

# **Webinar on thematic focus of Specific Objective 4.2**



# DRP 3rd CfP – General Framework

- 1-step application procedure
- Application process and assessment like in previous CfPs
- Targeted CfP: Under each DRP Specific Objective one or few specific topics („thematic focus”) identified
  - **Only proposals clearly addressing one certain thematic focus have a realistic chance for funding!**
- Available funding under S.O. 4.2.: 4 MIO EUR
- Official launch of the CfP: mid-September 2025
- Deadline for submission: mid-December 2025
- Envisaged project start: July 2026

# Thematic Focus 1: Tackling the accelerated territorial polarization within the Danube Region

- DR is the European macro-region with the most outstanding territorial, socio-economic and demographic polarisation
- Interlinked trends like brain-drain, decline of rural areas and extreme discrepancies regarding competitiveness shall be tackled in a comprehensive and strategic manner
- Combined top-down and bottom-up approach: Linking (national/regional) key-actors for aligning policies and filling evidence gaps and as well as piloting selected solutions on local level
- „Big picture“ Danube Region: 3rd CfP proposals shall go beyond niche-solutions tackling singular urban-rural gaps

# Thematic Focus 1: Tackling the accelerated territorial polarization within the Danube Region

## Main Activities

- Developing a common vision for mitigating the effects of aggravating polarization in the DR
- Transnationally harmonizing the evidence base in relation to the complex and interlinked phenomena concerned
- Updating and aligning policies and strategic frameworks and pilot-testing selected solutions on local level

## Main Actors

- Ministries (in charge) for regional development (national/regional level)
- Statistical offices (national/regional level)
- Public authorities representing the poles within the DR (most and least developed territories)

## Thematic Focus 2: Making local (and regional) governance systems more resilient to crisis-situations

- Newly emerging (e.g. COVID pandemic, war in Ukraine, cyber-attacks) and recurrent (environmental) threats and hazards call for more holistic and integrated preparedness-approaches comprising all governance levels
- Local level neglected so far, in terms of proper understanding of its role/relevance and even more regarding capacities needed for ensuring effective crisis-management
- Stocktaking of past experiences (esp. COVID) and re-thinking local crisis-responsiveness in the light of recent national or EU regulatory frameworks and initiatives

# Thematic Focus 2: Making local (and regional) governance systems more resilient to crisis-situations

## Main Activities

- Analysing the vulnerability of local governance systems in crisis-situations; needs-assessment regarding capacities needed for ensuring their crisis-proofness
- Capacity building for local actors
- Harmonisation of local/regional/national response mechanisms and/or creation of a transnational response mechanism

## Main Actors

- Local (public, private or civic) actors with a stake in civil protection or disaster management
- Operators of critical Infrastructure
- National/regional authorities responsible for the regulatory framework in the field of civil protection and disaster management

## Thematic Focus 3: Innovating models for effective civil society engagement

- Low level of civil society engagement and institutional trust in the DR
- Pooling of existing experiences and exploring new ways needed for improving civil society involvement into public decision making process, especailly on the local level
- Local public authorities and organisations are key for providing the enabeling environment for actively involving civil society – esp. Youth – in the design and implementation of policies which concern the future development of DR territories



# Thematic Focus 3: Innovating models for effective civil society engagement

## Main Activities

- Creation and testing of new models for local civic participation and promoting transnational exchange of experiences and networking
- Analysing the role – potentials, limitations, risks – of new technological phenomena like social media or AI in increasing institutional trust in the Danube Region
- Fostering efforts for better youth involvement

## Main Actors

- Organisations and initiatives representing the civil society, ideally with cross-border or transnational outreach
- Local public bodies as providers of the enabling environment needed for improved civic participation
- Youth organisations



## Thematic Focus 4: Strengthening capacities of local governance systems for sustaining critical Value Chains

- The DR is key for ensuring the smooth functioning of vital European value chains – at the same time being Europe's macro-region directly neighbouring a geopolitically more and more instable space
- The recently increasing fragility of the established global tariff-system poses further threats to critical value chains
- For tackling these challenges a better understanding is needed esp. regarding role of local and regional governments in their interaction with businesses and civil actors for ensuring an effective and sustainable functioning of crucial value chains

# Thematic Focus 4: Strengthening capacities of local governance systems for sustaining critical Value Chains

## Main Activities

- analysing the vulnerability of crucial value chains from a transnational/DR perspective and the role of local public bodies within them
- creation of a coordination mechanism for Danubian value chains, comprising local authorities, (local) businesses and infrastructure operators
- Capacity building measures for local actors

## Main Actors

- local public bodies
- Businesses and business support organisations
- main economic policy drivers

# DRP 3rd CfP – further information and advice

- Lead applicants seminar (8th October 2025)
- National Info Days
- National Contact Points
- Bilateral Consultation with DRP PO (strongly recommended for each proposal!)
- Contact EUSDR PAC / national Steering Group members for thematic discussion, inspiration and networking

**Thank you for  
attending**

## **Danube Region Programme Managing Authority/ Joint Secretariat**

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