



International Association  
of Water Service Companies  
in the Danube River  
Catchment Area



**DANUBE  
WATER  
PROGRAM**

# **ENERGIZING THE WATER SECTOR IN THE DANUBE REGION**

# **2022 DANUBE WATER FORUM**

Report, October 2022



Federal Ministry  
Republic of Austria  
Finance



**SHUKALB**  
WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE ASSOCIATION OF ALBANIA

# I. AGENDA OUTLINE

Tuesday, June 28 <sup>th</sup>	
15:00	DWF Registration
16:30 – 18:00	2022 DWF Opening Sessions: Water and Energy in Europe
18:00 – 20:00	2022 DWF Welcome Reception and Cocktail
Wednesday, June 29 <sup>th</sup>	
09:00 – 10:30	Setting the Scene: The Energy Market and Effects on Utilities in the Danube Region
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11:00 – 12:30	Innovative Technologies for Saving and Producing Energy in the Water Service Sector
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch Break</i>
13:30 – 15:00	Financing Energy Related Measures in the Water Service Sector
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
15:30 – 17:00	Creating an Enabling Environment to Energize the Water Sector: Capacity Building, Policy, and Regulation
17:00 – 17:30	2022 DWF Closing Sessions
19:00	Joint Conference Dinner with Nexus event

## II. THE ORGANIZERS

### World Bank / IAWD Danube Water Program

---

The World Bank / IAWD Danube Water Program supports **smart policies, strong utilities and sustainable water and wastewater services** in the Danube region by partnering with regional, national and local stakeholders, promoting an informed policy dialogue around the sector's challenges and strengthening the technical and managerial capacity of the sector's utilities and institutions.

#### Why this Program?

Governments and water professionals in the Danube region face a double challenge of meeting their citizens' demand for universal, good quality, efficient, and financially sound or - in one word - sustainable water and wastewater services, while catching up to the environmental requirements of the European Union *acquis communautaire*. To address this double challenge, the World Bank and the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD) have partnered to launch the Danube Water Program, with a 13 million Euro, three-phased financing from the Government of Austria.

#### What has the Program achieved?

The Danube Water Program was formally launched in May 2013 in partnership with line ministries, regulators, waterworks associations, and local government representatives of a dozen countries in South-East Europe. Since the launch of the Program, knowledge exchanges among more than 1.200 sector professionals and policy makers in the region and beyond has taken place. In 2015 a State of the Sector report was launched ([SoS 2015](#)) and updated in 2018 ([SoS 2018](#)) and is a flagship product of the Danube Water Program. The reports provide an analysis of the region's progress and challenges in providing sustainable water and wastewater services for all and aims to document and inform water services policies and their outcomes in 16 countries of the Danube region. Three additional analytical pieces exploring status and trends in wastewater management, rural water supply and sanitation and agglomeration of utilities have been published. Capacity building programs benefiting over 170 utilities have been undertaken under the region wide Danube Learning Partnership (D-LeaP) involving cooperation with all the national water utility associations. Numerous local initiatives worth more than € 1,000,000 through competitive grants have been supported.

[iawd.at](http://iawd.at)  
[worldbank.org/en/topic/water](http://worldbank.org/en/topic/water)  
[danube-water-program.org](http://danube-water-program.org)

### Water Supply and Sewerage Association of Albania (SHUKALB)

---

The Water Supply and Sewerage Association of Albania (SHUKALB), which was established in 2000, is a professional not-for-profit Association of water supply and sewerage professionals who wish to improve the management of the Water Supply and Sewerage Sector in Albania, making it efficient, sustainable and effective in accordance with the current laws and regulations in Albania. The Association's Mission Statement consists of four main mission objectives: To advocate the collective interests of professionals in the water sector in Albania; To serve as a leading resource for knowledge, professional development and networking; To invest time and resources to build awareness and attract future generations to seek a career in the water sector; and to be a positive force for mutual understanding, collaboration and regional partnerships in the Western Balkans.

As SHUKALB is a member of IAWD and the Danube Learning Partnership (D-LeaP), the association was the logical candidate to co-organise the Danube Water Forum jointly with the Danube Water Program and IAWD in Tirana, Albania.

[shukalb.al/en/](http://shukalb.al/en/)

### III. THE PARTICIPANTS

The 2022 Danube Water Forum on “Energizing the Water Sector in the Danube Region” was held on June 28-29 live in Tirana, Albania. By re-introducing the Danube Water Forum as a physical conference, IAWD and the World Bank continue to organize a yearly face-to-face exchange amongst the water community in the frame of the Danube Water Program, alternating with the now biennial Danube Water Conferences. Detailed information on the Danube Water Forum including session summaries and recordings can be found on the [DWF Website](#).



Figure 1: Key facts and figures of the 2022 DWF.

This year’s Forum brought together around 158 participants from national and local governments, regulatory agencies, water utilities, international financing institutions and professional associations as well as academia, coming from 20 different countries around the globe.

Figures 2 and 3 show this year’s distribution of participants by institution typology and by country/region.

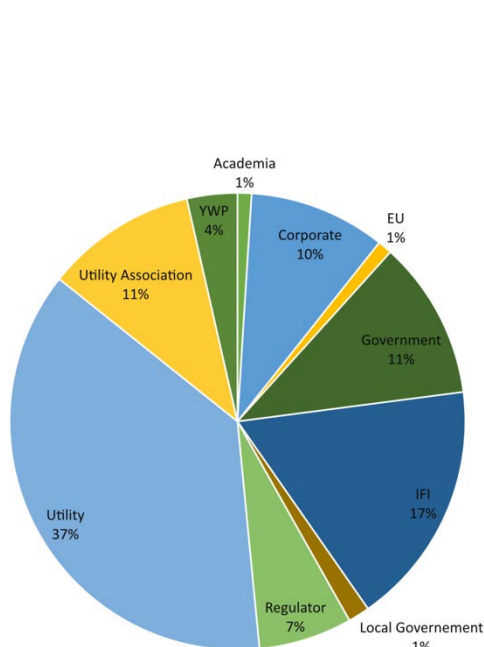


Figure 2 Distribution of 2022 DWF participants by institution typology based on the survey results.

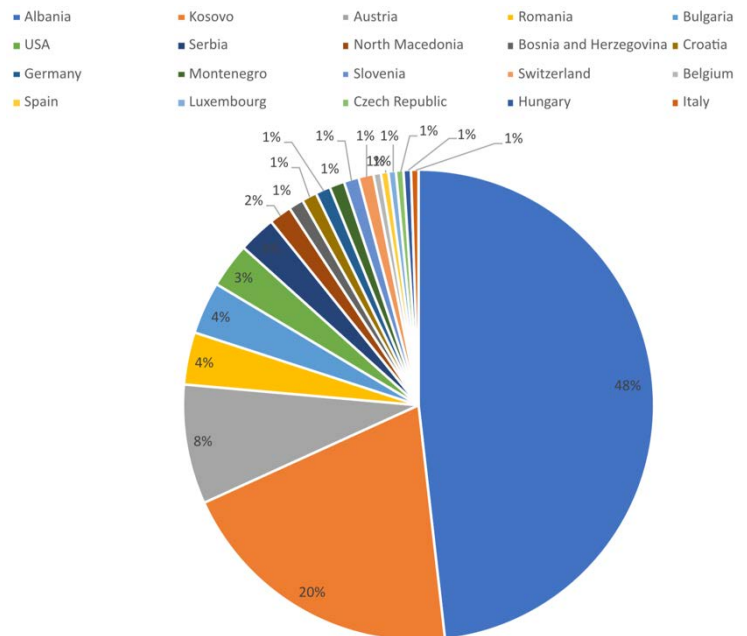


Figure 3: Distribution of 2022 DWF participants by country/region based on the DWF registration.

Figure 4 shows the level of continued interest and on-going engagement with DWP knowledge sharing and capacity building events/workshops. However, the event did draw in new participants as well, with 33,3% of survey respondents answering this was their first DWP event.



Figure 4: Previous engagement with DWP Workshops and Events

## IV. SESSION OVERVIEW

Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> June

### 2022 DWF Opening Session: Water and Energy in Europe

Chaired by **Kathia Havens** (World Bank) and Katerina Schilling (IAWD)

#### Context and Objective

The opening and keynote session featured welcoming words from senior representatives of the various institutions organizing, hosting and supporting the 2022 Danube Water Forum and provided an overview of the event's structure. It was followed by a keynote speech and a panel discussion on the subject.



**Kathia Havens**  
World Bank



**Katerina Schilling**  
IAWD



**Elisabeth Gruber**  
Austrian Ministry  
of Finance



**Evis Sulko**  
World Bank



**Walter Kling**  
IAWD



**Loïc Charpentier**  
Water Europe



**Monika Weber-Fahr**  
Hertie School of Governance



**Filip Wanner**  
Energie AG Bohemia



**Hajrije Morina**  
WSRA

Read the [summary](#) online & check out the following presentation:

[Keynote "Exploiting the Water-Energy Nexus – Energy Savings and Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions"](#)

Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> June

### 2022 DWF Welcome Reception

Chaired by Winston Yu (World Bank) and Walter Kling (IAWD)

#### Context and Objective

In the frame of the Welcome Reception and Cocktail the World Bank the Albania National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Modernization Program was launched. In addition, participants had the opportunity to network with peers.



**Winston Yu**  
World Bank



**Belinda Balluku**  
Albanian Ministry  
of infrastructure and Energ



**Karin Gallandat**  
Swiss State Secretariat  
for Economic Affairs



**Evis Sulko**  
World Bank



Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> June

## Setting the Scene: The Energy Market and Effects on Utilities in the Danube Region

Chaired by Walter Kling (IAWD)

### Context and Objective

As for other sectors, energy is essential for the water service sector, driving water service delivery through pumping, treatment of freshwater for consumption, as well as treatment before discharge into the environment. Energy tariffs, generally considered as affordable over the past decades, provide only limited incentives for water utilities to focus on an increase of energy efficiency and hence the reduction of energy consumption. This situation is about to change since energy costs have recently surged and costs for electricity and gas have multiplied in the beginning of 2022.



Walter Kling  
IAWD



Katharina Gassner  
World Bank



Radoslav Russev  
Wadata



Christian Minelli  
WAREG

Read the [summary](#) online & check out the following presentations:

[Energy price shocks in the Danube region: latest developments and future perspectives](#)



Ndrim Shani  
Albanian Water  
Regulatory Authority



Elisabeta Poci  
SHUKALB



Gazmend Daci  
World Bank



György Sugar  
ViK Subotica

[Rising costs versus poor efficiency: challenges and opportunities to \(de-\)energize utilities](#)

Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> June

## Innovative Technologies for Energy Management in the Water Services Sector

Chaired by Kathia Havens (World Bank) and Stjepan Gabric (World Bank)

### Context and Objective

Technologies for energy production and energy conservation have always been present in water supply and sanitation (WSS), but their importance and integration in processing and operating WSS technology has grown in importance only with the recent major increase of energy costs, that is likely to be an irreversible process. Unless efficient mitigation measures are implemented, the rise of energy prices will have a serious impact on WSS service sustainability, and consequently service affordability.



Kathia Havens  
World Bank



Stjepan Gabric  
World Bank



Jelyaz Rangelov  
Sofia Water



Wolfgang Gruber  
Vienna Water

Read the [summary](#) online & check out the following presentations:

[Renewable energy production - the case study of Kubratovo WWTP in Sofia](#)

[Renewable energy production - the case study of Vienna Water](#)



Gilbert Schreiber  
Siemens



Florian Kretschmer  
Vienna University of Natural  
Resources and Life Sciences



Camilo L. Cordoba  
World Bank

[Energy management for the water and waste water industry](#)

Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> June

## Financing Energy Related Measures in the Water Service Sector

Chaired by Ivaylo Kolev (World Bank)

### Context and Objective

Water and sanitation often struggle to receive sufficient funding for its regular service provision, therefore securing additional funds necessary for financing of energy related measures represents an additional challenge. This session looks at the possible sources and different modalities of financing available for energy investments in the water and sanitation sector and how those financing schemes and sources could be utilized to achieve financial sustainability of water service provision.


 Ivaylo Kolev  
 World Bank

 Dilip R. Limaye  
 World Bank

 Juan Bofill Maestre  
 European Investment Bank

 Sokol Xhafa  
 Regional Water  
 Company Pristina

 Eduart Rumani  
 Swiss Embassy in Albania

 Lyubomir Filipov  
 Sofia Water

Read the [summary](#) online & check out the following presentations:

[Options for financing energy efficiency projects in the water services sector](#)

[Is the EU Taxonomy relevant for energy efficient water service provision?](#)

[How to support green start-ups in the water service sector for the delivery of innovations](#)

 Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> June

## Creating an Enabling Environment to (de-)energize the Water Sector

Chaired by Elisabeta Poci (SHUKALB)

### Context and Objective

While rising energy prices are primarily impacting technical and financial sustainability of water utilities that are responsible for water service provision, solutions for this challenge can only be found with a joint effort of policy makers, water and energy regulatory bodies, and water service providers through creation of an adequate enabling environment and through coordinated action. The objective of this session is to analyze how integrated policy, regulatory interventions, and capacity building can support a more sustainable water service delivery in the Danube region despite the recent energy crisis.


 Elisabeta Poci  
 SHUKALB

 Klevis Jahaj  
 AKUM, ALB

 Vesna Muslic  
 Danube Learning Partnership

 Evis Gjebrea  
 Tirana Water &  
 Wastewater Utility

 Alba Zhorj  
 Albanian Water  
 Resources Management

 Dambudzo J. Muzenda  
 World Bank

Read the [summary](#) online & check out the following presentations:

[Aligning Policies, Institutions and Regulations \(PIR\) for efficient water service delivery](#)

[Albania Water Sector Modernization Program: An innovative approach to achieve the once in a lifetime water sector reform](#)

[D-LeaP – a regional partnership to capacitate the water service sector](#)



Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> June

## 2022 DWF Closing Session

Chaired by Winston Yu (World Bank)

### Context and Objective

This session summarized the main messages and ideas coming from the various sessions and reflected upon the main points and key ideas from the Forum to identify future paths for the sector to strengthen the institutional capacities to (de-)energize the water sector in the Danube Region.



Winston Yu  
World Bank



Walter Kling  
IAWD



Kathia Havens  
World Bank



Ivaylo Kolev  
World Bank



Elisabeta Poci  
SHUKALB



Petrit Tare  
SHUKALB

Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> June

## Joint Conference Dinner with Nexus Event

### Context and Objective

The Conference Dinner convened jointly with the conference\* on “Benchmarking and Asset Management Nexus – Key tools for Regulators and Decision Makers” and provided conference participants excellent networking opportunities. The Dinner took place in the beautiful Prestige Resort at the seaside close to Durrës.

*\* Back-to-back with the 2022 Danube Water Forum, the one-day Conference “Benchmarking and Asset Management Nexus” took place on 30 June 2022 in Albania’s capital city Tirana as an invitation-only event with a limited number of seats available for all relevant stakeholders.*



DWF 2022 Group Photo

Photos and recorded sessions from the Forum can be accessed online at the bottom of the [DWF Website](#), as well as a summarizing blog post here: [„Thank you, Tirana!”](#).

## V. SURVEY RESULTS

In total, 1 keynote, 12 presentations, 2 panel and 4 plenary discussions took place in 6 sessions. This conference report comprehensively summarizes the content of each of the sessions and redirects to the according materials which are accessible online.

Like in previous years, the organizers requested feedback from the participants at the end of the conference via an online survey.

Figure 5 shows that almost all sessions were attended by all participants, apart from the Closing Session on Wednesday in the late afternoon.

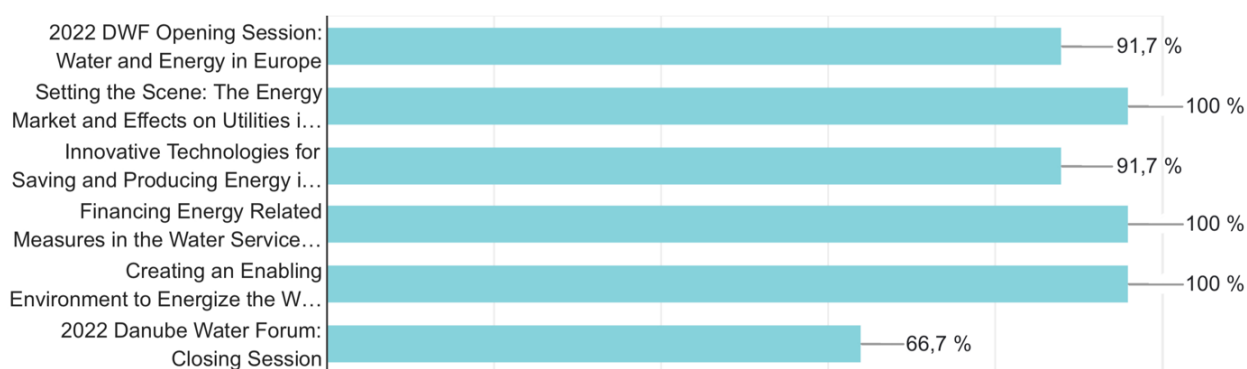


Figure 5: Sessions Attendance

The sessions on “Innovative Technologies for Saving and Producing Energy” and on “the Energy Market and Effects on Utilities” were the participants favorites, followed by the “Opening Session” and the one on “Creating an Enabling Environment to Energize the Water Sector”. “Financing Energy related Measures” was the least favorite among the content related sessions (see Figure 6).

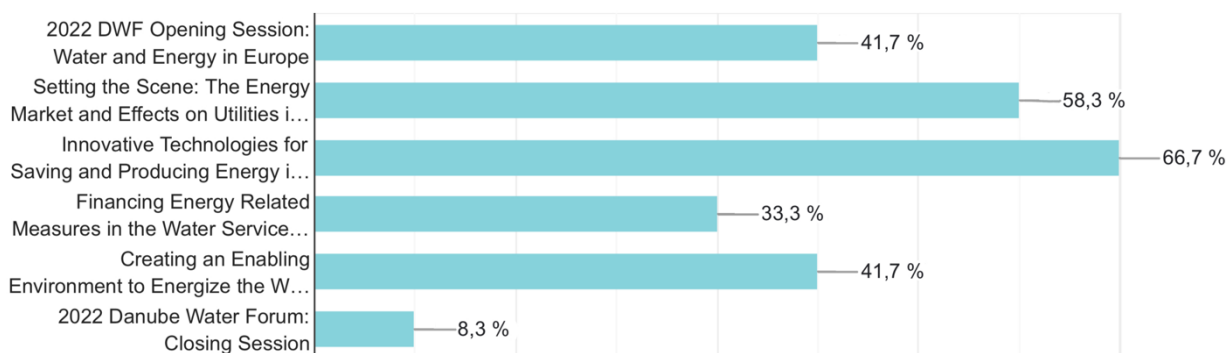


Figure 6: Sessions Rating

Participants would have liked to see the following topics addressed (see Figure 7) and have brought in additional feedback (see Figure 8):

Youth, Education
Something about Waste Water Treatment Plant
Topics about management, assessment of assets in water companies
strategic program details for selected countries, upcoming projects, technology survey
PPPs in water sector
The topics were specific to the Forum theme, additional topics would have lost the focus.

*Figure 7: Further Topics suggested*

Too many repetitions
The knowledge levels of the presenters and panelists were excellent, I appreciate the willingness to explain the concepts and analyzes in a good way.
All participants were very knowledgeable about their subjects and provided reliable and interesting information
There is a need to invite research institutes, universities which may be involved in studies/research to many aspects of water, energy etc. Also foreign embassy representatives which finance water programs.
Everything was OK
Perhaps the conference could have been more open to the energy regulator, energy providers - at least in the audience or panel discussions

*Figure 8: Additional Feedback*

The survey also addressed the formats of the forum, like the preferred social events (see figure 8) and the specific format features (see figure 9).



*Figure 9: Social Events Rating*

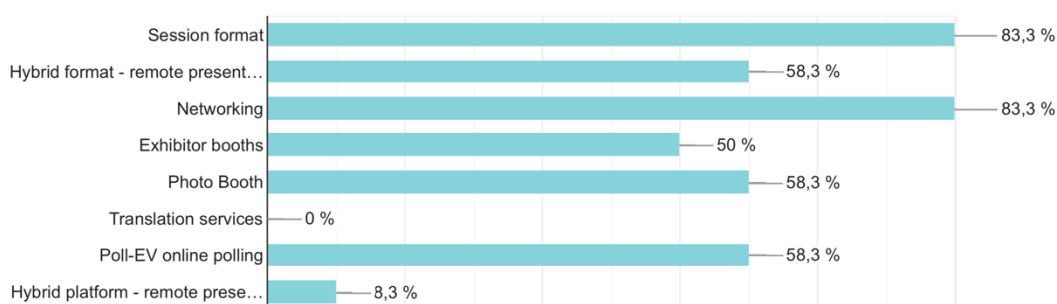


Figure 10 Format Features

Regarding the length of the sessions opinions varied:

Although several comments included that the sessions lasted too long, there were also remarks on sessions being too short. Some said that fewer presenters, but more time for discussions would have been better, others wished to hear from even more presenters. Many agreed that Coffee and Networking Breaks were long enough, however there is a broad understanding that even more space for networking should be provided. More opinions expressed in this context were mainly concerning more engagement with the audience and a hint at organizing B2B Events and bilateral meetings.

Additional feedback with respect to the Danube Water Conference format, logistics and communications predominantly positive:

They have been at an excellent level

very pleasant personal interaction with other participants, very well organized, possibly support networking with adequate tools

Presentations are taking the time of the panel. One presentation max per panel would suffice

Excellent!

Organization was excellent

It was good to have it in the region, i.e. change of country, more befitting the name of the program.

Figure 11: Additional Format Feedback

The following key benefits were indicated by participants:

- ▶ Connecting and getting to know people
- ▶ We discovered the latest trends, we learned from the recommendations of the presenters and panelists, we learned how to implement the strategies offered by the latest presentations in the water and energy industry, etc.
- ▶ General information about the current sector status. Networking.
- ▶ Experience for others
- ▶ The topic was actual, some material could be put in use immediately with policy makers
- ▶ Knowledge sharing, networking
- ▶ New knowledge, new know how

▶ Energy business



Participants would like to see the following issues improved:

- ▶ Session format to be more diverse and allow more discussion and interaction
- ▶ Brightness in the room
- ▶ Networking (e.g. tool support, contact details (e-mail) in participants' list), maybe customer visit
- ▶ More stakeholders invited and presentation related to innovation
- ▶ The risk of resource depletion
- ▶ The panel discussions were rushed often, sometime too many panelists. Avoid using same panelists in more than a panel or presentation.
- ▶ More interaction between participants
- ▶ Participation of key stakeholders

Last but not least, participants made suggestions about topics they would like to discuss at the 2023 Danube Water Conference in Vienna:

- ▶ Operation and Maintenance of WWTP
- ▶ Topics which are in trend regarding the management of issues in water companies
- ▶ IT-security, process optimization, best practice in projects
- ▶ Concrete research/projects that lead to sustainable water sector
- ▶ How to reduce water losses
- ▶ Circular economy in the water services sector; Crisis management (Covid, energy, prices)
- ▶ Asset Management
- ▶ Digitalisation





## VI. FORUM SUPPORTERS

The organization of the 2020 Danube Water Forum has been made possible through financial and institutional support from:



Additional contribution has been received from our conference supporters:

