The Central & Eastern European Travel Retail Association (CEETRA) says it plans to strengthen its membership base and increase the frequency of its forums in a bid to broaden engagement with industry stakeholders.

Speaking to TRBusiness recently, CEETRA Chairman Patrick Bohl said the benefits of CEETRA to local operators and retailers is perhaps not fully understood in the region.

He said: “Airports might think they are sufficiently represented through ACI or local retailers might think they are too small to be involved or influence large policy matters.

“Both these segments will deliver significant growth to our membership base and they are targets for us.”

Bohl’s comments echo an address he made in January at the association’s AGM, in which he pointed out that despite travel retail’s significant contribution to the regional economy it is ‘widely misunderstood and often overlooked by policymakers in the region’.

CEETRA, which represents companies in Austria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Romania supplying and retailing duty free to travelling consumers throughout the Central and Eastern European region, adds that it plans to up the volume of its travel retail forums in the future.

“We think this is a concept that really works to involve potential new members to showcase what benefits CEETRA can bring to the industry,” according to Bohl. “It also establishes a link between ETRC and their expertise with the regions as they are typically attending and presenting updates.”

To read a full interview with Patrick Bohl, see the May edition of TRBusiness, available from the press racks during this week’s TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition & Conference in Singapore. Click here to subscribe.