

Meeting on the ITI Danube Delta Region – Ministry of European Funds - 30 June 2016

DG REGIO initiated this meeting with aim of better understanding the state of play for the 'Integrated Strategy for Sustainable Development for the Danube Delta Region' and the related ITI.

Participants included the Ministry of European Funds, all managing authorities for the ESI Funds, the prime minister's services, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, the ADI Danube Delta ITI, DG REGIO, DG AGRI (video); DG EMPL (video).

Main issues from the meeting:

- The Strategy will be adopted by Government; the inter-ministerial endorsement process is ongoing. As part of the SEA, feedback from the Ukraine is still awaited. The latest version of the strategy is not significantly different from the 2015 draft developed by the World Bank. "Knowledge-based economy and business support" has been included as an area of activity.
- Projects will be selected and prioritised according to criteria and procedures established by each programme, including an endorsement by the ADI (see note MEF: <U:\Romania\1. Programming 2014 - 2020\ITI Danube Delta\Meeting 30 June 2016\ITI mechanism Note 27.06.doc>). The ADI ITI will be involved in drafting the selection criteria for the dedicated calls for proposals. The process is not entirely clear since it appears that the ADI ITI will also proceed with a prioritisation exercise, which does not seem to be taken into account by the different programmes.
- Integration of infrastructure and services (mainly ROP and HCOP) will be addressed within the functional working group for innovative approaches; no concrete measures agreed yet.
- The ADI ITI offers support to beneficiaries including for project preparation and won't have a role 'to control'. 56 feasibility studies have been financed using TA resources. The ADI ITI staff will include 20 FTE.
- It is difficult to estimate the maturity of the projects that appear on the extended list. The MA for the ROP estimates that 50% of the projects started elaborating technical documentation.
- As long as the strategy has not been adopted, no calls for proposals will be launched. Discussing possibilities to speed up the process, the MA for the ROP committed to launching public consultations on specific guides for applicants as soon as possible.
- Monitoring will take place at 3 levels: at national level on the basis of 10 indicators referring mainly to the Europe 2020 targets; at regional level towards the consultative committee; at project level by the ADI ITI and the managing authorities. The division of tasks between the ADI ITI and the managing authorities seems not fully developed yet.
- The feasibility to measure the 10 indicators at the level of the territory covered by the ITI is doubtful and important areas such as biodiversity, economic diversification and tourism are not covered. The indicators will be revisited and discussed with the National Institute for Statistics.

As a general note, the meeting did not show much dynamics between the partners at national level. The ADI ITI, although represented by its president and coordinator, kept a rather low profile.
