



EUSDR PA7 Newsletter – Wrapping Up the Year 2020 and Wishing You Happy and Healthy Holidays!

Dear readers,

the year 2020 has brought unexpected challenges and opportunities. It has been an intense year for all of us, teaching us the value of professional and casual collaboration in the most adverse circumstances. In spite of all these PA7 team with the support of various stakeholders managed to accomplish many tasks and activities that are summarized in our first pilot Newsletter.

We hope you will find it an interesting reading and we would welcome any feedback from your side.

On behalf of both PA7 coordination teams, we would like to wish you Happy Holidays and a successful New Year!

PA7 NEWS

PA7 – new project for priority area coordination approved

The Danube Transnational Programme provides co-financing to the activities carried out by the Priority Area Coordinators (PACs) of the EUSDR. PA7 team submitted a project proposal aimed at ensuring the implementation of a stable and effective governance system for EUSDR PA7.

The specific objectives of the project are supporting the Steering group (SG) in implementing EUSDR PA7, supporting policy development and policy initiatives, and enhancing coordination between PA7 actors and encouraging involvement of key stakeholders in the PA7 activities.

Specific PA7 activities are co-financed by the Danube Transnational Programme under the specific objective 'Support to the Governance and Implementation of the EUSDR'.

Project duration: 01/2020-12/2022 (36 months)

Project partners: Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information – Slovakia (ERDF) and University of Belgrade – Serbia (IPA)

Total project budget: 352.487,88 €





PA7 Steering group meetings in 2020 | 3 June and 9 November 2020 | Online events

The 19th PA7 Steering group meeting was organized on 3rd June, as a joint meeting with Priority Area 8 (Competitiveness of Enterprises). The meeting was focused on the exchange of knowledge and discussion regarding possible ways for cooperation related to the Action plan implementation.

On 9th November, 2020, PA7 organized the 20th Steering Group meeting. It was focused on the implementation of the PA7 activities, revitalization of the working groups, and exploring possibilities for macro-regional cooperation. The meeting was attended by the participants from 11 Danube region countries, EC DG Regio, Joint Research Centre and Danube Strategy Point.

All related documents and presentation are available [here](#) (Section SG Meetings).

Survey on Horizon 2020 (non)participation in the Danube Region

In order to implement the updated PA7 Action plan and contribute to enhancing the participation of the Danube countries in ERA; the PA7 coordination team has prepared two questionnaires focused on mapping the (non)participation of Danube region researchers in Horizon 2020.

The questionnaires were open for 3 months (1 September- 30 November 2020) and they were circulated among the relevant stakeholders with the support of EUSDR National Coordinators, Priority Area Coordinators, SG members, Danube Strategy Point, Danube Rectors Conference and Horizon 2020 Implementation Bodies.

One of these questionnaires was addressing policy makers, the other was prepared for Horizon 2020 national contact points, implementing agencies, applicants and participants.

The received answers shall help us map the main reasons for participation, respectively barriers to non-participation in projects under this programme and possibly to enhance participation in the upcoming Horizon Europe.

The first preliminary results of this analysis will be presented at the beginning of 2021.



EUSDR NEWS

Publication of the New EUSDR Action Plan and other strategic documents

Despite the pandemic state, the EUSDR was able to jointly push forward several crucial actions and processes. The [EUSDR Action Plan was successfully revised](#), the governance of the EUSDR, aiming to support a more efficient implementation of the Strategy, was further developed; the [Governance Architecture Paper](#) was published and the [National Coordinators Rules of Procedure](#) were updated.

In 2020 also other key documents have been released, such as [ECs 3rd report on the implementation of macro-regional strategies](#), the new [EUSDR Communication Strategy](#), as well as the [EUSDR Implementation Report 2019](#).

9th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region | 22 October 2020 | Online

Under the [Croatian EUSDR Presidency](#) the first completely online [9th EUSDR Annual Forum](#) was held, with more than 730 participants. In the [Joint Statement](#) of the Ministers responsible for the EU Strategy for the Danube Region expressed their support for the EUSDR, the Embedding process and for EUSDR activities in fostering the EU enlargement process.

Starting with November 2020 [Slovakia has taken over the Presidency of the EUSDR](#) for 2021 and will continue to focus on the [Embedding of the EUSDR into EU Programmes](#) as one of the main priorities of the Strategy in 2021.

Information on the 7th Danube Participation Day, held back-to-back with the Annual Forum, is available [here](#).

DANUBIUS AWARDS 2020 CEREMONY | 6 November 2020 | Online

The Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Research (BMBFW) and the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM) honored the scientists of the Danube Region for their commitment to their scientific work during the [Danubius Awards 2020 Virtual Ceremony](#) which took place on 6th of November 2020.

The scope of the Danubius Awards has always been to give visibility and recognition to the scientists' community of the Danube Region. In the framework of the EUSDR they represent a chance to highlight the potential of the region in the area of sciences and research. You can find more information about the Danubius Awards 2020 Ceremony on the [IDM website](#).



RELATED MACRO-REGIONAL AND EU INITIATIVES

Meeting of Macro-regional Coordinators | 28 April 2020 | Online event

PA7 members participated at a meeting of macro-regional coordinators discussing common challenges caused by the COVID-19 crisis. The aim of the meeting was to identify possible areas of cooperation across macro-regional strategies (MRS) to mobilise support for regional response to the economic challenges caused by the current health crisis and related preventive measures. Moreover, the meeting was used to start building joint initiatives between all four MRSs.

PA7 leading the macroregional Task Force on Digital education

PA7 coordination team with the strong support of PA9 took the leadership in the newly established MRS Task Force on Digital Education with the aim to share and learn from good practices applied across macro-regions and to take joint initiatives on, for instance, pedagogical measures; technical solutions; usage of different funding sources, etc.

The Task Force has prepared and circulated a [Questionnaire on collecting the Good practice on Remote-schooling MRSs/Digital education in the context of the COVID-19 crisis](#) and in these days works on the publication of the received good practices.

#EUvsVirus Initiative

The European Commission's [#EUvsVirus](#) initiative aimed to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic has proved to be effective. Thanks to the pan-European Hackathon in April 2020, 2,164 multidisciplinary and international teams were formed, in order to collectively develop innovative solutions. The 120 best teams of the Hackathon participated at the matchmaking event in May, which was the biggest matchmaking event ever organised in the world. During the EU Matchathon 2,235 new partnerships were created by matching the winning teams with more than 500 partners from the public and private sectors. This EU initiative was launched in collaboration with the 27 Member States and some associated countries. PA7 helped promote the initiative and actively participated in the Hackathon.

Please find the final report of this initiative [here](#).



Season Greetings



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