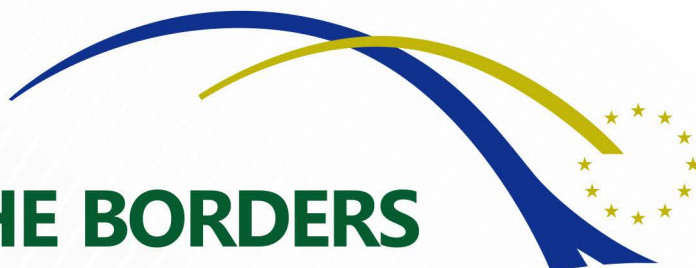


Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives  
European Institute of Cross-Border Studies



# CROSSING THE BORDERS

## Studies on cross-border cooperation within the Danube Region

### Case Study

Cooperation of the Moravian-Silesian (CZ) and  
Žilina (SK) Self-governing Regions in the

EGTC TRITIA



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## 1. Introduction

This case study was elaborated in the framework of the project „Crossing the borders: Geographic and Structural Characteristics of Cross-Border Cooperation in the Danube Region”, a project led by CESCO - Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives. The case study was elaborated between June and November 2014 by the team of authors led by Hynek Böhm.

The cooperation of Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions under the TRITIA EGTC umbrella has been selected as an example of the cooperation managed by the territorial units at a higher than municipal but lower than national level. There are only 2 examples of a CBC at a higher than municipal level on the borders of the Czech Republic with Slovakia, Austria and Bavaria (countries or states covered by the Danube Strategy at the moment): forepart from the EGTC TRITIA there is only one such cooperation, under the framework of CENTROPE project. There is also the new EGTC NOVUM, in which four Czech regions are partners (Pardubice, Hradec Králové, Liberec and Olomouc Regions), but the others partners from Poland and Germany do not belong to the Danube Macroregion territory.

CENTROPE is a joint initiative of the Austrian Federal Provinces of Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland, the Czech Region of South Moravia, the Slovak Regions of Bratislava and Trnava, the Hungarian Counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron and Vas as well as the cities of Bratislava, Brno, Eisenstadt, Győr, Sopron, St. Pölten, Szombathely and Trnava. On the basis of the Kittsee Declaration of 2003, they work jointly towards the creation of the Central European Region in this four-country quadrangle.

CENTROPE CAPACITY is the lead project funded under the EU programme CENTRAL EUROPE. In the period until 2012 it aimed to create a multilateral, binding and sustainable framework for the cooperation of local and regional authorities, enterprises and public institutions in the Central European Region. Specific goals consist of creating a polycentric cooperation framework which should allow all the partners to work jointly and more effectively on the cross border issues. The project also offers them new tools for a balanced spatial development as well as an integrated development strategy and action plan. CENTROPE CAPACITY builds on the results of two INTERREG IIIA projects concluded in 2007, which provided the necessary preparatory work and development steps to establish the Central European Region CENTROPE.

So why to choose TRITIA? The CENTROPE cooperation initiative is, due to its “Danube affiliation” composition, probably more relevant than the EGTC TRITIA, which is, apart from its Czech and Slovak members, also made up by two Polish members, Opole and Silesian Voivodeships. Nevertheless CENTROPE region has not been institutionalised yet and has not developed any major activities since the end of CENTROPE CAPACITY project. Moreover, according to several experts, the CENTROPE should be now little bit behind its own zenith. In contrary to the CENTROPE region, the EGTC TRITIA fulfils the criterion of institutionalisation

and can prove some activities. Moreover, the author of the case study has been directly involved in the TRITIA creation and could thus bring some direct insights.

Except for this reason and this case study another one is being elaborated by the author team, more concretely focusing on cross-border cooperation between municipalities in Czech-Austrian-Bavarian border region. The authors think that this might be interesting to present two case studies, one on the municipal- and the another one on regions-led cross-border cooperation.

For the purposes of this paper, CBC is understood as *'an interaction between neighbouring regions within the EU (including Switzerland)'*. Specifically, the interactions which will be considered are those which are initiated by public actors at regional levels (we will not deal with CBC conducted by civic society actors, despite this being also of importance).

After sixty years of European integration, European borders have become psychological rather than physical barriers. Van Houtum (2004) notes that this psychological barrier is the product of the interface between various administrative, legal and cultural systems. The newer EU member states – those which joined in and after 2004 – have a shorter experience with CBC and employ different approaches to the creation of frameworks for CBC governance than do the countries of the 'old Europe'.

The single market, supported by the existence of the Schengen area, has European integration as its goal; that is, to ensure the freedom of movement of people, goods, capital and services. The coming into existence of these four principal freedoms in turn encouraged the process which Boesler (1997) describes as *'Entgrenzung'* (dissolution of borders). *'Entgrenzung'* corresponds to a decreasing role for national states and the increasing importance of regions, which enter into CBC more actively. The *'Entgrenzung'* process between the northern part of the Czech and Slovak borders will be analysed.

In the context of the increased importance of regions the concepts of paradiplomacy and new regionalism take on increased relevance. These concepts acknowledge the autonomy of local political actors and examine CBC from a bottom-up perspective; underlining local actors' use of CBC as a tool to achieve their goals in cross-border regions. Some authors (e.g. Scott, 2000) refer to transborder regionalism, of which the emergence of new political communities is symptomatic. These new political communities cross borders and traditional mechanisms of international cooperation, developing new transfrontier models for advanced regional interaction which are capable of efficiently solving problems. According to Schmitt-Eggner (1998), a cross-border region is not only a territory, but is also its engine. This foresees the existence of a specialised body responsible for CBC management. Both analysed regions created with two other regions from Poland such a body - EGTC TRITIA. The contribution of this entity towards CBC conduct will therefore be assessed.

Knippenberg (2004, p. 618) and Perkmann (2003, p. 163) analysed the behaviour of politicians from border regions and identified a desire to avoid the limitations imposed by policies made

at the national level. Perkmann nevertheless does not consider this *cross-borderisation* to represent any kind of threat to the sovereignty of national states.

The regions are one of the key recipients of EU funds. When CBC was connected with EU funds via the INTERREG programme in the end of the 1980s, the number of cross-border initiatives dramatically increased. Some authors (i.e. O'Dowd 2002) contend that EU money is the only motivation for many cross-border initiatives; others (Scott 2000) consider working with INTERREG as a primary purpose of Euroregions. The role of EU funds as a motivation to establish an EGTC to use these funds more effectively will be analysed in the paper, more concretely relationship between OP CBC Slovakia-Czech Republic and its use by actors creating TRITIA EGTC will be analysed in more detail.

Amin and Thrift (1994) contributed with their „*institutional thickness*“ concept to the group of institutional regional development theories. This partial theory says that institutions are not formal organisations only, but they mainly create informal conventions, habits, network of relations, which stabilise and stimulate performance of regional economies. Success of regions in the long-term horizon is then dependant on the ability of local actors to create such institutions, which can create good framework conditions for economic and social regional development. (Rumpel 2002, p. 25).

According to Powell and Dimaggio (1991, quot. Amin and Thrift, 1994) there are four conditions for institutional thickness at regional level:

1. Presence of classical institutions and organisations.
2. High quality of collective and cooperative behaviour between these institutions.
3. Precise definition of competences and tasks of individual institutions and the entire system they co-create.
4. Feeling of shared responsibility for the project in individual member organisations.

According to many authors (i.a. Rumpel 2002, p. 25) the last condition is the most important one. The authors of this study share the point and will try to verify this in this study.

In the very introduction it was mentioned why authors chose the relations of the Moravian-Silesian Region under the EGTC TRITIA for their case study, when arguing with its institutionalised statute. We have also mentioned several framework contexts which are important for cross-border cooperation. We believe that the quality of institutions and European funds are key factors for cross-border cooperation.

Having written that we would like to state the following objectives of this case study:

The main objective of this paper is to show that the institutionalisation of cross-border cooperation between Moravian-Silesian Region and Žilina Region under the EGTC TRITIA umbrella improved their mutual cooperation. This should be done by the following means:

- Description of the development of this cooperation, its setting-up and governance structures created.
- Interviews with stakeholders responsible for the cross-border cooperation between both regions.
- Analysis of the process of the EGTC creation and strategic documents helping to frame this cooperation.
- Analysis of the ways how these regions use the EU funded Cross-Border Cooperation Operational Programme Slovak Republic–Czech Republic in the 2007–2013 programming period. This will mainly focus on the analysis how did the fact that cooperation become institutionalised influence the approach towards using these funds in comparison to the past (programming period 2004- 2006) and with other regions, which are involved in the cross-border cooperation in the centre and south of the Czech-Slovak border.
- Verification of the validity of several key concepts, mainly through the application of the institutional thickness concept in the cross-border cooperation in question.

## 2. Determination of geographical confines

The systemic cross-border cooperation between Moravian-Silesian Region and Žilina Region has taken place since the launch of the works leading towards the establishment of the EGTC TRITIA. Therefore this chapter will be started with the description of both regions, afterwards the description of the EGTC as the whole will follow. As the Polish neighbours from Silesian Voivodeship have played a prominent role in the process of the EGTC creation, the authors added also some short information about this region.

### 2.1 The Moravian-Silesian Region



Figure 1: Localisation of the Moravian-Silesian Region

The Moravian-Silesian Region is one of the 14 administrative Regions of the Czech Republic. Before May 2001 it was called the Ostrava Region (all newly emerged Czech regions, which were established in 2000, were named according to their biggest urban centres, except for the Central Bohemian Region which is around the City of Prague). The region is located in the north-eastern part of the historical country of Moravia and in the east of historical Silesia, which is currently divided between the Czech Republic and Poland, to which more or less 85% of Silesian territory belongs. The region borders the Olomouc Region to the west and the Zlín Region to the south. It also borders two other countries – Poland (Silesian and Opole Voivodeships) to the north and Slovakia (Žilina Region) to the east.

Once a highly industrialised region, it was called the "Steel Heart of the Country" in the communist era. There are, in addition, several mountainous areas where the natural landscape is relatively well preserved.



### 2.1.1 Physical geography characteristics

The geography of the region varies considerably, comprising many landforms from lowlands to high mountains whose summits lie above the tree line. There is the Hrubý Jeseník mountain in the west, with the highest mountain of the region, and all Moravia), Praděd, rising up to 1 491 metres. These mountains are heavily forested. There are also several ski resorts.

To the east, the landscape gradually descends towards the Moravian Gate (*Moravská brána*) valley with the Bečva and Odra rivers. The former flows to the south-west, the latter to the north-east, where the terrain spreads into the flat Ostrava and Opava basins (*Ostravská a Opavská pánev*), the most densely populated part of the area. The region's heavy industry, which has been in decline for the last decade, is located there too, benefiting from huge deposits of hard coal. The confluence of the rivers Odra and Olše is the lowest point of the region, at 195 m.

To the south-east, towards the Slovak border, the landscape sharply rises into the Moravian-Silesian Beskydy (often referred to just as Beskydy), with its highest mountain Lysá Hora at 1 323 m. The mountains are heavily forested and serve as a holiday resort.

### 2.1.2 Population

The total population of the region was 1 244 200 (men 48,83%, women 51,20%) in 2010 - but this is gradually decreasing since 1989. 86,9% are Czechs, 3,3% Slovaks, 3,0% Poles, 2,3% Moravians, 0,8% Silesians, 0,3% Germans and 0,2% Roma, though this last figure might be considerably higher as Roma often do not officially admit their nationality. 40,2% of the population are religious, mostly Roman Catholic, while 52,3% declare themselves atheists.

The population density is 227,3 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, which is the second highest in the country, after the capital Prague. Most of the population is urban, with 62 % living in towns with over 20 000 inhabitants.

### 2.1.3 Administrative division

There are 300 municipalities, of which 39 enjoy the statute of town. Population of 16 of these towns is over 10 000 inhabitants and 5 towns exceeded 50 000 ceiling. These are the capital of the region [Ostrava](#) (314 102 in 2002 – compare with 295 653 only in 2014), Havířov (85 271 - compare with 295 653 only in 2014), Karviná (61 146 – 2002, only 57 005 in 2014), Opava (60 731 in 2002, 58 054 in 2014) and Frýdek-Místek (60 603 in 2002, 57 523 in 2014).

Traditionally, the region has been divided into six Districts (Czech: *okresy*) which still exist as regional units though most administration has been shifted to the 22 Municipalities with Extended Competence and the Municipalities with Commissioned Local Authority.

- Bruntál
- Frýdek-Místek
- Karviná
- Nový Jičín
- Opava
- Ostrava-City

### 2.1.4 History

Until 2000 the current region did not exist as such. It was only a part of a larger administrative unit called the North Moravian Region (*Severomoravský kraj*), which was dissolved after the change of the regime and the fall of the Iron Curtain. The reform of public administration in 2000 established the Moravian-Silesian Region, next to other 13 regions of the country. Nevertheless there are still repercussions of the “communist period regionalisation”, and the previous regional structure as well as North Moravian Region still exist side by side, mainly in the organisation of justice and police.

Economic situation will be described later, in the part on cooperation strategy between the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions.

## 2.2 Žilina Region

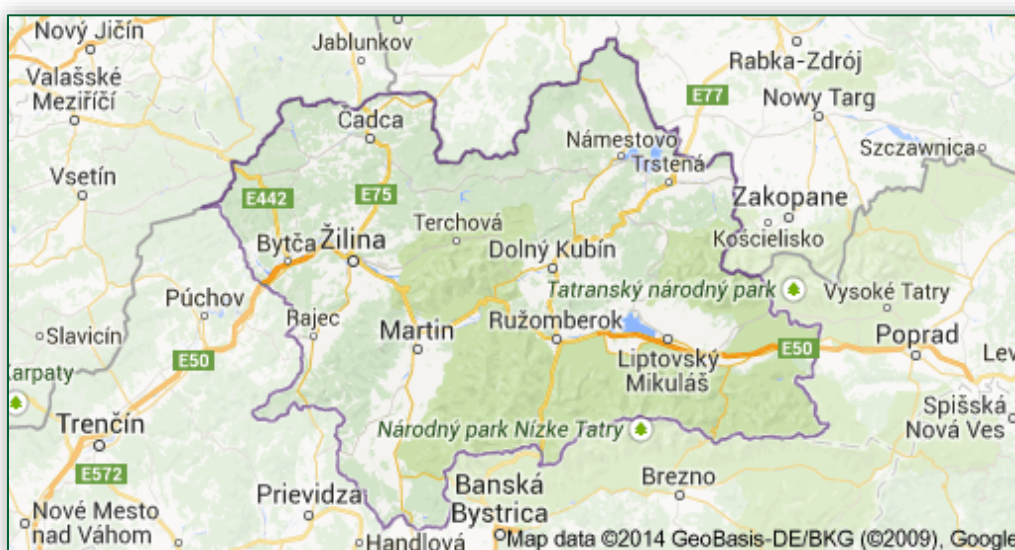


Figure 2: Localisation of Žilina Region

Žilina Self-governing Region is situated in the north-west of Slovakia and it is the third largest from the eight Slovak regions, with an area of 6 808,87 sq. kms, 690 131 inhabitants and a population density slightly exceeding 101 inhabitant per sq. km. It borders with the Czech Republic in the west and Poland in the north. It shares borders with three other Slovak regions – Trenčín, Banská Bystrica and Prešov regions and comprises 5 historical regions (Horné Považie, Kysuce, Liptov, Orava a Turiec), 11 districts (Bytča, Čadca, Dolný Kubín, Kysucké Nové Mesto, Liptovský Mikuláš, Martin, Námestovo, Ružomberok, Turčianske Teplice, Tvrdošín a Žilina) and 315 municipalities, from which 18 have a town status. The region was established in 1923, however, in its present borders it exists only from 1996, when the reform of regional administration in Slovakia took place. It is a mix of industrial region with several large towns and a rural hinterland with mountains. The City of Žilina is the region's administrative centre, whilst the City of Martin has also got a strong cultural environment, as it is also stated in the Slovak Constitution, describing this city as a “centre of Slovak national culture”.

### 2.2.1 Geography

The region is mountainous, belonging to the Western Carpathians. Some of the mountain ranges in the region include Javorníky, the Lesser Fatra and the Greater Fatra in the west, Oravská Magura, Chočské vrchy, Low Tatras and Western Tatras in the east. The whole area belongs to the Váh river basin. National parks on the region's territory are the Lesser and Greater Fatra, as well as the Low and High Tatras; landscape protected areas are Strážovské vrchy, Kysuce and Horná Orava. The colorful character of the region makes it a very attractive tourism locality, often visited by Czech and Polish tourists.

### 2.2.2 History

After the fall of Great Moravia in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century, the area became part of the Kingdom of Hungary by the 12<sup>th</sup> century and remained so practically to 1918. Before the break it was part of the Hungarian counties of Trenčín, Turiec, Orava and Liptov. After the incorporation into Czechoslovakia, the counties continued to exist under their Slovak names of Trenčín, Turiec, Orava and Liptov, but only until 1923, when they were replaced by (grand) counties. From 1928, it was part of the administrative unit "Slovak Land" and thus belonged to the short-lived Slovak Republic (1939-1945) before the land's reincorporation into Czechoslovakia in 1945, when the pre-war state was restored. In 1949-1960 there was a unit with the name Žilina Region but it was abolished in 1960 and the area became part of the new Central Slovak Region, of which it was part until 1990 (except 1969-70) when it was abolished. After the division of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the current region was established in 1996. Since the administrative regions became autonomous in 2002, it is governed as Žilina Self-Governing Region since then.

### 2.2.3 Demography

The largest towns are Žilina, Martin, Liptovský Mikuláš, Ružomberok and Čadca. The level of urbanisation is relatively low, with about 50 % of the population living in the towns, with the Námestovo District having the lowest urbanisation rate in the whole of Slovakia, amounting to merely 15 % of the population living in urban areas. According to the 2011 census, the inhabitants of the region were almost entirely Slovaks (97,5 %), with small minorities of Czechs (<1 %) and Romas (<0,5 %).

### 2.2.4 Economy

Compared to the stagnation in the 1990s, the region enjoys a period of relative prosperity now. Main employers belong to the sectors of industry and tourism. The river Váh valley, which runs across the entire region, forms a strong industrial base with wood pulp and engineering factories as well as the Kia and Volkswagen plants in Žilina and Martin.

The economic situation will be presented later, in the part on cooperation strategy between the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions.

## 2.3 The Silesian Voivodeship and its Metropolitan Area as an Attractor for Czech and Slovak partners

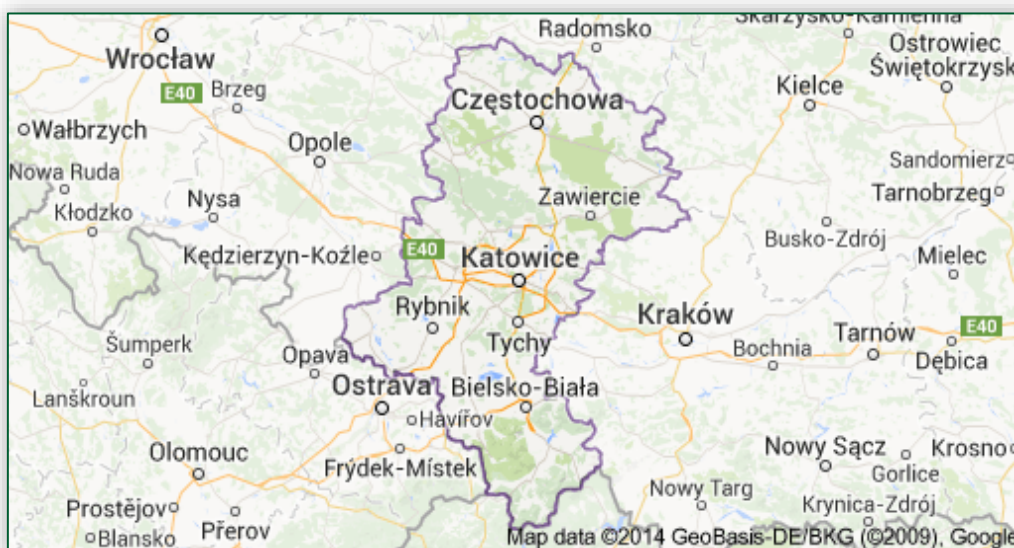


Figure 3: Localisation of Silesian Voivodeship

After the initial description of Czech and Slovak partner regions the picture must be completed by adding information about the strongest TRITIA founding member, the Silesian Voivodeship and its metropolitan area around Katowice. When looking at the characteristics of the Silesian

Voivodeship, it is clear that the process of the creation of TRITIA can be explained also as an opportunity to exploit the potential of the Polish Silesian Voivodeship with its cca . 5 000 000 inhabitants and significant economic potential. The **Silesian Metropolis**, formally *Metropolitan Association of Upper Silesia* is a municipal association composed of 14 adjacent cities lying in the Silesian Voivodeship. The seat of the city council is Katowice, the largest district of the Silesian Metropolis.

*Table 1: Cities of the Silesian Metropolis:*

District	Population	Area	Density
Katowice	312 201	164,67 km <sup>2</sup>	1 896/km <sup>2</sup>
Sosnowiec	222 586	91,06 km <sup>2</sup>	2 444/km <sup>2</sup>
Gliwice	197 393	133,88 km <sup>2</sup>	1 474/km <sup>2</sup>
Zabrze	189 062	80,40 km <sup>2</sup>	2 352/km <sup>2</sup>
Bytom	184 765	69,44 km <sup>2</sup>	2 661/km <sup>2</sup>
Ruda Śląska	144 584	77,73 km <sup>2</sup>	1 860/km <sup>2</sup>
Tychy	129 776	81,64 km <sup>2</sup>	1 590/km <sup>2</sup>
Dąbrowa Górnicza	128 795	188,73 km <sup>2</sup>	682/km <sup>2</sup>
Chorzów	113 678	33,24 km <sup>2</sup>	3 420/km <sup>2</sup>
Jaworzno	95 520	152,67 km <sup>2</sup>	626/km <sup>2</sup>
Mysłowice	74 912	65,75 km <sup>2</sup>	1 139/km <sup>2</sup>
Siemianowice Śląskie	71 621	25,5 km <sup>2</sup>	2 809/km <sup>2</sup>
Piekary Śląskie	59 061	39,98 km <sup>2</sup>	1 477/km <sup>2</sup>
Świętochłowice	54 525	13,31 km <sup>2</sup>	4 097/km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 978 479</b>	<b>1 218 km<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>1 624.4/km<sup>2</sup></b>

The Silesian Metropolis also known as the Katowice area lies within one of the largest urban areas in the European Union. Its population is 2 039 454 (2008),<sup>[3]</sup> within an urban zone, with a population of 2 746 460 according to Eurostat<sup>[4]</sup> and is also part of the wider Silesian metropolitan area, with a population of 5 294 000 according to the European Spatial Planning Observation Network. The agglomeration is the centre of the largest urban area in Poland and one of the largest ones in the European Union. The area flourished in the 19th and early 20th centuries, thanks to industry and natural resources. The conurbation consists of about 40 neighbouring cities, and the Silesian metropolitan area includes over 50 cities with a total population of 5 million inhabitants. Katowice is also in the middle of a 7-million-population megalopolis stretching from the Kraków region through Katowice to the Ostrava region.

The area of the agglomeration enjoyed economic growth – as the most of Poland – even during the period of the global economic crisis started in 2008 (some sources suggest 2007), which was not the case for neither the Czech nor the Slovak Republic. This increased the attractiveness of the cooperation with Polish partners for both Czech and Slovak regions, which was also highlighted by several experts in the interviews.

## 2.4 Opole Voivodship

The other territorial entity which currently co-creates the EGTC TRITIA is Opole Voivodship. It is the smallest region in the administrative makeup of the country in terms of both area and population. About 15 % of the one million inhabitants of this voivodship are ethnic Germans which constitutes 90 % of all ethnic Germans in Poland. As a result, many areas are officially bilingual in Opolskie, and the German language and culture plays a significant role in the education of the region.

The inclusion of Opole Voivodship in the cooperation looks as the least integral one, as the region is far from the tripartite heart of the Czech-Polish-Slovak border. The problems faced by this Voivodship are not the same as the one integrating mainly territories in the Katowice, Ostrava and Žilina triangle. The main reason for the inclusion of the region into the EGTC was probably due to the intensive cooperation of the units working in flood and risks prevention in the Moravian-Silesian Region, Opole and Silesian Voivodships in the years of 2008 and 2009, when the decision to found an EGTC was taken.

## 2.5 The EGTC TRITIA



Figure 4: EGTC TRITIA Cross-border region

Table 2: Basic statistical data on the EGTC TRITIA (2010)

	Moravian-Silesian Region	Opole Voivodeship	Silesian Voivodeship	Žilina Region
<b>Territory</b>	5 427 km <sup>2</sup>	9 411 km <sup>2</sup>	12 333 km <sup>2</sup>	6 788 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Number of inhabitants</b>	1 250 255 inh.	1 033 040 inh.	4 638 462 inh.	694 129 inh.
<b>Population density</b>	230 inh./ km <sup>2</sup>	109 inh./ km <sup>2</sup>	376 inh./ km <sup>2</sup>	102 inh./km <sup>2</sup>
<b>GDP per capita (EURO)</b>	305 458 CZK – 12 727 €	28 379 PLN – 7 094,7 €	36 126 PLN – 9 031,5 €	10 055 €

Source: Czech Statistical Office, Opole Voivodeship Office, Economic University of Katowice

EGTC TRITIA is composed of the Moravian-Silesian Region (CZ), Silesian and Opole Voivodeships (PL) and Žilina region (SK), and the largest cities are Katowice (PL, 300 000 inh.) and Ostrava (CZ, 300 000 inh.). With an area of 34 069 km<sup>2</sup>, and a population 7 855 000 inhabitants, the EGTC belongs to the biggest cross-border regions in Europe. There is a major concentration of heavy industry – coal mining and steel production – mainly in Silesian Voivodeship and the Moravian-Silesian Region. All of the regions involved have been undergoing economic reconstruction, not yet complete. In all of the regions manufacturing industry, mainly driven by the automotive sector, has newly emerged. Seven public universities and numerous private tertiary education institutions reinforce regional innovation potential.

There are smaller cooperation units – Euroregions - within the TRITIA territory:

- Těšínské Slezsko/Śląsk Cieszyński/Teschinensis,
- Silesia,
- Praděd/Pradziad,
- Beskydy.

Only the Beskydy Euroregion covers the territory of all three countries involved in the cooperation process; the other three are Czech-Polish initiatives.

All of the regional centres of the EGTC TRITIA are geographically substantially remote from the national capitals, most noticeably Ostrava (377 km from Prague) and Opole (313 km from Warsaw). The core area of the EGTC is an agglomeration around Katowice and Ostrava. Whereas the Silesian Voivodeship and the Moravian-Silesian Region represent the urban and densely populated part of the EGTC, the Opole Voivodeship and the Žilina Region are rather rural regions.

The regions constituting EGTC TRITIA miss major economic engine or metropolis within the EGTC's territory. This is why there is no substantial cross-border labour market or cross-border flow of commuters in the TRITIA regions. This leads to the absence of specialised structures to deal with the cross-border labour market. Except for Ostrava, which is situated on the Czech-

Polish borders, all of the bigger cities are geographically at least one hour journey by car from the borders.

Neither the cooperation territory nor the actors involved in cross-border cooperation have changed since the cooperation's beginning in 2009. As it will be explained in the following chapters, territorial units conducting cross-border cooperation lower than regional levels were offered a chance to comment on strategic development documents which have been developed during the phase of the TRITIA construction. Nevertheless, they have not been invited to become direct EGTC members for the moment.

The only other territorial unit who declared its interest in joining the EGTC was the Olomouc Region (Czech Republic). Their offer has been pending and remained unsolved, in the meantime thus Olomouc Region decided to join the newly constituted EGTC NOVUM, which covers the western part of the Czech-Polish border (thus no involvement of Slovak partners). For the EGTC TRITIA one must conclude that territorial expansion has neither been foreseen nor excluded.



### 3. The development of the cross-border cooperation

Each cross-border cooperation on the Czech-Slovak border is different compared to the other borders of the Czech Republic. Except for the non-existing physical, there are also almost non-existent or minimal mental and language barriers – yet the statement about the minimal language barrier cannot be applied for the young born in and after the 1990s. This is obviously caused by the long common history, presented by a joint co-existence in Czechoslovakia, which dates back to the years between 1918 and 1992, with the exception for the World War II period in 1939, when the independent Slovakia existed next to the Czech occupied territory (Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren). In the times of the common state there were functional links between the Czech and Slovak parts of the federation: daily commuting to work or school was a reality, public transport connections were in place and no mental barrier were perceived between both parts of the federal country.

After the division of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of the two successors – the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic since 1 January 1993, these links started to disappear, moreover, a standard border regime was introduced between both countries. The period after 1993, was influenced by different developments in both counties: whereas the Czech Republic followed Poland and Hungary in their efforts to “return to Europe”, Slovakia was little bit behind due to the semi-authoritarian style of prime-minister Vladimír Mečiar. This led to the fact that the Czech Republic joined the NATO alliance together with Poland and Hungary already in March 1999, whereas Slovakia must have waited till 2004. Nevertheless in the same year both the Czech Republic and Slovakia joined the EU in one big group with another 8 mostly ex-communist countries.

Nevertheless, in spite of the division both countries declared very similar ambitions in the foreign policy. Except for the above mentioned NATO and EU membership ambitions, which were successfully fulfilled, both countries belong to the Visegrad Group. As the web presentation of the V4 states, “the V4 was not created as an alternative to the all-European integration efforts, nor does it try to compete with the existing functional Central European structures. Its activities are in no way aimed at isolation or the weakening of ties with the other countries. On the contrary the Group aims at encouraging optimum cooperation with all countries, in particular its neighbours, its ultimate interest being the democratic development in all parts of Europe”. What is important for our paper, the cross-border cooperation belongs among top cooperation priorities, as it is mentioned in the lower paragraphs.

Visegrad cooperation is not much institutionalised. It is based solely on the principle of periodical meetings of its representatives at various levels (from the high-level meetings of prime ministers and heads of states to expert consultations). Official summits of V4 prime ministers takes place on an annual basis. Between these summits, one of the V4 countries holds presidency, part of which is the responsibility for drafting a one-year plan of action.

The only organisation within the V4 platform is the International Visegrad Fund. The Fund – established in 2000 with the aim of supporting the development of cooperation in culture, scientific exchange, research, education, exchange of students and development of cross-border cooperation as well as promotion of tourism – represents the civic dimension of the V4 cooperation. In the absolute majority of cases, the Fund provides financing to activities of non-governmental organisations and individual citizens. Apart from grant programs, the Fund awards individual scholarships and artist residencies which contribute to the exchange of views in the V4 region and the neighbouring countries. It is important to underline that next to the fact that this financial instrument has cross-border cooperation as one of its priorities, also big part of the projects in other domains – culture, scientific exchange, research, education, exchange of students and promotion of tourism – is implemented on a sheer cross-border perimeter, and had a clearly positive role in promoting cross-border cooperation.

As mentioned in previous paragraphs, the division of both countries brought new borders and created physical barriers. These barriers resulted in the decrease of cross-border employment, which happened mainly in the very north of the Czech-Slovak border, where the labour force from the poor Kysuce (Slovakia) always commuted to the Czech side to work either in steel industry in Třinec and Ostrava, or in coal-mining in the Ostrava-Karviná black coal rayon. As the restructuration of industry took place in the 1990s and the early 2000s, the first potential released workers were foreigners – Poles and Slovaks.

The division of Czechoslovakia meant also the different development of public administration structures in both countries: both of them left regional levels of public administration and the only level between municipal and national was the district level – on the Czech side almost without changes, on the Slovak side the reform of districts was undertaken, in terms of which 79 smaller districts replaced the original 37 bigger ones. This environment was not favourable for the cross-border cooperation.

Moreover, no euroregions on the Czech-Slovak border were created in the 1990s: one could have observed the creation of euroregions mainly on the Czech-German (1991, Euroregion Nisa-Nysa-Neisse or 1992, Euroregion Egrensis) or Czech-Polish borders (1997 Euroregion Praděd, 1998 Euroregions Těšín Silesia and Silesia), but there were no Czech-Slovak euroregions. This was also due to the rather negative welcome of euroregions by the then Slovak prime-minister Mečiar (1992-1998) whose administration did not provide any motivation or incentives for creating euroregions.

Therefore, the first euroregions on the Czech-Slovak border were created only in 2000; Euroregion Bílé Karpaty, sheer Czech-Slovak euroregion; trilateral Euroregion Beskydy with Polish municipalities involved and also trilateral Euroregion Pomoraví-Weinviertel, where there are Austrian members too. All these euroregions were controlled by municipalities and regions had almost no influence.

Cross-border flows and connections between the Czech and Slovak parts of the federation were frequent and the border between both parts of the federation was no real limit or barrier in the times of Czechoslovakia. After the division of the country border crossings were established and the frequency of connection by public transport decreased dramatically, but was not stopped. This means that also cross-border flows were decreased but certainly did not stop. Nevertheless, one must add that its intensity was about to be restored mainly after the EU enlargement in 2004 and the removal of physical barriers brought along by the extension of the territory covered by the Schengen Agreement also in the countries which joined the EU in 2004, including the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Once the regions started their functioning, they must have firstly started to care for themselves. The first pre-condition for cooperation between the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions was the signing of a treaty on joint work, which happened in 2003. In this agreement both regions identified the following cooperation areas:

- Economic cooperation and regional development,
- spatial planning and tourism,
- transport infrastructure and environmental protection,
- culture and sport,
- European integration and joint implementation of the EU funded projects.

As it is clear from the last point the European Structural Funds, which became accessible for both countries after the EU enlargement in 2004, brought new impulse into the relations between both regions. The Community Initiative Programme INTERREG 3A for the cross-border cooperation between the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and mainly its successor, the cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme Slovak Republic–Czech Republic 2007–2013 were the financial instruments, which led to the creation of the EGTC TRITIA and the institutionalisation of cooperation between both regions. This is nevertheless in more details described later in the text.

The first decision to establish an EGTC with the participation of the Moravian-Silesian Region, Žilina Region and two Polish regions came in June 2009, when presidents of all 4 regions met in the Moravian-Silesian Region and declared their will and preparedness to establish an EGTC, which was intended to be the first EGTC with Polish and Czech participation. The participation of Polish partners in the EGTC requires further explanation: Silesian Voivodeship and Žilina Regions have been partner regions since 2002, whilst the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Silesian Voivodeship signed their agreement in 2001 already. The participation of Opole Voivodeship cannot be explained with similar agreements as it was at first conducted with the Silesian Voivodeship. According to the experts interviewed their participation was also partly co-incidental.

### 3.1 The way towards establishing the EGTC

The primary motivation for selecting the legal form of EGTC was the possibility that EGTC TRITIA might have a significant role in the administration or at least the use of EU funds. However because experience with this legal form was minimal in Slovakia and non-existent in Poland and the Czech Republic the process of the EGTC's approval with national authorities was slow.

One must stress that the first cross-border initiatives between Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic appeared in the second half of the 1990s, mainly involving municipalities of middle and smaller size. Almost immediately these euroregional initiatives were afforded the opportunity to cooperate on the administration of European funds with national ministries. This share of competences is still in place today. This was also the reason that the formation of the EGTC TRITIA with its flat structure ignoring other vertical public administration levels as well as economic actors and civic society organisations, accompanied by the unhidden ambition to have more control over the funds for cross-border cooperation, encountered a very hesitant welcome from national authorities and a direct refusal from the euroregions.

The process of the EGTC TRITIA's establishment must be understood as a sheer application of the top-down principle. Despite the players at lower than regional level declared their interest in joining the activities towards the establishment of EGTC TRITIA, their voices have been ignored for a longer period. This, jointly with the very low level of communication with national levels, created an environment, which was hostile to the new CBC actor.

The initial meeting in June 2009, where the decision to establish an EGTC was taken, was followed by appointing a working group, which was composed of 5 technicians from each region – a total of 20 people. This working group was leading the works towards the final EGTC TRITIA establishment, which happened in December 2012. The founding process itself was very slow, as the founders and working group members encountered many difficulties at the level of national administration in all three counties. The only exception seemed to be the Slovak capital Bratislava, where due to the functional cooperation between southern Slovakia and Hungary there were some previous experience with this legal form, which was not the case for both Warsaw and Prague.

The principal impetus to establish an EGTC came, as previously mentioned in the upper paragraphs, from political leaders of all 4 involved regions. The most prominent role was probably played by the Marshall of the Silesian Voivodeship Śmigielski and the President of Žilina Region Blanár. Nevertheless, the work itself was done by the members of the working group, which was composed almost exclusively only from public servants of the relevant regional authorities or regional development agency representatives.

The working group members from the Silesian Voivodeship were well aware about their strong position and used it in negotiations. This was visible mainly during the discussion about the

legislation, according to which the EGTC was about to be established, and the question of the future seat of the grouping.

However, this changed when during the autumn 2010 the Marshall Smigielski did not defend his mandate in the elections. The new marshall declared his willingness to continue the works, but his personal interests were in different areas. The change of priorities of the strongest EGTC member was very visible. Moreover, the changed approach of the Silesian Voivodeship could also have been partly attributed to the fact that Polish regions managed to negotiate their continuation in the role of the managing authorities of regional operational programmes (by the way this was the role Slovak regions never had and the Czechs lost it after 2014). We can deduce that the representatives of the Polish partners were satisfied with that role and felt no more need to create difficult managing authority structures for the potential trilateral cross-border cooperation OP TRITIA.

The process of the EGTC creation has diverted from similar processes setting. As it was repeatedly mentioned in the text, the works of the creation began in 2009, when the working group of 20 technicians was created. The OP Slovak Republic – Czech Republic played an important role in this process, as it funded the project ‘Cross-Border Training Academy of Public Servants’. It was decided that parts of the training activities of the project should serve as a training about how to construct an EGTC. For this purpose, the INTERACT Handbook (Practical Handbook on the EGTC) has been exploited and the advice from this document was followed.

Already this initial phase has been except for the training used also for the definition of the joint cooperation areas. Their identification was difficult due to rather different competences of all partner regions. Final decision on cooperation areas was rather limited by this default setting. The working group identified and the politicians confirmed the principle cooperation areas, which were then described in two principle cooperation documents, the Statute and the Convention of the EGTC.

Drafting the Statute and the Convention of the EGTC were the key tasks of the working group. During this assignment, it came to numerous conflicts between lawyers who were representing all parties involved: it seemed that both Czech and Slovak legislation had many common points and principles, but the Polish legislation was found to be more complicated. This led to the prolongation of the whole process, which lasted over two years and resulted in the above mentioned documents, besides having agreed upon Poland as the country of registration and Cieszyn as the seat of the grouping. According to the lawyers it was the only possible solution; on the other hand some interviews with the experts show that Polish lawyers might have overargumented their Czech and Slovak counterparts.

### The convention of founding the TRITIA EGTC identified the following core cooperation areas:

Thematic areas:

- Transport and infrastructure;
- Economic cooperation;
- Tourism;
- Energy and environment.

Horizontal area:

- Smart implementation of projects and programmes.

Apart from these above areas other fields of cooperation were also identified, such as:

- crisis management,
- culture,
- human resources development,
- cooperation of education providers with focus on tertiary education,
- cooperation of public institutions,
- cooperation in the field of sports.

The convention itself was signed in December 2012, and the registration act was done by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in February 2013 ([www.egtctritia.eu](http://www.egtctritia.eu)). The statute was approved and it agreed mainly upon the main principles binding the functioning of the EGTC. It describes the bodies governing the EGTC, which are:

- the Assembly,
- the Director and secretariat, and
- the Supervisory Board.

It also sets the level of financial contribution by all its members; it is presented in chapter VII in more details.

## 3.2 Innovative use of the EU programmes

After the very first phase, during which the above mentioned cooperation areas were identified, the working groups decided to exploit cross-border cooperation programmes, which cover the TRITIA cooperation territory. The idea behind this decision can be, according to the interviews done with local experts, described as an ambition to use this programmes for more systemic approach to the cooperation.

Hence three projects were prepared and submitted into following operational programmes:

- Czech Republic – Poland
- Poland – Slovakia
- Slovakia – Czech Republic

All projects were focused at improving systemic cooperation between regional authorities of all four regions involved in the cooperation. These improvements should have been achieved mainly by a close cooperation of all regional authorities on joint development of systemic cross-border cooperation strategies between the regions involved.

This plan worked well. Three bilateral cross-border cooperation projects, with an ambition to construct three interlinked strategies, were approved and strategies were developed afterwards. The interviewed cross-border cooperation in the target region appreciated the elaboration of these strategies highly. The main asset was seen in the regular meetings of four working groups, which met during the strategy's implementation regularly. This approach brought along the results promptly, as it will be showed in later chapters, because it led to more systemic approach towards the creation of new cross-border projects.

At that phase the four founding EGTC members decided to invite actors of cross-border cooperation also from lower than regional levels, mainly from euroregions on the Czech-Polish border (Euroregions Tesin Silesia, Silesia and Praděd/Pradziad) along with the trilateral Czech-Polish-Slovak Euroregion Beskydy. These partners were offered with the possibility of participation in the process of drafting all three strategies. The euroregions nominated their representatives, but their participation was rather imbalanced. Nevertheless, their proposals have been taken into account.

In the first half of 2012 three bilateral strategies were created. In the meantime the managing authority of the (Czech) regional OP of the NUTS 2 Moravia-Silesia Region decided to finance the merging of three bilateral cooperation strategies into one single EGTC TRITIA strategy. This work was undertaken until the end of 2013; the main author of this study was one of the elaborators of the EGTC strategy.

The bilateral Slovak-Czech and the joint EGTC TRITIA strategy will be in more detail treated with in the chapters on the main activity areas and future cooperation plans. They deserve detailed analysis, as they should serve as principal long-term strategic documents.

## 4. Organisational and institutional structure, operation level and management

The TRITIA organisational units followed the possibilities provided by 1082/2006 Regulation on European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation. Unlike its predecessors (such as Euroregions and working communities), EGTCs allow, within the same cooperative structure, the interaction of different institutional levels in a new form of multilevel governance, where more stakeholders can participate than before: regional and local authorities, Member States, and all those public or private entities (universities, chambers of commerce, foundations, etc.) that are subject to public procurement rules.

It allows them to interact on a regional (not only cross-border) basis. It establishes a legal personality, with binding decisions in potentially remarkably large territories over a wide range of cooperation areas. The legal personality enables it to have a budget and own managing organs, the capacity of employing staff, holding property, to actively participate in legal proceedings, as well as the “EU legitimisation” to promote cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation. This legal stability reinforces decision-making among the partners, their position in interaction with the EU institutions, their possibilities for launching or improving their international position and the effective management of cooperation programs and projects (Spinacci, Arribas 2009, EIPA). This Regulation concretises the institutions, which are obligatory for this legal form. In this chapter we will describe the bodies responsible for the strategic management of the grouping.

### The Assembly

The Assembly should, according to the paragraph 10 of 1082/2006 Regulation, be a “body, which is made up of representatives of its members”. As a highest body of the grouping, it is currently composed by presidents of all four cooperating regions and no major changes are foreseen. Its competences include decision-making on the most important issues such as approving amendments to the Convention and the Statutes, which are the key documents according to the Regulation, approving the budget, election of the director, etc. The current chairman represents the Moravian-Silesian Region, as this was approved by all partners.

### Assembly Composition

- Miroslav Novák – **Chairman**, Moravian-Silesian Region
- Andrzej Buła – Opole Voivodeship
- Mirosław Sekuła – Silesian Voivodeship
- Juraj Blanár – Žilina Self-governing Region



The 1082/2006 Regulation also says that statutes may provide additional organs with clearly defined powers. The four regions which founded the EGTC decided to use this option and established the **Supervisory Board** to control the overall operation and financial management of the grouping and provide the Assembly with advice. The chairman was nominated by Opole Region.

- Tomasz Kostuś – **Chairperson**
- Pavol Holeštiak
- Martin Sikora
- Dawid Pasek

Other bodies, operating within this EGTC, are expected to conduct the day-to-day work. Therefore they will be described in next chapter.

## 5. Composition of the working group

The EGTC Regulation 1082/2006 foresees that day-to-day management of the EGTC should be secured by the Director, who will be in her/his efforts supported by the Secretariat.

### Secretariat of the EGTC

During the EGTC preparatory phase, partners decided to establish an EGTC according to the Polish legislation, as it looked as the only feasible option. To this end it seemed to be inevitable that the physical seat of the EGTC should also be located in Poland.

The secretariat of the Assembly was finally placed in Cieszyn, Poland. The choice of this town as a seat of the EGTC was done mainly due to the symbolic meaning of the place: Cieszyn (in Czech Těšín) was one town, which was divided between Czechoslovakia and Poland after the end of the World War I. The town is a seat of Cieszyn/Těšín Silesia region and since 1998 also Czech-Polish Euroregion bearing the same name (Euroregion Těšínské Slezsko /Ślask Cieszyński). Both the towns Český Těšín (CZ) and Cieszyn (PL) have been very active in the cross-border cooperational work and they have developed some remarkable projects and products.

Probably the biggest current problem of EGTC TRITIA lies in the limited capacity of its current secretariat, which is combined – or probably also partly co-caused – by the decreased level of interest from the strongest EGTC partner, the Silesian Voivodeship.

The first director of the grouping, Mr Zacharides, was not allowed to conduct the job on a full-time basis by the President of Žilina Region. Next to that he has been working as a Director of the Regional Development Agency of Žilina Region, which nominated him to do the job, but instructed him to conduct the EGTC director's function only up to a half-time basis. This limitation in capacity did not allow Mr Zacharides to dedicate the time to the TRITIA that it would have deserved.

Except for that the director was rather limited in the conduct of his role as a human resources manager. He was not allowed to select the employees freely, but had to accept nominations coming from the founding regions. Sometimes these nominations were made on political basis and the nominees had met very few of the preconditions to conduct the job properly.

As a result of this situation the secretariat was at a very uncomfortable position at the very beginning of TRITIA activities. The secretariat was composed from three persons, none of them on a full-time basis and at least one of them (in a position of project manager) was a sheer political nominee with very few preconditions fulfilled to do the job properly.

At the EGTC preparatory phase the discussion was led also about the possible involvement of the experts, which would be seconded for the EGTC's use by the founding members. These initial thoughts were nevertheless not anyhow reflected into the mechanisms setting up the

EGTC TRITIA's functioning. These seconded experts would have certainly been of a substantial help, nevertheless they have since then not been involved yet.

Despite the above mentioned limitations, the director Mr Zacharides managed to obtain some financial resources on a project basis. The projects were using the funds available: OP cross-border cooperation Czech Republic – Poland 2007-2013 and the International Visegrad Fund. They are described in a later chapter focusing on the main activities.

The current activities of the EGTC secretariat focus on the implementation of the approved projects. Except for that it has been engaged as a facilitator of the process of preparation and implementation of all mentioned strategies. As far as EU funding is concerned, there is a break between the calls of the two programming periods at this moment: the calls of 2007-2013 are over and the new programming period 2014-2020 will be – in terms of calls – launched in spring 2015 at the earliest.

The secretariat principally allows the balanced use of all three official and working languages of the grouping, Czech, Slovak and Polish. In practical terms the mix of all languages is applied, a translator from Czech/Slovak into Polish was used to be invited in the process of the statute, convention and strategies drafting. Now these professionals are used somewhat less. In practical terms the differences between Czech and Slovak do not require any external assistance, the differences of both languages to Polish are nevertheless more significant, here the language assistance is often needed, despite that the secretariat tries to save the money and use its own human resources.

At the moment the secretariat has four staff-members, each of them selected by one of the four founding regions: director Ms Sláviková, who is commuting from Slovakia, project manager representing Opole Region Ms Marzena Koral also commuting from Opole, project manager Anna Pilch from Cieszyn, who represents the Silesian Voivodeship, financial manager Ms Stepnikowska coming also from Cieszyn. The last member of secretariat from the Moravian-Silesian Region was from Český Těšín and also commuted (in fact walked over the border bridge from home) left the secretariat, right now the Moravian-Silesian Region is looking for his replacement. Except for the financial manager and project manager Ms Pilch, who have in the same building the seat of their other employer, staff-members commute to Cieszyn, but not on a daily basis. According to former director Zacharides they meet twice or three times a week.

## 6. Main cooperation plans, goals and activities

This chapter will focus on the main strategic documents, which determine the principal cooperation areas, activities and projects. It is the systemic approach towards cooperation, which distinguishes the cooperation of the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions under the joint TRITIA umbrella from other initiatives cooperating across the borders. Except for this systemisation it is also the institutionalisation of cooperation, which makes a difference to other cooperation initiatives.

The use of three cross-border cooperation programmes was – to our knowledge – the first time when Objective 3 programmes have helped to finance the development of strategic documents for a future EGTC. Hence in this chapter we will describe how “The Cooperation Project” helped to formulate cooperation strategy between the Žilina and Moravian-Silesian Regions.

### 6.1 Key cooperation initiatives based on the results of the project 'Cooperation – Strategy of systemic Cooperation Between Žilina and Moravian-Silesian Region'

The bilateral cooperation strategy between the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Žilina Self-Governing Region was funded from the SK-CZ OP. Its elaboration was done by the members of the four working groups, which copied the core cooperation areas (transport and infrastructure, economic cooperation, tourism, and energy and environment), the outsourced Regional Development Agency of the Žilina Region had responsibility for the final outline of the document. The document was elaborated between June 2011 and March 2012.

This partial cooperation strategy had an ambition to achieve the following global objective: “achieving by the means of mutual cooperation the needs necessary for the socio-economic development of border territory while respecting given assets of this territory and reflecting its needs”. This global objective should be achieved by the following strategic objectives:

1. Improving the transport network of the border region to ensure accessibility, increasing security and minimising negative environmental impacts.
2. Developing cross-border cooperation while working on an environment favourable for employment, entrepreneurship and innovation.
3. Exploiting the historical and natural assets of the territory for tourism economy development.
4. Increasing the quality of environment of the territory and using its potential for the exploitation of alternative energy resources.

## 6.2 Proposals for the future cooperation in transport and infrastructure

### 6.2.1 Current situation

High traffic load of existing road links in the Žilina Region and the Moravian-Silesian Region, increased rate of accidents, as well as negative impact on the environment in the form of increased noise, emissions from mobile sources of pollution and the like, all caused by insufficient infrastructure of this border area and also its insufficient quality. This has a negative impact on the required connectivity and accessibility of the area on both sides of the border. Both partner regions have the second lowest number of kilometres of road infrastructure per capita in the national comparisons. At the same time, the volume of public road traffic in both regions shows above-average values in their countries. The traffic load of the existing road network is also increased by rapidly growing transport between both regions, whilst the border crossings Svrčinovec-Mosty u Jablunkova and Makov-Bumbálka belong to the most important border crossings at the whole Czech-Slovak border due to the intensity of the use of passenger and freight transport and the rate of its growth. This situation relates to the wider economic context after the integration of the Czech Republic and Slovakia in the EU and with the increasing importance of the north-south European traffic corridor passing through both regions, while there is a slow advancement in building the superior transport infrastructure. High traffic load of the road network in both regions negatively impacts accident rate, in terms of which both regions rank among the leaders in this statistics in their respective countries, including fatalities.

Table 3: Selected transport data of both regions

Indicator	Žilina Region	Year of the data topicality	Moravian-Silesian Region	Year of the data topicality
Length of roads (I,II,III)	1 954,21	2010	3 377,6	2010
Density of roads (I,II,III) per100 km2	28,7	2010	62,24	2010
Length of roads per10K inhabitants	28,02	2010	27,9	2010
Length of highways and speedways	77,48	2010	85,5	2010
Density of highways and speedways per 100 km2	1,14	2010	1,58	2010
Length of highways and speedways per 10K inhabitants	1,11	2010	0,69	2010
Fatalities in traffic accidents	57	2010	76	2010

Road transport has, in terms of the transportation sector, a dominant share in generating CO<sub>2</sub> and particle emissions and contributes to the fact that both regions rank among the most polluted ones in their respective countries. The rugged topography of this border area, caused by the Carpathian mountain range, is reflected by an increased number of structures, including bridges, in the road infrastructure. Lack of investments in road infrastructure contribute to the increase in emissions of pollutants in the atmosphere. Last but not least, they contribute to the high risk of accident rate, since many infrastructural elements increase the risk of collision of road traffic participants. On the contrary, alternative forms of transport, such as railway traffic, cycling and others, are not used sufficiently. There are free charging stations for electric motor vehicles. The cycle tracks' network is poor, the tracks are usually running on the roads used by motor vehicles and the design of existing crossings does not take cyclists into consideration. At present, their condition is not satisfactory to serve as an alternative for the accessibility of the economic centres of the region. Although the railway network allows in its density and intensity for passenger transport the accessibility of urban centres, the greater share of this means of travel is prevented by the fact that the train station network is not sufficiently equipped with parking areas, as well as the fact that the synergy of public transport could not show in full extent due to the lack of coordination with bus services.

*Table 4: SWOT analysis of the cooperation in the field of transport and infrastructure*

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Centres of both regions are connected to the national highway network</li> <li>● Construction of highway connection between centres of both regions is realised gradually</li> <li>● Existing capacity of the railway traffic for transport of passengers and freight</li> <li>● Positive experience of authorities with the implementation of reconstructions of existing traffic connections projects in border area</li> <li>● Implemented projects of railway and road infrastructure development with EU support</li> <li>● Existence of the Integrated Transport System (IDS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Low intensity of joint strategic action in the development of the Pan-European transport corridor VI route</li> <li>● Insufficient coverage of the territory in question with highway and speedway infrastructure</li> <li>● Routing of busy road links through the towns and villages with a negative impact on environmental quality in affected areas</li> <li>● Insufficient sequencing of public transport connections in border areas</li> <li>● Lack of transport connections of airports via highway and railway infrastructures</li> <li>● High rate of accidents including fatal traffic accidents</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Routing of the Pan-European transport corridor VI, connecting the north and the south of Europe through the territory of both regions</li> <li>● Unused allocations from EU funds for the development of transport infrastructure</li> <li>● Positive impact of foreign direct investments on the development and improvement of transport interconnection of both regions</li> <li>● Intervention from ESIF also in the programme period after the year 2013</li> <li>● Existence of the plan aiming to build connections between the Danube and Odra rivers by a Vah water route</li> <li>● Connecting the public transport systems of the two regions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Decreasing permeability of existing road network shown also by increased accident rate</li> <li>● Unresolved financing of regional railway passenger transport</li> <li>● Insufficient response to the need of increasing transport capacities of the regional road network due to the property and manufacturing program of linked foreign direct investments</li> <li>● Increased cost of implementation of transport interconnection between the two regions because of the mountain ranges</li> <li>● Failure to ensure increased resources for the repairs and maintenance of road infrastructure due to the rugged morphology of the area</li> </ul>

## 6.2.2 Measures and indicative activities

### Measure 1.1: Increasing permeability of road network and safety of road traffic participants

Indicative activities:

- Expansion of roads in critical sections
- Building of sidewalks in sections with increased rate of accidents
- Development of measures to promote the safety of pedestrians in settlement centres
- Removal of conflict points on road routes
- Implementation of bypasses in the developed areas
- Implementation of intelligent traffic signs and traffic elements
- Reconstruction of intersections in terms of increasing their safety
- Reconstruction of bridges, railroad crossings and other traffic elements in terms of increasing their permeability and decreasing a risk of collision of various road traffic participants
- Use of modern technologies for the monitoring and diagnostics of pavement conditions
- Acquisition of technical equipment for improving road maintenance
- Promotion of the completion of superior transport infrastructure with the emphasis on elements included in the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)
- Enhancement of regional mobility by connecting secondary and tertiary nodes with TEN-T infrastructure

## Measure 1.2: Support of low-carbon forms of transport and increase of public transport efficiency

Indicative activities:

- Creation and update of plans for transport service of the area in terms of correlation of graphic timetables and capacities of various forms of passenger transport also in cross-border context
- Creation of studies, strategies and action plans for the introduction of low-carbon forms of transport
- Use of modern technologies to optimise the transport service of the area
- Modernisation of public transport means in terms of improving their ecologic features, comfort, efficiency and attractiveness for passengers, including passengers with various forms of disability
- Implementation of campaigns to promote alternative forms of transport
- Building cycle links connecting suburbs, small towns and villages in the wider surroundings with the centre via paved cycle paths separated from motor vehicle roadways, or within the expanded profile of the roads including their own traffic signs and traffic elements increasing cyclists safety
- Support in the building of infrastructure for transport utilising alternative sources of energy (e.g. charging stations for electric motor vehicles)
- Building of parking spaces near bus and train stations used for the transport to urban areas
- Development of environmentally friendly and low-carbon systems of transport and promotion of permanently sustainable urban mobility
- Development of a complex, interoperable railway system of high quality

## 6.3 Proposals for the future activities in economic cooperation area

### 6.3.1 Current situation

In the past two decades, both regions have undergone restructuring of their economic base accompanied by temporary increase in unemployment, increase in labour productivity, creation of favourable conditions for business development, creation of opportunities for foreign investments and intensification of connection between domestic and foreign markets. Business and entrepreneurship development becomes evident particularly in the Žilina Region that shows a more than twice higher number of companies per capita, compared with the Moravian-Silesian Region, where the preference to be employed has still prevailed mainly due to traditional big employers in mining and metallurgical engineering. Restructuring of economy was accompanied also by decrease of employment in agriculture and fishery. On the contrary,



both regions experienced over the last decade an increase of number of job-vacancies in construction industry and particularly in the services sector that today present more than 50 % of jobs in both regions. This development also relates to the restructuring of the economic base of both regions and to their linkage to all-European economic trends. This intensification of connections to the economic space of the European Union, as well as its trends of development showed mainly during a significant negative development of all main economic indicators on both sides of the border area at the time of the onset of global economic crisis at the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

A particular phenomenon, common to both regions, is the creation of capacities in automotive industry, thanks to the acquired foreign direct investments connected with supply chains and networks consisting of domestic as well as foreign business entities. The second ones, as traditional suppliers of big automotive trusts, are building their sub-supplying capacities wherever new manufacturing plants of these trusts are created. Significant specific feature in this respect is the fact that the most important investments in this sector originate from investors linked together in terms of ownership, which partially leads to linkage between manufacturing programs and intensification of their cross-border cooperation. Despite this fact, the border region still has a spatial capacity, as well as skilled manpower for the development of further investments either in the industrial sector, or in that of the services, for which we need to adjust the preparedness of the territory and its human resources.

*Table 5: Selected economic data of both regions*

Indicator	Žilina Region	Year	M-S Region	Year
Enterprises total	12 246	2009	16 540	2009
Enterprises per 1 000 inhabitants	17,6	2009	13,3	2009
Physical persons – entrepreneurs	59 213	2009	88 412	2009
Entrepreneurs per 1 000 inhabitants	84,9	2009	35,5	2009
Employees in R&D	2 215	2009	3 191	2009
Expenditures per R&D in mil. EUR	17 607	2009	CZK 3 030 mil. EUR 121 462	2009
Expenditures per R&D per 1 000 inhabitants in €	25	2009	97,7	2009

Investments in Research and Development per capita in Moravian-Silesian Region are more than three times higher than in the Žilina Region, where respective values are even below the Slovak average. Similarly, the Moravian-Silesian Region outperforms its south-eastern neighbour in per capita terms by approximately one third in the number of human capacities in the Research and Development sector.

However, at a European scale this border area does not reach even average values and the development of pro-innovative environment remains to be an issue on both sides of the border. In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the development of mutual cooperation between

subjects from both regions occurred in supporting the innovative environment, several common cross-border projects have been realised and there was a development in cooperation between founded clusters and other players in the field of innovation support. Also cooperation between the Žilina Regional Chamber of the Slovak Business and Industrial Chamber and the Regional Economic Chamber of the Moravian-Silesian Region has been established and resulted also in a joint project in the framework of Cross-border Cooperation of Slovakia and the Czech Republic called “Partnership-Development-Opportunities” that was aimed at the support of cross-border regions’ development, reducing differences between the involved regions, when achieving this goal through activities focused on promoting business, especially a series of free seminars focused on issues related to the foundation of business corporations and entrepreneurship in Slovakia, business generally, entrepreneurship of foreigners in Slovakia, issues of international contracts and their compatibility with EU legislation, participation of business subjects in the process of public tendering, etc. Awarding the regional brands (for example GÓROLSKO SWOBODA – regional product) also proved to be a positive turn for the promotion of cross-border cooperation in the field of local products. There are also traditional ties and contacts between research-development companies and universities. In the territory there are thus personal as well as institutional connections that can be utilised for the further strengthening of an innovative environment.

The support of business environment and the development of employment in the region is also linked to the need of providing the best quality education. There is a necessity to ensure that the schools will use the most effective methods and tools to ensure that pupils/students have an access to the empirical verification of their knowledge in practice. This issue affects specifically the vocational secondary education, as well as technically focused university education. The connection of the education to research and development is also important, mainly in the fields that relate to the economy of this area. The fact that many educational institutions in both regions have experience with partnerships, or joint projects is an asset. There is thus a room for development of these contacts in terms of identifying educational needs in the region and responding to them also in the form of cross-border activities. Abilities of individuals to assert on open EU labour market put increasing demands on the timeliness of his knowledge and skills in terms of their usability in practice constitutes a challenge for education providers.

Table 6: SWOT analysis of the economic cooperation of both regions

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional business ties because of the joint history</li> <li>• Restructured economy</li> <li>• Attractive territory for foreign direct investments</li> <li>• Experience in implementing projects focused on business and investment developments</li> <li>• Established cross-border partnerships of subjects promoting the culture of innovations and entrepreneurship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient support for innovations and business development from public funds</li> <li>• Insufficient permeability of cross-border highway and roads network</li> <li>• Weak signs of innovative thinking in both regions</li> <li>• Cross-border economy linked to a small number of big employers</li> <li>• Insufficient use of foreign direct investments for the development of an innovative environment</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linguistic proximity allowing the development of cross-border trade connections, as well as the development of cooperation between trade subjects</li> <li>• Support of the development of an innovative environment by the European Union</li> <li>• Connection of automotive plants in both regions in terms of ownership and production</li> <li>• Intention of regional autonomies to strengthen and institutionalise cross-border cooperation also with a focus on the development of economic cooperation</li> <li>• Potential for the further development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in the border area</li> <li>• Existence of cluster initiatives</li> <li>• Potential for cooperation and cross-linking of thematically similarly focused clusters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to cross barriers between the trade sector, research and development subjects and public</li> <li>• Failure of foreign subjects establishing production plants in the Moravian-Silesian Region and Žilina Region to invest in domestic Research &amp; Development structures</li> <li>• Complete removal of barriers in free movement of manpower within the EU and its impact on the drift of qualified manpower</li> <li>• Failure to establish a supporting platform for the implementation of joint projects focused on business development and innovations in the Ostrava –Žilina –Katowice triangle</li> <li>• Failure to remove barriers of communication and traffic systems in the border area</li> </ul>

## 6.3.2 Measures and indicative activities

### Measure 2.1: Building of joint business and innovative environment in border area

Indicative activities:

- Cross-linking of organisations representing enterprise subjects (business chambers, clusters, etc.) with Research & Development subjects and innovative players.
- Cooperation of regional players in supporting innovative culture in the border area (educational activities, cross-border innovative portals, awards, conferences, supporting schemes for innovating subjects from SME environment, joint activities to meet the innovative strategies, etc.).
- Development of green business, services, technologies and job positions in SME by supporting cross-border activities that reduce negative environmental impacts of entrepreneurship
- Investments in public infrastructure necessary for the development of business and innovations (science and technology parks, business incubators, industrial parks, innovative centres, etc.).
- Creation of joint products to acquire investments in the area (catalogues and databases of investment opportunities, web pages, participation in trade fairs and conferences, building of regional brand of the area favourable to business, etc.).
- Cross-border cooperation in innovation of public administration aimed at increasing the attractiveness of business environment and innovative culture including increase in quality of public administration services in regards to business environment.
- Implementation of cross-border studies, creation of business environment analysis and strategies of business development.
- Organising events and participating in events creating a room for trade and business development.

### Measure 2.2: Development of human capital and institutional and administrative capacities in border area

Indicative activities:

- Cross-border cooperation activities aimed at increasing the employability of the unemployed, young people and other vulnerable groups at the labour market and supporting cross-border labour mobility (labour exchanges, cross-border portals of job positions, cooperation of subjects working in job procurement, etc.).
- Activities of cross-border cooperation of the business sector, public administration and educational institutions aimed at the employability of graduates at the labour market, including innovations in education, increasing room for obtaining practical experience, etc.

- Activities of educational institutions aimed at cross-border linking of educational programs and creation of joint cross-border educational products (study visits, distance education, creation of educational products that enable to complete a part of education on the other side of the border area, creation of cross-border education portals, e-learning products, databases of teaching material, etc.).
- Cross-border cooperation activities in Research & Development of subjects and business sector aimed at the development of innovative environment.
- Activities promoting gender equity, equal opportunities and cross-border social inclusion.
- Activities promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions, including e-Government, e-Inclusion, e-Participation and e-Democracy.

## 6.4 Proposal for the future cooperation in tourism:

### 6.4.1 Current situation

The characteristics and history of the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Žilina Region are dominant determining factors of the tourism development. The arc of the Western Carpathian Mountains, situated in both regions, has created excellent conditions for the development of mountain tourism in its summer and winter forms.

Histories of both regions and their preserved manifestations have common features, for example in the form of architectural styles, sacral buildings and mansions, but also differences, for example technical monuments related to the industrial development of the Moravian-Silesian Region, or network of castles and curia in the Žilina Region representing the evolution of mansions in Hungary. In terms of the rate of tourists visiting attractive sites in national comparisons, the number of sites in the Žilina Region rank to the forefront, while the Moravian-Silesian Region does not belong to the nationwide leaders, with the exception of sites presenting technical history. The economic crisis has significantly affected the tourism of the area, i.e. both regions have suffered a temporal decrease in visitors, however, this trend seems to be reversed since 2010, especially in the case of the Žilina region. The less positive development of visiting rate in the Moravian-Silesian Region is also related to the fact that the decrease in the rate of foreign clients, who often visited this region for commercial purposes, have not stopped yet.

Table 7: Selected tourism data of both regions

Indicator	Žilina Region	Year of the data topicality	Moravian-Silesian Region	Year of the data topicality
Accommodation capacities (beds)	33 381	2010	23 785	2010
Guests	658 148	2010	527 380	2010
Overnight stays	2 135 892	2010	1 733 932	2010
Overnight stays per citizen	3,06	2010	1,39	2010

Besides traditional activities such as hiking and skiing, visiting museum expositions, traditional folklore, cultural events, tours of cultural and historical monuments, there is an increasing growth of the demand for other forms of tourism such as cycling, canoeing, equestrian and rural tourism, geocaching, discovering traces of technical history of the area (especially in the Moravian-Silesian Region), or spa tourism (especially in the Žilina Region) on both sides of the border.

The requirements of tourists on the quality of tourism services are also reflected in the demand for products that will provide a combination of several forms of tourist activities, while maintaining the desired comfort of the stay. In addition, if traditional ski resorts want to remain competitive, they must expand the services they offer by adding other forms of winter activities than just downhill skiing, as well as expand their offer by forms of summer tourism. It is therefore necessary to promote the creation of new tourism products and more complex service packages, which may also result in the extension of the visitors' stay. Foundation of tourism clusters on both sides of the border and preparation of others in this regard may contribute to the improvement of the offer. In both regions, there is an emphasis on the local special characteristics of the tourism territory, on which the unique offer should be based. There is a room for the creation of cross-border products that will be either thematic or based on the needs of a particular clientele.

The quality of information and promotional resources of tourism has increased significantly in the past decade, however their quantity and variety is insufficient, whilst their availability is problematic. It is also necessary to create new sources of information presenting complex packages of services, as well as products specifically focused on particular categories of clients. At the regional level, there is a need to apply common tools for promoting partner regions and be a competitive destination in relation to wider Europe as well as to non-European markets.

The existing networks of tourist information offices and other entities providing information on tourism products has different founders and different standards. There is no comprehensive methodology to define the required level of knowledge and skills of their employees. Cross-border cooperation aimed at enhancing the quality of human resources and the standardisation of requirements for their knowledge and skills creates favourable conditions

for the improvement of the quality of tourism services in the area as a whole. Infrastructure of tourist information offices does not fully utilise modern information and communication technologies to ensure greater availability, quality and comprehensiveness of the information provided. Museums and other cultural institutions have mostly permanent expositions that enable the interaction of the visitor with the exhibits to a limited extent and do not respond to the different needs of target groups.

Tourism infrastructure responds insufficiently to new forms of tourism development on both sides of the border. The territory still does not have a sufficient network of marked bike trails, bridle paths, trails for cross-country skiing, culinary routes, etc. Appropriate tourism infrastructure does not reflect to the needs of clients with various forms of disability.

*Table 8: SWOT analysis of the cooperation in the field of tourism*

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implemented investments in tourist centres and in new accommodation capacities</li> <li>● Existence of tourism clusters in the border area</li> <li>● Preservation and gradual development of traditional events</li> <li>● Experience of subjects from both sides of the border with implementation of tourism promoting projects</li> <li>● Variability of resources for promoting tourism, including cross-border cooperation programs</li> <li>● Existence of joint presumptions in areas suitable for the building of cross-border thematic trails</li> <li>● Sufficient accommodation capacities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Insufficient quality of human resources in tourism services, including their language skills</li> <li>● Insufficient complexity of services for year-round tourist activities in tourism centres</li> <li>● Lack of cooperation between business entities in tourism in the border area with the aim to extend the stay of their visitors</li> <li>● Insufficient information on attractive tourist places in the area and lack of pictorial marks (so-called “brown boards”), as well as on places of main contact with travelling public (airports, main train and bus stations)</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Natural and cultural-historical potential of tourism development for creating a new variety of products</li> <li>● Increase of visitors in Central Europe in the medium term</li> <li>● Potential for further connecting of hiking, running and cycling trails on both</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Globalisation of tourism enabling the availability of previously unknown destinations (outside the EU)</li> <li>● Poorly managed harmonisation of nature conservation and tourism development</li> </ul>

<p>sides of the border, as well as for the creation of joint cross-border tourism products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation between institutions preparing future specialists in CR for labour market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk arising from unresolved system of financing the public bus transport and regional rail service, which may primarily affect the border area if the need to reduce their capacities arises</li> </ul>
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## 6.4.2 Measures and indicative activities

### Measure 3.1: Developing the quality of services in tourism responding to local product

Indicative activities:

- Creation of studies, strategies and action plans to implement comprehensive tourism products and service packages in the area with the use of its particularities.
- Development and implementation of comprehensive products of tourism and packages of services in the area with the use of its particularities.
- Development and implementation of joint cross-border training products focused on the development of human resources in tourism.
- Innovation and expansion of the services of tourist information offices.
- Cooperation in creating information and promotion for tourism products.
- Implementation of joint marketing campaigns.
- Cross-border linking of clusters and other entities in tourism.

### Measure 3.2: New and modernisation of existing tourism infrastructure responding to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Indicative activities:

- Building and modernisation of nature trails, cycling routes, running trails, bridle paths, roller-skating circuits, etc., their information systems and other accessories (benches, rest areas, children's playgrounds, bike racks, etc.).
- Construction of bigger elements of infrastructure in relation to existing trails or trails under construction (piers, bike bridges, parking places, lookout towers, etc.).
- Implementation of measures aiming at increasing the comfort of users with various forms of disabilities.
- Preservation, promotion and development of cultural heritage.
- Modernisation, innovation and building of exposition and information capacities with the use of information and communication technologies in terms of increasing experience and perception of displayed exhibits, adjustment of expositions to various target groups and higher accessibility, quality and comprehensiveness of the provided information.



## 6.5 Proposal for the future cooperation in the environment area

### 6.5.1 Current situation

In the case of Žilina Self-Governing Region and the Moravian-Silesian Region, there are several areas of environmental issues that are common to territories of both regions and where cross-border cooperation can bring mutual benefits. First of all, it is poor air quality, associated with the concentration of heavy industry in the Czech - Polish border region of Silesia, as well as an extreme load of vehicle transport in this border area, which is related to the fact that the Baltic-Adriatic transport corridor runs through this area.

Emissions in the form of greenhouse gases and other air polluting components exceed the national level in several locations of both regions and show proportions exceeding the European level in the long term. Aside from measures to reduce emissions from transport (for more details see also Measure 1.2) it is necessary to focus the cooperation on reducing the energy demand of the economy, including the increase of the energy efficiency of buildings and other infrastructure (e.g. public lighting) and development of such alternative forms of energy production that are less harmful to the environment, particularly in relation to the air quality. The households have also the share of harmful compounds emission into the atmosphere. It is appropriate to form conditions, as well as to raise awareness aimed at reducing burning of such waste components, which have an especially negative impact on the air. Similar activities focused on supporting the forms of life that have a minimal impact on the environment are also desirable for water protection (e.g. for the reduction of the amount of oils released into the public sewer system) and waste management (focused mainly on increasing the volume of separated waste components, increasing the volume of waste recycling and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill).

On both sides of the border are series of areas with an increased level of protection. Those are often areas used intensively for tourism purposes since they have an increased incidence of a variety of nature beauties and diversity of habitats. It is necessary to promote cross-border cooperation, the exchange of experience and the transfer of best practices between entities in environmental protection. It is also necessary to develop strategic planning and the implementation of measures in these areas that will ensure the development of tourism respecting and ensuring the preservation of precious natural elements in the area. Last but not least, it is appropriate to extend the cooperation in environmental protection issues also by the problems of modern forms of pollution, whether it is a matter of noise, visual advertising, etc. Implementation of measures in the field of landscape protection, including the protection and preservation of unique (identical) landscape and natural elements have been poorly utilised within the dimension of cross-border cooperation so far.

Table 9: SWOT analysis of the cooperation in the energy and environment

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing cooperation of environmental protection bodies in the border area</li> <li>Implemented investments and projects for environmental protection, or better say improving its quality</li> <li>Unique nature with rich ecosystems and a number of preserved areas and landscape creating elements</li> <li>Many water resources (primarily in the Žilina Region) and sufficient capacities for the ensuring of drinking water supply</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor air quality</li> <li>Insufficient support of Research &amp; Development in issues of environmental innovation</li> <li>Low level of separation and recycling of waste</li> <li>High percentage of public buildings showing low degree of energy efficiency</li> <li>Insufficient sewage of small villages</li> <li>High energy dependence on fossil fuel</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EU funds for implementation of sustainable cohesion policy after 2013</li> <li>Suitable conditions for the increase in biomass and geothermal energy used for generating power in the border area</li> <li>New technologies in energy savings, waste management and environmental protection</li> <li>Interest of population in alternative forms of transport, as well as energy-efficient forms of housing</li> <li>Intensification of cross-border cooperation between players from both sides of the border caused also by frequent impacts of natural disasters and other forms of environmental pollution</li> <li>Intense implementation of environmental education at elementary and high schools</li> <li>Intensification of cross-border cooperation between players from both sides of the border in landscape preservation based on the utilisation of landscape-creating elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in the volume of traffic in the regions and its possible impact on the increase of noise and air pollution</li> <li>Insufficient increase of awareness about efficient and purposeful waste management and also about the importance of environmental protection</li> <li>Extinction of rare animal species due to the failure to provide conditions for their natural reproduction</li> <li>Implementation of large infrastructural buildings, primarily in transportation, energetics or production with poor respecting of environmental protection requirements</li> <li>Increase in the pollution of the ground as well as surface water due to a failure to deal with old environmental burdens, including failure to remove defects in old sewage systems</li> </ul>

## 6.5.2 Measures and indicative activities

### Measure 4.1: Increase in the energy efficiency of public infrastructure and development of the usage of renewable resources of energy in public sector

Indicative activities:

- Implementation of measures for increasing energy efficiency of claddings and roofs of buildings (external insulation, exchange of windows, etc.).
- Activities to increase the quality of heating regulation in public buildings, thermostatic features and metering.
- Implementation of innovative solutions to decrease energy consumption.
- Implementation of progressive technologies of combined power generation, heat and cold.
- Implementation of innovative solutions of public buildings heating.
- Introduction of renewable energy sources to the public sector infrastructure (small water power plants, photovoltaic panels, etc.).
- Reconstruction of public lighting with the aim to decrease power consumption.
- Informative activities focused on increasing the awareness about possibilities how to decrease energy demands of buildings and use renewable sources of energy.
- Implementation of activities for the assessment of energy efficiency of public infrastructure and preparation of proposals coping with that problem.
- Creating information databases of public infrastructure focused on energy efficiency.

### Measure 4.2: Introduction of measures for increased environmental protection

Indicative activities:

- Activities focused on the distribution of good cross-border practice examples in environmental protection.
- Activities focused on identifying and preserving rare landscape elements in the area.
- Activities focused on reducing the proportion of mixed municipal waste and increasing the volume of separated compounds and waste recycling.
- Activities focused on the protection of surface and ground water purity.
- Cooperation of crisis management actors and implementation of activities focused on risk prevention in the border area.
- Cooperation of environmental protection bodies, forest management subjects, hunting associations and other actors involved in environmental protection, including fighting with cross-border criminality in environmental protection (illegal dumps, water pollution, nest robberies, poaching, etc.).
- Activities for promoting environmentally focused research & development.
- Creating basis for spatial planning with cross-border elements.

## 7. Management and budget of the cooperation activities

In this chapter we will describe how the cooperation is financed and managed. This will cover two principal levels: the first one is the cooperation between both regions, and the second one is then the level of the whole EGTC.

### 7.1 The cooperation between the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Žilina Self-Governing Region

The cooperation between both regions is managed by units responsible for the international cooperation, which are in place in both regions. The officials of these units follow the text of bilateral cooperation agreements between both regions and set work-plans to achieve the goals. This is financed from the own sources of both regions, as the international cooperation costs create parts of their budgets.

More relevant bodies for the implementation of measures and projects are the departments responsible for the implementation of development projects of both regions, which act in close cooperation with departments responsible for concrete sectoral policies (such as transport, environment or education). This is then financed mainly from external sources, primarily by the European Structural Funds and co-funded by own sources.

### 7.2 The cooperation at the EGTC TRITIA level

The EGTC level operates with its own budget. Despite all four founding regions vary in terms of the number of their populations (from less than one million of the Žilina Region up to five million inhabitants of the Silesian Voivodeship), the annual contribution was set up to 22 000 Euro for each of the four founding regions.

The EGTC can work with sum of almost 90 000 EURO annually (according to the EGTC's ex-director Mr Zacharides, part of this money has already served for the pre-financing of development projects; the intention to use them for co-financing and pre-financing is still valid). This principle is different from for example euroregions on the Czech-Slovak border, where the member fees are calculated on the basis of the number of inhabitants of the member municipalities. Nevertheless, the main income of the EGTC come from successful projects. This already starts to happen and it is described in chapter nine.

## 8. Analysis of the strong and weak cooperation points

The key part of this case study will focus on the two main points: the first one will be the analysis showing how has the cross-border cooperation conduct between the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Žilina Self-governing Region changed during the process of establishing EGTC TRITIA. This will be done in two ways: the first will analyse the successfulness of both regions in using the funds from principal financial tool supporting cross-border cooperation, OP CBC Slovakia-Czech Republic for the programming period 2007-2013. This will be based on the work with the table of projects supported until the date of the elaboration of this study, November 2014. The second way is presented by qualitative research, which was based on the interviews with actors involved in the CBC conduct. Both ways will be commented separately in the subchapters A and B, but there will also be some cross-references, mainly showing the opinion of experts on the influence of the EGTC creation and thus intensification and systematisation of relations between both regions on the use of the financial instrument mentioned.

### 8.1 Analysis of the work with European funds

Context information about the territory: the entire length of Slovak-Czech border is 251,8 km. There are 4 822 803 inhabitants on the territory of 32 000 km<sup>2</sup>. The average population density is 150,5 inh./km<sup>2</sup>, which highly exceeds the average density of both the Czech (133 inh./km<sup>2</sup>) and the Slovak Republic (110,3 inh./km<sup>2</sup>).

The landscape is rather diversified, which influences both character of the settlements of the region and its economic diversity. Geographically it involves the rivers in valleys (Váh, Kysuca, Turiec, Orava, Bečva, Morava), agricultural rural lands and forests or uninhabited mountain terrains of both the Tatra and the Fatra Mountains, along with the Beskydy, Jaborníky and Bílé/Biele Karpaty.

The real contribution made by TRITIA for the development of mutual relations between its members, in this context mainly the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Žilina Self-Governing Region, can be measured by the amounts raised for the cross-border cooperation of subjects from both regions. This subchapter will try to verify the hypothesis that EGTC TRITIA as platform for mutual contacts between experts responsible for the regional development of both regions helped in the process of raising the funds for CBC. The establishment of this platform brought along a mechanism of regular meetings. These meetings mostly copied the process of making the bilateral Slovak-Czech Strategy and also the strategy of the whole EGTC, but except for the development of these strategic documents it created space for the drafting of projects, which were afterwards successfully submitted and funded by the Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme between Slovakia and the Czech Republic for the period 2007-13.

The analysis will be partly comparative. We will compare the successfulness of cooperation between the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Žilina Region with moneys raised by other 4 regions, which co-create the programme territory. When comparing we will also try to take into account the geographical factors influencing the use of the programme, such as the very short and, moreover, mountainous section of the borders between the Moravian-Silesian and the Žilina Regions, compared to the significantly longer borders between other 4 more southern border regions (moreover with very few geographical barriers in the southern part of the Czech-Slovak borders). We will also take into account another networks influencing cross-border cooperation on the Czech-Slovak border, mainly Euroregion Bílé/Biele Karpaty will be mentioned. The other comparison will focus on the use of the Slovak-Czech programme in 2007-2013 and the previous programming period 2004-2006.



Figure 5: All regions eligible for Slovak-Czech cross-border cooperation programmes (source draft OP 2014 – 2020)

### 8.1.1 Community Initiative Programme INTERREG A Slovak Republic – Czech Republic 2004-2006

The principal financial tool supporting cooperation on the Czech-Slovak border was offered to both countries after their EU accession on 1 May 2004. The whole programme covered the territory of 6 regions, which are situated on the Czech-Slovak border:

- Trnava Region (Trnavský kraj), Trenčín Region (Trenčianský kraj) and Žilina Region (Žilinský kraj) in Slovakia;
- Southern-Moravian Region (Jihomoravský kraj), Zlín Region (Zlínský kraj) and Moravian-Silesian Region (Moravskoslezský kraj) in the Czech Republic.

The programme offered for all these regions and eligible applicants 13 667 229 Euro from the ERDF funding; jointly with national co-funding the programme achieved the amount of 18 223 066 Euro, which was significantly less than its successor, which offered an amount exceeding 93 000 000 Euro from the ERDF in the 2007-2013 programming period.

The programme was divided into the following priorities:

- Social, cultural development and networking
- Protection of the landscape, environment and tourism promotion
- Technical assistance

Both countries involved in the programme approached its implementation differently: Slovakia divided the funds equally in advance among the three regions, which co-created in the programme area, whereas the Czech Republic allowed the regions to compete.

The “absolute winners” of the programme on the Czech side were subjects coming from Zlín Region. These subjects, including the Regional Authority of Zlín Region itself, managed to obtain some 85 % of the funds distributed in the whole programme. In contrary, the subjects from the Moravian-Silesian Region obtained with their 11 successful projects mere 457 000 Euros, which is slightly above 3 % of the allocation. This number can be moved up to 5 % when counting the projects submitted in the microprojects’ scheme for projects up to 20 000 Euro (there were 10 successful microprojects, which could have obtained some 150 000 Euro at a maximum. Nevertheless, the microprojects’ scheme as such is a systemic project submitted by Zlín Region).

The success of Zlín Region must be attributed to the fact that is managed to establish and support an efficient network – the Euroregion Bílé/Biele Karpaty and the Regional Development Agency co-managed a part of the whole programme via the microprojects’ scheme. Euroregion Bílé/Biele Karpaty is in more details described in the next subchapter of this study dealing with the use of the EU funds for CBC in the end of the 2007-2013 programming period.

To conclude the first programming period (2004-2006), which the Czech Republic and Slovakia experienced as full EU members, it should be said that the equal distribution to the Slovak

regions helped to all the involved regions evenly, nevertheless, the Czech “laissez-faire” approach of a free competition constituted a significant and decisive advantage for Zlín Region, which had in place the networks which helped their members in using the funds heavily. The usefulness of these networks can be demonstrated also by the fact that principal successful project promoters from the Moravian-Silesian Region came from Beskydy Euroregion – another though somewhat smaller cross-border network.

### 8.1.2 Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme Slovak Republic-Czech Republic 2007-13

The Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme between Slovakia and the Czech Republic for the period 2007-13 has provided Community support as part of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for the same 6 regions on the Slovak-Czech border as its predecessor:

Trnava Region (Trnavský kraj), Trenčín Region (Trenčianský kraj) and Žilina Region (Žilinský kraj) in Slovakia; Southern-Moravian Region (Jihomoravský kraj), Zlín Region (Zlínský kraj) and Moravian-Silesian Region (Moravskoslezský kraj) in the Czech Republic.

The Operational Programme fell within the framework laid out for the European Territorial Cooperation Objective and has had a total budget of around €109 million. Community funding through the ERDF amounts to some €93 million, which represents approximately 1,1% of the total EU investment earmarked for the European Territorial Cooperation Objective under the Cohesion Policy 2007-13.

The description of the previous programming period, mainly with weak performance of the Moravian-Silesian Region and entities from this region requires some deeper explanations. Except for the undoubted success caused by the preparedness of Zlín Region (and its counterpart, Trenčín Region) thanks to the functional network presented by Euroregion Bíllé/Biele Karpaty there are also other aspects which make the cross-border cooperation of the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Žilina Region difficult.

### 8.1.3 Default Geographical Disadvantage for cooperation between the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions

The disadvantages came from geographical settings: the Czech-Slovak border between both partner regions, the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions, is significantly shorter than the borders between other regions of the Czech-Slovak borderland. It is only 45 km of the 252 kilometres of the whole border. Moreover, the cooperation there is quite complicated as being a mountainous area with rather low population density at both its parts. The borders between Zlín and Trenčín Region can also be characterised as mountain areas, but it is significantly longer with more cross-border road and railway connections. The southern part of the Czech-Slovak



border, between the Southern-Moravian and Trnava Regions, is the longest one without major physical barriers.

There are 6 districts with a total of 300 municipalities in the Moravian-Silesian Region. CBC with Slovakia is hardly thinkable for many of the municipalities (mainly in districts Bruntál, Opava and Nový Jičín), as they are all quite far from national borders (one and half hour of a car drive on average for Opava and Nový Jičín and even more than two hours for Bruntál – for example from Osoblaha one needs to drive 154 kilometres to arrive at the Slovak-Czech border, which takes two and half hours; not to speak about the fact that the shortest way is via Poland).

In Žilina Region there are 11 districts. There is a similar problem that more than a half of all these districts are geographically very far from the Czech-Slovak border. District Čadca is the border district with the Czech Republic (and Poland), districts Bytča, Kysické Nové Mesto and Žilina can also be achieved from the border in less than one hour. For another districts the Czech border is far away.

The geography of both regions thus sets some default limits to the mutual cross-border cooperation. One must also add that all districts in both regions far from the Czech-Slovak border are very close to the Czech-Polish, respectively Slovak-Polish borders, hence they tend to prefer Czech or Slovak/Polish cross-border cooperation.

*Table 10: Number of municipalities of regions covered by the Slovak-Czech CBC OP*

Region	Number of municipalities
Moravian-Silesian	300
Zlín	307
Southern-Moravian	673
Žilina	315
Trenčín	276
Trnava	251

Having in mind the weak performance in the 2004-2006 CIP SK-CZ, the regional authorities decided to invest some technical assistance funds and they prepared the series of meetings with representatives of all partner regions. This resulted in the decision to apply more actively for the funds coming from the European Territorial Cooperation (Objective 3) programmes. Opportunities in mono-national programmes offered more finance with a more straightforward grant process, thus the regions decided to change their attitude. The Moravian-Silesian Region conducted an analysis of “missed opportunities” and cross-border cooperation programmes had a very prominent role in this document. Therefore, it was decided to utilise

the newly called “European Territorial Cooperation Programmes” more systematically than before.

Objective 3 programmes were in 2007-2013 period presented by programmes organised in 3 strands:

- cross-border cooperation programmes (here represented mainly by repeatedly mentioned Slovak-Czech OP),
- interregional programmes (represented by Central Europe programme),
- transnational programme (represented by INTERREG 4A programme).

The preparatory meetings helped to prepare some projects. These submitted into B and C strand of the Objective 3 programmes failed to obtain funding, but they assisted in deepening the cooperation between the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions (and Silesian Voivodeship). The principle of regular meetings brought new dimension in preparing the projects. This was followed and rewarded by significantly higher success rate in obtaining grants from the SK-CZ operational programme, compared to the previous period.

This study considers that it was the decision to approach toward the phenomenon of territorial cooperation and work with European funds more systematically which led to the EGTC TRITIA’s establishment and intensified cooperation of both regions. Knowing about the bad result of subjects from mainly the Moravian-Silesian Region in the programming period 2004-2006, the authors decided to conduct a more detailed analysis about the Slovak-Czech programme in the 2007-2013 period.

The authors of this study worked with the information on all projects, which were supported from the Slovak-Czech programme. 258 projects obtained funding from the programme in the period of its implementation. There was also the last call for projects with its deadline on 20 November 2014, therefore the projects to be selected in this final call are not taken into account.

The authors analysed the group of these projects and divided them into two main categories:

**Systemic or technical assistance projects** – these are either technical assistance projects for both ministries responsible for the programme implementation, joint technical secretariat or contact points functioning or macroprojects securing the operations of the microprojects’ scheme. These projects are not selected upon the competition principle, as the beneficiaries are clearly defined in advance, except for the microprojects’ scheme these are programme’s transaction costs. We can say that these projects were awarded over 16 % of the programme allocation (over 14 out of 92 million Euro coming from the ERDF funding).

The rest of the allocation was nevertheless distributed in a **free competition of projects**: the programme organised 7 selection rounds (the last eighth is closed in January 2015). In these selection rounds there was a competition between the most common beneficiaries of the

cross-border cooperation programmes: public and non-profit actors functioning in the whole programme territory.

After having eliminated the above mentioned systemic or technical assistance projects, the remaining ones were analysed according to their “region of origin”. Firstly we compared the projects which were submitted by Regional Authorities (kraje – krajské úřady) themselves. We realised – and this presumption was also confirmed via the interviews with experts - that the participation of both regions in TRITIA’s construction had a huge impact on the performance of both regions in the use of the SK-CZ programme funds: the projects prepared by both cooperating regional authorities or organisations controlled by them amounted up to 6,68 million Euros of ERDF funds obtained, which is around 7,3 % of the whole allocation, but it mainly almost equals the funds obtained by four other regions, respectively their regional authorities, involved in the programme implementation in the southern part of Czech-Slovak border (projects prepared by them or organisation controlled by them obtained 6,9 million Euro).

*Table 11: The list of projects approved to both partner regions or organisation controlled by them directly thanks to the systemic cooperation of both regions and the creations of TRITIA:*

Lead partner	Partners	Project Title	ERDF
Moravian-Silesian Region	Žilina Region / Road Administration Moravian-Silesian Region / Road Administration ŽSK /	Reconstruction of road Bílá - Klokočov - Turzovka	2 680 206,40
Žilina Region	Moravian-Silesian Region / Road Administration Of Žilina Region / Road Administration Moravian-Silesian Region	Reconstruction of road Čadca-Milošová-Mosty u Jablunkova	1 319 897,96
Žilina Region	City of Ostrava Library.	Information without Borders Constructing Information Society by the Means of Connecting Librarian and information Systems	264 202,61
Žilina Region	Moravian-Silesian Region / Road Administration Of Žilina Region / Road Administration Moravian-Silesian Region	Reconstruction of road Turzovka – Bílá II. Etap	2 092 226,81
INOVA NOVA, n.o.	Regional Development Agency	Innovation Through border (InNOBorder)	324 134,53
			<b>6 680 668,31</b>

The money obtained by Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions were for the implementation of projects mainly in the field of infrastructure, connecting both countries/regions plus innovation projects.

Except for the projects implemented by six regional authorities, there were also other project categories identified. With the knowledge of TRITIA construction process plus the interviews made with experts from the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions, we were able to identify projects which appeared mainly thanks to the process of TRITIA construction. These projects amount slightly over €10 million of the ERDF support, which is almost 12 % of the entire allocation. The prominent role has been played here by the Technical University of Ostrava, assisted by two minor regional universities and its counterpart in Žilina with more than 4 million Euro of ERDF support obtained.

Concerning the other project promoters, the municipalities are the most numerous project applicants. The municipalities from the Moravian-Silesian Region along with with the municipalities of Žilina Region (but this is more about Moravian-Silesian Region) much less active than their counterparts in the other four regions, which are eligible to apply for the OP SK-CZ financial support. The reason for this must primarily be seen in the number of municipalities, but mainly also in their geographical remoteness from the Czech-Slovak border.

#### **8.1.4 Other project promoters in regions creating a programme territory of the OP SK-CZ**

##### **Municipalities**

Role of networks and networking is extremely important in cross-border cooperation, which is obviously true not only for the Czech-Slovak border. From the table containing information on all approved projects under the SK-CZ programme for the 2007-2013 period, it is very clear that the highest number of projects and cooperation initiatives come from the municipalities in the middle and south of the Czech-Slovak border. Except for the geographical reasons, which are described in the paragraphs above, there is also another cause, e.g. these municipalities have been active in cross-border networking and cross-border structures, which have thematically been focused on the Czech-Slovak cross-border cooperation.

The SK-CZ programme supported 258 projects so far. 129 of them – exactly half of the entire number - were projects managed by municipalities or organisations, acted as lead-partner or there were at least one project partner. 66 of these projects were done with the participation of municipalites (or organisations – mostly schools - fully controlled either by one or a union of these municipalities) which belong to the Euroregion Bílé Karpaty/Biele Karpaty, the body gathering subjects – mainly municipalities – with an interest in cross-border cooperation, from the Zlín and Trenčín Regions.

This is in a sharp contrast with the performance of municipalities from the Moravian-Silesian Region, which are not directly involved in TRITIA's cooperation network: there are only 10 projects with the participation of municipalities from the Moravian-Silesian Region or organisations controlled by them (municipal libraries, elementary schools, etc.). Half of these projects have partners from Euroregion Beskydy, the only Czech-Slovak institutionalised structure in the field of cross-border cooperation. The participation of municipal subjects or organisations controlled by the Žilina Region is somewhat higher; there are 16 projects with the participation of municipalities from Žilina Region; some of these projects have partners from Zlín region, as there are joint borders between both regions.

The factual dominance of municipalities belonging to the cross-border network Euroregion Bílé/Biele Karpaty should act as an example of good practice: it shows that cross-border networks – here presented by Euroregion Bílé/Biele Karpaty – have clearly positive role in promoting cross-border cooperation. Except for these larger cooperation networks, partnerships of municipalities act as an incentive as well: there are several projects between such municipalities or organisations coming from these municipalities, for example the partnership Valašské Meziříčí – Čadca, Vendryně – Čierne, Turzovka – Metylovice etc.

### Universities

Universities and tertiary education belong among potential project promoters. In contrary to the cooperation of municipalities from the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions, the universities from both regions, mainly the Technical University of Ostrava and Žilina University dominate in using the funds for cross-border cooperation: there were 21 projects with at least one participants being as university identified. 8 of them were bilateral projects between the two above mentioned universities, moreover, they have also been involved in projects where their partners were not universities.

The consortium was created also in parallel to the TRITIA creation: its core mission is to create links among the universities of the Moravian-Silesian Region, the Žilina Region and the Silesian and Opole Voivodeships with regard to scientific research and innovation. The goal of these links is to concentrate research and innovation capacities; this concentration should facilitate more effective planning, management and practical implementation of research projects and their technical applications. The Consortium will create the necessary conditions for the intensive sharing of research outcomes and experiences of innovation-based activities, and will complement the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) TRITIA which exists on the level of national ministries.

They should create conditions enabling the regions involved in the Consortium to achieve higher competitiveness. At the moment PROGRESS 3 consortium gathers 14 universities mainly from TRITIA territory and the regions nearby – mainly Trenčín and Trnava Regions in Slovakia.

The anchoring of 4 public universities from the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions in cooperation networks nevertheless helped them to be successful within the Czech-Slovak cross-border cooperation: there are 16 public universities in 6 regions covered by the Slovak-Czech programme (6 of them in Brno, seat of the South-Moravian Region). Those from both analysed regions clearly dominate in the programme use. (On the other hand some universities from Brno have been very successful in use of the mono-national Structural Funds programme for research and development and created large structures with the ERDF funding; they might have decided to focus on these programmes and ignore CBC at this stage. But this was not subject of this research).

## 8.2 Qualitative part - interviews with experts

Interviews with experts were conducted during the preparation of this case study in the course of October and November 2014. The main target group were representatives of regional authorities from both regions, but also other stakeholders with different backgrounds were asked; their full list and questions are available in the annex of this study.

All experts agreed with importance of the Schengen regime and internal market, but as a principle motivation for the CBC, they see the EU programmes supporting cross-border cooperation. They believe that these programmes were the impulse for improving and sometimes establishing functional relations between both regions.

Except for the principal tool, Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme Slovak Republic-Czech Republic 2007-13, its predecessor and successor underlined also the contribution of other programmes, mainly those supporting the cooperation of schools – current Erasmus+ Programme, ex-Life-Long Learning and Socrates Programmes.

Interviewed experts representing both regional authorities underlined that the process of the EGTC TRITIA creation was the real impetus to improve the quality of relations between both regions, having signed a cooperation agreement already in 2003. Nevertheless they think that European funds and the related process of the TRITIA creation brought along the “upgrading of these relationships” – this is felt more intensively by the people who implement the CBC directly. At this moment they perceive the relations of both regions as better as with their other partner regions. To illustrate that we are quoting the interviewed experts: *“but there is a strong personal cooperation. Recently a numerous delegation with the representatives of many departments from our authority have visited Žilina. Representatives of the Education, Youth and Sport Department have visited Žilina several times and they have discussed especially the topic of the support of talented students and the cooperation in sport activities. The recently mentioned journey was not focused on projects, but on finding common topics and ideas for a future collaboration. Representatives from Transport Department, Environment and Agriculture Department, Regional Development, Education, Youth and Sport Department and Tourism*

*Department and European Projects Department visited Žilina. We can say that crucial departments from our authority participated in this visit and they met their counterparts from the Žilina Self-Governing Region. We often meet counterparts within the meetings of EGTC TRITIA and I think there is a lot of space for more intense cooperation. Mostly, the above mentioned meetings result into concrete actions – for example the reconstruction of the roads on the Czech-Slovak border is really perceptible and I think the cooperation in education is successful too.”*

Rather concrete answers on the contribution of the process of regular meetings during the development of joint strategies brought interviews with experts representing transport departments of both partner regions: *“We made a common strategy with the Žilina Self-Governing Region (a definition of common goals, cooperation of various transport branches etc.) and this has evolved into specific investment projects. We succeeded in the reconstruction of all roads which are straight cross-borders connections between our region and the Žilina Self-Governing Region. Nowadays all roads, leading through the saddles in the Beskydy Mountains, are reconstructed (within the cross-border programme CZ-SK). And for the next period we are preparing a reconstruction of the rest of the roads. There are no differences between the roads on the Czech and Slovak side of the border, every aspect is unified.”*

The cooperation of both regions under the TRITIA umbrella influences also the process of preparation of both regions for the 2014-2020 programming period: *“...our region is preparing for a new programming period. Nowadays we have identified the roads which need a reconstruction within cross-border projects – we talk about concrete sections with specific financial proposals. There is a similar situation in the sphere of tourism (a propagation of attractive locations like castles, ski grounds and paths, cycling paths, technical heritage, culinary tourism). These investment and non-investment project proposals are similar on the Czech-Slovak border and the Czech-Polish border. It's important to transform these specific proposals into projects after the approval of the operational programmes”.*

The cooperation of regional authorities themselves was valued quite highly among interviewed experts. Nevertheless, they still feel many gaps in the cooperation of other subjects, the criticism was (despite the finding mentioned in the previous subchapter) also directed towards the local universities: *“... despite a lot of money has been spent within EGTC TRITIA, some strategies have been prepared, a lot of people have met their counterparts, but I miss big projects. We cooperate successfully in tourism, but in the sphere of technical innovations (and the cooperation of main universities of our regions) I see a lot of insufficiencies. And these scientific sectors, as we know from the border area between Germany and France, are crucial for the development of whole regions. I know some cooperation between universities exist, but it doesn't lead to big important projects. Moravian-Silesian region is populous and there aren't language barriers in relation to Slovakia and there is a great cultural similarity with Slovaks. So there is no reason not to deepen the cooperation between universities and scientific centers. Usually two or three universities participating at the PROGRESS 3 agree and prepare some*

*project. However, I do not know if universities can be involved in big projects within the framework of cross-border cooperation.”*

The interviewed experts were invited also to think about cooperation barriers, which was done in trilateral Czech-Slovak-Polish context. The problems they identified were much more related with Czech/Slovak-Polish rather than Czech-Slovak context: *„Another potential hindering factor can be the difference in the competences on the level of cooperation between our regional authority and that of the Žilina Self-Governing Region. Official departments and sections may not match and sometimes there is a need to find partners from non-regional organisations. However, due to common history within Czechoslovakia these problems are quite rare (unlike with Poland)... There are also so-called mental barriers. Especially in the sector of environmental protection and air pollution problems where Poland has less rigorous norms and limits. This fact hinders cooperation.”*

When being asked the questions on potentially interesting cooperation areas, the joint labour market and cooperation of education providers scored highly in many answers of the experts. These areas were underlined both with accent on the current situation or the situation to come soon: *“...I should mention the existence of numerous Slovak minority groups in our region. This minority lives here for generations and it's related to the industry in the Ostrava-Karviná coal basin. Many members of this minority have relatives and property in Slovakia. Secondly, the area called Kysuce (cities Čadca, Krásno nad Kysucou) is quite poor, without developed industry or services, so people move to our region because of the employment. They used to migrate for centuries. Another important fact is daily commuting which is possible thanks to the improvement of the cross-border road network. We should realise that the distance between Ostrava and Nošovice, as well as Čadca and Nošovice is similar”. In the future, “...there is a great potential in a cross-border labour market. Nowadays people from Slovakia work in our region. The cooperation between schools from the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Žilina Self-Governing Region is in its infancy and the lack of information and cross-border cooperation between schools influences labour market. Some fellowships and foreign stays can contribute to some kind of familiarisation of the host region and to possible employment in this region. Long-term stays abroad should be supported in high schools and universities.*

Some of the answers signalled that relations between Czech and Slovak public actors differ from “usual or good cross-border relations”: *We are in a very good relationship with the Transport Department of the Žilina Self-Governing Region. We can solve detailed problems and share our experience. Many people from our department (including me) and from Roads Administration of Moravian-Silesian Region studied in Žilina, because there was the only school focused on transport in our federal country. So we have friendly relations and we speak the same expert language. We maintain a federal identity. We should thank the projects which led to our regular mutual meetings while working on joint strategies – be it the bilateral Czech-Slovak or the complex EGTC one.*



### 8.3 Chapter conclusion

The manifold comparison, implemented in the first part of the chapter, clearly showed that more systemic approach towards this issue brought clear results for the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions: mainly the Moravian-Silesian Regional Authority managed to obtain more funds and helped to co-initiate many projects in 2007-2013 period than in the previous 2004-2006 shorter one. Moreover, the amount of money raised for the Regional Authority is itself outperformed the results of the other two regional authorities on the Czech side of the border, which were, from the point of view of cross-border cooperation, of less favourable geographical default setting.

The positive impact of existing cross-border networks on the ability of their members to conduct cross-border cooperation, measured in this paper by capacity of members of these networks to obtain external financial sources for mutual CBC, as also clearly shown in the chapter: the most successful CBC actors within the Czech-Slovak actors have been from Trenčín (SK) and Zlín (CZ) Region, where the Euroregion Bílé/Biele Karpaty has been conducting its activities since 2000. This network has been the most successful one. Only in the 2007-2013 programming period, the other cross-border networks helped their members to achieve better results; these new networks are the TRITIA EGTC and PROGRESS 3, a consortium of universities. The union of municipalities, working in the north of the Czech-Slovak border and involving also Polish partners, such as Euroregion Beskydy, has shown its role mainly in the 2004-2006 programming period, although, during the 2007-2013 period, it has achieved somewhat worse results, but still defended its right to exist.

The second subchapter describes the qualitative part of the research based on interviews with CBC stakeholders from the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions, i.e. the interviews have tried to complement the existing picture with opinions of the experts involved in the cross-border cooperation mostly at regional levels.

The sample of interviewed experts showed their positive attitude to the cross-border cooperation, roles of networks and institutions in it. On the other hand, the authors were not able to identify any major opponent of the CBC contribution. The interviewed experts have identified clear contribution of the process of the EGTC TRITIA creation, which meant a more systemic and better planned conduct of the cross-border cooperation. The newly introduced systemic approach has also helped to establish functional and friendly interpersonal relation between stakeholders responsible for the cross-border cooperation in both regions.

The networks are already created and the human capital is ready to undertake ambitious cooperation projects between all partners who created the EGTC TRITIA. In both strategies described in this paper there are many potential projects outlined, which should be financed from the INTERREG 2014 – 2020 programmes. The new generation of these programmes took into account the fact that EGTC has developed its own cooperation strategy and there are some cross-references in all three relevant drafts of the INTERREG programmes (CZ-PL, PL-SK and SK-

CZ). What was missing during previous programming periods was the possibility to design and implement trilateral development projects. At the moment, it seems that theoretically this should be – according to Regulations - possible in 2014 – 2020 period, but the question is, whether national controllers will be able to set appropriate mechanisms which support trilateral projects.

We must conclude this chapter with a clear statement that cross-border networks really help their members to engage in implementation of the cross-border cooperation. These networks also help to build trust and functional relationships among their members, thus they contribute to the higher level of institutional thickness in cross-border regions.

In the following chapter, we will shortly outline the cooperation projects formulated for the EGTC TRITIA as a whole. This will be followed by description of several projects of the EGTC which are currently under implementation.

## 9. Future plans and goals of the cooperation

This chapter will try to outline the future cooperation goals. As it was mentioned in previous parts of the study, the main purpose of all three bilateral cooperation strategies, including the Slovak-Czech one, was to serve as a resource for creating one single EGTC TRITIA strategy. The works were undertaken between June 2012 and the end of the year 2013. The works were done by external consultants, who consulted the strategy with the members of the TRITIA working group twice. Nevertheless the process of the strategy creation has not been satisfactory finished yet and it has remained unfinished.

As far as TRITIA is concerned, its cooperation **vision** was embedded into the strategy, as it is described:

*"The Moravian-Silesian Region, the Silesian Voivodeship, the Opole Voivodeship and the Žilina Self-governing Region form, through their institutional cooperation, a functional social, economic and prosperous cross-border region with existing connecting infrastructure, able to eliminate negative barrier effects of borders and to use mutual complementarities thanks to their joint effort."*

### Global and specific objectives of the EGTC TRITIA cooperation:

The EGTC TRITIA trilateral cooperation strategy identified the following cooperation activities, which were developed by the means of global and specific objectives.

#### Transport and infrastructure

Systematic cooperation of the EGTC TRITIA in the field of transport and infrastructure should according to the elaborated strategy lead towards meeting the following objectives in the years 2014-2020:

##### Global Objective 1:

Maximising the use of the geographical position of the partner regions for their economic development supported by appropriate development of cross-border transport infrastructure and transport using endogenous potential of the cooperating regions and taking into account the needs of transport accessibility and safety, while respecting friendly approach towards the environment.

##### Specific objective 1.1:

Establish and operate an expert platform which is able to identify common priorities for infrastructure, transport and logistics solutions.

##### Specific objective 1.2:

Improve local and regional transport accessibility.

**Specific objective 1.3:**

Support low-emission forms of transport and more efficient public transport.

**Economic cooperation**

Systematic cooperation of the EGTC TRITIA in the field of economic cooperation should lead towards the following objectives in the years 2014-2020:

**Global objective 2:**

Creating an environment suitable for a common, business attractive cross-border economic area based on the use of innovation, support of entrepreneurship and business. To create an area that will make the best use of its geographical location, availability and qualifications of local human resources, common history and mutual complementarity of all regions, and ensure high levels of employment of its inhabitants.

**Specific Objective 2.1:**

Create conditions for development and institutionalisation of existing elements and the creation of other cooperative elements leading to the formation of cross-border economic area.

**Specific objective 2.2:**

Support the development of human resources and administrative / institutional capacity of the border region.

**Specific objective 2.3:**

Promote cross-border initiatives in research , development and innovation.

**Tourism**

In the field of tourism, the following objectives were identified:

**Global objective 3:**

Maximising the use of geographical, historical, cultural and natural resources of the partner regions for tourism development.

**Specific objective 3.1:**

Build and modernise the infrastructure for tourism.

**Specific objective 3.2:**

Implement targeted marketing and promotion of cross-border tourism and cooperate in the field of Destination Management.

**Specific objective 3.3:**

Develop tourism based on the use of local products.

#### **Specific objective 3.4:**

Improve the quality of tourism services.

### **Energy and Environment**

In the field of energy and environment the EGTC TRITIA strategy should fulfil the following objectives:

#### **Global Goal 4:**

Reduction of environmental burden in the territory of cooperating regions and to increase the quality of the environment in the border area with the use of energy-efficient solutions.

#### **Specific objective 4.1:**

Improve environmental quality in cross-border regions.

#### **Specific objective 4.2:**

Cooperate in the search for energy-win solutions especially in the domain of waste disposal.

#### **Specific strategic objective 4.3:**

Promote the use of renewable energy sources.

### **Project fulfilling the strategy:**

The strategic part of the document is based on findings of the analytical part, related with global and specific strategic targets defining the main directions of cross-border cooperation of partner regions. The actual implementation of the strategy will be ensured through the projects of regions and entities operating there. The list of proposed projects is divided into the following categories:

- **Key (flagship) projects** – projects generating significant effects in social, economic, spatial-infrastructure areas and environmental protection, their implementation in practice is closely involved in the implementation of strategic objectives. In addition to its large scale and diversity, they offer innovative, unique solutions whose attributes are multiplied. They are actually building the image and identity of the cross-border region, playing a role of “local magnets”. These projects should mainly, but not exclusively (as in the areas of transport, energy and environment) be characterised by involving partners from all three countries whose regions are involved in the cooperation.

- **Other projects** – additional tools introducing changes in society, economy and environmental protection, their successful implementation is often a condition for success of strategic and flagship projects.
- **Additional bilateral projects** – the bilateral projects of three bilateral strategies to which this synthesis refers.
- **Horizontal projects** – create a specific category thanks to their character, passing through individual areas of cooperation.

It should be noted that the attached list of projects represents an initial catalogue of the proposed solutions for the analysed territory. In no way it excludes the recognition and implementation of other projects that directly reflect on the strategic objectives and activities defined within the strategic provisions for the development of institutional cooperation between the Moravian-Silesian region, Opole Voivodeship, Silesian Voivodeship and Žilina Self-governing Region.

## Projects in “Transport and Infrastructure” area

### Key projects

Project name:	<b>Monitoring platform for the development of superior transport infrastructure</b>
Project owner:	EGTC TRITIA
Brief description:	The objective of this activity will be to process a joint synthesis of documents stating the conduct of transport policy and development of superior transport infrastructure, which will, in the long term, serve as a basic document determining the direction of further mutual cross-border connections. For this purpose, representatives of partner organisations of public authorities and their proposed experts will form an expert committee that will jointly process this concept. The platform shall be technically provided by the Secretariat of EGTC TRITIA
Sources of funding:	CZK 0,6 million, resources of program for transnational cooperation and partner regions, EGTC TRITIA
Territorial impact:	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Development of cycling transport in TRITIA functional urban areas and between them</b>
<b>Project owner:</b>	EGTC TRITIA
<b>Brief description:</b>	The aim of this activity will be to identify several problematic places in terms of cycling development in EGTC TRITIA urban areas, to ensure exchange of experience with promoting the importance of cycling in Europe and process a joint document of cycling development as one of the forms of low-carbon transport within the EGTC TRITIA territory.
<b>Sources of funding:</b>	CZK 0,6 million, EGTC and partner regions funds, ERDF
<b>Territorial impact:</b>	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

## Projects in “Economic Cooperation”

### Key projects

<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Czech – Polish – Slovak business platform</b>
<b>Project owner:</b>	EGTC TRITIA
<b>Brief description:</b>	The aim of this project is to support SME sector operating in the cross-border area, e.g. by the means of creating cross-border economic forum; which will help in networking; paid internships for unemployed; B2B meetings for entrepreneurs, etc.
<b>Sources of funding:</b>	OP CBC CZ-PL, OP CBC SK-CZ, International Visegrad Fund
<b>Territorial impact:</b>	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Self-governing Region

<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Automotive TRITIA</b>
<b>Project owner:</b>	EGTC in partnership with founding regions
<b>Brief description:</b>	The aim of the project is the development of educational programs for secondary and tertiary education providers that will respond to the needs of automotive industry in the regions creating EGTC and to create a competence centre in automotive industry
<b>Sources of funding:</b>	OP of multinational or international cooperation 2014-2020
<b>Territorial impact:</b>	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

### Other projects

<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Training program in entrepreneurship for secondary schools – “Education for business”</b>
Project owner:	Partner regions or secondary schools
Brief description:	The aim of the project is promotion and popularisation of the idea of entrepreneurship between secondary school students, together with encouraging the young people to develop their own business and freelance activity.
Sources of funding:	OP CBC CZ-PL 2014-2020, OP CBC SK-CZ 2014-2020. OP PL – SK 2014-2020
Territorial impact:	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region
<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Platform of cooperation in scientific research and academic field, cross-linking of scientific and academic centres in cross-border area</b>
Project owner:	Universities involved in Progress 3 consortium
Brief description:	Aim of the project is to deepen the cooperation between research and academic centres in exchange of skills, experience and knowledge in order to improve innovations. Aims of the project relate also to several other domains: providing systematic and comparable knowledge related to trends of EGTC cross-border area for politicians and practitioners; increase in mobility of university employees; cross-border transfer of knowledge.
Sources of funding:	International Visegrad Fund, OP of multinational cooperation, ERDF
Territorial impact:	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Support to cluster organisations within the ClusterNet initiative – workshops for inter-industrial cooperation of clusters in R&amp;D (in M-S region and outside)</b>
Project owner:	Regional Development Agency, Karol Adamiński University of Economics in Katowice, University of Žilina
Brief description:	The objective is to provide expert support in cluster management within the two meetings of cluster managers, establishing cooperation with foreign cluster organisations and information service on European



cluster policy. The meetings will also be focused on the initiation of cooperation of cluster organisations from partner regions of the European Territorial Cooperation TRITIA, primarily in Research & Development.

Sources of funding: OP CBC CZ-PL and SK-CZ 2014-2020, private funding, EGTC TRITIA

Territorial impact: Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

## Projects of cooperation in “Tourism”

### Key projects

<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Hiking without barriers – network of buildings and tourism attractions in EGTC TRITIA accessible to disabled persons</b>
Project owner:	EGTC and partner regions
Brief description:	The aim of the project is the improvement of accessibility of tourism attractions of the cross-border EGTC TRITIA region for the disabled persons with utilisation of the joint touristic product.
Sources of funding:	ERDF
Territorial impact:	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Specialised tourism</b>
Project owner:	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Self-governing Region or relevant entities in this region
Brief description:	The aim of the project is to adapt the offer of services for disadvantaged tourists. The project may continue the already implemented project in the Moravian-Silesian Region, “Barriers-free Moravian-Silesian Region” ( <a href="http://www.jedemetaky.cz">www.jedemetaky.cz</a> ), within which a unified certification of accommodation and catering facilities, monuments and other objects attractive in terms of tourism is created. This certification system could be promoted and expanded in terms of the area within this project.
Sources of funding:	Regional ROP and their successors, OP CBC CZ-PL 2014-2020, OP CBC SK-CZ 2014-2020, OP CBC PL-SK 2014-2020, EGTC TRITIA

Territorial impact: Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

**Project name:** Jointly coordinated marketing surveys

**Project owner:** Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Self-governing Region

**Brief description:** The aim of the project is to coordinate or introduce joint marketing surveys in tourism. It is possible to coordinate surveys of satisfaction and loyalty of the visitors to the whole TRITIA territory or survey of target groups and their needs. Based on executed surveys and recommendations within the project, it is also possible to create a common TRITIA “Corporate Design Manual” as the basic elements of unified visual style of the whole region. But this can be created only more closely for the marketing tourism needs, and not as the official general logo of the region as such.

**Sources of funding:** Regional ROP and their successors, OP CBC CZ-PL 2014-2020, OP CBC SK-CZ 2014-2020, OP CBC PL-SK 2014-2020, EGTC TRITIA

**Territorial impact:** Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

### Other projects

**Project name:** Cross-country skiing trail (interconnection of cross-country skiing trails)

**Project owner:** Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region or relevant entities in these regions

**Brief description:** To achieve real or at least marketing connection and visibility of existing machine treated cross-country skiing trails in all partner regions. Follow-up of existing projects in the Moravian-Silesian Region “Beskids cross-country highway” and “Jeseníky cross-country highway” and activities within the EGTC and others in the Žilina Self-governing Region (Slovakia), connection to other activities of entities in these regions. The areas concerned:

- 1) Silesian Beskids – Beskid Śląski
- 2) Jeseníky – Góry Opawskie

Sources of funding:	Both ROP and their successors, OP PS CZ-PL 2007 - 2013, OP PS CZ-PL 2014-2020, OP PS SK-CZ 2014-2020, OP PS PL-SK 2014-2020, private financing
Territorial impact:	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Self-governing Region

<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Professionalisation and modernisation of tourism industry in Slovak-Polish-Czech border area</b>
Project owner:	Regional touristic organisations
Brief description:	The aim of the project is professionalisation of workers in tourism industry in the border area (including language preparedness) and modernisation of operational standards and customer service in this field. Other objective is laying the foundations for cross-border cooperation of entities operating in tourism industry and local self-administrations in promoting touristic attractions or joint touristic offers in the border area. These objectives will be achieved through the implementation of learning modules designated for entities in tourism industry (touristic information centres, travel agencies), for associations conducting activities in this thematic field and for units of local self-administration.
Sources of funding:	OP CBC CZ-PL 2014-2020, OP CBC SK-CZ 2014-2020, OP CBC PL-SK 2014-2020, private financing
Territorial impact:	Opole Voivodeship, Silesian Voivodeship, Moravian-Silesian Region, Žilina Region

<b>Project name:</b>	<b>Wooden architecture trail</b>
Project owner:	Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region, or relevant entities in these regions
Brief description:	The aim of Wooden Architecture Trail is to create a network of historical structures made of wood and having indisputable historical benefit for the visitor. The most ideal solution is to connect objects with all-year lasting, or at least seasonal, accessibility; those can be then partially amended with inaccessible objects. The trail will contain unified informative promotional material in all involved objects. This trail will be promoted by leaflets (information centres, wooden structures

themselves) and by other communication channels – internet, newspapers, radio, etc. Some of these structures could work as museums, thus it is possible to brighten the trail with interactive elements that would encourage higher visitations.

Sources of funding: Regional ROP, EGTC TRITIA, OP CBC 2014-2020

Territorial impact: Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

**Project name:** Gastronomic Trail

Project owner: Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region, or relevant entities in these regions

Brief description: The aim of Gastronomic Trail is to create a network of gastronomic facilities that will offer and serve specialties of their region in unified form and high standard. The project will be based on the motto, “Taste Local Specialties and Specialties of Our Neighbours”. The trail will include also so-called regional gastronomic products typical for area like cheese, milk products, bakery products, regional specialties, etc. This trail will be promoted by leaflets (information centres, gastronomic facilities) and by other communication channels – internet, newspapers, radio, etc.

Sources of funding: Regional ROP, EGTC TRITIA, OP CBC 2014-2020

Territorial impact: Moravian-Silesian Region, Silesian Voivodeship Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Region

## Projects in “Energetics and Environment”

### Key projects

**Project name:** Map of renewable sources of energy – Trail of experience with the use of renewable sources of energy in EGTC TRITIA territory

Project owner: EGTC and partner regions

Brief description: The aim of the project is to popularise experience and good practices leading to the increase of interest in the use of renewable sources of energy in the cross-border EGTC TRITIA region.

Sources of funding: OP CBC CZ-PL 14-20, OP CBC SK-CZ 14-20, Horizon 2020

Territorial impact: Silesian Voivodeship, Moravian-Silesian Region, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Self-governing Region

**Project name:** Joint strategy of air quality management in the TRITIA Region

**Project owner:** The main project owners are partner regions preparing EGTC TRITIA and EGTC

**Brief description:** Improving air quality on all sides of the border in areas with impaired quality of air by creating a joint strategy and its implementation. Enhance exchange of information and experience with the aim to find common tools applicable on both sides of the border. Implementation of measures and tools assembled in joint strategy.

**Sources of funding:** OP CBC 2014 – 2020; other sources of financing (national, regional)

**Territorial impact:** Silesian Voivodeship, Moravian-Silesian Region, Opole Voivodeship, Žilina Self-governing Region

### Projects implemented by the EGTC TRITIA nowadays

Except for the projects, which were planned and were described previously, the part of them has already achieved their implementation phase. Nevertheless, these are just minor projects mostly funded from the International Visegrad Fund.

### Local products belong to the marketplace

The project, led by ISTER - GRANUM EGTC and funded from the International Visegrad Fund, has focused on creating more suitable conditions for local products and their access to the market. The task of the EGTC TRITIA, the project partner, was to bring 18 experts including two speakers to the conference. Its objective was to compare the legislative background for the operation of local producers in the V4 cross – border areas.

### Promotion of technical history in an innovative way

Aim of the project “Discover your industrial past” is to raise awareness about the industrial heritage located in the area of European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation TRITIA: Silesia Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Moravian-Silesian Region, and Žilina Self – governing Region.

Within the project running from August 2014 to June 2015, several activities are planned: to design an educational desk game in Polish, Czech and Slovak, concerning the industrial heritage of the listed regions, competitions for the youth of the neighboring countries associated with the educational game, an international conference and an exhibition. The project focuses on educational activities that bring people from Poland, the Czech Republic and from Slovakia, bring their knowledge of the industrial heritage of the neighboring countries, which is nowadays one of the most important branches of tourism at the Polish-Czech-Slovak border area.

## 10. Unique, regionally specific features of cooperation

The cooperation between both cooperating entities, the Moravian-Silesian Region (the Czech Republic) and the Žilina Self-Governing Region (Slovakia), and their engagement in the EGTC TRITIA has many features which make the cooperation at both levels very unique and pioneering.

It was for the first time when the cross-border cooperation at higher than local level was treated systematically and with the planned use of the EU funds in the Czech Republic and Slovakia (and Poland, should we speak about the EGTC level). This approach was then followed by other entities, for example all Czech-Polish euroregions in their project Euregio PL-CZ, in which they also used the INTERREG funds to draft their cooperation strategy for 2014-2020 period.

Compared with other cooperation entities at higher than local levels – for example Czech-Bavarian-Austrian European Region Danube-Vltava/Moldau or the Hungarian-Austrian-Slovak-Czech initiative CENTROPE, it enjoys the highest level of institutionalisation – thanks to the EGTC brand. The other difference is in the economic similarity of regions cooperating under the TRITIA heading: whereas both other cooperation groupings – Danube-Vltava/Moldau and CENTROPE – can count on presence of highly developed regions and cities from the “old” EU and thus to rely on “pull” effect and the efficient use of cross-border complementarities. But the regions creating TRITIA cannot experience those pull effects because their economic levels are rather similar and there is no clear development pole which can act as a cooperation engine. To eliminate this, the sophisticated cooperation mechanisms should be put in place.

There are also some other unique features, which reflect on the need of the concerned cooperation territory. These needs were identified in cooperation strategies and were addressed by the form of identified joint cooperation measures and concrete projects. The accent on territorial needs makes also a difference compared to other cooperation entities.

There are also features, which are rather negative and should be improved. The main failure is a lower capacity of cooperation founders and their ability to involve also other actors, mainly from municipal level of public administration. This is also accented in the summary of this paper. Insufficient capacity to enter into a cooperation in other initiatives and with transregional interests is another failure, as an example, we can mention the absence of connections with the Central European Transport Corridor (CETC EGTC), which is a grouping interested in the same North-South corridor which is also vital for EGTC TRITIA.

## 11. Summary

The paper dealt with the cooperation of the Moravian-Silesian Region (the Czech Republic) and the Žilina Self-Governing Region (Slovakia) and the qualitative change of that cooperation which came with the process of the EGTC TRITIA creation. The authors dealt with the initial premises that the character of each cross-cooperation between Czech and Slovak subjects slightly differ from the cross-border cooperation on the other borders of both countries. This is mainly due to the joint history in one state, Czechoslovakia (1918 – 1992, with the break during World War II) and almost non-existing language barrier. The common history brought along frequent border-crossing – to work, study or spend leisure-time on the other side of the borders. These characteristics have co-caused the fact that mental barriers between inhabitants of both countries are low and perception of otherness is not so strong (as vis-à-vis other neighbours of Czech and the Slovak Republic, with possible exception on Slovak-Hungarian borders, where the authors expect rather low level of mental barriers between Hungarians living in Slovakia and their southern neighbours).

The main objective of this paper was to show that institutionalisation of cross-border cooperation between the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Žilina Region under the EGTC TRITIA umbrella improved their mutual cooperation. In the part describing the ways towards current cooperation of both regions, we mentioned that division of Czechoslovakia introduced a set of border regime, including physical controls. The division of Czechoslovakia meant a negative development for all regions lying on the newly emerged borders: the number of public transport cross-border connections between both countries dramatically fell down and complicated the situation of cross-border commuters. Moreover, the economic restructuring which started in 1990's, drastically changed the employment structure of the inhabitants of both analysed regions: the shift from primary or secondary sectors of the economy into the third service sector was accelerated also by enclosure of large heavy industrial factories and coal-mines in Moravian-Silesian Region, consequently, many commuters from the Žilina Region, mainly Kysuce sub-region, lost their jobs. When coming to this restructuring and lay-offs, mostly the foreign (Slovak and Polish) workers were the first victims in Moravian-Silesian Region. Also these developments led to the fact that many job-vacancies in tourism industry in the Žilina Region were co-caused also by the restructuring in the Moravian-Silesian Region.

Despite of the fact that both countries were members of the Visegrad Group and declared the same ambitions vis-à-vis future membership in “western” structures, mainly NATO and the EU, their development was slightly different. Whereas the Czech Republic managed to follow Hungary and Poland in kind of a “good pupils regime”, the Slovak ambitions were handicapped due to the Mečiar's government, which slowed down for example process of the Slovakia's entry into NATO, which came 5 years later (2004) than for the Czech Republic (1999).



The cooperation between subjects from both countries were complicated also due to different structures of public administration: whereas Slovakia introduced regional structure and self-governing regions already in 1996, the Czechs made the same changes only in 2000. The non-existence of regions of similar type and competences offered no space to create cross-border contacts at lower than national and higher than municipal levels. Moreover no euroregions on Czech-Slovak borders were created in 1990s. This was due to the negative welcome of euroregions by the Slovak 1992-1998 Prime Minister, Vladimír Mečiar, whose administration did not provide any motivation or incentives for creating euroregions.

Therefore the first euroregions on the Czech-Slovak border were created only in 2000, controlled by municipalities, hence regions had almost no influence, which is explained in previous paragraph as regions were introduced in both countries at different times. This means that they could not influence the beginning of cross-border cooperation under the euroregional umbrella and also had no possibility to obtain for European funding (which in the form of Phare CBC appeared on the Czech-Slovak border in 1999).

In 2000, the regional level of public administration was introduced in the Czech Republic and Slovak regions, existing since 1996, obtained their natural counterparts. During the first years of their functioning, the regions were occupied mainly by their own establishment and processes, for example, the issue of expected EU enlargement and the possibility to work with the EU Structural Funds was also a part of their agenda, but just partially.

The beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century was in the field of regional policies influenced by ideas of new regionalism (Keating, 1998) and paradiplomacy, which both acknowledge the higher importance of regions as actors of “small foreign policy”. This international element can be seen in their mutual cooperation and agreement signed in 2003. In this agreement, both regions identified several areas of joint interest, including “European integration and joint implementation of the EU funded projects”.

Since 2003 both regions should be understood as bound by an agreement on institutionalised cooperation. Nevertheless, only the European funds for cross-border cooperation brought some real and tangible cooperation, this happened only in 2007 – 2013 programming period. Until that time the cooperation was rather in the realm of declaration of political leaders than in reality.

The analysis conducted in the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of this paper showed that systemic approach towards mutual cross-border cooperation brought very positive results for the Moravian-Silesian and Žilina Regions: mainly the Moravian-Silesian Regional Authority managed to obtain more funds and helped to co-initiate more projects in 2007 – 2013 period than in the previous 2004 – 2006 shorter one. Moreover, the amount of money raised for the Regional Authority itself outperformed the results of other two regional authorities on the Czech side of the border, which was due to the – from the point of cross-border cooperation – less favourable geographical default setting – quite unlikely.

The possibility to use the EU funds for cross-border cooperation brought both regions – and also four regions creating EGTC TRITIA – to the joint extensive work on common cross-border development strategies. Except for the strategies elaborated concrete cross-border cooperation projects and their concrete promoters. The most important contribution has been the whole cooperation process as such, when the representatives of both regions plus other CBC actors from both regions have regularly met and worked on beforehand planned issues. The created cross-border Czech-Slovak network, in the very north of the border, is probably more valuable asset than funds already raised or projects identified in the strategies, as it shows the potential to approach the existing problems of both regions in appropriate way which respects the potential of this potentially cross-border region.

The strategies, which were developed thanks to the process of the intensified cross-border cooperation among both regions and also all four regions creating the EGTC TRITIA, are all extensive documents with parts analysing existing relationships between the regions involved. All these documents, in their both analytical as well as strategic parts, take into account existing socio-economic situation in the concrete cross-border region. The project proposals identified in these strategies and engagement of the newly emerged cross-border networks have the significant potential to affect the development of the region. Nevertheless, this is probably most likely in the areas of tourism and cross-border labour market.

The positive impact of existing cross-border networks and their ability of to conduct cross-border cooperation was proved by the analysis in chapter 6, not only on the example of cooperation between both analysed regions, but also on the case of universities gathered in consortium Progress 3 or municipalities and other actors creating the Euroregion Bílé/Biele Karpaty.

Except for the positive evaluation of cross-border networks in helping their members to obtain the EU funds for the mutual cross-border cooperation, , we also carried out qualitative research among practitioners in the field of cross-border cooperation. These experts confirmed the findings done by the quantitative methods. The euroregional cooperation in the form of Euroregion Beskydy and mainly Bílé/Biele Karpaty contributed to the institutionalisation of cross-border relation on the Czech-Slovak border in the first decade on 21<sup>st</sup> century, at the time when the newly emerged regions were quite weak after their construction. Now it seems – but it is rather a slow process – that there can be a division line between the (smaller) projects by Euroregions and bigger ones by the regions. The positions of the EGTC TRITIA and Euroregion Beskydy, situated fully in TRITIA territory and involving municipalities from all three concerned countries, are slowly becoming to be rather cooperative.

The implemented cross-border projects, the measures and projects planned in the strategies of cooperation between both analysed regions or in the framework of the whole EGTC TRITIA act according to the Boesler's Entgrenzung – de-borderisation – theory and they try to overcome the national burdens by cross-borderisation of their activities. Nevertheless, no part of the research identified any newly born feeling of a joint cross-border identity. Maybe the territories are too big or some kind of “federal Czechoslovak identity”, as mentioned by one interviewed experts, are enough for the CBC stakeholders or the inhabitants of the both regions.

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## 14. Annex

### Annex 1 (list of interviewed experts)

Interviewers: Hynek Böhm, Artur Boháč

List of the interviewed experts:

Name	Public official at regional level	Political representative at regional level	Practitioner of the CBC at municipal level	Other subject involved in CBC
CZ				
Ivan Strachoň		X		
David Sventek		X		
Jana Drobilová	X			
Petr Ksenič	X			
Hynek Orság	X			
Libor Částka	X			
Petra Koláčková	X			
Gabriela Kalužová	X			
Tomáš Fiedler	X			
Petr Kolčárek			X	
Alena Kolčárková			X	
Gabriela Niedoba			X	
Michal Banot				X
Lukáš Szlaur				X
Lukáš Kisza				X
Viliam Šuňal				X
SK				
Jana Braciníková	X			
Branislav Zacharides	X			
Peter Jakubčík	X			
Michal Laktiš	X			
Michal Polák				X
Mirka Poláková				X
Marian Chlebana				X
Eva Šustrová				X
Mirka Petříková				X
Marián Remenius				X
Ivana Bobrovská			X	
Katarína Katinová			X	
Ľubica Turčanová			X	
Peter Bytčánek				X



## Annex 2 Questionnaire used

Name:

Position:

Date:

### Introduction

How long have you been working in your current position? Did you deal with similar questions before entering this current position?

### Cross-border relations, partners, clients in your activities

In what cooperation(s) is your institution involved?

What about the frequency/intensity of the common work?

How do you find the efficiency of the cooperation in the light of its initial objectives?

### The importance and evaluation of cross-border interactions

Is there any cross-border commuting in your region of activity(for others)?

What are the positive effects of commuting?

Are there any negative effects of commuting?

### Reasons, conditions and targets of cross-border movements

Who are involved in cross-border movements?

What is their motivation?

Where do they regularly come from? (which areas, municipalities)

What are the main targets? (which areas, municipalities)

### Temporal changes in reasons, conditions and targets

How do you see the characteristic changes of cross-border traffic in recent years?

What are the reasons of the changes?

What do you think about the future prospects?

**The effects of recent changes (EGTC TRITIA construction, Schengen accession, introduction of euro in Slovakia)**

Did the EGTC TRITIA establishment result in significant changes in your activities?

Did the Schengen accession result in significant changes in your activities?

Did the introduction of euro in Slovakia result in significant changes in your activities?

**Factors helping or hindering cooperation**

What factors do hinder more intense cross-border interactions?

In your opinion what could contribute to the deepening of cross-border cooperation in the future?

What kind of cooperation would you support?

What is the difference between cooperation CZ-SK and CZ-PL, respectively SK-PL?

**What was the main contribution of intensified cooperation between both regions and the process of the TRITIA EGTC creation?**

**Own ideas for the promotion of cross-border cooperation**

**Other (personal questions)**

In the times of federation, did you study or live in the other part of it?

How often do you travel to the other side of the border?

What are your main targets on the other side?

What are the reasons of your visits?

### Annex 3: Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme Slovak Republic- Czech Republic 2007-13 - List of Supported Projects with Participation from at least one partner region

Lead-partner	Cross-border partner(s)	Project area	ERDF support
Orava Culture centre v Dolnom Kubíne	Vallachian Museum of Rožnov pod Radhoštěm / Municipality Kozlovce	Crafts of both regions	61 252,24
Nature Friends Nový Jičín	Alcedo / Zoo Ostrava	Comeback of the eagle into the Czech landscape	283 607,21
Technical University Ostrava,	Žilina University	Best technology transfer in energy resources	352 367,50
Žilina University	Technical University Ostrava	International TV in DVB-H system	799 224,40
Microregión Terchovská dolina	Inion of River Stonávka Municipalities	Euro Net	244 189,70
Ostrava University	Trnava University	Diagnosis of skills of pupils from both parts of the borders	352 755,26
Žilina regional Chamber SOPK	Regional Economic Chamber of Moravia-Silesia	CBC partnership-development-opportunity	99 076,55
Technical University Ostrava,	Žilina University	Supporting local heating with biomass	233 197,50
Moravian-Silesian Region	Žilina Region /	Road reconstruction Bílá - Klokočov - Turzovka	2 680 206,40
Žilina Region	Moravian-Silesian Region	Road reconstruction Čadca-Milošová-Mosty u Jablunkova	1 319 897,96
Region Beskydy SK	Region Beskydy CZ	Cross-border tourism in Euroregion Beskydy	75 031,20
Žilina University	Silesian University in Opava	Innovation for regional competitiveness	489 798,90
Town Frýdlant nad Ostravicí	Town Turzovka	CBC in Region Frýdlantsko - Horné Kysuce	364 390,75
NGO for leisure-time in Ostrava	elementary school Rázusova Čadca	III.Skiing and Snobarding Eurourse	255 298,35
Institut EuroSchola, o.s.	Union of municipalities Martin, Training Centre	APVS - Academy of Cross-Border Training of Public Servants	200 480,49

Lead-partner	Cross-border partner(s)	Project area	ERDF support
Žilina Region	City of Ostrava Library.	Information without Borders - Constructing Information Society by the Means of Connecting Librarian and information Systems	264 202,61
Czech union of nature protectors -MS branch	Slovak union of nature protectors	Nature does not know any borders	370 487,22
Science and Technology Park Žilina	Institut EuroSchola, o.s./ RDA of Trenčín regino./ Slovak centrum ofproductivity	Jointly for innovations	460 001,01
Tourism Cluster Liptov	KLACR o.s.	Jointly in the border region!	209 114,19
Žilina Region	Moravian-Silesian Region	Reconstruction of road Turzovka – Bílá II. phase	2 092 226,81
Town Krásno nad Kysucou	Town Frenštát pod Radhoštěm	Let us visit via monitor	138 926,39
Institut EuroSchola, o.s.	Science and Technology Park Žilina	Don't be afraid of making business	112 936,31
INOVA NOVA, n.o.	Regional Development Agency	Innovation Through border (InNOBorder)	324 134,53
Keric	Institut EuroSchola,o.s.	Connect with Nature	68 391,00
ICM Orava	Institut EuroSchola,o.s.	Centre od education - Opportunity to educate without borders	189 911,25
Žilina Region Firemen and Rescue Service	Moravia-Silesia Region Firemen and Rescue Service	Creating joint information exchange platform for extraordinary interventions in both regions	350 619,62
Town Turzovka	Municipality Metylovice	Environment protection in border regions	480 662,67
Žilina Region	Moravian-Silesian Region	Cooperation and systemic co-ordination of self.governments in both regions	85 960,50
Foundation KRTEK	Council of Youth of Žilina Region	MOLE IN NET	338 243,34
Z@ict,	IT Cluster,	Integrated regional information system - IRIS	377 189,62

Lead-partner	Cross-border partner(s)	Project area	ERDF support
Microregion Bystrická dolina	Union of municipalities of Stonávka river	Let us inform each other!	231 707,45
Žilina University	Technical University Ostrava	Cooperation in the field of traing and HR development in elektrotechnics	210 396,25
elementary school and gymnázium Vítkov, p.o.	Elementary School Vrbové, Školská 4, Vrbové,	Let us look for nice hidden places!	89 424,59
Technical University Ostrava	Žilina University	CBC development in the field of historical architecture	195 049,90
Municipality Zborov nad Bystricou	Municipality Mosty u Jablunkova	We want clean water in both regions	214 643,58
Tourism Cluster Liptov	KLACR o.s.	Learning Regions	308 909,27
INOVA NOVA, n.o.	Technical University Ostrava	Creativity and innovation globally - KreatIN	174 516,11
Community work centre of Moravian-Silesian Region	Centre of environmental Activities	20 independent years in border region municipalities	44 437,06
Car cluster SK	Moravian-Silesian Automotive Cluster	Automotive without borders	90 302,00
Technical University Ostrava	Žilina University	Joint study against pollution	113 689,06
Technical University Ostrava	Žilina University	HR Development in alternative energy sources	88 604,00
KERIC, o.z.	Institut Euro Schola, o.z.	EConnection	74 445,55
Čzech Union of nature protection	Alcedo	support of endangered species	183 482,40
Municipality Čierne	Municipality Vendryně	Let us get familiar with beauties of both places	33 934,97
Technical University Ostrava	Žilina University	Development of cooperation of both schools in building in the transport field	82 301,13
Regional Development Agency Ostrava	Regional Development Agency of Žilina Region	Technical Talent CZ-SK	36 965,51
Private secondary vocational school VIA HUMANA	Higher vocational school DAKOL andsecondary school DAKOL, o.p.s.	The presence breathes the past	55 734,54

Lead-partner	Cross-border partner(s)	Project area	ERDF support
Technical university Ostrava	Žilina University	Cross-border labour market chances for workforce from both regions	214 404,00
Technical university Ostrava	Žilina University	Waste management in both regions	114 945,50
Town Martin	Beskydská tvorba	System of motivation of town Martin employees as a tool to increase their competitiveness	35 168,92
Municipality Stará Bystrica	Municipality Řeka	Let us renew tourism infrastructure objects to help to re-initiate CZ-SK relations	199 900,68
Gymnázium Antona Bernoláka Námestovo	Wichterlovo gymnázium, Ostrava-Poruba,	Our-your O(ST)RAVA	47 194,55
Municipality Oravská Lesná	Municipality Huslenky	International cyclo-track	370 169,76
Technical University Ostrava	Žilina University	Increasing skills of future workforce in the field of metrology and metal-processing	81 668,00
Municipality Košťany nad Turcom	Municipality Zašová / Municipality Žabokreky	Let us explore water and its biotops	59 841,17
Prievidza Regional Culture Centre	NGO "Kunovjan"	On the wings of music	26 480,56

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