

Introduction

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The Dianet School, finished successfully its 2015 edition in Gorizia, is a result of initiatives within the European strategy for Danube region, product of new European model for cooperation across Europe called “macro regional strategies”. It would be interesting to remind some basics of these new policies. As the Commission is working on a proposal for the fourth such Strategy – for the Alpine Region, let’s see what have those new proposals, which are changing the way regions work together across EU, achieved so far.

Since the start of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in 2009, Europe has seen a growing interest in cooperation in greater European regions. Macro-regional strategies represent a new opportunity for comprehensive development of a larger region, addressing common challenges and potential. They represent a clear EU added value and existing EU horizontal policies are reinforced. They should provide the platform for common actions and facilitate an exchange of information, best practices and experiences, allow participating countries to learn from each other and to focus on a few key priorities that will bring real results and benefits to the everyday lives of the macro-regions’ citizens.

After the Strategy for Baltic Sea region in 2009, for Danube region in 2011, for Ionian-Adriatic region in 2014, EU Commission works now on a strategy for Alpine region.

A strategy to boost the development of the Danube Region was proposed by the European Commission on 8 December 2010 (Member States endorsed the EU Strategy for the Danube Region at the General Affairs Council on 13 April 2011).

Two years later, from 2013-2015, the University of Trieste, in cooperation with Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences of Vienna (BOKU) and University of Novi Sad offered an *opportunity for young researchers to familiarize themselves with issues related to the sustainable development of the Danube River Basin in the frame of DIANET International Schools* held in the town of Gorizia in Italy. The school covers a wide range of subjects. Students receive training in methods for the virtual representation of natural resources, as well as historical evidence. The covered methods include architecture and urban development, as well as methods of integration such as environmental history and deal with the preservation of cultural heritage, history and archaeology together with natural science methods.

In 2013, the core teaching offer was *Introduction to interdisciplinary Studies*. In 2014, it was related to the *Role of natural heritage of the Danube River Basin* for sustainable development, while in 2015 the *Role of cultural heritage for sustainable development* was the focus.

The place of the Dianet international school within the frame of the Danube: Future project and its 2013 and particularly 2014 edition were described in details in a *Preface* made by Stefano Brumat, project administrator of Danube: Future from the University of Trieste and Ms Claudia Macchia, Dianet coordinator for 2014 edition from the University of Trieste, we shall give here some basic information concerning the 2015 edition.

As the two previous ones, this one was held in Gorizia from March 14th to 23rd. The Organizing Committee of this 2015 edition was represented by Prof. Marco Dogo, Prof. Pavle Sekerus, Prof. Manuela Montagnari, Prof. Verena Winiwarter and Dr. Gertrud Haidvogel. Thirty-nine participants from 10 countries (Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia) and 16 universities (Corvinus and Eötvös Loránd universities from Budapest, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Luigj Gurakuqi from Shkodrës, Babes-Bolyai from Cluj-Napoca, Alpen Adria Universität Klagenfurt, Universities of Ferrara, Novi Sad, Trieste, Zagreb, Rijeka, Rousse, Primorska, Pécs, Ljubljana and Nitra) followed the courses.

During the two days` lectures students received training in Conservation, Preservation and Valorization of cultural heritage. Two full day excursions were organized in the area of Torviscosa and villa Manin and *Grotta Gigante, biggest touristic cave* in the world, which are supposed to offer to the student`s practical insight into the sustainability and preservation problems in the region. Researchers from the Universities of Novi Sad (Pavle Sekeruš, Aleksej Kišjuhas, Helena Hiršenberger, Mirjana Kranjc, Mladen Radišić, Jonjaua Ranogajac, Marko Škorić, Vesna Stojaković, Anica Tufegdžic and Nemanja Davidovic), Babes Bolay (Radu Christian Barna, Lucrina Șrefănescu), Trieste (Marco Dogo, Marija Mitrovic, Emanuela Montagnari, Igor Jelen, Pier Luigi Nimis, Franco Cucchi, Stefanoi Furlani, Diana Barillari), BOKU Vienna (Gertrud Haidvogel), Primorska (Irena Lazar, Zrinka Mileusnić, Katharina Zanier), Klagenfurt (Verena Winiwarter), Apor Vilmos Katolikus Főiskola (Tamàska Máté), Belgrade (Jelena Todorovic) participated in teaching activities on cultural heritage.

Second half of the school was dedicated to the students` group work. They were divided in 6 working groups, each composed of multinational, multilingual and multidisciplinary oriented participants. Groups prepared propositions having in mind the societal challenges of Horizon 2020 and took into account the challenges of the DRB H2020 calls. Draft project proposals developed in working groups should be a part of a hypothetical application to a funding authority. Group presentations evaluated by the committee ended the school.

One cycle in a life of a Dianet school is finished and it would be of a great importance if the school could continue its functioning because it contributes greatly to the improvement of teaching and research of higher education in the Danube region. By establishing and facilitating bilateral and multilateral contacts between the universities and researchers, by promotion of cooperation on issues of common interest thereby it contributes to the stability and the development of an open and democratic region in Europe.