

Political declaration "Building a European Region"

The co-operation between the neighbouring regions and cities of Southern Moravia, Western Slovakia, Western Hungary and Eastern Austria has developed and deepened very successfully over the past few years.

Numerous joint discussions and projects carried out amongst the decision-makers of these cities and regions have shown clearly that the common efforts undertaken in the future new internal-market region should be intensified and optimised by way of systematic, multilateral co-operation.

In order to achieve a corresponding additional quality of co-operation and as an opportunity to position ourselves in the Europe of regions, we, the signatories, wish to create special impulses and to take measures towards the early development of a common European Region:

- 1 The signatories are profoundly convinced that the upcoming enlargement of the EU in 2004 constitutes an additional and decisive impulse for the development towards a common region of growth and prosperity of the neighbouring regions and cities in the zone extending across the four countries Austria, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Hungary.

The signatories have the firm intention of supporting this development with commitment and over a long period as well as of making optimum use of all possibilities of cross-border co-operation offered by the EU for this purpose.

- 2 The signatories will orient their common efforts towards the goal of enabling the region to present itself, on both the European and international levels, as early as possibly as an attractive location and hence as a prominent quality location covering all areas of life.

The foundation for this goal will be provided by the region's competitive potentials for economic growth and innovation, its infrastructure, natural qualities, broad basis of knowledge and highly qualified population as well as by its manifold and top-quality cultural activities and events.

This goal is to be attained together with, and for the benefit of, the population of the entire region. In all areas of life, the gradual improvement of frame conditions will provide sustainable support for the population in its endeavours to further cross-border contacts, co-operation and intercultural dialogue.

- 3 In order to attain the common goal, the signatories have agreed to take all steps and measures necessary for the establishment of a Europaregion. As a next concrete step a cross-border project in the framework of the programme Interreg will be started to deepen the Europaregion initiative. In the course of the project the structural, institutional and financial framework shall be substantiated as a basis for the definite decision on the foundation of the Europaregion.

- 4 By 2005 latest, this project should have
 - entailed the further improvement and deepening of common efforts through the networking of manifold bilateral and multilateral co-operation measures to form a dynamic structure within an enlarged Europe,
 - created a broad basis for the integration of the region by means of comprehensive

information of the population about the new quality of the future opportunities of the region,
-stimulated multi-faceted commitment on the part of different social and entrepreneurial interest groups to promote the sustainable development of the common European Region, and
- developed and tested an approach towards a long-term, common organisational input to position and market the region in Europe.

- 5 In their efforts to build this common European Region, the signatories, in addition to the goal of economic prosperity and welfare, in particular also dedicate themselves to the goals of creating equal opportunities for men and women and of creating a sustainably intact environment.

In order to achieve their goals, the signatories will continue the cooperative activities of the Platform Europaregion and will further intensify them, taking advantage of all support available from the EU.

Place, date in 2003, signatures of governors of federal provinces/districts and mayors:

On behalf of the federal provinces/regions

Bratislava Region
Federal Province of Burgenland
Győr-Moson-Sopron County
Federal Province of Lower Austria
Southern Moravia Region
Trnava Region
Federal Province of Vienna
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On behalf of the cities

City of Bratislava
City of Brno
City of Eisenstadt
City of Győr
City of Sopron
City of St. Pölten
City of Trnava
City of Vienna
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