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THE PRUT VALLEY – THE AXIS OF THE ROMANIAN- MOLDAVIAN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

ДОЛИНАТА НА ПРУТ – ОСТА НА РУМЪНСКО- МОЛДОВСКОТО КУЛТУРНО РАЗНООБРАЗИЕ

Долината на Прут е заселена още от античността и в нея се развива специфична култура с граници Карпатите и р. Днестър. В миналото тук се развиват множество култури със свои особености и различия.

Днес долината на Прут се поделва между три държави – Украйна, Румъния и Република Молдова.

Басейнът на Прут е оста на историческата област Молдова, въпреки че в момента реката разделя два отделни региона с дълго общо минало, два народа, които говорят един език. Двете Молдови – историческата област в Румъния и Република Молдова, в миналото наричани Бесарабия, включват 2/3 от речния басейн на Прут, плюс други области в Украйна (като Херта). Всички изброени региони имат общо минало и формират едно пространство с общ дух.

Геополитическата важност на басейна на Прутския е свързана с факта, че реката очертава източната граница на Европейския съюз и НАТО.

Регионалната програма „Културно и природно наследство на Югоизточна Европа” започва през 2003 г. в Албания, Босна и Херцеговина, България, Хърватия, Черна гора, Румъния, Сърбия, Македония и Косово. С нейните три компонента (възможност за институционално изграждане, възстановяване на наследството и местно развитие) тя допринася за мира и разбирателството в региона, който преминава през големи политически, правни, икономически и социални промени.

Ако Регионалната програма първоначално се фокусира върху пост-конфликтни ситуации в Югоизточна Европа, то по-късно тя се променя в посока към процесите на развитие. Базирана на транс-национален подход, тя отдава голямо значение на въпроси, свързани с различните култури и религии на Балканите. Голямото предизвикателство е дългосрочното разбирателство между хората и общностите, което е предварително условие за установяването на солидни и устойчиви регионални сътрудничества.

Отделно от основните цели, Регионалната програма предоставя възможност за обмен на експертиза и опит между съседни държави, които се сблъскват със сходни ситуации в полето на защитата, опазването, възстановяването и развитието на културното и природно наследство. Силно ударение е поставено върху мениджмънта на града и

селото, демократичните процеси и процесите на сътрудничество, подобряването на условията и качеството на живот. Затова Регионалната програма може да помогне за развитието на регионални процеси, които ще насърчат появата на нов тип общество, където дългосрочните проекти за развитие чрез диалог и участие на всички, колективният интерес, ще бъдат основа за осигуряване на демократична стабилност и социална сплотеност.

I. GENERAL DATA

The Prut Valley is the axis of a populated territory from ancient times and has targeted a particular culture in the area between the Carpathians and the Dniester River. During history this basin has experienced a cultural diversity reflected by the differences between the countries that are sharing its territory.

The basin occupies 27 450 sq. km. Currently, the Prut basin is shared between three countries: Ukraine – 8 300 sq. km (30% of the total basin area and only 1.37% of the country), Romania with 10 900 sq. km (40% of the basin and 4.57% of the country) and the Republic of Moldova with 8 250 sq. km (30% of the basin and 24.37% of the country).

The total length of the main course is 967 km (251 km in Ukraine, 21 km is the border Ukraine/Romania and 695 km is the border Romania/Moldova).

The Prut basin is the axis of the historical province of Moldova, even though currently the river Prut separates two regions with a long common history, two peoples with the same aspirations who speak the same language. Both Moldova, the historical province of Romania and Moldova, historically called Bessarabia, have 2/3 of the Prut basin, plus other provinces in Ukraine (like Herta), and also a common history with the provinces mentioned earlier, but all these form a space with a common spirituality.

The geopolitical importance of the Prut basin currently is that this is the basin of the river that drains the eastern border of the European Union and NATO, as well.

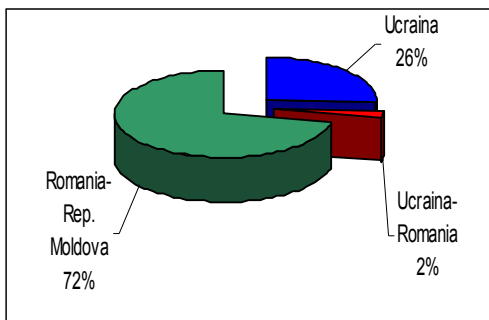


Fig. no. 1. Repartition of the Prut River length between the riverine countries

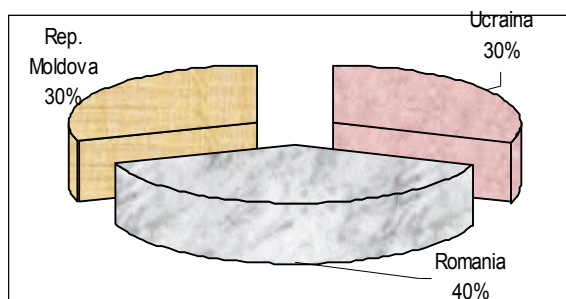


Fig. no. 2. Repartition of the Prut basin surface between the riverine countries



Fig. no. 3. Stanca-Costesti Reservoir
1. Lake
2. Hydroelectric power plants
3. Natural Protected Area
4. Shipping Center

ROMANIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA PARTICIPATE IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES OF THE DIRECTORATE OF CULTURE AND CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE:

Romania:

Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe – Romanian profile;

European Heritage Days in Romania;

Council of Europe Cultural Routes:

– Parks and Gardens;

– The Iter Vitis Route;

National Heritage Policy Romania – European heritage network;

Regional Programme on Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe;

Emerald Network (ecological network);

European Diploma of Protected Areas.

The Republic of Moldova:

Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe – Moldova profile;

European Heritage Days in Moldova;

Council of Europe Cultural Routes:

– The Iter Vitis Route

Regional Programme for the Black Sea and South Caucasus: Kyiv Initiative;

Emerald Network (ecological network).

EXAMPLE FOR TRANS-BORDER COOPERATION BETWEEN ROMANIA AND THE REP. of MOLDOVA

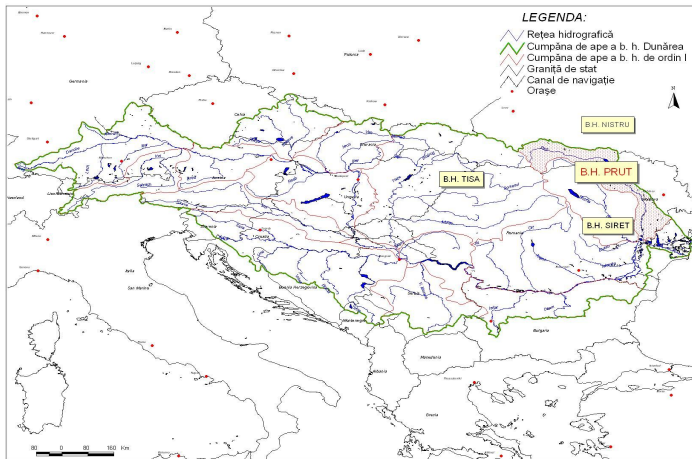


Fig. no 4. The position of the Prut basin in the Danube basin

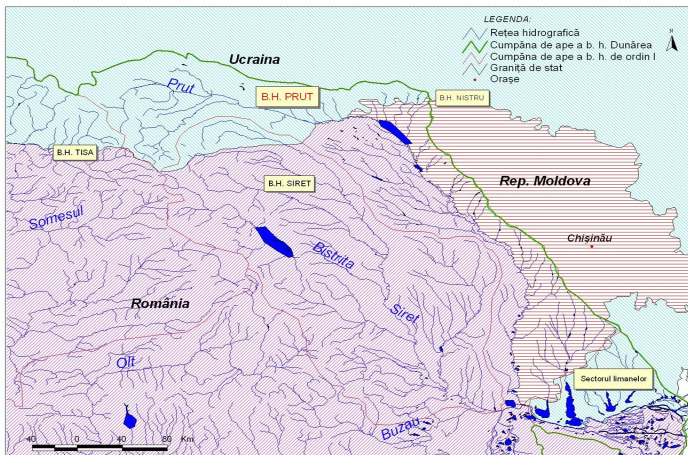


Fig. no 5. The Prut basin position relative to these three countries involved: Romania, the Rep. of Moldova and Ukraine

II. CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

The Culture of Moldova

The Culture of Moldova has been influenced primarily by its Romanian origin, the roots of which reach back to the 2nd century A.D., the period of Roman colonization in Dacia. This is due to the fact that the majority of the population of Moldova, the Moldovans, are of common ethnicity with the Romanians.

During the centuries following the Roman withdrawal in 271 A.D., the population of the region was influenced by the contact with the Byzantine Empire, the neighbouring Slavic and Magyar populations, and later the Ottoman Turks. From the beginning of the 19th century, a strong West European (particularly French) influence came to be evident in Romanian literature and the arts. The resulting *mîlange* has produced a rich cultural tradition. Although foreign contacts were an inevitable consequence of the region's geography, their influence only served to enhance a vital and resilient popular culture.

The regional population had come to identify itself widely as "Moldovan" by the 14th century, but continued to maintain close cultural relations with other Romanian groups. The eastern Moldovans, however, those inhabiting Bessarabia and Transistria, were also influenced by the Slavic culture of the neighbouring Ukraine. During the periods 1812–1917, and 1944–1989, the eastern Moldovans were influenced by the Russian and Soviet administrative control, as well and by ethnic Russian immigration.

Bessarabia was one of the least-developed and least-educated European regions of the Russian Empire. In 1930, its literacy rate was only 40 percent, according to a Romanian census. Although Soviet authorities promoted education (not the least to spread communist ideology), they also did everything they could to break the region's cultural ties with Romania. With many ethnic Romanian intellectuals, that had been forced to flee or had been killed or deported both during and after World War II, Bessarabia's cultural and educational situation worsened.

The Culture of Romania

The culture of Romania is rich and varied. Like the Romanians themselves, it is fundamentally defined as the meeting point of three regions – Central Europe, Eastern Europe and the Balkans, but cannot be fully included in any of them. The Romanian identity formed on a substratum of mixed Roman and quite possibly Dacian elements (although the latter is controversial), with many other influences. During late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the major influences came from the Slavic peoples who migrated and settled in nearby Bulgaria, Serbia, Ukraine and eventually Poland and Russia; from the medieval Greeks and the Byzantine Empire; from a long domination by the Ottoman Empire; from the Hungarians; and from the Germans living in Transylvania. Modern Romanian culture emerged and developed over roughly the last 250 years under a strong influence from the Western culture, particularly French and German culture.

The Romanian language is a Romance language. Moreover, some degree of cultural descent from Ancient Rome is clear from the customs and affinities with the other Romance nations.

The Romanian (Vlach) people that appear in records from the 10th century on were already Christian, and Christianity seems to have been adopted here early on, under Latin influence. However, medieval Romanians will gradually adopt Eastern Orthodoxy, under the influence of Constantinople (but through Slavic influence). Some customs, names and a substratum of words in the Romanian language are considered to be Dacian influence, although some are also disputed, as is the theory of the Daco-Romanian continuity which plays a significant role in Romanian national identity.

Direction for the Republic of Moldova (to East)

Kyiv Initiative Regional Programme: Black Sea and South Caucasus

The Kyiv Initiative brings together five countries at the south-eastern edge of Europe – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Their aim is to work together in an era of post-Soviet transition, to create democratic and engaged societies and rebuild trust and confidence across the region.

The programme focuses on five themes that both unite and characterise the participating countries: heritage management, film, the shaping of cultural policy, literature, wine culture and tourism exchange. Through a series of projects designed to encourage cross-border collaboration, the Kyiv Initiative enables the sharing of expertise and the development of competence and skills in both towns and the countryside.

Key principles:

The Kyiv Initiative Regional Programme relies on the following principles:

- multilateral co-operation and transversal approach of sustainable development;
- reinforcement of national policies, improvement of institutional capacity and management tools, and development of partnerships;
- building up of a network of national coordinators and local stakeholders ensuring effective decision-making and management process;
- rolling framework of action ensuring the broadening of the scale from bilateral towards multilateral activities.

Participants and beneficiaries:

Ministries of Culture, Foreign Affairs, Urban Development, Economic Development and Commerce, Environment, Tourism, Youth and Education, local and municipal authorities, professionals, civil society, private sector, cultural groups, artists and citizens.

Main components:

A. Capacity building, to ensure the sustainability of public policies and management in the field of culture and heritage.

B. Pilot projects on transversal themes, allowing demonstration and testing of experiences to be further implemented on a larger scale.

C. Public awareness activities aimed at gaining increased involvement of different stakeholders.

III. ACTUAL DIRECTIONS

Direction for Romania (to West)

Regional Programme on Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe (RPSEE)

This Regional Programme was launched in 2003 in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and Kosovo. With its three components (institutional capacity building, heritage rehabilitation and local development), it contributes to peace and reconciliation in a region undergoing complex political, legal, economic and social transition.

Supported by the European Commission in several of the projects, the Regional Programme emphasizes the notion of “local development” as a concept covering the following aspects:

- an acknowledgement of the diversity of the territories as a source of vitality and value;
- setting up and implementation of a sustainable development;
- a connection between countries and the opening up of the region to the rest of Europe;
- an integrated approach to conservation, planning and development issues.

If the Regional Programme originally focused mainly on post-conflict challenges in South-East Europe, it has shifted increasingly towards development processes. Based on a trans-national approach, it attaches particular importance to issues related to the multiple cultures and religions of the Balkans. The ultimate challenge is the long-term reconciliation between individuals and communities, a necessary precondition for setting up solid and sustainable regional cooperation.

Apart from its general objectives, the Regional Programme provides a global exchange of expertise and experience between neighbouring countries facing similar situations in the fields of protection, conservation, rehabilitation and enhancement of cultural and natural heritage. Strong emphasis is placed on the urban and rural management, democratic and participatory processes, and the improvement of living conditions and quality of life. The Regional Programme can thus help to establish a new set of regional processes to encourage the emergence of a new kind of society where long-term development projects through dialogue and the participation of all, in the collective interest, is crucial for ensuring democratic stability and social cohesion.

WEBSOURCES

<http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/Countries/>

<http://www.chwb.org/>

<http://www.my-world-guide.com/country/>