

Dear Members of the European Parliament  
representing the country in the Danube Region,

The “ALADIN - ALpe Adria Danube universities INitiative”<sup>1</sup>, a network of universities located in Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia, welcomes the European Parliament’s resolution of 21 January 2010 on a European Strategy for the Danube Region. It stresses the need to involve the relevant regional and local stakeholders in the Danube region in the preparatory process, in order to clearly identify the needs in order to find solutions to common challenges, to implement efficiently the concrete projects and to provide a good governance mechanism.

The ALADIN Network founded in 2002 represents a longstanding and closely collaborating group of universities and associated centers of excellence and Living Labs focusing on realizing the benefits of eBusiness and enabling eTechnologies in a cross-border context. The group herewith wants to point out to the Members of the European Parliament representing the countries in the Danube region

- that there exists world-class research and development expertise in the field of eBusiness and enabling eTechnologies in the region,
- and that this expertise will be pivotal to successfully connect and support the areas identified in the resolution on a European Strategy for the Danube Region for which enhanced synergies between different EU policies shall be developed: cohesion, transport, tourism, agriculture, fisheries, economic and social development, energy, environment, enlargement and neighbourhood policy.

In order to contribute to eCollaboration of all organizations and individuals engaged in an accelerated cross-border region development, we are suggesting exploitation of the Living Labs methodology. In recent years, over hundred Living Labs have emerged cooperating within the European Network of Living Labs – ENoLL. They are actively supported by the projects of the European Commission, Information Society and Media Directorate-General, New Infrastructure Paradigms & Experimental Facilities. Several projects are in progress bringing together cross-border “smart” cities and regions.

The key role of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) in Europe’s ability to move forward into the future is also underlined in the Digital Europe Strategy Report in the form of recommendations of the European ICT Industry to the Spanish Presidency of the European Union.<sup>2</sup> Especially the call for the formulation of a Post -Lisbon Strategy is strongly supported.

The undersigned members of the ALADIN Network thus express their interest to be involved in the preparatory process of the European Strategy for the Danube Region as well as the Post-Lisbon Strategy and invite the Members of the European Parliament representing the included countries to engage in a consultation process with them. It is also suggested to coordinate with the Danube Rectors’ Conference<sup>3</sup>, whose general aim is the improvement of higher education in teaching and research in the region.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aladin.units.it/>

<sup>2</sup> Industry Partnership Contribution to the Spanish Presidency, Digital Europe Strategy, <http://www.mityc.es/telecomunicaciones/Presidencia/actos/18enero/Documents/Final%20Report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.d-r-c.org>

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