



## **EUSDR | PA9 - Investing in People and Skills**

### **Work Programme "Education and training, labour market and marginalized communities"**

May 2019

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

The PA9 Work Programme is envisioned to be implemented in particular through the proceedings of PA9 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 Programme will require commitment and concerted effort from all stakeholders directly involved in the process.

#### **II. Overall objectives and activities**

In efforts to meet the objectives of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and in accordance with GAC Conclusions of 13 April 2011, PA9 plans to engage in the following activities:

##### **Coordination**

- Fulfilling tasks towards the EC and relevant ministries in the participating states in regards to reporting, participating in working meetings etc.
- Establishing and maintaining a network consisting of the national counterparts relevant to the Priority Area Coordinators.
- Identifying the possible relevant stakeholders, with particular emphasis on Project Leaders.
- Finding agreement on realistic and feasible targets relevant to the macro-region with the involvement of the Commission and all relevant stakeholders.

##### **Implementation**

- Initiating new projects and initiatives in the eight related policy areas.
- Providing assistance to Lead Partners in order to facilitate the implementation of projects and further development as well as screening of project ideas. This assistance emphasizes available European funding opportunities and makes use of already existing sources of information.
- Compiling a list of on-going projects and possible project ideas under the Priority Area. This list is continuously updated during the implementation and also included into the Progress Reports.
- Organising thematic (policy) workshops.
- Fulfilling tasks with regard to specific EUSDR funding facilities.

##### **Communication**

- Providing relevant information on the Strategy to the citizens, including to associate civil society concerned and to promote public awareness.
- Participating in relevant conferences and events primarily within the Danube Region but if relevant also in other countries.

**Overall outputs and events to date**

in cooperation with SG (please refer below for specific work area related activities)

- **PA9 Progress reports** 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 (2x), 2017, 2018
- 16 meetings of PA9 **Steering Group (June, Dec. 2011; June Nov. 2012; May, Oct. 2013; May, Nov. 2014; May 2015, March, Oct. 2016; June, Oct. 2017; June, Nov. 2018, May 2019)**
- Revision of the Action Plan of PA9
- 6 **Stakeholder Fora**, each with up to 160 international participants, partially Minister's level: June 2012, December 2013, November 2014, October 2016 in Vienna, October 2017 in Chisinau and November 2018 in Vienna
- Contribution to the **Thematic Events** in the framework of the Annual Forums of the EUSDR: November 2012, October 2013, June 2014, November 2015, November 2016, October 2017, October 2018
- 5 **Thematic Conferences on School Cooperation** (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)
- **Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF) Participation Day** (in cooperation with PA10): June 2014, October 2017 (Workshop Roma Empowerment), October 2018
- **Establishment of up to 8 thematic working groups**, following 8 actions, depending on commitment of DRC, 2012 and ongoing
- **Strategic meeting** of Working Groups related to education (Working Groups 1, 3, 4, 5), October 2012
- **Mapping and labelling** of existing and new projects and initiatives, 2011 and ongoing
- **Identification of 5 Strategic Projects**, 2016
- Agreement on and further development of PA9 **targets and objectives**, 2011
- **Revision of PA9 targets** and actions, 2016
- PAC participation in relevant events on EU and regional level (e.g. **Annual Fora, NCP-PAC meetings, ERI SEE, CECE**), ongoing
- Running of **PA9 website**, ongoing ([www.peopleandskills-danuberegion.eu](http://www.peopleandskills-danuberegion.eu))
- **Social Media** (Informing stakeholders about events, calls and other activities through social media channels such as Facebook)
- **PA9 Project Folder** (1<sup>st</sup> edition June 2014, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition June 2015, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition September 2016, 4<sup>th</sup> edition September 2018)
- Position paper "**Proposals for integrating education and training and ensuring a social dimension in the future programme**" for the ETC DANUBE Transnational 2014-2020
- Workshop Conclusions on "**Investing in inclusive and innovative education and training for better socio-economic outcomes**", June 2014
- Conclusions of the Strategic Meeting "**Fostering Cooperation and Institutional Capacity for Roma Integration in the Danube Region**", Vienna, 9-10 October 2014
- Workshop Conclusions in the framework of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of the EUSDR on "**Enhancing skills and competences through educational cooperation**", "**Labour Market Know-How Exchange in the Danube Region**" and "**Roma and Sinti: Participation as a key to empowerment**", Ulm, November 2015
- **EUSDR Youth Platform**, 2015 – ongoing
- Second, third and fourth meeting of **ESF Managing Authorities** in the Danube Region, Munich, 7/8 July 2016; Vienna 4/5 May 2017; Bratislava 17/20 September 2018
- **Capitalization Strategy** of the Danube Transnational Programme **Pole 9 "Educational Governance"** and **Pole 10 "Migration and Inclusive Governance"**
- Meeting of **Coordinators of Social Policy in Macro-Regional Strategies** (EUSDR, Baltic Sea Strategy and EUSALP) to

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|   | <p>strengthen the social dimension within macro-regional strategies, Bratislava 20/21 September 2018; Meeting of PA9 EUSDR, Baltic Sea Strategy and EUSALP with ESF Committees, Brussels December 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint proposals of the Priority Areas 7_8_9 of the EUSDR on "Better embedding of the EUSDR's prosperity pillar into suitable funding instruments within the new MFF (2021-2017) (November 2018)</li> <li>• Meeting <b>Macro-regional strategies as strategic frameworks for ESIF post-2020'</b> on 27 March 2019 in Brussels</li> <li>• <b>'Danube Region Monitor': Preparation Workshop</b> in December 2017, contracting study September 2018; Workshop Discussion of Results in May 2019</li> </ul>                      |
| <p><b>Next steps and planned outputs</b><br/>(please refer below for specific work area related activities)</p> | <p><u>2019</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revision of the Action Plan of PA9</li> <li>• EUSDR National Coordinators and Priority Area Coordinators Joint Meeting, May 2019</li> <li>• Workshop 'Solving future skills challenges in the Danube region', June 2019</li> <li>• Continuous Development of the <b>'Danube Region Monitor'</b></li> <li>• PAC Participation at the <b>8<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum in June 2019</b> in Bucharest</li> <li>• PAC Participation in other relevant events on EU and regional level</li> <li>• Facilitating the development of new projects</li> <li>• <b>Mapping and labelling</b> of new projects and initiatives</li> <li>• <b>Communication activities</b> (Running of PA9 website, project folder, ...)</li> </ul> |

### III. 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, 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>1</sup>

<sup>1</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.

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| <p><b>Related PA9 Targets</b></p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to improved educational outcomes and relevant skills and competences in the Danube Region, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, active citizenship and well-being</li> <li>• Contribution to increased quality and efficiency of education, training and labour market systems</li> <li>• Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Key projects, outputs and events to date</b></p> | <p><u>Cooperation organisations, platforms and networks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2004 – ongoing: <b>Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE)</b> - Regional Platform for Cooperation in Education and Training; Annual work programmes; Specific activity: Establishment of an International ERI SEE Secretariat in Belgrade in 2017 (Lead/Chair: RS) – www.erisee.org</li> <li>• 2007 – 2021: <b>Central European Cooperation in Education and Training (CECE)</b>; Renewal of Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2013 (Rotating lead: AT, CZ, HU, SK, SI)</li> <li>• Ongoing: <b>European Training Foundation (ETF)</b>; Annual Work Programmes</li> <li>• 2008 – March 2014: <b>Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital of the Regional Cooperation Council</b> (Lead: RO, AT, HR)</li> </ul> <p><u>Attractiveness and quality of VET</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2018 – 2021: Quality Development in Vocational Training (Lead: KulturKontakt Austria (AT)) January 2018 - December 2018: <b>Inclusive VET – Career Guidance and Counselling to support access to relevant education and training pathways</b> (Lead: KulturKontakt Austria (AT))</li> <li>• 2015 – 2017: <b>FairGuidance</b> (Lead: DE – ttg team training GmbH)</li> <li>• November 2015: <b>Removing Obstacles to the Recognition of Academic Qualifications in the Region</b> – Seminar on the establishment of a fast-track procedure for the recognition of academic qualifications (Lead: ERI SEE and RCC)</li> <li>• September 2014 – August 2017: <b>DESK – Develop, Evaluate and Safe Knowledge – Knowledge Continuity in Vocational Education</b> (Lead: DE – Landesakademie Esslingen)</li> <li>• 2014 – 2017: <b>Cooperation between Schools and the Business Sector in the field of tourism</b> (Lead: AT – KKA)</li> <li>• November 2014 – October 2016: National Authorities for Apprenticeships: <b>DALIVET - Development of Apprenticeship Learning in IVET in Romania</b> (Lead: RO – National Centre for TVET)</li> <li>• November 2014: <b>Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in vocational education and training</b> (AT, RO)</li> <li>• June 2013: Thematic Working Group <b>"Innovative VET Schools Network"</b></li> <li>• 2012 – February 2015: <b>Optimizing the links between labour market and the educational system: modernising the vocational system in Romania</b> (Lead: RO – National Centre for TVET Development)</li> </ul> |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2012 – August 2014: <b>Edu. Region - Education Network for the economic area and the labour market of Lower Austria and the Southern Czech regions</b> (Lead: AT – Landesakademie NÖ)</li> <li>• May 2011 – December 2013: ERI SEE Cluster <b>Modernizing VET system – improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET</b> (Lead: RO – National Centre for TVET Development)</li> <li>• August 2010 – August 2013: <b>Improving quality assurance (QA) in Vocational Education and Training (VET) through schools' networks</b> (Lead: RO – National Centre for TVET Development)</li> <li>• 2012 – 2013: <b>Capacity Building for Teachers of VET in the Danube Region</b> (Lead: DE/BW)</li> <li>• December 2012: <b>Peer learning event on VET within ET 2020 &amp; PA9</b> (organised by AT)</li> </ul> <p><u>Fostering basic and key competences</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2018 – 2021: <b>CODES - Competence-OrientED Education for Elementary Schooling in cross-border Regions</b> (Lead: AT - European Office, Vienna Board of Education)</li> <li>• 2014 - 2016: <b>Workshops and conference on the topic green competences for eco-tourism in the Danube Region</b> (Lead: RO – Ministry of Education and Scientific Research)</li> </ul> <p><u>Leadership in education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• February 2011 – January 2013: <b>International Cooperation for School Leadership (ICSL)</b> (Lead: HU – Tempus Public Agency)</li> </ul> <p><u>Evidence-based policy and practice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2011 – December 2013: <b>Cluster of knowledge on evidence-based policy making in education</b> (Lead: RS)</li> </ul> <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other projects linked to LLP and Erasmus+</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Next steps, planned outputs and projects</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Recognition and Validation of non-formal and informal Learning for VET Teachers and Trainers in SEE Countries</b> (Lead: ERI SEE)</li> <li>• Tba – 2021: Systematic Development of Vocational Education and Training in accordance with socio-economic development needs at national, regional and local level (Lead: RO - National Centre for TVET Development)</li> <li>• (ESF project – expected to start on September 2018) <b>Increasing the relevance of initial VET by anticipating training needs for the labour market and developing the work-based- learning component "</b> (Lead: RO – National Centre for TVET Development)</li> </ul>   |

## 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.

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| <b>Related PA9 Targets</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to a higher employment rate in the Danube Region, especially through tackling youth and long-term unemployment</li> <li>• Contribution to improved educational outcomes and relevant skills and competences in the Danube Region, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, active citizenship and well-being</li> <li>• Contribution to increased quality and efficiency of education, training and labour market systems</li> <li>• Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Key projects, outputs and events to date</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apr 2008 – Jun 2014: <b>Cross-border discussion forum for Labour Market Policy: Austro-Hungarian Expert Academy (EXPAK AT.HU)</b> (Lead: AT – L&amp;R Social Research)</li> <li>• Nov 2009 – Dec 2014: <b>Cross-border discussion forum for Labour Market Policy: Austrian-Slovenian Expert Academy (EXPAK AT.SI)</b> (Lead: AT – L&amp;R Social Research)</li> <li>• <b>Bilateral Exchange in Labour Market Policy Austria - Moldova</b> (ongoing) (Lead: AT – L&amp;R Social Research)</li> <li>• Dec 2012 – May 2014: <b>Virtual Qualification Network Austria-Bulgaria</b> (Lead: AT – ÖSB Consulting)</li> <li>• Oct 2013 – Jan 2015: <b>Virtual Qualification Network with Romania</b> (Lead: AT – ÖSB Consulting)</li> <li>• Mar 2013 – Feb 2015: <b>Bilateral Exchange in Labour Market Policy Austria – Ukraine</b> (Lead: AT – ÖSB Consulting)</li> <li>• 2013 – 2016: <b>Labour Market Policy Measures for the Austrian-Moldovan Cooperation within the Construction Industry</b> (Lead: AT – L&amp;R Social Research)</li> <li>• Meeting of the ESF Managing Authorities in the Danube Region in 2016, 2017, 2018</li> <li>• 2017 - 2019: <b>New Danubian Governance in Labour Market Relevance of Higher-Education (EDU-LAB)</b> (Lead: GE – European Foundation of Education)</li> <li>• 2017 – 2018: Feasibility Study on the Topic: <b>Labour Foundations in South-Eastern Europe – Needs and Implementation Options</b> (Lead: FAB – Verein zur Förderung von Arbeit und Bildung)</li> <li>• 2017 – 2019: <b>Danube@work</b> (Lead: Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB))</li> </ul> |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 2017 – June 2019 <b>Learning by Doing</b> – Targeted capacity building of VET partnerships in the Danube region for the effective modernisation of VET systems (Lead: Budapest Chamber of Commerce and Industry)</li> <li>• 2017 – 2019: <b>Joint Opportunities in Business for Youth (JOBS4Youth)</b> (Lead: Organization for Small and Medium Enterprises, Sector Development)</li> <li>• 2017 – 2019: Strengthening Social Entrepreneurial Landscape through Involving Socially Responsible Corporate Practices in Entrepreneurial Competences and Skills Enhancement in the Danube Region (<b>SENSES</b>) (Lead: IFKA Public Benefit Non-Profit Ltd. For the Development of the Industry)</li> <li>• 2018 - 2019: <b>Labour Market Policy Support Programme for the Republic of Moldova</b> (Lead: L&amp;R Social Research)</li> <li>• Workshop 'Creating a more Efficient Labor Market in the Danube Region' (22 May 2019, Chisinau)</li> <li>• Meeting of the Network “ESF-Managing Authorities in the Danube Region” (19/20 Sept. 2018, Bratislava)</li> <li>• Workshop “Empowering People with Disabilities through Employment Support” (23/24 October 2019, Chisinau)</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Next steps, planned outputs and projects</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tba: <b>Development Tools for Cross-Border Labor Mobility</b> (Lead: BG – Human Resources Development Agency, Ruse)</li> <li>• Workshop Solving Future Skills Challenges in the Danube Region' in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova on 11/12 June 2019</li> <li>• Meeting of the <b>ESF Managing Authorities</b> in the Danube Region in autumn 2019</li> </ul>   |

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.

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| <p><b>Related PA9 Targets</b></p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to improved educational outcomes and relevant skills and competences in the Danube Region, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, active citizenship and well-being</li> <li>• Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Key projects, outputs and events to date</b></p> | <p><u>Workshops / Working Groups</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April 2013 – ongoing: <b>Thematic Working Group</b> "Creativity and Entrepreneurship" (Meetings in Sofia, April 2013; Ruse, April 2014 and Bucharest, May 2015)</li> </ul> <p><u>Transversal key competences, entrepreneurship education, innovative learning environments and creative partnerships</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2018 – 2021 InnoSchool</b> - Strengthening social innovation and entrepreneurial spirit of secondary school's student in Danube macro-region using highly innovative learning system (Lead: CZ – DEX Innovation Centre)</li> <li>• January 2018 – December 2018: <b>DIY-ACCEL</b> - Piloting of Danube and Ionian Youth Entrepreneurship Acceleration (Lead: BG – Business Support Centre for SME, Ruse)</li> <li>• 2013 – ongoing: <b>unaVision</b> (Lead: DE – ThinkCamp)</li> <li>• January 2015 – December 2015: <b>Danube Competence Centres for Creativity and Entrepreneurship</b> (Lead: BG – Business Support Centre for SME, Ruse)</li> <li>• 2014 - 2018: <b>VEN – Income Generation</b> in VET Schools and Colleges (Lead: AT – KKA)</li> <li>• July 2012 – December 2014: <b>i.e. SMART - SMART Training Network for Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Emerging Sustainable Economic Sectors</b> (Lead: AT – European Office, Vienna Board of Education)</li> <li>• January 2012 – June 2014: <b>Empowering Young People - Connecting Europe</b> (EUSDR-Pilot Project; Lead: AT – BMB/KKA)</li> <li>• October 2012 – 2015: <b>Dunavision</b> (Lead: DE – ThinkCamp) 2013: <b>Innovative Competency-Oriented E-learning in Tourism - ICOELIT</b> (Lead: BG – BSC SME, Ruse)</li> <li>• January 2012 – December 2013: <b>ECO NET - Support for Training Firms in SEE</b> (Lead: AT – KulturKontakt Austria)</li> </ul> |



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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August 2010 – February 2013: <b>Training the teachers from economic VET schools to implement the training firms method</b> (Lead: RO - National Centre for TVET Development)</li> <li>• January 2010 – December 2012: <b>ET-Struct: Economic Educational Territorial - Structure</b> (Lead: AT – European Office, Vienna Board of Education)</li> <li>•</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Next steps, planned outputs and projects</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tba – 2021 Competence opportunities for digital employment (CODE) (Lead: BG – Human Resources Development Agency, Ruse)</li> <li>• tba: <b>Intergenerational Social Innovation Support Scheme</b> (Lead: AT- Vienna Board of Education, European Office)</li> <li>• tba: Next meeting of <b>Thematic Working Group</b> "Creativity and Entrepreneurship"</li> <li>• tba: <b>Stimulate Entrepreneurial education in schools of Danube</b> – (Lead: SI - International School for Social and Business Studies)</li> <li>• tba: <b>Danube Youth Social Entrepreneurship Orientation</b> ( Lead: RO - Federation of Social NGOs in Transylvania)</li> </ul> |

## Work Area 4

### "To support lifelong learning and expanding learning mobility" (Actions 4)

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>2</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.

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| <p><b>Related PA9 Targets</b></p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to improved educational outcomes and relevant skills and competences in the Danube Region, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, active citizenship and well-being</li> <li>• Contribution to ensuring inclusive education and training and promoting inclusive labour markets, equal opportunities and non-discrimination as well as the promotion of civic competences and lifelong learning opportunities for all</li> <li>• Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Key projects, outputs and events to date</b></p> | <p><u>Learning mobility</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May 2011 – ongoing: <b>CEEPUS - Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies</b> (Lead: N/A – Central Office in AT)</li> <li>• 2012 - ongoing: Thematic Conferences on <b>Learning, Teaching, Exchanging – School Co-operations in the Danube Region</b> (Lead: AT – OeAD)</li> <li>• 2008 – 2013: <b>Capacity Building Mobility Programme</b> (Lead: AT – Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital)</li> <li>• Sept 2017 – Feb 2019: VET4SCAPE - Vocational Educational Training for Skills, Competence and Economy (Lead: AT)</li> <li>• 2014 – 2017: ESCAPE - Enhances Skills, competence and practice for the Economy (Lead: AT)</li> </ul> <p><u>Lifelong Learning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2017 - 2020: <b>Down to Earth – Earthen Architecture in the Danube Region</b> (AT- Technical University of Vienna)</li> <li>• (2016 – 2020): <b>Educational Cooperation in Border Regions – (BIG)</b> AT-CZ, AT-HU, SK-AT (Lead: AT – European Office, Vienna Board of Education) (2017 – 2020) Restart - Reinforce Entrepreneurial and Digital Skills of Students and Teachers to enhance the modernization of higher education in Moldova (Lead: MD Serviciul relatii internationale ASEM)</li> <li>• January 2015 – October 2015: <b>Milestones of Learning Development – Strategic improvement and development of life-long learning programs within Danube Region</b> (Lead: BA – South East European Youth Network)</li> </ul> |

<sup>2</sup> Coordination should be sought with the European Training Foundation.

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 2014 – August 2017: <b>ESCAPE – Enhanced Skills, Competence and Practice for the Economy</b> (Lead: AT – Business Academy Linz)</li> <li>• August 2010 – June 2014: <b>Training on competence based assessment for VET teachers</b> (Lead: RO – National Centre for TVET Development)</li> </ul> <p>October 2012: <b>LLP Contact and Project Preparation Seminar on "Transition from school to work"</b> (Lead: AT - OeAD)</p> <p><u>National Qualification Framework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2015: ERI SEE seminar on "<b>Removing obstacles to Recognition of Qualifications</b>" in Zagreb on 5-6 November 2015</li> <li>• 2014: (follow-up to the project "Development of National Qualification Frameworks"): <b>Removing obstacles to Recognition of Qualifications</b> (Lead: HR – ERI-SEE)</li> <li>• 2012-2013: <b>Development of National Qualification Frameworks</b> (Lead: HR – ERI-SEE)</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Next steps, planned outputs and projects</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thematic Conference 'School cooperation in the Danube Region: Experiences and future actions' (Lead: AT – OeAD)</li> </ul> <p>ongoing: <b>Coordinating the Work of the South Eastern Europe Vocational Education and Training Network</b> (Lead: ERI SEE)</p> <p>ongoing: <b>Recognition and Validation of Regional Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers</b> (Lead: ERI SEE)</p>   |

Work Area 5

**"To promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through education and training"**  
(Action 5)

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.

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| <p><b>Related PA9 Targets</b></p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to improved educational outcomes and relevant skills and competences in the Danube Region, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, active citizenship and well-being</li> <li>• Contribution to ensuring inclusive education and training and promoting inclusive labour markets, equal opportunities and non-discrimination as well as the promotion of civic competences and lifelong learning opportunities for all</li> <li>• Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Key projects, outputs and events to date</b></p> | <p><u>Social Cohesion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2018 – 2019: <b>RISE FREE</b> - Reaching for Inclusiveness and Improved Skills Through ICT-Enabled Education, Fostering Refugees' Employability and Entrepreneurship (Lead: AT – Graz University of Technology)</li> <li>• 2018 – 2019: <b>Support to National Policies for Inclusion of Roma and Marginalized Groups in Education and Labor Market Through Promoting Innovative Systems, Integrating Mainstream and Community Development Interventions</b> (Lead: BG – C.E.G.A.)</li> <li>• 2010 – ongoing: <b>Concordia Vocational Training</b> (Lead: RO – Concordia Foundation)</li> <li>• October 2014: Workshop on "<b>Empowering marginalised groups through education and training in the Danube Region</b>" (Lead: AT – OeAD)</li> <li>• 2015 – 2016: ROMAEDU – DANUBE - <b>Integration of Roma Children into Education System</b> – Countries of Danube Region (Lead: SI – Institute for Romological Studies, Education and Culture)</li> </ul> <p><u>Youth Platform</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>December 2018: Workshop on 'Early School Leaving and NEETs across the Danube Region'</b> (Lead: AT –Interkulturelles Zentrum, Kulturkontakt Austria,)</li> <li>• June 2016: <b>2<sup>nd</sup> EUSDR Youth Platform "Learning Pathways to Social Cohesion: Synergies between Formal and Non Formal Education"</b> (Lead: AT - Interkulturelles Zentrum)</li> <li>• December 2014: <b>1<sup>st</sup> EUSDR Youth Platform "Learning Pathways to Social Cohesion"</b> (Lead: AT – Interkulturelles Zentrum)</li> </ul> <p><u>Intercultural Dialogue, Mutual learning, Languages</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2006 - 2016: <b>aces - Academy of Central European Schools</b> (Lead: SK – Vceli Dom, AT – Interkulturelles Zentrum)</li> </ul> |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2017 – 2018: <b>aces – Academy of Central European Schools – ACT LOCAL! Fostering young people’s active involvement and social engagement by supporting cross-sectoral initiatives of schools with non-school partners</b> (Lead: AT – Interkulturelles Zentrum)</li> <li>• 2015 – 2022: <b>Danube Peace Boat E.U.R.O.P.E</b> (Lead: RS – Media Education Centre)</li> <li>• May 2008 – December 2011: <b>EdTWIN - Education Twinning for European Citizenship in the Centropo Region</b> (Lead: AT – European Office of the Vienna Board of Education)</li> <li>• September 2003 – 2015: <b>Sprachoffensive - Language Strategy</b> (Lead: AT – Office Sprachkompetenz)</li> </ul> <p><u>Sustainability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 2014 – December 2016: <b>eschool4S - E-School for Sustainability in the Danube Region</b> (Lead: DE – GIZ)</li> <li>• October 2011 – September 2014: <b>Collaboration of Schools and Communities for Sustainable Development</b> (CoDeS) (EU-Comenius multilateral network; Lead: CH – Stiftung Umweltbildung Schweiz)</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Next steps, planned outputs and projects</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (2020 – 2023): Preventing Early School Leaving (Lead: SI - Development and Education Centre Novo mesto)</li> <li>•</li> </ul>   |

## 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.

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| <b>Related PA9 Targets</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to a higher employment rate in the Danube Region, especially through tackling youth and long-term unemployment</li> <li>• Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Key projects, outputs and events to date</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Re-Turn – Regions benefitting from returning migrants</b> (Lead: DE – Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography)</li> <li>• <b>Migration for Development in the Western Balkan (MIDWEB)</b> (Lead: IOM)</li> <li>• <b>Capacity Building of Institutions involved in Migration Management and Reintegration of Returnees in the Republic of Serbia</b> (Lead: IOM)</li> <li>• June 2012 – Nov 2014: <b>SEEMIG - Managing Migration and its Effects in South-East Europe</b> (Lead: HU Hungarian Central Statistical Office)</li> <li>• Meeting of the Austrian Association of Cities: <b>Poverty and Migration</b>; Wels (Austria), 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015</li> <li>• 2017 - 2019: <b>Danube Region Information Platform for Economic Integration of Migrants (DRIM)</b> (Lead: SI – Slovenian Migration Institute ZRC SAZU)</li> <li>• 2017 - 2019: Addressing migration challenges, breaking stereotypes and raising awareness by measuring the well-being of young people in the Danube Region (<b>YOUNIG</b>) (Lead: HU Hungarian Central Statistical Office)</li> <li>• Co-Leader of Pole 'Migration' within the Danube Transnational Programme, Input at the YOUNIG Conference, Vienna, June 2018</li> </ul> |
| <b>Next steps, planned outputs and projects</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capitalisation Strategy – Pole Migration within the Danube Transnational Programme</li> </ul>   |

## Work Area 7

### "To fight poverty and social exclusion of marginalized communities in the Danube Region, especially the Roma communities" (Action 7)

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 marginalized 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>3</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>4</sup>, EU-Roma network and NGOs active in this field in the Danube Region is indispensable for improving the situation for Roma.

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| <b>Related PA9 Targets</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to ensuring inclusive education and training and promoting inclusive labour markets, equal opportunities and non-discrimination as well as the promotion of civic competences and lifelong learning opportunities for all</li> <li>• Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Key projects, outputs and events to date</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing: <b>European Network on Social Inclusion and Roma under the Structural Funds</b> (EU Roma)</li> <li>• Feb 2015 – Sep 2015: <b>THARA – Amaro Than</b> (Lead: AT – Volkshilfe Österreich)</li> <li>• Ongoing: <b>ESRA - Hungarian Product and Cultural Fund</b> as umbrella organisation, modelled on the experiences of a well-functioning Hungarian Product and Cultural Fund operation. (Lead: HU, ESRA)</li> <li>• Strategic Meeting "<b>Fostering Cooperation and Institutional Capacity for Roma Integration in the Danube Region</b>", Vienna, 9-10 October 2014</li> <li>• <b>EU Roma Network Meeting</b>, Vienna, 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> November 2014</li> <li>• <b>Workshop on East West Cooperation for Roma Integration</b>, organised by the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs &amp; Inclusion, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015</li> <li>• 2017 - 2019: <b>Changing Discourses, Changing Practices: The Roma as Human Resource (RARE)</b> (Lead: HU Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta)</li> <li>• <b>ESF-Roma-Empowerment Projects</b> in Austria (2016-2019):             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Laco Drom</b> – Good Way, Mentor Management Entwicklungs Organisation GmbH &amp; Co OG</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

<sup>3</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>4</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.

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Support at Authorities and early childhood education for Roma and migrants furthest from the labour market</b>, Verein Vida Pavlovic</li> <li>○ <b>Maro drom - Our way</b>.Project for Integration of Roma and Sinti in Upper Austria, Volkshilfe Oberösterreich</li> <li>○ <b>Roma / Romni Qualification- and Counselling Center for Roma</b>, Itworks / Kulturverein österreichischer Roma</li> <li>○ <b>THARA Romani Zor! Future – Empowerment of Roma!</b> Volkshilfe Österreich</li> <li>○ <b>Cambro: Open Space for Learning and Couselling</b>, Caritas der Erzdiözese Wien</li> <li>○ <b>ROMANO ZURALIPE</b>, Programme for Empowerment from Roma and Romnja on the Labour Market, Romano Centro</li> <li>○ <b>ZORROM</b> - Empowerment, Caritas der Diözese Graz-Seckau</li> <li>○ <b>Recognition, Competence and Information</b>, Centre for Social Innovation</li> <li>○ <b>Dumo Ikeriba</b> – Empowerment of Roma in the Labour Market, Phurdo Salzburg – Centre for Roma and Sinti</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Next steps, planned outputs and projects</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracting Phase of 8 ESF-Roma Projects in Austria</li> </ul>  |



## Work Area 8

### "To promote gender equality on the labour market, especially in payment" (Action 8)

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.

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| <b>Related PA9 Targets</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contribution to ensuring inclusive education and training and promoting inclusive labour markets, equal opportunities and non-discrimination as well as the promotion of civic competences and lifelong learning opportunities for all</li><li>• Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels</li></ul> |
| <b>Key projects, outputs and events to date</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2015 – ongoing: STEMM Summer Orientation Camp (GirlsGoIT) (Lead: Tekedu)</li></ul>  |
| <b>Next steps, planned outputs and projects</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2019-2021: Project "<b>Changing Discriminatory Implications of (Possible) Parenthood for Women and Men</b>"(Lead AT: L&amp;R Social Research in Cooperation with CESI Croatia)</li></ul>  |

### **Overview of PA9 Targets**

The targets in PA9 - 'Investing in people and skills', as set by the Steering Group in May 2016, are:

#### **Contribution to a higher employment rate in the Danube Region, especially through tackling youth and long-term unemployment**

- To foster cooperation between key stakeholders of labour market, education and research policies in order to develop learning regions and environments (Action 2)
- To improve cross-sector policy coordination to address demographic and migration challenges (Action 6)

#### **Contribution to improved educational outcomes and relevant skills and competences in the Danube Region, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, active citizenship and well-being**

- To enhance performance of education systems through closer cooperation of education institutions, systems and policies (Action 1)
- To foster cooperation between key stakeholders of labour market, education and research policies in order to develop learning regions and environments" (Action 2)
- To support creativity and entrepreneurship (Action 3)
- To support lifelong learning and expanding learning mobility (Action 4)
- To promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through education and training (Action 5)

#### **Contribution to increased quality and efficiency of education, training and labour market systems**

- To enhance performance of education systems through closer cooperation of education institutions, systems and policies (Action 1)
- To foster cooperation between key stakeholders of labour market, education and research policies in order to develop learning regions and environments (Action 2)

#### **Contribution to ensuring inclusive education and training and promoting inclusive labour markets, equal opportunities and non-discrimination as well as the promotion of civic competences and lifelong learning opportunities for all**

- To support lifelong learning and expanding learning mobility (Action 4)
- To promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through education and training (Action 5)

#### **Contribution to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral levels**

- To enhance performance of education systems through closer cooperation of education institutions, systems and policies (Action 1)
- To foster cooperation between key stakeholders of labour market, education and research policies in order to develop learning regions and environments (Action 2)
- To support creativity and entrepreneurship (Action 3)
- To support lifelong learning and expanding learning mobility (Action 4)
- To promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through education and training (Action 5)
- To improve cross-sector policy coordination to address demographic and migration challenges (Action 6)
- To fight poverty and social exclusion of marginalized communities in the Danube region, especially the Roma communities (Action 7)
- To promote gender equality on the labour market, especially in payment (Action 8)