



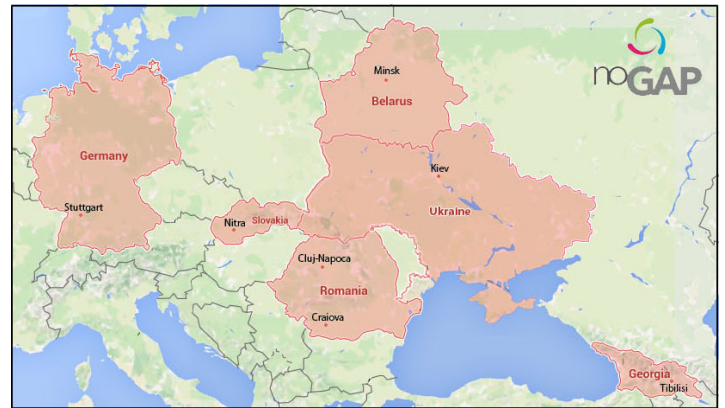
The Knowledge Transfer Community

Bridging the gap between research and innovation in EU and Eastern Partner countries - Some findings from the NoGAP Final Conference in Cluj-Napoca, July 27, 2016

The event was organized by German Aerospace Center and the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca and took place on July 27, in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

NoGAP is an EU-funded project aiming to promote the cooperation of the EU and its Members States/Associated Countries with the Eastern Partnership Countries (namely: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) on bridging the gap between research and innovation.

The **NoGAP** consortium is composed of 13 organizations from 6 countries of which 3 are EU members (Germany, Romania, Slovakia) and 3 are members of the Eastern Partnership (Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia). In order to improve mobility between research, business and innovation, interrelated tandem relations between research organizations and innovation support services are established.



The Final Conference of the **NoGAP** project presented an overview of its activities, which aim at fostering the transfer of technology in the energy sector between European and Eastern Partner Countries (EaP).

Activities included trainings for researchers, companies and multipliers as well as twinning between EU and EaP countries, methodologies for technology transfer, analytical work and networking and brokerage events.

The importance of international cooperation for better technology transfer between science and industry was underlined by all speakers at the **NoGAP** Final Conference.

The conference gathered together the coordinators of all R2I INCO projects targeting Eastern Partner Countries, as well as representatives from several other projects in the field. Partners from **NoGAP** talked about their experiences with twinning activities in the projects and presented first results and impacts.

More than 60 participants from 13 countries all over the European Union and the Eastern Partnership attended the event.

The conference was opened by Professor Daniela Popescu, Vice-Rector of the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca and host of the conference, and by Professor Norbert Höptner, Commissioner for Europe of the Ministry of Economics of Baden Württemberg and Director of Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum, the coordinating institution. Both speakers stressed the importance of transnational collaboration for the creation of a favorable environment for technology transfer.

The Danube Transfer Centers (DTC) which operate in several locations in the Danube Region (DTC Cluj-Napoca & DTC Bucharest (Romania), DTC Bratislava & DTC Nitra (Slovakia), DTC Novi Sad (Serbia), DTC Maribor (Slovenia), DTC Vukovar (Croatia), DTC Pannon (Hungary) and DTC Ruse (Bulgaria)) are good examples how best practices can be transferred across borders for the benefit of SMEs, academia and society in general.



Opening speech by Professor Daniela Popescu



Award of Certificates of Excellence to Prof. Höptner, Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum

In recognition of excellence mentoring, knowledge transfer and strategy for innovation and competitiveness created during the NoGAP project and the already visible results, Dr. Gabriel Vladut awarded Certificates of Excellence from ARoTT, the Romanian Association for Technology Transfer and Innovation, to the representatives of Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum, namely Professor Norbert Höptner, Dr. Jonathan Löffler, Robert Gohla and Daniela Chiran.

NoGAP contributes to taking advantage of the innovation potential of SMEs based on a better cooperation with researchers, transferring and using knowledge resulting from research.

NoGAP reinforced cooperation with Eastern Partnership countries, developed a 'Common Knowledge and Innovation Space' on the societal challenge 'Secure, Clean and Efficient Energy'. In order to improve mobility between research, business and innovation, interrelated tandem relations between research organizations and innovation support services (under international methodology) was established.

After an introduction into the project structure by the coordinators Daniela Chiran and Robert Gohla from Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum, two presentations introduced the potentials deriving from macro-regional strategies: Hicham Abghay from Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum presented the new project DanuBalt (<http://danubalt.eu/>), which aims at connecting the Danube Region and the Baltic Sea Region in the field of innovation in Health Care.

Professor Eden Mamut from the Ovidius University of Constantza, Romania, presented the broad range of activities by the Black Sea Universities Network. New opportunities arise from the Danube Transnational Programme, as well as from clustering activities.



Daniela Chiran, Coordinator of NoGAP project



Simina Fulga, Fraunhofer Institute for Manufacturing Engineering & Automation



Professor Eden Mamut, Ovidius University of Constantza

Simina Fulga from the Fraunhofer Institute for Manufacturing Engineering & Automation explained the specific approach to technology transfer applied by the Fraunhofer Gesellschaft, which uses several channels to bring scientific discoveries to the market, from contract research over patents and licenses up to joint research projects with industrial partners.



Experiences from twinning Georgia - Slovakia

The 2nd part of the conference was dedicated to the discussion of country experiences from twinning activities that took place between institutions in Georgia and Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania, Belarus and Germany. 2 Memorandum of Understanding have been signed between a Slovak and 2 Georgian universities. 3 MoU was signed between Romanian and Ukrainian entities. 5 proposal projects was generated by the twinning Romania-Ukraine. The weakness was highlighted.



Experiences from twinning Ukraine - Romania

NoGAP is constantly collecting technology offers, technology requests, and expressions of interest for cooperation. Please find a selection of the profiles currently available at: <http://www.no-gap.eu/en/1600.php>

Coordinators from R2I projects InnoverEast (<http://www.innovereast.eu/>), SUAFRI EPC (<http://suafri-epc.eu/index.php/en/>) and SECURE R2I (<http://www.secure-r2i.eu/index.php/en/>) complemented these presentations with insights from their projects.

Generally, twinning was considered an excellent instrument by all participants, which generates good relationships between institutions and leads to some tangible results.

The twinning between the Georgian Technical University in Tbilissi and the Slovak University of Agriculture (SUA) in Nitra in the frame of **NoGAP** lead to some results: Ideas are discussed how a research center similar to the new research center AgroBioTech at SUA can be established in Georgia. 2 Memorandum of Understanding have been signed between the Agriculture University and 2 Georgian universities.

Three MoU was signed between Romanian and Ukrainian entities. Five proposal projects was generated by the twinning Romania-Ukraine, The wickness was highlighted. Trust and communication were considered essential for successful twinning activities. The R2I coordinators, who supported comparable activities, supported this point of view. This bottom-up driven approach should be pursued further in the future.

To complement this view with some experiences from more policy-oriented projects, Oliver Rohde from the German Aerospace Center (DLR) and Philipp Brugner from the Center for Social Innovation (ZSI) gave some examples from other INCO-Projects targeting countries from the Eastern Partnership, the Danube Region and the Black Sea Region.

Prominent examples are Danube Inco-Net (<https://danube-inco.net>), Inco-Net EaP (<http://inco-eap.net/>), Black Sea Horizon (<https://blacksea-horizon.eu/>) and the RI Links 2 UA (<https://ri-links2ua.eu/>), successor of BILAT UKRAINA.'

Here you can find links and a list of other web resources that offer useful information regarding the EU-Eastern Partnership cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation <http://www.no-gap.eu/en/1541.php>



The coordinators of INCO-Projects, was awarded for the contribution

The support for technology transfer and innovation across borders should target all levels: the micro-level of cooperation between institutions, the cooperation in the frame of macro-regions such as the Black Sea, Danube or Baltic regions, as well as the cooperation on European level.

Recognizing the interdisciplinary nature of innovation, stakeholders looking for support should look beyond Horizon 2020 and search for synergies with other instruments, from regional policy and structural funds as well as thematically oriented programs.



The sustainability of the project, potential partnerships for project was presented

Partners' voices about NoGAP

The **Slovak University of Agriculture** appreciates the **NoGAP** project for several reasons. First, involvement in the project has brought new opportunities for cooperation among partners in the future.

Activities, communication and team work in the work packages have been effective and efficient.

Furthermore, the partners have participated in the discussion of problems arising during the life of the project and finding solutions to overcome the negative impacts on project performance. Additionally, brochures and handbooks delivered in work packages have brought new knowledge in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy and could be available for researchers and stakeholders working in this area.



Dr. Zuzana Lajdova, Slovak University of Agriculture



Prof. Lyudmila Rusina, National Technical University of Ukraine "Kyiv Polytechnical Institute"



Dr. Givi Kochoradze, International Center for Advancement of Research, Technology and Innovation

For **National Technical University of Ukraine "Kyiv Polytechnical Institute"** the **NoGAP** project is the next step and the new opportunity for development of the University technology transfer support system.

Our university obtained the best practices from the project partners in technology transfer and started implementing them in the everyday practice of the Science Park "KyivskaPolytechnika" and International Project Department.

The project improved the current technology transfer training system by introduction of new handbooks and trainings. Network at NTUU "KPI". NTUU "KPI" has established a good partnership with the members of the project consortium. In particular, one Erasmus+ KA2 application entered two consortium of H2020.

Thereby, we can assert that the **NoGAP** project not only met our expectations and far exceeded them. Furthermore, many Ukrainian experts in the field of energy efficiency got new invaluable experience in bridging the gap between research, innovation, and business creation thanks to the **NoGAP** project.

During the implementation of **NoGAP** project, the National Innovation System of Georgia experienced some positive developments, which can be partly accredited to our project.

The Georgian Government signed the Association Agreement with Horizon 2020, the Innovation Strategy of Georgia for 2014-2020 was elaborated with assistance by the World Bank. The first Techno Park in ICT was created and equipped with the support of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia.

During the **NoGAP** project Georgia became member of Enterprise Europe Network and two Georgian organizations became contact point of EEN. Representatives of our organization ICARTI took part in many of these structures and activities.

It is important to underline that in all events of the **NoGAP** project in Georgia, representatives of governmental structures participated as well. To keep the momentum created by **NoGAP**, ICARTI will be part of the new project "STI International Cooperation Network for Eastern Partnership Countries" – PLUS (EaP PLUS).

Thus many tasks started by **NoGAP** project will continue in the frame of other projects.



Daniel Acs, Union of Slovak Clusters

Union of Slovak Clusters (UKS) has benefitted from the **NoGAP** project in many areas. UKS actively supported and promoted networking of transfer centers of EaP countries, which could closely collaborate with Danube Transfer Centers (DTC).

Specific project outcomes are used in strengthening the AgroBioTech Transfer Centre in Nitra, Slovakia, where UKS is deeply involved.

Thanks to the **NoGAP** project, AgroBioTech Transfer Centre became one of the founders of the National Centre for Technology Transfer Support in Slovakia – NITT SK. Moreover, institutional and individual partnerships opened space for cooperation in several international projects supporting competitiveness of SMEs.

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IPA CIFATT Craiova's aim and expectation was to create a methodology at the international level for technology offers and requests with forms that are utilized in more than 45 countries and to create a network and a data base for future technology transfer.

We trust that we have created skills that can be utilized for the benefit of the countries and entities that participated in this activity.

After a long activity as Enterprise Europe Network, IPA was able to transfer knowledge and best practice base on his international experience. In same time have created partnerships on Horizon 2020, Erasmus + Programmes, especially for Ukraine.



Dr. Gabriel Vladut, IPA CIFATT Craiova, Romania

We believe that the NoGAP project has represented an extraordinary opportunity, for the team of the **Technical University of Cluj-Napoca**, to contribute on a European level to the development of know-how and solutions directed towards the active field of renewable energy, as well as to the improvement of the international relations between the European Union and the countries from the Eastern Partnership.

Our team has been involved primarily in the preparation and delivery of trainings (for a total of 9 events in the 3 partner countries) and in the direct common work with the organizations from these countries (coordination of 26 innovation audits and development of 6 IPR consultancy projects), but also in other knowledge and innovation support activities directed at improving the capability of the renewable energy sector.

As the projects nears its completion date, it is a good moment for all those that have contributed to its success and for all the stakeholders that have been involved to our activities, to celebrate and further disseminate its achievements and to make plans for future collaborations. Building on the results of NoGAP, as well as on the strong professional and personal bonds formed during the past three years, it is important to explore new ideas that could value the complementary competences and the wide range of skills that the partners from this consortium have exhibited.



Oliver Rohde, German Aerospace Center

It is a great honor for Cluj-Napoca and our university to act as hosts for the NoGAP final event, to welcome in Romania the partners of the project and the special guest speakers of this conference and to provide the framework for discussion necessary both for the completion of the project activities and for establishing new cooperation routes in the future

NoGAP was and is important for the **German Aerospace Center**, because we are interested in cooperating with the Eastern Partnership Region in many ways.

NoGAP gave us the opportunity to complement our bilateral and multilateral activities in the political sphere with bottom-up driven activities.

The contacts established through the project, together with the vast amount of knowledge gathered by the project partners, will provide a valuable basis for further cooperation in technology transfer with partners from EaP as well as EU countries.



Assoc. prof. Mihai Dragomir, Prof. Sorin Popescu, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania



Daniela Chiran,
Coordinator of NoGAP project
Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum

NoGAP bridges the gap between research and innovation and contributes to taking advantage of the innovation potential of SMEs based on a better cooperation with researchers, transferring and using knowledge resulting from research. In order to improve mobility between research, business and innovation, interrelated tandem relations between research organizations and innovation support services was established. Our aims was to create a stakeholder map within the societal challenge secure, clean and efficient energy and develop a Best Practices Methodology for the knowledge transfer between public research and industry in the societal challenge secure, clean and efficient energy, to bridge the gap between research, innovation and business, based on EU experience and on a survey conducted among the stakeholders. This methodology and sustainable Network was created at European level, implemented and show results, cooperation and partnerships.



Robert Gohla,
Senior Project Manager,
Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum

The overall objective of the project was to reinforce cooperation with Eastern Partnership countries to develop a **'Common Knowledge and Innovation Space'** on the societal challenge **'Secure, Clean and Efficient Energy'**.

Sessions was center around examples of country experiences in the transfer of technologies in the energy sector. The presentation of funding schemes opened up new opportunities for stakeholders from all over the region and the EU. The conference aimed at identifying good practice that can be applied in other countries and industries. Networking among stakeholders was facilitated as well.

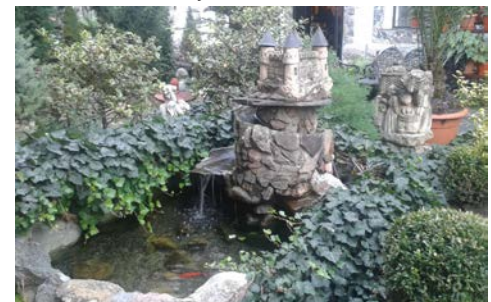
Together with other relevant projects, partnerships and synergies for the cooperation in science, technology and innovation in the countries of the Eastern Partnership and with partners from EU Member States were discussed. The sustainability of the NoGAP project, measures and activities was already discuss and analyzed among participants.

A Networking activity was prevue with entertainment, exchange of ideas and best practices.



... and a visit at the Turda salt mine and the Dracula castle.

Beyond the activities, made with passion and professionalism, knowledge partners, the beauties, history and interesting places in the countries visited was permanently observed by the **NoGAP** project partners. We can't forget "Tamada - Toastmaster" a nice habit of Georgia, found in Romania, Ukraine, Belarus, Slovakia, and Germany.



During the last days of the NoGAP project, a colleague from Ukraine gave birth to a boy. Congratulation. We are pound. More information about the event, including all presentations, is available at www.no-gap.eu



<http://www.no-gap.eu>

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