

## **Education, research and development**

Research and education are key factors for the creation of an innovative business environment. The prime location for high-quality education and research facilities within the entire Austrian-Hungarian border region is Wien. The strong concentration of public and co-operative research facilities – more than half are located in Wien – is counter-pointed by a 17,5% share of private industrial research, which is – in terms of both geographical distribution and technical specialisation – in line with the geographical distribution of industry across Austria.

Five universities and three academies of arts are located in Wien. Further universities or university faculties are located in Sopron, Győr, Mosonmagyaróvár and Keszthely. Universities of applied sciences are located in Wiener Neustadt, Eisenstadt and Szombathely. Additional higher education units work in the larger cities Nagykanizsa, Zalaegerszeg, Mödling, Pinkafeld, Stadt Schläining and Weiz. Based on the Bologna process there will be no obstacles to the harmonisation of qualifications and diplomas in the border region.

The high economic performance of the Hungarian border area is vulnerable in national terms because of low capacities in research and development (R&D). Concerning the rate of employees in the R&D sector (researchers per 10.000 people: 12) the border region is far below the Hungarian average (researchers per 10.000 people: 23). Even this low capacity is unequally distributed. 64,9% of the 142 institutions involved in research and development are located in Győr-Moson-Sopron, 22,5% in Vas and 12.6% in Zala County. Also on the Austrian side the expenses for research and development are not extremely high on the NUTS II level.

Over the last decade the region has started to plug the gaps in regional innovation systems. Centres for innovation and applied research have been established in Eisenstadt, Güssing, Jennersdorf, Wiener Neustadt, Győr, Sopron and Szombathely. According to the Lisbon strategy co-operation between the universities, R&D and industries is evolving.

In the knowledge transfer between R&D, innovation and technology centres and the industries, economic clusters may play a relay function. In West Transdanubia eight clusters have been established since 2000. Similar institution systems have been established also on the Austrian side of the border region over the last 10 years. These developments give a potential for closer co-operation (networking) across the border at all levels of the innovation system.

## **Development tendencies**

Education, research and development will play a stronger role in cross border co-operation. In general a good and diverse supply is given in the whole region, with a certain dominance of Wien and some gaps in the southern part. The established co-operation's will be continued and extended on the one hand among the education institutions and on the other hand to the R&D and industry.

The focus on specific strengths in the region (e.g. the successful post graduate MSc course "Renewable Energy in Central and Eastern Europe") offers skills for qualified workforce in the region. Other "hot spots" for R&D co-operations can be implemented in courses or offers of the smaller educational sites mentioned above. Among these thematic fields are nature management, renewable primary products, medical engineering, logistics, eco-mobility and sustainable tourism.