

2021/2022 GROWING WITH THE CHALLENGES



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

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IAWD 2022 AT A GLANCE

8
Board members

4
Staff members

50
IAWD members
in

13
Countries

14
Webinars, workshops,
and events
with

2112
Participants

24
D-LeaP Hubs
with

676
Participants trained

23
Publications

IN SPITE OF IT ALL WE KEPT GOING - AND GROWING



Walter Kling
IAWD President

2021/2022 took us out of the global pandemic frying pan into the fire of a war that devastated a country with strong ties to our community and hit Europe with exploding energy prices. Meanwhile, exceptional drought in most of the Danube region reminded water professionals that climate change is only just warming up – pun intended.

Yet, the last two years deserve credit as a period of success and steadily improving perspectives.

In December 2022 we could launch Phase 4 of the Danube Water Program, having secured the necessary financing to again extend an assistance program that just recently was named a lighthouse example for regional cooperation at the UN Water Conference 2023, an outstanding global event at the U.N. Headquarters in New York.

Another success story that we will happily continue is RCDN, the Regional Capacity Development Network, a partnership of seven associations of local government units and nine associations of water utilities in six countries in the Danube region. IAWD has participated in this network from day 1, and we are looking forward to continue important projects during the upcoming next grant period.

To keep up with the growth of our network, IAWD has consolidated all management and administration activities in the hands of a joint IAWD Secretariat team, led by Katerina Schilling.

2022 also saw the election of the IAWD Board for the period until end of 2025, with many familiar and some new faces, the latter being Wolfgang Gruber, Staff Unit Manager at Vienna Water, and George Sugar, General Manager of Vodovod Subotica in Serbia.

Welcome, new Board members, and a heartfelt “Thank you!” to everybody who helped to move our community forward during the now 30 years of IAWD and 10 years of Danube Water Program – which is cause for celebrations in 2023 and an optimistic look ahead.

Yes, 2021/2022 was a rocky road, and more of the same seems to lie ahead, but we keep going, and we keep growing.



STRENGTH THROUGH COOPERATION

YOUR IAWD MEMBERSHIP

Our network is steadily growing, because those who understand the water sector also realize that joining the IAWD means becoming part of something important: **IAWD, the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area, is the prime association of water and wastewater utilities in the Danube region.**

IAWD welcomes all utilities, utility associations and institutions with a stake in the water sector of the Danube and Balkan region, and we especially appreciate the fact that four new members decided to join our community in the challenging period 2021/2022 - for mutual benefit: **We believe in strength through cooperation, a strength that grows with every new member.**

Together, we create a strong voice that promotes the ongoing improvement of water services and utility operation in the Danube region - **the Voice of the Danube.**

IAWD is an international network with a shared vision, a shared mission, and a shared approach: **Our vision is safe, reliable, affordable access to water services for all in the Danube region, because improving water services improves lives.**

Our mission is to act as the Voice of the Danube, strengthening our members in delivering sustainable water services through cooperation, capacity development and knowledge exchange.

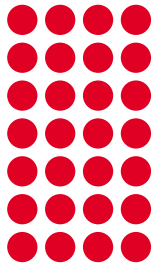
Our approach is to communicate, to connect and to capacitate.





Utility Members

28



New in 2021/2022:

Korca Water Supply and Sanitation JSC (Albania)
K.P. Vodovod a.d. Prnjavor (BiH)
JP "Vilin Lug" (Serbia)



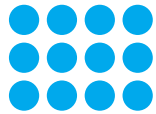
Association Members

10

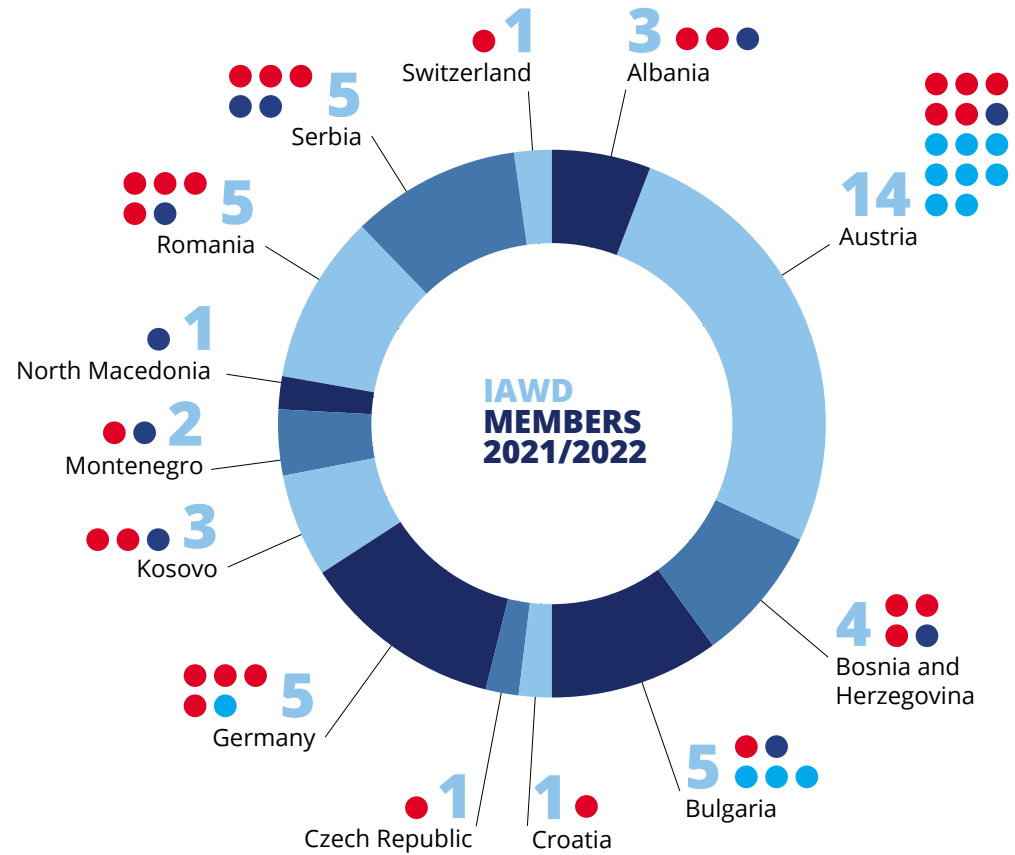


Institutional Members

12



New in 2021/2022:
Hydrolia (Bulgaria)



"We joined the IAWD because water quality and infrastructure improvement are issues that are best solved in coordinated efforts, with support from a strong regional network."

Evis Gjebrea
Deputy Director, Tirana Water Supply and Sewerage



"Water infrastructure is mostly invisible and always taken for granted. All the more important is a strong network that gives water a voice."

Christian Plohberger
CEO, Protectum Solutions

IAWD MISSION AND VISION

IMPROVING WATER SERVICES TO IMPROVE LIVES

Over three decades, IAWD has steadily built its cooperation network in the water sector of the world's most international river basin, reaching out beyond national, cultural and linguistic borders with an ever-growing number of programs and activities to create a strong voice for improving water services and utility operation in the Danube region: The Voice of the Danube.

IAWD works with national water utility associations and individual utilities, helping to secure the water quality of the Danube and its tributaries, promoting sustainable utility services, representing the water sector's interests and providing donors with an established, attractive platform that covers the entire region.

IAWD is aware that in the face of climate change and all related challenges only joint action, joint standards and universally binding regulations will safeguard the quality of water resources and services in the Danube region. It is therefore IAWD's common concern to show solidarity in managing water services and ensuring their high quality.

IAWD enters its 31st year driven by a promising vision, an important mission and a stronger sense of urgency than ever:



OUR VISION

Safe, reliable and affordable access to water services for all in the Danube region, because improving water services improves lives.



OUR MISSION

Aware of the importance of information, communication and cooperation in the water service sector, we act as the Voice of the Danube, strengthening our members in delivering sustainable water services through cooperation, capacity development and knowledge exchange.



WHO WE ARE

IAWD is the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area. We are an independent, non-profit organization of water and wastewater utilities, national water utility associations and other stakeholders engaging in the provision of safe and reliable water services for over 80 million people living in the Danube region. Join the Voice of the Danube community and support building a safe water future for the Danube region.



OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH

Communicate with our members, our supporters and the interested public on a comprehensive range of channels, with a strong focus on digital services.

Connect the Danube region's water sector by a program of conferences, meetings and webinars to enable peer-to-peer networking.

Capacitate water sector professionals by supporting knowledge exchange, mutual support networks, access to resources and the capacity building activities of the Danube Learning Partnership.

AT OUR RIVERS, BY OUR RIVERS, FOR OUR RIVERS: THE EUROPEAN RIVER MEMORANDUM COALITION

Supported by a broad coalition of over 170 European drinking water suppliers from nine associations, the European River Memorandum of 2020 sets 10 theses for precautionary water protection strategies, as well as target values for watercourses, defining indispensable minimum quality standards to secure a sustainable drinking water supply in wide parts of the continent.

All in all, the ERM Coalition represents the water protection and drinking water interests of 188 million people in 18 states situated in the catchment areas of the rivers Rhine and Ruhr, Danube, Elbe, Meuse and Scheldt.

Aware of the enormous environmental, economic and social importance of rivers, the IAWD has of course joined the ERM Coalition and also cooperates closely with the International River Foundation. For the latter, the IAWD has lately hosted two signature events:

The 2021 European River Symposium, which had to be held as a virtual event due to Covid-related travel restrictions, highlighted the changes and specific actions brought about by the European Water Framework Directive and the rich opportunities presented by the European Green Deal and European Biodiversity Strategy.

The 25th International River Symposium 2022 welcomed over 350 participants from 55 nations at the Tech Gate Vienna conference venue for a four-day, three-track conference, accompanied by local events in other time zones that fed into the main event and an online participation option.

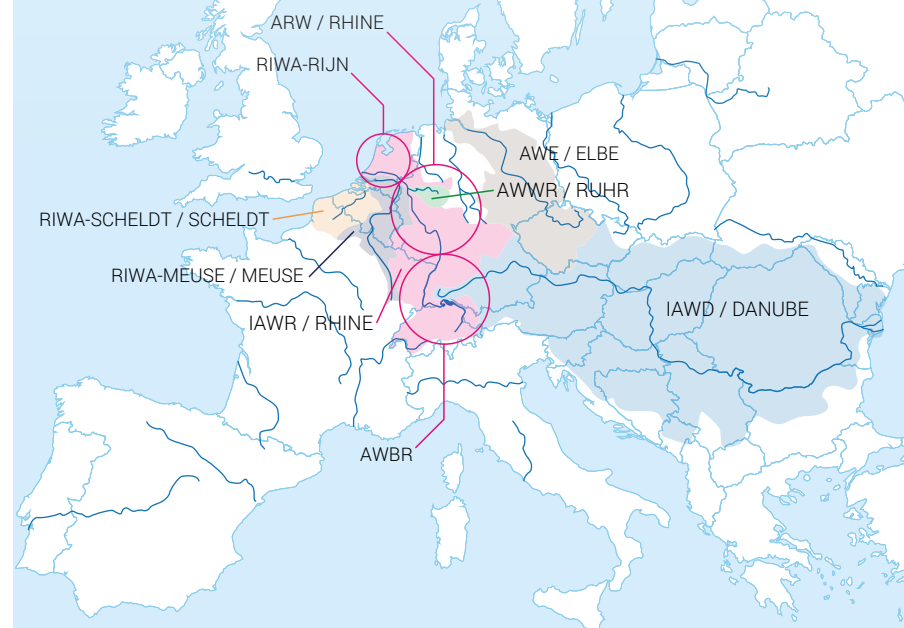
Conference documents and the European River Memorandum are available for download in the Voice of the Danube online library.



MORE
DETAILS



MORE
DETAILS



PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROGRESS

Rivers do not stop at borders, and the same goes for floods, droughts, pollution and infrastructural headaches. This plain truth was the starting point of the IAWD and its International outreach: International cooperations, cross-border initiatives and partnerships of all sizes, from very local to totally global are the very DNA of the community.

We take the occasion to introduce trusted, valuable friends, partners and supporters:

WORLD BANK

Trusted partner and supporter of IAWD and co-implementer of the Danube Water Program which started ten years ago, initially designed for a three year period, and now again extended by a phase 4, thanks to financing by the Austrian Ministry of Finance.

ROUNDTABLE OF DANUBE REGION WATER UTILITY ASSOCIATIONS

The Roundtable of Danube Region Water Associations is a coordination platform gathering representatives of all utility associations in the region for regular information exchange and cooperation planning meetings.

NETWORK OF ASSOCIATIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF SOUTH-EAST EUROPE (NALAS)

Municipal governments are key players in the water sector, owning and managing the majority of utilities in most countries of the Danube region. In 2016,

IAWD and NALAS signed a Memorandum of Understanding, strengthening the cooperation between NALAS and IAWD at the regional level and between national water utility and municipal government associations.

INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSOCIATION (IWA)

In 2017, IAWD has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Water Association IWA, kicking off collaboration in the Danube and Black Sea region with, among others, a strong focus on Young Water Professionals. YWP are active in several countries of the region since, and IAWD supports their work and their integration into the Danube Water Program.

GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (GWP CEE)

The GWP CEE region covers two major European catchment basins – those that drain into the Baltic Sea and those that drain into the Black Sea. Its governance structure comprises Partners, Country Water Partnerships, a Regional Council and the Bratislava-based Secretariat.

EQUAL AQUA

Established by the World Bank's Water Global Practice, Equal Aqua (EA) is a collaborative platform that promotes gender diversity and inclusion in water sector jobs, benchmarking gender inclusion in water organizations. In March 2022 the IAWD joined Equal Aqua officially.



COMMUNICATE CONNECT CAPACITATE IAWD ACTIVITIES

IAWD acts as a regional platform for information exchange, peer-to-peer networking and knowledge sharing. The wide range of activities in this network builds on three principal pillars: communicate, connect, and capacitate.

Communicating to keep you informed, IAWD provides Voice of the Danube as a multi-purpose web platform for information exchange, complemented by digital newsletters, reports and direct member contacts. We encourage everybody with a stake in the region's water sector to register as a Voice of the Danube user. It is free of cost, does not carry any obligations and keeps you up to date on news, activities, business and career opportunities, and everything that is going on in the water sector of the Danube region.

Connecting you with the Danube region's water sector, IAWD has built a strong, far-reaching peer-to-peer network of stakeholders such as governments, regulators, utilities, donor agencies, businesses supporting the water industry, and water utility associations. For a lively, productive exchange, IAWD co-organizes conferences and events including its signature events, the Danube Water Conference and the Danube Water Forum, to connect the sector's stakeholders in the Danube region.

Capacitating you on the professional level, IAWD has created a wide variety of activities and programs designed to support knowledge exchange among water and wastewater utilities and strengthen their technical and managerial capacities, including the Danube Learning Partnership (D-LeaP) aiming at improving water services and utility operation in the Danube region.

EVENTS ORGANISED IN 2021/2022



COMMUNICATING to keep you informed:

Stay up to date on news, activities, business and career opportunities, and everything that is going on in the water sector of the Danube region.



CONNECTING you with the Danube region's water sector:

Join a far-reaching strong peer to peer network and connect with the water sector's stakeholders, such as governments, regulators, utilities, donor agencies, businesses supporting the water industry, and water utility associations.



CAPACITATING you on the professional level:

Benefit from a wide variety of IAWD programs including the Danube Learning Partnership (D-LeaP) that aim at improving water services and utility operation in the Danube region.



IAWD ACTIVITIES 2021/2022 COMMUNICATE

To get an idea of the real scope and reach of IAWD, visit its Voice of the Danube website. Launched in summer 2020, it contains a full library of relevant publications and reports, a toolbox for water professionals and a news section that covers the water sector in the region.

Voice of the Danube is publicly available, but to access the full spectrum of services, readers need to complete a registration. Registered reader status is cost-free, carries no obligations whatsoever and gives access to the full event schedule, latest water-related news, business and career opportunities, a comprehensive collection of reports, studies and background information in the Danube Library, and vital services like Benchmarking and D-LeaP capacity building support in the Danube Toolbox.



89,420
Page views



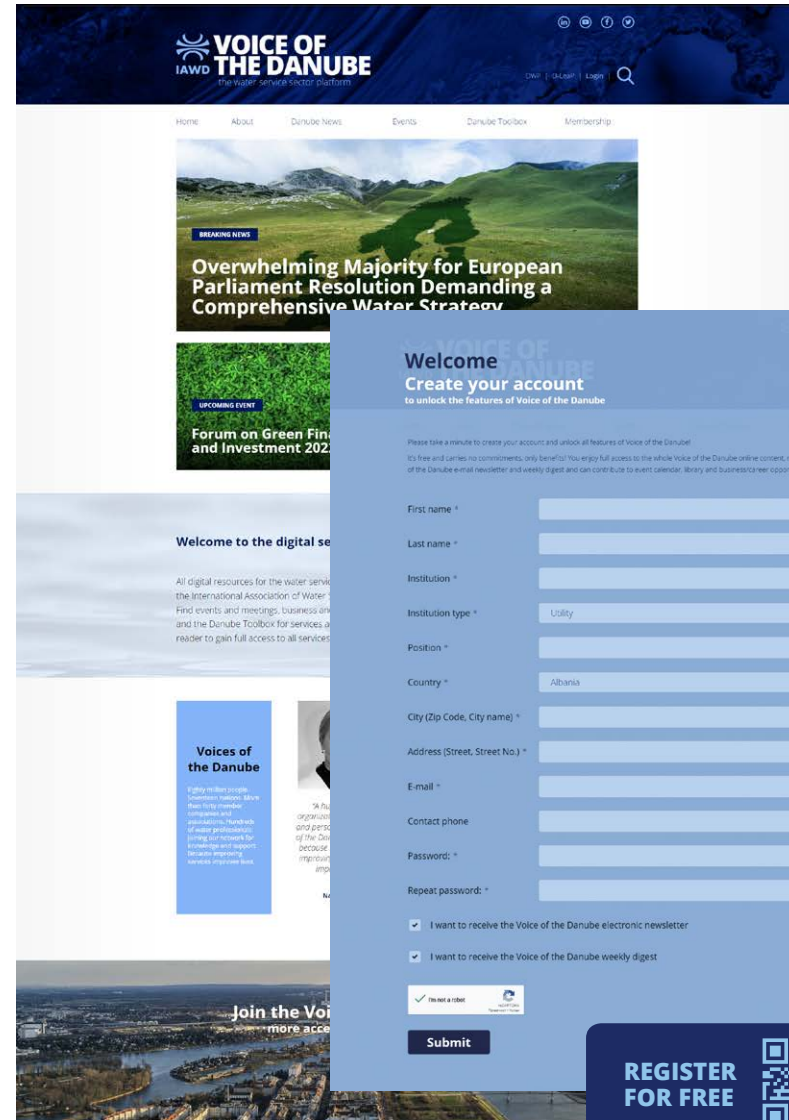
697
Registered
VoD users

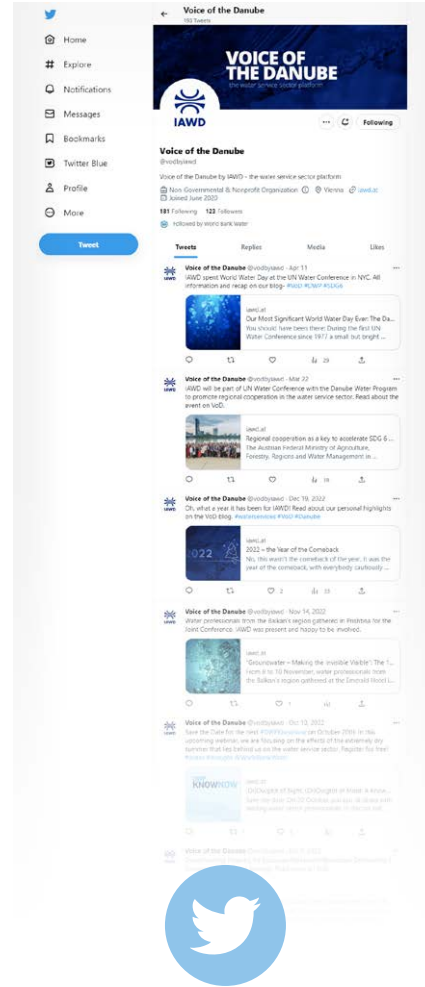
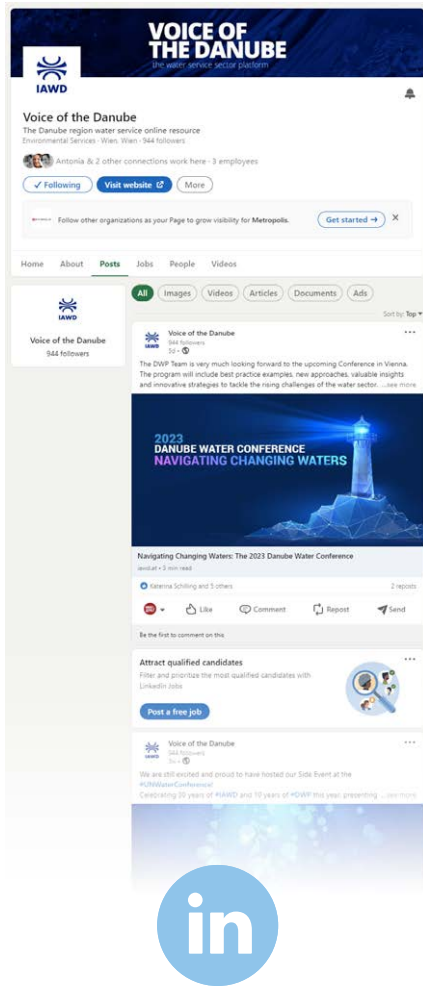


176
Countries



863
LinkedIn
follower

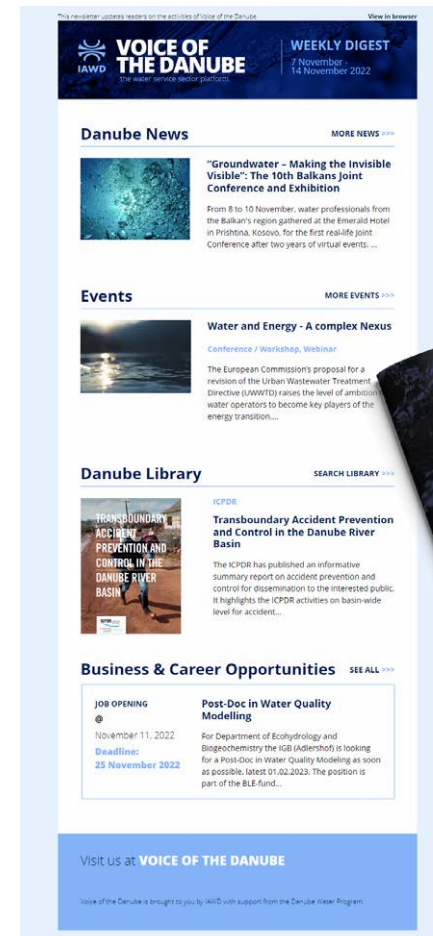




The digital tools of the Voice of the Danube community were honed during the Covid lockdowns and pandemic-related travel restrictions. A weekly newsletter service, social media services with a strong focus on LinkedIn, and quick adoption of webinar and video conferencing tools literally kept the VoD community going in the days when the world stood still.

Another addition to the program is the IAWD annual review, first issued in 2020, downloadable in the Danube Library. The second edition, covering the years 2021 and 2022 is what you are reading right now.

IAWD approaches its fourth decade operating a multi-channel communication landscape that has proved its value as a resilient tool for information and exchange.



IAWD ACTIVITIES 2021/2022 CONNECT

In spite of it all, the Covid emergency had an upside. It taught us the value of remote connections, and when we finally could leave lockdowns and restrictions behind us, we took valuable learnings with us.

While organizing our crisis response, we realized the value of webinars as platforms for an up-to-date exchange of information and experiences and introduced the Danube Water Program KnowNow webinars, a series of online events that provide a growing multinational audience with valuable insights on current topics.

Still, the sense of isolation and a longing for face-to-face contact grew when the pandemic entered year two and the Danube Water Conference 2021 had to be held as a virtual event.

Titled “Building a Resilient and Water Secure Danube Region”, the Conference drew almost 250 water experts from around the globe, and IAWD went out of its way to treat the participants to latest digital conferencing technology, creating a pleasant “as close to live as possible” conference experience.

In spite of all these efforts, there was a palpable sense of relief when in 2022 Tirana, then the European Youth Capital, hosted the first post-pandemic live Danube Water Forum, titled “Energizing the Water Sector in the Danube Region”, and held back to back with the Benchmarking and Asset Management Nexus event .

For those who missed these landmark events, full conference reports and video documentation is available online in the Voice of the Danube library.

DWP KNOWNOW WEBINARS



7

Webinars



868

Participants



41

Countries reached



DANUBE WATER FORUM 2022



158

Participants



16

Young Water Professionals



6

Sessions



12

Presentations



1

Gala Dinner
(by the seaside)



∞

Endless opportunities
to get together

2022 DANUBE WATER FORUM

ENERGIZING THE WATER SECTOR IN THE DANUBE REGION

MORE
DETAILS



The 2023 edition of the bi-annual Danube Water Conference, titled “Navigating Changing Waters: New ways to overcome emerging challenges of the water sector in the Danube region”, will be held from 31 May till 2 June in Vienna, and we will enjoy being “live” again, all the more because IAWD will take the occasion to celebrate its 30th birthday and the 10th anniversary of the launch of the Danube Water Program.



IAWD ACTIVITIES 2021/2022

CAPACITATE

IAWD's most prominent initiative to strengthen technical and managerial capacities in the region's water sector is D-LeaP, the Danube Learning Partnership.

Although the Danube region enjoys a high level of basic access to water and sanitation services, the effectiveness and efficiency of the related services does not always meet international standards. In 2015, a State of the Sector report issued by the World Bank identified room for improvement regarding the capacity of professional staff working in the sector in a number of countries in the region, often due to limited professional development and training opportunities.

IAWD in cooperation with its members, the national water utility associations, has therefore established the Danube Learning Partnership (D-LeaP) as a regional, integrated, sustainable capacity building initiative. Covering 16 countries, D-LeaP provides a comprehensive curriculum for the management and technical staff of water and wastewater utilities in the Danube region. Overall, 17 D-LeaP Hubs have been established so far in the Danube region.

D-LEAP ACTIVITIES 2021/2022



17
Hubs



12
Active countries



255
Utilities trained



7
Programs delivered

MORE ABOUT D-LEAP





In 2021, D-LeaP was extended further, adding a new program on Access to Financing, which was delivered as a pilot by the AQUASAN Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This program provides up-to-date theoretical and practical knowledge on basic financial concepts and the financial aspects of utility management.



The extended Water Safety Planning and Crisis Management program which added Pandemic Response and Water Resources Management to its curriculum to cover the most current topics is hugely popular, running in the national hubs in Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia and the Czech Republic, partly with support from the Regional Capacity Development Network.



2022 also saw the completion of the first Utility Management Training (UMT) cycle. The UMT aims to equip current and future water-sector managers with tools and techniques to support their decision-making, covering the whole spectrum of utility management in a series of single-topic modules which add up to cover the full spectrum of management and operational skills that qualify utility managers of the future. Encouraged by the success of the program, the organizers have scheduled the second cycle with a class of 18 participants for a start in 2023.



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