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**III Progress Report**



  
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The Third Progress Report aims at presenting the work done and the progress achieved within Priority Area 11 during the last year in correspondence with the strategic keys and objectives set within Priority Area 11 “Security” of the European Strategy for the Danube region.

The Report is structured in three main parts: “State of play”, which gives the picture of the overall progress in PA 11; “Progress in the implementation of PA 11 key objectives” containing thematic sections that address our keys and objectives. The advance in each of the four thematic key objectives is the backbone in the Report structure. Special emphasis is put on the lessons learned during the last year; “Characteristics of the process” includes certain elements recognized as essential in the course of the implementation of PA 11 activities.

The Report contains two Annexes, which aim is to illustrate the headway in the project implementation.

The present Report rests on the structure proposed by the EC and at the same time reflecting the specific characteristics of the work in Priority Area “Security”.

# Overall progress

## Introduction

The new reported period marks the implementation in practice of the identified priorities, set objectives and measures in Priority Area 11 “Security” of the European Strategy for the Danube Region.

The practical-oriented approach in the four thematic areas for cooperation outlined at the first Steering Group meeting in June 2011 in Sofia (enhancing the police cooperation, strengthening customs and border control through contact centres, border management and document security, strengthening the rule-of-law and combating corruption) has led to concrete results. This was also possible due to the political support demonstrated for the activities within PA 11 at the Ministerial Danube Security Conference in May 2013 in Munich which was emphasized at the EUSDR II Annual Forum by the EC. It is considered as a great recognition for the efforts of the participating countries. During the reported period the project development and implementation remained of crucial importance.

## State of play

The cooperation under Priority Area 11 (PA11) Security has taken a concrete shape and achieved visible results. It has created new impulses and led to transnational projects. Better coordination between the MS has brought about more coherence and strengthened the sustainability of projects. Financing of activities and projects within PA 11 is regarded as an issue of crucial importance, efforts are continuing in identifying opportunities for the new programme period 2014-2020 for the purpose of addressing common challenges and to benefit from strengthened cooperation in the Region. PACs of PA 11 participated in the meetings of the Danube 2014-2020 Programming Task Force. In view of the fact that the Security area is not included as a separate priority in the new Danube Region Programme, other financial sources are also explored. In October PA 11 participated in a survey on the priorities of the Central Europe 2020 Operational Program; PACs joined the START meeting in May 2014.

### Finalized projects, initiatives and activities

#### Projects on anti-corruption policies

Three projects approved by the Steering Group were finalised - the European Anticorruption Training (EACT), The Rule-of-Law project and the Cyber Symposium Project. The results achieved were reported at the VI Steering Group meeting in November 2013 in Budapest.

Through the implementation of the two finalised projects focused in the field of strengthening the rule of law and combating corruption (Rule-of-Law project and European Anti-corruption Training project) the trans-border cooperation in the Danube region and Western Balkans was significantly enhanced and considerable contribution was made to elaborating and implementing comprehensive anticorruption policies at national level in compliance with the EU policy in the area of the fight against corruption. The projects supported the cooperation in this field through elaborating models of best practises and expert knowledge and also an integrated approach on the prevention of this phenomenon. One of the results of the Rule-of-law project is a comprehensive study on the best practices which makes an overview of potential capabilities and limits of national anti-corruption measures. Moreover the work on these projects created a joint understanding and a network of experts beyond national borders.

As far as the cooperation and discussions in the field of strengthening the rule of law and combating corruption is conceived as very important in PA 11, one of the projects approved for financing under the TAF 2nd call which was submitted by Moldova, namely *Combating corruption in cooperation with Danube region states* is regarded as a continuation of the work in this field.

#### Cyber symposium project

Following the support received by the ministers at the Danube Security Conference, the beginning of cooperation in the Danube region on the fight against cybercrime was set by the Cyber Symposium Project implemented in 2013. In view of the particular importance of this issue for the security environment in the region, the project helped to overview and outline key challenges for all law enforcement agencies. The implementation of the project marked the inclusion of the fight against cybercrime as a new forth area to the list of priorities of police cooperation and thus contributes for the enlargement of the scope of covered thematic areas. Moreover it is considered as a first step towards establishing a network of Danube region agencies competent in fighting cybercrime.

Besides the encountered difficulties in financing projects, the states that are actively working under PA continue to invest efforts in elaboration and financing new projects. These efforts succeeded in already received grants under the ISEC programme for two projects which implementation started - the project "Cooperation Southeast Danube Region" and the Hungarian project “Setting up the structure of a Danube River Forum” have received.Three projects of PA 11 were submitted to the second call for projects and selected to receive technical assistance from the TAF-DRP, with the financial support of the European Union and the City of Vienna.

The impact of the Project is seen in relation with the introduction of coherent and comprehensive approach in the fight against cybercrime in the Danube region. Cybercrime is an increasing challenge for all law enforcement agencies around the globe. World-wide networks, cloud computing, smartphones with rapidly growing capabilities and fast technological progress provide outstanding opportunities for criminals. They act globally, remotely and even simultaneously in different countries. Hence, we need more than ever cross-border alliances from law enforcement agencies to face these challenges.

Follow-up initiatives to the ciber symposium project are in the process of planning.

### Running projects, initiatives and activities

#### Register of project proposals

Led by the conviction that the successful outcome of the efforts is tightly linked to the project implementation, the PA 11 member countries continued enriching the register of the project proposals that is kept by the Coordination Bureau in Sofia. Three more projects were added and the total number reached 31 projects of which already nine projects have received a Letter of Recommendation by the Steering Group. The number of projects is not what matters most, but it is rather the inclusion of more issues in the framework of the set areas of cooperation within PA11.

#### Strategic long-term cooperation between law enforcement authorities

A great success for PA 11`s efforts was achieved by the implementation of the strategic long-term project idea for enhancing the cooperation between the law enforcement authorities along the Danube River through a network of contact points for exchange of information. This strategic project idea of PA11 as emphasised by the Ministers during the Danube Security Conference provides possibilities for fast exchange of information, coordinated joint activities and also coordinated control along the Danube River, so that all countries have one and the same real-time picture of the situation on the river. Through its realisation the added value of the efforts of all the Danube Region countries in the framework of Priority Area 11 are made visible and a solid and well developed framework for a sustainable cooperation in the region is to be established.

The beginning was set by a high-level Kick-off Conference of the “Setting up the Structure of a Danube River Forum” project (hereinafter referred to as DARIF) (HOME/2012/ISEC/FP/C2/4000003980) held 17-19 September 2013 in Budapest and Mohács. As a result five working groups were formed and started their work in two workshops so far. The participating Member States of PA 11 completed in 7-11 April 2014 a very successful joint operation under the project which was carried out as a multi-purpose law enforcement operation with the contribution of Frontex, Europol and EUBAM. Europol made an important contribution to the project in elaborating a Joint Scan Threat Notice on Serious and Organised Crime directly linked to the Danube River. Authorities controlled altogether 10 147 persons and documents. Preparations are on-going for the 2nd Joint Operation (21-25 July 2014) during which much bigger traffic on the Danube is expected because of the tourist season.

Following consultations the Austrian PORIS Project proposal was incorporated to the DARIF project. A national study about the legal and technical feasibility of cross-border networking of the River Information Service (RIS) for security purposes has been initialized by Austria in cooperation with the Technical University of Graz and the Viadonau (National inland waterway authority). Thus not only the implementation of the strategic project was developed, but also the first steps in establishing horizontal cooperation with Priority Area 1a were made.

The significant progress and the achieving of concrete results has further continued in enhancing the police cooperation in the three key areas that were set in January 2012 during the Danube Police Chiefs Conference in Munich (drug trafficking, corruption and trafficking in human beings) and confirmed during the High-level Danube Security Conference in May 2013 where the fight against cybercrime was added to the list of priorities.

#### Law enforcement cooperation network

At the same SG meeting, the Romanian Border Police made a presentation of a project idea on *"Setting up a network of centres for law enforcement cooperation. Networking between existing centres and those proposed under the EUSDR*". Its aim is to provide horizontal cooperation between the law enforcement agencies of the participating countries through the electronic exchange of data by computer application, but also by other means under mutual agreement. The Romanian project idea would complement the Hungarian DARIF project and the Austrian PORIS project and would also be in line, without duplication of efforts, with the strategic project idea of PA 11 for enhancing the cooperation between the law enforcement authorities along the Danube River through a network of contact points for exchange of information.

#### Cooperation SE Danube Region

Parallel to that at the beginning of the new programme period 2014-2020 new initiatives and projects are to be started and continuation of already started projects is in process. In the field of international police cooperation in combating illicit drug trafficking, the project “Cooperation Southeast Danube Region” initiated by the Bavarian State Criminal Police Office was started on 1st January 2014. As a first conference under the project during the period 30 September – 2 October 2014 the 153 meeting of the Working Group Southeast for Fighting Drug Trafficking (AG Südost) will be held and significant increase of attendance is expected compared to previous meeting of the WG in view of already registered participants. Then major exercise (controlled delivery) is planned for 2015. The exercise will be carried out in Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic and Germany.

Led by the conviction that it is very important to guarantee the security by problem-focused projects which are tailored to the specific problems prevailing in the Danube Region, the PA 11 participating states are regularly reviewing the set fields of cooperation in the scope of the three thematic areas.

#### Project on organised crime

At the 7th SG meeting a project proposal by Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) was presented. It will be a project on fighting organised crime. The member states situated in South East Europe were appealed that one of them should take the lead. Germany (PAC Federal Ministry of Interior) will examine how to foster this project. The project’s duration will be one year, starting from the beginning of 2015. It will mainly be financed by KAS. Further details will be elaborated in the course of planning.

#### PA meetings across the Danube States

Inspired by the will to involve actively all stakeholders and to achieve broader participation as well as political support to the work in the area of Security in EUSDR of PA the PACs undertook the initiative to hold Steering Group meeting in countries different from the coordinators of the PA. The aim is to encourage all member states to get involved on a broader base. Therefore, the VI Steering Group meeting was held in Budapest, and the VII Steering Group meeting was held in Bucharest. Thus the work under PA 11 has received a new impetus and a further political support, as the political level of the host country uses this opportunity to attend the Steering Group meeting in the country concerned.

Efforts have continued for the involvement of the non-EU member countries and associating them more closely in the activities and projects that are of interest for them. The insufficient resources in non-EU countries remain a challenge for their participation in the Steering Group of PA 11 work.

As a result of the efforts of the three coordinators and the support of EUBAM, Moldova and Ukraine became active participants in the work of the Steering Group. Moreover Moldova elaborated a project proposal which was submitted to the second call for projects and selected to receive technical assistance from the TAF-DRP. The efforts will continue to associate other non-EU countries in the work of PA 11 in view of achieving broader cooperation.

#### Horizontal cooperation within EUSDR

In view of obtaining synergy of efforts of the different stakeholders, in PA 11 we are exploring different possibilities for horizontal cooperation and our efforts has led to first results. The discussions started during the Vth SG meeting with the PACs of PA 1a. They were continued during a joint informal expert meeting held in September 2013 on which PACS discussed possible joint activities. In April 2014 the responsible persons for DARIF and representatives from PA 1 a met in Budapest to fix the cooperation. Also the cooperation in the field of customs received a new impetus. In the context of enlargement of the scope of cooperation, contacts were maintained with the EUSBSR. Consultations are on-going with PA 15 of the EUSBSR, the PACs of the two PAs held a meeting in the framework of their participation in the III Annual Forum in Vienna.

#### Cooperation with NGOs

During the reported period, the cooperation with the non-governmental sector has continued further. Such structures were involved in providing scientific expertise, as for example in the implementation of the Rule-of-Law project. Consultations are also on-going on an initiative of the Central European University called “Danube Excellence“ which main goal is to establish a working joint university in the region with orientation on transborder processes and structures, especially on security, safety, law enforcement and related public services with special focus on regional best practices.

#### Communication activities

Communication activities Convinced that communicating the work of the PA 11 and visibility of the achievements has a positive influence on stakeholders and their participation in the SG meetings as well as in activities and projects, the coordinating parties took active part in the EUSDR Annual forums as well as in the “Black Sea-Danube Social-Economic Innovation Forum” in May 2014 on the occasion of the European Maritime Day where the PA 11 was awarded with Diploma of Excellence for the Black Sea-Danubian Social and Economic Innovator for the support in preparing projects.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

*Last year marks the third year of the implementation of the EUSDR – period, which was very intensive for PA 11. In the course of the everyday work when the PACs and the Coordination Bureau overcome various challenges, we learned to be better “Danubians”.*

*Among the most valuable “lessons learned” are:*

*-* **The importance of active involvement of EUSDR actors**

*The work done during the past year pointed out the necessity of broad involvement of the relevant actors in the Danube region (EUSDR member states and the respective stakeholders). Encouraging the active participation of more countries in the Danube Region is important to achieve enhanced cooperation of essential number of stakeholders. On the other hand, the actively involved countries gained benefits from that cooperation by increasing their capacities in the relevant areas*

*-* **The necessity of identifying funding sources**

*As the Security Area is not among the thematic objectives of the Danube programme, our experience learned us to actively and unceasingly look for funding opportunities. Continious efforts were done to identified possible alternative sources, for example – funding from NGOs. Our experience indicates that this is a successful practice and our intention is to continue investing efforts is this respect.*

* **The added value of the horizontal cooperation**

*Horizontal cooperation adds new impetus in cooperation within EUSDR and possibilities for establishing such cooperation with other Priority Areas must be further explored; (the cooperation with PA 1a is currently on-going within the framework of the DARIF project) establishing cooperation with EUSBSR is also important focus of efforts;*

**- The significance of continuously enriching the content of our work**

*The cooperation started in the different thematic areas is to be further developed by implementing new projects and initiatives in order to achieve more effectively our key objectives and to meet successfully the security challenges in the region. . Furthermore we found useful and important to enrich the thematic areas by including new focuses, such as the cybercrime, which gives added value and lead to practical and visible results.*

*-*

**- The necessity to communicate our work**

*Communicating the work and visibility of achievements is crucial for achieving broader participation and commitment of the participating countries. Our experience in the last year taught us that taking into account the specificity of the security matters, our work should be communicated in an adequate, open and proactive manner. This would help us to involve more interested stakeholders and get appropriate assessment and feedback. Continuous efforts would be made in the area of awareness rising.*

# Progress in the implementation of PA 11 key objectives

## Key objective I: Security offensive - Enhancing police cooperation

With the aim of strengthening international police cooperation in combating illicit **drug trafficking** t*he project “Cooperation Southeast Danube Region”* initiated by the Bavarian State Criminal Police Office started on 1st January 2014. The expected result of the project is increased effectiveness of the fight against drug trafficking through continued harmonisation with EU standards and practices in the participating countries.

In the field of **corruption counteraction,** the reported period marked the finalisation of two important projects in PA 11 – the *European Anti-Corruption Training*, led by Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia and the *Rule of Law – implementing comprehensive and integrated approach in preventing and counteracting corruption in the Danube Region* – a joint project of Bulgaria and Germany, implemented with financial support from Konrad Adenauer Foundation and national financing from Bulgaria. Complementing each other, the two projects provide for a comprehensive platform for focused discussions and exchange of experience thus contributing significantly to an enhanced cooperation in the fight against this phenomenon. Consultations are on-going on continuation of the work in this field.

The beginning of exchange of experience and best practices, as well as outlining synergies of existing initiatives and cooperation in **combating cybercrime** was marked by another finalised project under PA 11. In the framework of the project a Seminar on combating cybercrime was held in October 2013 in Stuttgart on which a total of 140 experts discussed strategies for combating cybercrime, highlighted the challenges and presented approaches to overcome them. The event is considered as a first step towards establishing a network of Danube region agencies competent in fighting cybercrime.

## Key objective II: Danube centres for cooperation and information

Consistent efforts are being made for enhancing cooperation through contact centres along the Danube River. The discussion that started during the First Round Table in April 2012, where an agreement was achieved to work for setting up a network of contact centres, continued at the Steering Group meetings of PA 11. During the III SG meeting (June 2012, Munich) three relevant project ideas received a Letter of Recommendation by the Steering Group. Then during the IV SG meeting (December 2012, Sofia) these projects were presented in detail and their future implementation was discussed and presented during the V and VI SG meetings (June 2013, Berlin and November 2013, Budapest). Also in May 2013 in Sofia during the Second Round Table the future steps and challenges related to the development of this strategic project was discussed.

Cooperation within the DARIF project builds upon the existing positive experience in the Black Sea Cooperation Forum and the Black Sea Border Cooperation and Information Centre in Burgas as an example of working cooperation between the border police/border guard authorities in the Black Sea Region for efficient counteraction of transborder crime. Furthermore, in long-term perspective cooperation between the two initiatives could be established in view of linking the Danube Region and the Black Sea Region.

The implementation of the project of Hungary on establishment of the Danube Law Enforcement Coordination Center and its third phase, the DARIF project in Mohács started with a high-level Kick-off Conference 17-19 September 2013. During the conference the specific plans for the project implementation were introduced. The Kick-off Conference was concluded by the adoption of a Joint Declaration in which the delegations formally confirmed their participation in the project while emphasizing the importance of cross-border cooperation and effective information exchange. The work plan was presented of each of the five expert groups established under the project.

Two workshops have been held in the DARIF so far in December 2013 and in May 2014 on which the implementation of the project and the organisation of the joint operations were discussed in the framework of the five expert groups. The 1st Technical Workshop of the DARIF project was held on the 9-10th December 2013. More than 70 experts from the field of criminal risk analysis, customs, border management, water transportation and transportation of dangerous goods as well as information exchange met from the ten member states of the DARIF in order to put the initiatives into practice and elaborate on the topics and implementation of the three joint operations that are due in 2014. During the Extra Workshop in May 2014 the report on the 1st Joint Operation was presented and the results were discussed in view of planning the next operations.

On 7-11 April 2014 the 1st Joint Operation was performed by the participating states. Detailed Framework Operational Plan was elaborated by the Ministry of Interior of Hungary for the operation with national sub-plans of the member states as annexes.

Participating authorities of the Member States - police forces (criminal- border- and water police) customs, disaster management organizations, human health and phytosanitary authorities, navigation (port) authorities and other cooperative bodies (for example: environmental protection and labour inspection) and other partners carried out controls on passenger cruise ships, and freight ships (including transport of dangerous goods), pleasure boats and each unloading ports.

The Ministry of Interior of Hungary performed coordination of implementation between participating Member States. During the operation – in order to facilitate information flow and reaction capabilities - each participating Member State operated their own national contact points and delegated one liaison officer to Mohács to take part actively in the daily work of the Temporary Coordination Centre, and to keep contact with their national authorities. Work of the Centre was organized by the Hungarian coordinator of the OPERATION EG. Frontex, Europol and EUBAM liaison officers have also participated in it.

The 1st Joint Operation is considered as very successful. During the 3 operational days a total number of 653 officers were involved in the ten member states (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine) as well as 25-30 duty boats and cars per day and country. 770 searches were carried out in passenger cruise ships, tugboats, freight ships, containers, cars and destination ports. Authorities controlled altogether 10 147 persons and documents.

Two more joint operations will be performed during the implementation of the project on 21-25 July and 10-14 November 2014. The 2nd Technical Workshop is foreseen for January 2015 and the Final Conference on the project is to be held in April 2015 when an overall evaluation of the project will be presented.

PORIS

To provide for a more effective communication environment for exchange of information between the coordination centre and the national contact points, setting up of a police river information system is foreseen. The PORIS project is based on the Austrian positive experience. The main objectives of the Austrian Project proposal “PORIS” are currently part of the “DARIF” project. Austria has therefore modified its project objectives and initialized a national study about the legal and technical feasibility of cross-border networking of the River Information Service (RIS) for security purposes in cooperation with the Technical University of Graz and the Via Donau (National inland waterway authority). As of the moment the financing is under review. As far as the study is funded from national funds, it is expected that the results will be available in March 2016. Austria intends to provide the relevant results of the study to the EUSDR.

## Key objective III: Security required for individual movements in the world wide web (e-ID) - (formerly: System of border control and document inspection management)

The kick-off event was a symposium on EU Border Management and Security of Travel Documents in the Danube Region (Sofia II) in Sofia from 18 to 20 April 2012. The country-specific calls for action that were identified act as a catalyst in order to drive forward changes based on EU experiences and EU standards. This in terms of three aspects:

* The applicable EU acquis as well as experience in the implementation;
* New developments, e.g. on “smart borders“ ;
* The issue “visa” for the areas “travels” and “pre-border checks”.

The field of traditional ID documents has also been covered.

Now it is focusing on the security required for individual movements in the World Wide Web (eID). The new task now is to define the requirements which will ensure the ID security in the cyber area on a sustainable basis. For top security documents of the traditional kind, ID proof is obligatory. This must also be discussed for the “documents“ and the e-ID functions which are used online. This also implies in view of the millions of uses of Internet services and the related problems of theft or falsified identities.

In this respect the key topic will be expanded by ID security in the worldwide web. Solutions are being worked on worldwide and also within the EU. These must be interoperable in the EU in particular because of the European internal market, the border-control free space, all the more because of their comprehensive use across borders.

With this aim in mind, an e-ID symposium is planned to be held in Budapest at the end of December 2014 for exchanging requirements and experience on this topic. The countries of the Danube region will be invited to exchange experiences and requirements regarding these issues. The symposium is up-to-date as the discussion has already been started or is in full swing in these countries.

## Key objective IV: Strengthening the rule of law and combating corruption

The implementation of the following relevant projects was concluded in 2013:

### Finalized project “Rule of Law”

Bulgaria and Germany implemented the Rule-of-Law (RoL) project with the financial support of the RoL Programme for South East Europe of Konrad Adenauer Foundation as well as with Bulgarian national co-financing. From June 2012 to March 2013 the three planned workshops at expert level were held under the project. The area of countering corruption was highlighted in three perspectives such as prevention of conflict of interest, criminal and civil asset forfeiture and links between organised crime and corruption. As a result best practices in countering corruption were exchanged and models and systems used in this field were identified. The concluding event on this project – a high level conference for summarising the results was held in 4-5 November 2013 in Bulgaria.

### The closing of the project was marked by another significant outcome - a study named “Fighting corruption in the Danube region - an overview of potential capabilities and limits of national anti-corruption measures” drafted by the Max Planck Institute. Based on the specific methods and approaches of the Danube Region countries in their fight against corruption the study will outline the best practices. The results of the workshops and the scientific expertise outline the strategic directions for further development of the cooperation in prevention of and fight against corruption in the Danube region. The project is a stable platform for exchange of information and expert knowledge in the Danube Region and the region of the Western Balkans. Finalized project “European Anticorruption Training (EACT”)

Since 2011 EACT project, led by Austria has been a key focus of cooperation. EACT pursues an integrated approach.Structured on the basis of „practise meets practise“, the project consists in total of a kick-off conference in 2011, 15 working group meetings between 2011 and 2013 and a final conference in October 2013.

During the project implementation best practices are identified and the exchange of experience at the highest level is promoted. The work is guided by three fundamental principles which are reflected in three working groups: prevention, investigation and international cooperation. During the whole time-frame and process of EACT, participants use the innovative and secure online database platform EPE (Europol Platform for Experts), which ensures that the secure exchange of information, documents, case studies and expertise as well as the preparation for an upcoming meeting is available for the participants on a consistent basis.

### Impact of the finalized project under key objective IV

Corruption is not confined to individual countries. In its various manifestations, corruption may affect all the countries in the Danube Region, leading to extremely high, transnational negative effects.

Positive aspect of both implemented projects is that all the countries are making serious efforts to tackle the problem of corruption in an effective and sustainable manner. The help and support of the EU is of great importance in this respect.

In a dynamic exchange and learning process, countries can benefit from the experience of other states and can apply their findings to their particular situation. This is of utmost importance against the backdrop of corruption, as an extremely dynamic and manifold phenomenon. The promotion and improvement of knowledge exchange could lead to visible difference in the way this phenomenon is addressed. The anti-corruption fight in the Danube Region could be significantly accelerated and improved by close cooperation and exchange of promising measures.

The established network between the experts and possibilities to exchange best practices are of crucial importance.

In conclusion, the fight against corruption remains a long-term endeavour, as results can often be properly assessed only after some time has passed.

# 3. Characteristics of the process

## Continuing cooperation and involving all stakeholders in the work under PA 11 of the EUSDR

Keeping in mind that the implementation of the objectives requires the engagement of all the participating stakeholders in the Danube region, the three coordinating parties – Germany, Bavaria and Bulgaria – continue to invest efforts in the involvement of the relevant actors.

- Two Steering Group meetings within PA 11 were held since the last report (in December 2013 in Budapest and in June 2014 in Bucharest). This initiative of Bulgaria and Germany to hold SG meeting in countries other than the coordinating ones was based on the will to achieve broader commitment of participating states. The activities during these meetings traditionally include analyses of the work to date, feedback about the latest development of the on-going and planned projects.

*-* With the support of the European Union border Assistance Mission to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine - EUBAM the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine became active members of the SG of PA 11. In the last year the commitment of Moldova and Ukraine within PA 11 significantly increased – not only at the level of participation in the Steering group meetings but also in concrete activities. Even more Moldova has elaborated its first project proposal, which will be provided with financial support by TAF. The Priority Area Coordinators shall continue their work for associating more closely the two countries in the activities and projects that are of interest for them.

## Political support to activities within PA 11

- Second Annual Forum of the EUSDR – Representatives of the Coordination Bureau of PA 11 participated in the Second Annual Forum of the EUSDR, held on 28-29 October 2013 in Bucharest, Romania where they presented the progress of activities within the Priority Area “Security”. The project manager of the Hungarian DARIF Project presented it there as an example of strategic project activities in PA 11.

- “Black Sea-Danube Social-Economic Innovation Forum” - representatives of the Coordination Bureau of PA 11 took part in the forum held in May 2014 on the occasion of the European Maritime Day. The PA 11 was awarded with Diploma of Excellence for the Black Sea-Danubian Social and Economic Innovator for its active and sustainable support to projects and in particular to the Romanian Project Proposal - Strengthening the naval transport protection capacities of Romanian Gendarmerie which was approved for financing under TAF.

- The VII Steering Group meeting in Bucharest - The State Secretary of the Romanian Ministry of Internal Affairs attended the meeting.

- The Ministers of Interior have regularly exchanged information on the strategy and its development by bilateral discussions.

## *Strategic Implementation*

## The implementation of the Strategic Project idea in PA 11 started with a kick-off high level conference on the DARIF project. The project is in advance stage of implementation – two seminars were held on which the common challenges and issues of joint interest were discussed; the first joint operation was performed which provided for putting in practice the joint cooperation under the project.

## Exploring possibilities for horizontal cooperation with other PAs

The coordinators of PA 11 are working consistently for the active involvement of all countries participating in EUSDR in the activities of PA 11. Moreover exploring of possibilities for horizontal cooperation with other PAs was further continued.

- After the initial presentation of the work of PA 1a of the EUSDR during the V Steering Group meeting of PA, the PA 1a organised an informal meeting in Austria of the two priority areas which was held at the end of September 2013 in Vienna. One result was outlining possible joint activities. The representative of the Germany supported the idea of more targeted, harmonised and thus more effective controls. The aim is to bring about more coordinated controls accompanied by better security. Thus horizontal cooperation shall be achieved, as well as customs authorities shall be involved in cooperation under PA 11.

- During the meeting between PA1a and the DARIF project on 23rd April 2014, firstly the DARIF project was presented and secondly the main goals of the PA1a were introduced for example increasing the cargo transport, solve obstacles of navigability, develop multimodal terminals, implementation of RIS, harmonize education standards. It was also mentioned that depending on the outcome of the DARIF project, it may be necessary to establish a Permanent Coordination Centre in Mohács. In this case the infrastructure of the information exchange would be ensured by PORIS project while the DARIF would set up the forum system. The meeting pointed out that there were many common lines, but the DARIF is connected to law enforcement authorities and activities while PA1a is dealing with industrial and shipping companies. The biggest step forward would be if we developed a shared document library, it would make the controls easier, faster and more transparent. The project has been working on this solution and PA1a has the ability to mediate among law enforcement authorities and shipping companies.

## *Work of PACs*

## During the 4th EUSDR NCP/PAC meeting in 11-12 March 2014 in Vienna the PACs had the opportunity to present PA 11 main achievements in 2013 in terms of projects implementation and to give a short forecast to future activities. The meeting provided a possibility to see the work of the priority area against the background of other PA work and to exchange good practices and information on faced challenges.

## *Financing process*

## PACs representatives joined the meetings of the Task Force for elaboration of the Danube Programme. After it was made clear that PA 11 will not be reflected directly as a separate thematic objective in the transnational program, the PACs of PA 11 focused their participation on exploring financing opportunities under the set priority areas.

## *Generating projects*

## Despite the difficulties in obtaining financing for projects within PA 11, 3 projects were finalised and 2 projects are implemented and 5 projects are planned. Since June 2013 three projects have received a Letter of Recommendation.

## *Scientific expertise*

## The work under the Rule-of-Law project was supported with significant scientific expertise. The Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Heidelberg prepared a study “Fighting corruption in the Danube region - an overview of potential capabilities and limits of national anti-corruption measures”. Also under EACT project a best practice manual was elaborated containing all the important information exchanged and developed throughout the working group meetings as well as other contributions to the project.

## *Involving civil society*

## It should be noted that in PA 11 there is a specificity concerning the priority participation of governmental institutions in providing security. Nevertheless, where possible we are trying to involve also non-governmental structures as for example under Rule-of-Law Project on which civil society organisations participated in the work.

## *Publicity measures*

## Constant efforts are made to stay visible and to inform the society on the achieved results. A good contact is established with the members of the Steering Group of PA 11 and constructive dialogue is maintained. With the purpose of staying visible the Coordination Bureau in the Ministry of Interior is updating regularly the website of the Danube Strategy.

## *Discussions speeded up*

## Through the implemented projects the discussions and cooperation were speeded up in combating illicit drug trafficking through the implemented project “Cooperation Southeast Danube Region”; cooperation in corruption counteraction was further promoted by two important projects finalised last year in PA 11 – the European Anti-Corruption Training and the Rule of Law Project. The implementation of the strategic project idea received further impetus with the implementation of DARIF project and the initialised study on the possibilities to implement the PORIS project. The Cybercrime symposium Project implemented in 2013 made a first step towards speeding the cooperation in this field and in establishing a network of Danube Region agencies competent in fighting cybercrime.

## Funding

As a specific challenge before PA 11 for the programme period 2007-2013, the lack of a particular financial instrument for projects funding should be noted. For example the Austrian PORIS project and the Romanian Comprehensive Assessment on the Danube project meet difficulties with regard to their funding. Despite the difficulties in obtaining financing for projects within PA 11, so far 3 projects were successfully implemented, another 2 projects are currently been implemented and 5 more are planned.

During the last year the PA 11 stakeholders continued their working on the challenge to generate project ideas and to identify possibilities for their funding through various EU programmes. With regard to PA 11 a dual approach is being pursued. On one hand, existing resources should be made use of. Strategies and projects in the policing area, for instance, should be implemented with existing financial and personnel resources and equipment, where possible. On the other hand PA 11 examines the extent to which existing funds and assistance programmes of the European Union could be used. The project "Cooperation Southeast Danube Region" and the Hungarian project proposal “Setting up the structure of a Danube River Forum” have received financing under the meanwhile expired ISEC program.

Our efforts continue to involve civil society as much as possible, e.g. local NGOs and foundations. (Konrad-Adenauer Foundation, Hanns-Seidel Foundation). We have succeed to manage with the challenges regarding the financing of the Rule of Law project, but this is a short-term project and we would not have such a success on long-term projects without funding at EU level.

As regards the forthcoming financial period (2014 – 2020) the success of our activities depends to a great extent on the availability of financial resources. In this context we are encouraged by the establishment of a specific Transnational Cooperation Programme for the Danube Region. Given the fact that Security area is not a separate thematic objective, our efforts are focused on identifying possibilities for financing under the set objectives, as well as on identifying other financing opportunities under other instruments of the MFF.

In the framework of the Second Call of the Technical Assistance Facility for Danube Region Projects (TAF-DRP) after conducting the necessary internal selection procedure, PA 11 submitted three project proposals. All of them were approved to receive support which gives a new impetus in the efforts for finding financing opportunities for the projects under PA 11.

**Annex 1**

**Road Map**

* 1. **Target: Efficient exchange of information between relevant law enforcement actors by 2015 with the aim of improving security and tackling serious and organised crime in the 14 countries**

2.1.2. Action: **Security offensive –Strengthening police cooperation.**

The priorities agreed upon at the Danube Police Chief Conference in Munich in January 2012 (fight against trafficking in drugs, trafficking in human beings and corruption) were confirmed at the Ministerial Danube Security Conference held in Munich on 6/7 May 2013 within the framework of the European Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). The conference signalled the addition of cybercrime to the list of priority areas.

1. ***Objective: integration of AG Südost in EUSDR***

The Working Group Southeast for Fighting Drug Trafficking ("AG Südost"), an independent expert body of national police and customs officers aims to optimise the security and the fight against organised crime through close cooperation of law enforcement agencies and exchange of information.

The conclusion drawn at the Danube Police Chief Conference was to integrate AG Südost as a separate project into the EUSDR and to open it for non- members in the near futureso as to integrate all countries involved in the Strategy. The project aims - to enhance the exchange of information and strengthen cooperation between the law enforcement authorities to promote security and tackle organised crime; to achieve a high and common level of qualification for all organisational units involved.

The project sheets were drafted in German and English for the Cooperation Southeast Danube Region Project by the Bavarian State Criminal Police Office (BLKA) in consultation with the Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior. In the project sheets, the initial situation, project goals, target groups and project budget were outlined.

**Milestone 1: Letter of Recommendation**

Initiated electronic consent procedure by the coordination bureau of PA 11 in Sofia within the Steering Group of PA 11. No objection by the members of the Steering Group received; a Letter of Recommendation drafted and signed by the three Priority Area 11 coordinators (dated 25 august 2012).

**Milestone 2:** **Ensuring financial resources for the implementation of the project approved**

The total project budget amounts to 325.748,35 EUR. The total amount of the grant is 293.108,36 Euro.

**Milestone 3: Implementation of the project**

The project is implemented under the leadership of the BLKA with the Austrian Federal Criminal Police Office and the Czech Republic (NPC Prague) participating as partners.

The target groups: experts and investigators from law enforcement and customs authorities charged with combating international drug crime.

The project is to be implemented via two mechanisms: two major conferences planned during the project period to be attended by experts and investigators. The countries not involved in the Cooperation Southeast Danube Region so far are to be informed of opportunities of cooperation and anti-crime strategies (best practices) within the framework of “AG Südost”. The basis for joint operational measures will to be established in the future. In addition to that transnational exercises are intended to be carried out (controlled deliveries).

**Milestone 4: Start of the project and kick-off meeting in January 2014**

The project started on 1 January 2014. The kick-off meeting was held in Munich on 15 and 16 January and was attended by the BLKA and its project partners, the Austrian Criminal Police Office and NPC Prague. A kick-off brochure was issued to the participants.

**Milestone 5: 153rd Conference of the Working Group South East (“AG Südost”)**

The 153rd conference of AG Südost to be held in Austria from 30 September to 2 October 2014. The number of participants from countries who announced their attendance - significantly increased

**Milestone 6: “Exercise Operation Perseus”**

A major exercise (controlled delivery) is to take place in May 2015. The exercise is to be carried out in Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic and Germany.

**Milestone 7: Debriefing on the exercise**

A debriefing with representatives of the countries that participated in the exercise is to be held in Hungary in June 2015.

**Milestone 8: 154th Conference of the Working Group South East (“AG Südost”) in the Czech Republic**

**Milestone 9: Conclusion of the project (December 2015)**

1. ***Objective: Symposium on Cybercrime Project - a first step towards establishing a network of Danube region agencies competent in fighting cybercrime***

Objective of the project - to enhance and intensify cross-border cooperation of the law enforcement agencies in the Danube region in terms of combating cybercrime or maintaining cyber-security respectively.

**Milestone 1: Letter of recommendation**

Initiated electronic consent procedure by the coordination bureau of PA 11 in Sofia within the Steering Group of PA 11. No objection by the members of the Steering Group received; a Letter of Recommendation drafted and signed by the three Priority Area 11 coordinators.

**Milestone 2:** **Ensuring financial resources for the implementation of the project approved**

The total project budget amounts to approximately 50,000 EUR.

**Milestone 3: Iimplementation of the project**

The project was implemented under the leadership of the Ministry of the Interior of Baden-Württemberg.

Experts from nine countries participating in the EUSDR (Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Romania and the Republic of Moldova) as well as from France and Switzerland congregated on 17 October 2013 at the international Symposium „Cybercrime - Building Alliances for a Safer Digital World“ in Stuttgart (Germany).

The objective of the project was to enhance and intensify cross-border cooperation of the law enforcement agencies in the Danube region in terms of combating cybercrime or maintaining cyber-security respectively. To this end the event focused on the exchange of best practices and new approaches in combating this type of crime. Overall about 140 participants discussed strategies for combating cybercrime; the challenges were highlighted and approaches to overcome them presented.

The Minister of the Interior from Baden-Württemberg, Mr Reinhold Gall underlined in his opening speech that in the field of combating cybercrime both, technical know-how and rapid, direct and non-bureaucratic cross-border information exchange are required to successfully locate and identify perpetrators. Besides, it is important to devote resources to the protection of IT systems to block cyber-attacks and espionage. Cross-border strategies and a close cooperation of the different key players from law enforcement agencies, science and private enterprises are required. A progressive alignment of the different legal regulations in Europe is important.

State Police President Gerhard Klotter presented the structures in Place in Baden-Württemberg and the networks and types of cooperation which have already been established. He pointed out the urgent demand for an international network of law enforcement officers and outlined the role which the State Office for Criminal Investigations Baden-Württemberg could play.

Mr Schol from Europol described the tasks and services of the „European Cybercrime Centre“ (EC3) which has become operational at the beginning of 2013. He highlighted that EC3 can provide valuable contributions to the investigations in the Member States by analyses of relevant information and the coordination of cross-border investigations.

Further lecturers were Mr Dieter Schneider (President of the State Office for Criminal Investigations), Mr Leopold Löschl (Federal Office for Criminal Investigations of Austria), Dr. Harald Niggemann (Federal Office for Information Security – BSI – in Germany), Prof. Dr. Martin Rieger (Albstadt-Sigmaringen University) and Prof. Dr. Felix Freiling (Friedrich-Alexander-University, Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany).

The symposium proved impressively that cybercrime is one of the key challenges for all law enforcement agencies already right now but even more in future as more and more crimes will shift from the real world into the cyberspace.

**Milestone 4: Future discussions and possible continuation of cooperation under a new project**

The project is considered as a first step towards establishing a network of Danube region agencies competent in fighting cybercrime. The requirements of effective strategies to combat cybercrime, for enhanced international police cooperation and alliances with other stakeholders reveal that further improvements could be tackled by a tailor-made international project which to be financed out of the new EU Internal Security Fund. Further details on this issue to be discussed in due time within the Steering Group of PA 11.

**Road Map**

**2.2 Target: Effective co-operation between relevant law enforcement actors by 2015**

2.2.1. Action: Strengthening the law enforcement cooperation through contact centrеs.

Considerable success was achieved for enhancing cooperation through contact centers along the Danube River.

Three project ideas identified – from Austria, Hungary and Romania, aimed at addressing issues related to the Action. An agreement achieved to work for setting up a network of contact centers during the First Round Table in April 2012. A Letter of Recommendation issued by the Steering Group at the III SG meeting (June 2012, Munich).

In February 2013 a Hungarian delegation paid a visit to the Black Sea Border Coordination and Information Centre in Burgas for exchange of experience with the existing cooperation between the Black Sea littoral states. Cooperation between the two initiatives to be established in long-term perspective in view of linking the Danube region and the Black Sea Region.

Political support was received during the Danube Security Conference (6/7 May, Munich). The project idea to set up a network of contact points along the Danube and the further upgrade of the centre in Hungary (Mohács) as coordination centre are regarded as a strategic project.

A long-term vision was outlined for enhancing the cooperation between the law enforcement authorities along the Danube River through contact points for exchange of information as a result of joint and purposeful efforts of the Danube countries. This strategic project provides possibilities for fast exchange of information, coordinated joint activities and also coordinated control along the Danube River. All countries will have one and the same real-time picture of the situation on the river.

A Second Round Table on Setting up Coordination Centre(s) for Border Police Cooperation/ Networking of Existing Centres was held on 28-29 May 2013 in Sofia. The focuses of cooperation outlined – enhanced exchange of information with possibilities for preventing actions, the so called early-warning system, as well as coordinating joint activities and performing joint operations. Important challenges were mapped out – finding out the appropriate form for organising our cooperation, possibilities for establishing contact points/ using existing ones, establishing environment for communication and video conference connection.

*- Police River Information System Donau (PORIS) – Austria*

It is in line with the EU Directive 2005/44/EG. Pursuant to the Directive all EU Member States shall undertake respective measures to introduce River Information Services (RIS) with regard to security in general and the waterways in particular. The Austrian Federal Police use the RIS in form of DORIS (Donau River Information Service) which enables real-time overview of vessels, rendering of assistance/securing of evidence after accidents or in emergency situations. The system stores person-related data regarding crews and passengers. The overall idea of the project is to ensure international interconnectedness of the police and customs units as well as any other relevant authorities and entities from the Danube countries. The project aims at establishing a uniform technical and legal base (BI- or Multilateral) for information exchange.

*- Setting up the Structure of a Danube River Forum (DARIF) – Hungary*

The project aims atincreasing jointly the safety and security of the Danube**,** taking harmonised and efficient measures against river and river related crimes and organised crimes and establishing transnational, cross border and operative law enforcement cooperation platform for the Danube. The centre in Mohács is a newly established one – a modern water border crossing point in compliance with Schengen requirements, with RIS in use since 2007. It will be a platform for information exchange and coordination of joint actions and trainings and will provide regular basis for technical and strategic workshops. The cooperation will cover the topics of border police, water police, customs and finance guards and Danube related disaster management issues.

*- Comprehensive Assessment on the Danube – Romania*

A new project idea was proposed. Recognizing the specialities of the separate Danube countries and the river itself in its four main sections it was suggested that a team of experts should carry out a need and risk assessment analysis and prepare a final document which could serve as a basis for future joint activities and the implementation of the Danube Strategy.

**Milestone 1:** **High-level event - Setting up the Structure of a Danube River Forum****Project (DARIF) high-level Kick-off Conference, 17-19 September in Budapest and Mohács, Hungary**

The implementation of the project led by Hungary on establishment of the Danube Law Enforcement Forum and coordination centre in Mohács started with a high-level Kick-off Conference 17-19 September 2013. During the conference the specific plans for the project implementation were introduced. A Joint Declaration was adopted in which the delegations formally confirmed their participation in the project while emphasizing the importance of cross-border cooperation and effective information exchange. The work plans of each of the five expert groups established under the project were presented.

1. **Criminal and Risk Analysis Expert Group**:

*Aim:* Risk analysis based on information from tendencies and modus operandi of actual crimes and other threatening events. Support of authorities involved in Danube waterway transport controls based on the risk analysis, and at the same time to ensure the security and detection of criminal offences.

2. **Law Enforcement Control Expert Group:**

*Aim:* To evolve a unified control method, that corresponds to the safety and speedy requirements during the border- and long-range inspections and to create a joint database as well effectively support the law enforcement control.

3. **Safety and Security of Waterway Expert Group:**

*Aim:* A standardized law enforcement system on the Danube that’s instrumental in the creation and the preservation of waterway transport safety by keeping track of and enforcing the compliance with both international and national requirements concerning crew and safety of water crafts, prevention of environmental pollution, as well as living and working conditions on board in connection with phenomena representing threats to the waterway transport safety and analyzing and evaluating the experience with the enforcement of waterway transport regulation. To support the work of the enforcement bodies with extensive analysis on the risks and know-how of the transport of dangerous goods on the Danube. To help the harmonization of the national interests and national responsibilities regarding the dangerous goods transport on waterways.

4. **Joint Operations and Training Expert Group:**

*Aim:* Planning of Joint Operations to be implemented during the project – according to the demands of the member states – elaboration of the Framework Operational Plans and necessary forms and synchronizing the implementation with setting up a Temporary Coordination Centre in Mohács. Working out the possible topics and feasibility of further joint operations on River Danube based on the experiences gained during carrying out the operations with maintaining close co-operation with law enforcement bodies and other cooperative organizations of the Danube Countries.

5. **Information Exchange and River Information Service Expert Group:**

*Aim:* To support the harmonisation and development of modern and efficiently utilizable cross border information services for law enforcement authorities responsible for the Danube.

For the purpose of the project implementation Europol drafted a Joint Scan Threat Notice on Serious and Organised Crime directly linked to the Danube River.

**Milestone 2: Implementation of the project. Two Workshops and one Joint Operation performed.**

Two workshops were held in December 2013 and in May 2014 and a joint operation performed in April 2014. The implementation of the project and the organisation of the joint operations were discussed during the workshops in the framework of the five expert groups. During the seminar in May 2014 (Extra Workshop) the report on the 1st Joint Operation was presented and the results discussed in view of planning the next operations.

The 1st Joint Operation was performed by the participating states on 7-11 April 2014. Detailed Framework Operational Plan was elaborated by the Ministry of Interior of Hungary for the operation with national sub-plans of the member states as annexes.

Purposes of the operation: detection of facilitation of illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings, actions against illegal immigration, detection of smuggling of drugs, cigarettes and other goods, implementation of general waterway law enforcement controls aboard ships and in the ports, detections of false documents , seeking for wanted persons, increased controls on labour employment and on transport of dangerous goods.

International criminal and law enforcement controls have been concentrated to the River Danube and to its riverbanks at important ports by the authorities of the Member States. The territorial scope of the 1st Joint Operation did not include the Danube-Rhine-Main Canal, because it was closed at the beginning of April.

Participating authorities of the Member States - police forces (criminal- border- and water police) customs, disaster management organizations, human health and phytosanitary authorities, navigation (port) authorities and other cooperative bodies (for example: environmental protection and labour inspection) and other partners carried out controls on passenger cruise ships, and freight ships (including transport of dangerous goods), pleasure boats and each unloading ports.

Coordination between participating Member States was performed by the Ministry of Interior of Hungary. In order to facilitate information flow and reaction capabilities during the operation, national contact points operated and a liaison officer was delegated to Mohács by each participating Member States to take part actively in the daily work of the **Temporary Coordination Centre**, and to keep contact with their national authorities. The Hungarian coordinator of the OPERATION EG organized the work of the Centre. **Frontex, Europol and EUBAM** liaison officers also participated.

Tasks of the Temporary Coordination Centre: keeping daily contact with the NCPs of the participating Member States of the operation, immediate and mutual data exchange, collecting information on the actual state of the sub-operations in Member States, operational support given by Europol officer and collecting statistical data for the final report of the operation.

Statistical data, including all relevant 24 hours data of the previous operational day of the Operation, was sent on a daily basis to the Centre, where daily summary of the results was prepared.

The 1st Joint Operation was considered very successful. During the 3 operational days a total of 653 officers were involved in the ten member states (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine) as well as 25-30 duty boats and cars per day and country. 770 searches were carried out in passenger cruise ships, tugboats, freight ships, containers, cars and destination ports. Authorities controlled altogether 10 147 persons and documents.

PORIS

Setting up of a police river information system is foreseen to provide for a more effective communication environment for exchange of information between the coordination centre and the national contact points. The PORIS project is based on the Austrian positive experience. The main objectives of the Austrian Project proposal “PORIS” are currently incorporated in the DARIF project. Austria modified the project objectives and a national study was initialized about the legal and technical feasibility of cross-border networking of the River Information Service (RIS) for security purposes in cooperation with the Technical University of Graz and the Via Donau (National inland waterway authority). The financing opportunities are under review. If study is funded from national funds - the results to be available in March 2016. Austria will provide the relevant results of the study to the EUSDR.

**Milestone 3: The way ahead - Future actions under the DARIF project**

Two more joint operations to be performed in the framework of the project on 21-25 July and 10-14 November 2014. Another workshop foreseen for January 2015 and the Final Conference on the project for April 2015 - an overall evaluation of the project to be presented there.

A decision of all countries to be taken on the framework and content of future cooperation in the Danube Forum until the closing conference of the Danube Forum project in April 2015.

A clear vision to be outlined how to unite the ideas on establishing the network of contact points so that each country can draw greatest possible added value for itself and in the same time achieve maximum synergy of the efforts of all countries.

**Milestone 4: Ensuring financial resources for the implementation of the projects**

1. For the *Police River Information System Donau (PORIS) – Austria*: Estimated budget € 3m/year, for the 2-year duration: € 6,000,000

2.For the *Danube Law Enforcement Coordination Centre – Hungary*

- Estimated budget € 600.000, Source: IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme, External Borders Fund, and EC ISEC Programme

- Phase I - € 241,860 (of which € 193.358 EU grant have already been awarded)

- Phase II-III - ~ € 400.000 (of which € 261 783EU grant have already been awarded)

3. For the *Comprehensive Assessment on the Danube – Romania -* Estimated budget € 400,000.

**Road Map**

**2.3 Target: Promoting the rule of law - Assistance for participating countries by deepening and promoting the idea of the rule of law and strengthening and developing further democratic structures. Promoting (legal) certainty for the people by fighting against corruption.**

2.3.1. Action: **European Anti-corruption Training**

EACT was carried out from October 2011 until December 2013 and aimed to develop best practice models through the exchange of expertise of its participants, mostly with the help of case studies, to ensure efficient and flexible future international cooperation on operative levels in corruption cases. Three working groups were established (Investigation and Prosecution, Prevention and International Cooperation) in the project framework. Experts from anti-corruption agencies, police and public prosecution offices of the EU member states, the Schengen area, pre-accession countries as well as from the Western Balkans were the main target group of this project.

Besides the other regular participant states, the Slovakian National Anti- Corruption Agency NACA and the Slovenian Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (KPK) as well as the latter’s Ministry of the Interior’s National Investigation Bureau (NPU) were specific partners within the Austrian-led project. While the Austrian side was organizing 5 working group meetings on the topic on “Investigation and Prosecution”, Slovenia was responsible for the 5 sessions on “Prevention” and Slovakia was in charge of 5 further meetings on “International Cooperation”. Thanks to the usage of the secure Europol Platform for Experts (EPE platform) the communication and exchange of information among the participants did not come to an end after each working group meeting but continued to grow.

**Milestone 1: Working groups meetings**

Since June 2012 Austria organized three working group meetings in autumn of the same year, as well as in January and June 2013 dealing with specific topics such as “Security Management in the Field of Anti-Corruption: Recruitment of Personnel, Need-To-Know Principle, Access Control, Protection against System Failure”, “Cloud Computing”, “Money Laundering” or “Tax Fraud”. Slovakia again lately administrated three meetings on topics such as “Joint Investigation Teams” or the general evaluation of best practices. The Slovenian partners in the same period held four meetings on issues as “Accessing, using and linking of existing Official Database”, “Whistle-blower Protection”, education and Awareness Raising and Education Programmes for Children and Youth. All the exchange on practical experience in the field of anti-corruption was finally summarized in the EACT-Manual “Practice Meets Practice”.

**Milestone 2: EACT Final Conference**

The EACT final conference took place in Brdo pri Kranju (Slovenia) from 14 to 17 October 2013.

More than 60 representatives of anti-corruption, police and law enforcement authorities from 17 European countries attended the conference organized by the Slovenian project partners. The conference offered the last opportunity for a fruitful, practice-oriented exchange between experts in the framework of the project.

The Slovenian President Borut Pahor, the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Virant, the Director General of the Slovenian police force, Mr. Veniger, and Mr. Klemencic, opened the conference.

The first day of the conference was mainly devoted to the presentation of the results of the project. Special emphasis was placed on the best practice manual containing all the important information exchanged and developed throughout the working group meetings as well as other contributions to the project. Subsequently, the working group and conference participants had the opportunity to attend various panel discussions, which were opened by external lecturers. The topics dealt with were, amongst others, "experiences regarding whistle-blowing gained in the field of investigation”, "joint investigation teams”, "legal assistance” and "the regulation of lobbying as an anti-corruption measure”.

On the last day of the conference, the experiences gathered in the framework of the project were evaluated, and a possible follow-up project was presented by the Austrian Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAK).

Thanks to the support provided by EUROPOL, the secure EPE platform will remain available to the project participants for purposes of information exchange regarding the prevention of and fight against corruption. The EPE also contains the results of the successful EACT project.

**Road Map**

**2.3 Target: Promoting the rule of law - Assistance for participating countries by deepening and promoting the idea of the rule of law and strengthening and developing further democratic structures. Promoting (legal) certainty for the people by fighting against corruption.**

2.3.2. Action: Rule of law. Implementing a comprehensive and integrated approach in prevention and fight against corruption.

The project proposal jointly prepared by the competent Bulgarian and German authorities (Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Justice, Republic of Bulgaria, and Bavarian Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection) and submitted to the Rule of Law Program South East Europe of the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation.

Received funding in the amount of 59.000 Euro for *May-December 2012 and* 30 800 Eurofor the *year 2013*. National co-financing of project activities also provided.

Three international workshops conducted as a follow-up of the kick-off conference on the project (21-22 May 2012, Pravetz, Bulgaria).

**Milestone 1: Seminar on Prevention of conflict of interests (28-29 June 2012, Sofia)**

The following countries participated: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Germany, Ireland, Hungary, Latvia, Macedonia, Romania, and Slovenia. The following institutions and commissions joined the seminar: Transparency International, Berlin; Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Bucharest; EUROPOL.

Different European models of prevention and ascertainment of conflict of interest presented, evaluated and discussed.

**Milestone 2: Seminar on Criminal and Civil Assets Forfeiture (3-6 October, Fischbachau, Bavaria)**

Legislation and national case studies in the field presented by the representatives of Bavaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova and Serbia. In-depth thematic discussions held on the strong and weak aspects of the relevant policies, and recommendations for better institutional coordination enhanced international co-operation and more educational measures made.

The following important conclusions drawn:

- Optimisation and improving the practice with regard to forfeiture of assets acquired through criminal activity in the countries from the Danube Region. For this purpose the experience and the good practices of German model could be used;

- The necessity to achieve better coherence and inter-institutional coordination established;

- Training and improving qualification of staff with competence in the field said to be very important element;

- Transborder cooperation also considered of significant importance. Acquaintance with the legal systems of the different countries, as well as with the implemented methods for forfeiture of assets acquired through criminal activities, provide a broader view to the experts.

**Milestone 3: Seminar on Addressing Organized Crime – Corruption Nexus (27 Feb–1 March 2013, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria)**

Participants - representatives of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Albania, Serbia, Macedonia and federal provinces Bavaria and Baden – Württemberg. National legislation presented and good examples from countries own practice shared.  A clearer view and common understanding of the link between the two phenomena achieved, while systems and practices for finding such possible links identified on the ground of the presentations and discussions. The encouragement of common approaches in prevention and the fight against the link between organised crime and corruption was also an added value of the seminar`s work.

Active participation of Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Heidelberg and the Centre for the Study of the Democracy in the event. The representatives of Max Plank institute presented the study “Fighting corruption in the Danube region - an overview of potential capabilities and limits of national anti-corruption measures”.

**Milestone 4: Analysis and assessment of the legislation and the institutional framework of the participating countries**

Activity conducted in parallel to the workshops and with the support of scientific expertise.

A Questionnaire on Corruption Prevention and Control distributed at the end of March 2013 by the Max Planck Institute with the aim to provide for drafting a comprehensive and thorough analysis in the framework of a study on the fight against corruption in the Danube region.

The results of the workshops and the scientific expertise, although related not only to EU-Member States, could be of particular interest to the EU anti-corruption mechanism for periodic assessment.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Milestone 5: Conclusion of the project (Autumn 2013)**

The closing conference of the project was held between 4 and 5 November 2013 in Sofia, and attended by representatives of Austria, BiH, Chezh Republic, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Macedonia, Moldova and Serbia. The high level representatives from the countries have presented their national experience from the project as well as the perspectives for its future development. As a result of the closing conference the following conclusions have been outlined:

- the project represents a stable platform for exchange of information and expert knowledge in the regions of the Danube region and Western Balkans;

- there is a clear consensus about the threats posed by the corruption, in particular with regards to the undermining of the confidence in governmental and law enforcement agencies;

- the necessary steps for implementation of well-coordinated and comprehensive measures for prevention and fight against corruption were outlined;

- the differences in the respective national systems were identified and the willingness to strenghten the capacity of the institutions in accordance with the objectives of the EU was reaffirmed;

- the participating countries have reaffirmed their readiness to itensify the exchange of experience and to plan a new project for 2015.

During the closing conference the study “Fight against corruption in the Danube region: a study of regional best practices” elaborated by Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law has been presented and discussed. The study includes the following countries: Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Germany, the Czech Republic and Austria. The selection did not focus on countries with especially low corruption levels, but rather on very promising concepts, potentially influential to the other Danube states. As a positive aspect the study concludes „that all the countries are making serious efforts to tackle the problem of corruption in an effective and sustainable manner. The help and support of the European Union is of great importance in that respect. Although most of the countries studied still show a relatively high level of corruption, the developments fuel hopes that a positive trend is in sight in the anti-corruption fight.”

In conclusion, the core objectives of the project related to analyzing the legal situation and the different national practices in fight against corruption in the Danube region as well as providing opportunities for better networking and coordinating the efforts of the national anti-corruption and law enforcement agencies have been achieved.

Based on the specific methods and approaches of the Danube Region countries in their fight against corruption the sustainability of the project will be maintained and developed.

The further development and deepening of the cooperation amongst all stakeholders in prevention of and fight against corruption in the Danube region is to be aimed at by a planned project of Moldova on Combating corruption in cooperation with Danube region states. It is regarded as a continuation of the work in this field.

**Annex 2**

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | **Cooperation South-East Danube Region** |
| **Related action** | Security offensive –Strengthening police cooperation |
| **Countries involved** | 14 EUSDR states |
| **Funding** | EUR 293.108,36  Application was submitted to ISEC for funding with the last general call for proposals in March 2013. |
| **State of implementation** | The contract with the European Commission was closed on 21 November 2013. The project started on 1 January 2014. The kick-off meeting was held in Munich on 15 and 16 January 2014. |
| **Description** | The conclusion was drawn at the Danube Police Chief Conference to integrate the Cooperation Southeast Danube Region for Fighting Drug Trafficking (AG Südost) as a separate project into the EUSDR and open it for non- members in the near futureso as to integrate all countries involved in the Strategy.  The project will be implemented under the leadership of the BLKA with the Austrian Federal Criminal Police Office and the Czech Republic (NPC Prague) participating as partners.  The project aims at strengthening international police cooperation in combating illicit drug trafficking through continued harmonisation with EU standards and practices in the participating countries.  The project will promote the exchange of information and strengthen cooperation between the law enforcement authorities to promote security and tackle organised crime.  Sustainability will be obtained by generally optimising and intensifying cooperation, in particular the international operational cooperation (permanent exchange of information between investigators and regular transnational exercises.  The goal of the project is to develop a common strategy for combating drug trafficking in the Danube region and at the same time enhance the cooperation between the participating countries.  Additionally, the project aims at achieving a high and common level of qualification for all organisational units involved. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | PACs consider this project proposal as a good one and it is in line with EUSDR criteria. The project corresponds to one of the main targets of PA 11 “Effective co-operation between relevant law enforcement actors by 2015“. |
| **Next steps** | The project will be implemented via two mechanisms:  During the project period, it is planned to organise two major conferences, which will be attended by experts and investigators. In addition to that, it is intended to carry out a transnational exercise (controlled deliveries).  The target groups are experts and investigators from law enforcement and customs authorities charged with combating international drug crime.   * Conference of the Working Group South East (AG Südost) in Austria (30 September - 2 October 2014) * Controlled Delivery Exercise (May 2015) * Debriefing in Hungary (June 2015) * Conference of the Working Group South East (AG Südost) in the Czech Republic |

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | **Symposium on Combating Cybercrime** |
| **Related action** | Security offensive –Strengthening police cooperation |
| **Countries involved** | 14 EUSDR states |
| **Funding** | Budget approx. EUR 50.000 |
| **State of implementation** | Finalised |
| **Description** | Cybercrime is a typical transnational phenomenon which requires effective cross-border strategies and cooperation as hardly as any other. Hence, the quality and intensity of cooperation in this field has to be improved in the entire Danube Region.  The objective of the project was to enhance and intensify cross-border cooperation of the law enforcement agencies in the Danube region in terms of combating cybercrime or maintaining cyber-security respectively. To this end the event focused on the exchange of best practices and new approaches in combating this type of crime.  Experts from nine countries participating in the EUSDR (Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Romania and the Republic of Moldova) as well as from France and Switzerland congregated on 17 October 2013 at the international Symposium „Cybercrime - Building Alliances for a Safer Digital World“ in Stuttgart (Germany). Overall about 140 participants discussed strategies for combating cybercrime; the challenges were highlighted and approaches to overcome them presented.  The symposium proved impressively that cybercrime is one of the key challenges for all law enforcement agencies already right now but even more in future as more and more crimes will shift from the real world into the cyberspace. This event is considered as a first step towards establishing a network of Danube region agencies competent in fighting cybercrime. The requirements of effective strategies to combat cybercrime, for enhanced international police cooperation and alliances with other stakeholders underline that further improvements could be tackled by a tailor-made international project which could perhaps be financed out of the new EU Internal Security Fund. Further details on this issue shall be discussed in due time within the Steering Group of PA 11. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | PACs consider this project proposal as important as the fight against the cybercrime should be promoted in the Danube region.  The project corresponds to the action “To intensify the prosecution of Internet crime (cybercrime)” within the target “Effective cooperation between relevant law enforcement actors by 2015” and it contributed to the strengthening of the police cooperation in the Danube region. |
| **Next steps** | Continuing cooperation in the field of combating cybercrime in a new project of PA 11 in view of future establishment of networks of relevant experts in the Danube region |

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | **Setting up Coordination Centre(s) for Border Police Cooperation/ Networking of Existing Centres** |
| **Action related** | Strengthening the law enforcement cooperation through contact centres |
| **Countries involved** | Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Moldova, EUBAM |
| **Funding** | Technical Assistance |
| **Stage of implementation** | On-going |
| **Description** | The project idea was defined as agreed to be a strategic dimension of the work at the ministerial Danube Security Conference on 6th/7th May 2013 in Munich. It will be filled with content and will succeed to establish permanent and sustainable police cooperation.  The outlined focuses of cooperation – enhanced exchange of information with possibilities for preventing actions, the so called early-warning system, as well as coordinating joint activities and performing joint operations.  Important challenges mapped out – finding out the appropriate form for organising the cooperation, possibilities for establishing contact points/ using existing ones, establishing environment for communication and video conference connection.  The representatives of the participating countries expressed positive attitude for involvement of their countries in the projects during the Second Round Table held in May 2013 in Sofia – some more concretely, other more generally supported the establishment of the network of contact centres and the PORIS system.  PACs asked the participants as an impetus of the meeting to consult their countries on the necessary practical steps for involvement of the respective country in the project. Also countries were asked to think strategic on future development of related projects in view of finding the appropriate form for cooperation, creating framework and filling it with content. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | The PACs support the project idea and take active part in enabling discussions and decisions making on further implementation. |
| **Next steps** | Countries will decide on the future development of the project. It is important to work on our cooperation and at the end to have the support and to implement the project with the participation of largest possible number of countries from the Danube Region. It is only in that way that a real added value in our Priority Area could be achieved and this is our task. |

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | **Setting up the Structure of a Danube River Forum (DARIF)** |
| **Action related** | Strengthening the law enforcement cooperation through contact centres |
| **Countries involved** | Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldavia, Ukraine |
| **Funding** | IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme  External Borders Fund  EC ISEC Programme |
| **Stage of implementation** | The infrastructural conditions have already been established in the Mohács Border Crossing Port (offices, data communication lines etc.).  The first phase of the Danube Law Enforcement Coordination Centre project has been successfully completed, the Hungarian-Croatian Common Contact Point Office was officially opened at the port in Mohács on 6th December 2012 and it started to operate from 1 January 2013.  The political will needed for the second phase was established by the adoption of the Action Plan signed by the Ministers of Interior of Serbia and Hungary on 24th January 2012. Practical implementation is not started so far.  The third phase - developing the system of the Danube River Forum (DARIF) - is in process with the support of the European Commission. Within the framework of the ISEC programme financial support was granted.  The implementation of the project started with a high-level Kick-off Conference 17-19 September 2013. During the conference the specific plans for the project implementation were introduced. The Kick-off Conference was concluded by the adoption of a Joint Declaration in which the delegations formally confirmed their participation in the project while emphasizing the importance of cross-border cooperation and effective information exchange.  Two workshops were held in December 2013 and in May 2014 and a joint operation in April 2014. During the workshops the implementation of the project and the organisation of the joint operations were discussed in the framework of the five expert groups. During the seminar in May 2014 the report on the 1st Joint Operation was presented and the results were discussed in view of planning the next operations.  The 1st Joint Operation was performed successfully on 7-11 April 2014 by the participating states. Detailed Framework Operational Plan has been elaborated by the Ministry of Interior of Hungary for the operation with national sub-plans of the member states as annexes. Each participating Member State have operated their own national contact points and have delegated one liaison officer to Mohács to take part actively in the daily work of the Temporary Coordination Centre, and to keep contact with their national authorities. Frontex, Europol and EUBAM liaison officers have also participated. |
| **Description** | The main objectives of the Hungarian project are as follows:   * To increase jointly the safety and security of the Danube; * To take harmonised and efficient measures against river related crimes (incl. organised crimes); * To establish transnational, cross border and operative law enforcement cooperation platform for the Danube.   Relying on the resources provided by the European Union, *the implementation of the Danube Law Enforcement Coordination Centre project is planned in three stages*.  *At the first stage* of the project a Croatian-Hungarian Common Contact Point Office was established.  *At the second stage* Police Authorities of Serbia will join this CCPO.The project will be financed by the External Border Fund.  *In the third phase* two main lines are identified to reach the continuous exchange of information, on one hand to develop a Strategic Forum, and on the other hand, to establish a Coordination Centre in the frame of the DARIF.  The aim of the Strategic Forum System is to develop a form of cooperation in which the law enforcement leaders and experts of the Danube Region Countries to discuss the current issues in relation to the security of the Danube river way, which increases the effectiveness of the cooperation not only in particular sections of the Danube, but also focusing on the entire line of the Danube. The system of the Cooperation Forum will be implemented with active participation of the Member States, in accordance with the Member States' demands and requirements. In parallel to that, the Coordination Centre which was created at the Border Crossing Port at Mohács - as a common contact point - coordinates the law enforcement international activities, support the implementation of joint actions and the transmission of relevant information by the Member States.  The total costs of the project funded by ISEC Programme: **290 870 €, c**ontribution from EC: **261 783 €** |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | Letter of recommendation issued by PAC on 19.06.2012 |
| **Next steps** | * 2nd Joint operation (July 2014) * 3rd Joint operation (November 2014) * 2nd Technical Workshop (January 2015) * Final Conference (April 2015) |

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | **PoRIS – Police River Information Service** |
| **Action related** | Strengthening the law enforcement cooperation through contact centres. |
| **Countries involved** | all countries along the Danube, EU- as well as non-EU countries |
| **Funding** | e.g. ISEC, IPA, ENPI, TAIEX |
| **Stage of implementation** | Readiness to start implementation. Possibilities for funding are looked for. |
| **Description** | The main objectives of the Austrian Project proposal “PORIS” are currently part of the “DARIF” project. Austria has therefore modified its project objectives and initialized a national study about the legal and technical feasibility of cross-border networking of the River Information Service (RIS) for security purposes in cooperation with the Technical University of Graz and the Via Donau (National inland waterway authority). At this time the financing is under review. As far as the study is funded from national funds, it is expected that the results will be available in March 2016. Austria intends to provide the relevant results of the study to the EUSDR. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | PACs, BG and GER fully support the project. The project is in line with the strategic target of PA 11 Security, namely Effective co-operation between relevant law enforcement actors by 2015.  *A Letter of Recommendation has been issued for this project.* |
| **Next steps** | * Kick-off conference in Vienna (presentation of the Austrian system et al.) regional conferences in different Danube-neighbouring countries, final conference; * Set-up of an international workgroup consisting of experts from all Danube-neighbouring countries; * Identification of the current implementation status of RIS in the respective Danube-neighbouring countries; * Identification and evaluation of already existing or planned interfaces of the police- and customs authorities regarding RIS in all Danube-neighbouring countries; * Analysis of already existing international legal foundations for the cross-linked use of RIS by the police- and customs authorities of the Danube-neighbouring countries, thus considering the relevant Union law (Schengen Borders Code, Prüm Treaty, …) as well as bi- and multilateral treaties; * Set-up of the required legal framework for the trans-national exchange of personal data by the police- and customs authorities in the framework of RIS as well as for the operational implementation of joint operations of international police cooperation as regards the trans-national fight against crime and illegal migration as well as for the support of the cooperation at border controls on the waterway Danube; * Support of the police- and customs authorities of the Danube-neighbouring countries regarding the organisational and technical implementation of compatible connectivity to the RIS for the sake of trans-national information exchange as regards vessels, crews, passengers and transport of goods; |

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | **Comprehensive assessment on the Danube** |
| **Action related** | Strengthening the law enforcement cooperation through contact centres. |
| **Countries involved** | All Danube neighbouring countries  Some of the countries will join Romania as co-beneficiary partners, others will contribute with their experts from police, customs and naval traffic control agencies and entities of the Danube-neighboring countries dealing with security-, criminal- and border police tasks |
| **Funding plans** | Total estimated value is 400.000 Euro. The activities of the project will be deployed within two years starting from the day of signature |
| **Stage of implementation** | Detailed proposal and budget under preparation |
| **Description** | The project goal is the realization of an overall assessment of the current situation in the countries along the Danube and the establishment of main directions at regional level to be decided, given the **major differences between the law enforcement approaches** of the states on the waterway Danube, differences of legislation, institutional development and technical equipment, as well as status (Schengen countries, EU but non-Schengen countries, third countries).  Based on the results of this assessment, a gap analysis on technical aspects will be realized in order to **establish the main directions** for making the Danube region a safer place to live and decrease the crime phenomenon.  The gap analysis will be drafted through working team efforts and presented to the PAC. Conclusions of the gap analysis will support PAC in structuring and accomplishing the goals of the strategy as well as establishing the main further directions at regional level. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | Letter of recommendation issued by PAC on 19.06.2012 |
| **Next steps** | At present, because an eligible source of founding was not identified, the project is suspended. Intention was expressed by Romania to resume and continue the necessary procedures for implementing the project if in the future the Danube neighbouring-countries will want to join the project as partners and a financing line will be identified. |

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | **Symposium “EU border management and security of travel documents in the Danube Region”**  **Based on the applicable EU acquis with a special focus on issues and problems of the Danube region** |
| **Action related** | To develop further well-functioningsystem of border control and document inspection management |
| **Countries involved** | Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Romania, The Slovak Republic and Slovenia*,* as well as other countries such as Albania, Lithuania. |
| **Funding** | National funding |
| **Stage of implementation** | On-going |
| **Description** | The Symposium provided an opportunity for open exchange of views on security of travel documents, good practices of integrated border management, the efficiency of biometrics, the integration of the National Visa Systems into the European Visa System.  Topics of regional significance were also debated – the local border traffic in the context of the European neighbourhood policy.  Serious attention was paid on the latest developments to border management at EU level and their expected impact on the European citizens and the citizens of neighbouring countries – Schengen governance, the EU Smart Borders initiative and the electronic system for travel authorization (ESTA) for the EU. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | PACs, BG and GER initiated the project, organized and hosted the Symposium, chaired some of the panels. They took essential part in the discussions, facilitating the decisions and planning the steps for the way ahead. |
| **Next steps** | An e-ID symposium is to be held in Budapest in 2014 where requirements and experience will be exchanged on this topic. Three generic aspects will be in the focus:   * The point of view of real benefits (expected by citizens) * The point of view of technical security of e-ID solutions * The question of where the e-ID function will be placed (on a public ID document such as the ID card or on a separate one).   The countries of the Danube region will be invited to exchange experiences and requirements regarding these issues. The symposium is up-to-date as the discussion has already been started or is in full swing in these countries. |

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | **European Anti-Corruption Training (EACT)** |
| **Action related** | European Anti-corruption Training |
| **Countries involved** | Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia.  Moreover, the involvement and contributions of anti-corruption academics (as lecturers), as well as representatives from EU bodies (European Commission, OLAF) and international organisations (UNODC, GRECO, INTERPOL) is also of key importance to EACT. |
| **Funding** | EACT is carried out as a multinational project in the framework of the EU programme ISEC (Prevention of and Fight Against Crime). At the end of May 2012, the European Commission has proposed that EACT is financed through this programme. |
| **Stage of implementation** | Finalised |
| **Description** | The “European Anti-Corruption Training – EACT” was carried out under the slogan “Practice Meets Practice” and it takes an approach based on the presentation of examples of corruption cases, the exchange of practical experiences and the development of best practices concerning the fields of police investigation, prevention, prosecution and international cooperation. In order to achieve that aim, three working groups were established (Investigation and Prosecution, Prevention and International Cooperation).  Experts from anti-corruption agencies, police and public prosecution offices of the EU member states, the Schengen area, pre-accession countries as well as from the Western Balkans were the main target group of this project.  Thanks to the usage of the secure Europol Platform for Experts (EPE platform) the communication and exchange of information among the participants did not come to an end after each working group meeting but continued to grow.  Austria organized since June 2012 three working group meetings in autumn of the same year, as well as in January and June 2013 dealing with specific topics such as “Security Management in the Field of Anti-Corruption: Recruitment of Personnel, Need-To-Know Principle, Access Control, Protection against System Failure”, “Cloud Computing”, “Money Laundering” or “Tax Fraud”.  Slovakia again lately administrated three meetings on topics such as “Joint Investigation Teams” or the general evaluation of best practices. The Slovenian partners in the same period held four meetings on issues as “Accessing, using and linking of existing Official Database”, “Whistle-blower Protection”, education and Awareness Raising and Education Programmes for Children and Youth. All the exchange on practical experience in the field of anti-corruption was finally summarized in the EACT-Manual “Practice Meets Practice”.  The EACT final conference took place in Brdo pri Kranju (Slovenia) from 14 to 17 October 2013. More than 60 representatives of anti-corruption, police and law enforcement authorities from 17 European countries attended the conference organized by the Slovenian project partners. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | PACs, BG and GER fully support the project. The project is in line with the strategic goals of PA 11 Security, namely *Fight against corruption and Promotion of the Rule of Law.* It guarantees sustainability and is targeted to nearly all the EUSDR countries. Therefore the Steering Group recommends that endorsement to this project shall be granted and invites the funding sources to consider adequate financial support to the project.  *A Letter of Recommendation has been issued for this project.* |
| **Next steps** | A possible follow-up project was presented by the Austrian Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAK) during the EACT final conference in October 2013. |

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | **Rule of law. Implementing a comprehensive and integrated approach to preventing and fighting against corruption** |
| **Action related** | Rule of law. Implementing a comprehensive and integrated approach in prevention and fight against corruption. |
| **Countries involved** | Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia |
| **Funding** | For the year 2012  - Konrad Adenauer Foundation (39 000 euro)  - BG national Co-financing (20 000 euro)  For the year 2013  - Konrad Adenauer Foundation (30 800 euro) |
| **Stage of implementation** | Finalised |
| **Description** | The project aims at enhancing trans-border cooperation in prevention and fight against corruption in countries from the Danube region and Western Balkans through elaborating and implementing comprehensive anticorruption policies at national level in compliance with the EU policy in the area of the fight against corruption. The specific thematic focus areas, in which internationally and regionally agreed development goals should be addressed and achieved, include: 1) conflict of interest prevention, 2) criminal and civil asset forfeiture and 3) addressing organized crime-corruption nexus. Discussions in this areas were held during the organised relevant international seminars as follows:  - Seminar on Prevention of Conflict of Interest ( 28-29 June 2012 in Sofia, Bulgaria)  - Seminar on Criminal and Civil Asset Forfeiture (3-6 October, Fischbachau, Bavaria)  - Seminar on Addressing Organized Crime – Corruption Nexus (27 Feb – 1 March 2013, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria)  Final conference on the project was held in November 2013. The closing of the project was marked by another significant outcome - a study named “Fighting corruption in the Danube region - an overview of potential capabilities and limits of national anti-corruption measures” drafted by the Max Planck Institute. Based on the specific methods and approaches of the Danube Region countries in their fight against corruption the study outlined the best practices. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | Strong involvement of the PACs, BG and GER being leading countries of the project. Close supervision of the implementation. |
| **Next steps** | Continuation of established level in enhancing trans-border cooperation through the planned project of Moldova - *Combating corruption in cooperation with Danube region states* |

***TAF II CALL APPROVED PROJECTS***

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | Cooperation in the area of booby-trap explosive systems and disposal of discarded ammunition |
| **Action related:** | To support the Danube states in the cooperation and improvement of qualifications of law enforcement, judicial authorities and other services” |
| **Countries involved** | Project leader is Police of the Czech Republic, EOD Department. Preliminary the partnerships with Slovak Republic and Hungary have been agreed. |
| **Funding** | Total Budget Approx. € 1,210,000It is desired that the project receives funding under the EU Internal Security Fund which will soon replace the Commission’s “Prevention of and Fight Against Crime” Programme (ISEC). Co-financing will be provided from the state budget of the Czech Republic and possible partners.Opportunities to be explored following the consultancy which the project is receiving under TAF |
| **Stage of implementation** | Planned project. To be implemented in 2015-2019. |
| **Description** | The use of improvised explosive system when committing a crime is a permanent security threat in the whole Danube Region. The offenders improve the process of production and use of improvised explosive systems. As the example of internationally committed crime by improvised explosive devices we can mention attacks in IKEA stores in 2011.  A similar serious jeopardy on health, life and citizen´s property is presented by air bombs with the chemical fuses which come from the WW 2 (mainly US and GB made). We still can find them on the territory of Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic and other countries in the Central Europe. A disposal of these bombs is risky job because the bomb fuse can cause an early explosion as it happened in Göttingen / Germany in June 2010 when three pyrotechnics died.  Likewise, the ammunition from former Yugoslavia regularly appears due to illegal trade on the market in the Central and Eastern European countries since the 90th. It presents significant security risk especially when it is used for committing crimes. Similarly, discarded ammunition which comes from the World War 2 presents a risk to civilian population. The improper manipulation with these ammunition leads very often to accidents resulting in serious injuries or deaths. |
|  | Since all of the above mentioned issues have their international dimension it’s desired to tackle them on international level, such as under the umbrella of the Danube Strategy cooperation.  The idea is to thematically divide the project into 5 blocks:  (1) cooperation in the area of tactic reaction in criminal cases while using improvised explosive system, (2) introduction of particular types of improvised explosive means used in the different countries of the Danube Region, (3) cooperation in the area of ensuring the possibilities of the progress of an air bomb fuse disposal, (4) cooperation in the area of protection from war ammunition coming from former Yugoslavia, (5) increase erudition of pyrotechnics as well as increase security in areas with high incidence of unexploded ammunition coming from the World War 2.  The target of the first thematic block is to exchange information among EOD Departments of the Danube region in the field of new tactical procedures and to build up new technical procedures usable while disposing improvised explosive system. The aim of the block 2 is to introduce to pyrotechnic experts concrete types of improvised explosive system used in particular countries of Danube region in the form of study visits. The improvement of awareness will lead to higher efficiency and security while disposing of these explosive and their successive forensics expertise as well as to higher efficiency in investigating criminal and terrorist offences. The third thematic block is focuses on introduction to pyrotechnics the issue of air bomb with chemical fuses, to try new procedures and technical means of disposing these bombs, to exchange information and to promote safety awareness. The aim of the fourth block is to introduce to pyrotechnics with construction and effects of ammunition of Yugoslavian origin. Main target of the block 5 is to deepen erudition of pyrotechnic experts in the area of searching, removal and disposal of unexploded ammunition which will lead to minimizing the threats in areas with high incidence of unexploded ammunition. Consequently this will positively affect the security of civilian population. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | Letter of support issued by PACs. |
| **Next steps** | Exploring funding opportunities and possible involvement of other Danube Region countries. |

***TAF II CALL APPROVED PROJECTS***

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | Combating corruption in cooperation with Danube region states |
| **Action related:** | Combating corruption in cooperation with Danube region states |
| **Countries involved** | Project leader Republic of Moldova, Project partnersNational Integrity Centre – RomaniaCentre for the Study of Democracy - Bulgaria |
| **Funding** | Total Budget Approx. € 756,000Opportunities to be explored following the consultancy which the project is receiving under TAF |
| **Stage of implementation** | Planned project. To be implemented in April 2015 - November 2019. |
| **Description** | Despite the fact that Republic of Moldova has a small 430 m exit to the Danube river it is considered a riverside state neighbouring with the EU, interested in political and economic development of the Danube region. The provisions of the Danube Strategy are reflected in the objectives set by Government Decision No. 694 from 4 august 2010, namely: to enact and promote European values and standards in all areas; deepen bilateral cooperation with the EU member states and countries from the Danube Region; ensuring security through different EU instruments, including instruments provided by EU Schengen Catalogue.  The EU Strategy of the Danube Region (EUSDR) namely Priority 11 approaches fight against corruption, and practical cooperation in the field of combating corruption at the state border of the Danube region. Corruption represents a threat that challenges the internal security of any state, therefore the problems associated with corruption cannot be adequately solved by the state alone. There is a need for actions at EU, national and regional level.  For the Republic of Moldova the Danube port complex, represents a major importance due to its geographical location, it is situated in 7-th Pan-European corridor, also TRACECA corridor, it can be used for passengers and goods transportation, also for goods import/export, in/from the Republic of Moldova and their transit in/from European Union. The acceleration of economic integration and trade increasing represents a high risk for organized crime growth in the region, illegal migration, human trafficking, goods smuggling and black market development, which implies also corruption growth. |
|  | Having common borders with other states, there is a high risk for penetration of the state border by criminal entities, thus creating conditions for corruption acts. Although RM continues its fight against corruption element, not all the methods are sufficiently effective.  Feasibility studies carried out till present by national and international experts within projects financed by the EU and USA, denotes the poor endowment of the border crossing points infrastructure, mainly related to video/audio surveillance, which poses a threat to the EU internal security, and creates preconditions for corruption acts to appear. Thus the support of the EU donors is appropriate and complementary to the efforts undertaken by the RM.  In order to combat and prevent corruption, and to promote the rule of law, these actions imply enhanced security and EU cooperation in the Danube region, having as priority: 1 – corruption and conflict of interest prevention, 2 – implementation of the best EU practices on corruption prevention and state border surveillance, (through studying best practices of the Danube region countries and other EU states, also through development of a behavior guide.).  Finally, the Border Police Department is working on the final version of the Border Police Department Strategic Development Program (SDP) for 2014 – 2016. A whole objective of the SDP is dedicated to enforcing the legislation and regulations in view of increasing staff’s legality, integrity and institutional transparency. Many activities planned under this objective, such as anti-corruption opinion polls and surveys, anti-corruption campaigns and information systems collecting citizens anti-corruption complaints are not covered by the institution’s budget. Therefore, this project is the perfect opportunity to cover all those costs. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | Letter of support issued by PACs. |
| **Next steps** | Exploring funding opportunities and possible involvement of other Danube Region countries. |

***TAF II CALL APPROVED PROJECTS***

**PROJECT APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP**

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| **Name of the project** | Strengthening the naval transport protection capacities of Romanian Gendarmerie |
| **Action related:** | Strengthening the naval transport protection capacities of Romanian Gendarmerie |
| **Countries involved** | Project leader: General Inspectorate of Romanian GendarmerieNational partners:National Commission for Nuclear Activities ControlGeneral Inspectorate of Aviation from Ministry of Internal AffairsGeneral Inspectorate for Emergency SituationsInternational partners:Law enforcement agencies from Bulgaria, Ukraine and Serbia. |
| **Funding** | Total Budget Approx. € 5,000,000 It is desired that the project receives funding under the European Structural and Investment Funds Opportunities to be explored following the consultancy which the project is receiving under TAF |
| **Stage of implementation** | Planned project. |
| **Description** | According to the Action Plan, The Danube Region is one interrelated and interdependent ecosystem, incorporating a rich and unique flora and fauna. It is diverse, including not only the immediate river Danube, its tributaries, lowlands and the remarkable delta, but also the major part of the Carpathian Mountains, the Balkans and part of the Alps.  The pollution from contaminated sites or waste disposal in this region has major impact on water quality, flora and fauna.  Additionally, the Danube Basin Region is characterised by the presence of a high number of industrial risks sites which present a constant danger to the environment and citizens. Past examples of severe pollution have shown that accidents do happen, and that knowledge of the risk potential, preparedness as well as rapid response mechanisms is essential to prevent, be prepared or reduce damage.  One of the risks occurring lately, which could permanently damage the Danube River eco-system is the transport of hazardous products. Our country performs regularly transport of nuclear fuel spent resulting from atomic power plant at Kozloduy - Bulgaria in Ukraine and effective protection is provided by the Romanian Gendarmerie forces in cooperation with the National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control. |
|  | According to our national legislation, Romanian Gendarmerie is the competent authority, at national level, with exclusive attributions in ensuring security of naval transport of hazardous products, such as: weapons, ammunition, combat equipment, explosive materials, narcotic drugs, toxic substances or other nuclear, radioactive or hazardous materials and substances.  The project is beneficial to Romania, as protection guarantor of naval transport of products with special character on the Danube River area of competence. It helps to protect the Romanian, Bulgarian, Ukrainian and Serbian population and counter the imminent threat of a security incident over the product transported, particularly due to some hostile actions.  Increasing the level of security of transported products with special character, accelerating the level of intervention in situations that would compromise the safety of transport and increasing mobility for intervention effectives, requires a pragmatic approach of the institution and becomes a huge responsibility taking into account the effects that might occur if there is an ineffective risk management. |
| **Involvement of the PACs** | Letter of support issued by PACs. |
| **Next steps** | Exploring funding opportunities and possible involvement of other Danube Region countries. |

1. COM(2011)308 final [↑](#footnote-ref-1)