

STRIDE PROJECT NEWSLETTER

ISSUES ADDRESSED

In recent years, Smart Grids have established a position very high on the European Union's agenda. As the development of new technologies have allowed for more concrete and realistic system solutions in regards to smart grids, Smart Grids increasingly represent the entire future development of the electric power system. Smart Grid concepts cover many areas, from the planning, operation, maintenance of the grid on one side and on the other side, from production, transmission, distribution and end-use.

Although prepared from a technological standpoint to implement Smart Grids, the Danube region is still in the early stages of the actual deployment of smart distribution systems. Local policy change to integrate the Smart Grid concept is essential in the further development of Smart Villages, Smart Cities or Smart Regions.



PROJECT GOALS

Through knowledge transfer and the development of planning tools, the STRIDE project, standing for *Improved energy planning through the Integration of Smart Grid concepts in the Danube Region*, aims to provide comprehensive support for local/regional policy makers for the improvement of energy planning. Some of the main objectives in this transnational project include regional analyses, developed strategies, action plans and other tools (i.e. methodologies, guidebook, digital platform) that will enable and accelerate the integration of Smart Grid concepts into local and regional policies across the Danube region.



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PROJECT DETAILS

Timeframe: July 2020-Dec. 2022

Budget: € 1,061,969.77

ERDF: € 834,497.49

IPA : € 68,176.80





STRIDE DIGITAL KICK-OFF EVENT

On the 5th of November 2020, the Interreg Danube Transnational Programme (DTP) approved project, STRIDE, hosted the official public kick-off event of the project. The event was held virtually as a digital conference in light of the COVID-19 pandemic with the purpose to raise awareness of the objectives as well as the activities of the project and provide information to stakeholders about expected results, benefits and their role in the project.

At the kick-off event, Interreg DTP Joint Secretariat (JS) project officer, Ana Leganel, welcomed all the partners and stakeholders present at the event and spoke about the “synergies that can be created between STRIDE project and the other DTP financed projects, especially CSSC LAB”. The JS officer also highlighted the fact that a good cooperation between the projects is expected for the benefit of the energy sector and the Danube region.

After formal introductions, Local Energy Agency Spodnje Podravje (LEASP) presented a comprehensive overview of the project, including information regarding the role of the associated strategic partners in the project as well as the development of the STRIDE digital platform. The floor then opened up to a Q&A session, overseen by the event moderator, Chris Ashe, Director of the European Institute of Innovation – Technology (EIfi-Tech), who takes the lead on project communication for the STRIDE project.

Lead Partner, Tea Potocnik (LEASP), commented on the role of associated strategic partners in the scope of the official kick-off event: “Associated strategic partners play a crucial role in the STRIDE pro-

ject, as they are the ones that will implement or support the implementation of the smart grid strategies and action plans – and in this respect, it is important to include them in the extensive dialog from the beginning of the project.”



Given the importance of the role of associated strategic partners and stakeholders in the successful implementation of the project, the lead partner added, “The kick-off event was a first in the series of events organised within the project STRIDE that required active participation of associated strategic partners.”

Furthermore, Roman Kecec of the lead partner organisation, LEASP, commented on the role of associated strategic partners in the development and roll-out of the STRIDE platform: “At the kick-off we presented the STRIDE platform, as it will be one of the most important project outputs, requiring the most engagement of all project partners as well as associated strategic partners and other stakeholders.”

The Danube Region Smart Energy Platform to be developed within the STRIDE project will create a network of experts, policy makers and other relevant stakeholders to boost the uptake of smart grid strategies across the Danube region. The digital platform will be designed in a way that allows for their application throughout the entire Danube region.

LONG-TERM RESULTS

The STRIDE methodology for regional analysis, good practice guidebook and digital platform will be designed in a way that allows for their application to be rolled out across the Danube region — this shall have impact on building capacity of smart grid infrastructure in the Danube region. Replication of the STRIDE project shall provide much needed scalability across the Danube region and beyond.

ONLINE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Due to COVID-19, the international STRIDE consortium has convened online several times since July 2020 for their Steering Committee Meetings and exchange events. The partnership is excited to meet face-to-face for international partner meetings as soon as it is safe to travel again.



PROJECT IMPACT

The STRIDE project is aligned with the Danube Transnational Programme's *Priority Axis 3 – Better connected and energy responsible Danube region*, and will directly contribute to the programme *Specific objective 3.2 – Improve energy security and energy efficiency*.

The main results of the STRIDE project are developed and integrated Smart Grid strategies with action plans at a local/regional level in collaboration with participating Danube regions.



PROJECT PARTNERS

The international STRIDE consortium is well-balanced with competent partners, including energy agencies, R&D organisations, energy clusters, a university and policy makers:

- Local Energy Agency Spodnje Podravje (Slovenia)
- European Institute for Innovation-Technology (Germany)
- ConPlusUltra (Austria)
- Bay Zoltán Nonprofit Ltd. for Applied Research (Hungary)
- University of Zagreb Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing (Croatia)
- Bulgarian Energy and Mining Forum (Bulgaria)
- EGÚ Brno, a.s. (Czech Republic)
- Centre for Energy, Environment and Resources (Bosnia and Herzegovina)



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