

## **EU Strategy for the Danube Region**

### **Priority Area 1b – “To improve mobility and multimodality: Road, Rail and Air Links”**

## **RULES OF PROCEDURES for Steering Group 1b**

**Version: 15 June 2016**

## **Rules of Procedures**

### **The implementation of Priority Area 1b:**

### **“To Improve Mobility and Multimodality - Road, Rail and Air Links” of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region**

Version: June 2016

#### **Preamble**

On the basis of:

- The Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European Union Strategy for Danube Region, COM (2010) 715, 8.12.2010 and the “Action Plan of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region, SEC (2010) 1489, 8.12.2010 endorsed by the General Affairs Council meeting on 13 April 2011 and by the European Council on 24 June 2011,
- The Council conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region, 3083<sup>rd</sup> General Affairs Council meeting, Brussels, 13 April 2011,
- The Council conclusions on added value of macro-regional strategies, General Affairs Council meeting, Luxembourg, 22 October 2013,
- The Council conclusions on the governance of macro-regional strategies, General Affairs Council meeting, Brussels, 21 October 2014,

representatives of the Countries of the Danube region establish a Steering Group (hereinafter referred as SG) for the implementation of the Priority Area 1b: “To Improve Mobility and Multimodality - Road, Rail and Air Links” (hereinafter referred as PA1b) of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (hereinafter referred as EUSDR).

Here defined Rules of Procedures specify the role, the tasks, the composition and the functioning of the PA1b SG.

#### **1. Role and tasks of the PA1b SG**

1.1 The SG of the PA1b is responsible for the implementation of the EUSDR, namely Priority Area 1b: “To Improve Mobility and Multimodality - Road, Rail and Air Links”. It represents the executive body of this Priority Area. The principle management task of the SG is day to day management of the PA. The SG makes decisions regarding the future development of the area, co-operation, co-ordination, recommendations and guidelines with an aim to enhance mobility in the Danube region. The SG activities are in particular oriented towards

narrowing gaps in the field of transport between the countries of the Danube macro-region.

- 1.2 The SG takes actions taking into account the Communication on the EUSDR and the Action plan. Proposals to modify the Communication and/or the Action plan shall be prepared and submitted to relevant governance structures if justified by PA1b activities or otherwise needed.
- 1.3 The SG works closely with relevant EUSDR governance structures, in particular with the European Commission and the Danube Strategy Point (hereinafter referred as DSP).
- 1.4 The SG may establish and create working groups in order to deal with specific issues and tasks that contribute to the SG work and that can accelerate implementation.
- 1.5 The SG is responsible for the collecting and labelling projects with the EUSDR added value. However the SG is in principle not responsible for implementation, administration or organization of projects.
- 1.6 The SG makes effort to promote public awareness on all relevant achievements regarding the implementation of PA 1b.
- 1.7 The SG is responsible for promoting the cross-sectorial approach of the EUSDR and shall ensure communication and visibility of results.
- 1.8 The SG is responsible to review, consider and approve the implementation reports drafted by the Priority Area Coordinators (hereinafter referred as PACs) prior to their submission to the European Commission.
- 1.9 The duration of the term of office for the SG will cover the whole period of implementation of the EUSDR.

## **2. Core Composition of the PA1b SG: Members and PACs**

- 2.1 The SG is composed of government representatives from 14 Danube region countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia as EU Member States and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine as non-EU countries).
- 2.2 The SG is chaired by the PACs.
- 2.3 The SG members proactively assist PACs for the smooth implementation of Priority Area 1b and to ensure that suitable actions are anchored all over the region and in all participating states. The SG members on their own initiative inform the SG about the activities developed in the countries they represent and which are relevant for the implementation of PA 1b.

2.4 The PACs and SG members ensure the implementation of the Action Plan defined for the Priority Area by agreeing on planning, with targets, indicators and timetables, and by making sure there is effective cooperation between project promoters, programmes and funding sources. They also provide technical assistance and advice.

2.5 The PACs and SG members work in consultation with the European Commission, the DSP and relevant EU agencies and national/regional bodies.

### **3. Membership**

There are three types of membership in the SG:

#### **3.1 Members nominated by the participating countries with a right to vote**

- The SG members entitled to vote have the task to participate at the SG meetings and involve in the decision-making process.
- The SG members are allowed to send the substitutes to the SG meetings on behalf of their respective countries upon prior notification of the PACs in writing and in due time. The substitutes have equal rights during the SG meetings or other PA1b events in case of absence of the members.

#### **3.2 Observers without a right to vote**

- The representatives of the European Commission, the DSP and the relevant international organizations are regular and permanent invitees of the SG on the basis of an observer status.
- The National Coordinators (NCs) are welcomed to participate at the SG meetings and other events organized by the PA1b.
- The representatives of other interested EU Member States or countries out of the Danube Region can also participate at the SG meetings, as observers, should they wish so.
- The Steering Group may assign status of observer to other e.g. non-governmental organizations or financial institutions, having a legitimate interest in the PA 1b.

#### **3.3 Guests and invited members with an advisory capacity**

- The SG meetings are open to the participation of staff members of the PACs. Upon invitation of the PACs, other countries, international organizations, regional initiatives, financial institutions, experts and other partners may participate as guests.

#### **4. Organization of the meetings and decision making**

- 4.1 The SG shall meet at least twice a year. PACs are in charge of convening the meetings of the SG.
- 4.2 Communications between PACs, SG members, observers and other participants of the meeting is primarily by electronic exchange.
- 4.3 All decisions at the SG meetings are taken by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached the item for vote is withdrawn from the agenda. Upon PACs decision the same item, preferably with additional explanation can be put at vote again at the next meeting.
- 4.4 Decisions can be made when at least the half of the participating countries attend the SG meeting.
- 4.5 Each participating country has one vote per decision.
- 4.6 Comments, proposals and advises from the observers and guests will be considered.
- 4.7 Decision-making can be carried-out also by using written procedure. PACs can initiate a written decision-making procedure in justified cases and/or lack of time to convene SG meeting. The written procedure can be initiated also under a justified request of one or more of the SG members. The draft decision will be sent to the members entitled to vote. The PACs shall determine a deadline of the written procedure. Time for reply shall be no more than ten (10) working days or in case of urgent matter six (6) working days. The lack of reaction until the deadline will be considered as “silent agreement” with the proposed decision.

#### **5. Information flow**

- 5.1 The PACs shall prepare the draft minutes of the meetings and send them to the members and observers of the SG not later than 20 working days after the meeting has taken place. The participants of the meeting may send their comments not later than 10 working days following the receipt of the document.
- 5.2 Minutes are formally adopted at the next SG meeting.

#### **6. Working language and communication**

- 6.1 To ensure an efficient and rapid communication among the SG members, English is adopted as working language.
- 6.2 Participants may bring interpreters at their own expense.

6.3 The communication and exchange/distribution of any documentation between members of the SG shall generally be done by e-mail.

**7. Expenses**

7.1 Expenses related to the organization of the meetings of the SG shall be covered by the coordinating and/or organizing countries.

7.2 Travel, accommodation and any other extra expenses are to be covered by participants.

7.3 PACs may decide to cover travel and/or accommodation costs for members from non-EU countries and if in position exceptionally to all SG members or observers or invited experts.

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