



**GLOBAL WATER
PARTNERSHIP
CENTRAL AND
EASTERN EUROPE**

Youth Engagement in Water Sector From Participation to Ownership

Lessons from the Danube Region

WHY YOUTH MATTERS?

“Young people are not only the future but also the present of water governance. Engaging them meaningfully is essential to fostering a new generation of water stewards who are equipped to tackle current and future water challenges through innovation, collaboration, and commitment to sustainability.”



WHY YOUTH MATTERS?

- **The water sector is facing a generational (and technical) transition**
- **Growing water challenges in the region and beyond**



- **Young people are motivated — but often disconnected from institutions**
- **Engagement must move beyond awareness raising**



DANURELY PROJECT – WHAT WAS IT ABOUT?

Interreg
Danube Region



Co-funded by
the European Union


DANURELY -WS

- PARTNERS: GWP CEE, Water research Institute - SVK, Ludovika University - HU UNI, Belgrade University - RS
- Empower young people in the Danube Region to engage more actively in water sector
- Learn about youth needs
- Design and plan follow up activities



- Need for practical experience
- Lack of entry opportunities
- Limited visibility of water careers
- Importance of mentorship
- Need for interdisciplinary skills
- Desire for international networking
- Interest in policy interaction



DANURELY PROJECT – WHAT EXPERT SAYS?

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Youth bring more than energy—they offer **fresh perspectives, creativity**, and serve as **bridges** between science, policy, and local communities. If we aim to build truly sustainable and adaptive water policies, it is not enough to simply ‘listen’ to them—we **must involve them** in shaping decisions, designing strategies, and implementing actions on the ground.



— **Rock Aime Missamou**
Ludovika University of Public Service

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Young people should be **empowered** when starting their professional career, e.g. through **study visits, interactive exchanges** with experts from the field, or exchanges with other young people, to make sure they have everything they need to truly make a **sustainable impact** in the water sector.



— **Irene Schnait**
EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)
Strategic Point: People & Skills



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Staying effective in our sector means staying **adaptable** and keeping youth engagement as **dynamic** and **innovative** as the young people themselves.



— **Helene Masliah Gilkarov**
ICPDR – International Commission
for the Protection of the Danube River

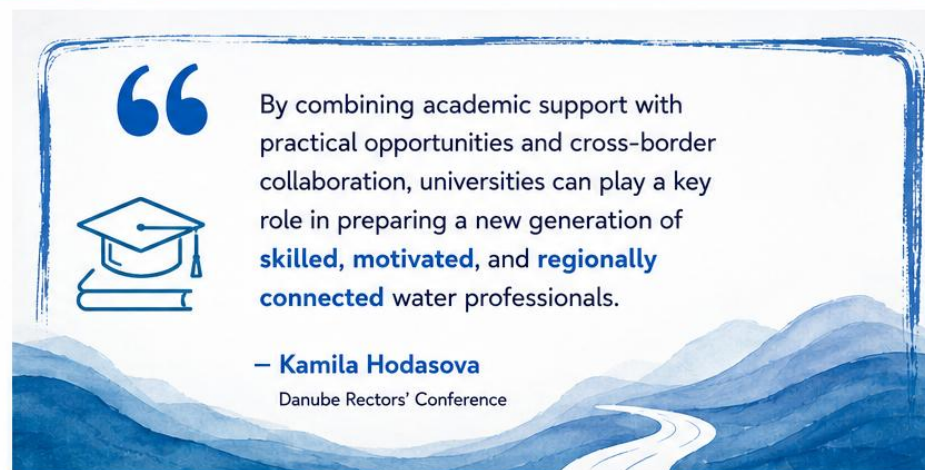


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By combining academic support with practical opportunities and cross-border collaboration, universities can play a key role in preparing a new generation of **skilled, motivated, and regionally connected** water professionals.



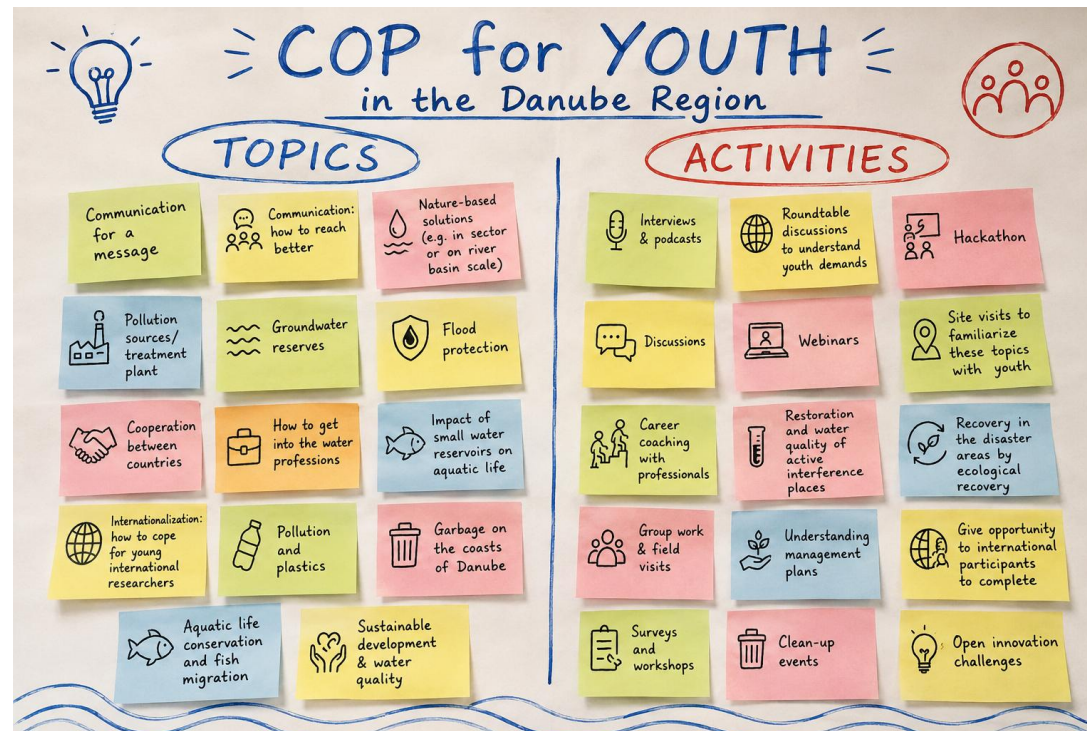
— **Kamila Hodasova**
Danube Rectors' Conference



- **From awareness to empowerment!**
- **From participation to ownership!**
- **Practical experience**
- **Mentorship**
- **Policy exposure**
- **Regional networking**



- Online Hub dedicated to water experts in Danube Region
- Focus on Youth – ensure sustainable, moderated online community!



Thank you!

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