



Press release: Meeting of the Working Group on legal and financial issues of the Danube Commission

On April 15-16, 2026, the Meeting of the Working Group on legal and financial issues (WG JUR-FIN) of the Danube Commission (DC) was held in a hybrid format and led by the Austrian Chair, Mr. Michael Kainz.

The delegations of all riparian countries (Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Ukraine) were present at the Meeting.

The participants expressed solidarity with Ukraine, which continues to suffer damage from the strongly condemned Russian military attacks on the Lower Danube. They welcomed the publication on the DC website of the *Register of Damage in the Lower Danube Region Caused by Russian Military Actions*, which hinders free navigation and violates the very core of the Belgrade Convention's fundamental principles regarding the regime of navigation on the Danube (1948).¹ All affected Danube countries are invited to provide information on any damage caused by the Russian Federation's military attacks to ensure the continuous updating of the Register.

The Danube Commission continues the process of modernization, ensuring the transition to the new Secretariat structure (effective July 1, 2026) and making use of internal human resources through professional reorientation supported by ongoing training. Another important step in the reform of the Danube Commission Secretariat constitutes the first round of discussions on the draft of the new *Unified Regulations on the Rights and Obligations of Functionaries and Employees of the Secretariat of the Danube Commission*. In this respect, it was decided to keep the current Meeting open and to resume on June 10, 2026, with deliberations on detailed proposals from the Member States on the document.

WG JUR-FIN traditionally discussed important legal and financial issues concerning the implementation of the Belgrade Convention and Danube navigation, took note of the progress achieved in cooperation with international partners within the framework of the GRANT 3 Agreement and PLATINA4Action project, agreed to improve the DC's Financial Regulations, examined the 2025 budget implementation, was informed on the staff matters, in particular in the field of organizational development, and was also briefed on the DC's publishing and communication activities.

At the same time, the possibilities for improving cooperation with non-governmental international organisations, reporting procedures, and website content were examined.

The next WG JUR-FIN meeting is scheduled for October 2026.

¹ Danube States adopted the Decision at the 100th Session on 14 December 2023 (DC/SES 100/11) urging the Russian Federation to draw the consequences of its attacks by withdrawing from the Belgrade Convention until 29 February 2024, or, failing that, as of 1 March 2024, the Danube States will no longer consider themselves bound by the obligations under the Belgrade Convention vis-à-vis the Russian Federation. This decision came into force on the 1st March 2024.