

Minutes

29th Steering Group Meeting

Priority Area 9 'People and Skills' (PA9)

Date: 6-7 November 2025

Venue: Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Hotel Holiday, Zmaja od Bosne 4, 71000 Sarajevo)

Chairs:

Jörg Mirtl, *Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, Austria*

Jürgen Schick, *Federal Ministry of Education, Austria*

Ludmila Pavlov, *Ministry of Education and Research, Republic of Moldova*

Olha Dubovyk, *Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity, Ukraine*

Day 1 – 6 November 2025

Welcome and Introduction

Jürgen Schick, Jörg Mirtl, and Olha Dubovyk opened the Steering Group meeting and welcomed members and participants of the PA9 Steering Group. Appreciation was expressed to the Bosnian and Herzegovinian EUSDR Presidency for the support provided by hosting the 29th PA9 Steering Group meeting in the framework of the 14th EUSDR Annual Forum.

Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted unanimously. It is available via this [link](#).

State of Play EUSDR: News, Initiatives, and Events

Outlook on the Bulgarian EUSDR Presidency (Vyara Mincheva)

The Bulgarian National EUSDR Coordinator, Vyara Mincheva, provided an outlook on the Bulgarian EUSDR Presidency in 2026. The main political focus will include reducing regional disparities, acknowledging the role of cities as drivers so that no region is left behind. Advancing social cohesion, skills and cultural connectivity will be relevant dimensions in this regard. The thematic priorities will be connectivity for growth, embedding of MRS goals post-27, support to candidate countries, the Danube-Black Sea link, and the strengthening of the EUSDR governance. Planned activities in 2026 include an online meeting in January to present the PCY programme, a meeting of Priority Area Coordinators at the end of February, a meeting of National Coordinators and Priority Area Coordinators in October, and the 15th EUSDR Annual Forum in November.

Information on the 3rd Call of the Interreg Danube Region Programme (Stephen Halligan)

Stephen Halligan provided an update on the 3rd Call of the Interreg Danube Region Programme (DRP), a targeted call on selected thematic focuses that is open until 15 December 2025. Under Specific Objective 3.1 (accessible, inclusive and effective labour markets), capacity building for public employment services will be funded (€3 million available in total for 1-2 projects). This

includes information and data systems and training to support public employment services in adapting to current changes, such as the green and digital transition, demographic change, and migration. Under Specific Objective 3.2 (accessible and inclusive quality services in education, training and lifelong learning), funding will be provided to support Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) (€3 million available in total for 1-2 projects). This includes a strategic dimension of supporting CoVEs (including by building on PA9's Danube Region Platform on CoVEs) and a more operational approach on developing the excellence potential of existing or new CoVEs. Applicants are supported through the [DRP website](#), webinars, a matchmaking system, and consultations offered by the DRP, its national contact points, and Priority Area Coordinators.

Update from the Danube Strategy Point (Cristina Cuc)

Cristina Cuc reported on key activities of the Danube Strategy Point (DSP) over the last months, including facilitating the ongoing discussions on EUSDR governance, adjusting the timelines for monitoring and evaluation, and providing training sessions for EUSDR core stakeholders. With regard to communication activities, the EUSDR website was relaunched, the updated list of Danube Strategy Flagships was published, and video campaigns on the flagships will be prepared. To promote youth engagement, support was provided to the Danube Youth Council (DYC) and the Danube Youth Organisations Network (DYON).

Cristina Cuc's presentation is available via this [link](#).

The Danube Region Monitor 'People & Skills': Main Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

Maryna Tverdostup – The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies – wiiw

Maryna Tverdostup presented an overview of the main conclusions and policy recommendations of the 2025 update of the [Danube Region Monitor 'People & Skills'](#). She highlighted that employment and labour market participation have improved across the Danube Region, although unemployment, youth transitions, and gender gaps remain challenges. Education outcomes are rising, yet digital divides, early school leaving, weak school-to-work transitions, and persistent inequalities continue to hinder progress. There is a need for more stable and long-term labour market spending targeting vulnerable people and sufficient education funding to address needs, such as teacher shortages. Inclusion gaps remain pronounced, with persistent poverty and inequality, gender pay and participation gaps, socio-economic learning gaps, and low adult learning participation among vulnerable groups. This monitor's thematic focus on basic skills and skills shortages showed declining basic competences and strong socio-economic, territorial, and gender disparities. Policy recommendations include activating the workforce, modernising learning systems, investments in education and labour market systems, promoting inclusion, empowering lifelong learning and labour market participation, and strengthening regional cooperation.

Maryna Tverdostup's presentation is available via this [link](#).

Updates on Education, Labour Market and Social Policies in Each Country

Tour de table

UA – Olha Dubovyk (Labour Market): Ukraine continues aligning its national legislation with EU standards, with the European Commission confirming good progress and the government aiming to complete accession negotiations by 2028. A major reform concerns implementing the EU Directive on work-life balance, including expanded childcare support and childcare facilities, higher birth-related allowances, and new family-oriented programmes. Digitalisation efforts focus on integrating all social sector registers into a unified information system to improve service accessibility. Ongoing labour market reforms have to address the high share of Ukrainian citizens working abroad and focus on modernising labour legislation, updating the training system to better match labour market needs, digitalising employment services, and strengthening lifelong learning.

UA – Olha Dubovyk (on behalf of Education): In response to the ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, more than €230 million have been invested in safe school infrastructure, giving over 100,000 children the opportunity to return to in-person learning. The new law on vocational education strengthens the role of employers in the governance of vocational education institutions, introduces vocational education standards, empowers regional authorities to forecast labour market needs, and supports the integration into the European Higher Education Area.

RS - Boško Latković (Labour Market): The drafting of the Law on Work Practice has been completed. According to the provisions of the law, work practice refers to all activities aimed at acquiring practical experience and appropriate skills for work in a particular occupation and are aimed at young people up to 30 years of age in order to improve their employability and to create opportunities for employment. Also, the European Commission has informed the Republic of Serbia that they approved their first Report of the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan. They reacted particularly positively to the number of unemployed youth who went through the programme and got employment or who were offered the possibility to continue education or training.

SK – Lucia Auxtová (Education): Slovakia is implementing a major education reform aligned with OECD and EU recommendations on equity, governance, skills, and digitalisation. The Slovak parliament adopted seven new laws covering early education, VET, higher education, the attractiveness of the teaching profession, and strengthened mental-health provisions. A legal entitlement to early childhood education will be introduced for four-year-olds (2027) and will be expanded to three-year-olds (2028) and two-year-olds as a long-term goal (2033). Secondary education will introduce a mandatory two-level school leaving maths exam in 2027, while VET is developing Centres of Excellence to set quality standards and strengthen links with universities and the labour market. A national strategy for the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into the education system is being prepared, with AI education introduced in schools from 2026 and plans to develop an AI competence framework for teachers.

SK – Eva Masárová (Labour Market): The most pressing challenge in the labour market is the persistent mismatch between the skills of jobseekers and the needs of employers. Although the registered unemployment rate stands at around 6%, employers continue to report a high number

of job vacancies, indicating a shortage of sufficiently skilled workers. This imbalance has also contributed to a rapid increase in the number of foreign workers entering the labour market. A particular concern is the large group of individuals who are not registered. Through ESF+ programmes, efforts are being made to reach out to these individuals and support their reintegration into the labour market. A revised employment law entered into force in September. One of its key principles is 'work instead of benefits', targeting people in material need. While these individuals traditionally fell under the responsibility of the social affairs sector, they have now also become an official target group for the Ministry of Labour. The aim is to support them in re-entering the labour market through ESF+ measures. As these initiatives have only recently begun, more detailed results could be shared at a future meeting.

BA - Adnan Jasika (Labour Market): The draft Implementation Plan on the Youth Guarantee has been finished and currently the Ministry of Civil Affairs is awaiting feedback from the European Commission. The piloting phase of the Youth Guarantee is planned for 2026. Regarding ESF+ and related initiatives like EaSI, it became evident that many stakeholders face difficulties in preparing project applications. In response to this challenge, the ministry applied for a RESPA project and drafted a concise guidance document titled *How to Write Project Applications*. A total of 500 hard copies will be printed, and eight workshops with expert trainers will be organized to support potential project promoters. It was also highlighted that Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing high unemployment on the one hand, while on the other hand there is a shortage of labour. As a consequence, the quota of work permits for workers from third countries has been increased. The projected quota of work permits for the employment of foreigners in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2026 amounts to 7,427 permits.

HR – Dunja Šare (on behalf of Education): Since this school year, new modular vocational curricula have been introduced in almost all VET schools in Croatia, except in the health sector where they will start in autumn 2026. Based on occupational, vocational and qualification standards, the modular system offers greater flexibility and allows schools to plan modules according to their needs. It also enables work-based learning to be integrated into modular education or organised separately. This reform marks a significant shift in how VET schools operate in Croatia.

HR – Filip Miličević (Labour Market): The findings of the Danube Region Monitor are fully applicable to the labour market context in Croatia, emphasising that significant progress has been made over the past ten years. During this period, the employment rate increased notably from 57% to 75%, while the unemployment rate declined from 10% to 5.5%. Despite this progress, several challenges remain. He highlighted persistently high youth unemployment, limited labour market participation among persons with disabilities, and the continued presence of a gender gap. He stressed the importance of the development of long-term care policies that support work-life balance. Overall, the general trend is positive, and Croatia is steadily catching up to EU labour market levels.

CZ – Ondřej Krýsl (Labour Market): Last month, Czechia held parliamentary elections and, based on their results, the transfer of power to the previous opposition parties is underway. The second half of this year has therefore been rather limited in terms of policy initiatives. Statistical data provided illustrates the development of the labour market in Czechia. Based on the data published by the European Commission in the report 'Employment and Social Developments in Europe' (2025), it can

be seen that Czechia is once again the country with the lowest unemployment rate (2.6%) and the lowest share of the population at risk of poverty and social exclusion (AROPE rate) (11.3%) in the EU. Among other reasons due to the demand on the labour market, Czechia is also doing well in the area of employing older people. At the same time, however, it is among the member states with the highest level of dependence on export (including export to non-EU countries, which is a significant risk in the current turbulent times).

HU – Petra Tükör-Kovács (Labour Market): Hungary's labour market remains stable, with employment at a historic high (81% of the population aged 20-64) and unemployment low at 4.4%. The main challenge is a growing labour shortage across the economy, with increased demand for labour and around 70,000 job vacancies (40,000 in the market segment, with the industrial sector being affected the most). To support economic growth, priorities include expanding training and retraining programmes to respond to new technologies and the green and digital transitions, improving working conditions and wage competitiveness, and strengthening SMEs. Measures under the Youth Guarantee Plus programme aim to support young people's entry into the labour market. A national pilot training initiative to activate the labour reserve (around 300,000 persons) has involved nearly 10,000 participants, with over a quarter completing training and securing employment.

AT – Jürgen Schick (Education): Several findings of the Danube Region Monitor resonate with challenges and initiatives in Austria. Current education priorities focus on improving early childhood education and care (ECEC), responding to demographic challenges and migration, ensuring equal educational opportunities, and supporting psychosocial health. In ECEC, Austria aims to increase participation rates, in particular regarding under three-year-olds. Measures include more and better training pathways for pedagogues and retaining staff. Regarding basic skills, Austria is performing better than the EU average in the PISA study, but results have deteriorated over time and challenges persist. Outcomes continue to be strongly influenced by students' socio-economic and migration background, in particular, when the first language spoken at home is not German. Support for German language learning in schools has been significantly increased. In the light of rising mental health challenges, Austria will double school psychologists and expand psychosocial services. When it comes to improving equal opportunities, approximately 400 schools facing significant socio-economic challenges will be supported with additional resources under the 'Chancenbonus' programme.

AT – Jörg Mirtl & Barbara Willsberger (Labour Market):

Austria is experiencing its third consecutive year of economic recession or stagnation, with only a slight improvement forecasted for 2026. This weak economic environment is strongly reflected in the labour market: Unemployment and PES training participation have increased noticeably, reaching 388,118 people in October 2025. The unemployment rate now stands at 7.2%. Groups most affected include people with low education levels, women, foreign nationals, and long-term unemployed individuals.

The care sector continues to act as a major employment engine, with demand for care workers remaining high. A key policy measure is the recognition of care work as heavy work, granting care

staff access to the heavy labour pension starting January 2026. In tourism, the government is establishing a new Tourism Employment Fund with an annual budget of €6.5 million to strengthen training, promote year-round employment, and reduce seasonal dependency. At the same time, seasonal quota regulations were revised to stabilise personnel planning, including raising the quota to 5,500 seasonal jobs and adding a separate Western Balkans quota of 2,500 positions. Further labour market measures include the introduction of an adapted further training period model from January 2026 aimed at supporting employees pursuing higher qualifications.

MD – Ludmila Pavlov (Education; contribution received in writing): Major reforms across early childhood, general, and secondary education included aligning early education with EU standards, upgrading kindergartens, approving a multilingual education framework, strengthening school safety, and promoting parenting and adolescent well-being initiatives. Teacher development continued through extensive training and increased recruitment, and progress was made on competency-based curriculum reform. School infrastructure modernisation and digital transformation advanced through the Model Schools Programme, FabLabs, EduLife spaces, the Digital Competence Framework, digital literacy assessments, and new information systems under development. Inclusive education was supported through assistive technologies for children with disabilities, education resource centres, and mobile psycho-pedagogical teams. Students received new benefits such as free meals, financial support, and new textbooks. Higher education progressed with new digital systems, updated regulations, and infrastructure upgrades, while lifelong learning expanded through micro-qualification guidelines and new programmes.

RO – Carmen Clapan (Education; contribution received in writing): Romania is advancing several reforms in pre-university education, including a new curriculum framework for secondary education, continued assessment/grading reform, improved teacher status, a reorganisation of architecture, a focus on children with special educational needs, and monitoring. In vocational education and training (VET), a new legal package supports a complete dual VET pathway from initial VET to higher education. Other efforts include alignment of VET with labour market needs, strengthened quality assurance, and support measures for students with special educational needs, from disadvantaged areas or vulnerable contexts, and from Roma communities. In accordance with recent tertiary education legislation, Romanian universities now define their academic mission as one of three types: Education; Education and Research; or Education and Advanced Research – each assessed through national or international criteria.

Day 2 – 7 November 2025

General Update from the EU Commission (Elisa Cocco, DG REGIO)

Elisa Cocco reported on recent developments in EU regional and urban policy, highlighting key outcomes from the 2025 Strategy Days: stronger synergies and mutual learning between macro-regional strategies, deeper political dialogue, better coordination on shared priorities, and improved use of funding opportunities. She also outlined the 2026 Commission Work Programme, 'Europe's Independence Moment', which focuses on strengthening Europe's strategic independence in defence and energy and boosting competitiveness through a more results-oriented EU budget.

Finally, she stressed the continued importance of cohesion policy for competitiveness, growth, and regional resilience.

Elisa Cocco's presentation is available via this [link](#).

State of Play PA9: News, Initiatives, and Events

13th Meeting of the ESF Network in the Danube Region, 25-26 September 2025, Bratislava, SK **Barbara Willsberger (L&R Social Research, PAC9 team, Austria)**

The 13th Meeting of the ESF Network in the Danube Region took place on 25-26 September 2025 in Bratislava and was hosted by the Slovakian Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. It focused on the Youth Guarantee, with project examples like One-Stop-Shops for Young People in Slovakia and the ALMA Pilot Project in Czechia. Other focus areas were simplified cost options and the social dimension of the European Commission's Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034. Since 2025, candidate countries have also been participating in the network with the aim of supporting the accession process. The next meeting will take place online in spring 2026. More information is available via this [link](#).

4th Meeting of the Danube Region Platform on Centres of Vocational Excellence, 30 September 2025, online

Sarah Fellner (OeAD, PAC9 team, Austria)

The Danube Region Platform on Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) was set up in 2021 in cooperation with the European Training Foundation (ETF). It aims to promote policy dialogue on VET excellence and CoVEs and to facilitate cooperation between VET institutions. The 1st Platform Meeting assembled experts from the Danube Region countries, the European Commission, ETF and PA9. The 2nd Platform Meeting focused on social inclusion and going green. The 3rd Platform Meeting covered the greening of VET in the energy and construction sector. On 30 September, the 4th Platform Meeting was held online on 'VET Excellence for an Inclusive, Green, and Digital Danube Region'. The meeting's goal was to promote cooperation in the Danube Region through good practice examples and information on funding opportunities under the Interreg Danube Region Programme. The meeting was attended by 68 participants from 13 countries.

More information is available via this [link](#).

Thematic Conference 'Roma Empowerment', 16-17 October 2025, Vienna, AT

Jörg Mirtl (Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, PAC9, Austria)

The 1st International Conference of the Danube Labour Market Policy Platform for Roma Inclusion 'Roma Empowerment for the Common Labour Market – 20 Years of Successful Project Implementation in the Danube Region' took place on 16-17 October 2025 in Vienna. The conference was hosted by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection of Austria. H.E. Korinna Schumann, Federal Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection of Austria and H.E. Petre-Florin Manole, Minister of Labour, Family, Youth and Social Solidarity of Romania – himself a Rom – delivered opening addresses. The conference included expertise from the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights and demonstrated good practice

examples from Danube Region countries. It brought together more than 100 participants. A follow-up is planned for 2026.

More information is available via this [link](#).

PA9 Event during the 14th EUSDR Annual Forum ‘Closing the Skills Gap: Green and Digital Skills for a Competitive Europe’, 6 November 2025, Sarajevo, BA

Sarah Fellner (OeAD, PAC9 team, Austria)

The event was held the previous day in Sarajevo, as part of the 14th EUSDR Annual Forum. It benefitted from expertise from a diverse group of stakeholders from research, an international organisation, an EU agency, a national agency, and two projects.

More information is available via this [link](#).

The Danube Region Monitor ‘People & Skills’, outlook (online database, 2028 update)

Barbara Willsberger (L&R Social Research, PAC9 team, Austria)

The Danube Region Monitor 2025 report and its thematic chapter ‘Basic Skills and Skills Shortages’ were published on the PA9 website. The accompanying online database is also being updated and the PA9 Steering Group members will get a link to test the new online database. Another update will take place in 2028.

The updated versions of the report, its thematic chapter, and the online database are available via this [link](#).

Outlook 2025 and 2026

Jörg Mirtl (Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, PAC9, Austria)

Reference was made to an upcoming meeting of the social coordinators of the four macro-regional strategies in Brussels in November 2025 and a presentation of the ESF Network at the Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region.

Barbara Willsberger (L&R Social Research, PAC9 team, Austria)

PA9 is currently in the planning and coordination phase. Two steering group meetings – the first most likely organised by the Ukrainian team online – and a stakeholder conference will take place in 2026. In addition, thematic workshops will be held – suggestions for topics are welcome. Possible topics include a Roma focus, support of candidate countries on labour market topics, and social innovation. There will be two ESF Network meetings, one online and one on site.

Jürgen Schick (Federal Ministry of Education, PAC9, Austria)

Seminars organised by the Austrian National Agency for Erasmus+ to promote school cooperation through eTwinning will continue in 2026 but will now be open to all countries participating in eTwinning. Several Danube Region countries will join a seminar in March on German as a second/foreign language and another in November on initial VET.

Due to internal restructuring and budgetary adjustments in the context of the current Austrian austerity measures, OeAD will no longer be part of the PA9 coordination team as of 2026 and

activities previously led by OeAD will have to be reorganised. Appreciation was expressed to OeAD for the longstanding and professional contribution to PA9. The Federal Ministry of Education remains committed to the EUSDR and will continue its role as Priority Area Coordinator with a renewed focus on strategic cooperation, ministerial dialogue, and active participation in key events and formats.

Adoption of the PA9 Work Programme (SG Decision)

The PA9 Work Programme was adopted by the PA9 Steering Group. It is available on the PA9 website via this [link](#).

Updates from Partners and the Danube Youth Council

Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (Sandra Brkanović)

Sandra Brkanović, the newly appointed Director of the Education Reform Initiative of Southeastern Europe (ERI SEE) Secretariat as of 1 November 2025, presented the results of three major projects that ERI SEE had completed this year (EQET SEE, RESET and the RECONOMY Programme). She announced the next steps: further development of occupational and qualification standards and curricula, with a focus on agriculture and tourism/hospitality; the development of curricula for tourism and hospitality technicians in collaboration with OeAD; and the planning of new projects.

Sandra Brkanović's presentation is available via this [link](#).

European Training Foundation (Susanne Nielsen)

Susanne Nielsen presented the European Training Foundation (ETF), an EU agency supporting human capital development and systemic reform in candidate and neighbouring countries. As an extended arm of the European Commission, ETF monitors progress on key indicators (e.g. the Herning Declaration) and provides evidence-based policy advice through surveys and studies in sectors such as construction, renewable energy, and agriculture. She also highlighted several key initiatives and networks in the Danube Region, including CoVEs (Centres of Vocational Excellence), GRETA (Greening Responses to Excellence through Thematic Actions), the Agri-Food Innovation Network, GLAD (Governance, Learning, Action, Dialogue), ESCO (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) and the Youth Guarantee.

Susanne Nielsen's presentation is available via this [link](#).

Danube Youth Council (Caroline Lercher Tauber)

Caroline Lercher Tauber of the Danube Youth Council (DYC) shared information about DYC activities in the field of PA9. She presented their ongoing work on a recommendation paper for PA9 aimed at easing the transition from education to employment and thereby contributing to reducing youth unemployment and social exclusion. Based on their analysis of barriers and best practices, they have identified three key recommendations: promoting region-wide dual education and work-based learning; investing in educational equity as a strategy to strengthen employment; and institutionalising career guidance and employer engagement. Their next steps are a joint meeting of the new DYC members (started November 2025) with PA9 and DSP, followed by writing and finalising the paper in May.

The DYC's presentation is available via this [link](#).

Updates from Projects

Franz Riemelmoser, Carinthia University of Applied Sciences, Interreg Danube Region Programme project 'TransAC'

Franz Riemelmoser presented the 'TransAC' project, which aims to create a transnational training academy for additive manufacturing to support young and vulnerable people and boost competitiveness and resilience in the Danube Region. By combining physical and digital labs, modular training, and cross-border cooperation, the initiative links Industry 4.0 with education and regional development, strengthens the regional workforce, supports SMEs, and retains talent in rural and crisis regions. He emphasised the importance of sustainability through strong partner commitment, engagement of local stakeholders, and the further use of project outputs, including new curricula. The approach is designed to be scalable, starting with 14 partners across seven regions, and foresees an evolution from a Training Academy toward a Centre of Vocational Excellence, supported by steps such as the integration of AI through 'TransAC AI' and the establishment of a Teacher Academy.

Franz Riemelmoser's presentation is available via this [link](#).

Jani Kozina, Anton Melik Geographical Institute, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU), Interreg Danube Region Programme project 'WIN'

Jani Kozina presented the Interreg-funded WIN project, 'No Woman Left Behind – No Place Left Behind', which seeks to improve women's position in the labour markets of peripheral industrial regions by addressing structural barriers through multi-level solutions. The project brings together 10 partners from seven pilot regions. The project's three specific objectives (SOs) include building a strong evidence base on women's needs and institutional challenges (SO1), implementing social innovations that translate research into practice (SO2), and strengthening institutional capacity through awareness-raising tools such as the WIN sociopoly game and the development of action plans (SO3). These efforts culminate in policy recommendations for the EUSDR aimed at fostering gender-inclusive labour markets and supporting sustainable regional development.

Jani Kozina's presentation is available via this [link](#).

Any Other Business, Conclusion, and Next Steps

The long-standing SG member Drahuša Kalmanová from Slovakia announced her upcoming retirement, for which the PA9 coordination team wished her all the best. As OeAD will no longer be part of the PA9 coordination team as of 2026, Sarah Fellner took the opportunity to thank the colleagues from the coordination team, the Steering Group members, and partners for the excellent cooperation. Ludmila Pavlov, Olha Dubovyk, Jörg Mirtl, and Jürgen Schick delivered concluding remarks and closed the 29th PA9 Steering Group Meeting.

Participants of the 29th PA9 SG Meeting

ON SITE (27):

First Name	Last Name	Institution	Country
Manuel	Aigner	Austrian Embassy Sarajevo, Office of the Social Attaché	Austria
Sarah	Fellner	OeAD – Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation	Austria
Morgijana	Karic Nezirovic	Austrian Embassy Sarajevo, Office of the Social Attaché	Austria
Jörg	Mirtl	Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection	Austria
Jürgen	Schick	Federal Ministry of Education	Austria
Barbara	Willsberger	L&R Social Research	Austria
Adnan	Jasika	Ministry of Civil Affairs	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Vyara	Mincheva	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works	Bulgaria (NC)
Darinka	Parvanova-Lazarova	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works	Bulgaria (NC team)
Filip	Miličević	Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy	Croatia
Dunja	Šare	Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy	Croatia
Ondřej	Krýsl	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Czechia
Stephen	Halligan	Danube Region Programme (DRP)	DRP
Cristina	Cuc	Danube Strategy Point (DSP)	DSP
Caroline	Lercher Tauber	Danube Youth Council (DYC)	DYC
Sandra	Brkanović	Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE)	ERI SEE
Susanne M.	Nielsen	European Training Foundation (ETF)	ETF
Petra	Tükör-Kovács	Ministry of National Economy	Hungary
Boško	Latković	Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	Serbia
Lucia	Auxtová	Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth	Slovakia
Martin	Drahoš	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	Slovakia
Drahuša	Kalmanová	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	Slovakia
Eva	Masárová	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	Slovakia
Franz	Riemelmoser	Carinthia University of Applied Sciences (Interreg TransAC project)	Trans AC
Olha	Dubovyk	Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity	Ukraine
Maryna	Tverdostup	The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies – wiiw	wiiw
Jani	Kozina	Anton Melik Geographical Institute, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU) (Interreg WIN project)	WIN

ONLINE (7):

First Name	Last Name	Institution	Country
Elisa	Cocco	European Commission (EC), DG REGIO	EC
Ludmila	Pavlov	Ministry of Education and Research	Republic of Moldova
Carmen	Clapan	Ministry of Education and Research	Romania
Carmen	Musat	National Center for TVET Development	Romania
Viktoriia	Karbysheva	Ministry of Education and Science	Ukraine
Tetiana	Movchan	Ministry of Education and Science	Ukraine
Mykhailo	Omelchenko	Ukrainian Institute for International Politics (UIIP)	Ukraine