

## **European Union Strategy for the Danube Region**

### **Priority Area 9 "Investing in People and Skills" – EUSDR Youth Platform**

In 2013 the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs together with Interkulturelles Zentrum / NA Erasmus+: Youth in Action as well as the Hungarian National Agency for the Erasmus+: Youth in Action programme and the SALTO South East Europe RC started the planning of a *Youth Platform* within the EUSDR Priority Area 9 "Investing in People and Skills".

This **planning phase** included ongoing meetings between the above mentioned stakeholders in 2013 and 2014, a presentation of the Platform during the Yearly "TCP Seminar" of Erasmus+ National Agencies (Bonn 2013), a presentation during the International Open Space Conference of PA9 in December 2013, at workshops with representatives of Educational Ministries, Youth Ministries and Sport Ministries as well as Civil Society Organisations and formal education institutions as well as 2 preparation meetings in Vienna with Stakeholders and Facilitators (23/24 June and 16/17 September 2014)

Based on the planning phase the following **aims and objectives** were identified:

#### Aims:

- Contribution to the achievement of EU 2020 targets, in particular with regard to smart and inclusive growth
- Contribution to the "Education and Training 2020" strategic framework and its four strategic objectives
- Contribution to the improvement of labour markets and social inclusion in the Danube Region
- To foster partnerships at the interface of education (formal and non-formal), training and youth

#### Objectives

- Serve as meeting point between formal and non-formal learning institutions to share experiences
- Share good practice projects of cross-sectoral cooperation between formal and non-formal learning institutions
- Foster sharing of ideas and project development and explore possible funding opportunities within Erasmus+ or the Danube Transnational 2014-2020 or other funding instruments

The involved Erasmus+ Agencies as well as the SALTO SEE RC agreed to cooperate on the EUSDR Youth Platform on a long term basis till the end of the current Erasmus+ programme (2020) in the framework of Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA). This ensures sustainability of the platform for the next years and allows for flexibility to take into account the needs of the educational sector in the Danube Region.

#### **Activities related to the EUSDR Youth Platform 2015:**

##### Participation Day , Castle Esterhazy, Eisenstadt on 25 June 2014

Organised by the Foster Europe Foundation this day brought together civil society organisations and decision makers to exchange ideas and present projects in 4 thematic villages. The Youth Platform was discussed in one of the workshops of the event.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> EUSDR Annual Forum "We grow together – together we grow" on 26/27 June 2014 in Vienna

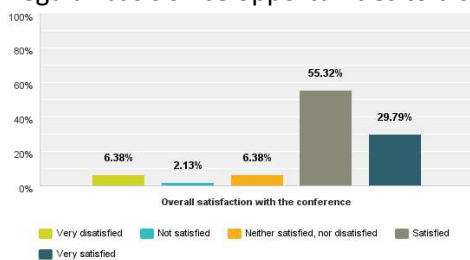
The development of the EUSDR Youth Platform was presented during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Forum within the PA9 workshop "Investing in inclusive and innovative education and training for better socio-economic outcomes".

### 3<sup>rd</sup> PA9 Stakeholder Conference on 6/7 November 2014 in Vienna, Steering Group Meeting of PA9 (5 November 2014)

The EUSDR Youth Platform was presented during the PA9 Steering Group Meeting and was discussed during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Stakeholder Conference in the framework of the thematic working groups. Several participants of the Stakeholder Conference also joined the EUSDR Youth Platform.

### 1<sup>st</sup> EUSDR Youth Platform

Taking into account the aims and objectives the overall theme of the 1<sup>st</sup> EUSDR Youth Platform (15-17 December 2014, Vienna) was "**Learning Pathways to Social Cohesion**". The conference generated substantial interest in the region; more than 300 people applied in total of which 65 participants from both the formal and non-formal educational sector representing all EUSDR Countries were selected for participation. Participants expressed a great need to establish the platform on a semi regular basis since opportunities to discuss common, cross-sectoral initiatives and projects are



sparse. The introduction to funding opportunities (Erasmus+ and Danube Transnational 2014-2020) was very much welcomed by the participants and fostered the planning of common projects. Participants of the event also expressed a wish to create an actual online based EUSDR Youth Platform highlighting Initiatives in the Region. The feasibility of this will be discussed during the evaluation meeting by the stakeholders. In general the activity can be described as a

success based on the positive feedback of the participants.

### Planned Activities related to the EUSDR Youth Platform 2015 / Next steps:

#### Evaluation Meeting - 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2015

Meeting of stakeholders to plan the 2<sup>nd</sup> EUSDR Youth Platform

- Discuss thematic focus based on the evaluation results of the 1<sup>st</sup> EUSDR Youth Platform
- Explore the feasibility and focus of a web based EUSDR Youth Platform
- Explore the possibility to include stakeholders from the labour market and/or decision makers in future EUSDR events

#### Dissemination and Promotion of the Youth Platform

The Platform will be presented during the next EUSDR Annual Forum in Ulm in 2015 and during NA meetings in the framework of Erasmus+ wherever possible.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> EUSDR Youth Platform

Based on the outcomes of the evaluation meeting a 2<sup>nd</sup> Youth Platform meeting is envisioned for October/November 2015 in Vienna.