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Danube Safety Net Project Progress Report № 1

I. General Information

Project “Improvement of the transport safety in the common Bulgarian-Romanian stretch of the Danube river through development of the emergency response by cross-border cooperation”, e-MS code: ROBG-522 - the Danube Safety Net Project was launched in line with the principles of the EU 2020 Strategy of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and in direct response to one of the main priorities of the EU funded INTERREG V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme for increasing the transport safety on waterways and maritime transport routes.

The project was approved for financing within the Third Call for project proposals, under Priority Axis 1 “A well connected region” of the INTERREG V-A Programme and is classified as “Hard” project. Its duration is **36 months with starting date - the 15th of September, 2018**. The project will be implemented by two partners - the Bulgarian Executive Agency “Maritime Administration” (EAMA) which is the Lead Partner and the Romanian Naval Authority (ANR).

The overall budget of the Danube Safety Net Project is **5,699,612.87 euro** as the Contribution from the European Regional Development Fund is 85% or **4,844,670.93 euro**.

The overall objective of the Danube Safety Net project is: To improve the safety of river Danube navigability for the whole length of the common stretch between Romania and Bulgaria, through the following measures:

- ✓ Establishment of Emergency Response centers (ERC) in Romania in the town of Turnu Magurele) and Bulgaria in the towns of Ruse and Lom;
- ✓ Supply, development and integration of a common Geographic Information System for Emergency Response;





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- ✓ Supply of specialized crafts carrying emergency response equipment for the two partners;
- ✓ Development of a Common Action Plan for reaction in situations related to transport safety on the common stretch of the Danube river.

The implementation of the project is structured in four Work Packages:

- **Work Package P “Project Preparation”** covered the project preparation phase during which the two Partners jointly established the project goals, planned the overall implementation and submitted the project proposal;
- **Work Package M “Project Management”** is dedicated to the administrative, financial and operative management of the project and together with **Work Package C “Communication”** will support the implementation of the activities for the whole duration of the project.
- **Work Package T1 “Measures for Improvement of River Transport Safety”** is the core and most important Work Package of the project and includes five logically interconnected activities.

II. State of Implementation (September, 2018 - June, 2019)

1. Start-up activities

1.1. Work Package M “Project Management”

After the official start of the Project, implementation teams from the two Project Partners were formed and individual tasks were assigned.

Project Kick-off Meeting

On the 24th of October, 2018 in Giurgiu, the Romanian Naval Authority representatives together with the Bulgarian partners from Executive



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Agency “Maritime Administration” participated in the opening session of the Danube Safety Net Project - ROBG 522.

During the kick-off event, the two Partners had the chance to discuss the project overview, activities, plan, deadlines, schedule, indicators, task distribution and to set forth goals. A working methodology has been established on this occasion for a common approach to how the Danube Safety Net Project will be implemented.

Partial externalization of the project management

In compliance with the approved Application form and in particular with Work Package M, Activity A.M.1 - Project Management, both Partners took the necessary actions to start public procurement procedures for appointing external consultants for project management support.

Following a conducted tender procedure, in April, 2019 EAMA signed a contract with the selected contestant for operational support and coordination activities in the implementation of the administrative-legal, technical and financial management of the project.

In May 2019, ANR also launched a tender procedure for Project Management Consultancy in line with Activity A.M.1. The Project Partner signed a contract with the selected contestant in July, 2019.

Regular Team Meetings

On the 11th of April, 2019, the first Regular Team Meeting of the two project implementation teams took place in Ruse. During the event, the two Partners exchanged information on the project activities schedule, the current status of implementation as well as the actions that will take place in the coming period.

1.2. Work Package C “Communication”

Communication is an integral part of a project and plays an important role in the project implementation. The main purpose of this work package is to inform the wide public about the project activities and



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goals, as well to provide information of the sources of financing and co-financing. The information for projects like Danube Safety Net should be well distributed among the citizens of Europe and serve as a best practice of projects confined by the European Union through European Regional Development Fund.

The first public event for the Project was held on the 27th of November, 2018 in Constanța, where a Project press conference took place in compliance with Communication Activity A.C.1. With a participation of around 40 people and the attendance of a number of media representatives, this event achieved its purpose, namely to inform the wide public about the project activities and goals, to distribute information among stakeholders about the benefits, positive impact and significant results to be achieved by the Partnership under the INTERREG V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme.

In line with the communication plan of the Project and in particular with Activity A.C.4 - Promotional materials, WP C, in June, 2019 EAMA signed a contract for the design and elaboration of branded materials required for popularization of the project and its results.

The elaborated during the project materials will be distributed on the organized events and specific sessions for dissemination and in public thematic events in the CBC region. Materials will be distributed for free among stakeholders and citizens.

1.3. Work Package T1 “Measures for improvement of river transport safety”

Work package T1 is the core Work Package of the project and includes five logically interconnected activities. As its implementation starts in August, 2019, during the observed period the two Project Partners undertook preparatory actions for the successful and timely start of the WP T1’s activities.



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III. What's next?

Public procurement procedures

In the upcoming months the project implementation will further progress, reaching the starting point of the main Project Work Package - T1 “Measures for improvement of river transport safety”.

The implementation of the Work Package will start with **deep research and data collection of the business processes and existing communication** between the partnering institutions. It also envisages **elaboration of Business analysis** which will provide up to date information regarding the common activities and responsibilities of each institution and the obligations and possibilities for collaboration. Next, **recommendations for improvement of the cooperation and communication processes between EAMA and ANR**, based on world's best practices will be developed (Activity A.T1.1).

As the Act.T1.1's tasks will be performed by external consultants simultaneously in Romania and Bulgaria, the two Partners will conduct public procurement procedures in order to select contractors.

Having the above, ANR plans to launch its procurement procedure for deep research and data collection of the business processes and existing communication between the partnering institutions in the immediate period July - August, 2019.

In line with the provisions of the contract EAMA awarded under WP M, the contractor prepared two tender dossiers related to the implementation of WP T1. One of the dossiers is for the development of preliminary study and data collection (Activity A.T1.1, Work Package T1), organization and conduct of a Transport safety Expert and Stakeholder meeting in Ruse (Activity A.T1.1, Work Package T1) and development of an Action Plan (Activity A.T1.5, Work Package T1). The second dossier includes the development of technical specification for transport safety IT tool with components and modules for Romania and Bulgaria (Activity A.T1.2, Work Package T1).



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As a result, EAMA plans to launch the two procedures in the period September - October, 2019.

The results from the Activity's implementation will be summarized in a single Report representing the findings of the conducted researches, analysis and data collection in the cross-border region in Bulgaria and Romania.

Findings of the research and collected information about business processes will further be used under the project while preparing technical specifications for the components of the supplied Danube Safety Transport Geographic information System (DSTGIS).

Team Meetings

In August, 2019, the second Regular Team Meeting of the Project will take place in Constanta. The event will be focused on the start of WP T1 and will give floor to important discussions regarding the core implementation of the project.