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Danube Safety Net Project

Progress Report № 4

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 **39 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, 2020 - August, 2021) - Summary

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

Regardless, due to registered slight delays in the implementation of some of the project activities, extension with three months of the project implementation period was requested by the Partners and approved by the Managing Authority of the Programme.

With regards to the implementation of Work Package T1 “Measures for Improvement of River Transport Safety”, EAMA has successfully achieved two of the key Deliverables of the WP: D.T1.3.1 “Supply and integration of DTSGIS” and D.T1.3.2 “Supply of Hardware equipment for emergency response centers in Bulgaria”.

In November 2020 RNA awarded a contract for the supply of two multipurpose vessels. On the time being, the vessels have been delivered, which contributed to the achievement of Deliverable D.T1.4.3 “Supply of Multipurpose vessels in Romania”.

In December 2020 EAMA also awarded a contract for the supply through purchase of multipurpose non-self-propelled crafts (barges) for emergency and rescue activities on the Danube River and the contract is currently under implementation.



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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, according to the approved Application form.

Several significant administrative procedures were carried out during the observed period. Notification № 4 to the Subsidy and Co-financing contract for the change of the Project Manager was initiated and approved accordingly. As of 1st of October 2020, Mr. Petar Kirov is replaced by Mr. Rumen Nikolov, General director of “Emergency and Rescue Activity” General Directorate, EAMA as Manager of the Project.

In November 2020 Addendum № 3 to the Subsidy and Co-financing contracts for the Danube Safety Net Project was signed between the Partners and the Managing Authority of the Programme for the extension of the project implementation period with three months. The extension was justified by the observed slight delays in the implementation of some of the activities as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In June 2021, Addendum №4 to the Subsidy and Co-financing contracts was signed in response to the identified by the Romanian Naval Authority need for changes in the technical characteristics of the hardware, which will be delivered for the Emergency response center (ERC) in Romania. The Addendum also approved changes in the location of the ERC from Turnu Magurele to Constanta and of the two vessels which will be delivered to RNA - from Turnu Magurele to Giurgiu and Bechet.

Another Addendum to the Subsidy and Co-financing contracts for further extension of the project implementation period is currently under preparation.

2. Work Package C “Communication”

Activity C is being implemented according to plan. Promotional materials (flyers, memory sticks, leaflets) for dissemination among the stakeholders and general public will be produced after all key activities are implemented.

Two public events for presentation of the established Emergency response centers and delivered vessels in Bulgaria and Romania will be organized until the end of the project.



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The final event for the project will take place in Silistra.

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.

As a result of a conducted tender procedure, on 20.05.2020 EAMA signed a contract with Consortium “DUNAV GIS” with subject: “Supply and integration of geographic information system for transport safety and supply of equipment for Emergency response centers”, for the implementation of Activity A.T1.3 “Establishment of Emergency response centers in Bulgaria”. The successful implementation of the contract, 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 centers 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.

In September 2020 EAMA launched a public procurement procedure for the supply through purchase of multipurpose non-self-propelled crafts (barges) for emergency and rescue activities on the Danube River. Afterwards the public procurement was terminated and later on announced again. As a result of the procedure, in December 2020 two contracts were signed with “Triest- Remontstroy”, for the supply of one non-self-propelled vessel (barge) to the port of Ruse and the supply of one non-self-propelled vessel to the port of Lom. The contracts implementation is expected to be completed in the end of August 2021.

Two multipurpose vessels were successfully delivered to the Project Partner in November 2020, but the pandemic context affected the launch of two key tasks under Activity A.T1.4, namely the supply and integration of DTSGIS and the supply of hardware equipment for emergency response centers in Romania, though the Romanian party made all proper due diligences in order to comply with the activities calendar. Under these circumstances, RNA managed to publish on June 15th, 2021, the open tender, having its object D.T 1.4.1 and D.T 1.4.2.



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On the time being, the procedure reached its final stage: evaluation of the financial offers.

III. What's next?

Further extension of the project implementation period is requested by the partnership and is currently awaiting approval.

The Romanian component of the Danube Transport Safety Geographic Information System is still to be delivered to the Project Partner. During the next reporting period, RNA is expected to award a contract for the supply of DTSGIS, which is expected to be implemented within the newly extended timeframe of the project. Afterwards the Bulgarian and Romanian components of the system will be integrated and will start operating in coherence.

Public events for the presentation of the supplied vessels to EAMA and RNA will be organized and will mark the progress of the project.