

# 12<sup>th</sup> International Stakeholder Conference of Priority Area 9 “People and Skills” of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region

## Fair, Green and Digital Transition in Education and Labour Market Policies in the Danube Region

23 May 2024  
Vienna, Austria

**Date:** Thursday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024, 9:00-17:00 CET

**Venue:** Flemings Hotel Wien-Stadthalle, Vienna, Austria

[Neubaugürtel 26-28, 1070 Vienna, Austria](#)

## CONCEPT

International conference on challenges and opportunities of a fair, green and digital transition on the labour market and in the field of education in the Danube Region. The conference will be held on site in English and no interpretation will be provided. Participants are invited to bring along questions, ideas, and initiatives. The conference is hosted by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research of the Republic of Austria in the framework of the 2024 Austrian Presidency of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region.

### **Advancing Fair, Green, and Digital Transition in the Danube Region: Prioritizing People and Skills**

The labour market and education systems in the Danube Region are undergoing profound transformations, shaped by four key factors on which the conference is going to focus:

- The **Green Transition** is fundamentally reshaping both education systems and the labour market. Developing green skills is essential for filling Green Jobs, which are pivotal for fostering a climate-neutral and sustainable Danube Region.
- **Digital technologies**, particularly artificial intelligence, are revolutionizing how we work and learn. Adapting to ongoing digitalisation demands acquiring new skills to navigate its challenges and seize its opportunities effectively.
- In this dynamic landscape, ensuring **inclusivity** is paramount. Given the significant economic and social disparities in the Danube Region, the success of its digital and green transitions hinges on their **fairness**. Priority should be given to integrating vulnerable groups in the Danube Region.
- Moreover, it is imperative to involve the voices of the **youth** in shaping the future of a fair, green, and digital Danube Region.

Within the framework of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), Priority Area 9 "People and Skills" serves as a pivotal platform focusing on labour market dynamics and education policies. This emphasis provides a suitable foundation for addressing the aforementioned challenges and formulating initiatives, projects, and policies accordingly. Furthermore, it effectively contextualizes pan-European strategies and initiatives such as the European Green Deal, the European Pillar of Social Rights, and the European Skills Agenda within a regional framework. The EUSDR plays a crucial role in creating a level playing field for both European Union Member States and candidate countries, thereby fostering a more inclusive and cohesive Europe. Given the geopolitical tensions at the edges of the Danube Region, notably Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, concerted efforts in labour and education policies are imperative. Notably, Priority Area 9 "People and Skills" is jointly coordinated by Austria, Ukraine, and the Republic of Moldova, underscoring its innovative nature as a platform for cooperation with emerging candidate countries.

## DRAFT PROGRAMME

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**Thursday, 23 May 2024**

Moderator: *Nina Kraft*

- 09.00**            **Setting up and Checking in**
- 09.30**            **Official Opening of the Conference**
- Martin Kocher, Federal Minister of Labour and Economy, Austria
  - Doris Wagner, Director General for Education and VET, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria
  - Alexei Buzu, Minister of Labour and Social Protection, Republic of Moldova
  - Dmytro Zavgorodnii, Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Ukraine
- 10.15**            **Keynote Speeches**
- *Navigating the Digital Skills Divide: Labour Market and Education Transition in the Danube Region*  
Maryna Tverdostup, The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (wiiw)
  - *Green Skills – Transdisciplinary Education for Transformative Action*  
Marie-Sophie Attems, Regional Centre of Expertise on Sustainable Development (RCE), Vienna University of Economics and Business
- 11.15**            **Coffee break**
- 11.45**            **Panel Discussion**
- Challenges and Opportunities of the Green, Digital and Fair Transition in the Danube Region and beyond*
- Egbert Holthuis, Deputy Director – Jobs and Skills and Head of Unit – Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission
  - Gyula Cserey, Head of Unit, Strategy & Investments, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission
  - Tina Šarić, Director, Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE)
  - Ivana Šučur, Acting Director General of the Directorate-General for European Integration and International Cooperation, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Montenegro
  - Doris Wagner, Director General for Education and VET, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria

**12.45**            **Lunch break**

**14.15**            **Introduction to the Working Groups**

**14.30**            **Parallel Working Groups**

**Working Group 1 – Green Skills**

*Moderator: Tina Šarić*

Thematic Inputs:

- *Green Transition*  
Gordon Purvis, European Training Foundation (ETF)
- *Green Skills in the Austrian VET System*  
Wolfgang Pachatz, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria

Project Presentations:

- *Öko-Booster Project*  
Christian Nowak, BFI Vienna
- *EINfälle statt Abfälle*  
Kristijan Rehsmann, 4everyoung

**Working Group 2 – Digital Skills**

*Moderator: Nadija Afanasieva*

Thematic Input:

- *Digitalisation of the Labour Market*  
Anna Nowshad, Deloitte

Project Presentations:

- *DigiMe – Digital and Media Competences for Pupils and Teachers*  
Hannah Diernhofer, European Office of the Board of Education for Vienna
- *DigiPro*  
Robert Hauss, Institute of Technology Vienna (TGM)
- *Digital transformation of the social support system in Ukraine*  
Olha Dubovyk, Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine

### **Working Group 3 – Vulnerable Groups and a Fair Transition**

*Moderator: Barbara Willsberger and Jörg Mirtl*

#### Thematic Input:

- *Barriers for Roma in Accessing Education and Labour Market*  
Andrey Ivanov, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

#### Project Presentations:

- *I-VET – Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Moldova*  
Sabine Albert and Jure Purgaj, University College of Teacher Education Vienna
- *NEVO DROM (Career and Education Prospects for Roma and Rom\*nja) & EmpoR (EmpowerRom'nja - Equal Opportunities through Qualification)*  
Jelena Zlojutro, Adult Education Centres Vienna (VHS)
- *MEET - Mental Well-being in Education for Disadvantaged Youth*  
Barbara Glinsner and Michaela Bruckmayer, Center for Social Innovation (ZSI)

### **Working Group 4 – Green and Digitally Skilled Youth Accessing the Labour Market** (hosted by EUSDR Danube Youth Council)

*Moderator: Maty Mihaľko and Flavia Enengl*

- *Welcome and Tour de Table*  
Maty Mihaľko, Danube Youth Council
- *Introducing the Survey on Uncovering Green and Digital Competences*  
Irina Apostol, Danube Youth Council
- *Presentation of the Results of the Survey*  
Viktorija Ćosić and Biljana Popović, Danube Youth Council

## **16.15 Reports from the Working Groups**

## **16.35 Conclusions & Outlook**

Priority Area Coordinators

- Anna Gherganova, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Republic of Moldova
- Viktoriia Karbysheva, Ministry of Education and Science, Ukraine
- Jürgen Schick, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria
- Roland Hanak, Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy, Austria

## **16.45 End of the Conference**