

AGENDA NO. 6: Working plan for the year 2017

We provide an overview of the CESCI professional activities for the year 2017 below.

A) Strengthening CESCI services

During the previous years, the professional organisation of our association was concentrating on strengthening, popularizing and making CESCI national and international relations recognisable. We have reached our main goal now; CESCI is an acknowledged participant of the professional discourse on border cooperation both in Hungary and on an international level.

Based on the results of this gradual development, we would like to strengthen the services of the association in two levels from the beginning of 2017: towards our members and the national and international policy institutions.

1. Working out a system for membership services

We sent out a questionnaire to our members in summer 2016, in which we surveyed the certain demands for services. The questionnaire was filled in by 80% of our members. Based on the incoming answers, we are going to expand our services for our members significantly this year.

1.1 Membership newsletter

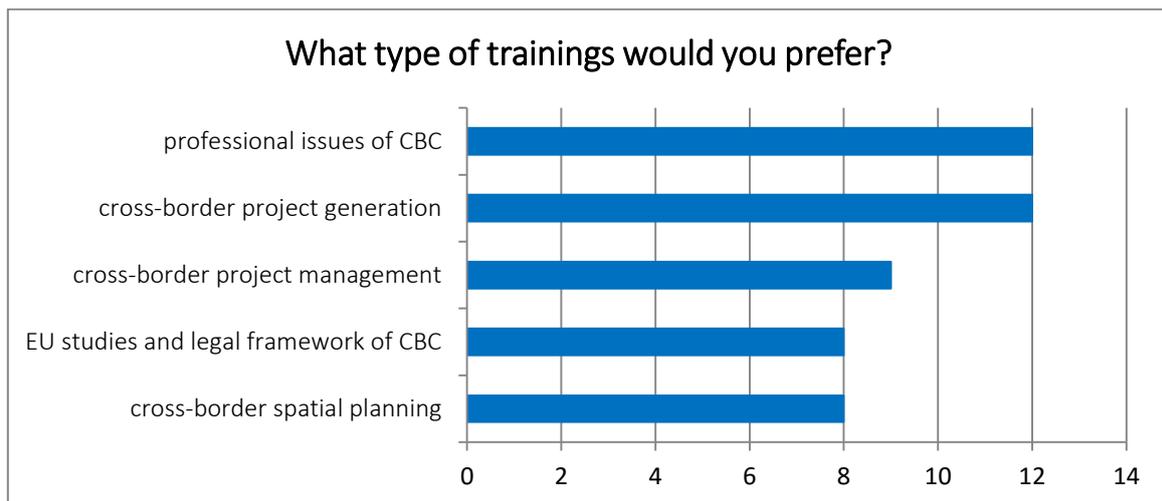
Based on the results of the questionnaire, we have published our membership newsletter in 2-3 months since last autumn, which, unlike our professional newsletter, contains primarily practical information. This type of information source is going to be sent out regularly to the members in 2017 as well.

1.2 Source map

We have constructed development source map for numerous Hungarian and foreign local municipalities during the past years. During the construction of these source maps, the association has accumulated a great amount of information of the tender resources (national, EU, non-EU), from which we have made a comprehensive matrix. We would like to make this database available to our members in online format. This might happen parallel to the renewal of our profile that comes along with a new website.

1.3 Trainings

Our members could have indicated their demands on trainings in the questionnaire. We are going to start our training services based on the feedbacks in autumn 2017, which supports the development of the skills for cross-border cooperation. The greatest interest is in project development and professional knowledge exchange on cross-border cooperation based on the incoming answers.



1.4 Study visits

Our new initiative is organising study visits for our members to exchange experiences. The first study visit is destined to Basque Country this spring; with the contribution of INFH and the support of the French regional municipalities in the area.

1.5 Professional conferences

Our association organised professional conferences earlier, which were evidently open for the members. We specifically organise such professional events elaborating on significant topics from

2017 that can be interesting for local and regional municipalities, which give most of our members; primarily on preparing them for the EU season post-2020. Our first mini-conference is going to be organised on the future of EU urban policy in connection with our General Assembly meeting.

1.6 Research library

In the past few years, our association has collected a great number of books in the topic of cross-border cooperation that is probably unique in our country. We are going to process the books and make them available for researchers, but primarily for our members.

2. *Budapest Observatory of Borders*

During the past few years, the focus of our activities has been gradually moving from planning tasks to activities which support policies on cross-border cooperation. The project called *Budapest Observatory of Borders* has been launched in 2016; it is one the one hand reflecting to this change, and one the other hand to the new situation that was created by the expansion of the network (CESCI Balkans, CESCI Carpathia).

Our work, which supports the formation of EU policies and the national information exchange in this regard, includes publishing publications, assembling professional background materials, trainings, organising conferences and workshops, and active participation in European or macro-regional networks.

2.1 Planned publications

We have started to assemble and publish our publications which summarize / process the results of our professional activities in 2016. We would like to continue this work in 2017 as well.

- **The Carpathian Convention:** study on the formation, structure and development plans of the Carpathian Convention (organization development analysis; the work has started last year, finalisation is on the go) [author: dr. Rudolf Bauer, director of CESCI Carpathia]
- **Phantom borders:** summarising series of studies of the research dealing with space use patterns in the Esztergom-Štúrovo micro-region, conducted by the staff of the Institute (mainly academic writings with spatial theory relevance, and with cross-border programming in the focus; the work has started in 2016) [authors: Péter Balogh, Zsolt

Bottlik, György Farkas, László Letenyei, András Morauszki; authors from CESCI: Teodor Gyelník, Mátyás Jaschitz, Gyula Ocskay, Márton Pete]

- **Territorial observation:** MOT has launched a consultation process focusing on providing the availability and harmonisation of necessary territorial data for border planning and development. We organised international seminar on this topic in autumn 2015. On the basis of the seminar's results, we would like to publish a survey volume with good practises. We would support the EU discourse on border Territorial Impact Assessment with this publication (planning methodological background document) [involving international authors].
- **Cross-Border Review 2017:** academic yearbook of the European Institute which is published every year with international authors; international editorial staff helps the work of the editor, James W. Scott since 2016 (academic publication of borderland studies, the only one of its kind in the Central and Eastern European area, in English) [own publication]
- **Journal "Falu Város Régió":** we are continuously publishing articles in this journal which is a primer journal in territorial development. Two articles are going to be published in the first half of the year 2017 in the first issue. Teodor Gyelník and Márton Pete *Crossing the borders: Geographic and Structural Characteristics of Cross-Border Cooperation in the Danube Region* summarised the results of *Crossing the borders* project; *Two Cities – One Plan* by Kitti Dubniczki presents the analysis of the management plan of Komárom and Komárno, written by Lilla Szilágyi K. and published by CESCI. We have received requests for the issues about territorial monitoring appearing in the second half of the year.
- **Our associates' further publications:** our two associates (Mátyás Jaschitz and Gyula Ocskay) are going to participate as external experts in the work of the National University of Public Service's workshop, *Digital governing, digital state* which is supported by Hungarian Public Administration and Services Operational Programme (KÖFOP). The workshop provides on the one hand to publish the results of CESCI, and on the other hand to arrange professional events. Within the framework of the project, the survey of Mátyás Jaschitz *Területi folyamatok innen és túl – Magyar határ menti tervezési körkép* is going to be published and the preparation of 5 further publications is going to be started.

2.2 Support for policy making, elaboration of professional materials

Ever since its foundation, the CESCI has elaborated numerous contribution papers, policy preparing studies, background analyses with a view to supporting the drafting of Hungarian and

EU policies. Along by the renewal of the organization these activities will gain a bigger emphasis than before.

In cooperation with the Technical Secretariat of the Slovakia-Hungary INTERREG V-A programme we take part in the preparation of the call targeting the elaboration of cross-border territorial action plans for employment (TAPE) by supporting the drafting of the necessary documents and the shaping of the application system. According to the preliminary negotiations, we will provide the Széchenyi Programme Office with a permanent help-desk with a view to guaranteeing the submission of high quality proposals.

In line with the request of the State Secretary of the Ministry of Justice we have worked out the governmental development concept of the city of Esztergom, the follow-up of which is still continuing also in 2017: based on the requests accepted and following the negotiations performed with experts we have modified the document and informed our partners about our readiness for free of charge mentoring of the realisation of the programme. The document is in line with the border-city programme what we intended to launch several times and it has to be matched the prioritized tourist developments of the Danube bend region.

Ever since its foundation, our association has actively been taking part in the governmental work supporting the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs). The EGTC workshops initiated by ourselves and held 3 to 4 times per year are at the moment organized and financed by the Ministry of Trade and Foreign Affairs (MFA) but we still participate in the preparation of the particular workshops with a view to improving the professional content and our representative used to be present at these events – in 2017, it will not be otherwise, either.

Besides, we offer support for free for the establishment of EGTCs (at the moment, we are working on the set up of one grouping at the Hungarian-Slovenian border area, based on the decision of the two governments' joint meeting made in 2016); as well as for their development work (e.g. project development workshops, legal consultancy, elaboration of professional background materials, mediation between partners, etc.). In 2017 we expect similar activities, based on the particular requests arriving from the EGTCs.

In parallel, our association applied for an MFA call for framework contract financed by the Hungarian Public Administration and Services Operational Programme (KÖFOP) supporting the project development activities of the EGTCs. In case our tender is selected, we shall take into account the tasks related to the preparation of the groupings' tenders from the second half of the year, onwards – already within a framework contract.

In 2017, our main development in the field of EGTCs will be an on-line platform (called 'EGTC Monitor') which will offer information in Hungarian and English on the EGTCs having Hungarian members. On the one hand, the interface to be developed in cooperation with the groupings will publish the news of the EGTCs; and, on the other hand it will give place to the analyses, thematic maps drafted periodically by the CESCI staff. Our goal is to inform the public of the EU on the work carried out by and the operational conditions of the Hungarian groupings. In the future, the platform will contain also the internal EGTC forum.

We are preparing a position paper to the European Commission's methodology measuring the efficiency of the EGTC policy; the consultation related to the future of the Cohesion Policy; and the 7th Cohesion Report.

The project on legal accessibility started in 2016 will continue in 2017 at three levels. First, we provide professional support to the Ministry of Justice for the creation of a three-level institutional platform of accessibility (interministerial working group, the system of joint committees with the neighbouring countries, coordination among V4 countries). Secondly, we actively partake in the EU level consultation process, we will deliver a summary on the results of our project of 2016 to the management of the Cross-Border Review project (having the same thematic focus), at the DG Regio.

Thirdly, in 2017, with the support of the Ministry of Justice, we will further develop the results of the project realised in the previous year in four fields: we provide support to the neighbouring Serbian Republic in the elaboration of the implementing act enabling the state to establish EGTCs; we will set up a working group tackling the legal barriers of access of local products to the market; and another one supporting the cross-border service provision of the emergency cars; finally, we will analyse the currently existing information resources on cross-border mobility and we will draft a proposal on the integration thereof.

Each year we expend serious deal of energy for the realisation of professional or policy-related projects with the support of diverse calls of the EU and outside the EU. In the time of the drafting of the current activity plan, we are waiting for the results of two such tenders.

We have submitted an application to the Strategic Grant of the Danube Strategy with a project aiming to create a platform of cross-border cooperation structures of the Danube and the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregions and to involve the youth in CBC. Our partners are: the AEBR, the CESCI Balkans and the ISIG.

We have submitted a project to the Strategic Partnerships call of the Erasmus+ Programme based on the initiative of the CESCI and with the leading partnership of the Euro-Institut of Kehl (Germany). The project called 'CB ManGo' aims at creating a network dedicated to the training of managers of cross-border development and governance.

This year, we plan to submit again a proposal to the Twinning call of the Horizon 2020 programme. The project aims at strengthening the cooperation between CESCI and Hungarian academic and university actors, based on the experiences of our Western partners.

We also plan to submit a proposal to the Visegrad Fund targeting the support of coordination of legal accessibility in V4 countries.

We participate in the tender aiming the analysis of the missing railway links across the internal EU borders based on the invitation of the British SYSTRA transport consultancy company and the French MOT. In case our tender is selected, we have to carry out a exploratory research in the Eastern European region.

2.3 Realization of trainings, conferences, workshops

Our association organizes several international professional events, every year – usually together with co-organizing partners.

As usual, also in 2017, we organize the Szentgotthárd / Monošter project development seminar with the participation of Hungarian and Slovenian stakeholders and under the auspice of the two embassies. The seminar is attended by Hungarian and Slovenian municipalities, high level educational institutions and entrepreneurs without participation fee (in 2016, we had 120 participants at the event).

Within the framework of the abovementioned KÖFOP project (implemented by the Hungarian National University of Public Service, NUPS) we will organize a series of lectures with the involvement of prominent European experts of the subject (according to our plans, in 2017 we will organize 4 workshops of lectures). Besides, an international conference on the cross-border territorial planning with a special geographical focus on the Danube region will be taken place in Budapest. We expect an audience of near 100 participants to the conference titled *Macro-regional*

policy challenges and best practice solutions for joint cross-border planning - governance and interoperability organized together with the NUPS. We plan to publish the presentations in 2018.

The most important ever event of our history is approaching: in 2018 we will organize the World Conference of the Association of Borderlands Studies (ABS) in cooperation with the University of Vienna and the Loránd Eötvös University (Budapest). The conference of an audience of 600 persons has provided tasks to the CESCI during the last year but the preparation starts just now.

We are involved in the mentoring activities related to the development of the Câmpie region in Transylvania, voluntarily. We have prepared the development action plan of the region for the year of 2017 in cooperation with the Office of the Parliament. We aim at elaborating an integrated action plan. In this respect, we plan to organize two workshops this year, both dedicated to the drafting of the action plan. The participants are civil actors, ecclesiastical personalities, and representatives of educational institutions for whom the participation is free of charge. CESCI is the professional coordinator of these workshops and it mentors the development of the projects to be included in the action plan.

In addition, during the summer we organize a youth leader training in Magyarhertelend, as a component of the program; we plan to train 20 to 25 young applicants selected by our partners from Câmpie in order to fulfil the tasks of local community development; and we would like to involve also partners from Hungary within the framework of a study tour.

We still keep supporting the border areas' actors in the elaboration of their projects by compiling resource maps, partnership building and concrete project development activities.

2.4 Active participation in the work of European-wide networks

The cooperation with other European think-tanks and the EU institutions represents an important pillar of our activities. In this respect, this year gains a special significance by the fact that our French partner institution, the Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière celebrates its 20th anniversary. We will participate also at their international events (the panel at the Open Days included).

At CECICN we obtained the task of the redaction and refreshment of the network's web page, at the end of the last year. According to our plans, the web page should be replaced by a knowledge

sharing platform through which we would like to ease the communication of more than 500 European local and regional municipalities – mainly with a view to sharing best practices.

The cooperation is not confined to the meetings at official events but we also regularly submit joint tenders to EU calls. It is our plan this year, too. Until the General Assembly we have submitted two proposals to the Strategic Fund of the EUSDR and the Erasmus+ Programme.

In 2017, we plan to take part in the Interreg Europe call in cooperation with the Erlangen University and the MOT with a project related to the subject of the EGTCs.

Based on our activities on EGTCs we have been invited to the Luxembourg Working Group which is working on the preparation of a new EU tool, the so-called European Cross-Border Convention (ECBC) drafted during the Luxembourg presidency, in 2015. Within the framework of these activities we are cooperating closely with the MFA which similarly delegates a representative to the working group. Usually, the working group organizes two meetings a year which we plan to attend this year, as well.

CESCI is represented every year by a delegation at the European Week of Cities and Regions in Brussels and our colleagues can be present more and more international conferences. In 2017, the conference organized by the Regional Science Association (RSA) in Cluj (*Regional Polarisation and Unequal Development in CEE: Challenges for Innovative Place-based Policies*) has for us a special significance where several ones of our colleagues plan to give presentation: Teodor Gyelnik on the subject of the theory of sovereignty (in the session of *Geo-Politics and Geo-economy*), Roland Hesz on cross-border tourist development (in the panel titled *Places and Tourism Destination Management*), Tamás Illés on the problems of border peripheries (in the session of *Rural Areas Under Pressure*), while Gyula Ocskay on the EGTCs (in *Territorial Governance* session).

By our plan we will participate at the EUGEO conference in Brussels, at the workshop of the AEBR External Borders Task Force in Switzerland and the AESOP conference in Lisbon.

B) Planning

Although with decreasing significance, planning is still present in our portfolio. These projects have the characteristic that it is hard to schedule them since the calls can be published anytime during the year.

At the end of the last year we have signed a planning contract with the Via Carpatia EGTC. Our task is to elaborate a cross-border action plan for employment. If we have the opportunity, we plan to participate in the preparation of further action plans to be submitted to the Slovak-Hungarian call.

According to the request of CESCI Carpathia, we have compiled a comprehensive study aiming to develop the cross-border thematic tourist routes within Košice and Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén counties. In the study, we evaluate the existing routes, we present good practices from Western Europe and draft recommendations targeting the future developments. The document can be applied as preparatory study at the relevant calls.

C) Institutional development

In 2017, the establishment of two EGTCs where our association provides professional background is continuing. In the case of the Hungarian-Slovenian MURABA EGTC, the first version of the founding documents are already worked out; while the Task Force of the ECR EGTC will present the proposed Convention and Statutes to the Steering Committee in springtime only. It means that the documents are expected to be approved in summer.

We coordinate the establishment of the Hungarian EGTC as public benefit service, while the setting-up of the ECR EGTC involving 14 EU member states is coordinated by us as a business service.

It is worth mentioning that in 2016 we launched to renew the CESCI. In this vein, on the one hand, we moved the planning and development department and the European Institute into a joint office; on the other hand, we renewed the design of the association. Based on this our image objects are gradually re-planned and in 2017 we will develop a new web page, as well.

Budapest, 11th April, 2017

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