



## **EUSDR | PA 09 - To Invest in People and Skills**

### **Education and training, labour market and marginalised communities**

WORK PLAN 2011-2013

As of July 2013

#### **I. Roles and responsibilities**

The PA 9 Work Plan is envisioned to be implemented in particular through the proceedings of PA 9 Steering Group meetings, working group sessions, stakeholder fora and through the implementation of projects and work in networks on the ground. Successful execution of the Work Plan will require commitment and concerted effort from all stakeholders directly involved in the process.

#### **II. Overall activities**

In efforts to meet its objectives within the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and in accordance with GAC Conclusions of 13 April 2011, the Steering Group of PA 9 envisions the following activities:

- Establish a network consisting of the national counterparts relevant to each Priority Area Coordinators;
- Identify the possible relevant stakeholders, with particular emphasis on Project Leaders;
- Provide relevant information on the Strategy to the citizens, including to associate civil society concerned and to promote public awareness;
- Examine the Commission's target examples and find agreement on realistic and feasible targets relevant to the macro-region with the involvement of the Commission and all relevant stakeholders;
- Compile a list of on-going projects and possible project ideas under the Priority Area. This list shall be continuously updated during the implementation and also be included into the first Progress Report issued by the Commission by the end of 2012;

- Provide assistance to Lead Partners in order to facilitate the implementation of projects and the further development and screening of project ideas. This assistance shall emphasize available European funding opportunities and rules and make full use of already existing sources of information. During the implementation of individual actions and projects the voluntary nature of participation should be preserved.

**Specific PA 9 overall activities are:**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Responsible</u>
• 2 meetings of PA9 Steering Group per year	Spring and autumn 2011, 2012, 2013	PAC
• Stakeholder Forum, 160 people, international conference in Vienna, Minister's level	June 2012, December 2013	PAC
• Thematic Workshop "Promoting Empowerment, Smart Skills and Inclusive Growth" in the framework of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Annual Forum of the EUSDR	November 2012	PAC
• Establishment of up to 8 thematic working groups, following 8 actions, depending on commitment of DRC	2012, 2013	PAC + DRCs (N.N.)
• Strategic meeting of Working Groups related to education (Working Groups 1, 3, 4, 5)	October 2012	PAC
• Strategic Meeting of Working Group 3	April 2013	PAC
• Strategic Meeting of Working Group 4 "Innovative VET Schools Network"	June 2013	PAC
• Strategic Meeting of Working Group 5 "EUSDR Youth Platform"	June 2013	PAC
• Strategic meeting of Working Group 6	November 2012	PAC
• Strategic meeting of Working Group 7	November 2012	PAC
• Mapping and labeling of existing projects and initiatives	ongoing 2011, 2012, 2013	PAC + SG
• Mapping and labeling of new projects and initiatives	ongoing 2011, 2012, 2013	PAC + SG
• Agreement on and further development of PA9 targets and objectives	December 2011 and ongoing	SG

- |   |         |     |
|---|---------|-----|
| • PAC Participation in relevant events on EU and regional level (e.g. ERI SEE, EU-Roma network) | ongoing | PAC |
| • Running of PA9-Website  | ongoing | PAC |

### III. Targets

The targets in PA9 - 'To invest in people and skills', as set by the Steering Group, are:

- Highlighted target for PA9: Contribution to the 'Education and Training 2020' strategic framework and its four strategic objectives.
  - Action: To enhance performance of education systems through closer cooperation of education institutions, systems and policies.
  - Action/Work area: "To support lifelong learning and expanding learning mobility"<sup>1</sup>
  - Action: To support creativity and entrepreneurship.
  - Action/Work area (new<sup>2</sup>): To promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through education and training.
- Target: Contribution to the achievement of EU 2020 targets, in particular with regard to smart and inclusive growth
  - All actions support this target.
- Target: Efficient cooperation between relevant actors through involvement and extension of existing regional cooperation networks and initiatives.
  - This target is valid for all actions and is a general strategic objective.
- Target: To foster creative partnerships at the interface of education, training and culture.
  - This target is valid for all actions and is a general strategic objective. Particular actions are:
  - Action: To foster cooperation between key stakeholders of labour market, education and research policies in order to develop learning regions and environments.

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<sup>1</sup> As adopted by SG, December 2011

<sup>2</sup> As adopted by SG, December 2011

- Action: To support creativity and entrepreneurship.
- Target: Contribution to the improvement of labour markets and social inclusion in the region.
  - Action: To foster cooperation between key stakeholders of labour market, education and research policies in order to develop learning regions and environments.
  - Action: To fight poverty and social exclusion of marginalised communities in the Danube Region, especially the Roma communities.
  - Action/Work area (new<sup>3</sup>): To promote gender equality on the labour market, especially in payment.
  - Action/Work area (new<sup>4</sup>): To promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through education and training.
- Target: Contribution to higher synergies of education systems and labour market demands on all levels.
  - Action: To improve cross-sector policy coordination to address demographic and migration challenges.
  - Action: To foster cooperation between key stakeholders of labour market, education and research policies in order to develop learning regions and environments.
- Target: Establishment and implementation of a small project funding mechanism.
  - This target supports all actions.

#### **IV. Actions/Work areas**

##### Work area 1

##### **“To enhance performance of education systems through closer cooperation of education institutions, systems and policies” (Action 1)**

Fostering efficiency, innovation and good governance in education and training is crucial in the face of the challenges posed by globalisation, demographic changes, rapid technological developments and increasing pressure on public budgets. This should be done in particular through the exchange of best practices of different education and training systems through transnational cooperation, joint development of programmes and materials, promotion of research on the economics of education,

<sup>3</sup> As adopted by SG, December 2011

<sup>4</sup> As adopted by SG, December 2011

peer learning, and capacity building, i.e. for evidence-based policy and practice and for facilitating the policy learning process, strategy formulation and policy action. Specific added value lies in the inclusion of third countries and best use should be made of already existing programmes and cooperation structures.<sup>5</sup>

### Specific ongoing activities and projects

<u>Title (Lead)</u>	<u>Duration</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Meeting of PA9 Thematic Working Group</u></li> </ul>	tba
<u>Cooperation platforms and networks:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE)</b> - Regional Platform for Cooperation in Education and Training; Specific activity: Establishment of an International ERI SEE Secretariat in Belgrade in 2012 (Lead/Chair: RS)</li> </ul>	2004 -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Central European Cooperation in Education</b> (Rotating lead SI, AT, SK, HU)</li> </ul>	2007 - 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital of the Regional Cooperation Council</b> (Lead: RO, AT, HR)</li> </ul>	2008 -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capacity Building for Teachers of VET in the Danube Region</b> (Lead: DE/BW)</li> </ul>	2012 - 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Edu.Region - Education Network for the economic area and the labour market of Lower Austria and the southern Czech regions</b> (Lead: AT)</li> </ul>	Jun 2012 - Aug 2014
<u>Governance and policy action:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cluster of knowledge on evidence-based policy making in education</b> (Lead: RS)</li> </ul>	Jun 2011 - Dec 2013
<u>Attractiveness and relevance of VET:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Optimizing the links between labour market and the educational system: the development of the dual vocational school in Romania</b> (Lead: RO - National Centre for TVET)</li> </ul>	Sep 2012 - Jun 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cluster Modernising VET system – improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET</b> (Lead: RO – National Centre for TVET)</li> </ul>	May 2011 - Dec 2013
<u>Various:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects linked to LLP, such as Comenius/e-twinning, Leonardo, etc.<sup>6</sup> (Proposed by AT – OeAD, Austrian agency for international mobility and cooperation in education, science</li> </ul>	Variable

<sup>5</sup> The main aim is to reinforce the European Area of Education (EAE) thus contributing to the success and sustainability of the EU integration process. Country specific needs and the demands of the EAE according to the EU Work Programme "Education and Training 2020" need to be taken into account and follow up. Work should build upon already existing bilateral cooperation projects and multilateral initiative.

<sup>6</sup> Individual projects might be added at a later stage.

and research)

## Planned Projects

- **Competence-Based Teacher Professionalism – The Innovative and Creative Turn** (Lead: AT – University of Innsbruck) Oct 2013 - Oct 2016

## Work area 2

**“To foster cooperation between key stakeholders of labour market, education and research policies in order to develop learning regions and environments”**  
(Action 2)

To increase innovative capacities of the labour force in the Danube Region, new forms of partnerships and cooperation among key stakeholders (labour market, education and training, research and employers) need to be further developed. Employers (private, public and voluntary) have an important role to play in identifying the knowledge, skills and competences needed in working life. To increase the employability and entrepreneurial potential of all learners, communication and active cooperation should be further developed between education and training institutions on the one hand and employers on the other.

### Specific ongoing activities and projects

Title (Lead)

Duration

- Meeting of PA9 Thematic Working Group
- **Cross-border discussion forum for Labour Market Policy: Austro-Hungarian Expert Academy** (EXPAK AT.HU)  
(Lead: AT - L&R Social Research Institute) Apr 2008 - Dec 2013
- **Cross-border discussion forum for Labour Market Policy: Austrian-Slovenian Expert Academy** (EXPAK AT.SI)  
(Lead: AT - L&R Social Research Institute) Nov 2009 - Oct 2014
- **Bilateral Exchange in Labour Market Policy Austria - Moldova** (ongoing) Oct 2012 -
- **Virtual Qualification Network Austria-Bulgaria** (Lead: ÖSB Consulting)
- **Feasibility study. Composition of a Virtual Qualification Network with Romania within the Framework of EUSDR**  
(Lead: ÖSB Consulting)
- IPA 2011 project: **“Preparation of Serbian Labour Market Institutions for European Employment Strategy”** (Lead: Serbian Ministry of Economy and Regional Development)
- IPA 2008 project: **“Forecasting and NES data management”**

## Planned projects

### Title (Lead)

- **Mastering Skills of European Professional Medics (MED)**  
(planned to apply for funding in programming period 2014-2020, Lead: Business Support Centre for Small and Medium Enterprises - Ruse)
- **Establishing of a Network of Agricultural Training Centres**  
(planned to apply for funding in programming period 2014-2020, Lead: Business Support Centre for Small and Medium Enterprises - Ruse)

## Work area 3

### **“To support creativity and entrepreneurship” (Action 3)**

A reorientation towards entrepreneurship and creativity, which constitutes a prime source of innovation, is important as a prerequisite for businesses, in particular for small and medium sized enterprises, and thus for Europe's competitiveness. This could be achieved through the introduction of innovative learning programmes to support creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship at all levels of education, through the promotion of intercultural dialogue or through language training, making use of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Danube Region. Broader learning communities and creative partnerships, involving representatives of cultural actors, civil society and other stakeholders, should be promoted with a view to creating a climate conducive to creativity and professional and social needs, as well as individual well-being.

### **Specific ongoing activities and projects**

#### Title (Lead)

#### Duration

- Meeting of PA9 Thematic Working Group Apr 2013

Transversal key competences, entrepreneurship education, innovative learning environments and creative partnerships:

- **Empowering Young People - Connecting Europe** (EUSDR-Pilot Project; Lead: AT – MoE) Jan 2012 - Dec 2013
- **ECO NET - Support for Training Firms in SEE** (Lead: AT - KulturKontakt Austria) Jan 2010 - Dec 2013
- **i.e. SMART - SMART Training Network for Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Emerging Sustainable Economic Sectors** (Lead: AT - European Office, Vienna Board of Jul 2012 - Dec 2014

Education)

- **Dunavision 2013** (Lead: DE - Thinkcamp)

Oct 2012 - Dec 2013

### Planned projects

#### Title (Lead)

#### Duration

- **Creativity and business – unlocking the potential** (Lead: BG - Human Resources Development Agency)
- **E-Log - Online Competency-Oriented Education in Logistics** (Lead: BG - Human Resources Development Agency)
- **Innovative Competency-Oriented E-learning in Tourism - ICOELIT** (Lead: BG - BSC SME, Ruse)

15 months from the date of signing the contract - depends on the process of evaluation

### Work area 4

**“To support lifelong learning and expanding learning mobility”** (Actions 4 and 5 curr.)

Comprehensive LLL strategies and their implementation have been identified as a priority for the development of knowledge societies. Making these effective and increasing their impact for individual learners remains a critical challenge. Institutional capacity building of LLL bodies is a prerequisite for implementing these policies. Countries in the Danube Region will coordinate on the development of National Qualification Frameworks. Specific added value lies in supporting non-EU Member States in drawing up their National Qualification Frameworks.<sup>7</sup> Specific attention should be drawn to rural areas and to developing alternative employment opportunities and economic diversification for people occupied in traditional sectors where restructuring is still under way such as agriculture.

### Specific ongoing activities and projects

#### Title (Lead)

#### Duration

- Meeting of PA9 Thematic Working Group “Innovative VET Schools Network” May 2013

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<sup>7</sup> Coordination should be sought with the European Training Foundation.



- Comenius/eTwinning-Regional Development Workshop for teachers with pupils 12+ “eTwinning in the Danube Region“, Vienna Jun 2013

#### Learning mobility:

- **Capacity Building Mobility Programme** (Lead: AT, Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital) 2008 - (annual cycles)
- **CEEPUS - Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies** (Lead: N/A, Central office in AT) May 2011 - Apr 2018
- **Training on competence based assessment for VET teachers (Lead: RO – National Centre for TVET)** Aug 2010 - Jun 2014

#### European reference tools:

- **Development of National Qualification Frameworks** (Lead: HR) Oct 2011 - Dec 2013

### Work area 5

#### **“To promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through education and training” (Action 5 NEW)**

Education and training systems should enable all individuals to acquire and develop skills and competences required for their employability and to foster tolerance, intercultural dialogue and non-discrimination. Equal opportunities in learning can contribute towards the social inclusion of individuals from minorities and vulnerable groups, and active citizenship. Barriers for drop-outs to return to education and training need to be removed as well as preventive approaches and cooperation between education sectors strengthened. Mutual learning on best practices should be developed.

#### **Specific ongoing activities and projects**

<u>Title (Lead)</u>	<u>Duration</u>
• Meeting of PA9 Thematic Working Group “EUSDR Youth Platform”	<u>Jun 2013</u>
• <b>aces - Academy of Central European Schools</b> (Lead: SK - Vceli Dom, AT - Interkulturelles Zentrum)	annual project cycles
• <b>Collaboration of Schools and Communities for Sustainable Development</b> (CoDeS) (EU-Comenius multilateral network; Lead: CH - Stiftung Umweltbildung Schweiz)	Oct 2011 - Sep 2014

#### **Planned projects**

<u>Title (Lead)</u>	<u>Duration</u>
• <b>Danube Connects - through the Ottoman traces up to the European Integration</b> (DACON) (Lead: HU - Cultural Institute)	Aug 2013 - Jul 2015

of XIII. district Budapest)

## Work area 6

### **“To improve cross-sector policy coordination to address demographic and migration challenges” (Action 6)**

Enhanced efforts should be pursued to develop knowledge on the status quo, on drivers and impacts of migration flows and demographic change, so to develop a basis for enhanced cooperation of different policies at all levels of governance. Cross-sector policy coordination between relevant government departments, education authorities, social services, healthcare services, cultural policy authorities, housing and spatial planning authorities as well as asylum and immigration services at local, regional and national level, as well as dialogue with civil society are essential to ensure an adequate level of support. Spatial consequences of migration-induced social, economic and cultural changes and possible responses in the framework of urban and rural development should be considered. Cooperation with existing organisations, such as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), with their existing analysis and recommendations, would be particularly useful.

#### **Specific ongoing activities and projects**

##### Title (Lead)

##### Duration

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|--|---------------------|
| • Meeting of PA9 Thematic Working Group  | Nov 2012            |
| • <b>Central European Knowledge Platform for an Ageing Society</b> (CE-Ageing Platform) (Lead: AT - Centre for Social Innovation)                | Jan 2011 - Dec 2013 |
| • <b>Re-Turn – Regions benefitting from returning migrants</b> (Lead: DE - Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography)                             |                     |
| • <b>Migration for Development in the Western Balkan</b> (MIDWEB) (Lead: IOM)  |                     |
| • <b>Capacity Building of Institutions involved in Migration Management and Reintegration of Returnees in the Republic of Serbia</b> (Lead: IOM) |                     |
| • <b>SEEMIG - Managing Migration and its Effects in South-East Europe</b> (University of Vienna)   | Jun 2012 - Nov 2013 |

## Work area 7

### **“To fight poverty and social exclusion of marginalised communities in the Danube Region, especially the Roma communities” (Action 7 and 8 curr.)**

To make full use of the Danube Region's population specific focus needs to be put at empowering in particular groups in risk of poverty and ensuring them access and opportunities. Children, old people, mentally and physically disabled, immigrants, homeless, representatives of marginalised ethnic groups are the most vulnerable. Actions to reduce the number of people in risk of poverty need to complement each other, applying an integrated approach.<sup>8</sup> Especially on Roma communities, whose living conditions are often especially dire and with no place in 21st century Europe, special attention must be paid. Hence the coordination of efforts between existing initiatives and actors such as the Roma Decade (2005-2015), EU Roma platform for Roma Inclusion<sup>9</sup>, EU-Roma network and NGOs active in this field in the Danube Region is indispensable for improving the situation for Roma.

### Specific ongoing activities and projects

<u>Title (Lead)</u>	<u>Duration</u>
• Meeting of PA9 Thematic Working Group	Nov 2012
• <b>European Network on Social Inclusion and Roma under the Structural Funds (EURoma)</b>	ongoing
• <b>THARA - Roma Biznis</b> (Lead: Volkshilfe Österreich)	Feb 2013 - Jan 2014

### Planned projects

<u>Title (Lead)</u>	<u>Duration</u>
• <b>NSRS in the Danube Region</b> (Ministry of Education of Romania)	tba

### Project Idea

- Roma Responsibility Project – Evaluation of economic self starting initiatives or Romanies in Central- and Southeastern Europe

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<sup>8</sup> In particular such actions could focus on the eradicating of child poverty, improving equity in education programs(from early childhood to postgraduate training), reducing the number of early school leavers, providing access to health care, promoting active inclusion in the labour market, making efforts to provide decent housing for everyone, tackling indebtedness or on providing conducted training programs for local officials on governance of multiethnic communities.

<sup>9</sup> The Roma inclusion Platform was endorsed and launched during the Czech Presidency in October 2008. Its main objective is to call governments and main stakeholders to debate Roma inclusion, on topics such as education, health and housing, meeting on a twice-yearly basis.

## Work area 8

### **“To promote gender equality on the labour market, especially in payment” (Action 8 NEW)**

Equality between women and men is one of the European Union’s founding principles. The principle of equal pay for equal work dates already back to 1957, when it became part of the Treaty of Rome.

To create equal opportunities for women and men on the labour market, discrimination, educational stereotypes, labour market segregation, precarious employment conditions, involuntary part-time work and the unbalanced sharing of care responsibilities with men must be overcome. The full realisation of women’s potential and the full use of women’s skills must be fostered with the emphasis to facilitate a better gender distribution on the labour market and to allow the number of quality jobs for women to be increased.

Besides the discrimination against women in career opportunities, the discrimination against female employees with regard to their wage level is imminent. The so called gender pay gap (the average difference between men’s and women’s hourly gross earnings across the economy as a whole) in the EU remains at 17.8%, with heights around 30% in some EU member states.

To ventilate this topic a stakeholder forum involving social partners, should be initiated. This forum should explore possible ways to improve the transparency of pay as well as the impact on equal pay of arrangements such as part-time work and fixed-term contracts.

#### **Specific ongoing activities and projects**

##### Title (Lead)

##### Duration

- Meeting of PA9 Thematic Working Group

tba

## Specific finished activities and projects

### Working Group 1

- Peer learning event on VET within ET2020 & PA9 (organised by Austria) Dec 2012
- **Improving quality assurance (QA) in Vocational Education and Training (VET) through schools' networks** (Lead: RO – National Centre for TVET) Aug 2010 - Feb 2013

### Professional development of teachers, trainers and school leaders:

- **International Cooperation For School Leadership (ICSL)** (Lead: HU – Tempus Public Agency) Feb 2011 - Jan 2013

### Working Group 2

**Network for Labourmarket Cooperation in the Border Region Hungary-Austria** (NETLAB) (Lead: AT - Regionaler Entwicklungsverband Industrieviertel) May 2008 - Dec 2012

**Cross-border discussion forum for Labour Market Policy: Austrian-Slovak Expert Academy** (EXPAK AT.SK) (AT – L&R Social Research Institute) Jul 2008 – May 2012

**Cross-border discussion forum for Labour Market Policy: Austrian-Czech Expert Academy** (EXPAK AT.CZ) (Lead: AT – L&R Social Research Institute) Nov 2009 – Dec 2012

**Cooperation in Labour Market Issues: Austria-Bulgaria** (KOOP AT-BG) (Lead: AT – ÖSB Consulting) Oct 2009 – Dec 2012

**Cooperation in Labour Market Issues: Austria-Romania** (KOOP AT-RO) (Lead: ÖSB Consulting) Sep 2009 – Dec 2012

**Qualification Network Danube Area** (Lead: Vocational Training Institute Burgenland)

### Working Group 3

- **Training the teachers from economic VET schools to implement the training firms method** (Lead: RO) Aug 2010 - Feb 2013
- **ET-Struct: Economic Educational Territorial - Structure** (Lead: AT - European Office, Vienna Board of Education) Jan 2010 - Dec 2012

### Working Group 4

- LLP Contact and Project Preparation Seminar on “Transition from school to work”, Vienna Oct 2012

### Working Group 5

- **EdTWIN - Education Twinning for European Citizenship in the Centropo Region** (Lead: AT - European Office of the

Vienna Board of Education)

Working Group 6

- **Monitoring of Skilled Workers** (FAMO - regular survey of supply and demand of skilled workers at the border region of eastern Austria and Slovakia) (Lead: AT - Paul-Lazarsfeld-Gesellschaft für Sozialforschung) Aug 2008 - Jul 2012

Working Group 7

- **THARA - Novi Vidici** (Lead: Volkshilfe Österreich) Feb 2012 - Jan 2013



MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVA,  
VEDY, VÝSKUMU A ŠPORTU  
SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY



## Minutes of the EUSDR PA7 SG+PA8 SG+ PA9 SG Joint meeting

**Date and venue:** 15 May 2013, "Old Building" National Council, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

**Attendance:** according to the list of participants

### Agenda:

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12,00 – 12,30	Registration of participants
12,30 – 13,30	Lunch
13,30 – 13,45	<b>Opening and Introductory Speech</b>  Štefan Chudoba, Slovak Coordinator of EUSDR/PA7 and Miroslav Veskovíc Serbian Coordinator of EUSDR/PA7 Hans-Peter Herdlitschka, Baden-Württemberg Coordinator of EUSDR/PA8 and Dragica Karaic, Croatian Coordinator of EUSDR/PA8 Roland Hanak, Austrian Coordinator of EUSDR/PA9, Jürgen Schick Austrian Coordinator of EUSDR/PA9 and Ion Gumene, Moldavian Coordinator of EUSDR/PA9
13,45 – 13,55	<b>Experience of South East Europe Programme Financial Support in Danube region Countries and Intention of its Transformation into Danube Region Programme</b> Ivan Curzolo – Head of SEE Joint Technical Secretariat
13,55 – 14,05	<b>Technical Assistance Facility for Danube Region Projects – TAF-DRP</b> Elise Lindner – WH-Beschaffungs-und-Service GmbH
14,05 – 14,20	<b>Best practice with SEE Programme Support: "AUTOCLUSTERS – Automotive network for Innovation"</b>

14,20 – 14,35	<b>Implementation of the Danube Reference Data and Infrastructure Flagship Project</b> Vladimír Šucha and Alessandro Annoni – Joint Research Centre of the European Commission
14,35 – 15,00	<b>Presentation of the PA8 Project Proposals and Topics Offered for the Common Cooperation of PA7+PA8+PA9</b> EUSDR/PA8 Coordinators <b>Socio-Economic Assessment of the Danube Region: State of the Region, Challenges and Strategy Development”.</b> Markus Kappler – Centre for European Economic Research Mannheim/Baden Württemberg
15,00 – 15,15	<b>Discussion</b>
15,15 – 15,35	<b>Break</b>
15,35 – 16,00	<b>Presentation of the PA9 Project Proposals and Topics Offered for the Common Cooperation of PA7+PA8+PA9</b> EUSDR/PA9 Coordinators
16,00 – 16,15	<b>Discussion</b>
16,15 – 16,40	<b>Presentation of the PA7 Project Proposal and Topics Offered for the Common Cooperation of PA7+PA8+PA9</b> EUSDR/PA7 Coordinators <b>Project BAYHOST</b> – Maxim Gatskov, Bayrisches Hochschulzentrum für Mittel, Ost und Südost Europa, Regensburg <b>Project DREAM</b> - Helmut Haberscak, BOKU – Universität für Bodenkultur, Wien
16,40 – 16,55	<b>Discussion</b>
16,55 – 17,15	<b>AOB</b>
17,15 – 17,30	<b>Conclusions</b> Coordinators of PA7,PA8 and PA9

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### Opening and introductory speeches

The meeting was introduced by J. Oszlanyi (Slovak Republic), who apologized the absence of the State Secretary Š. Chudoba and announced his later arrival. Further J. Oszlanyi presented the introductory welcome address for the PA7 coordinator, on behalf of the State Secretary Š. Chudoba, where he highlighted the fact that the today meeting of three steering groups has the intention to join people, ideas and needs in this region as well has the objective to share commonalities and initiate effective projects and investments in the Danube region. M. Veskovíc as well appreciated this initiative of a common meeting and expressed the opinion that mutual cooperation in the Danube



region is a necessity and only such a cooperation of PA8 and PA9 could bring prosperity in this region and this is not the last meeting of such kind. H.-P. Herdlitschka for the PA8 as coordinator expressed the interest in mutual cooperation, where the combination of knowledge society, entrepreneurs and investments into people could bring interested results in the future. He underlined that Inevitable for the Danube strategy is an interlinkage between the policy makers, good projects and financial sources. Mrs. D. Karaic (also PA8), mentioned the necessity for working on projects which are overlapping the individual areas of the Danube strategy. For the PA9 R. Hanak expressed his appreciation to the organizers for preparing such a meeting, which is according to him mainly a working meeting, there are already a lot of interconnections within the Danube region, but if we start cooperation there will be a lot of more of such interlinkages. J.Schick (also PA9) transmitted the greetings from the Austrian federal Ministry for Education, and expressed the opinion this is a beginning of important and inevitable discussions and they would like to share ideas. Inevitable is to keep a good balance between coordination and implementation. Remark - I.Gumene from Moldavia was apologized from the meeting.

The meeting continued as scheduled with the presentation of I.Curzolo (Head of SEE Joint Technical Secretariat) with the topic: "Experience of South East Europe Programme Financial Support in Danube region Countries and Intention of its Transformation into Danube Region Programme". He presented the in detail the South East Programme for the period 2007-2013 as well as preparatory steps for the next financing period. Out of 800 projects submitted only 40 have been supported due to financial limitations. In this context he underlined the importance of the relationship between the Danube strategy and the governments. For the future there is a need for a better coordination between the program and the theme, which resulted at the present into disequilibrium in the approach of project assessments.

J.Oszlanyi introduced the next speaker, which was Elise Lindner from the WH-Beschaffungs-und-Service GmbH with the presentation: "Technical Assistance Facility for Danube Region Projects – TAF-DRP". She introduced the idea of a support to project applicants in a form of technical assistance financed from the PA10. The idea did emerge from the necessity to create a certain contribution for applicants who have a lack of financial resources and with the aim to over-cross barriers and to be successful at the end. Consultants shall provide any kind of services for a period of six months, to those who need their support and aid within the process of project submission. At the present consultants are searched. Information about first call for proposals could be obtained from PA coordinators, who will be addressed directly with concrete information. First calls for interests are expected in June, next by the end of 2013 and the last beginning of 2014. Any applicants from any PA could apply, mainly with focus on projects which are in public interest and which do have transnational size. Selection will be done by PA10 (City Vienna). The result should the realization of a concrete project.

J.Oszlanyi introduced the next speaker R.Bíro (Director of Automotive Cluster-West Slovakia) with a presentation related to: "Best Practice with SEE Programme Support: "AUTOCLUSTERS" – Automotive network for Innovation". R.Bíro presented the project of autocluster, which is joining 37 members from various institutions as e.g. universities and academics bodies. The main idea was to support SMEs to become successful as suppliers for automobile industry. Strategic partnership and networking of various enterprises have been established. The project was financed with 1,6 MEURO budget, as outputs 3 projects within the 7FP have been applied and the experience could be transferred into the Danube strategy. As a problematic issue he did mention the delay in payments (up to 10 months), which did have a negative impact to the SMEs involved.

Within this part of the meeting V.Šucha and A. Annoni from the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission continued with the presentation: "Implementation of the Danube Reference Data and Infrastructure Flagship Project". The idea of a Danube reference Data and Infrastructure was presented as a challenge and start for a discussion how to realize the proposed activities by the Joint Research Centrum and to create a database which will be a horizontal issue on which cooperation should start. It was also proposed the PA7 coordinators are to be in the future a contact point for the other countries which will be involved. The cooperation how to improve the data infrastructure is to be improved. As well as the Danube countries involved should avoid duplicity, share common regulations and to follow a better synergy. This is a multi-sectorial project where success is to be guaranteed by partnerships between the countries.

J.Oszlanyi did introduce the next part of the meeting which has been the presentations of the individual PA.

H.P. Herdlitschka introduced M.Kappler from the Centre for European Economic Research (Mannheim) with a project: "Socio-economic Assessment of the Danube Region: State of the Region, Challenges and Strategy Development". The presented study is focused on innovation in SMEs – creation of clusters and does show the cooperation within the region and besides it. First part is consisting of a deep assessment of the socio-economic performance of SMEs. In the second part focus will be on cooperation with local partnerships on the topic of competitiveness and challenges for enterprises. To be finalized in 2014. The output should be a proposal how to create EU strategies. It will be not only a study, but also a tool, which will be utilized for the over-bridging of this financial period, where our positive and negative sides are to be known.

Next presentation within the PA8 was presented by Prof. Löffler, who presented a project of a pilot initiative, which started 6 month ago, in cooperation with Baden-Württemberg, Serbia, Rumania and Slovakia. The idea was to create centers of transfer of technologies, together with 25 companies and two clusters involved, at the present experts for technological needs are searched. This flagship project could serve as a good example of integration. In case of interest the initiative is open for further cooperation. Also Dr. Winkler (PA8) appreciated the idea of a common meeting of this three SG, in this context she introduced the Danube Networking Cluster which is a networking platform for the Danube region (with the aim -how to learn the policy of cluster management). The projects are based on common experiences within the Danube region, some of them already started; there is also a possibility for merging projects and to adopt new partners. This could be a possibility for the PA7 – universities dealing with vocational education. This initiative is especially open towards automobile industry and all new ideas are welcomed. In the future applications for projects will be submitted and workshops for clusters in the region will be organized. At the end of her presentation she invited the present audience to a conference which will be held in Linz on the 27.-28.6.2013 on innovation technologies with focus on Smart Specialization. Last lecturer within the PA8 - Dr. Winkler in his presentation appreciated from the Austrian side the work of Prof. Veskovic which he has already done, as well as to JRC – those are interconnecting us and he appreciated the work of the organizers of this event.

Afterwards J.Oszlanyi asked for discussion to this part of the meeting. Questions and comments have been raised from the audience regarding support for the INCONET project also requests for information packages for universities within the PA8 and the effectiveness of the Socio-economic Assessment Study have been raised.

After the scheduled break, the meeting continued with further presentation of the PA9 Project Proposals and Topics Offered for the Common Cooperation of PA7+PA8+PA9 by the EUSDR/PA9 Coordinators. R. Hanak (Federal Ministry for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, Austria) supported the proposal from the previous speaker from PA8 regarding the Socio-Economic Assessment Study as a useful tool for all three SG PA7, PA8 and PA9 with the consideration that such kind of activities would have been useful when planned commonly in advance. As the research design has not been developed commonly, the study unfortunately cannot be considered as a common one. The interest for common activities in the future is here. As regards the working areas for the PA9 focus is on labor market, needs of the employers and employees. The PA9 is offering their know-how to other countries in the region. Further areas where PA9 is open is the subject of demography, migration, as well as a Platform for aging will be created – a possible model for the Danube strategy could be offered. As regards a possible cooperation with PA7 the subject fights against poverty and exclusion does emerge project on Roma community. A connection of overall strategies for Roma is interested, due to the fact that 80% of the European Roma population does live in the neighborhood of the river Danube. With PA8 cooperation on the fight on equal payments between men and woman could be foreseen. J. Schick (Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture, Austria) commented on the importance of the policy level and the strategic dimension in the whole process of the implementation of the EUSDR. He stressed that concrete measures in education and vocational education are also key elements within the Europe 2020 strategy. Investments into education are of utmost importance in order to generate sustainable, inclusive and smart growth also in the Danube Region. One Work Area within Priority Area 9 deals with the performance of education systems through closer cooperation of education institutions, systems and policies. In this context there are projects related to regional initiatives such as the Education Reform Initiative in South East Europe (ERI SEE). Other projects relate to the attractiveness of VET (lead: Romania) and on evidence based policy making in education (lead: Serbia). Another Work Area is oriented towards entrepreneurship and creativity, which aims i.e. at fostering creative partnerships at the interfaces of education, training and culture. A good example in this area is the project i.e. SMART. Lifelong learning and mobility are further central subjects of a Work Area which involves i.e. capacity building through mobility programmes and the development of qualification frameworks etc. A further Work Area deals with equity, social cohesion and active citizenship – in this respect, a Youth Platform in the Danube Region will be established. It is important to take into account all potential sources of financing of projects in the field of education (e.g. for the creation of networks). The future Danube program as the only program that covers exactly this geographic region should also provide the possibility to finance smaller transnational projects in the field of education and culture, e.g. through a small project fund.

Discussion to this part was opened as scheduled, but nobody from the auditorium took the floor.

The program continued with a presentation of the PA7 Project Proposal and Topics Offered for the Common Cooperation of PA7+PA8+PA9, opened by M. Veskovic. He underlined that the Danube strategy is mainly about cooperation and communication. The PA7 is a horizontal priority and does have importance also for the others. Then he continued with the presentation prepared by the Slovak colleagues, where as possible topics for mutual cooperation have been proposed vocational educational training, education of Roma minority, the subject of decommissioning as well as possible cooperation in the area of land and agriculture. In this context the smart specialization strategy was underlined as one of the ex ante conditionality's for the preparation of structural funds as well as the

support of excellence is a priority (centres of excellence in various areas which are working together). Within the PA7 projects BAYHOST and DREAM are to be supported. Maxim Gatskov from the Academic Centre for Central, East and South-East Europe, Regensburg presented the project BAYHOST. The project is focused on cooperation between universities and other institution in the Danube region, focused on fellowship programs and study stays. At the end of his presentation he offered cooperation also for others who would like to be involved in the project. The project DREAM was introduced by H. Habersack as a project with main priorities on Danube river research and management. He explained the situation in the Danube area with respect to needs regarding flood protection, climate changes, pollution and navigation. The objective is to create hydro-research institutions with focus on the above topics. From the overall proposed budget of 70MEURO, up to now 1,6 MEURO are committed. PA7 will be involved mainly through IKT and educational activities. The project is open for further cooperation.

Afterwards J. Oszlanyi proposed comments from both coordinators of the pA7. M. Veskovic replied regarding the project DRRIF, where the call for proposals will be published shortly. Š.Chudoba continued that he understood this presentations as useful discussions in which the PA7+PA8+PA9 will continue also in the future. Also the concept of 3S shouldn't be omitted within the Danube strategy and he invited partners for cooperation. Slovakia's strength is in automobile industry, where over 260 suppliers in Slovakia (mainly SMEs) are involved and this is a chance for success. He informed also the audience about the conference on Scientific Support to Danube strategy, which will be held the next day in Bratislava, organized in cooperation with the JRC (EC), where would be a possibility to present how PA7+PA8+PA9 could cooperate also in the future.

Within the discussion to PA7, questions have been raised regarding Roma education on universities and their finalization of the studies. M. Veskovic replied with concrete examples of successful projects in Vojvodina and he mentioned also strong support for graduation within the Roma community itself. Š.Chudoba added that Slovakia does have about 8% of Roma population, where the main problem is elementary and higher education. There are ongoing projects from the structural funds in this respect. And this is a topic where we would like to cooperate with our neighbors. Further Š. Chudoba explained that the project DRRIF will be published soon, probably the following days. H.Habersack replied to a question related to the inclusion of biodiversity into the project DREAM, where this will be included mainly into the flooding areas between Vienna and Bratislava.

The meeting continued with the point any other business, where J.Oszlanyi informed the audience that the coordinators didn't find an agreement with the conclusions as presented before the meeting. The coordinators agreed that each of them will present his opinion.

## **Conclusions**

### **PA7 (Š.Chudoba):**

- Acknowledgment of the work of the coordinators and common interest of the SG in the preparation of projects
- SK presented four projects, which we would like elaborate further and inform possible partners about the development, as well as possibilities how to cooperate together

- Together with our Serbian partners within the PA7, we do offer common activities within the Danube strategy, as well as tackling the task of the coordination of the 3S strategy within the Danube region is a challenge for us

#### **PA7 (M.Veskovic)**

- The meeting showed that we are in a process of mutual learning how to be open and to identify common priorities
- Communication is important and prosperity is the objectives within the PA7, as well as the cooperation with people in the area of research and development
- Common activity will utilize the potential which we have and which could be used for common results

#### **PA9 (R.Hanak)**

- The door for cooperation is opened, with a suggestion that if we have common projects, they need to be discussed at the early stage, so that cooperation could start from the very early beginning.
- Education and employment of Roma population is the core of cooperation with the PA7+PA9.

#### **PA9 (J.Schick)**

- This meeting was an important step and the beginning of an important process for the planning and assessment of common activities. There is a need to work together, the direction is good and the cooperation with international organizations is the path how to continue.

#### **PA8 (D.Karaic)**

- In the PA there is no exclusivity for projects, no overlapping; it is the question of good communication and the improvement of complementarily in our activities.

#### **PA8 (H.P. Herdlitschka)**

- Support for competitiveness is very important within the Danube region; this has as a result prosperity of the region and the whole Danube area and could be gained through mutual cooperation.

Finally the **representative of the European Commission (DG Regio) E. Nüssmüller** expressed her appreciation to the Slovak side for organizing the event and stated that there have been a lot of good ideas to be followed in the future (best possibility is the Danube Forum meeting in October in Bucharest).

J.Oszlanyi concluded the working meeting in the scheduled time.


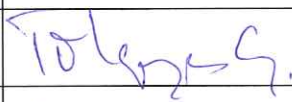

In Bratislava 17 May 2013

Minutes recorded: Sandra Salamonová (Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport SR)

## Participants

**Joint PA7 SG, PA8 SG and PA9 SG Meeting**  
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### PA9

No.	Name	State	Signature
1	Eva Nussmüller	EC	
2	Mirko Ožegović	Serbia	
3	Ludmila Pavlov	Moldova	
4	Carolina Prisăcaru	Moldova	
5	Ivana Radonova	Bulgaria	
6	Anton Simonič	Slovenia	
7	Dana Carmen Stroie	Romania	
8	Júlia Štěpánková	Slovakia	
9	Ivana Šučur	Montenegro	
10	Gabriella Tölgyes	Hungary	
11	Zoica Vlăduț	Romania	
12	Nevena Vraneš	Serbia	
13	Slavica Vučić	Bosnia and Herzegovina	
14	Łukasz Wardyn	EC	
15			
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### PA9

No.	Name	State	Signature
1	Roland Hanak	Austria	
2	Ion Gumene	Moldova	
3	Jürgen Schick	Austria	
4	Rolf Ackermann	Germany	
5	Dario Baron	Croatia	
6	Ester Bergmann	Austria	
7	Carmen Clapan	Romania	
8	Zoia Cojocar	Moldova	
9	Ulrike Damyanovic	ETF	
10	Catherine Danielopol-Hofer	Austria	
11	Katarina Denčić	Serbia	
12	Puia Dobre	Romania	
13	Aida Durić	Bosnia and Herzegovina	
14	Ljiljana Džuver	Republic of Serbia	
15	Jiřina Fryčová	Czech Republic	
16	Diana Grösslova	Czech Republic	
17	Sandulescu Ioana Felicia	Romania	
18	TANJA DEDOVIC	IO M	



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### PA9




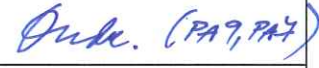




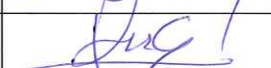

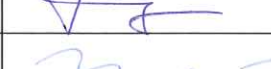
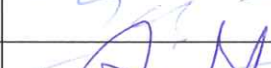
No.	Name	State	Signature
1	Katarina Ivanković Knežević	Croatia	
2	Genoveva Jecheva	Bulgaria	
3	Drahuša Kalmanová	Slovakia	<i>Ken</i>
4	Christina Kasparyan	Bulgaria	<i>Chp</i>
5	Tobias Kazich	Germany	
6	Stefan Keersmaecker	EC	
7	Klaus Körner	EC	
8	Anja Krabatsch	EC	
9	Jörg Leitner	Austria	
10	Elise Lindner	Austria	<i>Elise Lindner</i>
11	Loredana Maravić	Croatia	<i>Loredana</i>
12	Luminita Matei	ETF	
13	Hartmut Mattes	Germany	<i>Hggs</i>
14	Kalin Minev	Bulgaria	
15	Jörg Mirtl	Austria	<i>h mirtl</i>
16	Georg Moser	Germany	
17	Ljiljana Mugosa	Montenegro	
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## Participants



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No.	Name	State	Signature
1	AUXTOVA LUCIA	SR	 PA9
2	TANJA BOGNER	AUSTRIA	 PA9
3	Anga Kratoch	Belgium	 PA9
4	ANTONIE ONDROUCHOVA	CZECH REPUBLIC	 Dubk. (PA9, PA7)
5	ANETTA SZILAGYI	HUNGARY	 Szilagyi Anetta
6	Molnar Zoltan	Hungary	 Zoltan Molnar
7	DRAGOS MARCU	Romania	 Marcu Dragos
8	Rumjana Hilpert	Germany	 Hilpert Rumjana
9	JONATHAN LOEFFLER	Germany	 Loeffler Jonathan
10	POPESCU SORIN	ROMANIA	 Popescu Sorin
11	KATARINA OBRAĐOVIC STAHONIC	SERBIA	 Stahonic Katarina
12	MILAN SOLAJA	SERBIA	 Solaja Milan
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