

**Leipzig Agricultural Policy Forum 2007 on
“Agricultural and Rural Development Policies -
Challenges for Institutional Set-up and Co-operation in
South Eastern Europe”
Regional Conference, November 16-18, 2007**



Conclusions from the Working Group Sessions
**Promoting Success stories of regional cooperation
and networking**
Best practices in cross-boarder cooperation



Impulse statements

- “Regional co-operation in the Shopska Land “
- “New regional funds as a tool to support cross-border co-operation”



Discussion on

- How to further strengthen regional co-operation?
- How to foster the integration process in the EU?



CONCLUSIONS



How to foster the integration process in the EU?

Regional and cross-border cooperation – Why?

- A lot of similarities
- More common interests
- Similar regions “MUST” cooperate to serve as bridges between the countries



How to foster the integration process in the EU?

Preparation for negotiations with the EC

- Formation of a professionalized negotiation teams, to avoid dis-continuity
- Exchange experience among negotiating teams (mainly from new EU member countries BG, RO, SLO)
- Get the “hints” of the negotiation process with Brussels



How to foster the integration process in the EU?

Trainings on EU subjects

- Trainings should be done by consultants from recently accessed EU member states



How to further strengthen the cross-boarder co-operation?

Awareness creation in own countries on all possible levels

- Importance of the regional cooperation and its benefits



How to further strengthen the cross-boarder co-operation?

Identify common needs and priorities

- Cooperation in writing Laws, by-Laws, Strategies, Plans/ Programmes
- Trainings



How to further strengthen the cross-border co-operation?

Formalization of the cooperation

- Signing of the Declaration sustaining the initiative of SWG initiative
- Green light from the “TOP”
- Development of sound Strategy and Action Plan foreseen with the Declaration



How to further strengthen the cross-boarder co-operation?

- Broader vision about the regional rural development
 - Emphasis the importance of RD
 - Including more aspects than economy



How to further strengthen the cross-border co-operation?

- Regional promotion activities (special focus on journalists)
- Extending stakeholders (Stakeholders Rural Club)
- Development of the network with similar organizations (PREPARE, Hungarian LEADER centre..)



How to further strengthen the cross-boarder co-operation?

Establishment of a task force groups

- Subject based
- According to the interests

Projects

- ✓ Extend the good practices (XXL)
- ✓ Infrastructure
- ✓ Biodiversity



How to further strengthen the cross-border co-operation?

- Investments in human capital / capacity building (training centers and scholarships)
- Extend cooperation towards East (Ukraine, Moldova)
- Development of a experts` pool from the region



**Ownership of regional initiatives
to be transferred to the RD
stakeholders on local and
regional level**