



THE 2004 ASSOCIATION FOR BORDERLANDS STUDIES EUROPEAN CONFERENCE
"BORDERS IN A NEW EUROPE: BETWEEN HISTORY AND NEW CHALLENGES"
GRAZ, AUSTRIA

**Field Trip: Vienna and the Four Borders Region
Austria - Hungary – Slovakia – Slovenia**

September, 13 – 15, 2004

ROUTING:

Monday, Sept., 13:

- 8:00 Departure from Graz to Bad Blumau (70 km): *Recent spa development, European Wellness Destination (spa cooperation concept between Austria, Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia)*
- 11.00: Departure from Bad Blumau via Hartberg, Oberwart, Oberpullendorf, Mattersburg, Eisenstadt, Neusiedl (150 km)
- 13.00 – 14.30 Lunch break
- 14.30 – 15.00: Neusiedl – Illmitz (25 km): *Cross-border National Park Neusiedler See (Hungary – Austria)*
- 17.00: Departure to Vienna (80 km)

Tuesday, Sept. 14:

- 9.00 – 13.00: Downtown city tour. City Planning Department, City of Vienna: *The Vienna – Bratislava Region: Strategies and policies for economic, social and territorial development.*
- Afternoon: Free time in Vienna

Wednesday, Sept. 15:

- Morning: Free time in Vienna
- 14.00 – 16.30: Drive back to Graz (200 km)
- 18.30: Conference opening and reception at the University of Graz

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

Development of different cross-border activities in the Three Borders Area between Hungary, Slovenia and Austria; Vienna as economic and cultural center of Austria.

Bad Blumau:

The province of Styria has developed a series of new – wellness oriented spa locations in the border area to Hungary and Slovenia, to get a unique selling proposition within the European tourism. The most recent spa development area is Bad Blumau, well known for its unique architecture designed by the famous painter Friedensreich Hundertwasser, his slogan when building this spa: "I see water as a sort of refuge, a sanctuary to escape to".



(http://www.blumau.com/evo/web/rogner/299_EN.611FA0112962235).

A cross – border project entitled "Limitless" represents the cooperation of spas and wellness destinations between the Austrian counties of Burgenland and Styria as well as the countries in Western Hungary (Pannonia) and Slovenia as a joint European thought – which is, to work together across the borders in the interest of tourists.



Limitless in the rich variety of Feel Good and health programs is designed to enjoy the „consequences“ of this inter-nation-al friendship, luxuriate in a world which offers mind, body and soul a truly paradisaical choice (http://www.european-spa-world.com/evo/1079_EN.51F0FF7757079).

National Park Neusiedler See:

Austria's first IUCN-approved National Park on the plains at the heart of Europe - reached from both Austria and Hungary - shows that nature knows no boundaries. Its aim is the long-term preservation of habitats for a wide variety of bird and plant life at the point where the Alps meet the Euro-Asiatic plains. The basis for the Park was created by the inclusion of large privately owned areas of cultivated land. Water, rippling reed beds, sweeping meadows with flat saltwater pools - this ist the National Park known as the Neusiedler See Lakes Area. The Pannonian climate with its long growing period and its position between the Alps and the Puszta determine the type of plant life: mosaics of dry meadow surrounded by wetlands and salt marshes. The National Park is full of wildlife, mainly birds: meadow sandpipers, geese, herons, storks, curlews

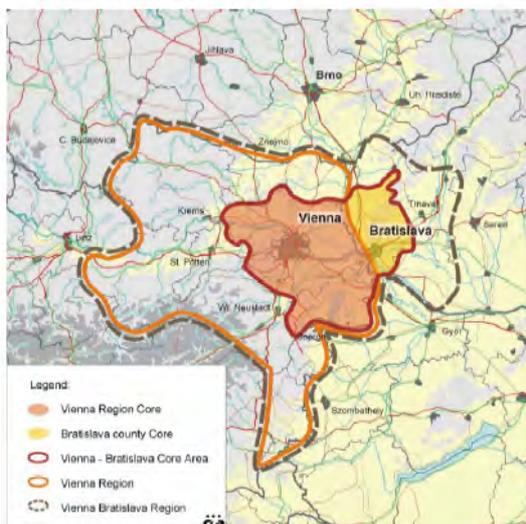


and birds of prey. The mammal most popular amongst visitors is the funny little suslik, or ground squirrel, that lives in the short grass of the pastures (http://www.tourist-net.co.at/natps_1e.htm).

The Vienna - Bratislava Region:

The Vienna – Bratislava Region has developed throughout history as a mutual, connected settlement and social system, even though, the two parts were the responsibility of the different central administrations (Austrian empire, Hungarian kingdom). However, the ties between the two parts of the region were clear even after the breakdown of Austrian monarchy as well. Later, mutual relations were discontinued after the creation of two ideological worlds in the new order of Europe after the Second World War. This has continued until the end of 1980s of 20th century. The Vienna – Bratislava Region was influenced by its position in Europe throughout its history. It lies in the “geographical centre” of Europe, in a location with very favourable natural and geomorphological conditions. Several dominant geo-morphological formations of European scope converge in the region (Alps and Carpathian massive, the Pannonia Basin, watercourse of the Danube River). Historically, these features have pre-determined the main North-South and East-West routes and connections to other European states. These main axes in the area will be strengthened by the renewed diagonal linkages across Europe, which will be even more significant under the changed geopolitical and economical conditions in the near future.

Vienna – Bratislava Region



Regarding the new political–economical changes in the states of Central and Eastern Europe, the area of Vienna – Bratislava Region is becoming a significant area for the revival of East-West relations. The area moves in the focus of interest, not only from a national perspective, but also from the whole European perspective -- as a node from where the new links across individual states are made possible across Europe. The importance of the Vienna – Bratislava Region for the further development has been stressed in the results of the study “The production areas in Western and Eastern Europe” (EMPIRICA, Bonn 1993), where the area of Bratislava county was evaluated on the basis of

several factors as having “the greatest outlook of all regions” surveyed in Europe. At the same time, adjacent regions were also shown to have good evaluation results, such as the region Győr - Soprony and Burgenland. The appropriate use of synergy effects calls for the optimal cooperation of all three partner regions. This is based on the assumption that the cumulative strength of all is more than the individual positive factors. This new settlement and transformation structure could become a node of European importance and foster the integration of north-eastern, south-

eastern and the western parts of the Europe. The importance of the Vienna – Bratislava Region in Europe is documented by the example of considerations relating to the whole European settlement network drafted by the German Ministry for Regional Planning, Building and Urban development in Bonn, in February 1994 “Raumordnungspolitiken im europäischen Kontext” (Spatial Planning Policies in a European Context). In the study, the Vienna – Bratislava Region is integrated as one of the seven centres (agglomerations) allocated the highest degree of importance within Europe as a whole. The importance of the Vienna – Bratislava Region is strengthened by the traversal of several Trans-European corridors (TEN) in this area, which increases the attractiveness with respect to the accessibility and links to the other significant centres and agglomerations in Europe (http://www.bratislava.sk/soubory/700000/281376_Joint_chapter.pdf).

Vienna:

More information: <http://www.wien.gv.at/english/>

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