Study trip to Upper Austria
THE DONAUSTEIG AND THE DONAURADWEG

From 14th to 16th of December, in cooperation with the Danube region in Upper Austria, DCC organized a study tour for selected Romanian and Serbian stakeholders located in the Iron Gate Region. During two days of the trip, participants from several different institutions (Mehedinti County Council, Cyclomaniacs, TO Kladovo, TO Donji Milanovac and the newly established Cycling Organisation of Kladovo) had an opportunity to learn more about the establishment, maintenance and promotion of cycling and hiking trails. Goal of the study trip was to gain knowledge for the application in the process of improvement of the Blue Week cycling trail – a 115 km long new touristic product that connects the cities of Kladovo (SR) and Drobeta Turnu Severin (RO).

For this purpose, two of the most attractive hiking and cycling trails in Europe were selected to be the best practical example – the Donauseite hiking trail and the Donauradweg (Danube Cycle Path). These two routes run parallel to the Danube: the Danube Cycle Path exists along the entire Danube in Austria, whereas the Donauseite is a hiking trail located in the province of Upper Austria. The Donauradweg attracts more than 600,000 cyclists per year.

The beginnings of the Donauradweg traces back to the 80′s, when the region started an initiative to continuously extend the existing towpaths into more concrete networks of trails and building simultaneously vast network of signposts. Throughout the time, with the support of local tour operators which continuously raised awareness about the trails, the trail has been perfectly coordinated and promoted through various materials and information centers. This process resulted in 375 km of cycling routes on both sides of the Danube throughout Austria and 170 km and 41 complete loop trails only in Upper Austria (the hiking trail was opened in 2010). While cycling trails are running almost right next to the Danube, hiking paths are circling above charming Austrian hills that hide many breathtaking viewpoints.

Signposts can be found along the whole route and the system is done as a combination of regular signposts along the road or hiking paths, and painted signs on the road itself or on the trees. Both routes have different logos that are designed in a catchy combination of green and blue colors, and tourists can easily notice them. It is not only the logos that create specific identity of the routes. Inner synergy of the product is secured by repetitive design of the signposting systems, info centers that are branded in the same way and also the resting points that are positioned on the locations where stopping is most comfortable.

If you take into consideration that well developed infrastructure is being maintained regularly by local municipalities, and promoted in best possible way trough precise information that are always available at donauradweg.com and donauseite.com, no wonder that more than half a million tourists per year are enjoying to cycle along the Austrian Danube. Plus, a well-organized system of bed and bike accommodation is something that will guarantee to visitors not only a perfect place for the outdoors activities, but also a cozy places to rest or enjoy the local cuisine.

The Blue Week cycling route is a new product in DJerdap region that is also part of the EuroVelo 6 cycling Route. At this point, 13 locations were selected on both sides of the Serbian and Romanian border, while signposting, maintenance and promotion of the route are elements that will be worked out in the future. That is why the study trip to Upper Austria was more than inspiring to all stakeholders that are involved in the process. After an initial setting up of the route, it is now clear which further steps are necessary in order to create a strong and attractive cycling trail.
Final Conference of Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route project

The final conference of Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route project took place on September 24th in hotel Capitol in Bucharest, Romania. Mr Danko Cosic, Danube Competence Center’s Project Manager facilitated the opening sessions, followed by keynote speakers Mr. Octavian Arsene, Director of National Authority for Tourism Romania and Ms. Emanuela Panke, Secretary General of IterVitis Association.

There was a presentation on Project partners and their contribution, while Mr Cosic presented key Project results and achievements. Scientific background of Route certification was elaborated by Michael Werner from Department of Art and Art History at the University of Albany, who is the Head of Route Scientific Committee. Stanimir Stoyanov, the Chairman of Union of Oenologists of Bulgaria talked about “Wines from the Danube region” as a new label on the market. Ms Penelope Denu addressed the audience via video call followed by official signing of Memorandum of Understanding between IterVitis and the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route.

At the end, participants enjoyed the wine tasting organized by Mr Dan Jalea and Alcovin winery from Romania.

You may take a look at Mr Danko Cosic presentation at – http://report.romanemperorsroute.org/


Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region

The 4th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region took place on 29 and 30 October 2015 at the Trade Fair Ulm. This year, the Forum was jointly organized by the European Commission, the State of Baden-Württemberg and the City of Ulm.

Under the title “Smart, social, sustainable - Innovation for the Danube Region”, the forum put a strong emphasis on topics such as innovation, professional training and dual education, entrepreneurship and civil society, as key factors for a sustainable and integrative growth in the Danube Region. The thematic sessions, workshops and panel discussions organized during the two days, gave the participants the opportunity to take a closer look at the complex mechanisms that should be put together on a political, project and funding level in order to profit largely of the potential of a macro-regional strategy.

Living the future on the Danube

In cooperation with the Danube Strategy Point of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) PA3 “To promote culture, tourism and people to people contact”, the National Tourism Organisation of Serbia (NTOS) with the support of GIZ / DCC project and Regional Development Agency of Bačka, organized a conference under the name “Living the future on the Danube” held on 7th December.

The panel discussion highlighted main tourism development issues and how they are interlinked with other spheres important for the strengthening and connecting the Danube region. The event was also an opportunity to promote the film “Danube in Serbia – 588 impressions”, created in cooperation with Austrian Development Agency, as a part of the thematic campaign for 2016.

Revision of Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route

After the end of Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route project, it was clear that not all of the 20 selected Roman localities along Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route are equally willing or ready to participate in further development of the Route.

In that sense, DCC team led by Chairperson of Scientific Committee of the Route, Mr. Michael Werner, had three meetings (from 21 to 23rd December), with representatives of localities that were already involved in the Route development or are willing to become part of it.

After the meeting in Plovdiv, the team visited locality Novae in Svishtov, while the last day was reserved for guided tour through the Alba Iulia complex. This study tour helped the team to understand not only the themes on which representatives of localities are working, but also everyday dynamics and obstacles that partners are confronting with and plans for the upcoming projects.

Broader report will soon be available in new edition of Roman Footprints magazine.
Info Tour along Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route

During September 2015, two info tours along Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route were organized for two different group of tour operators. On their way, tour operators had a chance to visit Sirmium – Imperial Palace, Ilok, Novi Sad and Petrovaradin Fortress, Sremski Karlovci, Belgrade, Donji Milanovac and Lepenski Vir, Djerdap Gorge, Kladovo, Negotin and Rajacke Pimnice, Felix Romuliana, Belogradchik Rocks and Magura Cave, Ruse, Ivanovo Rock Monastery ending up in Bucharest. The joint dinner for both groups took place in Bucharest and another group departed on the same tour, but in different direction.

Several wine tastings were organized along the way, including ”Wines from the Danube Region” Masterclass that helped participants to explore and expand their knowledge of varieties, styles and wine regions along the Danube, during intimate wine education session, while cruising on the river.

Photo and Adventure Fair in Vienna

In cooperation with National Tourism Organisation of Serbia, that was also a partner country of the Photo and Adventure fair in Vienna from 20-22. December, DCC presented touristic offer of four Danube Regions. Focusing on the themes Young Danube, Austrian Danube, Iron Gate Region and Danube Delta, through images and texts that were posted on four pillars, visitors had an opportunity to learn more about attractions of mentioned regions.

Presentation wouldn’t possible possible without the support of DCC members and partners: ARGE Donau, TO Kladovo, Rowmania, Danube Office – Mehedinti County Council, Old Fane’s Lodge, Vylkovo Pelican Tour, Robinson Travel and State Tourist Board Baden-Württemberg. During two days of the fair, 250 visitors visited the stand and collected various promo materials.

DCC MEMBER NEWS

DCC MEMBERS

OLD FANE'S LODGE
www.lamosfane.ro

Old Fane’s Lodge is located in Marasu Village, on the Great Braila Island and amidst the Braila Natural Park. It offers free Wi-Fi and water sport facilities. The location, in the vicinity of the Danube, is ideal for birdwatching and fishing. Old Fane’s Lodge offers a garden, barbecue facilities, a shared kitchen and a games room. Guests can enjoy the lounge with TV, dining area and a fireplace. Free private parking is possible on site. The air-conditioned rooms provide a seating area and river views. The bathroom facilities are shared and free toiletries are available for guests. Old Fane welcomes you in a wild land where you can enjoy all that nature left us to enjoy without our anthropic intervention.

LEPENSKI VIR MUSEUM
www.lepenski-vir.rs

During the sixties of the 20th century, extensive archaeological research were carried out in the area of Iron Gate. Prof. Dragoslav Srejović led the research at Lepenski Vir locality where unique prehistoric culture was discovered, dating back to the Mesolithic period. This attractive museum represents one of the most interesting attractions in Djerdap Region and it is a must see for any passing by tours.

DANUBE OFFICE – MEHEDINTI COUNTY COUNCIL
www.sejmh.ro

Mehedinti County Council is an institution, legally constituted in April 1992, acting as authority for the local public administrations (61 communes, 3 towns an 1 municipality), supporting their initiatives and projects that should generate regional development for an intelligent and sustainable economy of the county. Aside from carrying out of the public services of county interest, the county council decides, within the limits and terms of the law, the cooperation or association with other administrative units in the country or abroad, in order to promote common interests. Tourism development is one of the main concerns of Mehedinti County Council.
Flora Tour – 25 years of best services with a smile

Coming year will be really special for tourism in Bratislava and Slovakia, and for Flora Tour travel agency. In May 2016, it will commemorate 25 year anniversary of the company and that is the reason it was decided to dedicate the new season to these celebrations.

During two and a half decade, the agency provided various tourism products and tourism related products to tourists from all over the world – especially sightseeing tours by our popular Presporacik - Oldtimers®, walking city tours, short trips with professional guides to Bratislava’s surrounding, as well as longer Slovakia tours, thematic tours, transfers by modern coaches, events, accommodation and dining services and many other services. Thanks to its professionalism and devotion, Flora Tour has become one of the tourism leaders in the region.

For the new season, Flora Tour is preparing some surprises for its customers, and to give them more possibilities to explore the Danube region. In 2016, it is planning to expand the product portfolio of new half-day trips full of authentic experiences. For those who wish to explore fairytale region of Small Carpathian Mountains, and see how the famous wine-growers produce traditional wines, there is amazing Wine tour. If one wishes to explore the place emblazoned with history and legends, there is a possibility of choosing the Devin tour, which offers both history and black currant wine. In order to discover the royal history of Austria-Hungary monarchy at the most amazing place in Austria, one can always choose a trip to the Schloss Hof Palace. All of these tours will be held regularly by Flora Tour minivan accompanied by licensed guide in English and German languages.