

EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION
REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

PA7 Implementation report for period 07/2015 to 06/2016

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12th PA7 Steering Group Meeting
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Summary of progress achieved during the reporting period

- PA7 continued in its efforts focused on steering a number of stakeholders in higher education, research and ICT in the Danube Region towards common EUSDR objectives and specific PA7 targets.
- The most intensive work of PA7 coordinators and the Steering Group is focused on dissemination, networking and creation of the framework that will boost motivation and commitment of stakeholders to the EUSDR.

Progress of the PA7

➤ Progress on policy level:

The main PA7 activities remained focused on a **wide dissemination and policy level advocacy for the EUSDR, PA7 targets and obtaining support for the most relevant PA7 actions.**

Main policy achievements: rising visibility of PA7 targets and actions; enhancing cooperation among DR countries focused on more effective spending of existing resources.

➤ Concrete achievements:

- German Ministry of Education and Sciences (BMBF) “Danube Call”
- Establishment of Danube Funding Coordination Network (DFCN)
- Multilateral call for funding scientific and technological cooperation projects in the Danube Region with participation of AT, CZ, RS and SK.

➤ Policy lessons learned:

- Active participation of national representatives in the work of SG and its WGs has not recorded much of a progress in the last year; not all EUSDR member countries participate actively in the SG, attend meetings, or even take active part in the e-mail correspondence between meetings
- Although some countries still lack active participation in the work of the SG, their stakeholders manage to find the way to take active part in the PA7 projects, initiatives, RIS3 platform and/or other activities
- The activities of the flagship projects and other supporting projects are important for the implementation of activities on the ground. Successor projects to those ending or their prolongation (e.g. Danube-INCO.NET ends on 31/12/2016) need to be planned and support of all actors is needed (after the funding of the Coordination and Support Action in FP7, no such action is foreseen in Horizon 2020; an initiative under the Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence work programme for example could be envisaged).

- **Progress on PA7 targets and actions:** targets updated, actions to be updated
- **Progress on activities:**
 - Developed new web site (www.danubeknowledgesociety.eu) and PA7 flyers
 - Initiation of the idea regarding a COST targeted network for the Danube Region in coordination with Danube-INCO.NET project
 - Participation at various EUSDR/regional/international events and meetings
 - Organisation of 10th and 11th PA7 SG meeting
- **EUSDR strategic projects:** PA7 Steering Group and the PACs are still in the phase of choosing the approach in EUSDR strategic project labelling. In the future period, there is a need to distinguish labelling of PA7 flagship projects and EUSDR strategic projects and the responsibility of the actors in this process.

Achievements of PA7 in terms of funding

- ✓ On May 30, 2016 the **Danube Funding Coordination Network (DFCN)** was established with the primary objective to coordinate and synchronise national, bilateral and regional efforts in the DR in order to foster multilateral collaboration in R&I. This should lead to the implementation of concrete joint funding actions for STI activities.
- ✓ Programme for Funding **Multilateral Scientific and Technological Cooperation Projects** in the Danube Region was successfully approved by 4 participating countries (AT, CZ, RS, SK) - the purpose was opening up the current bilateral agreements towards multilateral cooperation in the DR for better coordination and joint strategic use of financial resources.
- ✓ Under the umbrella of **Danube-INCO.NET** project much has been done in regard to developing mechanisms for recognition and labelling of the most relevant project proposals for the EUSDR and PAs. Also the project strongly supported policy dialogue, establishment of Danube Technology Transfer Centres and coordination of funding mechanisms.
- ✓ **Flagship projects** running under the PA7 are at the different phases of their implementation covered by various funding sources serve as a good practice to apply to large scale projects dealing with main PA7 targets.

Governance of PA7

- The coordination of the PA7 is continually led jointly by Slovakia and Serbia.
- The PAC support teams in Serbia and Slovakia support joint governance, coordination and communication with SG members and other stakeholders of the PA7.
- In the Slovak Republic in August 2015 - Dr Jaroslava Szüdi, Assistant Professor from the University of Economics in Bratislava joined the PAC support team in Slovakia.
- In the Republic of Serbia from September 2015 holder of the TA Grant became University of Belgrade (while in previous period it was University of Novi Sad) and the new PACs supporting team was established.
- To maintain good coordination with main stakeholders and strengthen links among SG members, both PACs have undertaken a number of activities. PAC teams, some of the most active SG members and support teams were very active on promotion of PA7 targets and actions fulfilment.

Coordination and cooperation activities

- one of PA7 flagship projects was submitted within the EU Erasmus+ Programme – Call for proposals EACEA 13/2014 “**National Authorities for Apprenticeship**” and it was recommended for co-financing until 12/2016.
- Close collaboration with the **EC JRC** speeded up activities regarding Smart Specialization in the DR, as well as Danube Innovation Partnership, and Reference Data and Service Infrastructure for the Danube Region
- Collaboration with **Danube-INCO.NET project** and its partners on various policy and communication activities.
- **Cooperation possibilities of the newly established DFCN with JPIs** (Joint Programming Initiatives, i.e. JPI Urban Europe, JPI MY,BL) as discussed during the joint Workshop with Danube-INCO.NET in May 2016 in Berlin.
- Cooperation with the **University of Economics in Bratislava** in order to teach students of the Faculty of National Economy about the EUSDR and other macroregional strategies.

Activities for involvement of stakeholders and civil society

- S3 Workshop “S3 DESIGN LEARNING WORKSHOP” organized by JRC and Danube-INCO. NET project in Chisinau, Moldova on February 18-19 2016
- A workshop on setting up a DFCN on May 30 and 31, 2016 in Berlin, Germany. The event was jointly organised by the Danube-INCO.NET project and the coordinators and actors of Priority Area 7 (PA7) of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). Local organisers were DLR Project Management Agency and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.
- established cooperation with the NGO European Movement Serbia
- cooperation with Slovak Embassy in Serbia
- cooperation with the University of Economics in Bratislava
- Participation on various seminars, workshops and conferences in the country and abroad

PA7 workplan for 1 year

➤ **Policy development activities**

- Ministers for competitiveness and R&D meeting - Joint ministerial statement
- 5th Annual Forum – workshop
- Outline of the WGs activities
- Proposal of the monitoring of effective targets implementation
- New common project of technical assistance for Slovak and Serbian PAC

➤ **Activities related to Strategic projects**

- SG members and Flagship project coordinators approached with a survey on strategic projects
- Decision on further steps and responsibilities (possibility to establish ad hoc WG)
- Strategic projects labelling

➤ **Activities related to other projects**

- Flagship projects, Danube-INCO.NET
- Technical Assistance for PA7 coordination and facilitation (SK+RS)
- New DTP Call – promotion activities
- Multilateral Call – promotion activities

PA7 workplan for 1 year

➤ **Coordination and cooperation activities**

- Launching and evaluation of multilateral Danube call
- COST - promoting common platform
- Preparation of project proposals for DTP

➤ **Activities for involvement of stakeholders and civil society**

- Subjects/seminars/workshops/conferences at universities focused on EU macroregional strategies – involvement of students and young researchers
- EUSDR presentations and popularisation of its activities at various events

➤ **Publicity and communication activities**

- New webpage released and updated
- Flyers and brochure prepared and distributed
- Contributions at various events - workshops, seminars, conferences

• **Management activities**

- 12th PA7 SG meeting and DFCN meeting
- 5th Annual forum, Bratislava
- Workshop with stakeholders during Week of Science in November, Bratislava

Thank you for your attention!