

MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMISSION

FLANDERS - SLOVAK REPUBLIC

HELD IN BRUSSELS

FROM 30 JUNE TILL 1 JULY 2008

The third meeting of the Joint Commission to discuss the Cooperation Programme for the years 2008-2010 to implement the Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Flanders and the Government of the Slovak Republic was held in Brussels from 30 June till 1 July 2008.

The chairman of the Flemish delegation welcomed the Slovak delegation and presented the members of his delegation:

Flemish delegation:

**Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs
Foreign Affairs Division**

- Freddy Evens head of division Europe, head of the delegation
- Etienne Schollaert policy advisor, secretary

Tourism Flanders Brussels

- Jos Vercruysse head of division
- Jan Van Praet policy advisor

Department of Public Governance

- Jan De Mulder policy advisor

Department of Culture, Youth, Sports and Media

- Hilde Billiet policy advisor

Departement Welfare, Public Health and Family

- Machteld Wauters policy advisor

Agency for Arts and Heritage

- Arlette Thys policy advisor
- Anne-Marie Croes policy advisor

Agency Youth Policy

- Jan Vanhee policy advisor

Department of Work and Social Economy

- Marc Willems policy advisor
- Farah Nolens policy advisor

Department of Economy, Science and Innovation

- David Grzegorzewski policy advisor

Department of Mobility and Public Works

- Etienne De Winne director-engineer
- Robert Peeters policy advisor
- Pim Bonne policy advisor
- Martijn de Bruijn policy advisor

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

- Gabriel Ysebaert engineer

Department of Environment, Nature and Energy

- Annemie Neyens policy advisor
- Patrick Hemeryckx policy advisor

Department of Country Planning, Housing and Immovable Heritage

- Nele Haegemans policy advisor

Department of Education

- Dirk Lapeirre policy advisor
- Johan De Witte expert

Flanders Investment and Trade (FIT)

- Evelien Staelens policy advisor

The chairman of the Slovak delegation thanked for the kind reception and presented the members of his delegation:

Slovak delegation:

Government Office of the Slovak Republic

- Ivan Ištvánffy General Director, Head of Delegation
- Gabriela Sabelová Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU

Ministry of Transport, Post-offices and Telecommunication

- Kvetoslav Kmec Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU

Ministry of Environment

- Ľubica Mikulášková Department of International Relations and Protocol

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family

- Marek Macák Assistant to the General Director of International Relations

Ministry of Health

- Pavol Jusko Bilateral Cooperation within Department of EU Programmes

Ministry of Construction and Regional Development

- Katarína Kukučková-Tomková Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU

Ministry of Agriculture to the Permanent Representation of Slovakia to EU in Brussels

- Karin Murániová Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU

Ministry of Economy

- Stanislav Polonský

Department of International Trade

Embassy of Slovakia to Belgium

- Jozef Reinvart

Deputy Head of Mission

The negotiations were held in a constructive atmosphere, and resulted in a draft text of the Cooperation Programme for the years 2008-2010 which was initialled by the heads of the delegation.

Both Parties will undertake the necessary steps, according to their respective internal legislations to approve this Cooperation Programme.

Both Parties also agreed to refer to each other's websites - which will contain updated information about their mutual cooperation. The Flemish Party will, in view of this, have a special link on its website www.flanders.be, referring to its activities in the Slovak Republic, which includes a cultural programme, in the Slovak, Dutch and English languages.

The Slovak Party will be providing information on this cooperation on the website of the embassy of the Slovak Republic www.vlada.sk.

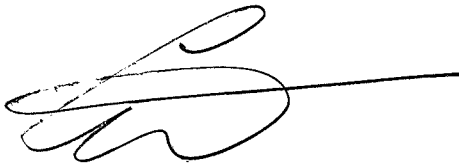
Both Parties (the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs and the Government Office of the Slovak Republic representatives) shall monitor on a half-yearly basis, both in Brussels and in Bratislava, the execution of the work programme.

Both Parties (the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs and the Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU – Gabriela Sabelová) shall provide each other with the contact addresses (mail, telephone number) of the contact persons within each line ministry concerned.

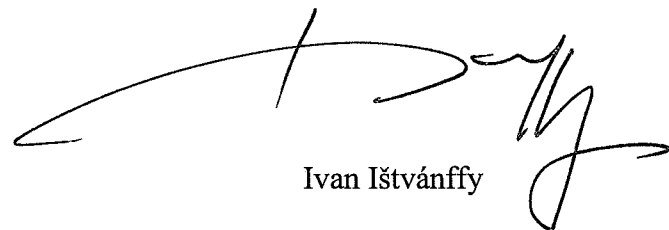
For all information and follow-up of this Cooperation Programme in both countries, the diplomatic channels will be used. The Flemish Party will consider the Representative of the Flemish Government in the Slovak Republic, as its contact point, except for investment and trade. For those matters the representative of FIT in Bratislava will be responsible.

For Flanders

For the Slovak Republic



Freddy Evens



Ivan Ištvánffy

COOPERATION PROGRAMME
FOR THE YEARS 2008 - 2010
IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF FLANDERS
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

For the implementation of the Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of Flanders that was signed in Bratislava on May 30, 2002, both Parties have agreed upon the following Cooperation Programme for the period 2008-2010. It was elaborated during the third meeting of the Joint Commission Flanders - Slovak Republic that was held in Brussels from 30 June till 1 July 2008.

PART 1. ECONOMY

1.1. General framework for cooperation

Both Parties underline the importance of cooperating concerning regional development policies and SME development.

Both Parties also underline the importance of increasing the awareness of SME in respect to accessing and utilizing EU funding possibilities.

1.2. Specific actions

The Flemish Party, i.e. the Agency for Economy of the Flemish Government, proposes the following fields of expertise as topics for which it can guarantee a highly qualitative transfer and exchange of knowledge and information.

Regarding the execution of cooperation projects by project promoters, both Parties underline the importance of relevant European programmes and also the Flemish Cooperation Programme for Central and Eastern Europe as a means of financing these projects.

1.2.1. General economic and regional policies concerning SME

Particular attention shall be paid to:

- efficient instruments and means of financial support for companies;
- entrepreneurship (a.o. mentorship projects, promotion campaigns on entrepreneurship, strengthening business associations and networks...);
- efficient institutional support network for start-ups and SME (a.o. access to finance, marketing, management, business conduct,...).

1.2.2. Regional development policy and the European Fund for Regional Development (ERDF)

Attention will be paid to the system of Flemish regional and spatial economic policy.

Particular attention will also be given to the role of national (e.g. given Objective 2) and European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (Interreg IV) in the framework of the European Fund for Regional Development (ERDF). Both the management as the impact of ERDF programmes on regional development policies and projects in Flanders will be looked at.

Particular attention will be paid to innovative project results and/or examples in view of the Lisbon Agenda / objectives and the mutual experience with SME participation in ERDF programmes and projects.

1.2.3. Sustainable infrastructure and sustainable management of business premises

Particular attention will be paid to the results and outputs of a Flemish - European Union supported "Innovative Actions" project related to this issue.

1.2.4. Enterprise coaching programme: mentorship projects

Particular attention will be paid to mentorship projects. These projects aim at professionalizing the management of small enterprises and enhancing networking between enterprises. The strategy consists in setting up fixed groups of small enterprise managers with one or two counsellors to exchange experiences on a monthly basis during one or two years. The counsellors are executives from large companies or experienced self-employed persons who are gladly willing to put their experience at the disposal of other entrepreneurs.

1.3. Exchange of delegations

Both Parties are interested in the possibility of exchanging a limited group of experts and officials in the economic fields mentioned under 1.2. or other fields to be determined by common agreement.

This exchange will be aimed at transferring experiences, knowledge, documentation, work models and information on these fields as well as providing specific training.

PART 2. FOREIGN TRADE

- The Flemish Party (Flanders Investment & Trade) commits itself to furthering and promoting trade relations between Flanders and the Slovak Republic. To that end seminars, trade fairs and economic missions will be organised.
- Both Parties shall exchange information concerning trade opportunities and investments. On a case by case basis, and at the other Party's request, both Parties shall exchange information concerning their respective markets and sectors and their experience and know-how in the field of the promotion of international enterprise.
- The FIT action programme has been determined on the basis of a regional strategy. This strategy has resulted from consultation between the FIT network in Flanders and abroad and the main Flemish economic actors. The strategy focuses on the most promising sectors on the foreign market and it has been translated into a tri-annual action plan. Slovakia is part of the regional strategy for Central and Eastern Europe. For Slovakia the focus has been put on the ICT and construction sectors.
- Flanders Investment & Trade does not have its own office in Slovakia. To cover the Slovak market it relies on the Walloon AWEX attaché, Ms. Harabinova.

For 2008-2010 FIT has planned the following actions (conditional):

- Multisector trade mission to Bratislava (cooperation with Awex and Brussels Export), from 3 till 5 June 2008.
- Market study "Building Materials in Slovakia", September 2008.
- Seminar "ICT in the Czech Republic and Slovakia", December 2008.
- Product Sample Booth at the construction fair Coneco, Bratislava, April 2009.

PART 3. TOURISM

- 3.1. Both Parties shall promote the exchange of information on legislation and regulations concerning tourism, statistical data, documentation and studies on the development of tourism.
- 3.2. Both Parties shall encourage the exchange of tourism promotion material and they shall promote the participation of tourism organisations in tourism events in Slovakia and in Flanders.
- 3.3. Both Parties shall encourage the organisation of study visits for journalists, radio and television reporters, researchers and specialists in the field of tourism.
- 3.4. Both Parties shall encourage the organisation of seminars, colloquiums and workshops on tourism themes that are proposed by one of the Parties, to exchange experience and ideas.

PART 4. AGRICULTURE

4.1. Cooperation in the field of agriculture

- exchange of know-how in the field of oil-bearing, albuminous crops and cereals.

4.2. Cooperation in the field of producer groups and associations

The Flemish Party offers to exchange its knowledge, experience and experts in the field of the foundation and functioning of producer groups and producers' associations.

4.3. Rural development

The Flemish Party will examine the possibilities to support the Slovak Party in the implementation of the rural development programme and the use of structural funds for pillar II of the common agricultural policy.

4.4. Production, processing and sale

The Flemish Party is prepared, within its financial possibilities, to share its knowledge and experience within the field of production, processing and the sale of fruit and vegetables in accordance with European legislation.

4.5. Science and innovation in agriculture

Both Parties shall intensify the cooperation between their scientific institutes in the field of agriculture.

Specific attention will be given to the exchange of researchers, joint projects under the EU Framework Programme and cooperation in the field of popularising science.

PART 5. ENVIRONMENT

The Flemish Party (ENE) (LNE) proposes to cooperate in the implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol.

Slovakia and Flanders are willing to cooperate within the objective of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, in particular to facilitate cooperation in the field of Joint Implementation under Article 6 and in the field of Emissions Trading under Article 17 of the Kyoto Protocol.

For this purpose a Memorandum of Understanding between the Slovak Government and the Government of Flanders can be drawn up which will detail procedures described in the Kyoto Protocol in relation to Slovak – Flemish cooperation regarding Articles 6 and 17 of the Kyoto Protocol.

The Flemish Party is prepared to invite, during the validity of the present programme, a team of experts (fluent English required) for a period of five (5) days within the frame of environment, nature and energy in order to exchange knowledge and to establish contacts with the Flemish actors.

PART 6. MOBILITY AND PUBLIC WORKS

6.1. Mobility and Traffic Safety

6.1.1. Education regarding car use

- Promotion of equal alternatives to make road traffic less dependent on the use of cars.
- Revaluation of pedestrian and cycling traffic and not making (small) travels dependable on combustion engines.

6.1.2. Evaluating and improving existing infrastructure

- Permanent adjustment of the rational use of means to transport goods.

- Rational use of modes of transport (balance between public and private transport, carpooling, car sharing, etc. as well as mobility planning at different levels (by government and industry) and similar initiatives).
- Integrated approach to public transport (intermodal transfer points between private and public transport).
- Passenger transport measures (adjustments to infrastructure or traffic rules).
- Quality design for the public space in order to have an equal and balanced use for all participants/actors in daily traffic: pedestrians, people with reduced mobility capacities, cyclists and users of powered two wheel vehicles.

6.1.3. Reduction of the accident rate and the promoting of desired (traffic) behaviour

- Promoting desired (traffic) behaviour and choices, such as adjusted speed, avoiding driving alone in a car, fighting/advising against drinking and driving, etc.
- Specific policy regarding road safety.

6.1.4. Actual policy towards viability

- Improving and managing the balance between available space and (car) traffic (with a special interest for (city) areas with historical valued heritage).
- Exchanging and consulting of know-how about toll collecting, traffic pricing and other techniques to curb traffic congestion in urban areas or as a means to achieve other goals.
- Internalisation of external costs (European Commission).

6.1.5. Legislation/management

- Permanent improvement/management of access to airports, ports and economic poles.
- Freight transport measures (improvement of general safety and comfort).
- Passenger transport measures (adjustments to infrastructure of traffic rules).
- Implementation of relevant EU policy and EU regulations with regard to transport and mobility.

6.1.6. Instruments: ITS/Computer/High Tech/data flow

- Consultation with regard to cross border communication networks and exchanging interesting sources through the growing number of media channels and technical innovations.
- Management of an internet site with public information:
 - laws and legislation;
 - other relevant information about the authorities in combination with linking to valuable information outside the strict institutional environment.
- Development and use of mobility indicators for defining policy and strategic research of passenger and freight transport on main roads and in metropolitan areas.

6.2. Roads and traffic

Both Parties are willing to exchange information and experiences regarding one or more of the following topics:

1. Co-ordination centre for all road construction works: all road activities are geared within a certain region in order to avoid conflicts in space and time and to minimize obstructions for road users and local residents.
2. Development of an internet site for public use e.g. about road works and regulations, travel planners and other 'pre trip' information.
3. Road safety: how to define priorities – how to deal with unsafe locations – handbook of road safety – road safety inspections and audits.
4. PPP (Public Private Partnership) applied for the construction of motorways or strategic constructions to improve mobility and to deal with missing links in the primary road network – dealing with contracting by result and risk management.
5. Road Data warehouse of the Agency: all kinds of data which can be geographically referred are stored and handled by one application and one interface. Application of the Geographic Information System for handling road and traffic related data.
6. Methods and materials for the control of the road condition.
7. The control of the overloaded lorries running on the motorways.
8. Traffic lights and speed cameras.
9. Projects to improve the traffic circulation of public transport.
10. Telematics – network.
11. Exchange of information about expertise and knowledge.
12. Maintenance (general or winter) of roads.
13. Incident management: ensuring first aid services, emergency planning; hoisting of vehicles when blocking traffic during rush hour in urban areas.
14. Exchange of information about EU directives, especially the tunnel directive and the road infrastructure safety management directive on TEN-T network.

6.3. Ports and Waterways

Both Parties are willing to exchange information and experiences regarding one or more of the following topics:

1. General policy on (inland) ports and waterways.
2. The relation between inland navigation and the environment.
3. Integrated water policy and the implementation of Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC on navigable waterways.
4. Implementation of relevant EC policy and EU regulations.
5. Implementation of RIS Directive 2005/44/EC.
6. Policy in terms of regulation, operation, commercialisation and promotion of inland waterways.
7. Modal shift promotion.
8. Support to the Belgian candidacy for membership in the Danube Commission.
9. Waterway manager N.V. De Scheepvaart is willing to give information regarding maintenance, exploitation and commercialisation of waterways. More specifically, their expertise and experience as public company with PPP projects can be implemented.

10. Regarding RIS, Waterway manager N.V. Waterwegen en Zeekanaal is involved in the project Calamity Abatement of the European IRIS – project in which Slovakia is related in the execution of a part of the project.

6.4. TEN – T Corridors

Both Parties are willing to cooperate and exchange information regarding the future revision of TEN-T Network.

6.5. Work visits

Both Parties shall cooperate by enabling the participation of a specialist in workshop courses, masteries in the field of mobility and public works.

Both Parties are prepared to consider receiving two delegations of maximum five (5) Slovak/Flemish experts for a period of five (5) days at the most in Flanders/Slovakia to exchange information, training, documentation (including site visits to various locations to be determined) and knowledge about one or more of the aforementioned themes, according to their points of interest. The first visit will be organised in Flanders in 2009.

The Flemish Party (Department of Mobility and Public Works) wishes to cooperate with FITA (Flanders International Technical Agency npo) for the work visits in which the transfer of knowledge takes a central position. FITA vzw will try to involve the private sector in the programme as much as possible.

FIT (Flanders Investment and Trade) will provide assistance wherever possible to improve the contacts with private entrepreneurs.

PART 7. YOUTH WELFARE

Both Parties will cooperate and exchange information, documentation and expertise in the fields of:

- special youth care, i.e. ambulant, semi-residential and residential youth care;
- integrated youth care, i.e. youth care and general prevention regarding youth welfare.

PART 8. WELFARE AND HEALTH

Both Parties shall cooperate and exchange information, documentation and expertise in the fields of:

- general health policy, scientific research in the field of health, quality management, inspection and supervision, cooperation of public and private organisations at regional and local levels.
- financial management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of health care projects.

8.1. Public health

- preventive health care policy (i.a. cancer prevention and screening programmes; suicide and depression prevention; prevention of problematic use of alcohol and drugs);
- co-ordination and monitoring of vaccination programmes and prophylactic of infectious diseases (i.a. fighting sexually transmittable diseases such as HIV);
- inspection, counselling and treatment of complaints about environmental licences.

8.2. Health care

- programming, recognition and subsidising of welfare and health facilities;
- support to services and facilities;
- improving quality (Integral Quality Control);
- exchanging information about good practices in the field of patient safety;
- primary health care and home health care;
- elderly care, particularly in rest homes, nursing homes and apartments for the elderly;
- mental health care (e.g. integrated mental health care, psychiatric home health care, ambulant psychiatry);
- health care insurance and management of the care insurance fund providing for those people who suffer from a long-lasting seriously diminished capacity;

PART 9. EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL ECONOMY

- 9.1.** Both Parties shall continue the cooperation in the field of employment policy, vocational and entrepreneurial training, and encourage the contacts between the competent bodies and the social partners in this field.
- 9.2.** Both Parties shall, at the request of the other Party, exchange information about the labour market, the legislation, the statistical data and any other information concerning employment policy, vocational and entrepreneurial training.
- 9.3.** At the request of the Slovak Party the Flemish Party (Flemish Policy Area Work and Social Economy) will accept a Slovak delegation (three (3) to five (5) experts) to Flanders during 2008-2010. The Flemish Party expects a request of the Slovak Party concerning their fields of interest in order to organise and prepare the visit.
- 9.4.** Both Parties encourage the cooperation in the field of the European Social Fund and they shall exchange information and know-how concerning the management and the monitoring of the ESF.
- 9.5.** The Flemish Party (Flemish Policy Area Work and Social Economy) shall examine the possibilities to play a stimulating role in the realisation of new projects in the field of employment, vocational and entrepreneurial training within the framework of the 'Flemish Cooperation Programme Central and Eastern Europe'.

- 9.6. The Flemish Party (Flemish Policy Area Work and Social Economy) shall act as mediator for possible cooperation with any actor or network active in the field of vocational and entrepreneurial training, labour market and employment policy.

**PART 10.
PUBLIC GOVERNANCE**

The Flemish Party (Public Governance Department) and the Slovak Party (the Office of the Government and other relevant ministries) will cooperate by exchanging information, experience, know-how and best practices between administrations. In particular contacts will be established between experts in the fields of human resources management, recruitment policy, integrity policy, ICT, E-government, integration policy, urban policy and relationships with local authorities, Flemish government architect, facility management, regulation management and policy evaluation, as well as research activities. Specific topics for cooperation will be further defined and agreed upon by both authorities' competent services.

**PART 11.
CULTURE
(Cooperation in the fields of Culture Policy, Youth and Sports)**

11.1. Culture policy

- 11.1.1. Both Parties shall inform each other in an active way concerning important developments in cultural policies. That means that both Parties will keep each other informed, on a regular basis of policy matters and their international context, including the identification of the stakeholders involved and references to other sources that may be available.
- 11.1.2. When common subjects, of considerable present political importance have been detected, the Parties may decide by consensus to organise specific projects in that field, such as exchanges, training, on the job training, seminars, residences, etc.
- 11.1.3. When one of the Parties participates in an important international project, it will associate the other Party – as far as possible – as a privileged partner.
- 11.1.4. During the validity of the present Programme the Flemish Party is willing to receive one (1) graphic designer for a working visit of two (2) weeks at the Frans Masereel Centre in Kasterlee. Free accommodation shall be provided as well as a per diem of 50.00 euros.
- 11.1.5. The Flemish Party shall receive one (1) Slovak translator at the Vertalershuis in Louvain for a period of one (1) month during the validity of the present Programme. Contrary to the usual financial arrangements when receiving individuals, this translator shall be given free accommodation and an allowance of 1000.00 euros. Slovak authors also have the possibility to enter the writers-in-residence scheme of het Beschrijf. Further details regarding the eligibility requirements and the registration procedure are available from the Ministry of Culture.

- 11.1.6. Both Parties are willing to improve and to stimulate the networking of the heritage institutions of their countries for the purpose of exchange of practices, experts and competences related to movable and intangible heritage.
In the framework of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 17 October 2003, both Parties will study the possibilities to develop joint projects regarding the methods of registration and preservation of the intangible heritage of Slovakia and Flanders. During the first phase, the responsible units of the Flemish and Slovak Ministry of Culture can exchange experience and know-how.

PART 12. SPORTS

- 12.1. The Flemish Party (BLOSO - General Commissioner's Office for the Advancement of Physical Development, Sports and Outdoor Recreation) and the Slovak Party (ministry of Education) shall support mutual contacts in the field of sports and also the exchange of athletes, trainers and policy-makers in the field of physical education and sport. The thematic orientation of these exchanges and the practical conditions shall always be agreed upon directly between the responsible bodies.
- 12.2. Annually, both Parties shall make a quota of fifteen (15) days available to provide athletes, trainers and policy-makers with the possibility to take part in apprenticeships, clinics, study trips and congresses and seminars in the field of sport in the other country.

PART 13. SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

As for multilateral cooperation both Parties shall strive for joint participation of Flemish and Slovak researchers in the Seventh European Framework Programme for Research and Development.

Both Parties shall intensify the cooperation between their knowledge institutes. Specific attention will be given to the exchange of researchers, joint projects under the EU Framework Programme and cooperation in the field of popularising science.

PART 14. TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING, HOUSING POLICY AND IMMOVABLE HERITAGE

The Flemish Party is willing to explain the Flemish policy in the field of immovable heritage. Subject to budgetary and staff constraints, follow-up and further development of this proposal can be discussed on the occasion of meetings of competent intergovernmental organisations (Council of Europe, UNESCO, etc.).

In the field of town and country planning and housing the Flemish Party is willing to receive a delegation and give a brief presentation of spatial planning or housing policy in Flanders.

At the request of the other Party both Parties shall exchange information and experiences on housing policy, immovable heritage and spatial planning.

PART 15. EDUCATION

15.1. Exchange of information and documentation

During the validity of the present programme, both Parties shall, at the request of the other Party, exchange relevant information on all types and levels of education.

The higher Education Policy Unit of the Flemish Department for Education and Training takes a particular interest in advanced academic programmes for foreign students, in the exchange of experience regarding the implementation of the Bologna Declaration and in the challenge the Bologna process “beyond 2010” offers.

15.2. Exchange of professors / teachers / experts / policymakers

Both Parties shall exchange each year two (2) experts / professors from a higher education institution / government for a stay of seven (7) days (2 x 7 days) at most, in order to participate in seminars, symposiums, colloquia. These days can be used to build a network of contacts and exchanges between institutions of higher education.

15.3. Specialisation scholarships

The Flemish Party offers the Slovak Party for each of the academic years 2008-2009, 2009–2010 and 2010-2011 one (1) scholarship for recognized postgraduate programs at higher education institutions.

All information on study opportunities in Flanders (useful addresses of university colleges and universities, accredited non Dutch-language courses) can be found on <http://www.studyinlanders.be/>

15.4. Research Scholarships

The Flemish Party offers the Slovak Party for each of the academic years 2008-2009, 2009–2010 and 2010-2011 six (6) months annually for research. At the request of the sending Party, these months can be divided in periods of three (3) months at least.

15.5. Summer scholarships: “Dutch Language and Culture” summer course

In order to promote the study of the Dutch language and culture in the Slovak Republic, the Flemish Party shall annually offer the Slovak Party a number of scholarships for participation in the “Dutch Language and Culture” summer course, held either at the University Hasselt or at the Talencentrum of Ghent University. These three-week courses are intended mainly for students of the Dutch language and literature enrolled in Slovak public higher education institutions. Applicants are expected to have a reasonable command of the Dutch language at the Elementary Knowledge Level of the Certificate of Dutch as a Foreign Language.

The Dutch Language Union will send the “Dutch Language and Culture” brochure to all institutions where the Dutch language is instructed and also to the Belgian Embassy in Bratislava. The brochure (including the English version) can also be found at the web site of the Dutch Language Union:

www.taalunieversum.org/taalunie/summer_courses_in_dutch/

PART 16. YOUTH POLICY

- 16.1. During the validity of the present Programme, both Parties shall consider sending four (4) experts (senior civil servants and experts) for a study visit of seven (7) days, to elaborate a youth strategy at all levels (local, regional and national) and to establish better cooperation between these levels.
- 16.2. During the validity of this action Programme, both Parties shall consider exchanging delegations of up to four (4) members (responsible civil servants and youth workers) for a period of seven (7) days at most with the aim of elaborating the ideas of the White Paper of the European Commission "A New Impetus for European Youth" by exchanging good practices regarding the themes discussed in the White Paper and the European Youth Pact.
- 16.3. Both Parties agree to send or receive youth workers for participation in selected international (youth) events.

PART 17. CAPACITY BUILDING: PORT MANAGEMENT

The Flemish Party (Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs) shall offer the Slovak Party the possibility to send experts to seminars in the field of port management training organised by APEC (Antwerp/Flanders Port Training Centre vzw) in 2008 - 2010.

The Slovak Party shall present its candidates for these seminars. The participants shall be selected by APEC. The Flemish Party shall cover the costs of the participation in these seminars. International travel expenses are to the account of the participant or the organisation to which he or she belongs.

PART 18. COOPERATION THROUGH PROJECTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE FLEMISH COOPERATION PROGRAMME WITH CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Both Parties confirm their willingness to continue their cooperation by means of projects in 2008 – 2010.

Both Parties will try to build on previously built-up contacts and networks and concentrate on those sectors where cooperation provides a mutual advantage and may lead towards a win-win situation.

The priorities of the Slovak Party are the following:

- strengthening the administrative and judicial capacity, management of European funds for regional development and within the framework of agricultural policy, combating corruption and economic crime, support to implementation of health reform, regional development, the environment, strengthening structural provisions in relation to the Roma Community and non-discriminative legislation, integrating the Slovak Republic into European Research Area;
- sharing experience within the field of competitiveness, business assistance through innovation, sharing experience within the field of Public Private Partnership.

The Flemish Party annually launches a call for proposals. For 2008 a call has been launched and project proposals could be filed until 31 March 2008.

The Flemish Party is willing to fund 50% of the budget within its budgetary limits. The other 50% must be foreseen by a partnership of the Flemish promoter, the Slovak partner(s) and/or the Slovak authorities.

One multilateral project involving Slovak partners has been presented for 2008:

- e-PLATfOrm Carpathia (VOKA West-Vlaanderen + Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kosice, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Trenčín, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Presov).

All project proposals shall be evaluated by both Parties on the basis of their own criteria and procedures. During a bilateral meeting the projects proposed for funding shall be selected.

PART 19. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

19.1. General Provisions

19.1.1. The exchange of research scholarships under Article 15.4. shall be governed by the following general provisions:

The applicants should be under 35 years of age and they must have a master's degree or equivalent and an excellent academic record:

- a) The candidates shall be selected by the sending Party.
- b) By 1 April of each calendar year, the sending Party shall present to the receiving Party the candidates' completed scholarship application forms and other documents as specified in the application form. All documents shall be submitted in Dutch or in English, French or German in the case of Slovak applicants, and in Slovak or in English, French or German in the case of Flemish applicants:
 - a detailed curriculum vitae mentioning the knowledge of languages;
 - a detailed study or work programme which one wants to take at a recognized institution in the guest country;
 - letters of recommendation and eventual admission to the institution;
- c) By 1 July of each calendar year, the receiving Party shall inform the sending Party whether the candidates have been accepted, and shall at the same time

communicate to the sending Party the names of the institutions accepting them for study stays.

- d) The sending Party shall provide precise and detailed information about each scholarship holder's arrival at least two (2) weeks before the commencement of his/her stay.

19.1.2. The exchange of scholarships under Article 15.3. (scientific research) shall be governed by the following financial provisions:

- a) The sending Party shall cover the international return expenses for travel to and from the predetermined destination in the receiving country.
b) The receiving Party shall cover:

In Flanders:

- a monthly allowance of 740.00 euros;
- a starting allowance of 125.00 euros granted at the first arrival in Flanders, on the condition that the stay in Flanders takes at least one month;
- health insurance and third Party insurance in accordance with Belgian legislation;

19.2. Exchange of persons

The short-term exchange of persons (for 30 days max. and at the invitation of sending Party) as determined in the present programme shall be implemented according to the following criteria:

- a) The sending Party shall provide the receiving Party with the curriculum vitae, the invitation, goals and programmes as well as the dates of arrival and departure of the people concerned at least three (3) months in advance.
b) The receiving Party shall confirm it is prepared to receive the people concerned six (6) weeks before departure. The time of departure shall be confirmed at least two (2) weeks on beforehand.
c) To be covered by the sending Party:
- return international travel expenses
d) To be covered by the receiving Party:

In Flanders:

- accommodation and breakfast;
- in case no other provisions have been agreed among the partners, a fixed allowance of 37.00 euros per day (excluding transport costs) or 50.00 euros per day (including transport costs);
- health insurance and third Party insurance in accordance with Belgian legislation.

In the Slovak Republic:

- the precise conditions will be communicated through diplomatic channels.

PART 20.
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 20.1.

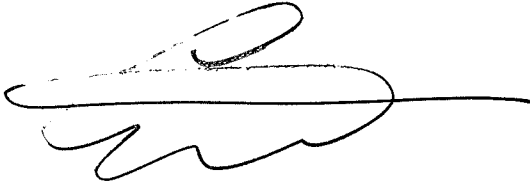
1. The provisions of the present Cooperation Programme do not preclude the possibility of implementing other activities, exchanges or projects that will be negotiated and agreed upon by the Parties through diplomatic channels.
2. Any disputes regarding the interpretation or implementation of the present Programme shall be solved through negotiation between the Parties through diplomatic channels.

Article 20.2.

1. The Cooperation Programme is subject to the internal procedures of each of the Parties.
2. The Cooperation Programme shall come into force on the day of the servicing of the last notification to the other Party. It will be valid till 31st December 2010.
3. The next meeting of the Joint Commission will be held in Bratislava in the fourth quarter of 2010.

Done in Brussels on the 1st July, 2008 in two original copies, each in the Dutch, Slovak and English languages, all three texts being equally authentic. In the event of different interpretation of the Cooperation Programme the English text shall prevail.

For the Flemish Party

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping initial 'F' followed by a horizontal line and several smaller, connected loops.

Freddy EVENS

For the Slovak Party

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a long, horizontal stroke followed by a vertical line and a series of loops and flourishes.

Ivan IŠTVÁNFFY