



Co-operation structures

Contacts and exchange at the personal, economical and political levels have a long tradition along this border region and offer an excellent starting position for establishing and intensifying relationships on a regular institutionalised basis. In this context, the ethnic minorities on both sides of the border could also play a major role (in Austria: Slovaks, Croats, Hungarians; in Slovakia: Germans, Czechs, Hungarians, Croats etc.).

In the ongoing period the cross-border cooperation can be described along the following structure:

- Cooperation on a political and administrative level (e.g. CENTROPE)
- Cooperation on an institutional level (EuRegio)
- project based cooperation initiatives

For the regions and cities in the quadrangle, open borders and the enlargement of the EU have created new opportunities for cross-border cooperation and a common future. CENTROPE for example is a joint initiative of the Austrian federal provinces Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland, the Czech region South Moravia, the Slovak regions Bratislava and Trnava, the Hungarian counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron and Vas, as well as the cities of Bratislava, Brno, Eisenstadt, Győr, Sopron, St. Pölten, Szombathely and Trnava. Based on the Kittsee Declaration of 2003, these regions and cities work jointly on the creation of the Central European Region. This political dimension of the Central European Region finds its expression in the regular Political Conferences of the governors, county presidents and mayors of the regional capitals – the first encounter held in Kittsee in September 2003 was followed by the St. Pölten conference in April 2005 and by the Viennese meeting in March 2006.

At the project level, experts from the fields of administration, research, consulting and civil society are working to deepen co-operative relations and to draft and develop common strategies, measures and activities. This work includes multilateral working groups as well as e.g. the expertise of business agencies.

The EUREGIO is one example for a co-operation on institutional level. The EUREGIO Region Weinviertel-South Moravia-West Slovakia, founded in 1997, consists of the districts of Gänserndorf, Hollabrunn, Korneuburg and Mistelbach. In Slovakia the member areas are the self-governing region of Bratislava (Bratislavský kraj) with the district of Malacky and the self-governing region of Trnava (Trnavský kraj) with the districts of Senica and Skalica in the West Slovak Region of Záhorie. In South Moravia there are the border districts of Břeclav, Hodonín, Znojmo and Brno-venkov. A total of 270 municipalities support the EUREGIO union in three regions inhabited by more than one million people. The EUREGIO acts as an platform for information and know-how transfer, as supporter for economic development and socio-cultural activities and as lobbyist for the specific regional concern. The thematic main fields of activities are location policy and economic and business development, labour market and qualification, environment – agriculture – environmental technology, tourism – wine – culture, youth – gender mainstreaming, regional and local partnership.

Beside the political and institutional platforms a large number of project aimed at the establishment of sustainable co-operation structures in the fields of regional and urban planning, transport, labour market, renewable energy, education and so on.