

3rd ANNUAL FORUM EUSDR 2014

we grow together **TOGETHER WE GROW**

Empowered for a prosperous and inclusive Danube Region

The Annual Forum is the main event of the year for the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, assembling its stakeholders from the whole Danube area to give strategic direction, exchange and showcase opinions and experiences, and to discuss vital questions of the Strategy's prospects and challenges.

Date	26 & 27 June 2014
Venue	Vienna City Hall
Organisers	European Commission City and Province of Vienna (Austria) Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Austria

General topic

The Danube Region testifies to the undiminished vitality of the European integration process. The still different degrees of political and economic integration into the European Union reflect the distinct socio-economic heterogeneity of the region, which is both a challenge and an opportunity.

we grow together stands for the European goal of economic, territorial and social cohesion that is particularly relevant for a sustainable development of the Danube area. Integration of the Danube region in this sense has the ambition to jointly create a region which is characterised by shared prosperity, inclusiveness and equal opportunities.

TOGETHER WE GROW consequently stands for the conviction that the process of integration will be for the benefit of everybody involved, that inclusive development is a guarantor for peace and well-being, and that cooperation will contribute considerably to the growth and international competitiveness of the Danube region.

At the EUSDR Annual Forum 2014 we will look at this twofold topic from different perspectives, touching in particular on the following aspects:

- Inclusive, sustainable growth as a focus and prerequisite of prosperity
- Multi-stakeholder European policies for social inclusion and competitiveness
- Governance as a criterion of success for the EUSDR

Inclusive, sustainable growth as a focus and prerequisite of prosperity

The financial and economic crisis has had a disproportionately negative effect on many countries in the Danube Region. Against this backdrop, the EUSDR can become a catalyst for accelerated recovery, growth and employment by contributing towards deeper economic integration and cohesion in the Danube Region. However, in order to achieve dynamism and prosperity, the aspects of inclusiveness, competitiveness and ecological sustainability must be understood as being equally important for a balanced development. By adding emphasis to the social dimension and the creation of jobs, the conference will establish a strong thematic link with the objectives of Europe 2020, i.e. sustainable growth, employment, education and the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

Multi-stakeholder European policies for an integrated and competitive Danube Region

Inclusive, sustainable growth will result from policies that are conceived and delivered in partnership of government, business and civil society – be it equality strategies to combat social exclusion, investment in education and employment opportunities or high-value services of general interest. Finding innovative solutions at the interface of different policy areas (such as labour market, innovation and entrepreneurship policies, social and educational policies, etc.) and strengthening the capacities of actors and institutions are key to successfully addressing major challenges in the Danube region. Representing the successful interplay of sub-state, national and European policy levels, the instruments and priorities of the EU Structural and Investment Funds can contribute much to this agenda and the EUSDR implementation.

Governance as a criterion of success for the EUSDR

On a macro-regional level, a “smart” and inclusive governance model promises reinforced dynamic and shared ownership in the process of implementing the Danube Region Strategy. In spring 2014, the European Commission will conduct a discussion process regarding the governance structures for European macro-regions that is to result in a Communication to the European institutions. Thus the Vienna Annual Forum 2014 offers a timely occasion to address questions of EUSDR governance itself: Who is to assume political leadership for the Strategy? How and who is leading the overall and day-to-day implementation of the Strategy? Who shall be the voice of the EUSDR vis-à-vis external parties? What is needed to ensure that the people in the Danube Region will be mobilised, activated and motivated to become partners in support of the Strategy and the implementation of its goals?

Day 1 – overview of sessions and topics

12:00	registration	welcome and registration
12:30	come together	networking lunch
14:00	conference opening	<i>we grow together</i> TOGETHER WE GROW
14:40	plenary session 1	<i>danube potentials</i> MIND THE GAP
16:00	coffee break	
16:30	plenary session 2	<i>danube challenges</i> INVEST IN PEOPLE
18:00	end of conference day 1	
19:30	gala dinner	<i>danube influences</i> TASTE VIENNA

Day 2 – overview of sessions and topics

09:00	plenary session 3	<i>danube cosmos</i> INSPIRED BY DIVERSITY
09:30	parallel actions (a)	<i>danube cosmos</i> READY FOR ACTION (a)
10:30	coffee break	
11:00	parallel actions (b)	<i>danube cosmos</i> READY FOR ACTION (b)
12:00	parallel actions (c)	<i>danube cosmos</i> READY FOR ACTION (c)
13:00	business lunch	
14:00	plenary session 4	<i>danube prospects</i> FACILITATE NEW GOVERNANCE
15:30	closing session	<i>danube thanks</i> AWARD & ANNUAL FORUM 2015
16:00	end of forum	

Day 1 – overview of actions and actors

Time	Session	Action	Actors	Surrounding
14:00	conference opening	3-4 opening speeches	P	EX
14:40	plenary session 1	1 opening statement 1 keynote, 4 discussants	E E P	EX
16:00	break			
16:30	plenary session 2	1 opening statement 1 keynote, 4 discussants	E E P	EX

Day 2 – overview of actions and actors

Time	Session	Action	Actors	Surrounding
09:00	plenary session 3	1 keynote 4-5 interviews	E E, A	EX
09:30	parallel actions (a)	WS, WS, WS, WS SC, SC, MA, MA, CZ, CZ	A, P, E E, A, P	EX
10:30	break			
11:00	parallel actions (b)	WS, WS, WS, WS SC, SC, MA, MA, CZ, CZ	A, P, E E, A, P	EX
12:00	parallel actions (c)	WS, WS, WS, WS SC, SC, MA, MA, CZ, CZ	A, P, E E, A, P	EX
13:00	lunch			
14:00	plenary session 4	1 report EUSDR 1 report ministers 3-4 discussants	E P P, E	EX
15:30	closing session	award ceremony 3-4 closing remarks	P, E, A	EX
16:00	end of forum			

EX = Danube Exhibition
WS = Workshop
SC = Speakers Corner

CZ = Coaching Zone
MA = Match making Area

P = Politician (Speaker, Discussant)
E = Expert (Speaker, Discussant)
A = Attendee

Detailed programme

DAY 1: Thursday, 26 June 2014

Morning: informal meeting of Ministers (of Foreign Affairs)

12:00 opening registration

12:30 networking lunch

14:00 conference opening
***we grow together* TOGETHER WE GROW**

Welcome & introduction *by conference moderator*

- **Greg Clark**, city and regional development advisor, London

Opening speeches *by politicians*

- **Johannes Hahn**, Member of the European Commission
- **Sebastian Kurz**, Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs
- **Michael Häupl**, Mayor and Governor of Vienna
- **N.N.**, representative Annual Forum host 2013, Romania

The Danube Tag Cloud (or similar action or interaction with the audience)

- Introduced *by the moderator, done by participants*

14:40 plenary session 1

***danube potentials* MIND THE GAP**

Stock-taking of the development and the integration process in the Danube Region, identification and discussion of core challenges regarding dynamics of development, competitiveness and social inclusion, both at the socioeconomic level and with a view to regional governance; discourse on implications for regional policy

Topics for keynote & debate

- Convergence and difference – the state of the Danube Region (state of the region report, socioeconomic status quo, regional disparities and core challenges)
- Institutional capacities and good governance (institutional status quo, current national / regional governance and capacities)

Opening statement by a politician (1 Speaker)

Keynote by an expert (1 speaker)

Panel reflection and debate by politicians and experts (4 discussants)

16:00 coffee break

16:30 **plenary session2**

***danube challenges* INVEST IN PEOPLE**

Breaking down of core topic governance for social inclusion and competitiveness into concrete policy areas of specific relevance for regional policy and the development of the regions: education and training, brain drain / labour mobility, labour market opportunities in particular for young people – as issues that are often characterised by extensive local know-how and can often only be resolved co-operatively for the benefit of all.

Topics for keynote and debate

- School to work – education and qualification as leverage for prosperity (tackling early school leave and youth unemployment, vocational training, social innovation and social partnership models in the fields of education and active labour market policies)
- Labour mobility and brain-circulation (consequences of brain drain for regional development, measures to promote labour mobility in the region, mutual recognition of degrees / qualifications, etc.)

Opening statement by a politician (1 speaker)

Keynote by an expert (1 speaker)

Panel reflection and debate by politicians and experts (4 discussants)

18:00 end of conference day 1

19:30 **gala dinner**

***danube influences* TASTE VIENNA**

DAY 2: Friday, 27 June 2014

9:00	<p>plenary session 3 danube cosmos INSPIRED BY DIVERSITY</p> <p><i>The “Danube Cosmos” comprises a wide spectrum of parallel activities (see section “Characteristics of conference format, speakers and moderator”) that address specific focuses reflecting the thematic priority areas of the EUSDR; participants will have the possibility to pick and choose their individual morning programme depending on their particular interests.</i></p> <p>Impulse to underpin the subsequent work in the different settings by ‘public intellectual’ or inspirational figure with hands-on approach, e.g. from culture field (1 speaker)</p> <p>Interviews introducing the activities of the Danube Cosmos with exemplarily by speakers, presenters & workshop co-ordinators (4-5 actors)</p>
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9:30	<p>parallel activities danube cosmos READY FOR ACTION (slot a)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic workshops • Speakers’ corners • Best practice presentations at exhibition stands • Match-making areas • Coaching zones
<hr/>	
10:30	coffee break
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11:00	<p>parallel activities danube cosmos READY FOR ACTION (slot b)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic workshops • Speakers’ corners • Best practice presentations at exhibition stands • Match-making areas • Coaching zones
<hr/>	
12:00	<p>parallel activities danube cosmos READY FOR ACTION (slot c)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic workshops • Speakers’ corners • Best practice presentations at exhibition stands • Match-making areas • Coaching zones
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13:00	business lunch

14:00 plenary session 4

***danube prospects* FACILITATE NEW GOVERNANCE**

Perspectives on the further design of co-operation in the Danube Region with a view to institutionalisation, governance and funding possibilities

Report from the European Commission

Governance concepts for the implementation of macro-regional strategies

(status quo of discussion process co-ordinated by the Commission, perhaps also implementation status of ETC programme “Danube”; including Q&A with queries from “question board” – see below)

- *Representative of DG Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission*

Report from the informal meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs

The Vienna Declaration for Governance of the Danube Region

presentation of results, e.g. rotating presidency, role of NCPs, etc.

- by a politician (1 speaker)

Panel debate

on the Danube Region and the way forward

including questions asked by young journalists and screening of statements by conference participants – see below

- by outspoken political figures from EUSDR countries, current and former holders of senior positions (4-5 discussants)

15:30 closing session

***danube thanks* AWARD & ANNUAL FORUM 2015**

Danube Challenge award ceremony

answers to quiz questions revealed, award ceremony

- *N.N. winners*

Outlook: The EUSDR Annual Forum 2015

- *Peter Friedrich*, Minister for European and International Affairs of Baden-Württemberg, host of Annual Forum 2015

Conference closing by hosts

- Representative of Austrian federal government
- *Michael Häupl*, Mayor and Governor of Vienna

16:00 end of forum

ANNEXES

Why attend?

The EUSDR Annual Forum 2014 in Vienna

- **brings up the core issues of sustainable development in the Danube Region**
The three mutually reinforcing priorities of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Europe 2020) should help the Danube Region deliver high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. Social inclusion is a central challenge for a stable and balanced development of society.
- **focuses on policy areas of great relevance for regional and municipal policies**
The issues of education and training, labour mobility and housing policy involve basic human needs and call for efforts, not only on the part of national institutions, but in particular of cities and regions.
- **offers a platform for the development of partnerships and co-operation ventures**
Many of the issues addressed are of a transnational nature and hence require collaboration across national and institutional borders. The Annual Forum offers formats for the presentation of project ideas and the establishment of new partnerships linked to all the priority areas of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region
- **presents examples of good practice and allows for direct contact with their “architects”**
The conference will create a forum for know-how transfer that facilitates the presentation of different but proven policy approaches and co-operation models while providing an occasion to learn about details and to exchange practical experience.
- **engages with the real needs of participants**
The conference offers participants numerous occasions and formats to raise their most urgent concerns and to ask and receive answers to open questions.
- **serves as a kick-off for new and more intensive forms of co-operation**
Key decisions regarding the future governance structure of the EUSDR will be taken immediately prior to the conference and presented for the first time to the general public in the context of this event.
- **communicates information about future financing possibilities for co-operative projects**
The Annual Forum marks the beginning of a new EU programme period. Fundamental features of the new funding programmes will be sketched and explained during the conference.
- **is the event for establishing and cultivating personal contacts**
With its framework programme and numerous side events, this two-day conference will offer numerous opportunities to establish new contacts and maintain existing networks.

Characteristics of conference format, speakers and moderator

Format

The Annual Forum takes account of the geographic and socio-economic diversity of the Danube Region as well as of the broad thematic scope of the EUSDR. As a comprehensive annual meeting of all actors engaged in co-operation within the Danube Region, the conference offers space for *highly diversified thematic dialogue*. At the same time, the 3rd Annual Forum wants to encourage an intensified *focused discussion* on the central issues of prosperity, inclusion and governance.

For this reason, the conference combines three programme sections with different orientations:

Plenary sessions – focussing on social inclusion and competitiveness

(Plenary sessions 1+2, 26 June 2014, afternoon)

- Focused thematic discussion of key questions of the conference
- Compact and concise keynote presentations
- Open and constructive discourse between experts and regional stakeholders (politics, administration, business, civil society, etc.) in the Danube Region

Parallel activities – danube cosmos

(Plenary session 3 + parallel activities; 27 June 2014, morning)

- In-depth analysis and discussion reflecting the thematic pillars of the Strategy for the Danube Region and the work in the Priority Areas (format: expert workshop)
- Presentation of good practices, project results, study findings and new initiatives (formats: speakers' corner, exhibition, workshop, etc.)
- Presentation of planned projects and match-making forum (format: match-making session)
- Suggestions for the submission, implementation and financing of projects (formats: workshop, coaching zone)
- etc.

Plenary session – focussing on enhanced governance structures for the Danube Region

(Plenary session 4, 27 June 2014, afternoon)

- Presentation of the results of experts' and politicians' consultations on the future governance of the EUSDR
- Strategic discussion & interaction with the audience

Speakers & discussants in the plenary sessions

To allow for constructive exchanges between different stakeholder levels during the plenary formats, the panels should be composed according to the following criteria:

- active involvement of actors of the Strategy for the Danube Region at the level of regional policy and administration as well as civil society, economy, etc.
- optimised geographic balance of speakers and discussants
- optimised gender balance
- mixed panels to ensure discussions between politicians *and* experts, public administrators *and* civil society representatives, etc. (instead of panels exclusively consisting of experts or politicians)

The proposed formats for plenary and workshop sessions foster dialogue (brief inputs, reflection, open discussion etc. instead of prepared statements).

Moderator of the plenary sessions

Greg Clark is a city and regional development advisor, speaker and facilitator, with 20 years' experience, principally in leadership roles in city agencies in London, UK, and in international advisory roles with many cities / regions, governmental and inter-governmental organisations.

Activating elements (optional)

- **The Danube Challenge**
Quiz for all conference participants in the style of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" or the centrepiece Picture Challenge (e.g. at the beginning of the conference or in the context of the evening reception). Prizes will include trips to cities in the Danube Region, perhaps including tickets for regional cultural events
- **Tag cloud**
At the beginning of the conference, participants will be asked to text and send their core concerns as keywords – this will generate a tag cloud of priorities
- **Question board**
In the course of the conference, participants will be given the opportunity to note their questions to the representatives of the European Commission, in particular with regard to future governance and programme structures, financing, etc. on a bulletin board. During Session 4, the moderator will select individual questions and address these to Mr. Hahn / Mr. Wolfe.
- **Co-operation with OKTO (TV channel)**
During the conference, participants will be interviewed (and filmed) and asked about their main concerns; the statements will be edited overnight and screened during the Session 4 discussion. Alternatively or additionally, people from the Danube countries could also be

Preliminary version, as of 2014-02-04

interviewed on-site before the event – these statements could likewise be screened during the conference.

- **Online questionnaire**

In the run-up to the conference, persons who have registered for participation will receive an online questionnaire asking them about their views on the conference topic and their core concerns – the findings from the questionnaires will be put up for discussion by the moderator in the course of the conference.

Venue

- **Plenary sessions**

Festival Hall of Vienna City Hall

- **Danube Cosmos**

Parallel events in the Festival Hall (including orchestra bays), Coat-of-Arms Hall group (e.g. workshops in Rooms 317 and 319), perhaps also in the City Senate Hall

- **Conference catering**

In areas “Nordbüffet” (northern buffet), “Feststiege II” (Grand Staircase II), Steinsaal II (Stone Hall II) and – if warranted by the number of participants – also in the “Wappensaal” (Coat-of-Arms Hall)

- **Evening reception**

“Volkshalle” (People’s Hall) and “Arkadenhof” (Arcade Courtyard)