Infrastructure

Regarding international and intraregional transport networks conditions vary widely in the region. The northern part (Wien-Győr) is easily accessible by all means of transport. The southern part has to face disadvantages in terms of accessibility. The improvement of connections is a key factor to foster economic coherence. Furthermore an important aspect is the concentration on eco-mobility.

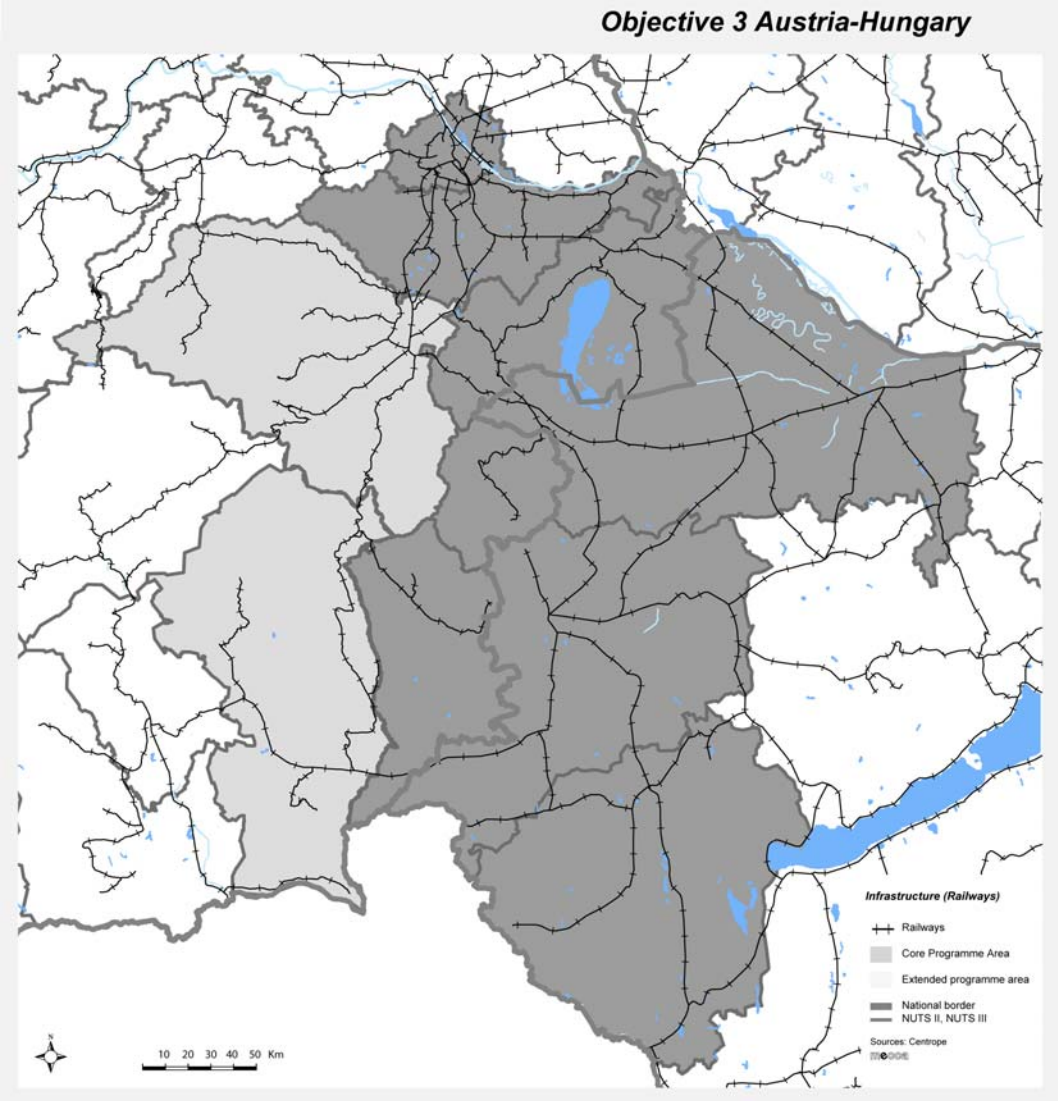
Road Transport

The northern area (Wien, Wiener Umland Südteil, Nordburgenland and city of Győr) has a high-grade road network (A2, A3, A4, A6, S1, S4, S31, see also Map 5: Transport infrastructure (roads, airports)). On the Hungarian side the significantly increasing traffic flow through the emerging new north-south (Baltic-Adriatic) corridor, together with the growing road capacity problems emphasises the importance to develop the north-south axis within West Transdanubia (M9). The two northern branches of this axis, the first one on the Bratislava-Csorna-Szombathely line and the other one through Wien-Sopron-Bük-Szombathely are meeting at Szombathely; the first one rather linking the Baltic and Adriatic area, while the second one heading via Zalaegerszeg and Nagykanizsa toward Zagreb as a new nodal and distribution point towards the Balkans.

Map 5: Transport infrastructure (roads, airports)

Railway Transport
The accessibility by rail has been increased significantly within the northern parts of the border region since 2000, when the Euregio-trains between Wien and Győr have been launched. To improve this rail line, electrification and modernization of the railway line between Sopron and Szombathely has started, bringing closer the mid-part of Western Transdanubia to the agglomeration of Wien. Around the Neusiedler See/Fertő and in other protected or sensitive areas, the concept of sustainable transport development gives special significance to the electrification of the railway system.

Map 6: Transport infrastructure (railways)



Other means of transport
The Danube's potential in the intermodal transport flows has been improved considerably. In the cross-border region the port of Wien has already established its role as an international harbour, while at the Győr-Gönyű port the doubling of the port's capacity and the railway connection to the Wien-Budapest line should contribute to the increased potential.

Due to the growing importance of international transport links, the airports within the region are also gaining more relevance. Especially the Vienna International Airport (VIE) has become increasingly important for the cross-border region as a whole due to continuous efforts to develop its position as an international hub. Beside the airport in Bratislava important gateways for the southern part of the region are the regional airports: Sármellék, Fertőszentmiklós, Szombathely and Graz.

The establishment of a bicycle network and building cross-border connection points increases the tourist attraction of the region. An inter-regional cycling network has been planned and partly built up over the last decade. The network on the Hungarian side still needs to be developed and important

links between the two sides of the border are also missing. Further efforts have to be dedicated to organise common services and marketing of this network. Public busses are an important means of transport, too.

Telecommunications and public utilities
The telecommunication infrastructure is especially in rural areas still lagging behind compared with international as well as national standards. However a number of initiatives have been established to improve the situation. Over the last 10-15 years considerable improvements and modernisation of the infrastructures for supply and disposal have been achieved – these efforts were especially marked in the Hungarian side of the border region. Nevertheless an overall assessment pointed at insufficient levels of infrastructure in small and medium-sized municipalities. The sewage system of the region is inhomogeneous and is generally below EU standards. Although significant steps have been taken to solve the problem of the disposal, purification and placement of sewage, several local and regional sewage treatment plants and regional and local collecting mains have been established there are still deficits in these areas. In some cases there is a potential for cross-border use of the sewage system and treatment and solid waste collection and disposal.

Development tendencies
Especially the north of the region is well equipped with road and railway connections. Also the southern part will benefit from the European Transport corridors (Baltic-Adriatic corridor as well as the corridors IV, V and VII). On the regional scale many road links and border crossings are missing. To improve the accessibility, measures on two levels are foreseen:

- Improved accessibility among larger cities including a better link to Wien and the development of a North-South corridor on the Hungarian side of the border;
- Reconstructing small scale East-West links across the border.

In the cross-border internal transport network of the region missing or insufficient elements can be found especially in the agglomerations of Sopron-Eisenstadt (Road No. 85), Szombathely-Oberwart (No. 89) and Kőszeg-Oberpullendorf (No. 87). The motorways M8 and M7 will have a key role in the accessibility of the southern part of the area. The participation of Hungary in the Schengen Treaty which is foreseen for 2008 will boost the opening of small border crossings. In ecological sensitive areas such as the UNESCO World Heritage Site Neusiedler See innovative forms of public transport and eco-mobility are being implemented.

Regarding transport of goods, the importance of multimodal systems, such as the RO-LA (Rollende Landstraße/transporting lorries by rail) terminal at Sopron is growing. Between Győr and Gyönyű a new railway line construction (10 km) will start soon, contributing to the better utilisation of the RO-RO (Roll on roll off) harbour at Gönyű.

For the future the role of information technology (IT) infrastructure and public services will be enlarged, especially for the smaller centres and communities. Accessibility is not only “hardware” – a vital and fast information flux needs strong internet backbones. On the local level many facilities of water, sewage and waste management will need more investments. The cross border perspective for a common facility management or other activities like logistic measures like bilingual signposting of bike paths will increase its importance.