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Danube Safety Net Project

Progress Report № 5

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 Program and is classified as “Hard” project. Its duration is **49 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;
- ✓ 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.



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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, 2021 - February, 2022) - Summary

During the reporting period the project activities were carried out in accordance with the Application form.

In September 2021 the Project Partners and the Managing Authority of the INTERREG V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme signed Addendum № 5 to the Subsidy and Co-financing contracts for Project Danube Safety Net, ROBG-522, for extension of the project implementation period with ten months.

As in the previous reporting period, the regular project activities were influenced by different restrictions and obstacles, caused by the global COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic situation required flexible approach and part of the team meetings were transferred from physical to online.

The implementation of Work Package T1 “Measures for improvement of river transport safety” continued during the reporting period as most of the activities have been completed. Although some delays in part of the remaining activities have been observed, the Project Partners are taking all necessary measures to overcome the deviations.

Due to the reporting period, RNA concluded on October, 25th 2021 both contracts in regard to the implementation of Work Package T1, with two Romanian economic operators, in order to deliver the main components of the WP, respectively: D.T 1.4.1



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“Supply and integration of DTSGIS” and D.T 1.4.2 “Supply of Hardware equipment for emergency response centers in Romania”.

On the time being, D.T 1.4.1 and D.T 1.4.2 are successfully completed.

Nevertheless, considering the fact that the work package includes also activity providing for the development of long waited and very needed Action plan, RNA started the procurement procedure, thus the next reporting period should find us with the Action Plan jointly accepted.

1. Work Package M “Project Management”

Within the reporting period, the two Project Partners coordinated the day-to-day implementation of the activities, provided sound financial and technical management of the project and organized and conducted the necessary procedures for the procurement of goods and services.

The partnership maintained regular communication with the Joint Secretariat and the Managing Authority of the INTERREG V-A RO-BG Programme regarding the reporting of the project implementation, notifications to the Subsidy and Co-financing contracts and reimbursement of certified expenditures. The two Partners have been strictly supervising and monitoring the achievement of the project’s results and indicators, as set out in the approved Application form.

Several significant administrative procedures were carried out during the observed period. In September 2021 the Project Partners and the Managing Authority of the INTERREG V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme signed Addendum № 5 to the Subsidy and Co-financing contracts for Project Danube Safety Net, ROBG-522, for extension of the project implementation period with ten months.

The extension of the project duration was requested by the Partners in the context of the COVID - 19 outbreak and its influence on the regular work activities, business and economic processes in Bulgaria and Romania. The overall duration of the project was extended to 49 months and its end date now is 14.10.2022.

Two notifications were submitted and approved: for changing four of the foreseen in Work Package M “Project Management” regular team meetings from physical to virtual and for introducing changes in the project implementation team of EAMA.

2. Work Package C “Communication”

Activity C is being implemented according to plan. The Project Partners started preparation for organization of two public events for presentation of the delivered



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vessels in Bulgaria and Romania. Also RNA prepared the deliverables from AC4: flyers, memory sticks and calendars. Project web site was constantly checked/updated with relevant information.

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. Its implementation started in August 2019 and is still ongoing.

Due to the reporting period, RNA concluded on October, 25th 2021 both contracts in regard to the implementation of Work Package T1, with two Romanian economic operators, in order to deliver the main components of the WP, respectively: D.T 1.4.1 “Supply and integration of DTSGIS” and D.T 1.4.2 “Supply of Hardware equipment for emergency response centres in Romania”.

On the time being, D.T 1.4.1 and D.T 1.4.2 are successfully completed.

Nevertheless, considering the fact that the work package includes also activity providing for the development of long waited and very needed Action plan, RNA started the procurement procedure, thus the next reporting period should find us with the Action Plan jointly accepted.

The successful implementation of the awarded by EAMA contract for the supply of geographic information system for transport safety and supply of equipment for Emergency response centers, which was completed in February 2020, contributed to the achievement of deliverables D.T1.3.1 “Supply and integration of DTSGIS” and D.T1.3.2 “Supply of Hardware equipment for emergency response centres in Bulgaria”.

The supplied system (DTSGIS) will significantly improve the navigability in the Danube region by considerably reducing the response time to distress alerts. DTSGIS minimizes the impact of human factors and lowers the likelihood of errors. The system provides real-time data exchange and keeps a detailed database of all the received disaster, incident and rescue alerts, enabling full statistics to be produced.

During the reporting period, daily tests of the DTSGIS and periodic actualization were being performed. Preparation for the integration process between the Romanian and Bulgarian systems was initiated, as the Romanian Partner declared their readiness.

With regards to the awarded by EAMA contracts for the supply of two barges under WP T1, a constant monitoring of the implementation process has been performed by the lead Partner. Although some delays have been observed, the Lead Partner is taking all necessary measures to overcome the deviations.



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III. What's next?

During the next reporting period, the Bulgarian and Romanian components of the system will be integrated and will start operating in coherence. The two multipurpose non-self-propelled crafts are expected to be delivered to the Lead Partner and public events for the presentation of the supplied vessels to EAMA and RNA will be organized and will mark the progress of the project.