Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation

Project

Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation Organization

Model Proposal

Osijek, April 2001
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I. APPRAOCH

The Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation is an international organization of counties and cantons, their seats, and chambers of commerce from the territories of the Republic of Hungary, Republic of Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, established subsequent to the signature of the Statute in Pécs on November 28, 1998. By virtue of this signature, Baranya County, County City of Pécs, and Pécs-Baranya Chamber of Commerce and Industry from the Republic of Hungary; Osijek-Baranja County, City of Osijek, and Croatian Chamber of Commerce—County Chamber of Commerce in Osijek from the Republic of Croatia; and Tuzla-Podrinje (Drina Basin) Canton, Municipality of Tuzla, and the Chamber of Commerce of the Tuzla Region from Bosnia and Herzegovina became its founders and Members. In 1999, the Cooperation was approached by the City of Barcs and the County City of Szekszárd from the Republic of Hungary, and toward the end of the year 2000 by Virovitica-Podravina (Drava Basin) County, Koprivnica-Križevci County, and Požega-Slavonia County, with their respective seats and chambers of commerce, from the Republic of Croatia, and Somogy County from the Republic of Hungary. This organization is not a juridical person. It is of an open character, i.e., it is open to the access of new Member Institutions.

By the agency of the aforementioned activities, created was an international association encompassing, toward the end of the year 2000, 23 Member Institutions in seven regional units in three states, whereof 652 are local self-government units (cities and municipalities), as demonstrated by the figures in Table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional unit</th>
<th>Number of residential areas</th>
<th>Number of territorial units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuzla-Podrinje Canton</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Croatia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koprivnica-Križevci County</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osijek-Baranja County</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Požega-Slavonia County</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virovitica-Podravina County</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Hungary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baranya County</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somogy County</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- City of Barcs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- City of Szekszárd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,939</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nowadays, the Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation stretches over the territories of three states, having a total area amounting to 21,554 km² (Figure 1), populated by ca. 1.9 million inhabitants (Figure 2).
Figure 1

Figure 2
In 2001, the institutions from the territories of Vukovar-Sirmium County (County, City of Vukovar, and Croatian Chamber of Commerce—County Chamber of Commerce) but also the Sombor Municipality from the territory of the FRY submitted their Accession Applications. In a preparatory phase are also the Accession Applications pertaining to the Posavina (Drava Basin) Canton and Brčko District from the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These data direct toward a conclusion that the territorial completion of the Euroregion is still unfinished, so that one should expect an increase in Member Institutions’ number.

An increase in the number of Member Institutions, which, pursuant to the valid Euroregional Cooperation Statute, have their representatives in all Cooperation bodies, raises a question of possible functionality of these multimember organs. Additionally, the experiences acquired in the two years of Cooperational establishment and operation impose the launch of an issue pertinent to the efficacy of preparation and implementation of preset programs. Bearing these facts in mind, the Conclusions derived at the last Cooperation Presidency session, held in Pécs on December 14 – 15, 2000, urge an approach to the analysis of the path traced, implying a proposal of measures whereby the functionality of this organization will be improved.

In order to act pursuant to the aforementioned Conclusions, an analysis of experiences of one’s own as well as of other Euroregions was initiated in the preparation of measures’ proposal. Hereby, open is the issue of applicability of these experiences with regard to the function of Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregion. Namely, every CBC (Euroregional) model is conditioned by geographical, historical, and other circumstances, so that one may purport that a model is nonexistent. However, certain mutual characteristics may be of assistance when formulating the proper solutions. Thus, this Elaborate exemplifies these experiences, i.e., the proposals of possible solutions incorporated in this material rely on the already applied ones and the practice of other Euroregions.

Having an objective to safeguard a systematic approach to the formulation of a Euroregional Cooperation model, this Elaborate especially analyzes the following elements:

1. The territory (area) of Euroregional Cooperation
2. The objectives and functions (content) of Euroregional Cooperation
3. Membership in Euroregional Cooperation
4. Organization of Euroregional Cooperation
5. Working methodology
6. Euroregional Cooperation finances
II. EUROREGIONAL COOPERATION TERRITORY

The Euroregional Cooperation is being established between the border regions of two or more countries. In Denis de Rougemont’s words, “A cross-border region is a potential region inseparable in geography, history, ecology, ethnic groups, economic possibilities and the like but disunited by the sovereignty of governments ruling on each side of the borderline.” As a rule, these regions geographically have regional characteristics. They always encompass certain governing (administrative) territorial units on both sides of the border.

Territorially, the models of establishment of a CBC (Euroregional Cooperation) are different. E.g., we adduce several territorial Euroregional types: two regions along a mutual borderline (Tatra Euroregion, Figure 3), the territories of three states along a mutual border line (Neisse – Nisa – Nysa Euroregion, Figure 4), a composite Euroregional form, with the participation of three states (Carpathian Euroregion, Figure 5), a Euroregional type divided/connected by a shared seashore (Pomeranian Euroregion, Figure 6), and a series of Euroregions along the German-Dutch borderline (Figure 7). Nevertheless, a common denominator of the depicted Euroregional types is the fact that they pertain to a geographically closed area, corresponding to the elements designated by Rougemont to the greatest extent.

Figure 3
Figure 6

Figure 7
On the contrary, in the Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation’s territory, currently existent is a territorial connectedness along the Hungarian-Croatian borderline but not along the Republic of Croatia’s border and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Figure 8). Bearing this fact in mind, one may hardly speak of a common Euroregional area. With regard to the Bosnian-Herzegovinian area, we may speak only of an international cooperation of three countries’ regions.

When it comes to this region as well, a precondition for the establishment of a Euroregion is the provision of spatial continuity. The requested presuppositions will be realized by the submission of Vukovar-Sirmium County’s Accession Application and the preparations of Posavina Canton and Brčko District.

Nonetheless, such a formed Euroregional Cooperation area directs toward a following conclusion: spatially, the Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation is integrated by the regions of Slavonia and Baranja (eastern portion of the Republic of Croatia). Furthermore, this position demonstrates that, in an overall Cooperation area, it is not possible to speak of a CBC, for a CBC takes place along mutual borderlines. Thus, with regard to the Cooperation area, one speaks of the Hungarian-Croatian and Croatian-Bosnian and Herzegovinian CBC, while one speaks of an international cooperation of regional units (interterritorial cooperation) with regard to the Hungarian-Bosnian and Herzegovinian relations.

This distinction is important for two fundamental reasons:

- functionally, the CBC contents (environmental protection, cooperation in accident situations, and the like) shall not be applied in the overall territory but only in the border area;
- legally, one should note that the Additional Protocol attached to the European Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation of Territorial Units and Authorities (1998) is being applied to the CBC forms and contents, while Protocol 2 attached to the said Convention (1998) is being applied to the international cooperation forms;
- financially, the application of financial mechanisms and instruments (programs and financial support) practiced by the EU when it comes to the invigoration and support to the CBC development (PHARE CBC and the like).

The conclusions issuant therefrom will be derived within the chapters dealing with the aforementioned issues.
But, it is significant hereby to analyze what are the limits for the expansion of a Euroregion. Of course, the answer to this question is always findable in a political sphere, but the expert fundaments of a response should be searched for in the basic objectives for the establishment of this organization. In that respect, the answer should suggest the conclusion that it is sensible to expand a Euroregion only to a territory that can be identified with the main objectives (motives) of its establishment, up to the limits that do not endanger the possibility of its operation. Thereby, one should not be especially mindful of the basic principle pertinent to a territorial entirety of a Euroregion.
III. OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF EUROREGIONAL COOPERATION

1. Cooperation Objectives

The CBC types of European countries’ border regions historically manifest as an answer to the necessity to alleviate the WW II consequences. In the conditions of recent European integration processes, this cooperation form occupies an important position. The first CBC form that assumed the appellation “Euroregion” was created along the German-Dutch borderline in 1958, bearing the name Euroregio. Presently, we can enumerate ca. 75 associations that have the characteristics of Euroregional Cooperation (Euroregions, Working Communities, etc.).

The process is being promoted by a series of normative, institutional, and financial measures and activities. In that complex, one should be mindful of the 1980 European Framework Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation Between Territorial Units or Authorities (Madrid Convention) with additional protocols in the segment of normative activities, structural-fund assets, support programs, especially the Intern Program, in the segment of financial subsidies, and the activities of the CoE, CoE’s CLRAE, and regional and local self-government units’ associations (AER, AEOR, CEMR, etc.) in the segment of institutional support. The consequence thereof is a rapid increase in the number of CBC forms in the 1990’s, especially along the Eastern and Central European transitional countries’ borderlines. The interregional CBC promoted by virtue of financial instruments (structural-fund assets and EU support programs) caused the establishment of Euroregions in the 1990’s (especially as a result of the Interreg program). We may purport that the CBC became a part of the EU pre-accession strategy.

The delineated processes change the position and role of border regions as depicted on Figure 9.

![Figure 9: Importance of a border region and Consequences](image-url)
The experience analysis of the majority of Euroregions directs toward the conclusion that the common initiative basis is the fact that the border regions, as a rule, geographically and frequently also developmentally occupy a peripheral position in their respective states. In the conditions of European integrations, i.e., in the European area, these regions compensate such a position by the agency of connection with the neighboring cross-border regions. We might even say that Europe’s integration transforms the precedent peripheral position of many border regions in the central one within Europe. This conclusion also circumstantiates the aggregation motive of the Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation Member Institutions, as depicted on Figures 10 and 11.

As a justification of the aforementioned purport, one should emphasize that the motive for the assembly of Cooperation’s founders was the project pertaining to the construction of a highway passing thru the European V/c transportation corridor (TEM) that would even more closely interconnect these regions and enable them a better communication with Central Europe in one direction and the Adria in the other.

The provided depiction directs toward the possible basic objectives of Euroregional connectedness. Of course, one should never neglect that a single European CBC model is nonexistent in Europe, including the individual goals.

The exemplified goals are a consequence of the fact that a Euroregion is always an interest-based organization that finds its fundamentals in the following:

- geographical connectedness (geographical aspect),
- joint resources and potentials (economic and environmental aspect),
- historical ties and relations (political, sociological, and psychological aspect),
- minorities on both sides of the border (demographic aspect),
- interstate state of affairs (political aspect),
- interstate and regional projects (interest-based and technical aspect).

Pursuant to the aforementioned contemplations, the creation of an area that will be harmoniously developed and will provide for the well being of its inhabitants is the main objective of the Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregion stipulated by the Statute as the basic act of this organization, whereby

- the economic and cultural ties of the incorporated regions are to be improved,
- the economic developmental programs are to be harmonized,
- these regions are to be made attractive to foreign investors,
- the ties between educational, scientific, and research institutions are to be established,
- the environmental programs are to be launched and supported,
- the understanding of various cultures is to be supported,

as to prepare these regions for the process of Central European and Euro-Atlantic integrations of the states they are located in.

The analysis of the Statute-stipulated goals and its comparison with the experiences of other Euroregions shows that they are still actual, so that their redefinition is deemed unnecessary.
2. Cooperation Content

The functions of Euroregional Cooperation i.e., the Cooperation contents, ensue from the expounded basic objectives. The contents are always a result of concrete circumstances, provided initiatives, and disposable resources. The operational experiences of other Euroregions, as well as programmatic projections created within the Euroregional Cooperation Working Committees, demonstrate the possible activities in the following fields:

- **spatial planning, nature preservation, and environmental protection**
  - harmonization of activities pertaining to the development of spatial information system applying the GIS technology,
  - harmonization of spatial-planning activities pertaining to the infrastructural facilities (transportation arteries, power-supply transmission lines),
  - establishment of waste-disposal facility network and waste-disposal technology,
  - launch of joint initiatives pertaining to the riverine-water improvement,
  - retrieval of joint databases pertaining to the regional flora and fauna,
  - protection of natural-heritage facilities in the border region (establishment of cross-border Nature Parks and the like),
  - organization of joint promotion activities pertaining to the environmental protection awareness,
  - launch of a joint action in specific areas, such as high-voltage transmission-line construction, provision of information on risks or potential risks (e.g., chemical-caused ones) along the borderlines,
  - compilation of procedural plans and mutual assistance in case of danger, disaster, accidents, etc.

- **transportation and communications**
  - harmonization of activities pertaining to the construction of cross-border road and railroad lines and transportational infrastructure,
  - joint activities in the maintenance of riverine transportation and transportation arteries,
  - invigoration of BCP’s erection and maintenance,
  - harmonization of utilization and joint utilization of airborne transportation infrastructure,
  - organization of cross-border public transportation, etc.

- **economy**
  - mutual promotion of economic conditions pertaining to the Cooperation Member Institutions,
  - proliferation of joint legal enchiridions describing the CBC possibilities,
  - organization of businessmen’s meetings, symposia, and other contact and experience interchange modes,
  - compilation of Cooperation-resident Economic Entities’ Address Book,
  - mediation in the establishment and support of cooperation between the Cooperation-based economic entities,
  - organization and maintenance of contacts between the economic support institutions, such as chambers of commerce (chambers of crafts and trades), local developmental and entrepreneurial centers, industrial and technological parks, entrepreneurship and free-trade zones, etc.,
  - rendition of support pertaining to the domestic-market presentation by the agency of fairs, other promotional activities, etc.,
  - import/export coordination,
  - joint-venture mediation and support,
  - preparation and development of joint developmental programs,
  - collaboration in the field of industrial innovations and technology transfer, etc.

- **tourism and entertainment industry**
  - analysis and identification of complementary tourist potentials and formulation of a joint tourist supply,
  - organization of exploitation pertaining to the complementary and mutual tourist resources,
  - joint production of tourist merchandise,
  - organization of joint promotional activities (proliferation of tourist publications, exhibition, fair, and performance calendars, joint ticket development, etc.).
- organization of promotional and tourist trips,
- erection and organization of joint tourist capacities and activities (cross-border biker tracks, etc.),
- cooperation in the education of catering- and tourism-industry personnel, etc.

- **healthcare and social welfare**
  - preparation of disaster-relief plan,
  - cooperation of ER's,
  - exchange of medical and paramedic personnel,
  - organization of symposia and other experience interchange forms,
  - cooperation in the development and realization of drug-prevention program and addicts' treatment,
  - cooperation in youth protection and disabled persons' care,
  - experience exchange in the field of sociofamilial problem-solving, etc.

- **science**
  - preparation and implementation of joint scientific-research projects,
  - organization of scientific and expert symposia, etc.

- **education**
  - expert know-how and experience exchange,
  - cooperation in the realization of postgraduate instruction forms,
  - cooperation in the faculty qualification for minority-language instruction,
  - cooperation in the realization of minority education,
  - cooperation in the organization and implementation of beginners' and advance courses in the neighboring border population's language, etc.

- **culture**
  - organization of guest performances and cultural manifestations exchange (exhibitions, concert, theatrical performances, etc.),
  - organization of joint cultural manifestations (artist colonies and exhibitions, music festivals, theatrical reviews, museal manifestations, gatherings, tours, etc.),
  - support in the realization of historiographic, melographic, ethnographic and other studies,
  - support to the minority cultural manifestations,
  - exchange and joint presentation of cultural information,
  - proliferation of books, guides, and cross-border atlases, etc.

- **sports**
  - development of cross-border sports centers and facilities,
  - joint utilization of potential sports facilities (recreational and top sports),
  - organization and promotion of regional sports encounters,
  - organization of sports interchange and joint sports manifestations, etc.

- **information**
  - compilation of the Euroregional Cooperation information system project and organization of its implementation,
  - formulation of Cooperational PR's (Web pages, publications, etc.),
  - production of joint broadcast for the electronic media (radio, TV),
  - exchange of informational contents via media houses, etc.
3. **Spatially Conditioned Cooperation Contents**

In the analysis of the problem pertaining to the spatial organization of Euroregional Cooperation, emphasized is the duality of relationship established with regard to the spatial position (border and interterritorial cooperation). This fact is most directly reflected on the Cooperatoral contents that will be established and developed between the Cooperation partners. It is sensible to implement the contents characteristic of or specific for a border region exactly in that way.

Pursuant to the aforementioned logic, the first encounter of the heads of the counties participating in the Croato-Hungarian CBC, i.e., all counties from both sides of the border, was held in Harkány on August 25, 2000 on the initiative of Osijek-Baranja County. On that occasion, mutual activity directed toward the compilation of joint plans and developmental projects was agreed upon and subsequently continued, especially pertaining to the following areas:

- regional planning,
- development of cross-border technological infrastructure,
- economy development, with a special emphasis laid on the tourism industry and development of technological research,
- human resources development,
- environmental protection.

In addition to the CBC, spatially conditioned are also the Cooperation contents pertaining to the riverine waterways. In that respect, a part of Hungarian and Croatian counties is affiliated with the Association of Danubian Regions, which conditions the collaboration development pursuant to the programs stipulated within this Association.

In that context, one should conclude that the special Cooperation contents and forms developed along a spatially delineated region, which does not encompass the whole Euroregional Cooperation area, do not impoverish but contently supplement and enrich partners’ relations within the region. Organizational relations established in this respect and possible problems connected thereto are a topic of consideration within the organizational problematic of the Euroregional Cooperation.

4. **Cooperation Functions**

Under the term function, implied is the interlinked activities pertaining to the execution of tasks whereby the preset goals are being accomplished. In that sense, from the delineated possible Cooperatoral contents issuant is a conclusion pertinent to the basic Euroregional Cooperation functions. Symbolically designated by correspondent mottos, these functions are the following:

- **“Thru cooperation toward friendship”** The development of mutual relations between the bodies of local and regional authorities, institutions, and finally citizens of this region is a precondition for a further joint operation. This relationship level is possible to be reached thru a network of institutional relations of organizations affiliated with certain activity and thru the activities designating immediate human contacts (from the encounters to the joint camps).

- **“Knowledge with no limits”** By virtue of know-how (experience, etc.) exchange, in its form as a resource, the cognitive limits are being surmounted and the personal and ideational flow improved in the whole area. These activities are in an immediate function of invigoration of human resources, and thus also of the developmental potentials of the overall area. They take place in the range starting from the “regular” business meetings up to the fact-finding missions and sojourns, joint expert and scientific gatherings, and finally cooperation in the implementation of various educational-process forms.
“Together in the development”  The identification of a mutual developmental interest, preparation, and establishment of a joint developmental strategy are a high level to be reached investing significant expert, political, and other efforts. Very frequently, the national borders are found to be the yet-to-be-surmounted obstacles of neighboring countries’ legal and political system. This function is possible to be realized by persistent and systematic joint activity directed toward the formulation and implementational organization of complementary or joint developmental projects.

“Thru diversity toward unity’  This sophisticated objective is possible to be achieved thru a meticulous formulation and excellent organization of joint activities, whereby the richness of diversity that comprise a unique value of togetherness is being promoted. This function is possible to be realized by a joint organization of activities that emphasize spatial entirety and affiliation with that area (e.g., from joint performances, festivals, and tours, joint sports teams, up to the election of the Miss Euroregion). The accomplishment of this function is a significant psychological presupposition in overcoming the historical and other barriers on one side, i.e., a presupposition for joint presentation with regard to the third parties in the realization of programs wherewith a peripheral position within one’s own country is synergically transformed into a central one within the European space on the other side.

In the realization of these functions, the main task of Euroregional Cooperation organs is also being expressed, i.e., the assistance and CBC harmonization as a basic sense of Euroregional Cooperation organization.
IV. MEMBERSHIP IN EUROREGIONAL COOPERATION

1. Accession Right

The study of Euroregional Cooperation forms directs toward the conclusion that, as a rule, the local, i.e., regional, self-govermental units are the Euroregional Member Institutions. As a rule, their membership is direct. Known are, however, the solutions according to which the Member Institutions of a Euroregion are Municipality Associations from both sides of the border (e.g., the Euroregion Elbe/Labe is comprised of the Czech and German Municipality Association). Moreover, it is possible to also record the examples wherein the Euroregional Member Institutions are administrative, expert, and other institutions from the border-region territory, being these that have manifested their interest herein (e.g., the Greco-Bulgarian Nestos-Mesta Euroregion).

The Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation is Statute-stipulated as an “interregional organization of cities, counties, cantons and other local self-governments, as well as chambers of commerce and crafts and trades from the territories of the Republic of Hungary, Republic of Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, established on voluntary cooperation.” This provision stipulates potential members according to their status and the territory of their seat.

Pursuant to the status, they are

- regional self-government units (counties, cantons),
- local self-government units (cities and local self-governmental forms),
- chambers of commerce (crafts and trades).

In the practice, regional self-govermental units, the cities—the seats thereof—, and chambers of commerce from their territories. The exceptions are two Hungarian cities (Barcs and Szekszárd) that joined the Euroregional Cooperation.

In accordance with the regional criterion, the institutions of the afore-stipulated status from the territories of three states are eligible to become the Member Institutions. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note the Statutory provision according to which, “the effort shall be invested in order to provide equal representation in Cooperation membership of the states wherefrom the Member Institutions originate.” This provision is probably a result of the care for equalized decision-making relations within Cooperation organs with regard to the regulated decision-making practice. Such a policy should prevent majority in inter-organ relationships. This provision is difficult to be preserved if the right of all institutions fulfilling the Statutory-stipulated conditions to accede to the Cooperation is to be respected. It is obvious that the decision-making issue is to be solved in a more suitable way than the limitation instrument pertinent to the member accession.

2. Membership Status

According to the valid Statute provisions, all Euroregional Cooperation Member Institutions enjoy an equal status. The consideration of already submitted initiatives, accession interests, and needs manifest a possibility to also regulate the membership-status issue differently, e.g., thru the establishment of various membership-status types. In that respect, the following status positions are apparent as a possibility:

- **regular membership** — reserved for the full Euroregion Member Institutions, with the right to participate in the work of all bodies and adjudicate on all issues

- **observer status** — open to the accession of organizations from the territories of Cooperation Member Institutions (e.g., Cro/Hu Border Municipalities’ Association, the CBC-governing body in Harkány, institutions oriented toward the development of programs for Euroregional invigoration, and the like) and other institutions evincing their participatory interest, with the right to participate in the work of the Assembly but without adjudicatory right

Depending on the acceptance of membership status, valid statutory provisions should be amended and adapted to this concept.
3. **Accession and Membership Withdrawal Procedure**

The Cooperation has an open character, designating that it is open toward the accession of new Member Institutions fulfilling the status and regional membership criteria. This fact necessitates the regulation of the new Member Institution accession procedure.

Pursuant to the valid Statute, the condition for the membership inclusion is that "the future Member Institution shall declare its intent in written form to the Cooperation President by the agency of its representative, including the provision that it recognizes the organization Statute and its provisions in the form of binding regulations." The Presidency adjudicates on the submittal by unanimous decision of its Member Institutions. A new member becomes the Cooperation Member Institution subsequent to the passage of written Decision on the authorization of its membership and dispatch of the Membership Accession Information.

Undeniably, the basic elements of membership accession procedure should be the following:

- candidate’s Membership Application, submitted on the basis of a decision passed by its authorized body, containing the intent to accede and the statement on the acceptance of the Statute as the fundamental organization act,
- a decision of the highest organization instance pertinent to the new member accession. (With regard to its significance, the decision should be passed by consensus.),
- a solemn Accession Form, presented by the new member and the Cooperation representative (President) in behalf of the Member Institutions accepting the new member at the Accession Statement signature ceremony.

However, it is interesting to also consider the reflection of territorial reorganization within a country on its membership in the Euroregional Cooperation, being a probable reality in the local and regional self-governmental reform conditions in the countries whose units are the Cooperation Member Institutions. Hereby, it is advisable to suggest the incorporation of a legal succession clause also in the Euroregional Cooperation membership with regard to the unit(s) being the legal successor of the Cooperation Member Institution. In this sense, the repetition of member accession procedure would necessary solely provided that a territorial unit that is not a direct Member Institution’s legal successor is being created in the territory of the present Member Institution.

Pursuant to the valid Statute, the membership cession is regulated by the provision according to which a unilateral intent statement of the Member Institution declaring its withdrawal from the Cooperation 90 days prior to the convention of a regular session is sufficient. According to the voluntary character of the organization, this solution is the only possible and acceptable one.
V. EUROREGIONAL COOPERATION ORGANIZATION

1. Approach

Under the organization of an association, thus including the Euroregion as well, implied is its internal organizational structure, i.e., the structure of its governing bodies.

Since the governance is a continuous process of planning, organization, direction, supervision and operational assessment oriented toward a permanent achievement of certain objectives, it is necessary to consider the way in which the fundamental governing functions are being organized: preparations, decision-making, execution and supervision. Organizationally, one should analyze which entity is the incumbent of these functions and whether it has sufficient instruments (authorizations and assets) at its disposal in order to execute its function fully.

2. Present Organization

Pursuant to the statutory provisions, Euroregional Cooperation is governed by its bodies: the President-chaired Presidency, comprised of the heads of Cooperation Member Institutions, Secretariat, and 12 Working Committees (on economic affairs, infrastructure and logistics, tourism, informatics, agrarian policy, science and innovations, culture and sports, education, national minorities, healthcare and social welfare and administration), as depicted by Figure 12.

Figure 12

The analysis of the scope of activities of these Statute-stipulated organs, but even more of the practice developed thereupon, directs toward the following conclusions:

1. The Statute-stipulated normative model distributed the basic functions in this way:
   - decision-making and execution supervision functions are entrusted to the Presidency,
   - preparatory and executive functions are entrusted to the Working Committees,
2. The model realized was dysfunctional with regard to the mode envisaged by the normative model, i.e.,

- decision-making function was completely executed (at the Presidency sessions that were convened four and then three times a year),
- preparatory and executive function have not yielded satisfactory results.

This statement’s analysis directs toward the reason for such a state of affairs: the concept of Working Committees comprised of Member Institutions’ representatives mutually unconnected in their expert operations and without a reliance on a common expert service (the Secretariat’s function was executed by the expert service of the President’s administrative apparatus) is unsuitable for an overall assumption of the preparatory and executive functions. The undeveloped working methodology speaks in that behalf, as well as the fact that the Standing Orders whereby the organizational structure and the modus operandi for the execution of their tasks was not promulgated, as stipulated by the Statute. Indubitably, the fact of a large number of committees and members in some of them that exceed the operationally optimal limits contributed thereto. Additionally, the practice that each Member Institution has its representatives in each of the committees irrespective of the nature of its activity (e.g., a chamber of commerce in the Cultural Affairs Working Committee, and the like) caused, in a part of the membership, the lack of interest in the operation of the body whose members they are. The result thereof is that a small number of committees proceeded from the preparatory to the executive phase.

An increase in the number of Cooperation Member Institutions complicates this problem even more, and the existent organization renders it inappropriate for the provision of an efficacious and economical function of its bodies.

All the aforementioned facts direct toward the necessity to redefine the contents and incumbents of Cooperation’s basic functions. The redefinition will launch a new organization proposal, comprising the core of changes in the organizational model of the Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation.

3. Comparative Experiences

In the preparation of this Proposal, studied were the experiences of other Euroregional Cooperation types. They demonstrate that three fundamental system-management tiers are being practiced in the majority of Euroregions (let it be repeated: there is no universal model):

- political level: decision-making level (Assembly, Council, Congress)
- executive level: (Executive) Committee, (Administrative) Council, Presidency
- administrative-technical level: Secretariat (joint, at one place, on different locations, or separated)

The Working Groups have a preparatory, consultative, and coordinative function pertaining to the executive tier of a governance system.

As an illustration, we adduce the examples of the following Euroregions (in theses):

Rhein-Waal Euroregion (Nl/FRG)

Council – the highest body (48), which annually elects its Presidents (German and Dutch ones)
Executive Committee – preparation and execution of Council’s decisions; elected by the Council, taking into consideration the proportionality principle; seven members, appointed every four years
Secretariat – administrative affairs, meetings organization pertaining to all bodies, execution of activities and projects, information; employing 16 professionals
Working Groups – economic structures; qualifications and labor market; social, sports, and cultural affairs; tourism and entertainment industry; transportation; healthcare; zoning; environmental protection; university

Elbe-Labe Euroregion (FRG/Cz)

Council – the highest politically elected body with decision-making functions
Presidency – two Vice-Presidents and Deputy Presidents, two elected members
Secretariat — two separated Director-headed Offices; organizational and technical affairs especially in cooperation with the Working Groups

Working Groups — regional development; economic cooperation; tourism industry; transportation; environmental protection; healthcare and social welfare; culture, education, and sports

Pomeranian Euroregion (FRG/Sk/Pl)

Council — the highest body (36)
Presidency — three national Presidents
Secretariat — a joint one in Szczecin
Working Groups — economic cooperation; transportation and infrastructure; tourism industry; rural areas and environmental protection; education; healthcare, culture, and sports; municipal administration and institutional cooperation; public law and order

Tatra Euroregion (Pl/Sk)

Congress — delegates; convened annually
Council — the highest executive authority, headed by the President
Supervisory Board — Congress-elected
Secretariat — two Offices, one on each side, headed by Secretaries; administrative affairs
Working Groups (Councils) — economy; environmental protection; culture; information; sports; tourism industry

Nestos-Mesta Euroregion (Gr/Bul)

General Assembly — members: municipalities, organizations, member-to-be associations
Administrative Council — an executive body, headed by the President, two Vice-Presidents, Executive Secretary and Treasurer
Executive Secretariat — headed by the Executive Secretary (on both sides), his expert team, and ancillary administration
Working Groups — communications; economic cooperation; transportation and infrastructure; tourism and entertainment industry; culture; agribusiness; technology transfer

Each side has the bodies of its own, the joint ones being the Administrative Council and Joint Working Groups.

West Nyugat-Pannonian Euroregion (A/Hu)

Board — the highest political body
Council — executive organ
Secretariat — Secretaries from each region (4)
Working Groups — eight

Nemunas-Niemen-Hemak Euroregion (Lt/Pl/By)

Council — the highest political body
Supervisory Commission — supervisory organ
Presidency — executive organ
Secretariat — three national Offices
Working Groups — economic affairs; social affairs; tourism industry and environmental protection, zoning

4. Organization Proposal

Pursuing the logics of such a governance-system structuralization, the organizational formulation of the Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation so that the organizational structure is comprised as follows seems to be rational (Figure 13):
Bearing in mind the Euroregional Cooperation essence, in the establishment of its organization it is necessary to take account of the application of national (state-based) equality irrespective of the Member Institutions' number. The territorial composition is the fruit of various national reasons, and is therefore changeable. As to prevent the organizational changes from exerting an essential influence on a harmonious Cooperation function, it is necessary to develop a mechanism of a national (state-based) equality (in substantial decision-making) irrespective of the number of Member Institutions. It is possible to be expressed by a parity representation in the formation, i.e., in the election of members of individual bodies and in the modality of their decision-making. The majority decision-making is admissible only when it comes to the procedural issues. The application of this principle on the organization is visible from the body organization proposed.

a. Assembly

The Assembly is the highest (political) body within the Cooperation. It is the main incumbent of decision-making function within the Cooperation (adjudicating on the most essential issues: on the Statute, membership relations, activity programs, executive-body appointment, etc.).

Its members are the representatives of all Cooperation Member Institutions, i.e., each Cooperation Member Institution has its representative in the Assembly. The solution according to which the Member Institutions are not predestined by their position in the Cooperation governance structure (since the valid Statute stipulates the composition of the Presidency) but their position is determined for each session by the plenipotentiary affidavit provided by the Member Institutions to their Assembly delegates appears to be logical.
b. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is the incumbent of executive function. It is comprised of a parity number of Member Institutions from each state (e.g., three) irrespective of the Cooperation Member Institutions' number. The Executive Committee members are elected for a four-year mandate by the Assembly upon a proposal of Assembly members from each of the states.

c. Presidency

The Presidency is comprised of the President and two Cooperation Vice-Presidents. The President and Vice-Presidents are elected by the Assembly for a two-year mandate, each being from the other state, thereby respecting each state’s presidency precedence (rotary election).

In accordance with their position, the President and Vice-Presidents are the members of the Executive Committee and manage its operations.

The President and Vice-Presidents are coordinators of Cooperation Member Institutions' operations, each within his respective state. In their capacity as the Presidency, they coordinate the work of the Executive Committee and the Working Bodies and manage the functions of Cooperation Secretariat.

d. Secretariat

The Secretariat is the Cooperation's administrative-expert joint service. It provides for an administrative-technical and expert support to the function of all Cooperation organs.

It is organized in three national Offices (Pécs, Osijek, and Tuzla).

The Secretariat members are appointed by the Executive Committee. The Secretaries govern the work of the Offices. Entirely, the Secretariat's operations are coordinated by the Secretary General. The Secretary General's role is assumed by the Office Secretary of the President's country of origin.

Incipiently, the professionalization of Secretariat members is unnecessary, so that they are nominated from the expert services' personnel of Cooperation Member Institutions.

e. Working Bodies

The Working Bodies are established by the Executive Committee for the sake of study of certain issues, preparation, consideration, and promulgation of certain proposals, organization of preset program implementation, operative harmonization of various institutions and for the sake of execution of other tasks of interest for the improvement of Cooperation affairs execution.

The Working Bodies may be established as permanent or provisional (ad hoc). They are established by virtue of a decision that stipulates its designation, scope of activities and competence, composition, modus operandi and their members' mandate.

The permanent Working Bodies (committees or the like) should be formed where mutual project, whose implementation is necessary to be jointly prepared and organized, i.e., conducted (with an emphasized organization function), are existent. For the areas wherein the institutional cooperation is being developed, it is possible to select between the establishment of a permanent Working Body appointed by the Executive Committee and coordination bodies of these institutions. For the Cooperation areas wherein there is one fundamental incumbent in each state, it is necessary to assess the justification for the formation of a joint body beside this incumbent. With regard to the Cooperational contents excerpted in the experience interchange (e.g., with regard to public administration), questionable is the necessity to form a permanent Working Body. It is more advisable to establish the forums and their incumbents. When it comes to certain projects, it is possible to found the permanent or temporary expert groups.
Pursuant to the aforementioned theses, the establishment of permanent Working Bodies in the fields of transportation and economic infrastructure, tourism industry, culture, sports and information system proves to be rational. For the fields of science, healthcare and social welfare, and education, whose contents are characterized by the preponderance of direct collaboration of institutions affiliated with the activity, it is recommended to establish the coordination bodies of these institutions. The field of zoning and environmental protection as well as the issue of national minorities and other domains, programs, or projects affiliated in their nature exclusively with the area along the national border should be entrusted to specific CBC bodies established between the Member Institutions along the Croato-Hungarian, i.e., Croato-Bosnian and Herzegovinian, border. With regard to the incumbent of public-administration experience interchange organization, one should establish a joint forum whose operations is to be organized by the Secretariat (having three members).

The Presidents and permanent Working Bodies members are nominated by the Executive Committee upon a proposal of the Cooperation Member Institutions. Not the Member Institutions’ representatives but the representatives of collaborating institutions should be nominated in the Working Bodies having a coordination role with regard to the institutional collaboration.

f. Supervisory Committee

The Supervisory Committee is a control organ whose establishment necessity emerges at the moment of formulation of the joint Budget and Cooperational financial transactions. Thus, its main function is to supervise the regularity of disposable asset utilization, whereupon the Cooperation bodies pass a decision of their own.

5. CBC Forms and Cooperation Organization

In the part pertaining to the scope and function, we have circumstantiated the fact that the spatial distribution of Cooperation constituents has conditioned two Cooperation types: a CBC and an interterritorial type. The CBC contents characteristic only of the areas along national borderlines have conditioned the definition of special programs specific for a CBC. The issue pertinent to the management of this part of the program is also connected thereto. A concrete initiative of Baranya County produced the encounter of county leaders on both sides of the Croato-Hungarian border in Harkány in August 2000, resulting in the establishment of a permanent collaboration (Figure 14).

It has been proposed that the county agreement should be sanctioned by the agency of an international document, the effort being in the conclusive realization phase. This activity also had organizational consequences, reflected in the following:

- The agreement has also encompassed the non-member counties, so that neither spatial nor status identities are existent. On the Croatian side, this problem is eliminated by a rapid inclusion of Croatian counties among the Cooperation Member Institutions.
- For the sake of coordination of the launched projects, a corresponding organizational infrastructure (Joint Working Committees with project teams for the fields of regional planning, development of border-area technological infrastructure, and economy development, with a special emphasis laid on the tourism industry and human-resources and environmental-protection development, ) is gradually being formed.

Having its reliance in the fact that the CBC-earmarked EU subsidies (PHARE CBC) are possible to be utilized only with regard to the contents delineated, this activity is a logical answer to the necessity to safeguard the extern asset sources. Thus, it may be also expected in the CBC formulation along the Croato-Bosnian and Herzegovinian border once the spatial preconditions therefore are fulfilled.

However, since we speak of the contents and participants that are also a part of the Euroregional Cooperation, there is a peril that the parallel programmatic and organizational composition lacking the correspondence with the Cooperation bodies might question the Cooperational sense and functionally. This danger directs toward the necessity to meticulously define the position of these programmatic contents and organizational composition in the structure of the Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation. The principle of Cooperational integrity prerequisites them to be correspondingly incorporated into the Cooperation as its separate programmatic part.
VI. WORK METHODOLOGY

The examination of results achieved in the previous period necessitates a consideration and methodologies applied in the accomplishment of preset objectives. With regard to this field, one should especially consider the planning, decision-making, and execution procedure pertinent to certain programs. A part of these issues is already being contemplated within the study of association’s organization.

1. Planning

Pursuant to the valid statutory provisions, the activities were planned on the level of Working Committees. The program proposals were submitted to the Presidency for the sake of authorization, as well as, reversibly, the reports on their execution. What has been manifested as a deficiency is that, in the organization as a whole, a sufficient knowledge of all programs was nonexistent, and the programmatic synergy in various fields was unrealized. In that way, the organization did not have its (unison) program but only a Working Committees’ programmatic aggregate. Additionally, this planning methodology has disabled the establishment of strategic Co-operative activity streams, i.e., a strategic Co-operative orientation was absent. In the plurality of activities planned, absent was the identification of key programmatic elements and a more pronounced engagement in their realization.

Therefore, it is necessary to upgrade the existent planning methodology. The Working Bodies’ activities in the preparation of program proposals should be preserved as an incipient phase with regard to the preparation of a unison programmatic document. The executive-function incumbent (Executive Committee) should formulate a harmonized activity program based on these proposals and submit it to the Assembly for the sake of adoption. In such a way, the expressed Co-operative programmatic orientation will be a strategic directive for all parts of organization in their joint operation. A programmatic document may be a long-term or annual one.

In order to assure the efficacy in the realization of basic Euroregional Cooperation’s objectives, in the planning approach it is necessary to establish the strategic, i.e., the key, programs and projects (e.g., the project of highway construction in the transportation V/c corridor, Figure 15) and establish an appropriate construction technology therefore. These projects are to be directly executed by the Cooperation organs. With regard to other programs, one should promote the cooperation of institutions conducting the activities wherein the respective programs are located and entrust their execution to these institutions.

Figure 15
2. Decision-Making

Already emphasized was the necessity to assure the application of equality principle pertinent to the Member Institutions’ group of a state in the formation of executive bodies, as well as in the decision-making procedure. In the formation of bodies, applied is the parity methodology irrespective of the number of Member Institutions from the territory of an individual state. In a decision-making procedure, the following instruments are disposable:

- a consensual decision-making on the most significant issues (Statute, members accession, etc.),
- the right to veto, affiliated with the Member Institutions’ group from an individual state with regard to the issues adjudicated by majority vote.

As a rule, a regular majority should be only applied when adjudicating on the procedural issues, and in all other issues, wherefore the consensual adjudication is not stipulated, the decision-making should be by virtue of majority vote pertinent to the overall number of respective body’s Member Institutions.

The decision-making procedure is conducted at the organ’s sessions. It is advisable to establish an obligation to convene the Assembly session at least once in a year. According to the nature of this subject matter, the Executive Committee should convene its session when necessary, at least once in four months. As a coordination body, i.e., as a method of coordination activity, the Presidency does not operate at sessions but at the ad hoc meetings, or by virtue of other communication form.

Acceptable is the practice to convene the sessions reciprocally in the territory of the Republic of Hungary, Republic of Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The official language of sessions and documentation is the Bosnian, Croatian, or Hungarian one. The interpreter is provided by the Secretariat.

The Statute stipulates the operational basics for the Cooperation organs. When necessary, the operation of the Assembly and the Executive Committee is possible to be regulated by the Standing Orders. The operation of these bodies is regulated by their foundation act.

3. Execution

The execution of approved programs is organized and conducted by the body or institution designated by the program itself. That can be a permanent or an ad hoc body, the organizations that are the incumbents of certain activities, or other organ. The execution is supported by the Secretariat, coordinated by the Presidency, and supervised by the Executive Committee.

In the execution, one should promote the concept of establishment of direct contacts between the congenial organizations that may be the incumbents of certain activities. The Cooperative Working Bodies have to rely on the Secretariat, while the incumbent organizations have to rely on a far broader human potential of their own. Other effects are also been achieved by virtue of connection establishment between congenial institutions: the relations of a more permanent collaboration in other programs and immediate human contacts are also being established. In such a way, the Cooperation is accepted as something innate, i.e., the institutions and people therein become to feel themselves as Cooperation constituents.

A pronounced psychological (and emotional) effect is an objective whereto one should strive; thus, one should take the activity-based execution mode into account. Finally, one of the main objectives of Euroregional Cooperation’s establishment is being achieved in that way: the establishment of ties between educational, scientific, and research institutions, i.e., the promotion of understanding and recognition of different cultures.

Exactly for that reason, a special attention should be paid to the approachability of Cooperation activities to the citizens, who are to become the partners in their execution. In that sense, irreplaceable is the role of the media.
VII. EUROREGIONAL COOPERATION FINANCES

The material qualification is an essential presupposition for the materialization of preset activity programs. It is a determinant reality factor of each social-organization model, thus implying the Euroregional Cooperation as well.

In the first period of Cooperation existence in its capacity as an international organization, the expenditures of its operations were covered by the activity participants, i.e., the hosts directly, pursuant to the Cooperation Statute, which reads, “The host shall cover the aliment costs of the Presidency and Working Bodies’ session participants, while the accommodation, transportation, and interpretation costs shall be covered by the session participants themselves. The Secretariat’s operational expenditures shall be the encumbrance of the organ whose President presides over the Cooperation.”

The Statute anticipates imposing the membership fee pursuant to the provision stating that “The Presidency may unanimously decide that the Member Institutions shall pay an annual membership fee for the objectives the Member Institutions stipulate by themselves. The membership fee shall be administered by the organ whose President executes the rotary presidential duty.” This possibility is unused, so that the membership fee is currently not imposed.

With regard to the financial transactions, the Statute contains only the following provision: “The material coverage of a project shall be decided on the occasion of adjudication on the project itself, and during the expenditure coverage one shall take into account the proportional Member Institutions’ participation.” However, this provision has also remained unapplied, for the joint resources to be adjudicated upon by the Cooperation organs failed to be realized.

The consequence of the absence of joint resources is the absence of joint manifestations. The orientation toward the resources of one’s own has caused the preference of partner’s invitation as a guest at a manifestation organized by the host. Furthermore, this consequence is reflected on the realization degree of the aforementioned Cooperational functions.

An attempt to consider the possible funds directs toward the following sources:

- proper activity-host funds,
- Cooperation Member Institutions’ contribution (membership fee),
- funds accumulated from domestic or international project-financing sources,
- donations,
- funds realized thru commercialization of certain activities, products, or services, etc.

Since the funds disposable are a limiting activity factor, a meticulous attention should be paid to the analysis of possible sources and fund-raising modalities. Nonetheless, this issue exceeds the limits of this publication.

Understandably, the launch of Euroregional Cooperation financial transactions opens a series of issues connected with the legal regime, transaction technique, decision-making modality and fund-spending supervision. Since this currently is a still “theoretical” question, the establishment of such a mechanism should be approached at the moment of funds procurement necessitating such an instrument.
VIII. ACTIVITY PLAN IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW MODEL

In the formulation and development of the accepted Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregional Cooperation organization model, one should apply the project approach. That implies that the articulation (design) should be followed by consideration and acceptance, then implementation, evaluation, and finally necessary correction. If we apply these provisions to this Project, the following steps are to be observed in its implementation:

1. Elaborate examination and approval by the agency of the Cooperation Presidency (May 2001)
2. compilation and promulgation of the Cooperation Statute (September/October 2001)
3. election and new bodies’ constitutive sessions (November 2001)
4. establishment of the Cooperation Secretariat Office (November 2001)
5. passage of necessary project-envisaged implementation acts (December 2001)

The evaluation phase and possible corrections are continued in the following one-year period.