

PROJECT CONTEXT

The “**Danube Velo Route**” project is a natural result of the efforts of the lead partner Agency for Regional Development and Business Center – Vidin and its Romanian partners to promote sustainable tourism in the region. Through its experience in Phare funded projects for promotion of a tourist destination and numerous meetings with Gtz representatives implementing a large scale project for the Danube bicycle track development and together with its partners the leading partner has accumulated large experience and know-how in the field of tourism development and promotion.

The main objective of the project is to *promote and develop cross-border tourism along the Danube in Romania and Bulgaria*. More specifically, the project aims the *continuation of the well-known Danube bicycle route from Budapest to the Black Sea*; the *development and promotion of various forms of tourism along the Danube* and a *regional image of the Danube River between Bulgaria and Romania as tourist destination*.

To achieve these objectives the project plans the following **key activities**: *database collection* for tourist services, events and infrastructure, etc. and its web posting. Organization of *workshops* with local stakeholders, tourism companies, organizations in order to further develop tourist service, accommodation facilities, provide *training on village tourism organization, draft projects for tourism development in the region*. The following activities could be summarized as *promotional materials preparation and print*: brochure and flyers, magazine, tourist DVD film, print of map. A *study* for the sign posting of the Danube bicycle track will be performed both in Bulgaria and Romania, giving precise information about the exact places, form and text of the road signs that will mark the bicycle track, which spreads on the existing road network near the Danube. Then the study will be sent to the ministries of transport for approval and a pilot signposting of 100 signs will be organized and implemented.

A **major event** within the project is the organization of a *Promotional Danube tour*, where 30 international journalists for a period of 10 days will follow the Danube route in Bulgaria and Romania on bike and boat in order to discover for themselves the tourist offer and spread it through their media to all interested tourists from Europe and around the world. A final 3 day conference will be organized to summarize the achieved results and ideas for future work and collaboration in the field and the Danube velo route will be promoted at five international tourism fairs in Danube countries. Proper information and communication campaign will take place to enhance the project effects.