

# **Memorandum of Understanding**

## **Concerning Continuous Cross-border Cooperation**

**between**

**the Responsible Authorities in the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Austria**

**within the Framework of the European Territorial Cooperation Goal**

**for the Programming Period 2021 – 2027**

The Slovak Republic and the Republic of Austria have a common culture and history and therefore, share common interests and challenges. The European Union's Structural Funds, and in particular the Interreg cross-border cooperation programmes, make it possible to strengthen and develop the prosperity, stability, and social security of the entire cross-border region. A factor of success of the Interreg programme between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Austria was, and should continue to be, addressing the challenges in programme area in partnership between a diverse array of institutions on both sides of the border.

The objective of the 2021-2027 programming period is therefore further strengthening cross-border cooperation between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Austria. There is still a vital interest in addressing common challenges and making the best use of the growth and development potential of the border region.

Cross-border cooperation, especially within the Interreg Slovak Republic – Austria programme supported by the EU, brings tangible results through co-financing and is an important impetus for sustainable cooperation.

In order to strengthen the process of European integration and to continue the exploitation of the potential of the participating regions, cross-border cooperation must continue to generate the best possible added value for both parties.

For this reason, all signatory programme partners, i.e. the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic on the Slovak side and the federal states of Burgenland, Lower Austria, and Vienna on the Austrian side, intend to cope with common challenges and to continue their long-term cooperation. The cooperation should continue to advance based on “the principles of modern, European and effective cross-border management under the Interreg Slovak Republic – Austria 2021 – 2027 cooperation programme” laid down for a new 2021 – 2027 programming period.

In order to strengthen this integration process and maximise the potential in this functional border region, it is necessary and desirable to continue the cross-border

cooperation programme between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Austria considering an efficient result-oriented management in the future.

Therefore, in the negotiations on the future 2021-2027 programme, all programme partners shall adhere to European principles as follows:

- cooperation between the signatory partners should be based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination at all stages;
- achieving common programme goals is a topmost priority;
- the programme implementation is governed by the ideas of a genuine European cross-border cooperation and the clear supremacy of EU law in order to ensure clear simplification of programme management in a commonly agreed manner;
- there is a need to develop an efficient and effective use of programme funds;
- all programme partners are taking an active part in minimising administrative burdens and maximising flexibility in addressing common tasks;
- all programme partners ensure an efficient and effective management of the programme within their respective tasks, while taking into account the principles of good governance, as well as the needs of all programme partners and project applicants;
- the conditions for the submission, implementation, and management of projects should be unambiguously simplified and set in a timely and thorough manner;
- to ensure a harmonised and standardised programme management, a monitoring system designed for Interreg cooperation programmes and taking into account harmonisation provided by HIT tools will be put in place;
- in general, all essential documents and tools for the programme implementation will be elaborated bilingually (in Slovak and German language) in an understandable and standardised manner and in accordance with the stipulated principles (equality, non-discrimination). The programme partners may decide unanimously on the use of one common language version with respect to the abovementioned principles.

All signatory parties unanimously confirm their intention to:

- continue as expeditiously as possible the programming of the new Slovak Republic – Austria cross-border cooperation programme (2021 - 2027), which was launched in autumn 2019;
- preserve the current programme area consisting of the Bratislava self-governing region, Trnava self-governing region and of the federal states of Burgenland, Lower Austria and Vienna, in their present form;
- create a common framework and structures to ensure an efficient and effective use of EU funds;

- define the thematic priorities of the future programme based on technical and partnership principle reflecting on the needs of the programme area of the joint programme and within the scope of the new regulations on EU funds;
- lay down administrative, financial, and legal obligations on a partnership basis and in accordance with the European legal framework;
- make every effort possible to ensure sufficient European and national funding of the programme, thus ensuring its timely implementation and a proper winding up.

The content of this agreement is the common will of all programme partners to continue cooperation with the aim of the best possible implementation of the cross-border cooperation programme between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Austria in the programming period 2021 - 2027.

We, the undersigned representatives of Member States and Programme Partners, have agreed on the contents of this Memorandum of Understanding.

**Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic**

Veronika Remišová, minister

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Place, Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic**

Igor Matovič, minister

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Place, Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Federal State of Burgenland**

Hans Peter Doskozil, state governor

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Place, Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Federal State of Lower Austria**

Martin Eichtinger, state councillor

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Place, Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Federal State of Vienna**

Martin Pospischill, head of department, City of Vienna – European Affairs

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Place, Date: \_\_\_\_\_