

2nd Meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Danube Local Actors Platform (AC D-LAP)

Main Outcomes, Vienna, 13 May 2015

The AC D-LAP adopted on the following conclusions:

1. 2nd Participation Day of the EUSDR, Ulm, 28 October 2015

The Advisory Committee of the D-LAP agreed with the basic concept as proposed by Sonja Jilek (University of Vienna) and Stefan August Lütgenau (Danube Civil Society Forum). The Advisory Committee of the D-LAP agreed that the 2nd Participation Day should

- Provide a **key note speech**, a **political message** to the Annual Forum, a comprehensive **participatory element** (e.g. world café), and a **closure**;
- Work within the comprehensive approach of a **common topic of heritage and future**, with a view towards a common identity in the Danube Region and in accordance with the concept presented by Sonja Jilek;
- Bring **manifold aspects to the fore**, in order to reach out to as many Priority Areas as possible, e.g. such relevant topics as culture, environmental issues, migration, soil protection etc.;
- Involve the **people and organisations active on the ground** and focus on the work that is carried out between the meetings;
- Make **participation and transparency** a central theme and recurring topic of the EUSDR.

2. National Hearings

AC D-LAP members are invited to **contact their respective National EUSDR Coordinator¹**, to **participate in national EUSDR coordination platforms** (if applicable) and propose to hold National EUSDR Hearings for the civil society before the 4th EUSDR Annual Forum in Ulm. The results of these National Hearings are to be presented at the 2nd Participation Day in October 2015 back-to-back with the 4th Annual Forum of the EUSDR.

So far, such meetings were or are intended to be held in Austria, Bulgaria, and Ukraine.

Upcoming Meetings

- ⇒ National Hearings in each of the 14 participating states of the EUSDR.
- ⇒ Danube Reception at the house of the city of Vienna (“Wien-Haus”) in Brussels, 17 June 2015
- ⇒ 2nd Participation Day on 28 October back-to-back with the 4th Annual Forum in Ulm on 29-30 October 2015
- ⇒ 4th Annual Forum of the EUSDR on 29-30 October 2015

¹ See <http://www.danube-region.eu/contact/contact-pacs-ncps>

Meeting Minutes

Tour de table, National Hearings

Kurt Puchinger (AT, PAC10) reported on the National Hearing held on the same day in Austria (1. Österreichisches Dialogforum Donauraum), which was organised jointly by PA10 and the Austrian National Coordinators and assembled approx.100 participants and stakeholders, as well as all the Austrian PACs and SG members. Puchinger stressed the importance of civil society when it comes to fostering territorial, economic and social cohesion in the Danube Region.

Jörg Mirtl (AT, PA10) commented on the different activities of PA10 with the aim of making the EUSDR a transparent and participatory process. Activities concern also the inclusion of the macro-regional dimension within on-going policies of active citizenship. The local actor approach was mentioned in a report on macro-regional strategies published by the European Parliament on 15 January 2015.² The cooperation with the EESC is continuing and Kurt Puchinger will make an intervention about the EUSDR at the ECOSOC meeting on 18 June 2015 in Brussels.

The proposed document on next steps within the roadmap for civil society involvement was accepted and supported by the advisory committee (see annex 3).

Daniela Urschitz (PA10) added the potential establishments of Danube subgroups with the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions.

Igor Studennikov (UA, Centre for Regional Studies) reported on the National EUSDR Hearing in Kyiv and the cooperation between the four Oblasti participating in the EUSDR. The document for this cooperation will be provided in English. In Ukraine, there is still no active National EUSDR Coordinator, but the coordination is now within the responsibility of the Ministry for Regional Development.

Stefan August Lütgenau (Danube Civil Society Forum) reported on regional meetings carried out in Bulgaria, which should lead towards a joint National Hearing.

Danijela Stojkovic (RS) reported on respective efforts in Serbia and also in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Daniela Urschitz (AT, PA10) commented on the details of the Austrian National Hearing.

Mikos Barabas (HU, Danubiana) stressed that National Hearings are good instruments. His understanding is that there is an organic link between relations of government-CSOs in general and the holding of the National Hearing with broad civil society involvement. He mentioned that he is in contact with the HU NC and interested HU CSOs will elaborate proposals for a National Hearing in HU.

² See study “New role of macro-regional strategies in European Territorial Cooperation”: EUSDR has led to the successful combination of the agendas of different non-governmental interest groups; the resulting “local actor approach” to participation is considered one of the best working cooperation networks in EUSDR.” (p. 57). See http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL_STU%282015%29540349

Roman Haken (CZ, EESC) said he was in touch with the CZ NC. A specific EUSDR dimension within another meeting held in September could be an option.

Simona Spinaru (RO NC) conceded the possibility of a National Hearing in Romania, including a meeting with civil society.

With a view to the Slovak Presidency of both the EUSDR and the Council in 2016 and a potential 3rd Participation Day, PA10 wrote to the Slovak NC and the DCSF is in contact with a Slovak NGO.

Riga Roadmap

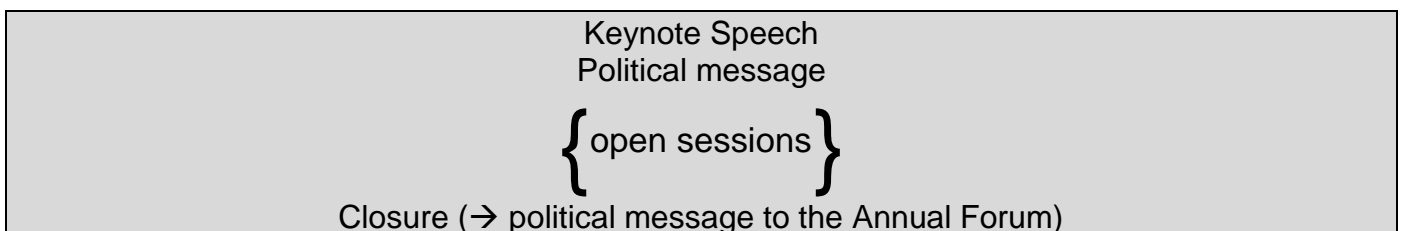
In the framework of the Latvian presidency, a roadmap was produced at an NGO meeting in Riga. Mirtl and Lütgenau, who participated in the meeting, reported on the successful inclusion of the macro-regional dimension into this road map.³ This road map calls for an implementation of article 11 of the Treaty of the European Union, which requests an open and constant dialogue to be established between EU action and the civil society. Barabas emphasized the distinction between social and civil dialogue in this regard and criticized the lack of openness and transparency of the Council of the EU. He also pointed out that civil society is crucial when it comes to the implementation of macro-regional strategies.

2nd Participation Day

Matthias Holzner (BW NC) presented the 2nd Participation Day as an integrated yet independent part of the 4th Annual Forum of the EUSDR to be held in Ulm. He commented on different funding sources and explained to what extent the involvement of civil society matters in Baden-Württemberg. The BW regional government has a dedicated State Consultant, Gisela Erler, who is going to transmit the main messages from the 2nd Participation Day to the Annual Forum. There are several opportunities to increase the current budget of the Participation Day. He stressed that from the point of view of the organisers, the Participation Day should rely on 2 main principles:

- It should reach out to the people on the ground.
- It should have open components such as Open Space or World Café elements.

Lütgenau commented on the organisational aspects and repeated the agreement from the 1st meeting in Stuttgart on 21 February 2015, where a Steering Group (DCSF, PA10, Agapedia, ILEU) took the decision that the Participation Day should comply with the following structure:



Danijela Stojković (RS) emphasized the importance of this political message.

³ See <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-ngo-forum-riga-documents>

She proposed to introduce new funding instruments for CSOs, both in regional and national level and suggested the key note speaker Mrs. Biljana KER Lindszy, CEO for Civil Society from European Bank for Reconstruction and Development .

Mrs. Sonja Jilek proposed that one of the workshops has to be Social media and open data. Stojkovic also stressed the importance of Social Media in the implementation of the EUSDR.

Sonja Jilek (University of Vienna) presented a proposal (see annex 4) for a thematic leitmotif of the Participation Day. This proposal was welcomed by the Advisory Committee of the D-LAP.

Several Members made proposals for specific workshops, such as on funding (Stojkovic), on migration (Dedovic, IOM), soil protection (Steiner, AT), and natural resources (Spinaru, RO). Haken (EESC) proposed i.a. to provide comparisons of civil society involvement in the different EUSDR countries and to present the Community-Led Local Development (CLLD).⁴

Johannes Lutter (Europaforum, AT) elaborated on his experiences as coordinator of the 3rd Annual Forum in Vienna, June 2014. He stressed that the Participation Day should have clear aims and has an important function in order to create an international community on the macro-regional level. With regard to this, there should also be a thorough look on processes and methods. Innovative conference methods such as Open Space require a professional moderator who steers these processes and thereby enables the establishment of a common identity.

A.o.b., upcoming meetings

The advisory committee decided not to hold an additional meeting before the 2nd Participation Day.

Urschitz (PA10) concluded the meeting of the Advisory Committee. The AC agreed on the main content (“heritage and future”) of the proposal by Sonja Jilek (annex 4), as well as on the next steps in the road map for civil society involvement in the framework of the EUSDR (annex 3) proposed by PA10 and the DCSF, which will subsequently be submitted to the Steering Group of PA10.

Annexes

Annex 1 Agenda

Annex 2 D-Lap Road Map to Ulm

Annex 3 Next Steps in the Road Map for civil society involvement in the framework of the EUSDR (draft)

Annex 4 Proposal for 2nd Participation Day by Sonja Jilek

Annex 5 Riga Roadmap to Participation

Annex 6 List of participants

⁴ See http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index.cfm/en/information/publications/brochures/2014/community-led-local-development