The 6th General Assembly of DCC took place in the city of Sremski Karlovc (Serbia) on Friday, 6th February 2015. During the Assembly, more than 45 members discussed and adopted activities, administrative and financial reports of 2014. With regard to 2015, a number of amendments to statutes were discussed and approved, as well as the operational plan and projected budget. Furthermore, a new model of membership structure, as well as a new membership based service portfolio were discussed. These documents are now waiting to be approved by the Board of Directors based on the valuable feedback provided by participants during the Assembly.

DCC on ITB 2015

This year’s participation of the Danube Competence Center in ITB Berlin will see again a comprehensive package of promotional activities, enhanced by many innovations for 2015. At the center of it all is the conveniently located “Discover the Danube” stand in hall 2.2., where DCC and co-exhibiting Danube partners showcase all that the Danube has to offer. Guided tours, for the first time with thematic specialization, will bring journalists, tour operators and political VIPs to the stands of Danube countries. A river cruise workshop, oriented toward river cruise companies and incoming tour operators from the Danube region, will highlight new market opportunities in emerging markets. Likewise, the Danube Forum will focus on the international branding and marketing of the Danube. For final consumers, the Danube passport game will allow to win exciting prizes, including a weekend Danube cruise. ITB 2015 will also be the framework for the kick-off meeting of the new DCC marketing committee, consisting of representatives of participating national tourism organizations, which in the future will co-determine overall marketing strategy of DCC and the Danube.

RER & DWR - CoORDINATION MEETING IN RUSE

Project partners working on development of Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route gathered in Bulgarian city of Ruse in order to discuss up to date activities and agree on upcoming work within the project. The key activities were: Study tour in the Netherlands, Concept development of interpretational materials for archeological sites, Ilok – Sremski Karlovci FAM trip for journalists and tour operators. Next steps are: National stakeholders meetings in all 4 partner countries, First itineraries and packages for tourists, and promotion on Regional and International level. After official part, partners enjoyed guided tour to Rouse Regional Museum of History and Ecological Museum.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF RER/DWR

The first meeting of Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route Scientific Committee was organized on 16th December 2014 in Imperial Palace in Sirmium, Sremska Mitrovica. The Scientific Committee gathers experts in the fields of culture, archeology, history, art and other similar fields, and has been established in order to secure scientific approach to the development of the Route’s theme basis and cultural-historical interpretation, according to highest academic standards.

"Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route is the first cultural route that will start from this Region. It is at the same time part of cultural heritage of the countries included in the Route, but also integral part of European cultural heritage. The Roman Empire and the Roman emperors laid the foundations of urban planning, administrative and regulatory system of medieval Europe, and thus the modern European societies too. In that sense, Route gathers localities in Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania, which are monuments of Roman emperors in the Region", said Michael Werner, president of Route Scientific Committee and professor from Albany University, State University of New York - Department of Art and Art History.

"Our goal is continual development of this cultural route as an attractive and economically profitable touristic product that gathers four Danube region countries. Through development of the Route, we want to contribute development of cross-border tourism and joint promotion of linked destinations along the Route, all in interest of four countries," said project manager of the Route Mr. Danko Ćosić.

(Parts of the news were taken from the news published on www.blic.rs)
NEW WEBSITE
ARGE DONAU ÖSTERREICH

The Austrian Danube region presents itself on a joint website since November 2014 at www.donau-oesterreich.at. The new online travel guide offers an overview of the entire Danube region in Austria. The website structure is based on five most important themes of the region: Danube Cycle Path, Danube Hiking Trails, Culture, Culinary Delights and Events. The entire website is responsive and adapts automatically to various devices, such as desktop-computers, tablets or smartphones. A translation into English will be carried out in 2015.

DANUBE. magazine 2015

The ARGE Donau Österreich published fourth edition of yearly high glossy magazine „DANUBE. magazine 2015“. The magazine is produced in German and in English, and provides insights into the Austrian Danube region. It offers images and stories about culture, hiking, nature, culinary delights and biking along the Danube in Austria. The German version can be ordered for free at: www.donau-oesterreich.at/prospekte.

To order the English version, please send an e-mail to info@donau-oesterreich.at.

5TH International Danube Tourism Conference in Krems

“The Danube - Smooth Flowing” was the theme of 5th International Danube Tourism Conference held in Krems-Stein, in Austria, from 3rd to 6th December 2014.

The organizers of the event were the Lower Austrian Tourist Board, the Lower Austrian Danube Tourism (Donau Niederösterreich Tourismus GmbH) and the Danube Tourist Commission.

Apart from the conference, held at the Campus of the University of Applied Sciences in Krems, participants had the opportunity to enjoy the post-convention tour to the Kremstal and Kamptal.

The programme, as well as all the presentations and photos can be found here: www.donau.com/de/donau-niederoesterreich/donautourismus2014/

CYCLING TOURISM IN BULGARIA AND LOWER DANUBE REGION

At the end of 2014 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) focused on the development of tourism sector in Bulgaria as an important factor for regional and economic development. Priority was set onto cycling tourism and transportation development policies on national, regional and local level in Bulgarian Danube Region and neighboring countries.

After initial meeting in Bratislava, GIZ started with implementation of the first phase, where six project experts visited stakeholders involved in development of cycling tourism. The study trip to Serbia and Austria facilitated a regional knowledge exchange between Bulgarian cycling tourism experts and cycling stakeholders from Austria, Romania, Serbia and Croatia.

Danube Speedboats

Bratislava Region has something new to offer: ten speedboats were launched, as a brand new product of a Bratislava- based DMC Tour4U last summer.

After years of experience in the streets of Bratislava with Prešporáčik - a lovely train that even took Larry King around the city in 2011, the company decided to show its visitors the beauties of the region from boats.

Speedboats of similar type are available for a group up to 60 people. There are also different routes to choose from, not only during the daytime but during evenings as well.

www.speedboats.sk/en/
NEW DCC MEMBERS

ATOS FRUCTUM
www.atos-fructum.com
www.atosapple.com

Our goal is to create and improve the conditions required for development of tourism and, in that way, enable the numerous tourist subjects to present their capacities and services and gain bigger profit.

By organizing a number of educational seminars and workshops and participating in various projects, we are likely to improve and create all required preconditions in order to fulfill these goals.

TRAVEL COMMUNICATION ROMANIA
www.TravelCommunication.ro

Travel Communication Romania is PR, Marketing & Events agency, dedicated to travel and lifestyle industry. Our area of expertise includes standard PR activities (press releases and press conferences), special projects (info trips, fam-trips and celebrity endorsement), events on request, social media, media-buying, consultancy and others. We work with travel organizations from other countries who want to be promoted to the Romanian public and cooperate with touristic regions, travel agencies, tourism organizations, hotels, DMCs, National, Regional and Local Tourist Boards, airline companies, resorts, NGOs.

NEW ONLINE MAGAZINE

Roman Footsteps

Online from February 2015. In order to promote archaeological sites, wine regions, wineries and events along the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route, new magazine will offer a platform for cooperation between experts and exchange between various experts and route stakeholders. In that sense, the new magazine will offer interesting news from the field of enology, culture and history.

Germany – Simply inspiring

Germany is the perfect year-round travel destination. It is most beautiful when is discovered step by step: that way, one can sense vibrant cities, picturesque countryside, exciting atmosphere and immense pallet of authentic traditions and customs. A colorful window to what a Germany as a travel destination offers can be seen on IFT in Belgrade 2015 and virtually on the website www.germany.travel. Join us on GNTB stand (Hall 1, stand 1120) and share experiences with our partners: Bavaria Tourism, Baden Württemberg Tourism, Luftansa German Airlines, German Railways, McArthurGlen and Allgäu Airport GmbH & Co. KG.

Moreover, do not miss Danube Networking Event, planned for Friday, 20th February at 2 pm. Use this opportunity to discover the amazing charm of German Danube and to discuss about the promotion of the Danube Region in general, spontaneously meeting a selected group of Danube stakeholders.

Bratislava Region Wines

A presentation particularly of small local wine makers, but also winegrowers from throughout the region:

Wine exhibition Slovenský Grob
13-14.03.2015
ČSOB Marathon Bratislava 29.3.2015
www.tourismbratislava.com

Oddesa events

Odessa is famous for its festivals. For those fond of gastronomic tourism, Odessa offers Pan-cakes festival (Maslenitsa) on 16-22 of February, Tomato festival on 8-9 of August, Season festival “Gifts of Odessa Autumn” in October, Festival of wine and cheese on 7-8 of November etc.

If you like music, you can enjoy Utyosov music festival (20-22, March), festival of Odessa Choirs within the frames of Children Festival on 1-3 of June, traditional Odessa Jazz-fest, hold on 18-20 of September, Festival of Violin ouvre in Odessa Opera house in October and even more.

You can also attend special celebration of Festival of Humor on the 1st of April, Odessa Birthday on the 2nd of September, Festival “I want to Odessa”, which will take place in Odessa on 26-30 of June, special Festival of Embroidered Shirts (Vyshevanka), devoted to the Day of Independence of Ukraine on August, 24th.

On the 1-3 of May the Festival for students and young specialists “Relax with mind” will be held. Amateurs of the sea can visit Odessa Sea Festival and Regatta on 24-26 of July.

You can also see the latest movies during Odessa International Film Festival on 10-18 of July and make your wish in Odessa during Christmas and New Year Festival from 19 of December till 19 of January.

More on: www.odessatourism.org

Bulgarian Brokerage Events

Cross Tour 2015 brokerage event will take place on 24th April 2015 in Bulgarian city Ruse. Enterprise Europe Network Ruse organizes this matchmaking event that is an excellent opportunity for tourism and creative industry stakeholders to meet potential partners on prearranged face to face meetings. CrossTour will focus on promoting the Danube Region of North Bulgaria and joint tourism offers with neighboring Romania. Last year, event gathered 52 organizations and resulted in 11 partnership agreements.
INTERPRETATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE –
TO WHOM THE HERITAGE ON
ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES SERVES,
TO REGULAR VISITORS (TOURISTS) OR
ARCHEOLOGICAL PROFESSIONALS?

Tourism is an important industry worldwide. Despite years of global economic crisis, international tourism is growing every year. In many countries, tourism grows more than the entire national economy. Cultural tourism is a specific segment within this big industry, for which the estimates vary from forty to sixty percent of the entire tourism industry. The definition of ‘cultural tourism’ is not very clear. ‘Culture’ can contain a wide variety of activities: sightseeing an heritage location, going to a museum, a rock concert or art exhibition. When you narrow it down to ‘heritage tourism’ it still raises questions: when are you a ‘cultural tourist’? Going on a city trip to Rome? Booking a visit to a museum or heritage site in advance? Visiting an old light house during your beach holiday on a Spanish costa? The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) holds the definition: “all movements of persons, … because they satisfy the human need for diversity, tending to raise the cultural level of the individual and giving rise to new knowledge, experience and encounters.” So basically, cultural tourism or heritage tourism can include anything that provides new knowledge, an experience or encounter. And from that perspective it makes perfect sense that tourism is increasingly regarded as an important opportunity for cultural heritage. In a time of economic crisis, governments are cutting on their costs, including those for heritage. Lack of budget leads to a stop or delay in research, conservation and excavation.

Heritage sites need to look elsewhere for their income. Leisure and tourism provide an alternative. Not just for money, but also or public support. In a globalising world, people feel the need to look for their roots, for their own place in history. Cultural heritage can offer that. Heritage is turning into an economic factor of importance, a way to make money. And at the same time it contributes to a historical awareness of one’s own identity. Research and a multi-disciplinary approach is necessary to make heritage visible and enjoyable. It is up to the heritage professional to discover the historical and scientific value. Experts in marketing, communication and promotion can contribute to the ‘wrapping’ and make it more accessible to a wider public. Authenticity in heritage is a strength, but also harbours a hazard: the heritage professional has to be able to let go some of the content in order to ‘sell’ it to the outside world. That doesn’t mean that heritage is automatically degraded into some fake Disney-like experience. Main thing is to keep in mind what the audience wants. Do they want a full academic lecture on a two-century-long royal dynasty? Or is it enough to offer a nice background scene for a relaxing day out? Maybe something in between? In either situation cultural heritage is a valuable asset. As a legacy from the past to be studied for the future, or as a pleasant and interesting historical setting for recreational visitors and tourists. Different levels that require a different approach of heritage: from scientific to ‘light-weight’. An interesting challenge that requires the mutual understanding of the professionals in cultural heritage, tourism, education, marketing and communication.