

As our project is labelled by the European Strategy for the Danube Region, we were also invited to take part in the 4<sup>th</sup> Stakeholder Conference in Vienna

**4<sup>th</sup> International Stakeholder Conference**  
**Investing in People and Skills in the Danube Region**  
*Towards a New Dynamic for Socio-Economic Development*



It took place on 5 October 2016 in Seminar- und Veranstaltungszentrum Catamaran in Vienna and was hosted by the Federal Ministry of Education, Austria, and the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, Austria

The conference provided participants with opportunities to discuss current European growth and development policies, how

effective approaches to skills and competences impact their success and what challenges they face with regard to education and training, labor market and civil society participation.

The conference assembled actors and promoters of the EUSDR from fourteen Danube Region countries and beyond in order to share good practice, to address common challenges for the future and to develop innovative projects and networks in the fields of increasing quality and efficiency of education and labour market systems, improving educational outcomes, fostering cooperation in labour market policies and promoting equal opportunities and social inclusion.

After introductory speeches by Alois Stöger, Federal Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, Austria, Hanspeter Huber, Federal Ministry of Education, Austria, Director General for International Affairs and Marco Onida, European Commission, DG Regio, a powerpoint presentation was held by Peter Huber, Austrian Institute of Economic Research about Welfare, Wealth and Work, giving statistical data and outlooks on the topic.

After a short break the conference continued with a panel discussion on the topic

### **Leveraging our skills investments: Impact, activities, achievements and future perspectives of EUSDR cooperation**

Then information about different funding opportunities was provided.

After the lunchbreak the participants from 14 countries had the chance to take part in one of 4 working circles.

In the circle Prof. Huber-Kirchberger chose the topic was:

Increasing Quality and Efficiency of Education and Training:  
Better Skills in Better Jobs



The lively discussion centred around the fields of how to motivate students for learning, what qualifications are needed for getting a job, the different requirements of multinational corporations and

small and medium sized enterprises and how the development of such enterprises can be encouraged.

It was regarded as an important issue to strengthen the attempts to increase the language competency of both students and teachers, especially in English to improve the access to information and data, and to make communication in a common working language easier.

The conference finished with the presentation of results and to go in for networking with like-minded stakeholders with a view to enter into a cooperation some time.