

ACTIVITY REPORT



summary
CESCI
2011



ABOUT CESCI

The Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives was set up by natural persons in 2009 with the aim of providing professional support for cross-border cooperation along the Hungarian border as well as in the Central and Southeast European area.

CESCI is based in Budapest, but its operation covers several countries.

The honorary chairman is Professor Szilveszter Vizi E., former chairman of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The members of the board are:

- ▶ Dr József Benedek, professor of geography, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca: outgoing chairman

- ▶ Rudolf Bauer, mayor (Košice West, SK)
- ▶ Zsolt Borkai, mayor (Győr City with County Rights)
- ▶ Judit H. Kovács, director (National Development Agency, Directorate of Regional Operative Programmes)
- ▶ Iosif Matula, MEP (Arad, RO)
- ▶ Professor Árpád Mihalovics (Pannon University).

CESCI's main aims:

- ▶ to provide professional support to cross-border initiatives along the Hungarian border and in Central and Southeast Europe
- ▶ incorporating the Euro-regions, the EGTCs and local and regional authorities participating in the cross border cooperation into a network
- ▶ promoting West European best practices
- ▶ establishing strategic cooperation with the competent decision making and decision preparing institutes of the European Union as well as with Northern and Western European networks created with the same purpose
- ▶ strengthening the internal cohesion and mutual rapprochement within the region by establishing partnerships between the nations of Central and Southeast Europe.

Operational head: Gyula Ocskay, general secretary. In 2011 day-to-day operation was handled by an average 6 members of staff.

In 2011 six new members were registered at the AGM, which was held on 26th May, bringing the total membership to 43.

We give detailed account of the 2011 activities in the followings.

EGTC PROGRAMME

The main area of operation for CESCI in 2011 was consultancy work related to the establishment and development of European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). This work consists primarily of the drawing up of the necessary founding documents and the coordination of the approval and registration processes, in all appropriate countries. In 2011 CESCI oversaw the registration of 3 EGTCs, and a further 2 EGTCs were nearing the end of the process by the end of the year.

Arrabona EGTC

The Győr-based EGTC set up by Győr, Mosonmagyaróvár, Dunajská Streda and Šamorín was registered in May. Since then a further 17 municipalities have joined the grouping.

RDV EGTC

The EGTC was set up in June by Trnavský kraj, Komárom-Esztergom and Győr-Moson-Sopron counties, with head offices in Tatabánya. The EGTC was registered by the Budapest City Court as court of registration in early December.



Novohrad-Nógrád EGTC

The grouping set up by Salgótarján and Fil'akovo will be the management arm of the world's first cross-border geo-park. We expect some 70 municipalities to join the grouping. The EGTC was registered in December.

Gate to Europe EGTC

The EGTC was set up on the initiative of the Nyíradony local authority and potentially comprises the Dél-Nyírség region, the definitive part of the Hajdúság, and in Romania the Ier region and the region of Crasna river. The approval process began in 2011.

European Joint Future EGTC

The grouping, launched by the local council of Pusztaottlaka, could play a significant role in organizing the cross-border initiatives of the region that comprises Békés and Csongrád counties. The approval process is in progress.

CETC EGTC

The grouping comprises municipalities of different sizes and levels of six different countries. Its goal is to develop a North-South transport corridor, the Central European Transport Corridor to link Southern Sweden and Croatia. The decision to set up an EGTC as part of the CETC project was taken in 2010. The related feasibility study was prepared by CESCI. We drew up a draft of the relevant founding documents in 2011. The documents were approved by the Polish and Hungarian self-governments involved. The EGTC will be based in Szczecin in Poland.

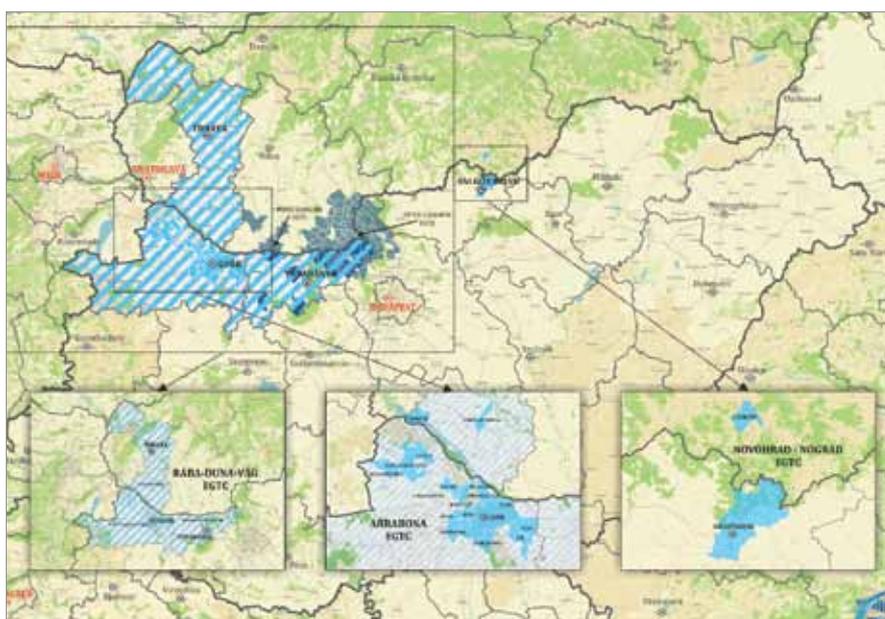
Professional support

Our organization provides professional support for the establishment, launch and operation of many other EGTCs in addition to the ones listed above.

Planning of the EGTC conceived by Nyíregyháza, Satu Mare (RO) and Berehove (UA) began in autumn last year, and the relevant founding documents were drawn up in all three languages by December, 2011. The Tátra-Mátra-Bükk EGTC is in development, with professional support by CESCI. The EGTC may be established with a Miskolc HQ.

We joined the Pons Danubii project in the strategic planning phase. We supported the Ister-Granum EGTC with legal consultancy, the Arrabona EGTC with the redaction and publication of a brochure.

Apart from our work "in the field", we also participated in the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice's EGTC working group, and were invited to offer our professional opinion on relevant domestic and EU legislations.



PLANNING AND CONSULTANCY

We reviewed the Hungarian Semmelweis plan, and offered our review for consultation to the relevant decision makers. We drew the attention of the authors of the Hungarian healthcare reform plan to the opportunities inherent in cross-border service provision, and the efficiency of possible joint service provision areas.

Within the framework of a Visegrad4 project we prepared EGTC case studies on commission from the Interrégió Fórum Egyesület (Interregion Forum Association). As a part of the project, the Bratislava agglomeration, the media project realised by the Pons Danubii EGTC, the Ister-Granum non-profit service provision system,



the Novohrad-Nógrád Geopark and the integrated tourism project of the Abaúj Abaújban EGTC have been presented. Parallel to the case studies, a documentary movie was prepared with CECI's professional assistance. The film is available via the CECI webpage. The film promotes EGTCs.

We reviewed the national rural development strategy and offered our review for consultation to the relevant decision makers. Our review pointed out the ways in which cross-border aspects of the strategy could be strengthened.



We prepared a summary with regard to past Tisza water reservoir projects, and organizational initiatives. As a result, CECI was invited to become involved in the planning of the forthcoming

Southeast European Tisza project. We prepared our recommendations for the institutional structure, and offered information to the representatives of the project host Regional Environmental Centre (REC) on the way in which the Tisza management could be structured through an EGTC. The project was submitted for the call of the Southeast European Interreg Programme.

We prepared the institutional chapter of the development strategy of the Innoaxis project, which helps the integration of the Hungarian-Serbian border region. The initiators of the Innoaxis project investigated the way to develop a unified development zone in the border region.

We worked out our position paper on the Hungarian national contribution to the EGTC resolution review. Aspects of our contribution were incorporated into the joint Hungarian memorandum by the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice.

We prepared a comprehensive strategic analysis for the Wekerle plan draft forming part of Hungarian foreign trade strategy. In our analysis we considered all previous initiatives in the region of the Carpathians, and formulated a proposal on how we felt the plan should be amended.

The collection of statistical maps and diagrams prepared on commission for the Pons Danubii EGTC serves to assist strategic planning. The collection gives account of the major regional trends based on data gathered by the Hungarian and Slovakian Statistical Offices.

Within the framework of the Hungarian-Romanian joint project entitled 'Limit of value' according to the order given by the municipality of Nyíradony, we prepared the strategy of a cross-border institution of municipalities and related legal analysis. We began to work on the project in late 2011, following the amendment of the Hungarian municipalities act.

OUR PROJECTS

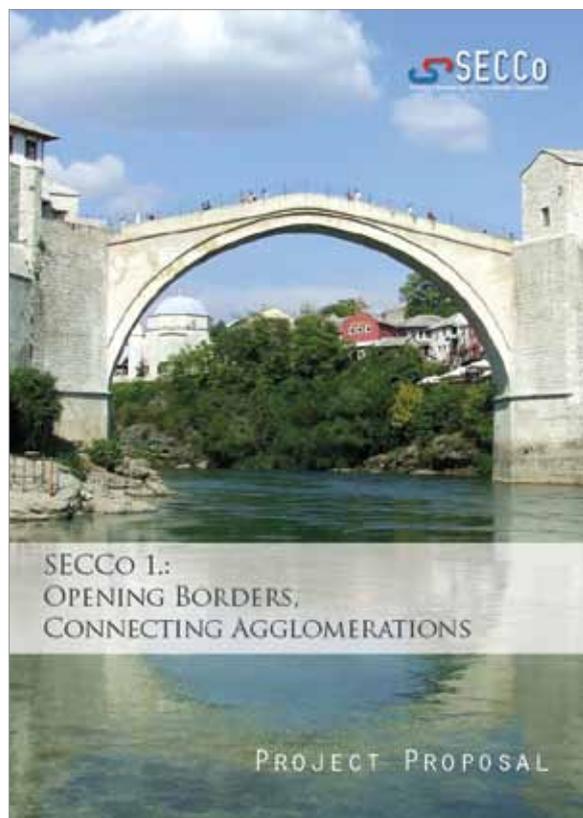
Frontier-value

Our successful application provided to the call of Hungary-Slovakia CBC programme aims at describing and promoting best-practice projects implemented since 1999 within the Hungarian-Slovakian CBC programme (our partner is the Forum Institute of Šamorín). The project of EUR 106 000 also aims at exploring the efficiency of the subventions invested in the border region.

SECCo 1 (Sharing Experiences on Cross-border Cooperation): Opening Borders, Connecting Agglomerations

The first thematic project of the package of projects approved by the Hungarian Government as part of the EU's Danube Region Strategy explores the geographical, economic, governmental and legislative environment of the cross-border development of agglomerations in the Central and Southeast European region. Our application was submitted to the INTERREG IVB Southeast European programme.

Our partners:



- ▶ Bulgaria: Sofia Municipality, St Clement Ohridski University (Sofia)
- ▶ Hungary: University of Miskolc, Hungarian Association of Regional and Community Developers, Ministry of Public Administration and Justice (observer)
- ▶ Italy: European Academy Regional Development and Community Development Institute (Bolzano), South Tirol Architecture Foundation (Bolzano)
- ▶ Romania: Civitas Foundation for the Civil Society (Cluj Napoca), Babeş-Bolyai University Department of Geography, Oradea Municipality, Ministry of Administration and Interior (observer)
- ▶ Serbia: University of Novi Sad College of Social Sciences, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management (Novi Sad), Regional Science Association (Subotica)
- ▶ Slovakia: EuroKonzult Association (Košice)
- ▶ France (non-programme area partner): Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière.

GUIDE 1.0

We have submitted our project entitled 'Giving Useful Information for Development in Eastern European border areas' (GUIDE 1.0) project for the call of the Hungary-Slovakia cross-border programme, in partnership with the Košice based EuroKonzult Association. The project aims at developing a comprehensive regional development database of the programming area, displaying the database on a web portal, publishing a manual of new European Cohesion Policy, establishing a permanent project development workshop with the cooperation of experts helping Hungarian-Slovak border area, and with their own contribution developing concrete development projects with the involvement of local stakeholders.

We are planning the realisation of similar projects in all border regions.

PROFESSIONAL EVENTS

Carpathian-basin regional development workshop

The 4th Carpathian-basin regional development workshop was held in Antalovci (Ukraine) on 1st-3rd April. The main topic of this successful event was regional development based on local values. The presenters and participants came from Romania, Serbia, Hungary, Slovakia and the Ukraine.



Second Câmpia Transilvaniei development workshop

We held the second Câmpia Transilvaniei civil workshop on 15th-17th April in Gherla (Romania). The event attracted 65 registered participants from all parts of the larger Câmpia Transilvaniei region. The main objective was to determine the main tasks of a future development network, and to discuss the conditions of operation of it. A further aim was to map the human basis of the joint strategy. The network development workshop was organized in cooperation with the Civitas Foundation, with funding by the National Civil Fund.



The first meeting of the Budapest Platform

The Budapest Platform

The Budapest Platform, set up in December 2010 with Hungarian, French, Portuguese and Dutch involvement, held its first meeting in Reims in France on 15th June. Decisions were made on the following issues at this first meeting:

- ▶ the platform's name has been accepted as final one;
- ▶ the participants acknowledged with satisfaction that CESCI had published a promotional brochure on the initiative;
- ▶ the platform will have its own website, with basic content, and links to the websites of the members of the initiative;
- ▶ the platform will initiate an exclusive professional consultation with the DG Regio on the draft resolutions designed to prepare the adoption of the new Cohesion Policy.

Hungarian-French border workshop

The first Hungarian-French municipal workshop on cross-border cooperation was held in Budapest at the Institut Français on 8th July, organized jointly by CESCI, MOT and the Franco-Hungarian Initiatives Association. Successful Hungarian and French projects were presented at the workshop before participants agreed to create a permanent virtual workshop. The workshop will undertake the followings: launch a project fair on the websites of the two professional organizations; launch a joint blog to give account of successful projects, pool new ideas and experiences, and to share the information on the funding opportunities; support the development of networks with Hungarian-French participation.



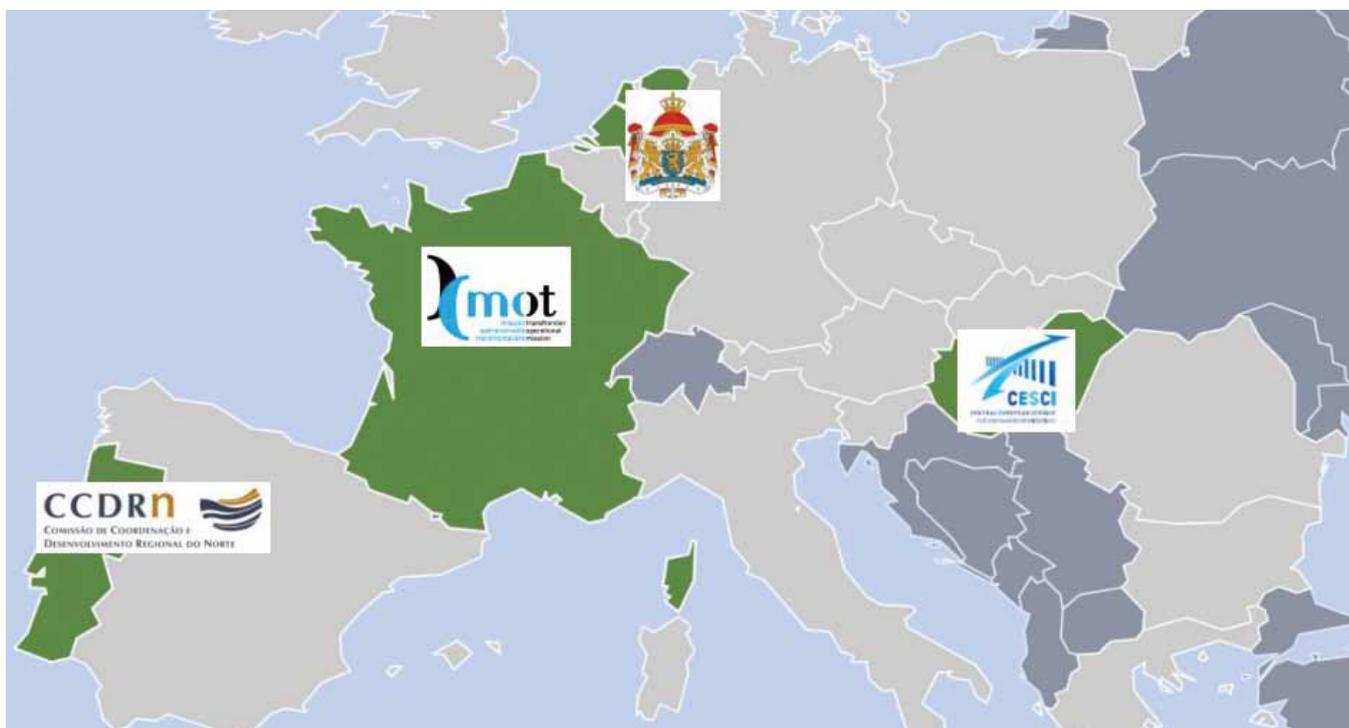
We were also involved in the professional preparations of 3rd meeting of Hungarian and French municipalities held before the workshop in the building of the Parliament.

The second Budapest Platform meeting

The second meeting of the Budapest Platform was held as part of the Brussels Open Days events on 11th October, 2011 in the office of French Treasury. All partners were represented at the meeting. On behalf of CESCI József Benedek, chairman, Rudolf Bauer, member of the board, and Gyula Ocskay, general secretary took part in the meeting. We discussed the draft cohesion policy resolutions published a few days before the event, and we decided to organize a seminar to be held in late November in the Benelux Office in Brussels, to announce our joint position to representatives of EU institutions. The seminar has been put off till a later date.

CESCI proposed the preparation of a new joint guide, in response to the new situation. The necessary

work will be coordinated by CESCI and completed during 2012. Members approved the simple logo at the meeting, and charged CESCI with development of a joint website for the partnership. We booked the www.budapestplatform.eu domain, and the development work of the web site has begun.



István Pálfi Memorial Day

We participated in the preparation and realisation of the 2011 Pálfi Memorial Day (28th November). We mediated between the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice and the awarded Michel Delebarre with regard to the award handing ceremony. We have prepared the eulogy and composed the text of the diplom. We sent out the invitation letters to some of the invited persons and oversaw the registration process ahead of the event, and operated the registration desk during the event.



We handed the awards of the 2011 Pálfi competition together with the István Pálfi Regional Development Foundation on the Memorial Day.

PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL EVENTS

Our association has been an active participant at numerous professional workshops.

We are the only outside organization participating in the meetings of the interministerial EGTC working group managed by the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice, and we are a member of the broader EGTC forum as well. Apart from the Hungarian Danube Strategy working group, we participate in the Vienna-based 3rd working group of priority area (PA) 10 ('Institution Capacity and Cooperation'). We are also members of the cluster working group (PA 8: To support the competitiveness of enterprises, including cluster development) coordinated by the Ministry of National Economics. At European level we are a member of the EGTC platform, and we aim to be present at all events where issues related to EGTCs are under discussion.

In 2011 we were represented at the following major events:

- 22nd-23rd March:** participation and presentation at the EGTC conference in Gödöllő held as part of the Hungarian EU presidency
- 11th-12th May:** participation and presentation at the annual conference of the Transport Chapter of the Hungarian Chamber of Engineering held in Balatonföldvár
- 15th June:** presentation on European regional cooperation at the annual conference of MOT (Reims, France)
- 29th-30th June:** participation at the meeting of the Steering Committee of the CETC initiative (Szczecin, Poland)
- 6th-7th July:** participation and presentation at the 3rd workshop of Hungarian and French municipalities (Budapest, Parliament)
- 10th-13th October:** participation at the Open Days of the Committee of the Regions (Brussels)
- 24th-25th October:** participation and presentation at the Polish presidency conference (cohesion policy) (Warsaw)

OUR PUBLICATIONS

We have published a booklet, in Hungarian and English, on the Budapest Platform, with financial support from the NCF.

We have published a coloured promotional booklet in Hungarian and English on the CESCO-initiated SECCO project, launched as part of the EU's Danube Region Strategy, and selected for the official Hungarian project list.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

1024 Budapest, Káplár u. 10/b

cesci@cesci-net.eu

www.cesci-net.eu