

## **Press release 1**

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### **Successful start of the GoDanuBio project**

**On 1<sup>st</sup> July the Danube Transnational Programme project “Participative Ecosystems for fostering the revitalization of rural-urban cooperation through governing Danube Circular Bioeconomy” (GoDanuBio) started its activities**

The Kick-of-Meeting, hold online on 30<sup>th</sup> July and with more than 40 attendees, was the official start of GoDanuBio. The wide consortium includes 19 project partners and 6 associated partners from 10 countries (AT, BG, CZ, DE, HR, HU, RO, SI, SK, RS) of the Danube macro-region. Nearly 70% of the participants are Clusters, Cluster associations and/or Business support organisations. The local authorities are represented through 3 partners and in a major degree by 6 Associated Strategic Partners.

Danube regions and cities face major societal transitions regarding demographic change. The rural exodus is caused by better employment opportunities for the youth and the prospect of a better life in cities. The movement of labor leads to depopulated areas leaving an aging and increasingly unskilled population behind. With the support of GoDanuBio activities the Danube regions can make a significant transformation. Co-creating ongoing and future strategies to increase the attractiveness of rural areas will be the key to give the youth new incentives for a rural renaissance.

During the project implementation the Circular Bioeconomy will be used as a tool to foster regional development: It is a concept focusing on the transition of a fossil-resource based economy towards an economy making use of sustainable production of biological resources and processes to develop new products and services, thus setting rural areas and their development into focus. The concept catalyzes interdisciplinary cooperation between different policy areas and productive sectors to actively address demographic change. In this sense, GoDanuBio will create value through participative governance, knowledge exchange, untapping biobased value chains and, ultimately, raising the attractiveness to stay and even move to rural areas.

The project partners will join forces till December 2022:

- ✓ To identify the local actors, establish cross-sectoral collaborations and prove the benefits of the “bioeconomisation” of the regional excellence, demonstrating the economic and societal values of the biobased ecosystems;
- ✓ To reveal the rural-urban, cross-regional and transnational opportunities for cooperation to put the circular bioeconomy in practice throughout the Danube macro-region;
- ✓ To develop an ecosystem for systematic multi-level governance with actors from the regional policy level, industry, academia and civil organisations. This approach aims at leveraging the institutional capacity of the participating regions and support transformative processes to tackle demographic change and brain drain.

The duration of the project is 30 months. The total financed budget is 2,713,796.50 Euro.

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**Project partners:** BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg (Lead Partner), Cluster Agentur Baden-Württemberg, Poly4EmI/Anteja ECG d.o.o, Romanian Cluster Association, IFKA Public Benefit Non-profit Limited Company for the Development of the Industry, Bulgarian Employers' Association of Innovative Technologies (BRAIT), Ministry of Education, Science and Sport – Slovenija, Bioeconomy Cluster – Slovenija, Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment of Romania, National Cluster Association – CZ, Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency, Croatian Wood Cluster, Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts of the Republic of Croatia, Ghelinta Commune, Business Upper Austria – OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur Ltd, Styrian Technology Park, City of Sigmaringen, Kosice Self-governing region, Regional Agency for the Development of Small and Medium Size Enterprises Alma Mons Ltd,

**Strategic Associated partners:** Provincial Secretariat for Regional Development, Interregional Cooperation and Local Self-Government, Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic, Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia, EUREGIO Bayerischer Wald - Böhmerwald / Regionalmanagement Mühviertel, Association of communes of Romania, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, European Secretariat