

Danube Day 2014 in Romania



Danube Day extravaganza across the country from Oradea to Tulcea!

150 organisations came together to produce the biggest Danube Day of 2014. Across southern Romania, 110 events were held in all 11 Danube regions. Energising thousands to act for their rivers, events were organised by Water Basin Administrations (WBA), local authorities, Apele Române, pan-national NGOs, Coca-Cola HBC Romania and a myriad of local organisations.

Among the highlights, **Let's Do it Romania!** mobilised an army of volunteers under a **Let's Do It Danube!** slogan. Working with Apele Române and WBAs and armed with bin bags and enthusiasm, banks were cleared in Caraş-Severin, Mehedinti, Dolj, Olt, Virginia, Giurgiu, Călăraşi, Ialomiţa, Constanţa, Brăila, Galati and Tulcea. 400 bags were cleared from the Nera in Caraş-Severin; 100 bags from Calafat beach and 2km in Gropeni. Intrepid volunteers took to the waters of the Crişul Repede, not for a pleasant paddle, but to clear a 10km stretch. Romania's largest social engagement project, Let's Do It! has motivated 900,000 volunteers to clear 2 million bags of rubbish since 2010.

"Today I made a small contribution – but an essential one" said one volunteer in Galati, where 60 bags of rubbish were collected.

Around 5000 students were involved in the campaign, which also saw educators go into schools to promote environmental protection. Children were encouraged to develop their own Danube stories in a national competition and the documentary film "The Danube - Europe's Amazon" was shown widely.

"We hope to change people's mentality so they waste less and...realize cleaner air is best for everyone's health."

Catalin Braicov, Coordinator of Let's do it Danube!

Taking the 2014 slogan - Get active for a living river - very much to heart, two Drobeta-Turnu Severin (DTS) men set themselves the momentous challenge of **cycling the entire Danube**. Andrei Cătălin Sănătescu and Costi Băleanu, members of DTS cycling club, Cyclomaniacs, took just 18 days to ride the 2,800km from the Black Forest to the Black Sea. They dedicated their trip to **Blue Danube Week**, an initiative of the Danube Competence Centre, in partnership with city councils and clubs.

The Romanian-Bulgarian-Serbian Blue Danube Week celebrates Danube Day through music, carnival, theatre, sport and exhibitions. Cycling was the focus in 2014, with a **cross-border Bike Fest and camp** in partnership with Cyclomaniacs. Cyclists gathered at DTS for a mass city centre ride. There was a chance for a breather at the Danube Fair featuring BMX demos, dance, kids' activities and free bike repair! Then it was back in the saddle to cross into Serbia for a collective ride in Kladovo; Cyclo-party and the floating of candle-lit lanterns on the river. Weekly river clean-ups also took place throughout June.

Each of the 11 WBAs held **Danube Day meetings** bringing together actors and stakeholders to review the Significant Water Management Issues and draft flood action plans; and to view a 2013 ICPDR Danube documentary.

"It is extremely important to realize that governmental actions alone won't bring the necessary improvements in water and environmental quality. Each of us must take action for ecosystem protection..."

Adriana Doina Pană, Delegate Minister for Water, Fishery and Forests in the Ministerial Danube Day Message to Basin Committees and WBAs.

In other actions, family fun was the priority, ensuring everyone raised a smile, a cheer, a paint brush, a paddle or a tapping foot for their rivers. Hands-on exploration and outdoor sport helped foster a connection with nature.

In **Crișuri** region to the NW, **Oradea** schools went to the water lab: 200 pupils found out how to collect and analyse river samples. Within **Mures** WBA, youth sports tournaments, swimming galas and art took place in **Târgu Mureș** and **Hunedoara**. 60 nursery children enjoyed a workshop and exhibition in Alba.

In the far west, sport, creativity and awareness-raising were also central to festivities led by **Banat** WBA. 150 people took part in 'Take Action for the Danube' sports tournaments. In **Caras-Severin** County, Danube folk music, art, cuisine and history featured in festivals along with sport in **Moldova Noua**; an international marine technology conference was held in **Băile Herculane** and **Pojejena** students took part in a Danube debate and games.

"Danube celebrations demonstrate the desire of all those who love protecting and enjoying the benefits of this beautiful river"

Luci Ervin, Director of Banat WBA.

South to **Jiu** WBA, **Mehedinți** County held events in **Orșova**, **Eșelnita** and **Șvinita** including water sports, exhibitions of Danube art, costume and artefacts; craft workshops and film screenings. Celebrating the Danube region's rich ethnic diversity, Roma, Hungarian, Czech, Serb, German and Greek traditions were showcased alongside Romanian dance. In **Craiova**, 'Let's Do It Romania!' held school workshops with Jiu WBA experts alongside a WBA art and essay competition and photo exhibition on Danube floods since 2006.

Within **Olt** WBA, water and city administrations and Coca-Cola Romania teamed up to promote 'Let's do it Danube!' clean-up actions, films, paper boat and fishing contests, painting workshops and visit to a water testing lab. **Giuvărăști** marked the day with folk music, poetry and art.

East to the southern area of **Arges-Vedea** WBA, actions in **Teleorman** County saw a cruise; Danube Waves art event; book and folk exhibitions; debates; competitions; and workshops on river monitoring and impacts of the fishing industry at **Zimnicea**. **Turnu-Magurele** got active kayaking for the 4th Danube Cup. **Giurgui** hosted cultural and sports events on the Sfântul Gheorghe including a paddling demo by Olympic champion rower, Ivan

Patzaichin. Other highlights were landscape creativity workshop, concert, photo exhibition, fish soup tasting and river clean-up tasks.

East to **Buzau-Ialomița**, a large clean-up action led by **Brăila, Călărași** and **Ialomița** Water Management Systems engaged pupils in clearing banks, including 2km in **Gropeni**. In **Ialomița** County, 130 government, business and media representatives discussed **Fetești's** development potential and enjoyed a Borcea cruise. In **Brăila**, sport, tradition and art topped the bill, with a focus on involving isolated communities and people with special needs. Roma children met with youngsters from scouts and sports clubs for pavement art, sport and cycling. 70 fishermen with impaired hearing took part in a national fishing contest. Other events included the opening of an 'Olympic spirit for a Living Danube' canoe/kayak course; folk and craft fair; exhibitions; workshops; and boat trips including a canoe through Brăila Natural Park for 120 students.

Galati continued its tradition of great festivities: 'Our Danube' saw 3 days of celebration comprising a Danube countries festival, concerts and tournaments. A battle of the fireworks enthralled residents, as did a colourful flashmob involving 300 folk dancers in red, yellow and blue. A 286m banner displayed the river from source to Delta and crowds cheered-on kayakers in the annual Braila-Galati race. With exhibitions, Danubius University science symposium and children's workshops, the city embraced Danube Day. ECO Counselling Centre Galați presented Significant Water Management Issues for the Danube and Prut and hosted the **Danube Art Master** national final. Andrei Paduraru from Galati beat 100 other entrants with his 'Happiness is in small things'.

In **Dobrogea Litoral** WBA, 1000 baby sturgeon were released into the river in **Tulcea** County by the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (DDBR) and Apa Nova Bucurest. Other events were the 'Danube Cup' kayak race; and WBA creative contest and bank clean-up in **Constanța** County. The DDBR/George Georgescu Art School's 15th 'Chance for the Blue Danube' competition attracted entrants from Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Austria and Germany.

Danube Day Partners

Water Basin Administrations of Banat, Mureș, Someș-Tisza, Jiu, Olt, Argeș-Vedea, Crișuri, Buzău-Ialomița, Dobrogea Litoral & Buzau Ialomița; Water Management Systems of Caraș-Severin, Mureș, Hunedoara, Alba, Dolj, Mehedinți, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Ialomița, Brăila, Constanța, Ialomița, Brăila, Calarasi, Olt & Olt WMS Water Quality Laboratory; Coca-Cola HBC Romania; Let's Do It Romania! & Danube!; Eco Counselling Centre Galați (ECCG); Danube Competence Centre; Cyclomaniacs Drobeta Turnu-Severin; County Prefectures of Caraș-Severin, Mehedinți, Dolj, Olt, Giurgiu, Teleorman, Galați, Ialomița, Brăila, Tulcea & Constanța; County Councils of Teleorman, Ialomița & Brăila; City Halls of Socol, Pojejena, Moldova Nouă, Drobeta Turnu-Severin, Corabia, Giurgiu, Roșiorii de Vede, Zimnicea, Turnu Măgurele, Fetești, Stelnică, Bordușani, Giurgeni, Galați, Brăila & Harsova; Commune Halls of Eșelnița & Svinița; Mayor of Giurvănești; Mugurașii Olt Folklore Ensemble of Giuvărăști; Environmental Protection Agencies of Olt, Teleorman & Brăila; National

Tourism Authority; Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Administration, Tulcea; GWP România; Caraş-Severin Semenic Inspectorate for Emergency Situations; Gendarmerie County Inspectorate for Caraş-Severin & Olt; Border Police Territorial Service for Caraş-Severin, Olt & Feteşti; Caraş-Severin County Department for Culture; Moldova Nouă Danube Association; Weekend Sport & Recreation Complex, Târgu Mureş; Hunedoara Sport Complex; Castle Arts, Drobeta Turnu-Severin; Mehedinţi Artists Union; Drobeta Turnu-Severin Arts Museum; Danube Gorges NGO (Cazanele Dunării); Olt & Teleorman National Environmental Guards; Ivan Patzaichin-Mila 23 Association; Ion Vinea Cultural Centre; San Giorgio Nautical Club; Aqua Carpatica; Kiss FM Giurgiu; Valahia Orchestra; Giurgiu Local Youth Council; Children's Palace of Giurgiu; Master Adventure Bihor; Salvamont Rescue Service Bihor; Apa Nova Bucureşti; SC Transport Trade Service SA Bucureşti; SC Fun Time Production SRL Bucureşti; Mecanturist Association; Galaţi Viva Sport Club Association; Galaţi Folk Dance School; Dunărea de Jos Cultural Centre; Grigore Antipa National Institute for Marine Research & Development, Constanţa; Romanian Agency for Sea Rescue; Giurgiu River Danube Ports Administration; Maritime Danube Ports Administration, Galaţi; Galaţi Mountain Tourism Club; Albatros Nautical Club; Pyro Events Team – Fireworks Design; Pyrovision; Romanian Olympic Academy, Brăila Branch; Brăila Municipal Sports Club; Trebuie! NGO; Edmond Nicolau Technical College; National Scouts Association, Brăila; Cuza Sport Club, Brăila; Brăila County Assoc. of Hunters & Fishermen; National Association of the Deaf, Brăila Branch; Foto Instant Club, Brăila; Brăila; Lower Wetland of Braila National Park; Antipa Cercul; Museum of Brăila; County Centre for the Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture, Brăila; Rehabilitation Centre for Independent Living, Brăila; SC Servicii Comunale SRL Slobozia; City Libraries: Gala Galaction, Roşiorii de Vede; V.A. Urechia; Ştefan Petică, Tecuci & Panait Istrati, Brăila; School Inspectorates of Mehedinţi, Teleorman & Tulcea Counties; Nurseries: No. 9 Alba City; Dumbrava Minunată, Giurgiu; No.25 Oradea; No. 10 Alexandria; Dumbrava Minunată, Tecuci; No. 3, 15 & 16, Tecuci; Primary Schools: Mihai Eminescu, Corabia City; No. 16 Constanţa; Vadu Oii; Cernavoda; Rasova; Ostrov; Chiscani & Gropeni; Secondary Schools: Pojejena Commune; No. 2 Hunedoara; Traian Lalescu, Orşova; I.Şt. Paulian Arts; Gheorghe Brăiescu, Calafat City; No. 4 Corabia; Giuvărăşti; Mihai Eminescu, Piteşti; Mircea Eliade, Piteşti; Nicolae Bălcescu, Piteşti; Tudor Vladimirescu, Piteşti; Alexandru Colfescu, Teleorman; Don Orione, Liceul; Zimnicea; No. 3 Zimnicea; Liţa; Vespasian Lungu Arts School, Brăila; George Georgescu School of Art; Atanasie Cojocaru Future Folklore Ensemble & Turnu Măgurele School Sport Club; Colleges & Universities: Carol I National College, Craiova City; Dunărea de Jos University, Galaţi; Danubius University, Galaţi; Anghel Saligny Technical College, Roşiorii de Vede & Unirea National College, Turnu Măgurele; Brăila & Tulcea County Directorates for Sport & Youth.

Danube Day 2014: Get active for a living Danube!

For general information about the 14-country Danube Day celebrations, view www.danubeday.org or email the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR): benedikt.mandl@unvienna.org.