

centrope Strategy 2013+

centrope Action Plan



centrope capacity

an initiative of:

_Bratislava _Bratislava Region _Brno _Burgenland _Győr
_Lower Austria _Sopron _South Moravia _Szombathely
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centrope Strategy 2013+ & centrope Action Plan

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Slovenský Dom Centrope

This document contains the full-length version of the **centrope** Strategy 2013+. A short version is published as the **centrope** Strategy 2013+ information brochure. All **centrope capacity** reports are available as downloads from www.centrope.com.

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Part A

centrope Strategy 2013+

Introduction

centrope has gone a long way since its inception in 2003. Where there once were countries within and outside the EU, foregone business opportunities and closed labour markets, congested roads and passport controls, now we find a common economic space with a level playing field for all sides, full labour mobility, less currency confusion, new highways and dense public transport services. In the everyday life of citizens, easy and hassle-free access to culture, leisure and shopping across the border comes as a matter of course. Politicians and public officials from the **centrope** partner regions and cities meet regularly to discuss and decide on concrete activities that will further deepen multilateral collaboration in the quadrangle.

The **centrope** Strategy 2013+ is the result of this co-operation at eye level, of a year-long development and consultation process that took place in the context of the **centrope capacity** project made possible with EU support. The Strategy's main value lies in a common understanding of the overarching and long-term aims of our co-operation, embodied in its various parts – what **centrope** stands for and what we want to achieve in the years to come.

With this strategy, we emphasise our commitment to a broad collaboration that extends from research and innovation to human capital development, spatial integration as well as culture and tourism. In all these areas, we agree on a set of shared goals and support a range of suggestions of how to concretise these ambitions through projects or initiatives.

More than anything else, however, the Strategy underlines the vision for our common region which has inspired **centrope** ever since its launch – the vision of a co-operation that equally generates benefits for our citizens and the world at large. For the inhabitants of **centrope**, this means gains through greater prosperity, sustainability and convenience; for Europe and beyond, it stands for benefits in the guise of an integrated, highly developed and dynamic gateway region at the very heart of the continent. We are convinced that this is an ambition well worth to be continued and deepened.

The Governors, Presidents and Mayors of the **centrope** partner regions and cities

The centrope vision:
a common region that is...

... the key promoter of co-operation and integration among our four countries, a forum of regions and cities that take responsibility for balanced development irrespective of borders, and a bridge between our citizens.

... a source of additional growth, employment and prosperity through a truly common cross-border market, a key to unlock the potentials of the knowledge economy, and an opportunity to tackle major societal challenges together.

... a laboratory for the future of Europe at the crossroads of four EU Member States, a model for a Europe that is confident and growing together, and a spearhead for deeper co-operation in the Danube Basin.

... a hub for Central Europe that connects the Middle Danube with the continent's economic and population centres and brings Europe closer together by acting as a swift and efficient corridor region.

... an access point for the world into Central Europe, from where markets, people and destinations are within easy reach, and where a wealth of skills and intercultural knowledge on the wider region are available.

... an international and open-minded region with high quality of life, where people from around the globe are welcome and find opportunities to live, work, learn, invent and investigate.

... a meeting-place for people, businesses and organisations as well as a market place for ideas and innovations, well-prepared to host international conventions, fairs, negotiations and major events.

... a mosaic of cultures and languages, where a common heritage feeds into a vibrant, cross-fertilising cultural life that combines achievements of worldwide renown with vital contemporary artistic production.

... a constellation of diverse landscapes, whose rich and varied natural endowment is transformed into a resource for sustainable development and growth based on green technologies and carbon-free forms of energy.

Knowledge Region Strategy 2013+

(responsible for content: **centrope** Office Austria)

1 Status 2012

Good, but not good enough to keep up

Measured in terms of research output and its impact, many science and innovation locations in **centrope** perform rather well. This holds true even as they tend to be in a semi-peripheral position within the overall European research system, from where they tend to seek co-operation partners in leading Western European research nations rather than among each other. However, scientific “islands of excellence” and highly innovative enterprises in a number of key branches do exist; some institutions and research groups hold world-class status. Research, technology and innovation have been at the heart of several regional development strategies, leading to considerable investments into new research infrastructure, human capital and knowledge transfer institutions. With 25 public universities and the main locations of two national Academies of Sciences, **centrope** has an extraordinary density of scientific and higher-education institutions. The shares of students and persons employed in R&D as well as in high-technology and knowledge-intensive industries are all above the EU average.

However, the foundations on which current strengths are built are not necessarily sustainable:

Structural challenges. Structural weaknesses concern the small size of many entities, meaning that innovating enterprises may not find access to venture capital and lack resources to grow into new markets, and that research institutions lack the critical mass necessary for international visibility and competitiveness. In addition, many of the technology-oriented firms in the region are subsidiaries of big international players and hold only limited relevance. Not being a technology headquarters region often means to be outside the cutting edge of innovation, dependent on outside investment decisions or relegated to a niche position. The long-term commitment of international companies to certain locations may easily dissipate. Cross-border interlinkage of the research and innovation systems is weak, forestalling potential cluster effects and the emergence of innovative ideas through networking and the sharing of relevant information. International visibility of the science location in general is low; even the reputation of Vienna – **centrope**’s biggest and most venerable university town – rests on the achievements of specific research areas rather than on being an international leader in science and innovation.

Pressure to adapt to a knowledge economy. At the same time, the squeeze to develop strong research and innovation systems is on the rise in all partner regions. Being part of (current or foreseeable) high-income countries, they must maintain competitiveness and avoid the loss of prosperity and employment by building a knowledge economy whose value added stems from human capital, creativity and high-tech. Against this background, it is alarming that **centrope** runs the risk of becoming a brain-drain region struggling to retain the brainpower it produces at its many universities or to attract enough brainpower to compensate for the drain.

Lack of financial supporting structures. Science and innovation actors in **centrope** have to cope with a significant disparity of supporting policies and instruments across the region. While some governments dispose of considerable means, in other countries nominal commitments to the key role of science and technology are not underpinned by sufficient grants or support structures. On the sub-state level, the capacities of partner regions to foster research and innovation in their own right diverge even more. In view of often restricted national and regional means, cross-border efforts are even more dependent on the funding opportunities offered by EU research and regional policies. Conversely, the private sector has a comparatively low share in R&D investment. Therefore continued public support in various forms is absolutely crucial for the future growth of endogenous and competitive capacities. However, what is missing to achieve deeper transregional research and innovation integration is a public funding structure able to translate any specific **centrope** agenda into dedicated cross-border lead projects.

Regional research and innovation strategies are fragmented at best. Regional-level research and innovation strategies are of highly diverging relevance for the **centrope** partners. While for some, own resources and institutions together with duly formulated strategy processes have led to full-scale RTI policies (the Czech and Austrian partner regions), other partners pursue innovation-oriented location strategies on a much weaker institutional and financial basis (the Slovak and Hungarian partner regions). The co-ordination or exploitation of the R&D resources of neighbouring regions is no major objective in any of the regional innovation strategies. A permanent forum of the **centrope** partners and RTI stakeholders to analyse, discuss and formulate development goals from a **centrope**-wide perspective is equally lacking. As a consequence, research- and innovation-led location strategies often pursue similar objectives in parallel and without mutual consultation. Simultaneous investments and developments may even provoke competitive constellations where co-operative activities would yield better outcomes for the region as a whole.

Potential waiting to be unlocked

Notwithstanding all these limitations, **centrope** nevertheless enjoys excellent frame conditions for emerging as one of Europe's leading knowledge regions, where new technologies and innovations originate from the smart interplay between science, business and policy. In particular, **centrope** is well-placed to benefit from its significant industrial sector and the related human capital – to the extent that the R&D-intensity of resident firms can be increased, knowledge transfer is intensified and the potential for new industry-oriented services is fully exploited.

The location factors in favour of **centrope** will become even stronger the less production is dependent on imported fossil energy in coming decades and the more **centrope** is able to draw on its wealth of alternative – and potentially cheaper – energy sources. Also, the more industrial raw materials can be efficiently recycled from waste through innovative technologies the more cost-effectively **centrope** will be able to produce (even irrespective of rising labour costs). Add the low transportation costs from **centrope** to Western European key markets (which are likely to absorb a major share of **centrope** exports in the future as well) due to its central location and good accessibility plus the potentials residing in improved access to Adriatic and North Sea trade ports and intercontinental rail transport to Eastern Asia, and the excellent cards the region holds for its future become evident.

2 Objectives 2013+

2.1 The governance objective:

A shared strategic approach towards a knowledge region centrope

A region where partners discuss their respective regional research and innovation strategies and find common ground on priorities, complementary development and co-ordinated allocation of means in order to achieve competitive science and technology specialisations.

centrope can support the emergence of a shared view on the potentials of a coherent and integrated cross-border innovation system. The transregional orientation of **centrope** permits considering the entire R&D potential and assessing possible synergies between regional subsystems. Therefore multilateral and multilevel co-operation can provide a framework in whose context all relevant stakeholders agree on goals and priorities of **centrope** as a knowledge region: regional authorities, regional R&D intermediate bodies, universities, research institutions and research-oriented enterprises. Moreover, the involvement of national government departments as well as of national research-funding bodies is indispensable both at an institutionalised level and on an ad hoc-basis. The resulting strategies would entail the

definition of promising research and innovation fields where cross-border co-operation that can be bi-, tri- or quadrilateral makes sense, highlight the necessary partnerships and argue the case for appropriate funding. Where appropriate, these strategies would instigate the formation of new clusters. Down the road, such a forum could evaluate the development of the initiative and the resulting growth of innovation capacities.

2.2 The instrument objective: A strategic fund for the knowledge region

A region where cross-border science and innovation co-operation can autonomously dispose of means to initiate, nurture and enhance key projects for the common knowledge region through a dedicated funding facility.

Under the **centrope** co-operation umbrella, a strategic funding facility that would allow for the financing of spearhead initiatives for the common knowledge region could be developed. Based on the identification of certain research topics or co-operation activities as crucial for the development of **centrope**, dedicated calls could be launched by drawing from such a facility. These regular calls would invite research and innovation actors to crystallise their ideas for interregional projects and spur them to engage in new partnerships. They would provide strong incentives to conceive and develop innovative proposals and thus would foster “**centrope** ownership” among scientists, young researchers and entrepreneurs. The preparation and formulation of the calls itself would have a mobilising effect, as stakeholders would discuss and agree in a dialogue on the most pressing and promising co-operation topics.

2.3 The core objective: A knowledge location of global visibility

A region where research and development strengths are pooled and furthered in co-ordinated fashion so as to create a stable knowledge location of global visibility and significance as a motor for smart, innovation-driven and technology-oriented economic growth.

More than anything, **centrope** can help to achieve the scales necessary for a knowledge region on par with its peers in Northern/Western Europe, North America or Asia. Pooling strengths in research and development and jointly nurturing them can be the key to global visibility and significance. Co-ordinated investments in expensive, specialised research infrastructures and common utilisation (exploiting the short distances) would entail optimised allocation of the scarce public funds. Close interactions among researchers facilitated by networking platforms, informal exchange, databases and the “deep knowledge” that results

from cross-border university education would instil new ideas and lower the barriers for launching experimental research. Transregional integration in the research and innovation field thus can instigate cluster effects and technological innovation that is genuinely rooted in the region while building, attracting and retaining human capital. It can contribute to a resilient knowledge region that rests on its own, generic strengths and is able to achieve lead or co-ordinating positions in the international research system. With a strong technology transfer element, co-operation in the **centrope** context can smooth the transition to a knowledge-based economy that renders the partner regions more competitive. In the longer run, the region may become the nucleus and centre of gravity of a wider Middle Danube Research Area that would encompass other important research locations at the doorstep of today's **centrope**.

3 Strategies & measures 2013+

3.1 Innovation foresight process: Common topics with a major governance side effect

A transregional innovation foresight process could kick-start the structured collaboration of RTI actors in **centrope**: regional authorities, regional R&D intermediate bodies, universities, research institutions, national government departments as well as national research-funding bodies. Over a two- to three-year period, the foresight process would identify cross-border areas of strength and provide the institutional anchor for goal-oriented interaction between the participants. It would look not only into existing research sectors of transregional significance and common assets but specifically into interdisciplinary topics that are the potential drivers of future economic growth, like material efficiency, energy efficiency, intelligent networks or smart cities. By doing so, the process would focus less on individual sectors or particular sizes or institutions but on the cross-cutting relevance of these topics for a specialised knowledge economy. Next to its substantial output, the process would build structures of an efficient research, technology and innovation governance for **centrope**. On conclusion of the foresight process, these structures (e.g. a standing group of all supporting agencies at the national and regional levels, a conference of **centrope** universities, etc.) could be made permanent with a view to the implementation and further development of the strategy.

The **centrope**-wide foresight will take into account the Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) that partner regions will elaborate in the EU programming period 2014-2020, in particular with regard to the “smart specialisation” objective and the ability to capitalise on EU funding. Ideally, the **centrope** foresight will not only be complementary to the RIS efforts of partner regions but will create cross-border synergies by being an integral part of the various RIS

development processes (interlinked e.g. through an inter-**centrope** peer exchange or cross-consultation among the relevant actors).

3.2 Towards a strategic funding facility: Public-private foundation and EU support

A number of roads lead to a strategic funding facility for the cross-border knowledge region and ideally can be travelled simultaneously. First of all, public and private actors committed to the **centrope** research and innovation agenda could endow a new transregional foundation with the necessary means plus the organisational capacity to administrate them. The donors would include **centrope** partners, national government agencies or departments as well as businesses – from big transnational companies to resident SMEs – with a stake in the region. Crucially, this foundation would represent a permanent structure with a sound financial basis, providing for much-needed continuity and the indispensable link with the private sector.

Secondly, available EU funding could be channelled to serve the purpose of strategic funding. Within the Structural Funds 2014-2020 framework, the transnational CENTRAL EUROPE programme could finance a dedicated mini-programme. Under such a mini-programme, public authorities develop a joint framework for their co-operation to be implemented through a number of subprojects by means of calls for proposals in a highly flexible but targeted and goal-oriented manner. Notwithstanding their limits regarding multilateral activities, the bilateral ETC programmes can be utilised for targeted **centrope** initiatives as well – for example, the Austrian-Czech programme could support co-operation activities emanating from the science location Brno. Moreover, the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation “Horizon 2020” will offer support for smart regional specialisation strategies. The operational carrier of all these EU-funded activities could be the transregional foundation mentioned above, with the EU subsidies acting as de facto add-on funding. Finally, the **centrope** funding facility would be developed and “programmed” simultaneously with the envisaged Danube Region Research and Innovation Fund (DRRIF), signifying both opportunities for synergies and highlighting the uniqueness of the **centrope** fund as focusing on the immediate cross-border area and involving the private sector as well as regional agencies as contributors.

3.3 Thematic lead initiatives

Life sciences initiative

Life sciences and biotechnologies in particular have clearly been identified as an area with very high transregional potential. They could play a trailblazing role for the **centrope** knowledge region agenda in both the academic and the entrepreneurial sphere. An important

aspect of this endeavour would be mutual access to infrastructure and the sharing of facilities, with an associated management dealing with questions of IPRs, regulated access and the like. In particular, life science locations in Vienna, Brno/South Moravia, Lower Austria and Bratislava could achieve synergies from this sort of co-operation. In addition, efforts are needed to strengthen networking, information-sharing and matchmaking as well as databases on available research facilities and scientific competencies. Researcher mobility – in particular of the young and coming – is a key aspect where much can be achieved at comparatively low cost. Activities could range from initiating summer schools as a first step to support the establishment of joint degrees and graduate programmes later on. A dedicated management would further co-operation at all levels – from mobilising actors to disseminating relevant calls and co-ordinating the canvassing of research projects. Additionally, an online platform and events for bringing together life science companies, financing institutions and research institutes could leverage the great potential of that industry in the region. Similar initiatives exist in the Medicon Valley (Copenhagen, Malmö) and BioValley (Basel, Freiburg, Mulhouse area). EU funding could stimulate activities in this industry.

Energy cluster initiative: Fostering renewable resources and energy autonomy

Already today, a wide range of energy generation possibilities together with a diverse and innovative energy research and entrepreneurship sector are important assets for **centrope**. The entire region has registered a striking rise of investments in the energy industry sector and an inflow of companies of a high technological standard. As a consequence, this has led to increasing demand for research and development, higher requirements for the qualification and technical training of workers as well as to the necessity of implementing the latest innovations of the energy industry. Based on networks created so far, cross-border strategic partnerships, dissemination of know-how and information, technology transfer and advanced training will remain vital to attain a critical mass and significant cluster effects. In a multilateral partnership, the **centrope** energy cluster initiative is to focus on renewable resources and a reduction of energy dependency as anchor points of collaboration in the years to come.

Smart mobility initiative: Cars and components for the age of renewable energies

As large and well-established as it is, the future of a competitive automotive industry in **centrope** will depend on its ability to adapt to two major trends: firstly, the reality of rising labour costs has to be met with a stronger research component and higher productivity. Secondly, the shift towards alternative propulsion techniques will require new skills on behalf of employees and investments in production facilities. This entails the huge opportunity of **centrope** to potentially emerge as a competence region for post-carbon car transport and smart mobility: a region where new propulsion technologies are not only developed but also

applied in daily practice, where industry and research institutions enter into collaborative partnerships that add value to producing at the location **centrope**, where public authorities facilitate new fuel infrastructure and IT-based traffic management, where technology transfer and supply chains function on a cross-border basis, and where multilingual specialists and engineers are educated for an integrated labour market in the automotive sector. To meet this opportunity, the **centrope** automotive cluster will focus on e-mobility technologies, cost-effective design and innovative equipment, the broadening of the Automotive Academy model and the introduction of additional (e-mobility) curricula and joint degree programmes in combination with continuous marketing activities.

3.4 Meet innovation. Meet centrope: Location marketing for the knowledge region

Regions face the challenge of competing with each other at a European and even worldwide level for a maximum share of investments and consumer markets. A cross-border region like **centrope** is well advised to use its diverse features as complementary strengths of a common transnational business hub in order to continue its success story as a booming FDI location. Especially in global markets, the **centrope** sub-regions find it difficult to acquire visibility on their own: target groups might have trouble recognising individual **centrope** sub-regions but certainly will have heard about Central Europe. While the European market is covered by several national/regional business and promotion agencies of the **centrope** region, overseas markets are often ignored due to cost-related or organisational issues. However, these agencies might be able to jointly develop a regular representational basis and could at the same time offer a bigger spectrum of features of the whole **centrope** region, thus gaining the critical mass necessary to compete with other highly developed agglomerations. Thus the joint promotion of **centrope** in its entirety as a knowledge-driven business location should be seen as an important contribution to prosperous growth of the **centrope** markets and economies.

Human Capital Strategy 2013+

(responsible for content: **centrope** Czech Republic)

1 Status 2012

The process of EU integration has produced a new regional socioeconomic map of Europe. Border regions in particular are in a state of flux. The rearrangement of activities, opportunities and threats is changing their socioeconomic role and significance. This development is to a large extent also affected by the economic crisis.

The economic crisis has negatively influenced the positive development of the labour market, and most of the regions experienced a substantial increase in unemployment rates, as witnessed by the record lows of 2008. The average unemployment rate reported by Eurostat for **centrope** in 2010 attained 6.5%, i.e. by 3.1 percentage points below the EU-27 average of 9.6% but also by 1.8 percentage points above the record low of 2008 (RDR 2011).

Current developments are very much reflected in the situation of all fields of human capital in the **centrope** region and, as indicated by the unemployment rates, the region might be characterised by very similar developments throughout on the one hand as well as significant differences in some other aspects of human capital on the other hand.

On one hand, the **authorities** charged in each country with the development of various aspects of human capital in the region **are different**. This heterogeneity is accentuated by the different levels of power assigned to these authorities, which are mostly subsidiaries of national bodies. Human capital issues are tackled differently across regions as well. Moreover, there exists a variety of strategic concepts related to human capital. In addition, the **macroeconomic indicators** vary substantially among regions, such as the unemployment rate, which ranges from 3.6% in Lower Austria to 10.1% in Vas, the share of female employment or the sectoral structure of unemployment (RDR 2011).

On the other hand, all **centrope** regions are facing similar developments in many areas of human capital, and these pose important common challenges for the future. As with other European countries, one challenge lies in the **aging population** – those aged 50 and over already represent one in five of the workforce; soon this proportion will rise to one in four. In **centrope**, Vienna is the only region where a slight increase of the active-age population is expected until 2030. Until now, both public- and private-sector employers in **centrope** have tended to encourage older workers to leave employment. As the numbers of younger people entering the workforce declines, the challenge will be to retain and promote the contribution of

these older workers. Faced with competition from younger workforces in other parts of the world, employers will need to maintain the capacity for work and the productivity of their older employees. A workforce with a balance of youth and maturity is regarded as best suited to respond to the rapidly changing circumstances associated with globalisation. Challenges also arise for the employees, who should be ready to embrace change and able to respond to innovative trends at work. The ageing and shrinking of the EU workforce over the next two decades calls for a novel approach to managing ageing, both in the workplace and in economic and socio-political terms.

centrope border regions suffer from **high structural unemployment** both due to the levels of socioeconomic development and the reduction and disappearance of border-related employment. Moreover, the region faces outward migratory flows of highly-skilled persons with tertiary/academic education.

To a certain extent, the **centrope** region is also specific because of its linguistic diversity. Although this cross-border region has a common history and national cultures have of course influenced each other, there is no common language, which creates many difficulties and obstacles for cross-border co-operation. In some fields, constant efforts to teach and learn the languages of the neighbouring countries are remarkable (NÖ Sprachenoffensive). While Hungarian, Slovak and Czech **centrope** regions can fall back on relatively well-developed foreign language didactics for German as a language of their neighbours, the Austrian regions face the problem of learning and teaching the relatively small Czech, Slovak and Hungarian languages. Teaching aids for these languages consider cross-border or professional communication only to an inadequate extent.

Moreover, the knowledge of English, which is often used for cross-border communication, is frequently insufficient as well. Thus improved language skills are an essential precondition of further cross-border co-operation in the **centrope** region. This is in line with the aim of the EU Commission to create a truly multilingual European society, where the rate of individual multilingualism increases steadily until every citizen is proficient in at least two languages in addition to his or her mother tongue.

2 Objectives 2013+

On the basis of the abovementioned bottlenecks and challenges identified for the **centrope** region, the following objectives were stated:

- Easy labour mobility – respond to unemployment, satisfy demand for particular professions and overcome remaining obstacles to the common labour market
- Education for competitiveness – respond to an aging population and unemployment and overcome obstacles caused by the absence of a common language as well as low levels of English language skills
- Human capital development strategy framework – reflect the heterogeneousness of regional human capital strategies in **centrope** and facilitate the future development of human capital so as to increase the competitiveness of the region

2.1 Easy labour mobility

Easy labour mobility is a prerequisite for a competitive region. Firstly, it enables employers (employees) to search for employees (jobs) across borders and therefore to a certain extent closes the gap between supply and demand in cross-border regions. Secondly, a cross-border region which offers easy cross-border labour mobility represents an added value for both employers and employees.

Even when cross-border labour mobility is in place, various administrative barriers and systemic differences of state administrations still cause problems in a number of areas. The obstacles to a unified labour market include differences in job profiles, discrepancies between national employment policies, different law systems, language diversity and differences in social and health insurance systems. This requires solutions at both a national and a cross-border level. Secondly, differences in education and curricula are still present. Furthermore, co-operation is complicated by cultural and linguistic barriers and a lack of skills that could provide for exchange and co-operation.

The objective is therefore to ensure easy access to labour markets within **centrope** and to enable foreigners to enter neighbouring labour markets without hassles. Secondary goals include resolving the abovementioned obstacles in the long run and exploiting the opportunities of labour market liberalisation.

The strategic aim for the **centrope** regions should be therefore seen in **the increase in quality of public administration services provided to foreigners**, which often constitutes the first and most important obstacle for incoming employees and students. Regional public administration offices should help foreigners to overcome the hurdles caused by national legislation instead of creating them. Moreover, in **centrope** regions with universities characterised by innovative potential, it makes sense to support the establishment of new

institutions such as expat centres and to foster their networking. Special attention should be paid to third-country foreigners, who often lack information in their mother tongue, which might be a significant obstacle for their integration into the labour market of **centrope**.

2.2 Education for competitiveness

*For the labour market to be efficient, competitive education is a crucial prerequisite. For the **centrope** region, this means several challenges for the future.*

Firstly, it is necessary to improve language skills, since this ensures much more effective and easier future co-operation. This objective involves various educational levels.

Secondly, the **centrope** labour force should be ready to embrace **lifelong learning**. With the dynamically changing and uncertain market of today's economy, companies must be able to adjust their processes and innovate their technologies so as to respond to current market needs. This requires employee flexibility expressed by a readiness to learn and adapt to new challenges – a task that is tackled variously across **centrope**. Cross-border co-operation is a unique way towards the efficient exchange of know-how, thus enabling **centrope** regions to adequately respond to the challenge.

Thirdly, more attention must be paid to the importance of an individual worker's "**interregional skills**" – stemming from the special needs of interregional interactions such as strategic, communicative, social and intercultural skills in the context of cross-border activities – for labour market outcomes. A stronger focus on these skills, mainly in secondary and in informal education, will therefore add a missing piece to the jigsaw of a competitive labour force. Results of past projects have shown that corresponding cross-border co-operation is an efficient way to tackle this issue.

Finally, to increase the competitiveness of **centrope**, it is essential to increase the **attractiveness of the region** for talented students as well as outstanding experts, mainly in technical disciplines and natural sciences. This will result in an increased inflow of university students, experts and investors in innovative businesses. The demand for workers in both traditional (skilled labour, craftspeople, etc.) and technical occupations exceeds the supply, because there are not enough students enrolled in such training programmes. For young people, these occupations are not attractive enough. Thus the attractiveness of both these branches should be enhanced to increase the interest in training at accordingly specialised secondary schools.

2.3 Human capital development strategy framework

The goal of the regions and cities joined in **centrope** is to enhance sustainable cross-border co-operation in order to forge a strong and competitive region. To attain this common goal, a **common strategy framework** has to be created within the scope of competencies of municipal and regional public authorities.

To increase the effectiveness of human capital development in the whole **centrope** region and to improve its competitiveness, it is necessary to recognise the main common relevant issues and to identify the fields of competition as well as those where co-operation or co-ordination might be beneficial. At a multilateral cross-border level, it is essential to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the solutions to common problems. This will help to resolve the issues more efficiently through an exchange of best practices.

Moreover, ensuring flexible co-operation to create a human capital strategy framework is a crucial part of increasing the future competitiveness of the whole region. The **centrope** region and Europe as a whole are facing similar demographic developments. These trends as well as issues arising from them should therefore serve as a basis for the common strategy framework.

3 Strategies and measures 2013+

3.1 Easy labour mobility

Easy labour mobility may be presumed to occur if two sets of conditions are in place. The first combines transport infrastructure and multimodal transport services with ecological aspects. This approach is largely reflected in the aspect of spatial integration but must also be viewed from the broader perspective of labour mobility. From this point of view, cross-border labour mobility can be supported by such initiatives as a virtual cross-border job fair that would enable job applicants to choose an employer from any of the **centrope** regions.

Removal of bureaucratic barriers and increasing qualification of officials

The second perspective of easy labour mobility focuses on soft aspects including the approach and competencies of public authorities with regard to foreign workers.

If **centrope** is an open region with easy labour mobility, it will harbour an opportunity to fill vacancies in branches where demand exceeds the supply with local or regional human resources. The aspirations of **centrope** to be such an open region are primarily rooted in the willingness of public authorities to respond to the specific needs of foreign students, employees and high-level experts. Conversely, **centrope** should be a region that offers fair

pay for work irrespective of any worker's country of origin. Therefore it is necessary to remove those bureaucratic barriers in the **centrope** regions that still impede easy entry into the labour market. This requires smooth communication with public authorities and adequate qualification of officials with a broader overview of the whole system, thus enabling foreigners to obtain sufficient information in one stop, as it were.

Since the majority of competencies in this field lie with the national level, an efficient tool might be a common approach and help to mutually support representatives of regional governance in lobbying at the national level, using the established **centrope** management structures.

Co-operation of institutions dealing with the integration of third-country foreigners

The integration of foreigners from third countries is a common issue tackled in the **centrope** regions. This includes labour market integration as well as social integration. **centrope** is a unique platform for the closer co-operation of institutions focusing on third-country foreigners, best-practice transfer and implementation.

Increasing language abilities of officials

For public authorities to respond to the needs of foreigners, it is moreover essential to remove language barriers. This means increasing the language skills of officials in all **centrope** regions and would also enable further and more intensive cross-border collaboration at various levels of public administration on the one hand and in more fields of co-operation on the other hand. Language curricula for public administration departments should add a piece to the jigsaw of training schedules for officials of the open region **centrope**.

3.2 Education for competitiveness

Increased proficiency in English

To increase the competitiveness of the **centrope** labour force, co-operation within and outside the **centrope** region is imperative. Language skills are a key prerequisite for this co-operation. Economic interconnection and interdependency are more pronounced these days than ever before. Globalisation as a long-term evolutionary process within the world economy influences all aspects of business at the regional and local levels in **centrope** as well. Therefore the knowledge of English is an indispensable precondition for anyone aiming for competitiveness in today's labour market. The importance of English should be given more space in curricula

throughout the whole educational system, with greater emphasis on secondary schools providing training for traditional occupations and crafts.

Cross-border camps and seminars aimed at the languages of neighbours

Proficiency in other languages – i.e. of neighbouring countries – not only facilitates entry into the integrated cross-border labour market but also contributes to the creation of a cultural region without barriers. Knowledge of the neighbour's language is a valuable link in the cross-border region. The educational institutions administered by regional public authorities should support and enlarge the offers of learning the neighbours' languages. An efficient way to meet this goal lies in the cross-border co-operation of institutions in various forms that encourage language acquisition in authentic learning environments (e.g. camps or seminars for teachers of neighbours' languages). Additionally, a **centrope** Education Programme can be set up to support student exchange and common case studies, which would likewise help to learn about the cultures and languages of neighbours.

Providing seniors with English skills

Considering the demographic development in European countries, the focus on seniors as a target group is inevitable. Thus public administrations should help older citizens to improve their English and include this aspect in their strategy for active ageing. This would enable seniors to become more involved in the globalised world, thus increasing their quality of life.

Including age management in strategic plans and know-how exchange on age management

The combination of demographic development and a dynamically changing business environment has a strong impact on the flexibility demanded of workers. As a consequence, even older workers should be ready to constantly adapt to the changing needs of their employers and the market. This entails the necessity to increase the importance of age management in society and to incorporate age management into the strategic plans of companies. Age management should become a vital part of human capital development strategies. This can be achieved through various measures beginning with know-how exchange, which is still rare in the **centrope** region, as this could help the regions to gain a better lobbying position vis-à-vis their governments.

Enhanced cross-border co-operation of educational institutions

Another consequence of the emerging 'silver economy' lies in the changing age structures of employees. Educational institutions should therefore provide students not only with the soft skills demanded by the challenging labour market but also prepare them for this change in the social environment of companies. Cross-border co-operation of educational institutions, e.g. common projects, simulation games, etc., can help to tackle this issue also in the international environment, which is a reality for most employees these days. Non-formal education in this field should be enhanced by the cross-border co-operation of NGOs.

Setting up centres for international mobility

The attractiveness of a region for talented people and experts is highly dependent on its environment and services. These can be improved by establishing and developing centres for international mobility to support the education of talented people. In partnership with network stakeholders, they should be actively involved in the development of cross-border strategies/programmes for research and innovation. As a result of the co-operation and know-how exchange between these centres, they could raise the awareness of **centrope** as a region with a competitive living environment. In due course, this will enable the region to attract not only talented people and experts from abroad but also motivate **centrope** expats currently studying or working abroad to return. Examples of such an institution could be the South Moravian Centre for International Mobility in South Moravia, Bizkaia:xede in the Basque Country and FWO in Flanders. Similar activities can be found in the Trentino Region in Italy and in organisations like the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. However, networking of these organisations within a larger region has not started yet – which constitutes a great opportunity for the **centrope** region.

3.3 Human capital development strategy framework

For the **centrope** region to be competitive in the long term, a common approach to human capital is an important aspect. In today's highly globalised economies, national regions may be considered as perhaps too weak to compete at a worldwide scale. Thus it is necessary for the regions to search for synergies that would enable them to benefit from the impact of national policies/strategies as well as from territorial co-operation with neighbouring regions.

Creation of a human capital development strategy framework

This has to be reflected in regional human resource development strategies and requires the creation of a common human capital development strategy framework as well as of a platform for regular meetings of strategy makers from public administrations to develop human capital in **centrope**, share their experience and co-ordinate this process. Moreover, they should provide important information on European and national legislation that could have an impact on cross-border co-operation in this field.

Human capital strategies and approaches vary a lot in each of the **centrope** regions, and different institutions have made different experiences, which might be very useful to share. To set up the basis for future co-operation, it is crucial to define common goals and create the basis for a common strategy.

Since the development of human capital in the cross-border region is a typical example of European integration and cohesion policy application, a common approach and development in this field should be entitled to support from the European Structural Funds. Since the development of human capital is one of the key topics of European policy in the next programming period, this area will be supported by European structures in upcoming years. A prerequisite for the efficient use of subsidies is to ensure pre-financing of human capital-related projects. The framework document should therefore conceptually reflect Strategy Europe 2020 as a key basis for public bodies at all levels. It is also assumed that Strategy Europe 2020 will be implemented in national strategic-conceptual documents in all four **centrope** countries.

Spatial Integration Strategy 2013+

(responsible for content: **centrope** Office Hungary)

Introduction

Spatial integration is a highly varied field with several aspects applicable to potential development avenues of the **centrope** region. Despite the long common history and clear trends of metropolitan area evolution, the transformation of the cross-border areas into an organic region has been significantly slower than was anticipated in 2003. There is a consensus that the process needs to be speeded up by setting clear priorities and taking conscious and committed measures if the region is to profit from any controlled synergies.

Professional consultations and the general response to initiatives and events clearly defined a two-pronged approach to the strategy. All other concerns and priorities apparently fall far behind the pre-eminent need for harmonisation in

- 1 transport services and infrastructure development on the one hand and
- 2 spatial and urban planning as well as data analysis, methodologies and tools on the other hand, with a focus on the co-ordination of **centrope**'s different planning departments.

1 Status 2012

1.1 Transport services and infrastructure development

Big picture

One of **centrope**'s obvious qualities lies in its location at one of the most important crossroads in Europe, boasting excellent connections in all directions and forming an important European hub. The accessibility of Vienna and Bratislava as nodes of the transport system is defined by multimodal corridors: the corridors of the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) starting/ending in and crossing the **centrope** region are Corridors IV and VI, a branch of Corridor V and Corridor VII (Danube). These formed the basis for the subsequent definition of the TEN-T in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia.

As the basic **road network** in the **centrope** region has grown historically, it passes through urbanised agglomerations. This causes congestions, which negatively affect both traffic itself and living and economic conditions in the region. Even the largest cities lack parts of the required tangential bypass systems, and transit traffic is forced to pass close to the city centres. The primary network outside the agglomerations is incomplete, and transnational

traffic is currently using the lower-category network. The secondary network provides important connections of national or regional importance.

The **centrope** region boasts a dense **railway network** evolved in the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries. In general, two trends of railway infrastructure development can be observed: restoration and upgrading of the main railway network with high-speed lines connecting the agglomerations, and abandonment of local and regional parts of the secondary railway network. This trend is one of the reasons why many connections cut off during the Cold War have not been resumed yet.

The **Danube** provides an important transport corridor for both freight and passenger transport. Over the past ten years, an attractive regular connection for passenger transport was established between Vienna and Bratislava. Tourist use by cruisers from the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal downstream to the Black Sea is a current growth sector. The idea of a canal connecting the Danube with the Oder and Elbe goes back to the Middle Ages. At the moment, different corridors are under discussion in Slovakia but, due to a lack of investments, their short-term implementation is not likely.

There are three international **airports** in **centrope** situated near the main agglomerations of the region, i.e. Vienna, Bratislava and Brno.

The availability of well-equipped intermodal **freight terminals** with sufficient capacity in appropriate locations is an important prerequisite for the shift of goods from road to rail or river. Both bimodal and trimodal terminals are available in the **centrope** region. Nevertheless, freight traffic on the Danube lacks stable water conditions and a scheduled container service.

Since 1999, **cross-border public transport** supply has been significantly upgraded. In particular, the frequency of connections between Vienna and the other big cities of **centrope** has increased, while travel times have decreased. Considering the necessity of changing and stepping up the competitiveness with passenger cars, the following conclusions may be drawn:

- High-quality public transport services are offered between Vienna and the main cities Bratislava, Brno, Győr and Sopron as well as between Bratislava and Brno.
- Connectivity and accessibility between the smaller cities located more at the periphery of **centrope** is weak or inexistent. This indicates low demand and weak economic and social relationships.
- Only a poor level of service is offered between Slovakian and Hungarian cities, while the level of service between Brno and Bratislava/Trnava is high and able to compete with

passenger car traffic. (However, there is a recent trend of reducing public transport services between Brno and Bratislava.)

- The level of cross-border connections and service between smaller cities and big agglomerations as well as among smaller cities depends on the transfer quality at the main nodes.

In rural areas, public transport is a basic service that must be offered by the state. In the Austrian part of **centrope** and in South Moravia, **integrated public transport and tariff systems** provide basic public transport services.

Core challenges

Different historical developments in the **centrope** sub-regions have led to different levels of infrastructure provision. Moreover, **centrope** includes large cities, small towns and rural areas facing varying challenges, thus resulting in specific requirements. Thus some challenges must be addressed jointly, while others engage local competencies and do not require transnational action.

- 1 Public transport services are of extremely varying quality throughout **centrope**. Strengthening public transport is recognised as one way to influence the future development of car traffic but also can reduce regional and social disparities. Public transport can provide accessible mobility where high fuel prices and the cost of car ownership are prohibitively expensive. Currently, **centrope** is facing two related main challenges, i.e. to provide basic services in peripheral regions and less densely populated areas, and to improve services between urban centres with high travel demand. Administrative borders pose a specific challenge; cross-border co-operation and service harmonisation are essential for improved public transport services. This requires a synchronisation of legal backgrounds and a common co-ordinated approach to permit sustainable and efficient operation.
- 2 In the road network, congestion occurs especially in and around some of the larger cities where the road network has not yet been optimised. In several parts of **centrope**, measures to strengthen smart and sustainable mobility have not been launched so far, have not shown an impact yet and/or face significant challenges due to the anticipated dynamic growth of motorisation. Cross-border traffic is especially sensitive in this respect. The currently congested sections might turn critical even in the medium term. Building new roads to remedy this challenge must be considered carefully so as to avoid repeating mistakes but might be an adequate approach in some cases. Moreover, the divergent development roadmaps of the individual countries must be considered as well.

Existing strategy papers

At its Summit meeting in May 2012, the **centrope** Political Board adopted a comprehensive common strategy paper – the “Strategic Framework for Transport and Infrastructure Development in **centrope**” including an “Infrastructure Vision 2030”, which indicates the target road and railway networks as well as measures to improve (cross-border) public transport and co-ordination in planning processes in **centrope**. This document is based on the mapping report of the INAT pilot action and provides a comprehensive list of all available strategy documents of the region. Moreover, the “**centrope** Vision 2015” strategy paper must be mentioned as well, as it is the earliest specific manifestation of a political and strategic commitment to common infrastructure development, thus laying the ground for all current work.

1.2 Spatial planning

Big picture

The demand for efficient fact-based territorial assessment and planning is growing dynamically in the region. This push is partially generated by the series of economic crises impacting the global economy, which are gradually eroding the cushions inherent in most planning systems, and partially by the European Union and the national actors, who are realising the potential competitive advantages inherent in more precisely targeted actions. In addition, the evolution of computing technology means that even sophisticated models and widespread real-time data management structures have become affordable for a wider range of users, down to and including smaller local governments.

Spatial data gathering and analytic methodologies have therefore been continuously improving during the last decade both at the national and international levels. Eurostat is still a limited tool when it comes to custom queries. **CentropeMAP/centropeSTATISTICS** has been in operation for eight years now but despite its closer focus on the region remains lopsided in its services. This means that the different national/regional systems keep dominating the area; while well-established and sophisticated in their own right, they are, however, rarely compatible.

Yet there exist successful initiatives in the field of spatial integration, especially the joint development of the Vienna-Bratislava metropolitan area, which may serve as a good practice case for other areas of **centrope**. The development of regions and agglomerations as well as of settlement structures is crucial for the harmonised development of **centrope** on the whole.

There is no harmonisation of the planning systems of different regions of **centrope**, which causes misunderstandings and uncoordinated development, mostly at a bilateral level. Spatial planning being regulated by different laws, the harmonisation or merely the comparison of individual systems proves difficult.

The relationship of **centrope** with the Danube Strategy should be clarified urgently in order to link efforts to develop **centrope**'s spatial planning to the Danube Strategy's development system.

Core challenges

The area shows several critical issues – some methodological, some more mundane – that need to be overcome if a workable and sustainable common system is to evolve.

- 1 Data collection methodology, bases and assessment methods need to be harmonised across not just different statistical traditions but across systems tailored to sometimes wildly differing social and economic structures.
- 2 In order to achieve the above, the necessary amount of trust and commitment needs to be garnered from both the operative and political levels in order to work out compromises, clarify priorities and invest the necessary capacities and funding in the common goal.
- 3 An accepted and properly funded organisation needs to be jointly maintained to guarantee impartiality and ensure availability of the data necessary for complex, targeted research.
- 4 Planning systems of the four countries are not harmonised at all and unlikely to become so in the short or medium term. Better co-ordination of planning departments and authorities is needed to avoid professional and political conflicts mainly caused by insufficient co-ordination.
- 5 Problems of urban sprawl should be discussed at a transnational level, most urgently concerning the Vienna-Bratislava agglomeration.
- 6 The development of a polycentric settlement structure in **centrope** could entail better liveability, harmonised development of rural areas and more effective planning of Functional Urban Areas in conjunction with their surrounding rural neighbours.

Existing strategy papers

Due to the nature of this field, resources include not so much strategic documents as tools, databases and methodologies. The “**centrope** Vision 2015” was adopted by the stakeholders in 2005 and is the most comprehensive among these. No strategy documents focusing on data management and common planning policies are available at a transnational level. However, data and knowledge resources could be identified at Eurostat,

centropeMAP/**centrope**STATISTICS or at national or lower levels, e.g. ERRAM, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office or TeIR (National Spatial Information System of Hungary).

Back in 2005, the project “Joint Regional Development Strategy” (JORDES+) for the Vienna-Bratislava-Győr region provided a solid basis for building a sustainable strategy for **centrope**.

2 Objectives 2013+

2.1 Transport services and infrastructure development

Strategic Framework for Transport and Infrastructure Development in centrope and Infrastructure Vision 2030

The “**centrope** Infrastructure Vision 2030” within the “Strategic Framework for Transport and Infrastructure Development in **centrope**” provides a comprehensive picture of the envisaged joint infrastructure development. Although the implementation of extension and upgrading measures are mainly not in the hands of the **centrope** partners, the partners commit to supporting co-ordinated and harmonised development of the cross-border sections. In this respect, the “Infrastructure Vision 2030” is the common base, although implementation requires bilateral co-operation. On the one hand, the “Infrastructure Vision 2030” should serve joint lobbying at a transnational level; on the other hand, it should support the partners in their individual strategies and their co-ordination with the national level.

Main railway network

The existing railway network suffers from serious capacity constraints and capacity problems. The development, extension and upgrading of the network is of vital interest for **centrope** in order to cope with the challenges described in Chapter 1. For this reason, the **centrope** partners have outlined a target railway network for 2030. With extensions and upgrading measures, the network serves as the basis for agreements both on activities in the **centrope** partners’ own spheres of action and on joint lobbying vis-à-vis the European Commission, national governments and service operators. The improvement of the railway network will increase capacities and reduce travel times between the main cities of **centrope**, thereby providing an infrastructure background to the development of high-quality services that are competitive with car traffic. The following high-quality services of importance to customers/travellers should be provided: frequency of service, comfort of travelling, reliability of transport. This may be considered as one measure to contain the increase of car traffic and its adverse effects.

Table: 1: Development of rail travel times between selected destinations due to infrastructure improvement (in minutes)

	2011	2030	Change	
			abs	%
Brno – Vienna	120	100	- 20	- 17
Břeclav – Vienna	80	60	- 20	- 25
Bratislava – Vienna	70	45	- 25	- 36
Sopron – Vienna	75	60	- 15	- 20
Győr – Vienna	75	60	-15	- 20
Brno – Vienna Airport (VIE)	150	115	- 35	- 23
Bratislava – VIE	95	60	- 35	- 37
Sopron – VIE	110	85	- 25	- 23
St. Pölten – Bratislava	132	82	- 50	- 38

Source: ÖBB - Austrian Federal Railways (2011): target system 2025+

Main road network

Like the main railway network, the main road network suffers from capacity constraints, inadequate service levels, traffic safety problems and a lack of continuous quality standards in certain parts of the network, while moreover severely impacting the environment of settlements. To cope with the future challenges outlined above, the **centrope** partners agreed on a long-term “Vision 2030” for the main road network. This includes closing gaps in the motorway network to reduce travel times and making better use of existing infrastructure, e.g. by expanding throughput capacities. In addition, decreasing noise and environmental pollution caused by motorised traffic is a key objective both in villages and larger towns. In some cases, this may be achieved by building bypasses; however, a general approach that allows access to mobility without enforced car use must be found.

The Danube as a waterway

The Danube is an important transport corridor for both freight and passenger transport. It is one of the priority projects of the TEN-T (Priority Project 18) and plays an important role in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region. The **centrope** partners support the targets of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region:

- Increase cargo transport by 20% until 2020 as compared to 2010 while taking account of the sensitivity of this special ecosystem
- Eliminate obstacles to navigability while taking account of the specific characteristics of each section of the Danube, such as national parks or nature reserves

- Establish effective waterway infrastructure management
- Develop efficient multimodal terminals at river ports
- Implement a harmonised River Information System (RIS) and ensure the international exchange of RIS data

Cross-border public transport initiatives

The majority of public transport issues in the region can be easily traced back to a lack of co-operation and harmonisation among the individual national/regional service providers and authorities. It is therefore evident that each step taken towards an intensive, organic strategic partnership is a step in the right direction. While it is currently agreed that a transregional integrated public transport association may not be either realistic or desirable in the medium term, the objective is to achieve a status where the actors are routinely co-operating and will have attained the following milestones:

- Multimodal and multilingual public transport information services
- Creating a common legal ground for co-operative actions and products
- Introducing cross-border, sub-regional or regional multimodal tickets and cards

2.2 Spatial planning

The objectives for spatial planning for 2020 are:

1. Comprehensive data are routinely collected in a complex joint database enabling in-depth and on-demand reports. The data are available for the research and analysis of several critical topics including, but not limited to, demography; economics and competitiveness; environment and sustainability; and regional cohesion. This database is jointly maintained by the partners, maintains intensive collaborative relations with all major university centres of the region and is slated to develop into a fully-fledged Regional Observatory.
2. For the non-metropolitan areas, a unified GIS-based data-gathering and data assessment system is rolled out for the whole area. This system ties into the central database but enables all levels of authorities and planners to access a detailed, objective and comprehensive overview of their relevant territories, thereby improving decision-making processes regarding both time input and efficiency.
3. Due to the congestion of data in cities and metropolises, a different, audit-based approach is needed for a comprehensive assessment. Naturally, these audits are linked to the joint data management system as well but also enable tracking specific critical thematic areas in great complexity. Such a system provides for more effective fact-based urban development and supports better-informed strategic decisions. At the same time, it is able to provide a very general overview, can act as a prospective framework for different

strategies and helps individual cities to co-operate in order to exploit synergies. Special consideration should be given to FUAs (Functional Urban Areas) as wider co-operation areas around cities.

4. As a common co-ordination platform for planning departments, authorities should be set up as institutional bases to harmonise the planning activities of cities and regions.
5. Regarding local demands and future policies for cities in the European Union, integrated strategies for **centrope** cities should be developed. Measures for physical urban renewal must be combined with measures promoting education, economic development, social inclusion and environmental development. In addition, the development of strong partnerships between local citizens, civil society, the local economy and the various levels of government is a prerequisite.
6. Common urban challenges should be identified to build a joint knowledge base for urban development. One phenomenon of present city development is the “creative city”. Fostering smart cities based on their creative industries should be a focus for **centrope** cities. Using art, culture, innovation and education jointly in **centrope** as integrated factors of urban strategies is key for the success of the region.
7. Lessons learnt from various “smart city” projects in and around **centrope** should be disseminated and integrated into the cities’ planning activities.

3 Core strategies and measures 2013+

3.1 Transport services and infrastructure development

Precisely defining the required measures is not a trivial task in the case of transport – the conceptual/political background is already being drawn up by the INAT pilot action, and with projects of this size, the implementation/investment roadmap has been in place for years at the national government level. Despite this, the project list itself is very clear and needs little explanation, so inclusion below is definitely warranted.

A joint traffic model based on mobility surveys is needed, although main elements of the system have already been determined. The professional and political co-ordination of the transregional infrastructure development could be based on **centrope capacity**’s established institutions of consultation and participation.

Railway development projects

Railway infrastructure development can be organised in three categories of measures. First of all, a selected number of key projects pertain directly to the further development of the TEN-T network, which was basically welcomed by the **centrope** partners, with a few exceptions:

- 1 Inclusion of the high-level rail connection Vienna – Vienna Airport – Bratislava – Bratislava Airport in the TEN-T core network
- 2 Inclusion of the railway node Brno in the TEN-T core network
- 3 Incorporation of the railway corridor Vienna/Bratislava to Zagreb/Rijeka into the TEN-T network
- 4 Change of contracting conditions for the railway line Sopron – Szombathely

The most important aspect to be able to implement railway infrastructure is to secure national funding – often the last but most persistent challenge for a project already planned in detail.

Secondly, there is one project that is not linked to the main thoroughfares but critical for the elimination of internal peripheries, namely the reconstruction of the railway line Oberwart – Szombathely.

A complete list of railway infrastructure projects of strategic cross-border significance can be found in the “Strategic Framework for Transport and Infrastructure Development in **centrope**”.

Road network

Unlike the railroad network plans, in the case of roads a much denser network means a much more varied batch of interventions even at the highway level. A list of projects regarding transnational and regionally significant cross-border connections can be found in the “Strategic Framework for Transport and Infrastructure Development in **centrope**” as the basis of the transnational network. Other cross-border links are likewise part of the Strategic Framework.

Waterways

The “Large-scale River Engineering Project between Vienna and Bratislava” is an important milestone in improving the navigability of the Danube within the **centrope** region. Regarding river ports, the following measures are to enhance the attractiveness of waterway transport:

- 1 Further capacity extension of Vienna’s trimodal freight terminal
- 2 Extension and modernisation of Bratislava’s freight terminal
- 3 Extension and modernisation of smaller ports (e.g. Krems)
- 4 Ensuring the navigability of the Danube branch between Gönyü and Győr for passenger ships in full respect of ecosystem requirements

The creation of a regular passenger transport service between Vienna and Bratislava (Twin City Liner) has proved that there is a demand for regular service. The **centrope** partners agree on better utilisation of the Danube for passenger waterway transport (e. g. Bratislava – Rajka) in the context of port facility upgrading.

Public transport initiative

The **centrope** partners initiated the “**centrope** Public Transport Round Table” (PTRT) as a key consultation platform that is open to all regional and local planning bodies and public and private transport suppliers in the region in order to tackle the obstacles to improved cross-border public transport. Based on this platform, the following activities will support better integration of cross-border public transport services:

1. Know-how transfer from the existing integrated public transport associations in Austria (VOR) and South Moravia (KORDIS) to other regions, in particular to Bratislava and the Bratislava Region, where an integrated public transport association is being developed.
2. Compilation of a study to clarify legal, institutional and financial obstacles to the implementation of cross-border public transport systems and/or services. To ensure better integration of cross-border public transport, the **centrope** partners call for the inclusion of integrated public transport systems into Hungary’s legislation, which does not yet provide for them.
3. Feasibility study for the implementation of EUREGIO bus lines comparable to EUREGIO train lines. If they turn out financially viable, these may prove a very valuable addition to the railroad connections by providing critical extra service while the infrastructure system is upgraded to cater for the increased demand. However, the bus system should not replace existing railway services or preclude future improvements of railway services, which constitute the backbone of transport in the **centrope** region.
4. Better schedule co-ordination to minimise transfer times at relevant interchange nodes.
5. Efforts to render ticketing for cross-border connections easier and more customer-friendly. Both above measures are dependent on the results of the legal and feasibility studies and the level of trust and co-operation built during the regular PTRT sessions.
6. Continued support for the promotion of public transport in **centrope**. At the moment, the promotion of public transport is exclusively a task of public transport companies. The **centrope** partner regions will support joint marketing initiatives of public transport companies.
7. Capitalising on the extensions of the main railway infrastructure for better regional accessibility and connectivity. The extension measures for the main railway lines serve the establishment of a European high-speed rail network. In order to capitalise on these investments for the improvement of regional accessibility and connectivity, the **centrope**

partners call for the designation of Břeclav, Győr, Sopron, St. Pölten, Szombathely, Trnava and Wiener Neustadt as feeder stations and for the assessment of through-connections at main public transport nodes, specifically in Vienna after the opening of the new main station.

Implementation of a multimodal and multilingual traffic information system

The **centrope** partners aim to develop a regional multimodal and multilingual traffic information system.

Two projects have been initiated in this field:

- The project “European Digital Traffic Infrastructure Network for Intelligent Transport Systems” (EDITS) was set up and approved under the CENTRAL EUROPE programme. The aim of EDITS is to define standards for interfaces on the basis of existing decentralised regional data systems. The result should be a data infrastructure permitting the setting-up of traffic information systems as the next phase.
- The project “TWIN Cities Connecting Intelligently and Intermodally” (TWIN CC II) is to extend the already operative system “AnachB” to Bratislava and the Bratislava Region. This project is under preparation.

While neither project covers the whole **centrope** region, they both provide personnel, financial, organisational and institutional infrastructure to develop multimodal traffic information in the **centrope** region. The non-participating regions are to be involved as observers and would be joining in the later maintenance phase.

3.2 Spatial planning

Cross-border planning instruments should be developed to serve harmonised planning and decision-making in **centrope**. The Strategic Framework identifies the following instruments in its Chapter 6:

- 1 Development and operation of a **centrope** traffic model
- 2 Implementation of periodical surveys on the development of cross-border traffic
- 3 Provision of market analyses for cross-border public transport demand
- 4 Periodical mobility surveys in all **centrope** regions
- 5 Cross-border co-ordination in the Bratislava Region following the results of the project BAUM (BratislavA Umland Management/BratislavA Územný Manažment).

Existing project initiatives focus mostly on data exchange as follows:

- 1 Regarding a joint database, **centrope**MAP/**centrope**STATISTICS is already operating and managed by the joint planning organisation of Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland (PGO) but the need for co-operation would call for more intensive measures in this field. In order to evolve this instrument into an observatory – a more active version of a complementary database/statistical organisation able to handle various tasks (e.g. preparation of periodic general assessment papers, provision of focused research on selected topics) –, it indubitably has to look out for both European funding and a more stable project partnership so as to provide all capacities necessary to take its operation to the next level as well as to ensure the required independence and capacity. This is to be a key project in the very first part of the 2014-2020 planning period.
- 2 Following the initiative of Lower Austria, its ERRAM tool is now exported to all other **centrope** regions through a cluster of three bilateral cross-border projects. ERRAM is a raster-based GIS accessibility assessment tool able to provide powerful information regarding territorial development trends and the validity of planning decisions. A **centrope**-wide rollout is expected to provide some kind of interface with the settlement-based systems of the partner regions, generating not just a best-practice transfer but also synergy effects.
- 3 The CEURBANA project aims at developing a comprehensive – and marketable – indicator system for urban audits. The entire **centrope** territory is represented by partners from all four countries, so full coverage is expected right from the beginning. As the cities themselves have already started working out rudimentary self-auditing processes, this project – if paired with a well-conceived stakeholder involvement strategy – is slated to set the stage for possible longer-term collaborations between them. The motto “cities are engines of Europe” could be adopted, and the harmonisation of **centrope** cities’ development strategies as well as measurements of their performance could lay a viable basis for the development of **centrope**.

Urban planning should be supported by common planning tools to be well prepared for the EU programme period 2014-2020 and to correlate regional planning, local planning and the Europe 2020 strategy. Flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy, i.e. smart growth (digital agenda, innovation union, youth on the move), sustainable growth (resource-efficient Europe, industrial policy for the globalisation era) and inclusive growth (agenda for new skills and jobs, European platform against poverty), should be seen as guidelines for a joint **centrope** agenda in urban development.

A consultation platform – later to be evolved into a **centrope** urban development instrument – should be established and based on the working co-operation under the recent **centrope capacity** project. The main aim of this instrument should lie in creating a professional understanding of how to elaborate and sustain integrated urban development strategies. Moreover, the platform could help to harmonise these strategies and should contribute mutual exchange and information on urban and regional development concepts to drafting processes.

As cities are the engines of the European economy and also of **centrope**, they must be considered as catalysts of creativity and innovation. Joint efforts should be undertaken throughout **centrope** to make more efficient use of their potential as hubs of the creative industries.

By focusing on city-specific sectoral investment priorities (promoting low-carbon strategies for urban areas, improving the urban environment, fostering sustainable urban mobility and furthering social inclusion by supporting the physical and economic regeneration of deprived urban areas), joint projects should be initiated and developed for financing in the new EU funding period.

Cultural and Tourism Strategy 2013+

(responsible for content: **centrope** Office Slovakia)

1 Status 2012

The Central European Region **centrope** is made up of eight federal provinces, regions and counties, with a combined population of approximately six and half million. The region is characterised by close connections between urban centres on the one hand and opportunities of recreation and enjoyment of the natural environment on the other hand. The Danube, March/Morava and Thaya/Dyje wetlands as green lungs of the region, and the Alpine and Carpathian mountain ranges and Lake Neusiedl/Fertő tó are the perhaps most striking tassels in the mosaic of natural landscapes in the Central European Region.

Due to the location of the quadrangle on a compact territory, **centrope** represents a unique regional grouping. The proximity of two capital cities – Bratislava and Vienna – is rather unique within Europe. Thanks to its position at the heart of Europe and at the crossroads of historical routes, the territory of today's **centrope** region has over many centuries been a centre of European history as well.

Shared heritage

Regarding historical development in this part of Europe, possibly the most important factor was the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as it included all regions constituting **centrope**. Since Vienna was the imperial capital city, the strongest political, historical and cultural clout converged in this region. The common historical background should become a basis of future tourism co-operation. Many well-preserved manifestations of this shared history such as historical monuments and traditions, royal palaces, former crown cities and other historical attractions offer good preconditions for the development of tourism in the **centrope** region.

The above period was followed by another historical era much different from the previous times of integration and common development. After the end of the Second World War, the Iron Curtain separated Austria from Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary for more than 40 years.

With regard to historical events in connection with tourism development, **centrope** may thus be seen from two different angles: on the one hand, it is a grouping of regions with a long shared history – the glory of the Habsburg monarchy, traditions, imperial cities. Yet at the same time, these regions were forcibly separated until quite a short time ago. Regarding

tourism, products promoting the shared historical heritage are as promising as products showcasing the remains and reminders of the former Iron Curtain.

Cultural diversity

Numerous common or similar elements can be found in the field of culture as well. The rich and exciting offers of **centrope** in the spheres of arts, culture and leisure are very present in the minds of citizens of the Central European Region. Visits to concerts and exhibitions in conjunction with cross-border culinary excursions have become a matter of course.

This historically evolved cultural region at the intersection of four countries is characterised by a very diversified creative output and wide offer of cultural institutions and events. In addition to numerous architectural monuments and museums and a wide-ranging cultural roster featuring large-scale events and festivals of worldwide renown, there is also space for a colourful and vibrant arts and culture scene highly appreciated by the population as a valuable element of quality of life.

Due to the above preconditions, the support of cultural and historically-oriented tourism is a logical consequence, and the first important steps have been already taken in this area (e.g. www.tourcentrope.eu).

The potential of transregional tourism offers also lies in the creation of products in co-operation with the tourism industry and tourism associations. This process must be based on a joint cross-border analysis of the co-operation potential for tapping synergies with already existing offers across the partner regions. Comprehensive offers in fields like wellness, spa tourism, wine and gastronomy as well as recreation and sports could be developed under the **centrope** brand, thereby going far beyond the framework of cultural tourism. In particular in the region of Lake Neusiedl/Fertő tó and in the surroundings of the national parks of the Thaya/Dyje, March/Morava and Danube wetlands, there are good preconditions for creating cross-border holiday packages and recreation destinations with common concepts and marketing.

Recent performance of the regional tourism industry

The global financial crisis and subsequent economic recession were reflected in reduced visitor numbers and overnight stays in most NUTS-3 **centrope** regions in 2009. Yet a slight improvement was recorded in most regions for 2010. In Vienna, the pre-crisis visitor volume was even exceeded, and this revival also continued in 2011. However, the border regions of Slovakia and the Czech Republic have not yet returned to the pre-crisis level.

An overview of the development of tourism over the past decade clearly shows that the length of visitors' stays in the **centrope** regions of the individual countries is gradually shortening. This trend is most significant in the South-Moravian and Trnava Regions, while the average number of nights spent in the Vienna and Bratislava Regions has remained at a relatively stable level. The longest stays in **centrope** were recorded in southern parts of Burgenland and Lower Austria and also in the Trnava Region despite the gradual decrease of average overnight stays.

The capacity of collective accommodation facilities measured by the number of bed-places increased in most NUTS-3 regions of **centrope**. Over the past decade, this growth was fastest in central Burgenland, in Bratislava and in the Weinviertel.

However, the net occupation of bed-places in hotels and similar facilities has developed heterogeneously. While from 2000 onward this figure grew most significantly in the Weinviertel and in central Burgenland, it decreased particularly in the South-Moravian, Bratislava and Trnava Regions. The highest capacity occupation of bed-places was recorded in Austria, i.e. in Vienna and central Burgenland.

The current situation is reflected in the following characteristics: Vienna followed by the Bratislava Region – the latter driven by the capital city – shows the highest share of foreign visitors, while the share of foreigners in the total number of visitors is lowest in Burgenland as a whole. Tourism intensity (number of nights spent in proportion to the population) is definitely highest in the Austrian regions, with Burgenland in first place; in the Slovak and Czech regions, it is below the **centrope** average.

Core challenges

Although the **centrope** region shares common cultural and historical aspects and a mutual proximity of territorial units, it is characterised by certain diversities including four different languages; moreover, each area presents its own customs, traditions and typical natural and cultural monuments as well as regional differences in governance structure, competencies and capacities.

Currently, this diversity of the **centrope** region is the main reason for the fragmentation of tourism-related activities, reflected in the preference given to a district approach over a regional or, respectively, a transregional approach. Therefore it is a priority goal to interconnect the potentials of the individual regions and to create transregional co-operation across the private, public and civil sectors so as to develop a larger-scale strategy.

On the other hand, the analyses undertaken identify great variations in the quality of tourism services. This fact could be a serious obstacle to the development of **centrope** as a common tourist destination.

Other challenges for determining strategic objectives in tourism include divergent levels of tourism infrastructure (e.g. tourism offices, public toilets, information signs, leisure centres) as well as of transport infrastructure, some poor communication platforms, an insufficient offer of tourism products and a lack of strategic documents on future development that would include cross-regional activities.

2 Objectives 2013+

*Main objective of tourism in **centrope**:*

*Make the **centrope** region visible to domestic and foreign visitors.*

2.1 Core objectives

Increase the number of domestic tourists within centrope

Poor awareness among local citizens of neighbouring regions and a low level of transregional mobility negatively affect the growth potential of domestic tourism.

Increase the number of foreign tourists to centrope

In order to increase the number of foreign tourists to the region, it is important to further develop the **centrope** marketing tool so as to provide continued support for regional and local tourist boards in their activities within the region and to encourage the creation of a common **centrope** brand. The first precondition is to communicate and organise common tourism fairs abroad, e.g. in Brussels, in order to present the uniqueness of each region under one roof.

2.2 Governance objectives

Increased co-operation between local and regional authorities should therefore focus on the creation of a network of partners so as to develop common cross-border specialised products, share know-how and eliminate communication barriers.

The usability of the relevant partners' available resources in the sphere of tourism is an important aspect for implementing the proposed strategies. The diversified competencies of public administrations at the regional and municipal levels in the four countries and the

lessened impact of national governments (globalisation) require broader co-operation by stakeholders working together on a platform to ensure “doing the right things in the right way for the right people”. Strategies should be implemented through co-ordination rather than through hierarchic structures. For this reason, we propose the setting-up of a platform whose output should not be the establishment of a network itself, but which should rather safeguard that the platform partners from both the public and private sectors can achieve their goals at reasonable cost.

2.3 Instrument objectives

City and countryside breaks

Currently, city breaks rank among the most popular tourism offers. Such short-term trips are tailored to people who prefer a weekend form of travelling and learning about new places to long-term stays. Here, a key precondition and success factor is the ability to offer many attractions, good-quality services and interesting events within a short period of time and in a compact city environment, i.e. on a relatively small territory. The prevalence of conference tourism, in particular in Vienna but also in Brno and Bratislava, can represent a certain impulse for this type of trips, as it provides a possibility to offer city sightseeing to business visitors, thereby motivating them to return and explore the destination during a longer stay. Thus it is important to support regional tourist boards in their cross-border promotions of city and countryside breaks at trade fairs with the aim of motivating business visitors to spend their free time and longer weekends within the **centrope** region.

Tourism products aimed at showcasing more rural areas represent the opposite of city breaks: natural sights, an attractive country environment and a more relaxed contrast to busy city life are basic preconditions for developing this type of tourism. This is also the case for short-term stays; therefore such compact offers must meet even higher demands.

The **centrope** region disposes of appropriate preconditions for the development of both forms of tourism. Attractive cities – in particular Vienna and Bratislava but also Brno, Győr and others – contrast with the lovely landscapes of rural areas with their varied culinary specialities. Due to the small size of the **centrope** region, both forms of tourism can thrive in synergy. In view of the ongoing urbanisation of Europe, this type of travelling and sightseeing may acquire increasing significance.

Development of multilateral thematic clusters and groupings

Networks will be mainly organised as multilateral thematic clusters. Clusters in general represent local concentrations of mutually interconnected entities, firms and institutions in a particular field. In the tourism industry, they specifically include groupings of entities that provide thematically similar services. Such groupings may result in a strong market position, better opportunities for promotion and marketing as well as the creation of common products.

Clusters should fulfil the following four main functions:

- Instil the willingness to join in and co-operate or, respectively, involve various social interests and actors in one objective
- Support the exchange of information and collective learning processes among relevant actors
- Increase effectiveness, efficiency and common marketing
- Initiate and intensify communication campaigns and specific target-oriented marketing strategies

The effective allocation and distribution of cluster resources can ultimately lower the financial start-up input of each member and hence facilitate the situation as compared to each of them acting on its own.

3 Strategies and measures 2013+

While the above objectives cannot be separated from the strategies employed to meet them, a comprehensive and integrative approach should be chosen. In an environment of strong worldwide competition in the tourism industry, it would be ineffective to spend resources and know-how separately both to attract foreign tourists and support domestic tourism. Joint tools to promote and boost the region's attractiveness include in particular the creation of cross-regional thematic tourism products. The region should present itself externally and also to its own citizens by drawing on and emphasising its cultural, historical, natural and social assets.

3.1 A region of cultural, historical and architectural heritage of immediate neighbours

One activity already in preparation is the transformation of the family cards – a main output of the FamilyNet project supported by the SK-AT cross-border programme (project partners: Lower Austria, Burgenland, Bratislava Region and Trnava Region) – into the creation of a "**centrope card**". Once implemented, this visionary concept would provide for a wide range of discounts for visitors to the region. The positive effect of the **centrope** card will ensure greater awareness of **centrope** on the part of its citizens. A **cross-border calendar of events** will facilitate easy access to the best up-to-date offers of the region. It is important to **raise**

awareness of top events of international importance organised in the region by **publicising them on radio and TV programmes**. Jointly organised festivals circling regularly through the region (e.g. Pan-European Picnic), long nights of museums or travelling exhibitions could prove a delightful experience for both tourists and locals. In particular, such offers would optimally present the unique diversity and variety of the four-country region, its cultural heritage and vibrant contemporary art scene.

The **centrope** region could promote itself through such presentations as “*a region of cultural, historical and architectural heritage of immediate neighbours*”. However, this would require **co-ordination and a marketing strategy of the centrope destination** as a unified region of common history and culture while at the same time spotlighting its uniqueness. The four-country region can become a space where new trends are born, and where something new and unique occurs at a crossroads of ideas and influences.

3.2 Effectiveness and efficiency to strengthen competitiveness, employment and landscape quality

Due to this internal competition, the quality of the tourism services offered could be improved by extending the mark-of-quality systems already existing in **centrope**. Later on, this could be transformed into a common “**centrope mark of quality**” co-ordinated by the regional tourist boards.

3.3 Thematic clusters

The first step would be to analyse the potential of thematic clusters, e.g. based on the common history – a cultural heritage network of the Habsburgs might be conceivable in this context. Another possible and desirable output of a clusterisation process in tourism might be the preparation of **common products, business plans or analyses for the marketing and promotion of the cluster and its products**. The existing tourism infrastructure in the form of the cultural heritage – e.g. castles and palaces, the long tradition of wine production, leading to the conservation of historic vineyards and wine cellars, as well as traditional culinary specialities – represents the main catalyst for the creation of thematic clusters. Natural conditions, in particular in the vicinity of the rivers Danube, Morava/March or Myjava, which once represented regional borders and today embody spheres of close co-operation based on the Danube Strategy, could also be considered part of the tourism infrastructure. Lake Neusiedl/Fertő tó and the dam reservoir Nové Mlýny in the South-Moravian Region are other attractive areas. Last but not least, the tourism infrastructure is represented by manifold tourism services provided mostly by SMEs. The preservation and development of such services (guesthouses, hotel industry, sports and recreation services) with the help of

clustering ensures their effectiveness and efficiency, thereby strengthening competitiveness, employment and landscape quality in rural areas. Trust-building among service providers within a cluster is an important effect in this respect and could be supported by standard trademarks, educational courses, microloans, etc.

3.4 Fostering governance structure – European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation

Multidimensionality must be strengthened when identifying and evaluating the development potential of the **centrope** regions' tourism strategies. Thematic clusters are unable to cover the complex relations between public, private and civil-society actors of **centrope** towards this end. A possible option might be the **formation of a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation of the centrope region (EGTC)**. The targeted formation of temporary networks able to set up and co-ordinate tourism-related activities in the region will allow drawing on the available sources of individual actors. The European Commission's EGTC legislation supports the creation of such an EGTC in the new programming period 2014-2020 and makes it eligible for Structural Fund subsidies.

3.5 Tourism means travel

The development of **integrated transport systems and discount cards** for this type of transport represents another precondition for strengthening the position of **centrope** in tourism.

Currently, **cycling tourism is a very rapidly growing sector**. Due to low cost, free and unlimited movement and the possibility to see many attractions within a short time-span, cycling tourism is becoming a more and more popular form of active relaxation. Cycling tourism is also scoring due to the unrestricted accessibility it offers, since it permits reaching city centres or other points of interest without having to look for a parking place or other forms of transport.

In addition to this possibility, **centrope** also provides for other forms of environment-friendly transport. As the Danube connects the whole region, **river transport** constitutes another type of low-impact travelling. Moreover, the well-developed **railway network has a high potential to accommodate a large number of tourists**.

Proposed measure: integrating the abovementioned forms of transport into tourism products.

3.6 CTMT transformed into the centrope tourism portal www.tourcentrope.eu

Promotion is a key form of tourism support. The **centrope** Tourism and Marketing Tool (CTMT) is an instrument that strengthens intraregional travelling and fosters new opportunities in tourism.

Representing a pilot project of the new web application, its primary objective is to act as a tool conveying comprehensive information that cannot be found through other sources. Due to its user-friendly and homogeneous design and the wide range of information provided, it becomes a good-quality portal for planning tourist activities in the **centrope** region. The content consists of information supplied by the regional tourist organisations. Currently, there are 40 bike routes, 120 cultural events and more than 160 points of interest representing a sufficiently attractive offer to put together myriad packages or trips for any special-interest group. At the same time, the **centrope** Tourism and Marketing Tool provides all necessary information about individual facilities, such as admission fees, opening hours, accessibility, etc. Due to clearcut maps, this tool is a very interesting option for planning tourist activities in the **centrope** region and represents a significant added value for the tourist offer of the region.

The further development of this instrument depends on the needs of tourist boards, web users and tourism service providers, as the IT methods used allow **extending the tool to further levels, with web modules** providing other types of information, e.g. on **wellness and spa tourism or traditional culinary specialities**, as well as allowing for the automatic exchange of information between the web portals of tourist boards and CTMT (and hence the **centrope** tourism portal) to ensure cost-effectiveness and sustainability. The transformation of the tool into the joint **centrope** tourism portal should be the last step, thereby providing a comprehensive information background including the **option of booking accommodation in the centrope region and connections to the transport infrastructure**.

Our future co-operation

The **centrope** partnership may look back on almost a decade of history culminating in the centrope capacity project, which for the first time established co-operation structures that allow for the continuous collaboration of all partner cities and regions at eye-level. The experience of the past ten years clearly shows the positive effects of continuity in the joint development and implementation of co-operation agendas, stable long-term partner networks and smart multi-level co-ordination.

The successful conclusion of the **centrope capacity** project calls for renewed efforts to ensure the sustainability of the centrope governance model. Thus the partners will use this opportunity to re-sharpen strategic perspectives and readjust the structures, instruments and modes of co-operation. Previous achievements shall be used as a basis from which to launch a broad growth process that involves both public and private stakeholders.

Notwithstanding the challenging environment until the start of the next EU programme period from 2014 to 2020, the **centrope** partners have agreed to focus on three core agendas in the immediate future:

- **Co-ordination, political lobbying & communication.** The established political framework will be continued with regular summit meetings of the centrope Board of governors, presidents and mayors. These gatherings will ensure regular coordination at the top political level and take place under an annually rotating presidency. An administrative centrope steering structure and a comprehensive management structure comprising transnational co-ordination and decentralised tasks within the partner countries will underscore the co-operation routine attained among the partners. A stakeholder platform is to initiate and mobilise new public-private partnerships for the development of the common region. This overall co-operation framework will also provide for public visibility, networking at EU level and the marketing of centrope as an attractive business location.
- **centrope Mobility Management.** With their high relevance for the entire region, improved mutual accessibility, public transport and infrastructure development represent top issues for co-operation in the quadrangle. Building on the high dynamics of current efforts in this field, the partners will forge ahead with the **centrope** Mobility Management flagship initiative. New co-ordination structures will include a High-level Administrative Board linked to the political **centrope** process plus the necessary operative capacities to further the cross-border mobility agenda.
- **Thematic co-operation.** Specific commitments of the partners according to individual priorities may cover the full co-operation spectrum from research and development,

technology transfer and innovation to cross-border cluster initiatives, labour market monitoring and qualification initiatives, transnational spatial planning or tourism destination development and marketing. In each case, the centrope partners will decide on the coordinating lead role and the means to be earmarked for the co-operation initiative at hand.

With the launch of a new period of EU cohesion policy in 2014 and the associated co-funding opportunities, the road will be clear for the structured implementation of the full **centrope** Strategy 2013+. It is the declared goal of the partner regions and cities to follow the Strategy's ambitions throughout the upcoming programming process and to pursue the projects and initiatives of the **centrope** Strategy 2013+ until the end of the decade.

Part B

centrope Action Plan 2013+

Automotive Cluster centrope II

Project partners: Mobility Cluster @ Vienna Business Agency (former ACVR); Győr Széchenyi István University; University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien

EU programme: AT_HU 2007-2013

Project duration: 04/2010 – 12/2012; follow-up application submitted



The **centrope** region has developed into a big player in the automotive and logistics sector and is still growing. After recent years of crisis, with declining sales, the auto industry has recovered faster than expected. Attractive but cost-effective design and innovative equipment, such as e-mobility technologies, are increasingly in demand. Although a dense network of suppliers around the OEM production plants exists already today, the requirements to be met by the individual companies in the automotive and subcontracting industry have significantly increased.

Within the **centrope** region, there already exists a successful bilateral co-operation in the automotive branch between the Austrian and the Slovak Automotive Clusters operating under the name of Automotive Cluster Centrope (ACC). Now this platform was extended to Western Hungary, focusing especially on e-mobility, as this innovative technology is a growing field that requires a lot of experts. Thus the extension of the existing Automotive Academy to Hungary is one of the main tasks of the current project co-funded through the Austrian-Hungarian bilateral ETC programme (project title Automotive Cluster Centrope II).

Activities:

- Establishment of the Automotive Academy in Hungary based on the experience of the Automotive Academy in Vienna
- Feasibility study for a new e-mobility curriculum
- Development of a curriculum for a joint degree programme including legal application for the new course
- Selection of speakers and trainers in tandem with the contents of the Vienna-based Automotive Academy, preparation of accreditation
- Continuous media and PR activities

To continue the co-operation based on these activities and to develop new ideas, a follow-up project application was submitted in September 2012.



Concept



Partnership



Work & time plan



Financing



Application for funding



Kick-off

TwinEntrepreneurs

Project partners: Vienna Business Agency; Young Entrepreneurs Association of Slovakia; National Agency for Development of Small and Medium Enterprises
EU programme: SK_AT 2007-2013
Project duration: 10/2012 – 12/2014



Initiative to support start-ups and small enterprises in the Vienna-Bratislava region

As emphasised by their function as capital cities, both Bratislava and Vienna are the most highly developed and dynamic parts of their respective countries. Regarding competitiveness, small enterprises play a very important role in the economies of Vienna and the Bratislava Region. Thus all three partners of the TwinEntrepreneurs project are actively supporting SMEs and start-ups using a broad range of time-tried tools. To exploit further competitive advantages, SMEs should be jointly supported and encouraged to extend their economic activities to neighbouring areas. This challenge will be addressed together in the framework of the TwinEntrepreneurs project.

First contacts between the partners of the TwinEntrepreneurs project were established during the preparation of the event “The EU Services Directive and Its Practical Advantages” held in Vienna on 14 September 2011 in the framework of the **centrope capacity** project within the “Knowledge Region” thematic area. At this event, the idea was born to provide Austrian and Slovak companies interested in their respective neighbouring regions more regularly with market information; concrete and individual support services would be particularly valuable in this context. In the following months, various ideas and different settings were discussed, and a project application for the SK_AT 2007-2013 ETC programme was submitted and duly approved in summer 2012.

Activities:

- A regional analysis will provide essential input for the concrete orientation of support activities depending on the needs of small enterprises
- Start-ups and small enterprises from Bratislava and Vienna will be enabled to participate in free-of-charge workshops/events on entrepreneurial know-how
- SMEs should receive individual coaching on how to grow and expand
- Peer review workshop with representatives of European good practices
- Continuous media and PR activities



Concept



Partnership



Work & time plan



Financing



Application for funding



Kick-off

Energy Cluster centrope

Initiators : Self-Governing Region of Trnava; Technologie Offensive Burgenland GmbH (TOB)

Potential partners: Energy agencies, NGOs, public authorities

EU programme: ECT SK-AT

Further details: Established in December 2010, registered in Trnava, non-profit-oriented



In the past years, Slovakia registered a striking rise of investments in the energy industry as well as an inflow of companies of a high technological standard. As a consequence, this led to an increasing demand for development and research, to higher requirements for the qualification and technical training of workers and also to the necessity of implementing the latest ideas and trends of the energy industry.

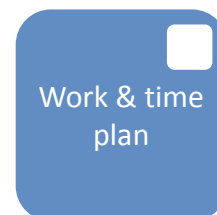
The initiative strives to assist companies and institutions in the field of renewable energy to create synergies and support the competitiveness of these enterprises. One of the main topics deals with the enlargement of the project to partners from the Czech Republic and Hungary to elevate this primarily bilateral co-operation to a **centrope**-wide basis.

The focal points of activities are:

- Technology transfer
- Advanced training
- Building cross-border partnerships
- Information and communication
- Research and development

As a first step, the cluster is structured as a loose network of partners around the initiators Trnava/Burgenland. By expanding the cluster to the whole **centrope** region, the dissemination of know-how, qualification, technologies, concepts, etc. will proceed very rapidly and efficiently. Moreover, the probability of implementing innovative and new ideas, concepts and projects will be enhanced by the cluster and its members.

The further development of the EnCC in terms of themes and membership is completely open since the founding members are ready to enlarge the energy cluster both thematically and geographically in accordance with suggestions and requests from new partners or members.



EAU

Energy-Autonomous Units

Project partners: Pannon Business Network; Zala Megyei
Vállalkozásfejlesztési Alapítvány; Technologie Offensive Burgenland
GmbH
EU programme: AT_HU 2007-2013
Project duration: 01/2013 – 6/2014; application submitted, waiting for
confirmation

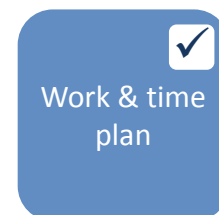


Ongoing or already completed projects like ESPAN, ITE, EKKO, etc. have created regional or local energy concepts and energy strategies. The results of this work show that, due to the savings potential but especially because of the available resources for energy production in many areas, energy sufficiency or autonomy seems possible at least in specific areas. Therefore, based on these prior results, a follow-up project should be developed to deal with implementation-oriented approaches to energy independence. The project EAU should be seen as a logical follow-up based on ongoing and completed projects and related to results of previous energy projects for energy independence. For this purpose, the EAU project was developed within the framework of the EnCC cluster established under the ITE project.

The EAU project is a further step towards achieving the long-term goal of total energy independence in the project regions. This is to follow from a bottom-up approach for single units to attain energy independence and subsequently comply with the project indicators and results across various energy units. Furthermore, the creation of energy-autonomous units should be extended to other areas so as to move towards the ultimate goal of complete energy autonomy.

Activities:

- Increasing the awareness of alternative energy forms through project outcome publications, events and workshops
- Identification and research of energy-independent units with business plans for implementation and strategies for further development
- A common CBC & regional research, concept and study for Burgenland and the Hungarian partner region (Pannonia)
- Technology promotion of energy-independent units through the possibility of applying pilot projects



REACT

Renewable Energy & Efficiency Action

Project partners: Fachhochschulstudiengänge Burgenland (University of Applied sciences); EnCoBa; TTSK; Automotive Cluster West Slovakia; Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava; TOB; strategic partner: HTL Eisenstadt
EU programme: AT_SK 2007-2013
Project duration: 08/2012 – 12/2014; confirmed



In Austria, the share of the building sector in total energy consumption is approx. 40%. Because of the relevant EU Directives, the zero energy design will become standard for new construction and renovation projects from 2020 onward. The technical development standard is advanced enough to permit the implementation of these requirements. However, at the moment, there is still a lack of adequate building concepts.

Likewise, an increase in the share of renewable energy is likewise to be attained by 2020. Therefore the project REACT also focuses and provides development in the fields of energy efficiency and renewable energy.

REACT wants to generate positive outcomes in both renewable energy (production) and energy efficiency for buildings (new construction and renovation) and in qualifying contributions.

Activities:

- Development of practical solutions for the construction of new buildings by effectively drawing on local resources for zero-plus energy houses
- Examination of potential energy savings in existing buildings and finding workable solutions for the rehabilitation of buildings
- Compilation of a renovation handbook
- Development of a training plan and pilot training of energy consultants for best practices in new construction and renovation
- Production, testing and research of renewable energy carriers generated from regionally available resources and biogenic waste generated through transport (mobility) and heat
- Project outcome presentation during the entire duration of the project vis-à-vis both the general public and specific target groups (architects, interested organisations, researchers, builders,...)



Concept



Partnership



Work & time
plan



Financing



Application
for funding



Kick-off

TwinRegion: Inter-municipal Co-operation in the Twin Region Vienna-Bratislava



Project partners: KDZ Centre for Public Administration Research (Vienna); CRR Centrum pre regionálny rozvoj a aplikovaný výskum (Trenčín)

EU programme: SK_AT 2007-2013

Project duration: 18 months (1/2/2011 – 31/7/2012)

While current Austrian-Slovak cross-border co-operation is primarily focused on relations between the cities of Vienna and Bratislava, co-operation activities between neighbouring towns in both metropolitan regions are quite rare. The integration of these cities and municipalities would not only strengthen the entire **centrope** region but also the abovementioned co-operation axis between Vienna and Bratislava. Thus the overall goal of the TwinRegion project was to strengthen inter-municipal co-operation in the Vienna-Bratislava region by focusing on the involvement of midsize municipalities.

Target groups included employees and executives of the respective towns and villages in the project area, preferably from departments for urban planning and economic development, as well as key stakeholders from politics and administration.

Project outputs:

- *Study TwinRegion Knowledge Co-operation in the Vienna-Bratislava Region*
Showing the status quo of co-operation in the Twin Region, the study defines six potential areas for collaboration in the Twin Region, which were elaborated in detail together with experts in two workshops. These areas include information & communication platforms, identity & marketing, education networks, co-ordination of regional development plans and innovative & sustainable use of resources. Recommendations for future co-operation models and fields were summarised in an additional co-operation guideline. Both publications can be downloaded from www.twinregion.eu.

- *TwinRegion Scorecard*: to facilitate co-operation in the Twin Region, a common scorecard with co-operation indicators at the regional and local levels as well as good practices was developed as an online database. This database was shared with and filled by the target groups (municipal employees of the project area) to make it a policy planning tool for future co-operation.

This project was not initiated by **centrope capacity**, but ARGE CENTROPE played the role of observer and consultant (e.g. joining the workshops in an expert capacity, interlinking issues with **centrope** Knowledge Region).

The official project end was the final conference in July 2012. The TwinRegion Scorecard as a tool for the launch of co-operation projects will be hosted and continued by the project partners. To enlarge the user community, the TwinRegion project and scorecard will be presented at the ongoing “Public Management Platform” course for 2012/13 in the context of the economic development module.



Concept



Partnership



Work & time plan



Financing



Application for funding



Kick-off

Expatriate Centres – Know-How Exchange



Project partners: Expatriate centres in Vienna and Brno; at the moment, there is no expatriate centre in Bratislava
EU programme: No application for funding intended
Project duration: Continuous

Working and living abroad has become reality for an increasing number of people. Mobility is indispensable in today's world both for companies and for their employees and family members. Expatriate centres can help to give them a head-on start by providing support and assistance on all issues related to expats' professional and private situation as newcomers.

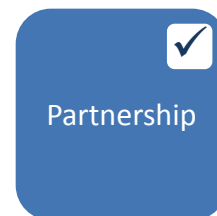
Over the past three years, both Vienna and Brno for the first time established expatriate centres. The exchange of experience is therefore the most valuable co-operation item in this initial phase. This is especially the case for the Brno expatriate centre, where mid-term financing of the support structure might depend on future fundraising (the Vienna expatriate centre team could provide some expertise). So far, two meetings took place in Vienna; the next one should follow in Brno in autumn 2012.

Joint networking with other expatriate centres from outside the **centrope** region (e.g. Amsterdam, The Hague, Linz, Graz) was also pursued. There were also special cases where both expatriate centres – Brno and Vienna – had to deal with the same clients; thus the staff of both centres maintain regular contacts, also in the framework of their day-to-day agendas.

Still under discussion are joint activities that would help to interlink the expats themselves, e.g. guided tours from Vienna to Brno (and vice versa). In Vienna, these offers might be dedicated mainly to members of an "expatriate club" (no concrete details settled yet).

At the moment, there is no expatriate centre in Bratislava. The partnership would be open to welcome relevant institutions from Slovakia. This offer is also extended to Hungary, as discussions to establish an expatriate centre in Budapest have begun.

Co-operation activities within the **centrope** region will be funded through the regular budgets for day-to-day activities.



Cross-border Labour Market Monitoring



Project partners: Regional branches of national labour offices in AT, CZ, HU, SK; MENDELU (Mendel University in Brno)
Project duration: Continuous

Meeting the labour market challenge!

Functional labour markets represent a significant prerequisite for the successful economic development of regions. However, the available quantity of suitable data for optimised work of the public and private sectors is insufficient.

Beyond public data sources

To develop adequate measures for the future development of the cross-border labour market, far more than access to general labour market statistics is required; this specifically refers to transparency on mobility behaviour. This transparency could be ensured by a tool for current labour market situation monitoring.

Striving for up-to-dateness and comparability

To deal adequately with this challenge, the Labour Market Monitoring Tool was launched by the CENTROPE Agency in March 2011 together with the experts from employment offices from all **centrope** countries to monitor the labour market situation at the regional cross-border level. This tool is aimed at the latest NUTS-3 level data **which are not publicly available yet.**

Towards a functional cross-border labour market

The monitoring results are presented twice annually and discussed by the experts of all four countries. The level of co-operation of the employment offices of all **centrope** regions is regular, efficient and sustainable due to intense co-operation with a university and does not require any external funding.

Current status: Monitoring will continue; the extension of the tool is planned according to suggestions of MENDELU.



Age Management

Project partners: AD Educa a.s.; educational institutions (Austria and Slovakia); Labour Office Brno; co-operating organisations: Employers (manufacturing companies) in Brno



Background:

The ageing and shrinking of the EU workforce over the next two decades calls for a new approach to age management, both in the workplace and in economic and social-policy terms. Those aged 50 and over already represent one in five of the workforce; soon this proportion will rise to one in four. Until now, European employers in both the public and private sectors tended to commonly encourage older workers to leave employment. As the numbers of younger people entering the workforce declines, the challenge will be to retain and promote the contribution of these older workers. Faced with competition from younger workforces in other parts of the world, European employers will need to maintain the capacity for work and the productivity of their ageing employees. A workforce with a balance of youth and maturity is regarded as being best able to respond to the rapidly changing circumstances associated with globalisation.

Key activities:

- Creation of a pool of best-practice examples in the field of age management (in various countries)
- Visits of partners' organisations (study tours)
- Workshop for organisations working with the target group
- Development of new educational activities for company management and HR managers
- Verification of best-practice examples by employers
- Pilot verification of the introduction of age management principles in company practice
- Verification of tools for work ability concept
- Final conference, conclusion and presentation of results achieved and evaluation of work ability concept questionnaires

Current status: Project funding was refused but the alliance is planning to continue its work (know-how exchange, further projects etc.).



Concept



Partnership



Work & time
plan



Financing



Application
for funding



Kick-off

Let's Act Together: Cross-border Co-operation of NPOs and NGOs



Project partners:

CZ: Association of Non-profit NGOs of South Moravia (ANNO JMK)

AT: Association of Town and Village Renewal of Lower Austria (NÖ – Dorf & Stadterneuerung)

EU programme: Territorial Cooperation AT_CZ; Small Projects Fund

Project duration: 03/2011 – 12/2011

Additional role of NPOs and volunteerism in society – not only providers of social, educational and leisure services, but also important employers

The non-profit sector is an important linchpin of the social system in all developed democratic societies. It also plays (or should play) a significant role as a partner of public authorities in social services, in the prevention of negative social phenomena, in youth work as well as in culture and education. But the tertiary sector can also be an important employer with a growing potential for creating new jobs. Both partner countries, i.e. Austria and the Czech Republic, are facing similar social phenomena and an ageing population. Due to these facts, the demand for tertiary-sector services is increasing. Cross-border co-operation at the operational level is therefore a logical requirement.

Objectives:

- Improve the quality of services provided by the tertiary sector through cross-border co-operation among organisations working with volunteers
- Enhance the lobbying position of organisations supporting and working with volunteerism vis-à-vis policymakers and lawmakers
- Increase the attractiveness of volunteering and community service in society (2011 was the worldwide “Year of Volunteering”)

Activities: Four interactive expert workshops – theory, comparison of legal provisions in both countries, best practice examples.

Topics: volunteerism in society, societal acceptance, legislation, practical examples; role and activities of NGOs in secondary prevention; employing citizens endangered by social exclusion; dual function of a social enterprise as employer and as instrument for social rehabilitation.

Two brochures comparing Czech and Austrian laws and general conditions regarding the issues described above.

Geographical scope: centrope partners Lower Austria, South Moravia, Brno. Representatives of NGOs from Bratislava took part in the workshops as guests. The project is very successful and transferable. At the moment, there is no way to co-finance similar projects at a multilateral level (NGOs and volunteer organisations have no resources to pre-finance the activities and manage the complicated administration of such EU projects).

Current status: The project was completed on time, the brochures and Internet outputs were completed by the end of 2011.

New cross-border partnerships have been initiated!



Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) – Research Co-operation



Project partners:

CZ: BIBS – Brno International Business School

SK: University of Economics in Bratislava

HU: Small Business Development Centre

The current economic crisis has placed higher demands on nation states. The living standards of national populations and economic welfare depend on the possibility of economic recovery and the stimulation of economic growth. The backbone of the Central European countries' economies consists in particular of small and medium-sized businesses, which are also the main providers of jobs. Their support in particular is key for stable and sustainable economic development over the long term.

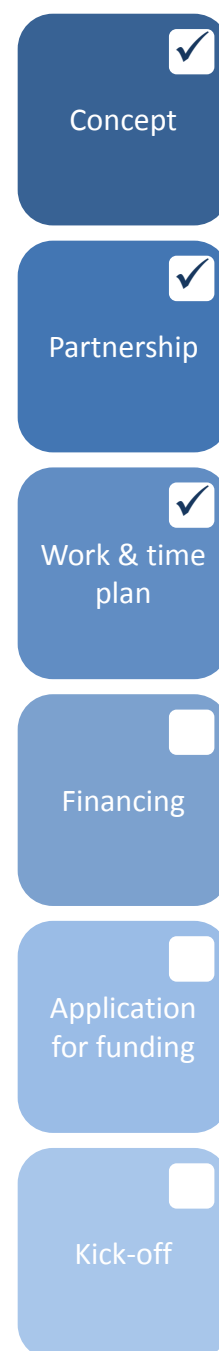
Objectives: The project goal in the context of these impulses is to provide a mapping of the small and medium-sized sector to assess the importance of a cross-border co-operation platform as a factor of development of this economic segment. The results may serve as a basis for further development of the SME segment of the economy.

Activities:

- **Research study** (in the form of a publication or a series of peer-reviewed articles): The main output will be a summary of academic and analytical findings.
- **Information portal:** The research will also enable the dissemination of all information concerning the practical benefits for SMEs and the opportunities open to SMEs. It will be the aim of the portal to consolidate and distribute this information; moreover, it will serve as a contact point for establishing further collaboration among firms.
- **Information evaluation and dissemination:** Another important part of the project output will lie in raising awareness about the results and exchanging information and findings regarding this issue. This will be achieved by means of an international expert conference (with partners from participating countries) and through a series of popular articles and direct communication with subjects from the target group (through chambers of commerce and business associations);

Geographical scope: CZ, SK, HU (+ possibly PL – under negotiation)

Current status: Project application ready, looking for suitable funding



International centrope Simulation Game



Project partners: Educational institutions and/or NPOs or similar subjects from **centrope**

The idea of a cross-border **centrope** simulation game was introduced based on conclusions of the **centrope** Political Board, demand from schools, discussions with experts as well as results of the human capital mapping by DCO CZ.

Objectives: The game responds to the evident need for increased language education, supports the cross-border co-operation of students and teachers, improves students' communication, negotiation and presentation skills and, last but not least, reflects current regional problems of cross-border overlapping, which needs lobbying support.

Activities:

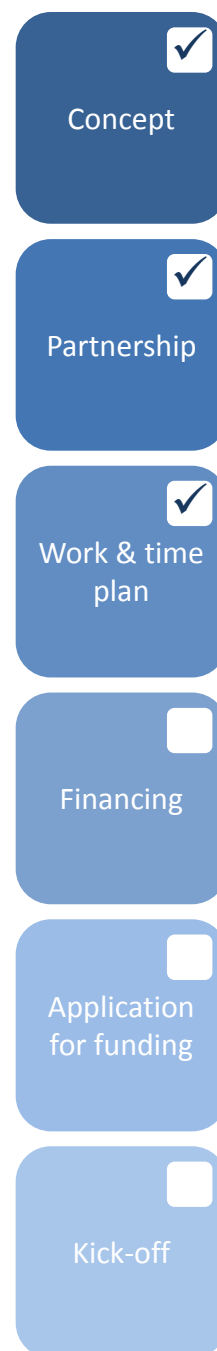
The concept of a simulation game was brought to Central Europe from Scandinavia, where it is mainly used for environmental education. The simulation game is based on the concept of "learning by playing". In Scandinavia, the simulation game concept is even used for political decision-making at both the local and regional levels. The game prepares students for real-life situations they might encounter in the course of their future careers.

The principle of the game is as follows: Each player is given a basic text describing a problem to be solved (e.g. the impact of transport on the environment), a description of the roles he/she is going to assume during the simulation game (e.g. a politician of a socially oriented party advocating the decrease of unemployment, a local representative lobbying for infrastructure, a representative of farmers and landowners lobbying for alternate routes, etc.) and tools that are to be used during the game (e.g. maps and plans of the given area, data about unemployment, CO₂ exhaust gas levels, etc.). These tools are used during the player's presentation and communication with other players. The game is usually managed by one player who acts as moderator.

Example of topic: Highway connection Brno-Vienna (road R52 + A5 motorway)

Geographical scope: **centrope** regions

Current status: Potential project partners are searching for other partner schools and suitable funding.



CEURBANA

Central European Urban Audit



Project partners: Initiator/Lead Partner: Hungarian Urban Knowledge Centre
PPs: VÁTI; WESTPA; Open Doors Public Utility Association (HU); KDZ Centre for Public Administration Research (AT); Mendel University in Brno (CZ); Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (SK)
Strategic Partner: AACT Association of Austrian Cities and Towns
Observers: URBANPROIECT Bucharest (RO); University of Novi Sad (SRB)
EU programme: South East Europe; project duration: 2 years

Background:

- “Beyond the GDP” is a key issue for **centrope**
- Cities are engines of EU development
- Networks of cities form a successful region
- New challenges for urban planning/governance
- Preparing for regeneration after the crisis

Objectives:

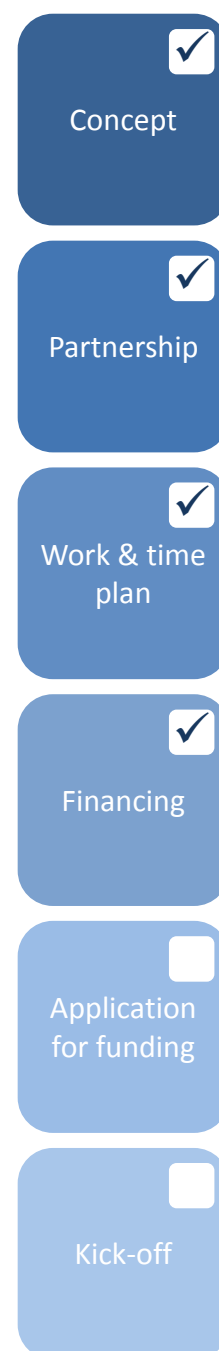
- Definition of indicators for urban development
- Development of evidence-based planning methodology and tools
- Effective communication of success in urban development
- Learning from others’ success – knowledge centre
- Integrated strategic planning for sustainable cities
- Training materials for experts and decision makers

Planned activities:

- Methodology for fact-based planning, indicators for measuring development in four countries with a special focus on **centrope** cities
- Awards for best performers in all **centrope** countries HU/SK/CZ/AT + four special thematic fields
- Intensive communication on urban success
- Training for experts and decision makers

Geographical scope: The four **centrope** countries, to be extended to the SEE area later on (**centrope** as gateway to the SEE region – “Vision 2015”).

Current status: Project application under SEE programme rejected – considered for resubmission during 2014-2020 period.



Concept

Partnership

Work & time
plan

Financing

Application
for funding

Kick-off

ESP – Energy Information Service Package for Businesses

Project partners: Lead Partner: Energy Institute for Business Vienna (EIW),
PPs: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of GMS County (HU); Ceurina (HU);
Vienna Economic Chamber (AT)
Strategic Partner: Energia Központ NKft
EU programme: AT-HU cross-border programme; project duration: 2.5 years
Budget: EUR 466,123



Background:

- The successful methodology and practice of ÖkoBusinessPlan in Vienna should be adopted in **centrope**
- Energy is a key issue in **centrope**
- Environmental questions are to be dealt with more seriously
- Economic difficulties of SMEs must be addressed
- Awareness raising for business is a basic tool to help them save energy – relevant local and/or regional policies should be developed

Objectives:

- Adoption of ÖkoBusinessPlan methodology
- Training of local experts
- Creating expert network in the region
- Knowledge transfer – experience exchange
- Development of holistic approach in the field of energy efficiency
- Training materials for experts and decision makers

Planned activities:

- Methodology for energy efficiency audit
- 40 pilot checks for businesses in and around Győr
- Intensive communication on energy issues
- 10 half-day trainings for experts
- 2 information days for participants

Geographical scope: Győr-Moson-Sopron County of **centrope**, to be extended in Hungary and later on to the whole **centrope** region.

Current status: The project was started in September 2011.



ERRAM Cross-border Accessibility Grid-based Spatial Analysis Model SK-AT, CZ-AT, HU-AT



Project partners: **LP:** Weinviertel Management (CZ-AT, SK-AT);
Regionaler Entwicklungsverband Industrieviertel-Projektverein (HU-AT), **PP:** South Moravian Region; South Bohemian Region; Incubator Malacky; Southern Weinviertel; MAREV; Office of the Lower Austrian Government; RU2; Office of the Burgenland Government; West Pannon Non-profit Ltd. , **SP:** Bratislava Region; Trnava Region; Zozo; Counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron, Vas, Zala
Project duration: January 2012 - September 2014
Planned budget: EUR 1.762,524

Concept :

Providing and choosing the locations most suitable for development contributes significantly to the competitiveness of a region. In this context, the issue of accessibility gains particular significance, as the vicinity of economic and social institutions and a suitable workforce are essential factors of location choice. In the ERRAM CZ-AT project area, the accessibility of economic and social services plays an especially important role for future planning processes. ERRAM will provide the basics for cross-border spatial development planning.

ERRAM HU-AT: By adopting a cross-border approach, the simulation model should help to identify the locations with the highest potentials for setting up new industrial or residential areas, protect these areas from other uses and establish marketing strategies.

In the ERRAM SK-AT project area, the current accessibility situation will be visualised and evaluated. Different scenarios will show the effects of new infrastructure (bridges over March/Morava river) on travel times and location quality. One special section is dedicated to public transport and mobility.

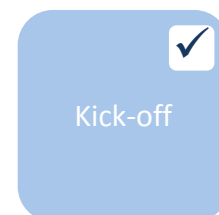
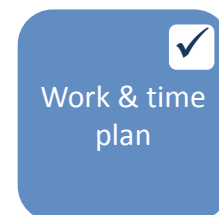
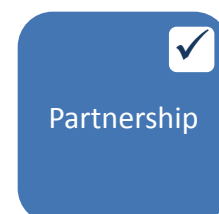
Project outputs:

- Cross-border grid model
- Harmonised cross-border database
- Cross-border accessibility matrixes of travel times for different points in time (present and future)
- GIS tool for conducting autonomous and standalone calculations and visualisations by the project partners
- One final report per project

Target groups:

- Regional and local authorities
- Territorial development experts
- Transport professionals
- Economic chambers and agencies

Current status: Projects were launched.



centrope **Mobility Management**



Project partners: Regional authorities, municipalities and public transport service providers in **centrope**

EU programme: N/A

Project duration: Continuous, long-term

Why

To achieve the goals set out in the “Strategic Framework for Transport and Infrastructure Development in the **centrope** Region”, the region needs a mechanism to concretise, prioritise and monitor its implementation. For this purpose, **centrope** will be given a permanent and politically supported co-ordination structure in the fields of transport, mobility and infrastructure development.

What

The Mobility Management will unite expertise and continuity at an operative management level and regularly involve stakeholders and the responsible public bodies. Its activities will entail the monitoring of traffic development, agenda-setting, the initiation of new implementation partnerships, multilateral knowledge management, political co-ordination and other cross-border mobility centre functions.

How

The new co-ordination structure will include a High-level Administrative Board linked to the political **centrope** process plus the necessary operative capacities to further the cross-border mobility agenda.

Current status: Agreed by Political Board of **centrope** as a follow-up to the **centrope capacity** pilot project INAT.



Concept



Partnership



Work & time
plan



Financing



Application
for funding



Kick-off

TRANSDANUBE



Project partners: Donaubüro Ulm (GER); Danube Tourist Commission (AT); Donau Tourismus Niederösterreich GmbH/National Park Donauauen (AT); Mobility Center Burgenland/Regional Government of Burgenland/National Park Neusiedlersee/Neusiedl (AT); Self-Governing Region Bratislava/RDA Senec-Pezinok (SK); West Transdanubian Regional Development Agency (HU); National Park Duna Ipoly and Fertő Hanság (HU); Vukovar/Nature Park Kopacki Rit (HR); Danube Competence Centre/RARIS/National Park Djerdap (SRB); Regional Development Agency and Business Center Vidin (BG); National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism/Tulcea Region/Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (RO)

EU programme: South East Europe

Project duration: October 2012-September 2014

Budget: EUR 2,5 million

Kick-off: November 2012

It is the aim of the project to develop tourist attractions in combination with **sustainable mobility, nature attractions** (protected areas) and **cultural attractions** (World Heritage sites).

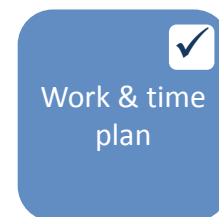
The main objective is the development of “Sustainable Mobility” in selected pilot regions along the Danube including train, bus, bike and water traffic to facilitate the concept of sustainable tourism in the whole Danube region.

Activities: Analysis of existing transport system, development of sustainable multimodal transport offers, mobility information for tourists in the Danube region, stakeholder involvement, evaluation

The **Danube** is the heart of the project and is thus showcased as the **connecting element** as well as a traffic route and tourist attraction.

Current status/activities so far: The application has been successful.

The activities began in October 2012 (preparation of tender documents underway).



Traces of Modernity: Cultural Routes of Modernism



Project partners: MAK – Museum of Applied Arts Vienna (AT); Moravian Gallery (CZ); Europaforum Wien (AT); Tourist Authority South Moravia (CZ)

EU programme: CZ_AT 2007-2013

Project duration: April 2011-December 2013

Budget: EUR 1.65 million

Kick-off: April 2011

Background and objectives: The co-operation between MAK and the Moravian Gallery began with the joint management of Josef Hoffmann's birth-house in Brtnice (Czech Republic). These activities within the context of the Josef Hoffmann Museum being successful, the two museums decided to further their co-operation and link other locations with a common background of architecture and tourist interest to the museum. Thus a cultural itinerary or cultural route should be created.

The idea is to link different historical places and collections in South Moravia (e.g. JH Museum, Moravian Gallery, Villa Jurkovič, Villa Tugendhat – all in Brno/CZ), Vienna (MAK and its branches in Vienna) and Lower Austria in the form of a cultural itinerary and to design, test and promote travel tours for international tourism with a focus on architecture and interior design.

Activities: Data collection, feasibility study of a cultural and heritage route in the cross-border region, seasonal exhibitions in selected cultural institutions, extension to potential new cultural partners of this modernism route.

Outputs: Media and marketing campaign, thematic exhibitions in CZ and AT, best practice for cultural routes to be included in tourism products offered by travel agents.

Current status: The project was launched in spring 2011. The results of a market research (including a market potential analysis) and fact-finding missions to already functional cultural routes in Europe will be presented in autumn 2012 as a basis for the subsequent design of the cultural route.

- ✓ Concept
- ✓ Partnership
- ✓ Work & time plan
- ✓ Financing
- ✓ Application for funding
- ✓ Kick-off

PERIMOST



Project partners: Bratislava Region; Office of the Lower Austrian Government; Municipality of Devínska Nová Ves
EU programme: SK_AT 2007-2013
Project duration: January 2012-December 2013
Budget: EUR 1.4 million
Kick-off: April 2012

It is the aim of the project to improve the accessibility of the regions Marchfeld, Römerland-Carnuntum and Bratislava for tourists and bike tourists.

The designation and implementation of small-scale infrastructure facilities will increase traffic safety, and the Small Carpathians region will be included in the cross-border cycle routes network.

Activities: Marking of the international cycling route EV13 in the Slovak part of this territory, setting-up of four cycling centres, reconstruction of cycling route along the Hainburg bridge and development of safety measures for cyclists in Lower Austria.

Outputs: Project activities will increase the attractiveness and accessibility of the partner regions.

Current status/activities so far: The application has been successful. Activities started in April 2012 (tender process underway).

- ✓ Concept
- ✓ Partnership
- ✓ Work & time plan
- ✓ Financing
- ✓ Application for funding
- Kick-off

Beyond the Bridge



Project partners: Bratislava Region; Donau Tourismus Niederösterreich GmbH; Municipality of Devínska Nová Ves; Municipality of Engelhartstetten
EU programme: SK_AT 2007-2013
Project duration: January 2012 – December 2013
Budget: EUR 750,000
Kick-off: February 2012

Aim:

- Completing the basic tourist infrastructure for quality development in cycle tourism and tourism in the regions bordering the cycle bridge in Devínska N.V. – Schloss Hof.
- Improving cycling and tourist services in the region, building a "cycle-friendly region".
- Creating attractive tourism products in the "bridge region" from both the Slovakian and Austrian perspectives.
- Promotion of products and of the attractiveness of the region through a promotional campaign and joint events.

Activities: Providing a complete service for visitors to the region, publishing thematic cycle maps, creating a web portal of all bike routes in the cross-border region, promoting the opening of the bridge and at the same time presenting the attractiveness of both countries to establish a common historical link in our region, revitalising former defensive bunkers along EuroVelo 13 for tourism purposes ("Iron Curtain").

Current status/activities so far: The application has been successful.

The activities started in February 2012 (cycle maps SK-AT, promotional activities during opening of cycle bridge Schloss Hof – Devínska N. Ves, web portal, cycle stands, information stands – tender process underway).



SACRA-VELO



Project partners: Bratislava Region; County Győr-Moson-Sopron; Region Trnava; Municipality of Szil

EU programme: SK_AT 2014-2020

Project duration: June 2015 – December 2016

Budget: EUR 1.2 million

Kick-off: September 2015

Aim: The project aims to unite elements of religious and active tourism. The project will connect major sacred sites and pilgrimage places along the rivers Raba, Danube and Morava and thus complete the international cycling route Eurovelo 6 between Győr and the Bratislava area.

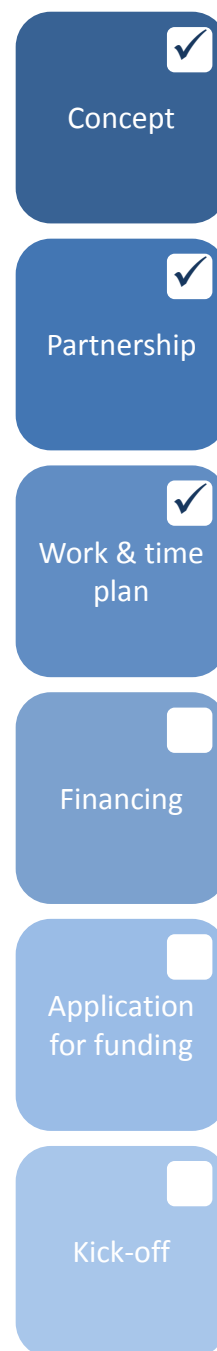
Activities:

- Replacement of information maps along the cycling routes
- Replacement of solar information audiovisual stands – fixed panels with audiovisual technology (“Electric Wizard”) for information about sacred buildings in three languages (SK, HU, ENG) – located in Marianka, Malacky and Modra
- Production and distribution of posters in 30 spots (put up on existing notice boards of churches), A3 format, with a description of the history of the buildings (in three languages – SK, HU, ENG)
- Production of cycling maps showing cycling routes and time input required
- Creation of an information brochure – trilingual colour brochure with descriptions of sacred buildings
- Purchase of bike racks to set up near the sacred buildings
- Involvement of secondary professional schools (recent graduates/students to act as guides)

Outputs: 242 signboards with explanations, 46 columns, 17 information maps, 90 posters (30 marked sacred buildings), 3 solar audiovisual information stands, 30 bike racks, 5,000 cycling maps, 5,000 information brochures, 2 press releases (minimum), 1 workshop, 10 students to act as guides (minimum)

Current status/activities so far: The application will be submitted in 2015.

Note: There is also a possibility to submit the project through SK-AT programme in 2014-2020, which would permit a hook-up to sacred sites on the Austrian side.



FamilyNet



Project partners: Trnava Region; Provincial Government of Burgenland; Non-profit organisation "Hand in Hand"; Federal Province of Lower Austria; Bratislava Self-Governing Region

EU programme: SK_AT 2007-2013

Project duration: 1/7/2012 – 30/6/2014

Budget: EUR 850,000

Kick-off: July 2012

Aim:

- ✓ The idea of the project reflects a similar system – the "Familienpass" of Lower Austria, which is already in its third decade and very successful. The "Family Pass" offers discounts for 1,000 service providers.
- ✓ It aims at the creation and implementation of discounts and other benefits for families with at least one child under eighteen years of age and residing in one of the participating regions.
- ✓ The project wants to cover the above-described four-region area in an effort to win over as many providers of goods and services (creating a supply network) as possible to the project, thereby engaging with a maximum number of families (creation of a database) to benefit from the discounts.
- ✓ The project will establish a network of discounts, especially in culture, sports, leisure activities, typical consumer purchases (clothing, electronics, sporting goods) and other services (restaurants, accommodation, holidays).

Activities:

- ✓ Saving money on consumer purchases
- ✓ Saving money on leisure activities
- ✓ Increasing the frequency of visits to leisure facilities
- ✓ Most important: quality family time spent together
- ✓ Expanding the potential customer circle
- ✓ Promoting the development of tourism
- ✓ Increasing visits to cultural and natural heritage sites
- ✓ Promoting the regions involved both in the domestic market and abroad

Current status/activities so far: The activities started in July 2012.



Concept



Partnership



Work & time plan



Financing



Application for funding



Kick-off

EdTRANS



Project partners: Bratislava Self-Governing Region; Vienna Board of Education

EU programme: SK-AT 2007-2013

Project duration: March 2013 - December 2014

Budget: EUR 600,000 (shares: Vienna 80%, Bratislava 20%)

Kick-off: March 2013

The objective of the project lies in developing common strategies to ensure the competitiveness of the region through education and innovation.

Aims:

- ✓ Overcoming existing barriers in vocational education
- ✓ Strategy in line with the recommendations and actions
- ✓ Marketing strategy to increase the attractiveness of vocational education
- ✓ Experience of operational work
- ✓ Implementation of best practices

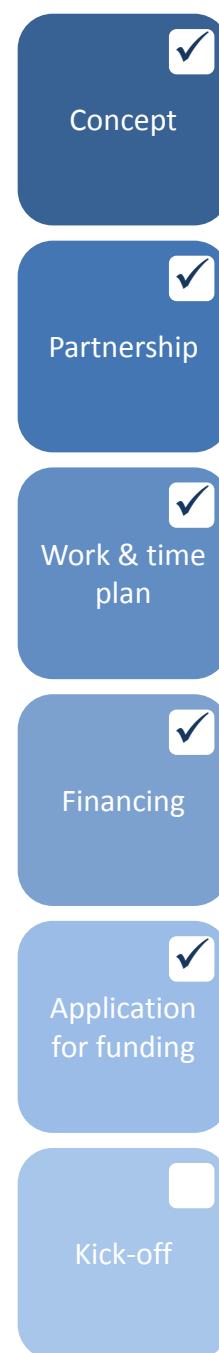
Activities:

The activities were divided into seven activity blocks:

1. Management and organisation
2. Competence, know-how, language
3. Mobility, cross-training and further education
4. Selection of professional orientation and vocational guidance
5. Change, innovation and recognition
6. Inclusion, integration and disadvantaged groups
7. Publicity

In focusing on vocational guidance and training, the target audiences are young people aged 14 to 20 years, who are in the process of choosing an occupation or are already engaged in (or preparing for) training, as well as their teachers.

Current status/activities so far: The activities should start in March 2013 – subject to approval in December 2012.



CulturSKAT



Project partners: Bratislava Self-Governing Region; Slovenský Dom
Centrope; Kulturvernetzung Niederösterreich
EU programme: SK-AT 2014-2020
Project duration: January 2014 – March 2015
Budget: EUR 800,000 (approx.)
Kick-off: October 2014

The objective of the project lies in the development of cross-border co-operation in the field of culture.

Aims:

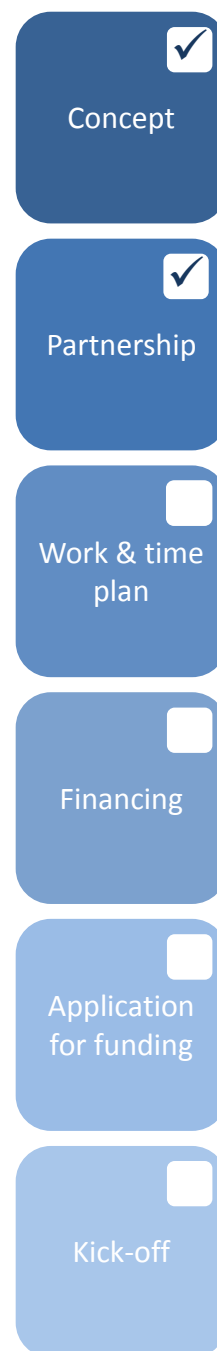
- ✓ Cross-border promotion of culture, cultural events, regional attractions, monuments
- ✓ Improving knowledge of the cultural heritage on both sides of the border
- ✓ Establishing contacts and improving cross-border co-operation between stakeholders in culture

Activities:

The stated objectives will be achieved by implementing the following activities:

- ✓ "Passport" for cultural facilities, creation of database
- ✓ Creating a web portal designed to promote culture, cultural events and attractions
- ✓ Visits to specific culture-related events on both sides of the border, know-how transfer
- ✓ Organisation of **centrope** meeting on cultural issues
- ✓ Organisation of workshops with experts and stakeholders from the cultural field
- ✓ Study of the creative industry, its development possibilities in terms of cross-border co-operation in Slovak and Austrian regions
- ✓ Organisation of a scientific symposium to exchange knowledge and experience
- ✓ Involvement of selected art-oriented secondary schools in the project

Current status/activities so far: The activities should start in October 2015.



Agritourism



Project partners: Slovenský Dom Centrope; Europaforum Wien

EU programme: National grant scheme of the Slovak Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development

Project duration: March 2012 – December 2012

Budget: EUR 20,000

Kick-off: March 2012

The objective of the project lies in the creation of common agritourism products and their promotion within the centrope region.

Aims:

- ✓ Identification of stakeholders in tourism services – focus “traditional cuisine, local wines, folklore traditions, leisure activities”.
- ✓ Networking of stakeholders in tourism services – focus “traditional cuisine, local wines, folklore traditions, leisure activities”.
- ✓ Calendar of events, activities and products with a bearing on agritourism.
- ✓ Marketing tools for the promotion of products.

Activities:

The stated objectives will be achieved by implementing the following activities:

- ✓ Project management
- ✓ Studies of perspective agritourism destinations in the Bratislava and Trnava Regions
- ✓ Workshop 1 – Best practices in Austria, networking of stakeholders, SK-AT
- ✓ Workshop – Active co-operation of private and public sector, SK- AT
- ✓ Calendar of agritourism events BSK/TTSK
- ✓ Promotional campaign of agritourism products

Current status/activities in progress: Four activities were already completed.

Project for 2013: **Agrotourism SK-AT online:** This project will be financed through the same national grant scheme of the Slovak Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development.



Concept



Partnership



Work & time
plan



Financing



Application
for funding



Kick-off