

Minutes

24th Steering Group Meeting

Priority Area 9 “People and Skills” (PA9)

Date: 14th June 2023

Venue: Online

Chair:

Oleksandra Husak, *Ministry of Education and Science, Ukraine*

Viktoriiia Karbysheva, *Ministry of Education and Science, Ukraine*

Nadija Afanasieva, *Ukrainian Institute for International Politics, Ukraine*

Roland Hanak, *Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy, Austria*

Jürgen Schick, *Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria*

Anna Gherganova, *Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Republic of Moldova*

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

Welcome and Introduction

Nadija Afanasieva, Oleksandra Husak, Roland Hanak, Juergen Schick, Anna Gherganova, and Ludmila Pavlov opened the Steering Group meeting and welcomed members and participants of the PA9 Steering Group. Team PAC9 expressed their solidarity and support for Ukraine during the full-scale war provoked by Russia. Oleksandra Husak, a Ukrainian PAC9 member, expressed gratitude for the support Ukraine receives from every EU country. Ukraine remains committed to its European path and to implementing the key sectoral reforms in education, training, and skills.

Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda was adopted unanimously. It is available under this [link](#)

Update from the Slovenian Presidency (Peter Volasko)

Slovenia continues to implement activities as the EUSDR Presidency. Peter Volasko briefed the participants of the Steering Group about the recent conference under the Slovenian Presidency “Towards knowledge-driven society and professions of the future” as well as future activities of the Slovenian Presidency. The conference focused on the expected transformation of societies, the crucial role of knowledge in them, professions of the future, mobility of the labour force, brain drain, and the adaptations needed in EU societies. The conference, having brought together many crucial stakeholders in the field (e.g., higher education, research

institutions, private sector, policymakers, and civil society) will provide an important basis for the Final Declaration of Slovenian EUSDR Presidency. Moreover, Slovenian Presidency is committed to developing an interdisciplinary approach and combining efforts of multiple Policy Areas, especially PA7 and PA9.

Lastly, Mr. Peter provided the SG members with the Slovenian EUSDR Presidency calendar for the rest of the year.

The 12th EUSDR Annual Forum is set on 24-25 October 2023.

Peter Volasko's presentation is available via this [link](#)

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

Elisa Cocco provided a general update regarding Macro Regional Strategy Report. The Conclusions to the Report were submitted to the European Council by the European Commission and 3 readings on the Conclusions have already been held by the Council. The Swedish Presidency announced that the Council agreed to the text of the Conclusions to the Report. The text is going to be approved by the end of June 2023. Elisa noted that the Report is focused on enlargement, funding, skills, and energy. The Council is believed to provide tips and recommendations regarding these topics.

DG Regio and DG Employment are working on Data Story on Cohesion Policy to support education, training, and skills as well as some input about Interreg and Macro-Regional Strategies. It will be published on the Cohesion Open Data Platform. The data story is available via this [link](#).

Elisa also thanked the participants of Macro-Regional Strategies Week which was on April 24-28, 2023. She noted the good feedback on the Skills panel during the MRS Week as PAC9 Nadija Afanasieva moderated the event and Danube Youth Council participated, too.

Finally, Elisa Cocco recognized the importance of the contribution of PAC9 regarding the ENI leftovers (Danube Transnational Programme) to be used for Ukrainian and Moldovan EUSDR regions.

Update from the Danube Strategy Point (Cristina Cuc)

Cristina Cuc presented DSP support frame that focuses on:

1. Embedding/funding
2. Monitoring/evaluation
3. Youth
4. Support for EUSDR core-stakeholders
5. Capacity Building

6. Communication

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

Update on the first call of the Danube Region Programme and Seed Money Facility (Stephen Halligan)

Stephen Halligan commented on the status of the DRP First Call. It is a two-step call and the first step has been completed with a selected proposal the second stage of AF submissions is underway until 16 June 2023. Projects are set to start in January 2024.

Out of 290 applications, areas that are important for PA9 are 3.1 "Accessible and inclusive and effective labour markets" (6 projects selected for Stage 2 AF) and 3.2 "Accessible and inclusive quality services in education, training, and lifelong learning (2 projects selected for Stage 2 AF). Projects focusing on accessible and inclusive and effective labour markets include those that promote retaining skilled labour, employment of and the retention of new young employees in the cultural sector, integration of vulnerable groups into the labour market, increasing the share of women employed in the forestry sector as well as employment for the disadvantaged. Projects focusing on accessible and inclusive quality services in education, training, and lifelong learning are devoted to the integration of rural NEETs into society, education, training, and the labour market as well as building capacities to support youth mental health and positively address early school leaving and NEET.

It could be observed that the levels of participation in these sectors are relatively low compared to other sectors. Some countries also have relatively low participation rates such as Germany, Slovakia, Moldova, Montenegro, and Ukraine. Moreover, some key organizations such as public employment services have been inactive. Steven has noted the importance of addressing these issues and increasing the level of interest.

The Seed Money Facility outline has been put forward for approval at the DR Monitoring Committee Meeting on the 20th of June 2023. In conjunction with PACs, an understanding of the SMF has been developed. The open call is proposed for all priorities as PACs define the thematic scope (call announcement) and streamline the content through workshops and seminars. The call will be 2-step:

1. Short project idea (description and added value for the Danube Region)
2. Assessment by the MA/JS

The maximum allocation of the program funds for 1 single SMF call is EUR 3,6 mil and the maximum EU contribution per priority is EUR 300,000.

Stephen Halligan's presentation is available via this [link](#)

Information from the European Commission on the European Year of Skills 2023 (Clara Boitel, DG EMPL)

Clara Boitel has provided SG members with context on the European Year of Skills 2023. European Commission has 4 specific objectives with EYS2023:

1. Investment
2. Skills relevance
3. Matching aspirations
4. Attracting people

Key stakeholders and actors in the EYS 2023 are the European institutions, Members States, existing platforms and networks, and international actors such as UNESCO, OECD, and ILO.

Major events under the framework of EYS 2023 are:

1. 9th May: EYS festival
2. 8-9 June: Making Skills Count
3. 23-27 October: European Vocational Skills week
4. Beginning of 2024: the concluding event.

European Skills Agenda focuses on strengthening skills intelligence through National Skills Strategies & Public Employment Services as well as through cooperation with other stakeholders such as universities. EU supports skills policy through a variety of instruments and initiatives such as Europass, ESCO, European Qualifications Framework, SkillsOvate, Eures, and DigComp. Additionally, EU networks and mutual learning include:

1. European Alliance for Apprenticeships
2. Digital Skills & Jobs Platform
3. Pact for Skills
4. EPALE
5. Working Group on VET & Adult Learning
6. Network of National Coordinators for adult learning.

Analytical references at the EU level include Education and Training Monitor, OECD support, Eurofound, The European Semester, CEDEFOP, Joint Research Centre, and Eurydice.

European stakeholders can find funding in the EU via various funding instruments such as European Social Fund, Recovery and Resilience Facility, Digital Europe Programme, Erasmus+, and InvestEU.

Clara Boitel has noted that each EU Member State has its own National Coordinator that every interested person can liaise.

Clara Boitel's presentation is available via this [link](#)

Update on Education, Labour Market, and Social Policies in each country

Tour de table

AT – Roland Hanak (Labour Market): At the end of May Austria has seen an increasing unemployment compared to the previous year. And in addition, there are 72,000 persons registered with the IMS in training as training participants. The number has slightly decreased compared to the previous year. Austria has had an absolute plus of employed persons about 50,000 persons more employed, an all-time high. Short-time work starting in COVID time continues to be a priority. Austria now is in phases 5-7 already of short-term work. Currently, there is a decrease in that number and there has been a total of almost €10 billion being spent on short-term work in Austria, which is a huge number. Ukrainian refugees can be employed on the Austrian labor market, without any restrictions, which is a positive thing. There is a lot of information in different languages, also in Ukrainian, English, and German on the homepage of the Austrian labor market service. There is a lot of detailed information on how to look for a job in Austria, and how to visit DMS if there is a need. Roland Hanak also touched upon the topic of UA and MD ENI leftovers from DTP. In this project, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy as the Lead Partner prolonged the project already till the end of June. However, there are still some unresolved questions that need to be clarified such as: What costs will be eligible? How is the derogation from the normal rules going to work for the first-level control? How is that going to work?

AT – Jürgen Schick (Education): Austrian education policy is focusing on main strategic fields: raising the level of performance and education levels, improving equal opportunities and gender equality, and expanding needs orientation in a way that education and training are more in line with the needs of young people and also the labour market, ensuring effective and efficient structures and processes in the overall education administration. In the field of early childhood education and care, a new agreement between the federal government and the federal provinces increases the funds available to expand places and improve quality. Austria is also continuing to improve digital education. A new compulsory subject “Basic digital education” has been introduced at lower secondary schools. The new subject is closely linked to an initiative funded partially out of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, by which digital devices are made available to pupils. Austria is also expanding measures to foster the ICT skills of teachers. In the field of high-quality teaching, a large-scale teacher workforce campaign comprises a bundle of measures that aim at making the profession more attractive and at meeting the required number of teachers in the long term. With the objective to compensate potential learning deficits from the pandemic, Austria has extended the provision of the remedial support package in school year 2022/23.,. Summer schools, which were introduced during the pandemic, have been integrated into the legal school framework and are now available every summer to help pupils to catch up on primarily basic skills. For more experts in

STEM, Austria has developed an action plan which aims at strengthening STEM along the whole educational path.

HR - Petra Reiner (Education): The Croatian Government has adopted the National Plan for Development of Education System until 2027. Within early and pre-school education, the major reform is related to raising its accessibility by ensuring infrastructural capacities. This month the second call was published for constructing and extending kindergartens. Also, a new model of financing early and pre-school education is in the final stage of adoption. It will enable the co-funding of municipalities and cities of a weaker fiscal capacity to cover the costs of constructing kindergartens and their regular activities. Within primary education, the whole-day school model has been prepared. A public call for participating in the pilot project was announced and the selection process of schools has finished. The objective of the pilot project is to evaluate the benefits and potential challenges of transitioning to whole-day school in Croatian primary schools. The e-School project is in its final phase, having significantly helped to transition to online education by putting in place local computer networks and e-services. The ESF project “Modernization of VET” has continued. It aims at strengthening the link between education and the labour market. It focuses on developing occupational and qualification standards, VET curricula, and professional training of VET teachers. Following the adoption of the new Adult Education Act, a quality assurance model was developed for adult education institutions. Regarding higher education, there is currently an ongoing project of digital transformation of higher education, which is focused on investing in digital infrastructure and enhancing the digital maturity of higher education institutions.

HR – Filip Milicevic (Labour Market): The situation with the labour market in Croatia is quite good. The labour market is related to GDP growth and recovery. After the pandemic, the GDP growth was very strong in Croatia in 2021 and 2022 and is expected to be substantial in 23. That means that the labour market didn't drop during the pandemic. The last data for unemployment show that Croatia has the lowest number of unemployed since 1982. It's less than 100,000 people. The employment rate is rising, it's now around 70% with a target of 75% by 2030. The activity rate is raising. The labour market is opening, we see a higher number of foreigners and migrants who are coming to Croatia to apply for open job positions. Croatia still has some challenges like lower employment of vulnerable groups. Especially for people with disabilities, we have disparities in employment rates between women and men. And this challenge is probably when we now have a solid labour market, the Ministry is expected to deal with these issues in the following years. Policy-wise, there is a certain shift from subsidies for employment toward training and education, upskilling, and reskilling. Croatia already envisaged 140 million euros to be an asset for this type of policy. There is a strong initiative for the implementation of individual learning accounts that can be expected also in the following years and Croatia is cooperating with the European Commission on this issue.

CZ – Nikola Strasek (Social Policy and Labour Market): As for unemployment rates in the Czech Republic, the share of unemployed persons dropped to 3.5% in May 2023. Czechia has some issues to resolve. The companies and the customers are still facing high input prices. The inflation rate is quite high, consequently, the government introduced a remedial package supposed to help with this situation. The government is still debating on the exact form of it with our unions. The package will affect taxes, the number of state workers, their wages, and much more. The Ministry is also working on the new retirement reform, which we hope to introduce at the end of this year, the specific regulations will come into effect in 2024 and 2025. The reform is focused on the modernization of vengeance, tightening conditions for early retirement from five to three years (being the max time), and of course, raising the retirement age from 65 to approximately 68 years old. Czechia is also considering increasing the parent allowance because it has not been changed for the last three years. However, there is no political agreement yet.

CZ – Marie Taltynová (Education) (contribution received in writing): A new minister of education was appointed, Mr. Mikuláš Bek (former rector of Masaryk University). CZ is in the second phase of implementation of the Strategy of Education Policy 2030+. The key measures for years 2023–2027 are being prepared in so called "Long-Term Plan". The plan will be submitted to the Government for approval in September 2023. It contains, among others, proposals of reforms in the area of content, forms and assessment of education at the primary level. The horizontal priorities (such as digital education, sustainability, and inclusive education) are covered in the implementation of the National Recovery Plan. Regarding the HE, an amendment to the Act on Universities is currently prepared. It includes a reform of doctoral studies that puts emphasis on individual development of students and on the changes in entrance criteria to universities. Another important area that is currently discussed in CZ: changes of financing of pedagogical and philosophical faculties (mainly due to low remunerations of pedagogues).

DE – Cristopher Sanchez (Education and Labour Market): Baden-Württemberg is facing a teacher shortage, so we're and also with the increased amount of students that are coming in as migrants from migrant families, most prominently from Ukraine – 30,000 additional school kids over the last year from Ukraine alone. We are developing strategies to curb that situation and tackle the challenges. Therefore 18-point initiative has been developed here in the state to facilitate the implementation and also to assist teachers in growing the work amount that they have. The initiative rests on 3 pillars. Firstly, acquiring extra staff for lateral employment so that people who are previously been working in other areas than be introduced to the teaching profession. There is existing staff and it is possible to shift workloads a little bit so that number of people who work part-time would have an increased workload. We're looking at

3000 teachers who volunteered to do that to assist. For example, they are previously retired people returning and so on to increase capacity in the area of about 500 additional teachers across the state. The state is lifting workloads from most school administrators. They have several large facets of tasks to do, and the government tries to lift those tasks. For example, by employing up to 250 openings in teaching assistants or assistants to administrators and educators. Likewise, to be put into schools. Over the last 10 years, on all school levels, we have increased capacities so that universities have a little over a thousand, 1300 extra students to prepare for educational careers. In terms of digitalization, the Ministry just passed the regulation that over the next four years there will be €4 mil extra to be put into just the field of digitalization in schools. That is €60 million over the next four years, mostly for infrastructure, but also staff training. And it's not just infrastructure. The state would also like to increase media literacy and efforts in robotics in elementary schools as well as assist schools in assessing where they stand in terms of digitalization. Therefore, they can better identify where more fixing is needed to increase digitalization in schools. The state has extended the program that is called LmR which translates into 'Learning with a tailwind': To compensate for the education that has been dropped during the COVID pandemic. It is a permanent thing that runs parallel to the schools, so funds are there to pay tutors and teaching assistants, and university students to come to schools and give extra lessons to school kids who need to still catch up on certain content. The government has introduced mandatory reading now in elementary schools. Already, 400 schools have been doing this, so this is reading out loud two times a week. 20 minutes of reading out loud will be introduced and kind of blanketed over the state in the next few years. That program will be expanded. Given that we have had a bit of a disappointing result in terms of reading literacy or reading competencies in schools, laws have been passed in Germany to facilitate the quality in preschools and kindergarten. It is a quality-based law that has a rather large budget of €4 billion to be implemented over the next few years. Regarding labour markets, Baden-Württemberg has had a slight recovery from COVID. We have a 3.7% unemployment rate which is about 240,000 people in our state. But given that the current economic situation has been called a recession already now in Germany, we're also looking a little bit at scepticism from new companies in terms of openings. There is a reduced number of openings but still 97,000 almost 100,000 vacancies in the state and 18,000 unemployed youth which is the equivalent of 2.6% of unemployed youth. It is still very solid, but the government keeps an eye on it, given that the economic times are a bit shifty these days.

HU – Gabriella Tölgyes (Labour Market) (contribution received in writing): Hungary managed to reduce the domestic unemployment rate to a record low level of around 3%. In the second half of the last year, a new phenomenon was observed, when the number of unemployed people increased together with employment. In addition to the invigoration of labour demand, this process is also stimulated by inflation, which is particularly high in the case of food, so

more people have started looking for work in recent months than the number of people that labour demand could absorb. In the last 3 quarters, the unemployment rate has been continuously rising. At the same time, in just one year, nearly 50,000 previously inactive workers returned to the labour market and started looking for a job. One of the determinants of the restructuring of the labour market is the strengthening of employment in the competitive sector, where the number of employed people has exceeded 4.5 million people for more than a year and a half. Number of employees working abroad decreased by 10,000, number of public employees by 35,000 during the same period. According to the latest measurement by the National Statistics Office, the average number of people working in the domestic primary labour market in the first four months of 2023 was 4,535,000. The Hungarian labour market has thus become a healthier, longer-term sustainable structure, where public employment plays an increasingly minor role. The sectoral structure of the Hungarian labour market also changed after the epidemic. In some key sectors, there are still fewer jobs than during the employment trough three years ago. In the same period of 2020, there are fewer jobs in the processing industry, agriculture, transport, and storage. It is a significant challenge that the number of people employed in the field of healthcare and social care decreased by 44,000 between the first quarter of 2020 and 2023. The proportion of telecommuters remained at a consistently high, but number of part-time workers fell close to the level before the outbreak of the epidemic. The Hungarian economy is characterized by an unprecedented labour demand, but the domestic potential labour force has fallen to a historic low, and its geographical distribution is very uneven. The largest reserve is found in the eastern region, while it has shrunk to a minimum in the more developed western part of the country. The largest share of the labour force, 40%, is made up of people with vocational qualifications and secondary education. More than half of the reserve is qualified, graduates represent around 10%. The number of foreigners working in Hungary is constantly increasing, and its territorial distribution is characterized by the dominance of the capital and the more developed Western Transdanubian regions.

MD – Ludmila Pavlov (Education): Two important strategies were approved by Moldova: It is educational development strategy 2030 and New Youth Strategy 2030 because youth also is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Research. Both of these are aligned with the European Agenda 2030. The legislative framework in the field of education was improved by amending the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova and the changes are intended to support and accelerate the investment in the education system to have a well-equipped school and universities. The amendments integrate additional facilities for teachers at the beginning of their career, increasing their quality of psychological assistance services and promoting, through all educational systems, a multilingual education. To support lifelong learning, the amendments of the Education Code stipulate that the government will finance from the side state budget adult training activities in areas of major social and economic

importance. Another important achievement is the approval of a new national framework of qualification. The document provides the flexibility and comparability of qualification and the description of the qualification is adapted to the European Qualification Framework, which will facilitate the processes of internationalization of education and recognition of international qualifications. In the field of vocational education and training, there was approved regulation regarding the organization of Technical Vocational training programs through dual education. Additionally, there is the process of modification of the methodology of budgetary financing of technical vocational education institutions to make their way of allocation and use of the public finances more efficient. Moldova is updating the nomenclature of the field of professional training of specialties in vocational-technical education to adapt them to the current and prospective needs of the labour market. In the last half of a year, there was proof of an important national program for our educational system. This is a national program for learning the Romanian language by national minorities, including adult education. And the second program is the program for the implementation of the strategy for strengthening interethnic relations. Both these programs are until 2025. In higher education, Moldova is in the process of implementing a huge reform that consolidates the university and research system through the concentration of resources. Both human and financial resources will bring scientific research closer to students by integrating research institutes into the structure of the universities. It will modernize them through the allocation of resources. In May there was a launch of the Horizon Europe National Office in the Republic of Moldova that will facilitate the collaboration between the scientific and the economic environment of the Republic of Moldova, and the countries of the European Union.

MD - Anna Gherganova (Labour Market): The labour market of the Republic of Moldova is slightly coming back to the pandemic COVID-19. The main labour market is increasing. For example, labour force participation in the group of population aged between 20-64 has a value of about 56%. The employment rate also has increased in this group of population, and it is about 55%. Most of the population of the Republic of Moldova is employed in the non-agriculture sector, it is about 82% and around 18% are still employed in agriculture. The launching of reform of public employment service in the Republic of Moldova. And main goal is to improve the efficiency of our public employment service by expanding and improving services provided to companies and increasing the inclusiveness of active labour market policy. For example, for youth needs, women have family responsibilities because Moldova's employment rate for this category of women is still very low. The efficiency of public employment service will be strengthened through improved performance-based management within this institution. To improve the targeting of active labour market policy through developing regional profiles and applying outreach measures for inactive people. Moldova continues to implement support schemes for companies that have faced technical unemployment in Moldova because of the consequences of the war in Ukraine. Many

companies have limited access to raw materials. Consequently, they must impose technical unemployment on their employees and the government is providing financial support for the employees working for such companies. Now Moldova has 25 companies receiving this financial aid from the state budget, covering more than 2000 employees. Moldova is exploring the possibility to regulate non-formal training to be able to provide such type of training for job seekers through our public employment services. The government will research what kind of courses it can procure through public employment services for job seekers and what would be the selection procedure for such kind of training providers of non-formal education.

ME – Ivana Sucur (Labour Market)

There are several reforms related to the labour market in Montenegro. Montenegro has support through the training project from Germany, Slovakia, and Estonia partners, and they provide support to introduce Youth Guarantee, as European Commission requested in the guidelines for youth. Montenegro has huge unemployment, there is a need to redefine some active labour market measures targeted at youth employment. Montenegro has a seasonal working character which means that it needs workers during the seasonal period. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare needs to have interoperability with the Ministry of Education and other responsible institutions to have the right data in the agency of employment to develop employment policy on its basis. Montenegro continues with the full digitalization of agencies of employment in Montenegro to update software and new hardware to meet the Youth Guarantee requirements from the European Union and to be able to connect it with the rest of EU agencies as Montenegro is expected to become a new EU Member State soon. Montenegro started to develop social entrepreneurship with support from our colleagues from the Twinning project. The government decides whether it should approve a legislative framework as such in Montenegro or it will use European legislation to develop and establish social entrepreneurship. Montenegro focuses on and highlights developing digitalization and green competencies for its workforce. Montenegro amended Labour Law to increase the minimum wage up to €450 is our minimum wage for Montenegro. It is a great achievement for Montenegro.

RO - Carmen Clapan (Education) (contribution received in writing): There are two education laws concerning pre-university and higher education, adopted by the Romanian Parliament in May 2023. These new education laws will impact the students from the 5th grade in the school year 2023-2024. Both laws have been subject to public consultations and include important changes proposed by many Romanian stakeholders: public and private institutions/organizations, companies, NGOs, children, students and parents' associations, other ministries, etc. The main measures at the pre-university level concern early childhood education and care: improving access and quality, more focus on the development of human resource skills, increasing enrolment capacity, and ensuring an integrated system based on

welfare principles, inclusion, and professionalism. Additionally, they concern with the reform of pre-university education: development of a dynamic and flexible skills ecosystem that corresponds to the rapid demographics, labour market, and societal changes, reaching equity/inclusion in the education system, and efficiency of investment. Regarding higher education, Romania aims to increase the flexibility and attractiveness of higher education programs, the development of the dual university programs, which will be substantially supported by additional funding of 30% per student; the flexibility of students' educational pathways and recognition of micro-credentials; and an increase in internships and training. In the field of VET, Romania focuses on assuring a complete career pathway for higher technical and dual education, increasing the number of areas, qualifications, and graduates. Romania has started already to develop regional consortia, and vocational campuses and to equip VET schools with computer laboratories. These measures aim to develop better practical workshops, increase the quality of the educational offer of VET schools, ensure rapid integration into the labour market, and train graduates with the qualifications and skills required by the labour market. Romania took all measures to ensure that the displaced learners from Ukraine can continue their studies while taking into consideration their well-being. In this sense, with the support of local NGOs, we mobilized displaced teachers as a way to assist refugee learners to better integrate into the classrooms, especially in early childhood education, in the kindergartens. The fact that the children are working with teachers who speak their language brings a plus when it comes to their sense of safety and normality. The Ukrainian teachers were involved from the very beginning in educational hubs, providing support to the children who are following the Ukrainian schools online or are enrolled in Romanian schools but are willing to keep in contact with the Ukrainian education system. The teachers are also involved in extracurricular and non-formal education activities like theatre, music, painting, etc. Some private schools in Romania have employed Ukrainian teachers especially those who were proficient in a foreign language, but some of them prefer to continue their activity in the educational hubs or to keep their employment in Ukraine, continuing to teach online. Also, Romanian legislation allows the displaced persons to be employed as teachers. All sides benefit from the training course on teaching and learning in difficult times offered by British Council in collaboration with UNICEF and the International Organization for Migration. The goal of the course is to train teachers to give support to the children affected by the emotional trauma caused by the war.

RS - Boško Latković (Labour Market): As of June 2023, there were 420,000 unemployed persons in the register in Serbia. The unemployment rate is now 9.4%. Out of the total number of unemployed, 56% are seeking employment for the first time and according to the age structure, young people under the age of 30 participate in the total number of unemployed with 18% while the share of people over the age of 50 is almost 40%. Serbia completed the Youth Guarantee implementation plan for 2023-2025 and the implementation plan will be sent

to the European Commission for the opinion and comments. After the consultation with the European Commission implementation plan will be forwarded to the government for adoption. Ministry of Labor Employment will oversee the implementation process while the National Employment Service will be responsible for the youth guarantee service delivery and monitoring and evaluation as well. Serbia expects to introduce necessary amendments to the legal framework to enact the policy reforms required for a successful delivery system and to further development of the implementation. Regarding the Ukrainian refugee situation, Serbia has passed a decree allowing Ukrainian citizens free access to the labour market, healthcare, and education.

SI – Irena Kuntarič Hribar (Labour Market) (contribution received in writing): Unemployment in Slovenia fell in May. For the second month in a row, it was the lowest in Slovenia since 1990. At the end of May 2023, 47,186 unemployed persons were registered, which is 2.9% less than in April 2023 and 15.5% less than in May 2022. In the first five months of 2023, 0.8% fewer unemployed persons were newly registered than in the same period of 2022, while 12.1% fewer unemployed people were employed. On average, 50,980 people per month were unemployed in the period from January to May, 17.0% less than in the same period last year. Between the beginning of the year to the end of May, employers reported 72,242 job vacancies, 5.2% less than at that time last year. In March 2023 the registered unemployment rate calculated by the Employment Service of Slovenia was 5.1%, which is 0.3 of a percentage point lower than in February and 1.1 percentage points lower than in March 2022. The registered unemployment rate for men was 4.7% and for women 5.7%. Slovenia works on a project “Rapid Transition of Young People to the Labour Market” (funded by the NextGenerationEU). The project aims to activate young people up to and including 25 years of age more quickly (4,000 permanent employment young people). To achieve the project's objective, incentives will be created for employers to employ persons up to and including 25 years of age. The employment subsidy is intended to promote the employment of persons in the target group for an indefinite period, but at the same time, it constitutes a commitment by the employer to provide an appropriate mentor to accompany the young person during the time of employment subsidy, to aid and to train him in a specific job. During the course of the subsidization of employment and mentoring, the new employee and his mentor shall be involved in training or education to the extent of a minimum of 30 school hours, promoting training to increase digital competencies. Public awareness and promotional activities for employers and young people will also be carried out. Promotional activities will cover the wider aspect of youth employment and the promotion of all activities carried out by Slovenia under the Youth Guarantee. Evaluation will be carried out at the end of the project.

SK – Lucia Auxtová (Education): Slovakia has launched the first action plan today Inclusive Education Strategy 2024 to implement the following priority areas: inclusive education and

support measures, counseling system, desegregation in education and care, making the school environment barrier-free, training of pedagogical and professional staff, countering stigmatization. It also develops a systemic measure to integrate displaced children from Ukraine through the amendment to the Education Act approved this year. There was introduced a legal entitlement for all children to be admitted to kindergarten at the age of four years and from September 25 at the age of three years. This will introduce a legal entitlement for all children, regardless of their social, economic, or family background. And now we are expected to increase the overall participation of children in pre-primary education and in particular the participation of children from marginalized communities and children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The government approved in December last year the national strategy for digital skills as well as the first action plan for 2024-2026. They are aimed at the development of digital competencies of the adult population of Slovakia. And the ministry implements measures related to the development of basic digital competencies of employees, applicants for employment, and small individual entrepreneurs using individual learning accounts. The main expected result by the end of 2026 is 6300 participants on courses for the development of basic and digital competencies using individual learning accounts. On the 30th of March 2023, a new state curriculum was approved by the Minister of Education, which brings crucial changes from 2 to 3 education cycles at elementary schools and shifts from teaching information to teaching skills and mindset. Pupils will be taught how to acquire this knowledge and think independently and act responsibly. The first 40 schools will be starting to teach and test the new curriculum on September 2023 and teaching according to this new curriculum should be mandatory from September 2026. As of September 2022, a network of 16 regional centers for supporting features was established throughout Slovakia and in connection with the National Institute of Education and Youth to support the implementation of the curriculum, changes, and transformation in schools. According to the Resilience and recovery plan, it is planned to establish another 16 regional centers in other regions of Slovakia at the beginning of the next school year.

SK – Drahuša Kalmanová (Labour Market): Last year Slovakia introduced another unemployment indicator called the share of available job seekers in the working-age population. It expresses the ratio of the number of available job seekers in the productive age from 15 to 64 years inclusive of the total population in the same age group. Unemployment will be reported using this indicator at the national, regional, and district levels and the municipal level. Unemployment fell the most significantly since October 2021 in all regions. The main indicator decreased from 4.29% and matches to 4.08%. The level of unemployment as well as the number of job seekers has almost returned to pre-pandemic levels. Slovakia wants to maintain this trend. It is also important to mention that in November last year, the European Commission approved the operation of Program Slovakia for the program period 2021-2027. Program Slovakia will be able to draw almost €13 billion from the new European

funds. Resources from this program are intended to support employment, including disadvantaged job seekers such as young people, and citizens over the age of 50. So how will be improved through the Labor office? To solve problems and support marginalized Roma communities, €190,7 million is allocated cross-sectionally in various areas. Education and acquisition of new skills among our employees are crucial for effective employment support, but also for increasing the competitiveness of businesses and the state economy. The Ministry also prepared several projects financed by European Union funds. A good example is the project called 'Development of Skills to Promote the Labour Market' and the second project called 'Don't Lose Your Job, Educate Yourself', which will improve the skills of 40,000 people.

UA - Oleksandra Husak (Education): As of today, 3281 educational institutions in Ukraine have been damaged by bombing and shelling, and 262 of them are destroyed. Moreover, due to the blowing up of the Kakhovka Dam (Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant) by Russian aggressor troops on the 6th of June, more than 60 educational institutions are under threat, including 27 preschool institutions, 15 schools, 6 VET institutions, and 15 higher education institutions, 2 research institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. Unfortunately, the number of damages may increase. Some of these institutions are in temporarily occupied territories. Ukraine's education system, in general, remains under immense stress due to such factors as migration, dynamic economic changes caused by war, as well as chronic lack of funding, and budget restrictions. Nevertheless, safety and continuity of teaching and learning as well as ensuring access to education remain the top priority of the Government. The education system makes strong efforts to adapt and become more flexible and responsive. I will give some information on each education sector.

In school education Implementation of the New Ukrainian School reform is ongoing, facing numerous challenges caused by the Russian war of aggression like destruction of educational infrastructure, displacement of students and teachers, and severe budget restrictions. For instance, publishing textbooks for Grade 5 of the New Ukrainian School was supported by partners, including UA language textbooks, whose publishing costs were covered by the European Commission, as well as publishing costs for textbooks in Natural Sciences to be covered by the EU-Finnish "Learning Together" project. In higher education the University admission campaign is ongoing - the procedure introduced aims at creating the safest possible conditions for transparent examination and independent evaluation, ensuring objectivity, and minimizing corruption risks. Ukraine is very thankful to the EU Member states for establishing temporary examination centers in more than 40 European cities. In the VET sector, in total 566 (93%) VET institutions operate 252 (45%) – in blended format; 161 (28 %) – in face-to-face format; 153 (27%) – in distance format. The total number of students in VET institutions is 227 500, of which 12 700 are internally displaced. 17 500 students are abroad and continue their studies in VET institutions of Ukraine remotely. 5,5 thousand students are in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine. There is a problem with passing the practical component of the

curriculum. And this means that students cannot transfer to another course or graduate. The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine adopted an order that allows students of VET institutions to interrupt their studies and take academic leave (order of the MoES dated 04/05/2023 № 394). The reform of vocational education and training in Ukraine involves the continuation of a large-scale «reboot» of the system oriented to the modern needs of the country and future reconstruction. VET should be flexible, strong, and inclusive, and will contribute to the recovery, sustainable economic development, and European integration of Ukraine. Ukrainian Parliament and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine continue working on improving VET legislation. Last year Ukraine made changes to the Law of Ukraine "On Professional (vocational and technical) Education" and made it possible to obtain vocational education free of charge for a second time. This year amendments have been made to the Law regarding the licensing of educational activities. Currently, it is possible to reissue a license for conducting educational activities without conducting a licensing procedure based on the relevant (Law of Ukraine dated 04.10.2023 № 3025-IX). Also, we continue working on the content of education. 14 state educational standards for specific professions have been developed and approved. With the support of international partners, more than 70 online training courses have been developed and posted on the platform «Profosvita. Online» which we created last year. The entrant's electronic cabinet has been created. From July 1, 2023, applicants can submit documents for enrolment to VET institutions online. I would like to give a special thanks for the opportunity to use more than €2 000 000 to retroactively finance the expenditures of the Ukrainian VET institutions since February 24, 2022. These funds can be channeled to support the education sector of Ukraine, including VET institutions in the regions of Ukraine, involved in the EU Strategy for the Danube region, namely, Ivano-Frankivsk, Odesa, and Chernivtsi regions.

UA - Olha Dubovyk (Social Policy): Despite active hostilities, the Government is taking measures to ensure the social protection of people in Ukraine. The number of people in need of support from the state has fundamentally expanded. Today about five million internally displaced persons have been registered. At the same time, part of the economy is not working, and therefore the resources for social protection in the country are not enough. At the same time, central and local governments are doing their best to ensure that everyone who needs support receives it. Without human request, Ukraine automatically continued to finance all previously assigned social benefits during martial law and simplified the appointment of new recipients. More than 6 million people are covered by one or another type of social assistance. Despite the difficult situation in Ukraine, the government is already thinking about rebuilding our country. The Plan for the Recovery of Ukraine is currently being developed. Ukraine will need social investment programs and investments in people. It should be a program to stimulate entrepreneurship. Helping to start their own business can be an important part of the incentive package for the return of Ukrainians displaced abroad. Also, On May 30, the Verkhovna Rada

adopted in the first reading draft law No. 5344-d "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding Ensuring the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to Work".

The draft law is aimed at creating favorable conditions for the employment of persons with disabilities, in particular by implementing approaches approved in other countries to the development of stimulating mechanisms for employers and expanding opportunities for persons with disabilities. The draft law provides for introducing the payment of a targeted contribution instead of administrative and economic sanctions for non-fulfillment of the employment standard. The contribution is provided in a smaller amount, compared to the amount of administrative and economic sanctions, but the obligation to pay it is established for all categories of employers in both the private and public sectors; expansion of the categories of enterprises that can use financial support for the creation of enterprises of labor integration and enterprises of protected employment; the possibility of acquiring the status of a labor integration enterprise for any economic entity, subject to compliance with the legally defined criteria; mandatory provision of social services to persons with disabilities (social support at the workplace, personal assistant, sign language translation, etc.) incentives for the involvement of private employment agencies in the mechanism of promoting employment and employment of persons with disabilities. According to the results of the implementation of the draft law, it is planned to achieve greater employment of people with disabilities, increase the number of targeted revenues to the state budget for social protection of people with disabilities, relieve the judicial system of Ukraine of all disputes related to the collection of administrative and economic sanctions for failure to fulfill the employment quota, reduce the amount of public expenditure on court costs.

State of Play PA9: news, recent projects, and events

Danube Youth Council meeting on 27.02.2023

Nadija Afanasieva (UIIP, PAC9 team, Ukraine)

On 27 February PAC9 had a meeting with Danube Youth Council in the form of a brainstorming session to find out PA9 topics that could have been interesting for members of DYC. DYC members articulated the need for critical thinking development among the students and citizens in general. They also said about connecting education and the labour market, bringing new strengths into the topics like working for NGOs and qualitative research on new trends that could be a very useful input for Priority Area 9 as well. DYC members also shared some examples of unemployment issues, and youth unemployment issues, but particularly about supporting job creation for young people with specific funding and training and qualifications. In general, DYC members are very interested in PA9 activities. Nadija Afanasieva proposed that SG members could introduce DYC members to any kind of event that could potentially be beneficial or interesting to DYC members through PAC9.

eTwinning Danube Region Conference

Sarah Fellner (OeAD, PAC9 team, Austria)

The Erasmus+/eTwinning Danube Region Conference is an annual conference to promote cooperation among teachers and schools across the Danube Region. It is organized by OeAD in cooperation with Priority Area 9 and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research. The last conference took place at the beginning of June in the Austrian town of Krems. A total of 43 teachers from 11 Danube region countries participated. They developed 10 cooperation projects in a wide field of areas.

The agenda, event report and list of projects are available [here](#).

Danube Region Platform on Centres of Vocational Excellence

Sarah Fellner

The Danube Region Platform on Centres of Vocational Excellence is an initiative together with the European Training Foundation's Network for Excellence (ENE). Its goal is to promote cooperation on vocational excellence in the Danube Region through a Policy Platform and by encouraging cooperation between VET providers. The Platform focuses on two topics: going green and social inclusion. The first and second Platform meeting took place online in November 2021 and in November 2022. A key strength of the Platform lies in bringing together the policy and the practitioners' levels. For the further development of the Danube Region Platform, as outlined in the concept note shared ahead of the Steering Group meeting, it is proposed to go more in-depth and focus on specific VET fields. The focus of the upcoming activities will be the topic of going green – in cooperation with the ENE partnership "GRETA" (Greening Responses to Excellence through Thematic Actions). On 9 June, a questionnaire was sent to Policy Platform members to gather background information on the greening of VET in their countries/regions. Upcoming GRETA activities include a webinar in July and a side event on the margins of the Forum on Vocational Excellence in September 2023 in the Netherlands. In October 2023, there will be a joint online event between GRETA and the Danube Region Platform, where the results from the questionnaire and good practice green skills projects will be presented. The annual ENE Conference will take place in November. The next Danube Region Platform meeting is planned for 2024 in a physical format in Austria. The focus of it will be put on the two sectors that were identified as being of the highest propriety among all questionnaire responses received, with the aim of identifying common areas of interest for cooperation and good practice examples for the greening of VET.

More information on the Danube Region Platform on Centres of Vocational Excellence is available here: <https://peopleandskills.danube-region.eu/coves-platform/>

PA9 Stakeholders Conference 2023

Nadija Afanasieva

Ukraine will organize PA9 Stakeholder Conference fully online in November or early December. SG members are welcome to contact PAC9 by e-mail and to propose their projects. There are ideas from other priority areas too. Consequently, the next PA9 Stakeholder Conference will be a cross-priority areas event and probably even a cross-macro-regional strategies event to follow the cross-sectoral approach of the European Commission and other European institutions.

SG Decisions

Identification of PA9 Danube Strategy Flagships 2023

Nadija Afanasieva reported that SG members have nominated two initiatives as Danube Strategy Flagships: “Bringing the Danube Region into Classrooms” and the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE).

“Bringing the Danube Region into Classrooms: Promoting Cooperation of Schools and Teachers”

Sarah Fellner presented the Flagship proposal “Bringing the Danube Region into Classrooms”, which is the initiative behind the Danube Region eTwinning conferences that aim at promoting cooperation between schools and teachers across the Danube Region. Annual conferences have been taking since 2012 and are organized by OeAD in cooperation with PA9. So far, more than 450 teachers have participated and have developed more than 120 projects. 13 Danube Region countries participate in eTwinning which is funded through Erasmus+. For further details, reference was made to the nomination form shared ahead of the Steering Group meeting.

Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe

For the second Flagship proposal, reference was made to the presentation by Tina Šarić that was delivered earlier during the meeting (see below). The nomination form with further details had been shared ahead of the Steering Group meeting.

No objections from Steering Group members were received and thus both Flagship proposals were adopted by the PA9 Steering Group.

Adoption of the rolling PA9 Work Programme

The updated rolling PA9 Work Programme was adopted by the PA9 Steering Group. It is available on the PA9 website [here](#).

Updates from partners

Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (Tina Šarić)

The Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) facilitates regional cooperation, which includes 7 economies from South Eastern Europe. It includes coastal as the associated partner and five of these are Danube strategy countries. ERI SEE focuses on vocational education, training, general education, and vet and higher education. ERI SEE is implementing the project, which is funded by the Austrian Development Agency, where it facilitates cooperation between the education and business sector to produce regionally based occupational standards and qualifications. ERI SEE has finished our activities regarding the regionally based occupational standards for agriculture technicians and locksmiths. Also, it has finished the regional-based qualification standards for these two and we are currently in the phase of developing guidelines for teachers for environmental, social, and gender aspects, but also for the implementation of the curricula for these qualifications. In Budva, Montenegro ERI SEE leads the regional meeting for the fine-tuning of the regional methodologies for teaching and learning material and training for teachers. The next ERI SEE activity is pre-tertiary education where we also have the component from the Austrian Development Agency project. Here ERI SEE is focusing on the quality assurance of pre-tertiary education, namely external evaluation. It has developed the policy vision for external evaluation in the region standard of competencies for external evaluators, tools for training needs, analysis, and evaluation of external evaluators. Currently, ERI SEE is developing the collection of best practices for external evaluation processes and planning the implementation of training needs, analysis, and training for trainers of external evaluators. In Moldova, on 16-17 July 2023 there will be a regional meeting on fine-tuning methodology for regional training for trainers of EE. ERI SEE is also organizing a study visit for teacher training agencies about digitalization. The study visit is planned for Zagreb, Croatia on the 29th and 30th of June. ERI SEE closely cooperates with the Regional Cooperation Council focusing on the recognition of higher education qualifications and quality assurance systems in the region. ERI is currently upgrading the register of accredited institutions and study programs in the region. Another study visit is also planned for Zagreb, Croatia on the 6th and 7th of July to attend Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education. ERI SEE is also planning a big international conference in Skopje in North Macedonia on the 26th of September.

Tina Saric's presentation is available via this [link](#)

European Training Foundation (Georgios Zisimos)

Georgios has updated SG members on ETF appointment of a new director. In the last couple of weeks, there were several important meetings in ETF: ETF had a visit from European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights N. Schmitz. It was a very timely discussion as the work

ETF is doing together with the Ukrainian colleagues and authorities was the focus of the meeting with the Commissioner. The meeting has given ETF a lot of food for thought for the next developments. Last March in Sweden ETF had a closer discussion at the Director General's meeting and the Ukrainian delegation attended the meeting on the occasion of being a new candidate country together with Moldova. ETF is actively involved in the European Year of Skills. It works with all partnerships and Danube Strategy is such a partnership. ETF hosts an event in Torino in autumn for the Western Balkans region where Erasmus+ will be the main discussion topic and how that participation in Erasmus+ contributes to policy shaping. Regarding the cooperation with financial institutions, last year ETF had a big event with the development banks talking about the European Development Bank, the European Investment Fund, the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, etc. to ensure the centrality of the issue of skills in development programs. Overall ETF had a busy week in Brussels where the dimension of skills was stressed, especially for the digital and green transition. A high-level policy debate with deputy ministers from the Central Asia region (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) is hosted by the ETF and will take place on 22-23 November. SG members were invited to join the meeting if they had an interest in that event. The cooperation between the planning strategy and ETF on the Excellence Portfolio is one of the flagship initiatives in ETF. A big team is working on it, and they are close to delivering (in November) a package to the European Commission. It includes a self-assessment tool for scientists on vocational excellence being the most comprehensive tool that has been created until now to help VET schools to design their plans and assess their progress in certain areas. Greening, digitalization, and pedagogics are among them. On 9-10 November, it will be presented at our conference. The label for excellence is a strong package, which is looking at the self-assessment side of clusters of schools within the logic of excellence together with the label that confirms the findings. These two tools are fundamental for the development of the whole portfolio of educational excellence. After that, ETF starts implementation meaning the usage of tools to offer access to schools all around the world. Danube Region schools are invited to participate.

Matus Mihalko (Danube Youth Council)

It was important for DYC members to have a kick-off meeting with the Priority Area 9 that some of them had signed up for. It helped the members to get a general overview of the PA9 work. It can be also fostered by regular updates and by encouraging youth to participate in the daily activities of PA9. The priorities for the upcoming period, like social inclusion, reconstruction of Ukraine, and e-learning, are very relevant also for DYC members as they have some serious experience in these fields too. DYC has created the Rules of Procedure for the DYC as well as the matchmaking to match a member with a priority area of interest. PA9 has six participants. Members of DYC are also interested in the topics that have been mentioned during the SG meeting such as youth trends, social inclusion, bridging between skills and education, e-

learning, and all of the tools that young people are using right now. NYC members can help with the promotion as they are young people themselves who know how to talk to young people and how to translate the policies into the language of the youth. These topics are very easily digestible within social media like Facebook and Instagram. NYC members approached PAC9 to offer help with communication and with bringing the new target group of young people into the topic.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Nadija Afanasieva and Roland Hanak delivered concluding remarks and closed the Steering Group Meeting.

Participants of the 24th SG meeting of the PA9 EUSDR:

First Name	Last Name	Institution	Country
Sarah	Fellner	Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD)	Austria
Roland	Hanak	Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy	Austria
Jörg	Mirtl	L&R Social Research	Austria
Jürgen	Schick	Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research	Austria
Barbara	Willsberger	L&R Social Research	Austria
Hajrija	Dautovic	Ministry of Civil Affairs	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Filip	Milicevic	Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy	Croatia
Petra	Reiner	Ministry of Science and Education	Croatia
Nikola	Strašek	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Czech Republic
Cristina	Cuc	Danube Strategy Point	DSP
Stephen	Halligan	Danube Transnational/Region Programme	DTP/DRP
Vana	Cendo	Danube Youth Council	DYC
Matus	Mihalko	Danube Youth Council	DYC
Biljana	Popovic	Danube Youth Council	DYC
Elisa	Cocco	DG REGIO, European Commission	EC
Clara	Boitel	DG EMPL, European Commission	EC
Tina	Šarić	Education Reform Initiative of Southeastern Europe	ERI SEE
Ulrike	Damyanovic	European Training Foundation	ETF
Georgios	Zisimos	European Training Foundation	ETF
Christopher	Sanchez	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of Baden-Württemberg	Germany
Ivana	Sucur	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Montenegro
Felicia	Bechtoldt	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection	Republic of Moldova

Anna	Gherganova	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection	Republic of Moldova
Ludmila	Pavlov	Ministry of Education, Culture and Research	Republic of Moldova
Carmen	Clapan	Ministry of Education	Romania
Boško	Latković	Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs	Serbia
Jelena	Nikolic	Ministry of Education	Serbia
Lucia	Auxtová	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	Slovakia
Drahuša	Kalmanová	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	Slovakia
Matus	Tluscak	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	Slovakia
Irena	Kuntarič	Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities	Slovenia
Peter	Volasko	Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation	Slovenian EUSDR Presidency
Nadija	Afanasieva	Ukrainian Institute for International Politics	Ukraine
Olha	Dubovyk	Ministry of Social Policy	Ukraine
Oleksandra	Husak	Ministry of Education and Science	Ukraine
Viktoriia	Karbysheva	Ministry of Education and Science	Ukraine
Mykhailo	Omelchenko	Ukrainian Institute for International Politics	Ukraine