resilient supply chains based on the experience and knowledge from other Danube projects, namely GoDanuBio and DanuBioValNet. It was presented that miscanthus was selected by the Danube Alliance as the first case study for the analysis and modelling of a value chain. The project is led by VDI/VDE Innovation+Technik and BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg is among the partners. Through cooperation with the German SME Advanced Ecologics GmbH, it is intended to establish a sustainable value network based on circular bioeconomy in the Vidin region in northwestern Bulgaria, with the help of a transport and storage system and a central biomass processing plant.

In the next session, Ms. Ana Dijan, Project Manager of Croatian Wood Cluster, which is one of the project partners of GoDanuBio, talked about how to turn residuals into value and mentioned how the wood industry and bioeconomy are old friends. Later on, one more project partner – Ms. Mateja Dermastia, CEO of Anteja ECG – presented her study on the impact and potentials of the Ukraine crisis on Supply chain development in the Danube region. She said: “More than 40 clusters in the Danube region can contribute to address the impact of disrupted value chains in the bioeconomy sector.”

In the afternoon session, during the thematic island organised by the GoDanuBio project Dr. Gerd Meier zu Köcker (CABW) and Prof. Dr. Ralf Kindervater (BIOPRO) presented the example of how the region Baden-Württemberg implements its bioeconomy strategy. Mateja Dermastia brought in the project's experiences and representatives from the Danube countries and regions discussed how transnational dialogue supported through the Danube Transnational Programme can be used for peer-learning and transfer of such good practices in policy making, where policy makers, clusters, intermediaries, research and companies need to interact in a top-down and bottom-up approach. The thematic island session was moderated by Lucia Seel.

The day before that, the members of the GoDanuBio consortium also had the chance to meet in person after many online monthly meetings, and to hold a Project Steering Group meeting (#5). During the meeting, the ongoing progress of the project was discussed and the upcoming activities for the final semester were outlined. Moreover, the individual work packages were presented by the respective work package leaders. After introductory words, the project partners held a discussion on how to tackle the challenges identified in the Integration Plan in the Danube Region, concluding activity of WPT2. Afterwards, selected project regions reported on the status of the co-creation workshops in their region. Some partners have already conducted some or all the workshops, while others are now fully engaged in planning. WP Communication highlighted the updated Action Plan and current activities. Afterwards, a joint activity with the representatives of EUSDR PA8 took place, in which the project was

briefly presented by Sergi Costa (BIOPRO) and the plans of EUSDR from 2023 onwards was shortly introduced by Judit Schrick-Szenczi, PA8 coordinator. She expressed the interest of PA8 to collect emerging ideas and proposals that could be funded within the 5-year period starting in January 2023.

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Košice Region Forum for Landscape Recovery

4th co-creation workshop organized by Košice Self-governing Region

Within the GoDanuBio project, the Košice self-governing Region took the opportunity to organize the fourth co-creation workshop, which took place in June 2022 in Košice. The workshop was organized in the framework of the Landscape Recovery Programme – Košice Region Forum for Landscape Recovery.

The Košice self-governing Region continues to implement the Landscape Recovery Programme, which focuses on the implementation of Water retention actions, changes in land management approaches, and the recovery of damaged landscapes in the rural and urban areas that are affected by demographic changes.

On Thursday, 9th June 2022, the Košice Regional Forum of Landscape Recovery was held at the Congress Hotel Roca with the active participation of the State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic Martin Kováč and Deputy Chairman of Košice self-governing Region Daniel Rusnák.

The workshop was organized in a physical form with the participation of 120 participants consisting of: Water Councils representatives (based on the Landscape Recovery Programme), Farmers, Agriculturists, Foresters, Water managers, Volunteers, Activists, representants of Local, Regional, and State administration, Representatives of the National Land Fund, Interest groups including NGO and General Public.

The workshop was professionally led by experts: Michal Kravčík (environmentalist, People and Water NGO.), Jaroslav Tešliar (head of Agency for Regional Development Support Košice, NGO.), and Jana Bieliková (transition2Bio, PEDAL Consulting).

Guiding objective of Košice Region Forum for Landscape Restoration

The 4th workshop organized by Košice self-governing Region aimed to create a space for an open discussion focused on the barriers that complicate the implementation of the Landscape Recovery Programme in the framework of the Košice Region: (legislation, centralization of the system, funding, etc.) The discussion took place between representatives of the regional authority and a representative of the state administration - the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic. Workshop was a great opportunity to present examples of good practice within the field of the Landscape Recovery Programme. The main objective of the organized workshop was to dive deep into

the plans of the Water Councils of Košice Region within the Landscape Recovery Program 2021-2030 of individual regions included topics for comprehensive solutions for the WEF (water, energy, food) approach, like climate change effects on water supply; soil fertility; extreme heat and the occurrence of natural disasters.

Brief Agenda of Workshop Košice Region Forum for Landscape Recovery

The workshop was divided into two main thematic blocs to achieve an open discussion-oriented to the main themes of the workshop as follows:

9:00 – 14:00 Best Practice Examples of Landscape Recovery Programme activities within the whole Košice Region (identification of barriers to implemented activities)

14:00 – 16:30 Panel Discussions (with the active participation of the State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Slovakia)

The panel discussions strongly focused on:

- What mechanisms and tools are necessary for the sustainable management of landscape recovery?
- How does the legislative environment need to be improved?
- What financial mechanisms are needed to strengthen the long-term management of Landscape Recovery?
- Which stakeholders are necessary to reach?

Identified barriers - results of panel discussions

- The approach to the care of damaged landscapes in rural and urban areas of the Košice Region is strongly sectorally - oriented
- The institutes at the regional level mostly expect decision-making at the higher levels of management of the State
- There is a need to build professional capacity in the participatory governance process. The sectoral approach to Landscape Restoration needs to be replaced by multisectoral solutions. It is necessary to strengthen trust in participatory governance at the regional level
- It's time to start the discussion - Together with the stakeholders, identify and discuss relevant barriers to the full development of the Landscape Recovery Programme and overcome these barriers

More information at:

<https://web.vucke.sk/sk/novinky/kosicky-samospravny-kraj-organizuje-forum-k-obnove-krajiny.html>



Workshop zur Bioökonomie im Alb-Donau-Kreis

Als gemeinsame Veranstaltung von BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg und dem Landratsamt Alb-Donau-Kreis fand am 5. Juli 2022 im Rahmen des Interreg-Donauraumprogrammprojektes „GoDanuBio“ der Workshop „Bioökonomie im Alb-Donau-Kreis: Ansatzpunkte für eine nachhaltigere Wirtschaftsweise durch intelligente Nutzung von Biomasse und Reststoffen“ statt. In der Veranstaltung, die Magdalena Siedlaczek von finep moderierte, diskutierten die Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer im World-Café-Format das Potenzial der Bioökonomie im Landkreis, die Identifizierung ungenutzter oder nicht effizient genutzter Biomasse sowie die mögliche Einbindung von Reststoffen in hochwertige Wertschöpfungsketten.

Im Projekt GoDanuBio geht es darum, dass die Bioökonomie in der Stärkung des ländlichen Raumes eine Schlüsselrolle einnehmen soll. Um diesen Ansatz für den Donauraum auf regionaler und lokaler Ebene zu entwickeln, werden im Rahmen des Projektes in den zehn Partnerregionen insgesamt 30 Workshops angeboten, davon drei in Baden-Württemberg. Der Alb-Donau-Kreis stellte sich als perfekter Partner heraus – dort soll in der Zukunft ein eigenes Bioökonomie-Konzept erstellt werden. Für den Workshop kamen rund 35 Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer zusammen, um über die Bioökonomie im Landkreis zu diskutieren.

Nach einer Begrüßung von Dr. Sigrid Kusch-Brandt (Landratsamt Alb-Donau-Kreis) und Dr. Katrin Stökle (BIOPRO, GoDanuBio) präsentierte Dr. Brigitte Kempter-Regel (BIOPRO) die Rahmenbedingungen der Bioökonomie in Baden-Württemberg. Eine andere Perspektive auf die Biomassekonversion erläuterte anschließend Dr. Tobias Wolfinger (Technikum Laubholz Blaubeuren) anhand der innovativen Nutzung von Holz.

Fokus nicht nur auf intelligenten Produkten, sondern auch auf intelligenter Nutzung

Nach den fachlichen Impulsen diskutierten die Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer in einem World-Café verschiedene Fragestellungen: Im Landkreis wurden zahlreiche Stoffströme identifiziert, welche für bioökonomische Produkte genutzt werden könnten – zum Beispiel Landschaftspflegematerial, Ölpflanzen und Abfälle aus der Nahrungsmittelindustrie. Es kristallisierte sich jedoch heraus, dass einige Materialien bereits energetisch genutzt werden, während die stoffliche Nutzung zukünftig erst verstärkt erarbeitet werden muss. Die innovativen Ideen der Bioökonomie könnten in Zukunft durch die Zusammenarbeit von Landwirtschaft, Forstwirtschaft, Kommunen und Firmen spannende Anreize für neue Produkte und regionale Erfolgspfade schaffen. Die Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer des Workshops identifizierten aber auch Spannungsfelder. So sind Weichenstellungen erforderlich, um dem Konflikt zwischen Nahrungsmittelsicherheit, Energiebereitstellung und stofflicher Nutzung von Biomasse vorzubeugen. Förderliche gesetzliche Rahmenbedingungen könnten die Bioökonomisierung des ländlichen Raumes beschleunigen. Gerade Kommunen sind in ihrem Handlungsspielraum durch die komplexen Vorgaben von Land, Bund und EU häufig eingeschränkt. Außerdem müssen bioökonomische Konzepte nicht nur theoretisch

funktionieren, sondern sich auch wirtschaftlich behaupten können. Für Kommunen und Firmen ist es wichtig zu identifizieren, welche Vorhaben unter welchen Rahmenbedingungen ökologische Vorteile erzielen und zugleich ökonomische Gewinne erreichen. Eine Vielzahl an Vorhaben und Ideen zum Umgang mit Biomasse und Reststoffen existieren bereits. Diese besser zu verstehen, kann einen wichtigen Beitrag leisten, um das wertschöpfende Potenzial einer regionalen Bioökonomie zu erschließen.

Für den Alb-Donau-Kreis bilden die Ergebnisse der Veranstaltung wichtige Bausteine in der weiteren Ausarbeitung des landkreiseigenen Bioökonomie-Konzeptes und unterstützen damit die strategische Orientierung in diesem wichtigen Zukunftsfeld. Im weiteren Verlauf sollen bioökonomische Aktivitätsfelder definiert werden, die im Landkreis mit Priorität weiterentwickelt werden sollen. Darüber hinaus zeigten die Diskussionsrunden des durchgeführten Workshops sowie die Vernetzung der Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer vielfältige Ansatzmöglichkeiten für die Entwicklung von konkreten Projekten auf.



Damit die Jugend nicht wegzieht: Ideen der Bevölkerung erwünscht

Eine Online-Plattform zum Melden gefährlicher Straßenstellen oder Schülergruppen, die gemeinsam zur Schule radeln: So wollen die Freistädterinnen und Freistädter ihre Stadt radfahrerfreundlicher machen und damit die Jugend zum Bleiben bewegen. Das waren zwei der zahlreichen Ideen bei einem Workshop mit Bürger:innenbeteiligung im Rahmen des Interreg-Projekts „GoDanuBio“ von Lebensmittel- und Cleantech-Cluster der oberösterreichischen Standortagentur Business Upper Austria.

Damit junge Menschen gerne in ländlichen Regionen leben, sind attraktive Rahmenbedingungen notwendig. Bei einem dreitägigen Workshop waren Ideen der Bevölkerung gefragt, wie Freistadt in eine radfahrer:innen- und fußgänger:innenfreundliche Stadt verwandelt werden kann. Zahlreiche begeisterte Radfahrer:innen und Fußgänger:innen folgten der Einladung zum Workshop mit Bürgerbeteiligung. Der Sitzungsraum im Freistädter Rathaus war bis auf den letzten Platz gefüllt. In einem dreistündigen Design-Thinking-Prozess entwickelten die Bürger:innen zahlreiche Ideen, wie Freistadt attraktiver und umweltfreundlicher gestaltet werden könnte.

Ideen umsetzen

Die Mitglieder der Ausschüsse Planung und Verkehr diskutierten und priorisierten die zahlreich eingebrachten Ideen und beurteilten, inwiefern sie realisiert werden können. Edith Öller, Unternehmensberaterin von IDEAZ, begleitete die Workshops als Expertin. Im nächsten Schritt sollen diese Ideen nach und nach umgesetzt werden.

Jugend zum Bleiben bewegen

Durch das Projekt „GoDanuBio“ soll sich Freistadt zu einer attraktiveren Stadt entwickeln. Damit erhoffen sich die Projektpartner:innen, das Wegziehen von vor allem jungen Menschen zu stoppen. Geplant sind u. a. eine Online-Plattform, auf der gefährliche Stellen im Verkehr gemeldet werden können, sowie mehr Abstellplätze für Fahrräder. Weiters sollen sichere Geh- und Radwege von vornherein in neue Planungen miteinbezogen werden. Eine weitere Idee will die Schulen vernetzen und so Gruppen von Schüler:innen dazu animieren, gemeinsam in die Schule zu gehen oder zu radeln. Das soll die Schulwege sicherer machen.

„GoDanuBio“

Der Lebensmittel- und Cleantech-Cluster der oberösterreichischen Standortagentur Business Upper Austria entwickeln gemeinsam mit 23 Projektpartner:innen aus zehn Ländern im

Interreg-Projekt „GoDanuBio“ ein Ausbildungsprogramm zu partizipativer Governance (Bürger:innenbeteiligung) rund um das Thema Bioökonomie. So sollen ländliche Regionen im Donaauraum für die junge Bevölkerung wieder attraktiver werden. „GoDanuBio“ will die regionale Entwicklung nachhaltig unterstützen. Der Fokus liegt darauf, den Übergang von einer fossil-basierten Wirtschaft hin zu biobasierten Produkten und Dienstleistungen anzukurbeln. Im Mittelpunkt stehen biologische Ressourcen sowie Verfahren zur Entwicklung neuer Produkte und Dienstleistungen. Diese können zur Weiterentwicklung ländlicher Gebiete beitragen.

Freistadt attraktiver machen

Die dreiteilige Workshop-Reihe in Kooperation mit der Stadt Freistadt fand im Rahmen des Projekts „GoDanuBio“ im Juni 2022 statt. Das Ziel: Ideen finden, um Freistadt in eine radfahrer- und fußgängerfreundlichere Stadt zu verwandeln. Wichtig war den Projektpartner:innen, die Bevölkerung durch aktive Bürger:innenbeteiligung in den Prozess einzubeziehen.

Mehr Informationen zum Projekt finden Sie [hier](#).

GoDanuBio's contribution to the bioeconomisation of the Danube Region

GoDanuBio supported the set-up of policy frameworks and participative governance schemes in the participating regions. The main topics were circular bioeconomy, sustainable rural development and rural-urban interactions.

The GoDanuBio partnership was mainly composed of a long-standing network of Ministries, state agencies and business support organisations belonging to the Danube Region. Based partly on the outcomes of the DanuBioValNet project (2017-2019), the new consortia included several new partner profiles e.g. a municipality, a county administration and a research institute.

The project was implemented from July 2020 till December 2022 through the harsh period of the COVID-19 pandemic, what reduced dramatically the physical interaction and caused more than two-thirds of the activities to be implemented online. The project finished officially on 31st December 2022.

Main achievements

Advancing on the deployment of policy frameworks & infrastructures

The project supported the progress of political approaches toward the circular bioeconomy in Croatia, Czech Republic Hungary and Romania. In some of these cases, the approach was embedding the bioeconomy concept in circular economy policies. In the case of Serbia, the impulse given through the organisation of a two-day Final Conference in its territory could be determinant to strengthen recent initiatives such as the launch of a bioeconomy cluster.

Making the bioeconomisation of the Danube Region more effective

The mobilisation of bioeconomy-related actors through the value chain was refined and speeded up. An Integration plan -that can serve as a guideline to empower rural-urban interactions from the policy-making side- was published. The preparation of a "Best Practice Brochure on the mobilization of actors for the Circular Bioeconomy", collecting 26 best practices from different participating regions was a well-rated exercise for mutual learning between partners.

Increasing the culture of participative governance

Between May 2021 and November 2022, the partnership organised 12 trainings on capacity-building and 32 co-creation workshops with the "bioeconomy" and "cooperation and networking" as the main themes addressed. Around 500 single organisations and 800 participants were reached through the co-creation workshops in ten countries. Knowing that Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary and Slovenia had had already participative governance experiences in the past, the project contributed to enhance new forms of democratic policy-making in some of the other participating regions, or at least to initiate steps toward them.

The Brain Trust Roadmap

The Brain Trust was one of the ideas inherited from the DanuBioValNet project and through GoDanuBio this idea was further explored. The Trust is a board of experts covering expertise on circular bioeconomy, cluster development and innovation in the value chain. The experts

could act as national focus points to accompany the bioeconomy transformation through e.g. further EUSDR PA8 flagships, Interreg or Horizon Europe projects. A roadmap for upcoming actions in 2023 was drafted.

More visibility for Interreg

Particularly BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg teamed up with the BIOEAST Initiative, with whom collaborated in a draft note addressed to different General Directorates of the European Commission (RTD, AGRI, GROW, REGIO) and other European stakeholders. This exercise, as well as the participation of Prof. Dr. Kindervater and the State Secretary at the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds (Croatia) in the EU Bioeconomy Conference in Brussels (October 2022), was a lively proof of how the project interacted with other initiatives and try to capitalise on previous project's results.

The follow-up

As assessed through an internal enquire within the partnership, the GoDanuBio project delivers a medium-to-high impact in the different participating countries in the years to come. A follow-up through EU-funded projects or the way the European Green Deal is managed in each country might play a role on this remit. Surely, some of the findings of the project will be conveyed through two recently started projects funded by Horizon Europe: [CEE2ACT](#) and [ROBIN](#), the latter with Baden-Württemberg and Žilina (Slovakia) as participating regions.

The output reports and deliverables of the project can be downloaded in [this link](#).