



Европейски парламент Parlamento Europeo Evropský parlament Europa-Parlamentet Europäisches Parlament
Euroopa Parlament Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο European Parliament Parlement européen Parlaimint na hEorpa
Europski parlament Parlamento europeo Eiropas Parlaments Europos Parlamentas Európai Parlament
Parlament Ewropew Europees Parlement Parlament Europejski Parlamento Europeu Parlamentul European
Európsky parlament Evropski parlament Euroopan parlamentti Europaparlamentet

Brussels, 12 March 2018

Honourable President of the European Commission, Mr Jean-Claude Juncker,
Honourable Commissioner for Transport, Ms Violeta Bulc,
Honourable Chair of the Transport and Tourism Committee of the European Parliament, Ms Karima
Delli,

We are writing to you in support of the largest Romanian stakeholders in the inland and maritime navigation sector to express great concern as regard the failure of dredging along the Danube waterways section between Romania and Bulgaria, and the lack of cooperation on behalf of the latter, a situation with severe consequences on the entire European transport system and the member states' economies.

As indicated in several Commission documents, including in the 2011 *White Paper for Transport - Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area*, two of the key objectives in the field of transport are 1) ensuring a competitive infrastructure and 2) removing physical and administrative bottlenecks. In this respect, dredging - the activity of removing the sediments and debris located underwater for the purpose of clearing the water pathway for ships to pass - is an essential activity towards achieving these goals. Its purpose is to maintain or increase the depth of navigation channels for the safe passage of boats and ships.

For these reasons, it is disappointing that the Bulgarian authorities have repeatedly failed to ensure the proper maintenance of the Danube River - despite having taken a commitment to do so on several occasions - indirectly blocking the access to cargo to and from the European market. This translated into losses for the Romanian industry, such as increased costs on transport operations for agriculture products and raw materials, but also a reduction in the tourism activity in the Danube Delta. Not least, the lack of predictability for inland navigation leads to an important part of the volumes that could be transported via the Danube to be redirected towards other European ports, thereby further widening the development gap between East and West.

As representatives of Romania in the European Parliament, we believe this situation is not just worrying, but completely unacceptable. We wish to stress that the lack of dredging is not merely a Romanian or regional issue; it is first and foremost a European one, with important consequences on the Single Market. As one of the biggest rivers in Europe - of which half, 1100km, passes through Romania - the Danube is a gateway into the European heartland and a reference point along several strategic axes. Additionally, in the context of discussing means for achieving a modern and sustainable EU transport system, inland navigation, as one of the cleanest modes available, is crucial for implementing our multimodality goals.

Up until this point, the Romanian authorities have made numerous attempts at solving the issues bilaterally. They have engaged the Bulgarian counterparts on several occasions, including at EU level during the Rotterdam TEN-T Days (2016) and at the meeting of European Transport Ministers in Luxembourg (2012), to name just a few. Ultimately, they have also taken it upon themselves to perform the dredging operation and this on their expense. None of this has lead anywhere and the dialogue is now suspended. We are also yet to receive any concrete resolution to the formal and informal notifications we in the European Parliament have repeatedly sent to the Commission over the last years.



Европейски парламент Parlamento Europeo Evropský parlament Europa-Parlamentet Europäisches Parlament
Euroopa Parlament Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο European Parliament Parlement européen Parlaimint na hEorpa
Europski parlament Parlamento europeo Eiropas Parlaments Europos Parliamentas Európai Parlament
Parlament Ewropew Europees Parlement Parlament Europejski Parlamento Europeu Parlamentul European
Európsky parlament Evropski parlament Euroopan parlamentti Europaparlamentet

Hence, we believe this is no longer a bilateral problem. As such, our intention with this letter is to raise once again the issue at EU level and solicit a prompt intervention of the European institutions in solving this matter of great importance for the transport and tourism sectors. The Romanian authorities and stakeholders are willing and ready to engage in dialogue and to help the Bulgarian part to uphold their duties regarding the dredging of the Danube waterways, and we count on your support.

With highest consideration,

Ana-Claudia Țapardel

Dan Nica

Ioan Mircea Pașcu

Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță

Maria Grapini

Emilian Pavel

Răzvan Popa

Daciana Sârbu

Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu

Damian Drăghici

Gabriela Zoană

Andi Cristea

Victor Boștinaru

Ramona Mănescu

Norica Nicolai