

Concept Note

COST Targeted Network

**“Strategic scientific networking in
areas of high societal relevance
within the Danube Region”**

Background and state of knowledge

- EUSDR clearly expresses the **need for an enhanced cross-border co-operation/ co-ordination in R&I**
- **Disparities in the region are posing a serious threat** to effective and mutual beneficial co-operations - the **obvious potential for integration** needs to be further exploited.
- Many researchers / research groups are **still lack access to international research networks**
- **Visibility of researchers from the region** within the global research community is **fairly limited**.
- With the view of **connecting pressing societal challenges with state-of the-art research, knowledge and data** in the region pronounced **deficits are apparent**.

Aims

- **Bring together researchers** and research related stakeholders **around selected topics of current relevance**;
- **Scientific excellence from and for the Danube Region** be paired with application experience;
- Additional benefits by **applying interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary approaches** and collaborations;
- Increasing **researchers' visibility and connectivity**;
- **Support leadership** for trans-national R&D cooperation in the region.

Relevance for COST

- **Strategic connection** to macro-regional R&I efforts
- Facilitation of activities towards supporting **Inclusiveness Target & Near Neighbour Countries**
- **Increased international networking and capacity building** in scientific fields of societal relevance
- **Increased impact of research in the region** through an enforced dialogue and connection (as relevant) with the business, NGO sector and policy sector
- **Enhanced visibility and connectivity of the scientific community** and especially young researchers in a currently less highlighted region

Potential areas and geographic scope

Migration and integration challenge
Natural resource management
Food/agriculture
Energy efficiency and consumption patterns
Advancing the digital agenda
River Basin Management
Science and innovation systems studies

Geographic focus on the 14 EUSDR countries
but
open to all interested COST Member countries

Next steps to take

- **Establish more elaborated COST contacts** (Executive Board, Widening Group, Office, Delegates...)
- **Limiting the topics to 4**
(PA7 vote?)
- **Preparatory expert workshop** to further specify these topics to ensure best connectivity and avoid overlaps with ongoing activities. Specific Co-ordination foreseen with JRC, PACs concerned, DRC..
- **More detailed concept to be presented at the CSO in April 2016**, final proposal by early fall; approval hopefully end of 2016