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**EU Strategy for the Danube Region**  
Priority Area 1a – To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways

**18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the PA1a Working Group**  
**Education & Jobs**  
Budapest, Hungary  
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**MINUTES**

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The meeting of the thematic working group on *Education & Jobs* within PA1a – *To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways* was organised in Budapest, Hungary, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2019.

The meeting was moderated by Mr. Gert-Jan Muilerman from PA1a Technical Secretariat. The meeting was scheduled as a small round table discussion with selected experts in the field of nautical education.

The discussions run according to the agenda set up by the Technical Secretariat for PA1a.

## 1. Welcome and introduction

**Mr. Gert-Jan Muilerman** (viadonau/Technical Secretariat of PA1a) welcomed all participants and outlined the objective of the current meeting. He gave a short overview of the defined targets for PA1a and the Working Group structure as the framework for the work in PA1a. He explained in more detail the added value of the EUSDR and how PA1a is contributing to the improvement of the framework conditions for inland navigation in the Danube Region. As examples, he summarised the PA1a activities in the Working Group for Waterway infrastructure & maintenance and the Working Group for Administrative Processes.

He summarised again the added value of PA1a: involvement of non-EU members, mobilisation of political pressure, establishment of cross-sectoral cooperation, bringing together stakeholders on different levels (experts) and to provide project support. Mr. Muilerman specifically stated that the aim is not to take over project initiatives, but to support ongoing initiatives by the experts in the Danube Region and to pick up loose ends wherever needed.

## 2. CESNI Work Plan for 2019 – 2021 on professional qualifications

**Mr. Jörg Rusche** (CESNI) gave a short introduction on the structure and objectives (mission) of the CESNI committee. He explained the activities of the permanent Working Group on Professional Qualifications. The ES-QIN (European Standard for Qualification in Inland Navigation), elaborated by CESNI, will standardise the provisions of the European Directive 2017/2397 and the CCNR Regulations for personnel on the Rhine. He presented in more detail the (foreseen) contents of the new ES-QIN standards. Mr. Rusche also presented an outlook into future activities: he pointed out that just having the standards is not sufficient, it also needs tools for quality certification, in order to ensure proper application of the standards in all education institutions. In particular, this involves the creation of harmonised exam standards or the drafting of guidelines for how to handle requests for recognition by third countries (non-EU members).

The ES-QIN will be complemented in 2019 with models for certificates of qualification as a boatmaster, as passenger navigation expert and LNG expert (electronic format provided as an option), uniform service record books and logbooks with a view to foster labour mobility and prevent fraud. All standards from ES-QIN will be updated regularly. Two temporary Working Groups were established for Quality Management and the work on future manning requirements, in order to contribute to the permanent Working Group.

## 4. Application of EU Directive 2017/2397 on the recognition of professional qualifications - Status and main results of the projects

**Ms. Doina Munteanu** (CERONAV) gave an overview of the results of the Danube SKILLS project regarding the application of Directive 2017/2397. The main outputs in this regard are the Policy Support Strategy and the accompanying Transnational Action Plan, outlining specific steps to be taken by the Danube riparian states for the transposition and implementation of the provisions of the Directive. Firstly, the designated national authority/authorities had to be identified; secondly, the actions to be taken had to be elaborated.

Ms. Munteanu further reported on the status of the transposition of the Directive into national law and

the implementation process in the different riparian states (for details please refer to the powerpoint slides).

She reported that CERONAV has already purchased a training simulator and is currently preparing the respective training programmes.

She also raised the issue of Slovakia currently not having a legally recognised education institution or training centre that would be able to conduct the education of personnel according to the new standards.

**Mr. Gerhard Klatt** (viadonau) elaborated shortly on the status of the transposition of the Directive in Austria and the activities conducted to that end in the framework of the Danube SKILLS project.

**Ms. Munteanu** summarised that the preparations for the transposition of the Directive already started in most countries. She reported that in Moldova there is no education centre, so the Directive will not be applied in MD. Ukraine on the other hand is planning to implement the Directive on the national level.

**Mr. Rusche** reported that the different translations of the Standards should be available by summer 2019. The preparation of the training programmes is ongoing as well.

**Ms. Munteanu** outlined the future involvement of CERONAV in this matter: Another project “Danube EduBoost” was submitted to the last DTP call, aiming to serve as a model for the implementation of the provisions of the Directive for other education institutions in the Danube Region.

Building on this outlook **Ms. Ghiuler Manole** (CERONAV) expressed her concern that in the Danube Transnational Programme none of the programme priorities seems to include issues of education. In the Danube SKILLS project the backbone was the Directive, so the project was implemented under the priority of a well-governed Danube region. The concern with the new project it is facing heavy competition.

She explained that the ERASMUS programme is not suitable for this purpose and that CERONAV is – due to its organisational structure – not eligible for national programmes. H2020 might be an option though.

Ms. Manole further stated that after the Danube SKILLS project there will be no platform for exchange of experiences and best practices in the transposition and implementation of the Directive.

**Mr. Rusche** confirmed this concern and added that cooperation is especially important since it will be possible in the future to start and finish the navigational education in different countries and that training centres that do not have a training simulator themselves could send their trainees to institutions that do.

**Mr. Leonard Cotiga** (AAOPFR) stressed the importance of practical training on board of vessels in addition to simulator training.

**Mr. Rusche** added that widely arranged recruitment campaigns are also important to be implemented in the coming years as are live-long learning initiatives which are not addressed in current curricula. Additionally, management skills of the nautical personnel should be fostered.

Mr. Muilerman agreed that recruitment campaigns would have to be embedded in general promotion campaigns for inland navigation. Social media and targeted advertising should be used for this purpose. He stressed again that within PA1a content-wise work will still be done by the experts for nautical education. The Technical Secretariat of PA1a can offer lobbying for funding opportunities and the promotion of IWT and careers in navigation.

**Mr. Cotiga** reported that in Romania currently trainees conduct six months of practical training on board of big vessels as employees of shipping companies. These mostly young people are satisfied with small salaries but many move to countries upstream of the Danube or in Western Europe as they grow older and have families. The issue of small salaries is especially relevant in Romania and Bulgaria. Also the training for personnel especially on passenger vessels should be considered. He also mentioned digitalisation as an overall issue in inland navigation and a topic for life-long learning.

## Coffee break

**Mr. Muilerman** summarised how PA1a will try to contribute in this field in the future. PA1a will lobby for the consideration of the topic of nautical education in the Operational Programmes (in the framework of the Cohesion Policy). He reported that a meeting with DG REGIO is foreseen in summer in order to do so. He asked the attending experts for headlines for the most important topics to be foreseen in the funding programmes.

The discussed issues are also addressed in the new EUSDR Action Plan by means of new targets. The new Action Plan is scheduled to be adopted in autumn 2019.

Mr. Muilerman further explained that the PA1a Working Group on Education & Jobs will try to serve as a platform for different stakeholders and to facilitate the exchange of best practices in the Danube region.

**Ms. Munteanu** added that each river commission has to prepare specific regulations for the personnel in navigation and asked about the status of this regulation in the Danube region (Danube Commission's responsibility).

**Mr. Gerhard Klatt** (viadonau) stressed that it would be necessary not only to foster transnational exchange of best practices but to have all stakeholders on a national level around one table. Cooperation tools/patterns are necessary for that purpose.

It was further discussed that the transposition of the Directive is mandatory but does not guarantee its application. States might risk infringement. PA1a will provide a platform for this cooperation work and remind the member states of their obligation and push for the real implementation after 2022. The ministerial level must be involved.

It was also suggested to involve the Danube Commission in conducting a recruitment campaign. The issue is not only ageing work force but also the lack of women in this field of work. This is mostly due to specific working conditions in inland navigation and salaries.

Concerning the capitalisation of the Danube SKILLS project results regarding Danube Logistics Promotion Centres, PA1a will try to foster know-how transfer and the exchange of best practices (tools) in the Danube region. Two different target groups are identified in this regard: the IWT training and education institutions and logistics companies. Training materials used in logistics education should also be distributed among operational experts.