

Eastern Partnership

Platform 4 "Contacts between People"

CORE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2017

The Work Programme (2014-2017) contributes to the goals of the Eastern Partnership, notably in the area of people to people contacts and serves to promote European values, political stability, economic growth and social justice.

EU Member States' work in cooperation with partner countries in various meetings and panels based inter alia on their transition experience and best practices forms an important element of this Work Programme. In this regard, Platform participants agree to continue providing the necessary expertise and cooperate closely on their activities. Initiatives of the Platform include close cooperation with relevant EU agencies.

The work of the Multilateral Platform 4 is to complement the agreements and actions on bilateral level (e.g. Association Agreements and Agendas) and actions on multilateral and bilateral level should mutually reinforce each other.

The Work Programme 2014-17 will follow-up on the core objectives as outlined in the previous Work Programme 2012-13 and will continue the cooperation in the fields of education, youth, research and innovation, culture, audio-visual sector and information society. The increased cooperation in research and innovation, including the mobility of students, researchers and academics, aiming to build a Common Knowledge and Innovation Space with the Eastern Partnership countries, will be further promoted.

At its meeting of 14 November, Platform 4 adopted its Work Programme for the years 2014-2017, in accordance with the general guidelines and rules of procedure of the Eastern Partnership Multilateral Platforms (point 1.4). The European Commission was guided by a number of considerations, including the lessons learnt from the implementation of the second Platform 4 work programme (2012-13), and the recommendations made by Platform 4 participants at their meeting of 29 May 2013. Targeted actions are proposed, to ensure that the Work Programme is focused and can therefore have a measurable impact. This work programme will remain flexible enough to allow new initiatives to be added at a later stage and in particular at the mid-term review, if the need arises.

Actions under this work programme will expand and deepen cooperation in education, youth, research and innovation, culture, audio-visual sector and information society.

The Commission proposes to implement a number of actions to reinforce the participation of EaP countries in EU international cooperation programmes and strengthen its dialogue on the policies covered by Platform 4.

In the first instance, the Commission will organise information campaign to raise awareness on the new generation of international cooperation programmes (2014-2020): Erasmus+ for education and youth, Creative Europe for culture, and Marie Skłodowska-Curie and Horizon 2020 for research and innovation, and the new opportunities offered to EaP countries.

The participants of Platform 4 agree to focus on the following priority areas during the period 2014-2017, with a mid-term review. Flexibility on the implementation is expected given the time span. The participants agreed in particular with the following targets to be achieved:

- Increased participation of EaP countries in EU programmes in the fields covered by the EaP Platform 4 “contacts between people” i.e. education, research, youth, culture, information and society.
- Contribution to strengthening EaP countries’ capacity to implement reforms and public policies in these fields.
- Increased cooperation between EU and EaP education and training authorities, higher education institutions, schools, research institutions, youth organisations, cultural organisations, etc..
- Increased knowledge and exchange of good practice among EU and EaP stakeholders in the above mentioned fields.
- Raised awareness amongst Partner countries of the possibilities offered to effectively collaborate with the EU.
- The participants of Platform 4 agree to focus on the following priority areas during the period 2014-2017, with a mid-term review.

1. Education

Means of implementation: Erasmus+ programme, eTwinning, with an increased cooperation between Higher Education Institutions in EU Member States and EaP countries, awareness raising events, policy dialogue and peer learning activities, ETF support available in the field of vocational education and training and human capital development. Synergies with Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions will be sought.

Objective: Improving the skills of students and researchers from the Eastern Partnership countries, as well as the quality of the higher education systems in the EaP region by supporting cooperation between partner countries and the EU. Increase the participation (in quality and quantity) of universities from EaP countries in the new Erasmus+ programme. Raise awareness of the cooperation opportunities between schools supported through eTwinning, support for reform of Vocational education and training systems.

Proposed activities:

- **EaP Information Day**
 - Awareness raising events / information days at least once a year in each EaP country, and if needed, organisation of a regional information event.
 - Information day on Erasmus+ and Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions.
- **Seminars / workshops:**
 - Regional dissemination events on good practice in Tempus and Erasmus Mundus projects.

- eTwinning Plus dissemination and valorisation conference updating on the activities and presenting the results and impact of the projects.
- a Prize award ceremony for the eTwinning Plus "best practice" could be given in the framework of Platform 4.
- Regional Torino Process meeting to assess progress in VET reforms 2012-14.
- Conference on the implementation of National Qualification Frameworks: in EaP countries.

2. Research

Means of implementation: Panel on Research and Innovation, awareness raising events on Horizon 2020 programme, in particular Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions

Objective: Increase the participation of EaP countries in EU research projects and programmes

Proposed activities:

- **Panel on research and Innovation** will facilitate coordination between EU and EaP countries' policies and programmes by sharing information and experiences, and will develop joint activities: 2 meetings a year
- **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions:** provision of support to facilitate the participation of EaP representatives to the Marie Skłodowska-Curie National Contact Points meetings
- **EaP Regional Information Day**
 - Organisation of events for raising awareness on the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions under Horizon 2020: at least one regional conference
- **Seminars / workshops:**

One regional event per year and complementing the work of the Panel and the activities carried out in the framework of the INCONET EaP on topics such as:

 - Horizon 2020 calls promotion, rules of participation and financial aspects,
 - issues related to cooperation in the innovation domain
 - specific S&T capacity issues faced by Eastern Partnership countries.

3. Youth

Means of implementation: Erasmus+ Programme, and maintaining and further developing the opportunities offered within the framework of the Eastern Partnership youth cooperation as currently implemented under the Eastern Partnership Youth Window;

Objective: Provide Eastern Partnership countries with the opportunity to participate in all youth related Actions of Erasmus+

Proposed activities:

- A visibility event for Eastern Partnership youth cooperation will take place. It will take the form of an Eastern Partnership Youth Forum to share strategies, tools and experiences on how to strengthen youth work and non-formal learning in Eastern Partnership countries. This event should be organised prior to the Eastern Partnership Summit 2015;
- Involvement of organisations of Eastern Partnership countries in **mobility activities in the field of youth** supported under Key Action 1 and **meetings between young people and decision-makers in the field of youth** under Key Action 3 of Erasmus+.
- **Seminars/workshops:**
 - International conference “Democratisation of youth participation in the civic and social life of Eastern Partnership countries”
 - Round table on the “Intensification of youth participation in decision-making processes”

4. Culture and audiovisual sector

Means of implementation: Eastern Partnership Culture Programme I and II, Creative Europe programme, Study facility

Objective: Participation of EaP countries in Creative Europe with the aim of fostering cooperation of artists and culture professionals; capacity building in the field of public policies.

Proposed activities:

- Cooperation in the field of cultural heritage– COMUS project (follow up Kyiv Initiative) under the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme
 - and EaP culture programme seminars and workshops

➤ **Seminars / workshops:**

1) EaP Regional Information Day on Creative Europe

- In order to facilitate the participation of Eastern Partnership countries in the Creative Europe Programme, a workshop will be organised with the involvement of Creative Europe desks.

- *Organisation of an EaP Regional Information Day: "Practical and financial aspects in the EU Creative Europe Programme".*
- Round table "Transformation of European cultural programmes: Experience and Perspectives" to take stock of existing cooperation and define the perspectives for their further participation in the new Creative Europe programme.

2) Seminar on the potential of cultural and creative industries

3) Seminar/workshop devoted to the impact assessment of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme

4) Modern culture of Europe: finance, media, management"

➤ **Studies**

- A feasibility study on the development of cultural industries in Eastern Partnership countries, including a mapping of the potential of the cultural and creative sectors.
- A study, with a particular focus on a) the legal framework and b) analysing the situation of the film industry in EaP countries (training, financing systems, distribution and exhibition of films on various platforms). The study could be followed by a validation workshop with relevant stakeholders.

5. Information Society

Means of implementation: Horizon 2020 Programme, Study Facility, Seminars/Workshops

Objective: Raise awareness on the new Horizon 2020 programme and support enhanced involvement of electronic infrastructures for education and research

➤ **Seminars / workshops and capacity building :**

- eInfrastructures events: two in 2014, and two in 2015.
- ICT in Horizon 2020 events: two in 2014, and two in 2015

➤ **Study**

Connecting EaP countries to GÉANT – an advanced feasibility study. The Study will address how connectivity could be established between GÉANT (the pan-European Communication Commons for Knowledge and Innovation) and EaP countries. Specific objectives would be to identify the various possible architectures ensuring regional aggregation and high reliability, conduct a cost/benefits analysis, identify associated risks, identify co-funding capabilities and yield recommendations to the EC. The study will also support dissemination of the findings in EaP countries (e.g via a website, collaborative platform, social media, workshops, conferences, meetings with key stakeholders, leaflets, etc.). This study will take as input of the concept note titled "EPIC: Eastern Partnership Interconnect" and will detail the deployment scenario.