



**6<sup>th</sup> International Stakeholder Conference**

# **The Future of Priority Area 9**

## **‘Investing in People and Skills’ in the Danube Region**

**Date:** 29th November 2018

**Venue:** Seminar- u. Veranstaltungszentrum Catamaran, Johann-Böhm-Platz 1, 1020 Vienna

Hosted by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, Austria  
and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria

By investing in people and making best use of its human capital, the Danube Region can progress and grow in a smart and inclusive way. To arrive at a knowledge based and inclusive growth as well as to adequately fulfil the potential for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, in particular within the digital economy, it requires empowering people through high levels of employment, investing in quality education and training systems, fighting poverty and modernising labour markets.

In the context of technological, environmental and demographic change, Danube Region countries are challenged to promote productivity and employability by equipping individuals with the relevant knowledge, skills and competences needed in a changing world and to respond to current and future labour market needs. A crucial element for the future of the region also relates to strengthening European identity and fostering the active participation of individuals in democratic processes.

In light of new, emerging needs and changing implementation frameworks in the Danube Region, the European Commission and the Bulgarian EUSDR Presidency in May 2018 have initiated a revision process of the 2010 Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Within the currently ongoing consultation phase in this regard, the 6th International Stakeholder Conference of Priority Area 9 ‘Investing in People and Skills’ will provide participants with opportunities to discuss current and future challenges related to education and training as well as employment policies in Europe and the Danube Region.

The conference will convene representatives from European institutions, Ministries responsible for Education, Labour and Social Affairs from Danube Region countries, stakeholders in education, training and employment as well as experts and researchers to share good practices and to exchange views on where further action and innovative projects are needed. In this regard it will examine whether future PA9 actions should be conceived rather as a continuation of the current framework (priorities, working groups/areas) with some adaptations, or if it is time to think about new topics and ways for working together. Moreover it will deal with the question, how this process can best be linked to post-2020 discussions, both in terms of strategic objectives, content, cooperation instruments and funds.

**Format:** Moderated plenary and break-out sessions (world café) will be used to ensure that participants can have substantive discussions about challenges and potential future priorities with respect to developing effective approaches to skills policies and related projects.



Ministry of Health,  
Labor and Social Protection



Ministry of Education,  
Culture and Research



# Draft Programme

## Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018

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**9.00 Registration**

Coffee, meet and greet

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**9.30 Welcome and Introduction**

- Roland Hanak, Priority Area Coordinator, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, Austria
  - Jürgen Schick, Priority Area Coordinator, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria
  - Anna Gherganova, Priority Area Coordinator, Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, Republic of Moldova
  - Ludmila Pavlov, Priority Area Coordinator, Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, Republic of Moldova
  - Stefaan Hermans, Director of Policy Strategy and Evaluation, DG EAC, European Commission
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- Moderator: Gabriele Stöger
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**10:00 Keynotes**

**The Future of European Education Cooperation**

Stefaan Hermans, Director of Policy Strategy and Evaluation, DG EAC, European Commission

**Digitization of Work: Risks and Opportunities**

Marcel Fink, IHS - Institute for Advanced Studies

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**11.00 Break**

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**11.30 Ideas and Lessons Learnt for a Forward Look on Investing in Human Capital in the Danube Region**

Panel Discussion

- Jader Cané, DG Employment, European Commission (tbc)
  - Anastasia Fetsi, European Training Foundation (ETF)
  - Roland Löffler, Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Training (*oeibf*)
  - Carmen Clapan, Ministry of National Education, Romania
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**12.30 Lunch**

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**13.30 World Café**

People and Skills and its Future Focus – Discussion of Following Topics

**Education and Training:**

- Quality and Efficiency of Education and Training Systems
- Relevant and High-Quality Knowledge, Skills and Competences
- Lifelong Learning and Learning Mobility
- Inclusive Education, Equity, Common Values and Sustainable Development

**Labour Market und Social Inclusion**

- Know-How-Exchange / Cooperation in Labour Market Policies
- Digitalization and Innovation in the World of Work
- Integration of Vulnerable Groups into the Labour Market
- Fighting Poverty and Promoting Social Inclusion for All

Including Break

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**16.00 The Way Forward – Joint Reflection and Exchange**

Wrap up and presentation of results

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**16.30 Closing Remarks and Outlook**

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**17.00 End of Conference**

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**19.00 Official Dinner**

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