

## Eastern Partnership

### Platform 4 "Contacts between People"

#### CORE OBJECTIVES AND REVISED WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2017

The Work Programme of Platform 4 (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.

The Work Programme of Platform 4 is guided by the joint declarations of the Eastern Partnership Summits to date<sup>1</sup> and takes into account the revised European Neighbourhood Policy<sup>2</sup>. The Work Programme seeks to exploit synergies between the different multilateral Platforms and enhance the communication of its activities.

The Work Programme of Platform 4 expands and deepens **collaboration in the fields of education, youth** (including employability), **research and innovation, culture and creativity, audio-visual sector and information society.**

The work of the Platform 4 is to complement the agreements and actions on bilateral level. Actions on multilateral and bilateral level should mutually reinforce each other.

The implementation of the Work Programme is a common responsibility of all Platform 4 participants. In this regard, an active cooperation between EU Member States and Partner Countries is key. Platform participants agree to continue providing the necessary expertise and cooperate closely on their activities. Initiatives of the Platform 4 include close cooperation with relevant EU agencies.

The Work Programme of Platform 4 was adopted on 14 November 2013, in accordance with the general guidelines and rules of procedure of the Eastern Partnership Multilateral Platforms. For the review of the Work Programme, the European Commission was guided by a number of considerations, including the lessons learnt from the first years of the Work Programme implementation, the 2015 survey among Platform 4 participants and their recommendations made at the Platform 4 meeting of 14 December 2015.

Areas of collaboration that the participants of the Platform wished to strengthen were added to this Work Programme. The Commission endorses their follow-up where the need arises and concrete initiatives take shape. A draft list of events and studies to be organised under Platform 4 is attached and can be adapted to accommodate new initiatives.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/docs/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/docs/index_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> JOIN(2015)50 of 18.11.2015  
[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/pdf/key-documents/151118\\_joint-communication\\_review-of-the-enp\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/pdf/key-documents/151118_joint-communication_review-of-the-enp_en.pdf)

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.

In line with the recent joint Communication 'Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy', increased emphasis will be given to drawing together the strands of cooperation in youth employment and employability.

To ensure that the Work Programme stays focused and can have a measurable impact, the Platform participants agree 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 and innovation, youth (including employability), culture and creativity, as well as information 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:

## **1. Education**

### Objectives:

- Enhancing the quality of the higher education systems in the EaP region by supporting cooperation between partner countries and the EU.
- Improving the skills of students, researchers and academic staff from the Eastern Partnership countries.
- Increase the participation (in quality and quantity) of universities from EaP countries in the Erasmus+ programme.
- Raise awareness of the cooperation opportunities between schools supported through eTwinning.
- Support for reform of Vocational education and training systems ensuring the development of skills, apprenticeships and work-based training.

Areas for reinforced focus, as suggested by Platform 4 participants in the mid-term review:

- Implementation of the Bologna reforms with a specific focus on internationalisation and recognition;
- Entrepreneurial education;
- VET (mobility in VET, internationalisation of the VET systems, VET reforms and benchmarks).

Means of implementation: Erasmus+ programme, eTwinning, awareness raising events, policy dialogue and peer learning activities, ETF support available in the field of vocational education, training and human capital development.

Synergies with Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions will be sought.

Proposed activities:

➤ **Peer-learning activities**

- Information sharing and awareness raising events at least once a year in each EaP country, and if needed, organisation of regional event(s).
- Event(s) on the application of the Bologna instruments.

➤ **Seminars / workshops:**

- Regional events on good practice in Erasmus+, Tempus and Erasmus Mundus projects.
- eTwinning Plus dissemination and valorisation event(s).
- Regional Torino Process meeting in the area of VET.
- VET-related event(s).

## **2. Youth**

Objectives:

- Provide Eastern Partnership countries with the opportunity to participate in all youth related Actions of Erasmus+.
- Enhance cooperation in youth employment and employability.

Areas for reinforced focus, as suggested by Platform 4 participants in the mid-term review:

- Youth employability;
- Youth participation in democratic and decision-making processes;
- Recognition and development of youth work;

- Recognition of non-formal learning.

Means of implementation: Erasmus+ programme; renewal of a dedicated Eastern Partnership Youth Facility; exploiting the potential for a dedicated panel on youth and employability.

Proposed activities:

- A visibility event in 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 2017;
- Involvement of organisations from Eastern Partnership countries in the **Erasmus+ Programme Youth strand** and meetings **between young people and decision-makers** in the field of youth
- **Seminars/workshops** on youth participation in decision-making processes and in the civic and social life of Eastern Partnership countries.

### 3. Research and Innovation

Objective:

- Increase the participation of EaP countries in EU research projects and programmes.

Areas for reinforced focus, as suggested by Platform 4 participants in the mid-term review:

- Exchange experience of successful projects;
- Commercialisation of research results;
- Training sessions on the Horizon 2020 (implementation aspects, peer learning, proposal writing).

Means of implementation: Panel on Research and Innovation, awareness raising events on Horizon 2020 programme

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: up to two meetings per 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 event to raise awareness and share best practice related to the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions under Horizon 2020.

➤ **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.

When relevant, synergies with the work of Platform 3 on Energy Security may be sought.

#### **4. Information Society**

Objectives:

- Support enhanced involvement of electronic infrastructures for education and research.
- Raise awareness on Horizon 2020 opportunities.

Means of implementation: GÉANT, Horizon 2020 Programme, Seminars, Workshops

Proposed activities:

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

- eInfrastructures events: two per year.
- ICT in Horizon 2020 events: up to two per year.

#### **5. Culture and audiovisual sector**

Objectives:

- Promote or strengthen the 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 cultural and audiovisual policies.

Areas for reinforced focus, as suggested by Platform 4 participants in the mid-term review:

- Creative economy with focus on specific sub-sectors (like theatre, music, intangible heritage);
- Fundraising in the cultural sector;
- Training sessions on the Creative Europe programme (peer-learning, good project examples, proposal writing).

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

Proposed activities:

- Cooperation in the field of cultural heritage – **COMUS project** (follow up Kyiv Initiative) under the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme
- EaP culture programme **seminars / workshops:**
  - Validation seminar based on the 2015 study on the cinema industry carried out under Platform 4.
  - Forum on creative industries.
  - Workshop on creative cities.
  - Seminar(s) on Creative Europe programme in the Eastern Partnership: good project examples, application writing training, partner search etc.