Online Meeting of the Steering Group of Priority Area 10 "Institutional Capacity and Cooperation" of the EUSDR (PA10)

– Summary –

16 April 2020

Main Outcomes

	AT	BA	BG	CZ	DE	HR	HU	MD	ME	RO	RS	SI	SK	UA	EC	EESC	RCC	CEI	DSP	DCSF
SG Online	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-

Main outcomes of the discussion:

- The Steering Group took note of the inputs presented by the Croatian EUSDR Presidency, the European Commission/DG REGIO, the Danube Strategy Point, and Priority Area 10 Coordination.
- The Steering Group discussed the state of play of programming (ESIF/IPA/NDICI) in their countries and regions as well as possible topics for selection. The majority of members agrees with **eGovernance/digitisation of public administration** as possible topic for the embedding process. Further topics were
    - civil society involvement
    - social innovation
    - measures against trafficking in human beings
    - digitisation and participatory governance
    - institutional capacity building in the public health sector
    - strengthening capacities of municipalities and local actors
- The Steering Group can provide additional inputs in the follow-up of the online meeting to propose topics and to specify the topics to be selected.

Welcome

Claudia SINGER (PAC 10/City of Vienna) and Meliha MUHERINA (PAC 10/Centre for European Perspective) welcome all participants to the Online Steering Group Meeting and briefly present the agenda (see **Annex I & II**).

Brief introduction into embedding process from the Croatian EUSDR Presidency

Tatjana KRALJ (HR) pointed out that one of the key messages from the last EC report on the implementation of macro-regional strategies (MRS) is the need for better access to funding for the strategies. Hence, the Croatian Presidency puts an emphasis on the embedding of MRS in EU funding 2021-2027. Against this background, the Croatian Presidency created a Task Force for embedding the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) that has met twice so far (Vienna & Brussels). The result of the meetings is the Guidance Paper on Embedding of the EUSDR in ESIF/IPA/NDICI 2021-2027 (see **Annex III**).

Revised EUSDR Action Plan

Roland MAYER-FREI (EC/DG REGIO) presented the revised EUSDR Action Plan (see Annex IV) and how to make best use of the document in order to achieve the objectives of the Danube Strategy. In the course of the drafting process the stakeholders of the EUSDR Governance discussed a lot about cross-cutting topics. At the same time, there was a strong will to keep the existing structure, so cross-cutting topics need to be implemented via close cooperation between the Priority Areas. Priority Area 10 "Institutional Capacity and Cooperation" represents a cross-cutting priority itself and should use this potential i.e. in the area of inclusion of civil society, capacity building, or youth in cooperation with other Priority Areas.

The revised EUSDR Action Plan serves as a starting point for the embedding process. The aim is to go beyond single projects, but rather constitute a platform for project pipelines and to use the full scope of available and suitable programmes. Against this background, DG REGIO sets out the timeline and necessary steps for the embedding process (see **Annex V**).

Guidance Paper for Embedding the EUSDR in ESIF/IPA/NDICI 2021-2027

Katharina LENZ (Danube Strategy Point) presented the Guidance Paper on Embedding of the EUSDR in ESIF/IPA/NDICI 2021-2027 (see **Annex III & Annex VI**). The paper also includes Annex 1a: EUSDR Actions Funding Sources and Annex 1b: Sources for content of EU funding instruments. The guidance paper were prepared in accordance with the Croatian EUSDR Presidency and are considered rolling documents, as the embedding process is dynamic and may require adaptations during the process.

2nd Call for Proposals – DTP Seed Money Facility

Claudia SINGER (PAC 10/City of Vienna) provided some basic information on the planned 2nd Call for Proposals for the Seed Money Facility of the Danube Transnational Programme (DTP) (see **Annex VII**). The final decision for the second call is still pending. The DTP Monitoring Committee is expected to discuss the topic at the next meeting in the beginning of May 2020. The selected topics for the embedding process will also be applied for the Seed Money Facility call.

Thus, the selected topics for Priority Area 10 need to fulfil the following criteria:

- The priority should refer to a specific and identified territorial challenge
- The exact territory of each priority should be defined (countries involved, including regions if applicable)
- The possible type of stakeholders to potentially be involved should be defined
- The selected priority should be addressed by mainstream programmes and by other main EU programmes (CEF, HORIZON Europe, LIFE+, ERASMUS+), if applicable
- The selected priority should be able to generate more than one project

Update from the Network of ESF Managing Authorities in the Danube Region

Claudia SINGER (PAC 10/City of Vienna) presented the state of play in the discussion within the Network of ESF Managing Authorities in the Danube Region (see **Annex VII**). The ESF Managing Authorities met on 9/10 March 2020 in Vienna with Priority Area 9 "People and Skills" and Priority Area 10 "Institutional Capacities and Cooperation". Currently, the ESF Managing Authorities are at varying stages of the

programming process. In a first informal discussion, the Managing Authorities listed seven topics* that could be considered for transnational cooperation in the Danube Region:

- Women in the labour market
- Digitisation*
- Social Innovation*
- Social Entrepreneurship*
- Roma Inclusion*/Inclusion of minorities & vulnerable groups
- Ageing population
- Life-long Learning

Discussion on topics for embedding institutional capacity and cooperation in ESIF/IPA/NDICI | Results

Introduction to the discussion see **Annex VII**.

The EUSDR Priority Area Coordinators are requested to provide 2-3 topics of the respective Priority Area for further embedding into ESIF/IPA/NDICI 2021-2027 until 4 May 2020 for further discussion in the group of EUSDR National Coordinators. The basis of the selection for Priority Area 10 is the result of the discussion of the PA 10 Steering Group.

Guiding questions for discussion:

- What is the state of play of programming ESIF/IPA/NDICI 2021-2027 in your country?
- Which topics do you consider the most relevant to be selected for the embedding process?

Croatia	Baden-Württemberg	Czech Republic	Montenegro	Romania
State of Play	State of Play	State of Play	State of Play	State of Play
In view of the current situation with the pandemic and the earthquake in HR, the programming process came to a halt and the current state of play is not clear to date.	ESIF MAs organized consultation meetings to discuss requirements of embedding. MAs appear open to the process, but want proposals for concrete measures.	The programming for the next period is still pending and there is a need to consult with the programming authorities to define topics for CZ.	ME will proceed with the programming, after receiving EC instructions. (The programming procedure will be carried out by the National IPA Coordinator Office.)	Currently, the MAs are undergoing an evaluation of topics and procedures. Due to the pandemic the focus of the tasks of the programming authorities shifted.
Possible topics	Possible topics	Possible topics	Possible topics	Possible topics
- Social innovation - Digitalisation	- Cross-border digitization - Participatory governance and digitization	- PA 10 Action 1: Institutional Capacity building to improve quality	- civil society involment - improvement of institutional capacities	- Digitisation - For further/ concrete proposals for topics, consultation

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* The topics can still be subject for change.
* Topics that are relevant for Priority Area 10 „Institutional Capacity and Cooperation"

	- Measures to tackle trafficking in human beings	of public services - PA 10 Action 8: Civil Society involvement		with Ministry is required.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	**Serbia**	**Slovenia**	**Austria**	**Slovakia**
State of Play	State of Play	State of Play	State of Play	State of Play
BA is still waiting for the programming framework from the EC/DG NEAR to proceed with the programming and the concrete definition of topics to be funded.	Since IPA III is still in a drafting stage, RS is waiting for the programming framework of the EC.	The current state of programming is unknown.	Topics for the next ESIF OPs will most likely stay largely similar compared to the previous OPs	n/a
Possible topics	Possible topics	Possible topics	Possible topics	Possible topics
In view of the Public Administration Reform as a relevant issue for IPA III/Bosnia, topics covered under PA 10 Action 1 would be considered relevant.	- Modernisation of public administration/ eGovernment - Capacities for health care services - Further consultation with the Ministry is necessary to define the topics concretely.	- Topics related with PA 10 Action 7: civil society involvement - Digitisation/ eGovernance	- Digitization - modernization of public administration - social innovation (co-designing policies/services)	n/a

Central European Initiative (CEI):	European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)	European Commission/DG REGIO	Danube Strategy Point
State of Play	State of Play	State of Play	State of Play
			DG NEAR had a look at the EUSDR embedding tool and confirmed that they can work with it.
Possible topics	Possible topics	Possible topics	Possible topics
Support for high-quality public services in the public health sector	Support for measures that strengthen resilience and with	There is a strong need to strengthen capa-cities of municipalities and local actors, which	

	reference to the Leipzig Charta.	is one of the key topics at EU level.	

+++ Meliha Muherina (CEP) & Claudia Singer (City of Vienna) +++