



**GROUPEMENT D'ÉTUDES ET DE RECHERCHES**

**N O T R E E U R O P E**

President : Jacques DELORS

# **IS THE NEW EUROPE INVENTING ITSELF IN ITS MARGINS ?**

**CROSS-BORDER AND TRANSNATIONAL CO-OPERATION**

**A study jointly carried-out with Unioncamere**

**Coordinated by Marjorie JOUEN**

**James W. SCOTT,**

**Daniel POULENARD,**

**Peter JURCZEK et Bernhard KÖPPEN,**

**Ferenc MISZLIVETZ,**

**Ferruccio DARDANELLO**

*October 2001*

*STUDY AVAILABLE IN FRENCH, ITALIAN AND ENGLISH*  
*© Notre Europe, October 2001*

## **Notre Europe**

Notre Europe is an independent research and policy unit whose objective is the study of Europe – its history and civilisations, integration process and future prospects. The association was founded by Jacques Delors in the autumn of 1996. It has a small team of six in-house researchers from various countries.

Notre Europe participates in public debate in two ways. First, publishing internal research papers and second, collaborating with outside researchers and academics to contribute to the debate on European issues. These documents are made available to a limited number of decision-makers, politicians, socio-economists, academics and diplomats in the various EU Member States.

The association also organises meetings and conferences in association with other institutions and publications. Under the organisation's articles of association, a European Steering Committee comprising leading figures from various European countries and political and professional origins meets at least three times a year. Website: [www.notre-europe.asso.fr](http://www.notre-europe.asso.fr)

## **Unioncamere**

Unioncamere is the Italian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture.

In 1999, the Association set up the Brussels-based European Research Laboratory on the relations between enterprises and the European institutions, in order to meet the need to examine more closely those subjects which directly impact on European enterprises when they come into contact with the institutions: the challenge of competitiveness and globalisation, and the difficult choice of a model of development for the Union which takes into account localised needs and can bring about economic and social cohesion. From the point of view of its institutions, the Union is seeking new forms of governance which can increase participation by the public, business, civil society and all of the public and private players from all over the territory in the European project.

The Laboratory has already organised several seminars on the major challenges facing Europe and has published reports on these debates. Website: [www.unioncamere.it](http://www.unioncamere.it)



## **Marjorie Jouen**

Born in 1960 and of French nationality, Marjorie Jouen is advisor to the President of *Notre Europe* for cohesion and future enlargement of the EU since November 1999. She holds a diploma from *l'Institut d'études politiques d'Aix-en-Provence* and studied at *l'Ecole nationale d'administration*. She was a member of the Forward Studies unit of the European Commission charged with social and territorial questions from 1994 to 1998. She coordinated the inter-services group on "local employment and development initiatives" and participated in many prospective studies whose topics include: European cities, the future of employment, and the structural tendencies of Europe in 2010.

## **James W. Scott**

James Wesley Scott is assistant professor of geography at the Free University of Berlin (FUB) and research fellow at the Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning in Erkner (by Berlin). He obtained his Ph.D. in 1990 and his M.A. in 1986 at FUB, and his B.Sc. at the UC Berkeley in 1979. Among his key research interests are regional development policy and trans-boundary regionalism in Europe and North America.

## **Daniel Poulenard**

A 48-year old Geographer and Economist, Daniel Poulenard holds a Ph.D. in geography. After a career in journalism, he held many posts as director of studies in fields concerning territorial management and regional economic development. Since 1995, he has directed the European network of independent experts (academics and consultants), present in five member states, "Parcourir". This organisation specialises in the elaboration and evaluation of public politics, notably Community programmes that concern regional development and cooperation.

## **Peter Jurczek**

Dr. Peter Jurczek was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany in 1949. He studied political science, geography, and pedagogy at the University of Frankfurt (1970-1976). He received his Ph.D. in geography in 1980 (University of Frankfurt). He was a research and teaching assistant at the University of Bayreuth from 1977-1993, where, in 1987, he completed his second doctoral thesis and gained the right to teach at the university level. He is professor of geography at the University of Chemnitz since 1994, where he is chair of social and economic geography. His principal research interests are: borders and international cooperation, rural areas, the geography of tourism, and the demographic change in Saxony. He is an expert witness for the Czech grant academy.

## **Bernard Köppen**

Bernard Köppen was born on March 8, 1971 in Nuremberg, Germany. He studied geography at Erlangen, Grenoble, and Bamberg (1993-1999). He obtained a master's in geography in 1997 (Grenoble 1 - UJF) and a diploma in geography in 1999 (Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Bamberg). Since April 1999, he has been a teaching and research assistant at the University of Chemnitz. His research interests are: the border area Germany - Czech Republic, the urban geography of the "Neue Länder" and ex-socialist countries, and the geography of transportation.

## **Ferenc Miszlivetz**

Born in Budapest, Hungary in 1954, Dr. Ferenc Miszilevitz holds a diploma in sociology and political science. He is presently the Jean Monnet chair of European Studies at Berzsenyi de Szombathely college. He directs the Institute of Social and European Studies (ISES) at Koszeg - Szombathely and is Senior research fellow at the Institute of Political Science at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest.

## **Ferruccio Dardanello**

Born in Mondovi, Italy in 1944, Ferruccio Dardanello holds a diploma in political science. Since 1984, he has been the president of *l'Unione Commercio, Turismo, Servizi e Trasporti* in the province of Cuneo. He is also President of the (CCIAA) of the province of Cuneo since 1993 and the Delegate to EUROGIN G.e.i.e. since 1994. He is also the National Vice President of *Confcommercio* since 1995 and President of *Confcommercio* of Piedmont since 1998. At *Eurochambers*, he represents *L'Unioncamere italiana* since 1997, and is Vice President since 1998.

## CONTENTS

<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>IS THE NEW EUROPE INVENTING ITSELF IN ITS MARGINS? SYNTHESIS OF FIVE CASE-STUDIES (Marjorie Jouen)</b>	<b>3</b>
1 - Portrait of the new Europe	5
2 - The cornerstones of the future Community area	10
3 - Support instruments for crossborder and transnational cooperation	13
<b>TRANSBOUNDARY CO-OPERATION IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION (James Wesley Scott)</b>	<b>17</b>
1 - Introduction: a Baltic Sea Region under construction	17
2 - The role of European structural initiatives: INTERREG II C for the Baltic Sea Region	18
3 - Two representative case studies of region-building through INTERREG IIC-BSR	20
4 - Analysis	22
<b>FRANCO-BELGIAN COOPERATION BETWEEN NORD-PAS DE CALAIS AND HAINAUT (Daniel Poulenard)</b>	<b>33</b>
1 - Brief presentation of the area, socio-economic and administrative situation, main features of the cooperation	33
2 - Has cooperation paved the way for new methods of public policy administration at regional (sub-regional or local) level?	34
3 - What has been the qualitative impact of the strategic co-operation in the region? What practical improvements have been achieved?	42
4 - What is the external impact of this cooperation?	43
<b>EUROREGIO EGRENSIS (Peter Jurczek et Bernhard Köppen)</b>	<b>49</b>
1 - Brief presentation of the area, socio-economic and administrative situation, main features of the cooperation	49
2 - Has cooperation paved the way for new methods of public policy administration at regional (sub-regional or local) level?	51

3 - What has been the qualitative impact of the strategic co-operation in the region? What practical improvements have been achieved? 53

4 - What is the external impact of this cooperation? 54

**THE HAYDN-LISZT QUARTET, NEW INSTITUTIONS, SOCIAL ACTORS AND NETWORKING IN THE WEST-PANNON EUROREGION (Ferenc Mészlivetz) 61**

1 - New players 62

2 - A double leap: enabling new institutional levels 64

3 - Changing Austrian attitudes 66

4 - What has been the qualitative impact of the strategic co-operation in the region? What practical improvements have been achieved? 67

**ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN FRANCE AND ITALY: THE "SEA ALPS" (Ferruccio Dardanella) 75**

1 - Brief presentation of the area, socio-economic and administrative situation, main features of the cooperation 75

2 - Has cooperation paved the way for new methods of public policy administration at regional (sub-regional or local) level? 76

3 - What has been the qualitative impact of the strategic co-operation in the region? What practical improvements have been achieved? 78

4 - What is the external impact of this cooperation? 81



## **SUMMARY**

What is at stake in border areas is not just of an economic and social nature; these regions are sensitive spots of the future Europe in political terms as well. Five cooperation initiatives (Baltic Sea, Nord-Pas de Calais/Hainaut, Egrensis, West Pannonia, The Sea Alps) were analysed according to a common grid to identify the actors, working themes, and the behaviours that could herald the “New Europe”.

If, up to this point, the cooperation initiatives have not triggered any revolution in the public services sector and in the structures of local authorities, attitudes are evolving pragmatically and the institutional dialogue is losing its formal and central character. The most dynamic actors are local leaders; they belong to the public or quasi-public sector and handle societal issues. This reinforces the idea that such cooperation depends largely on proximity.

The concrete improvements, that are a result of cooperation initiatives, are numerous and span the economic, social, cultural, and political fields. These themes match the concerns of local partners, but do not always coincide with the usual priorities of the State authorities, or those of the regional ERDF programmes.

By creating new development poles, the cooperation often serves to counterbalance both the remoteness and the peripheral situation of these areas. They play a significant role in the rapid acquisition of modern management and public administration methods in regions belonging to the candidate countries. It can also foster neutral examination of sensitive subjects (racism, combating the social exclusion of the Roma, the status of linguistic minorities etc.), which can enrich and reinforce local democracy. The results show that time appears to be less a crucial factor than the genuine will of elected representatives or officials to work together, not to mention the commitment of the population, businesses, teachers, researchers, and associations belonging to the civil society.

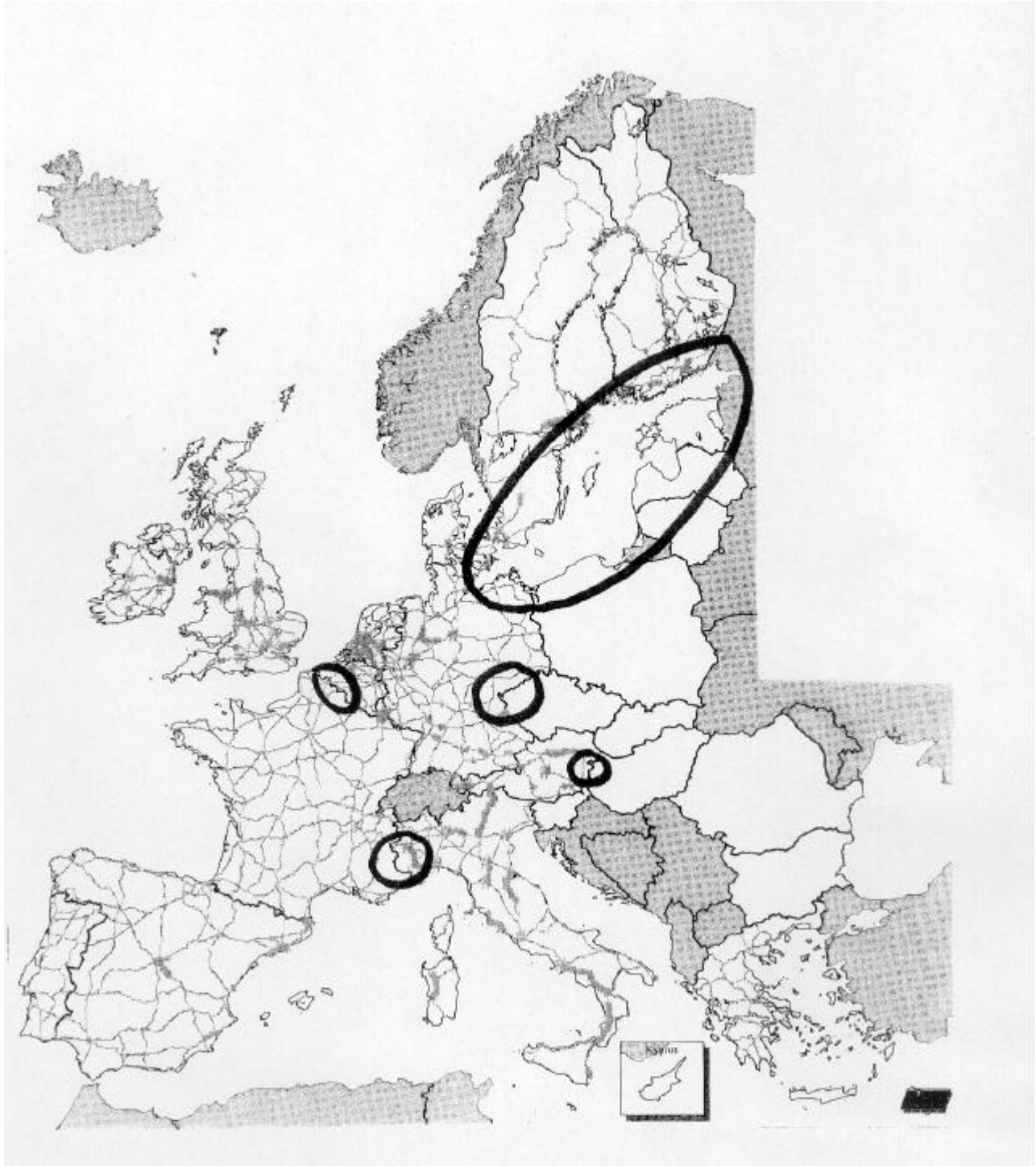
These cooperations have not yet succeeded in creating crossborder regions, as the draw of the nation state, notably concerning regulatory and budgetary affairs, still plays a powerful role. The principal obstacles encountered concern the lack or inadequacy of the necessary legal, financial, and human means and the difficulty of the problems to be resolved (e.g. the status of minorities, the security of borders, and the economic and social consequences of both immigration and emigration).

The community initiative INTERREG, whose express purpose is to support these co-operations, is far from satisfying its beneficiaries. Notably, there is not enough economic participation and the networking of border regions is not truly encouraged. There is more to ask for than that. Finally, despite its existence of over 10 years, INTERREG has not succeeded in adopting the needed legal and financial instruments.

The response to the needs of border regions cannot be left to chance and calls for the following:

- The clear definition of priorities and due consideration of the political problems involved at the highest Community level, notably concerning border control and minority status
- The implementation of satisfactory legal and management tools (e.g. management agencies, “European Cooperation Areas”, and the clarification of relative GEIE regulations
- The creation of a tool capable of stimulating dynamism and innovation along all of the EU’s borders. This tool should provide for genuine “testing ground” follow-up at the European level (i.e. animation, evaluation, technical assistance and simplified financial regulations).

## Map of five case-studies



**IS THE NEW EUROPE INVENTING ITSELF IN ITS MARGINS?**  
**SYNTHESIS OF FIVE CASE-STUDIES**

Marjorie Jouen

*"Borders have a two-sided, ambiguous quality. They can be either a bridge towards others or a barrier against them. They often reflect an obsession to position someone or something on the other side... Borders are a necessity, since without them – that is, without distinction – there can be no identity, no form, no individuality; there can not even be any true existence, since without them it becomes shapeless. Borders constitute a reality. They confer contours and traits. They build personal and collective individuality."* Claudio Magris, *Utopia e disincanto* (1999)

Since the end of the 1980s, flows in Europe have increased – not only in terms of goods, workers and tourists, but also in political terms. This development can, of course, be traced to advances in European integration and the completion of the single market. But it is also a consequence of the end of the cold war, which has upset our customary geographical and cultural references. The internal and external borders of the European Union (EU) have no doubt been the areas most affected by this momentous upheaval.

And they have not seen the end of it. Almost all of them<sup>1</sup> are set to experience two other major events in the coming years: the changeover to the euro and the accession of new Member States. With the introduction of the euro on 1 January 2002, businesses in the border areas will have less difficulty than before in competing and exploiting their complementarity. The greater transparency resulting from the use of a single currency and better transaction conditions for the population will undoubtedly generate an increase in crossborder trade, but not necessarily in overall consumption. Some sectors and businesses will benefit, others will suffer, and some redistribution of activities will certainly take place in the medium term.

As for enlargement, it will "convert" many of today's external borders into internal borders. The substantial disparities in income in these areas could provoke unprecedented social tension. Lastly, border areas will become more important in quantitative terms, mainly because of the small size of the new Member States. A quarter of the population of the 15 current Member States live in border areas, while the figure is 58% on average for the 12 applicant countries.

But what is at stake in border areas is not just of an economic and social nature; these regions are sensitive spots of the future Europe in political terms as well. They will quickly and abruptly be confronted with certain major issues, which could well become common concerns of the continent as a whole: migration, demands for recognition and the fate of minorities, the emergence of new barriers erected by regional and sub-regional bureaucracies, environmental protection in transnational areas, etc. In a word, the main challenge of the enlarged Europe will increasingly be to manage diversity while preserving cohesion – and border areas will be on the front line in this respect.

Given the significance of what is at stake, it is worth reviewing the processes currently at work in the EU's border areas to see how they are preparing to respond to the new problems

---

<sup>1</sup> The border areas that are not affected are those of countries which do not belong to the euro zone or have no common border with the applicant States (the United Kingdom, Denmark and Sweden).

and to what extent those involved at local level – whether belonging to the local area itself or to the central authorities – are inventing new forms of governance.

For the borders present other interesting characteristics. Located on the edge of the national States, they are, in a sense, the fault lines of Europe. While bringing out national differences, these borders are also "land's ends", where boundaries dissolve and peaceful coexistence must be organised. Little wonder that border areas have long been associated with smuggling and more or less shady exchanges. The current developments hold new opportunities for these areas, which have been known to apply rules in a more flexible and adaptable manner than elsewhere and have little hesitation in following their neighbour's example. The local actors also often take it upon themselves to correct disparities between national regulations that are, in theory, incompatible, and know how to take advantage of any margin of manoeuvre to move forward.

The purpose of this study is therefore to determine, using practical examples, whether and to what extent the cooperation being established between European border regions foreshadows tomorrow's Europe. The study covers all aspects of these cooperation initiatives, not just the programmes financed by the EU (such as INTERREG and PHARE), even if Community assistance is an undeniable catalyst.

The method applied is simple. It consisted in analysing five experiences of cooperation in the light of a common set of questions, with a view to identifying the actors, working areas and behaviours that could herald the "new Europe".

From the north to the south, the cooperation initiatives selected were the following:

- "West Pannonia", between Austria and Hungary
- "The Baltic Sea"
- "The Sea Alps", between France and Italy
- "Egrensis", between Germany and the Czech Republic
- "Nord-Pas de Calais (NPC)/Hainaut", between France and Belgium

Without claiming to present an exhaustive view of Europe as a whole, this selection is intended to provide a representative sample of the situations currently found in the EU: maritime and inland borders, internal and external borders (whose status is set to change in the medium term), long-standing and recent forms of cooperation, and intensive and tentative relationships. The Baltic Sea is, of course, a particular case given its size and history. However, the paper by J.W. Scott suggests that it actually comprises a range of maritime crossborder cooperation initiatives rather than a single large cooperation framework.

The answers to our questionnaire and comparison of situations can be analysed in three stages. At first glance, the five case studies seem to be fairly conventional assessments, whose main interest lies in the approach selected (governance: an aspect not usually covered by other evaluation exercises), and in the fact that the data is quite recent (the ex-post evaluations of INTERREG II will not be carried out before 2002-2003). A second reading – concentrating on the obstacles encountered, the shortcomings, outstanding problems and unexpected outcomes of the cooperation initiatives – gives a broader view and highlights the political issues behind crossborder cooperation in the European Union. The third part of this summary focuses on the assistance instruments available to these forms of cooperation and looks into the apparent contradictions of Community assistance. It concludes with a few proposals that might provide a response to the real needs of border areas.

## **1 – Portrait of the new Europe**

The next decade's Europe will not only be larger, it will also be different. In speaking of a "new" Europe, we wish to stress the qualitative changes within the Union, as a political entity, which are of particular significance for relations between Europeans, their region and their leaders. Acknowledging these developments, political scientists have put forward the theory of "multilevel governance" to describe the workings of the EU.

They suggest that alongside the Union-States-regions-cities pyramid is a more complex web of relations between a variety of actors. In addition to vertical relations, there are, on the one hand, horizontal relations of cooperation and partnership between sub-national authorities (regions, cities, etc.) or entities representing economic, social and civil stakeholders (professional and trade organisations, chambers of commerce, NGOs, etc.) and, on the other hand, transversal negotiation-based relations between entities with varying powers and at varying levels (direct relations between city networks and the European Commission, for instance). Another characteristic of this new model relates to the parties involved, who are operating in the public sphere. There are more of them and they are on a more equal footing than within the traditional hierarchical model. They take stances on economic issues or State responsibilities (police, security, budget, etc.), but also defend cultural, political and ethical causes (such as protecting the environment, combating exclusion, promoting minority languages and equal opportunities between women and men, etc.). They are also active in some "new" spheres, such as urban planning, quality of life and leisure. Lastly, these players are often organised in networks and exchange both information and tangible and intangible assets.

The questionnaire used to analyse the five cases of cooperation is based on this theory. It focuses on three main questions relating to the players and their working methods, the content of change and fields involved, and the external repercussions.

### **1.1 - Has the cooperation paved the way to new methods of public policy administration at regional (sub-regional or local) level? Who are the main actors in the process of change?**

In organisational terms, the cooperation initiatives, whatever their duration (from 5 to 15 years), have clearly not triggered any revolution in the public services and structures of the local authorities. However, working methods on one side of a border may have influenced certain reforms or, at least, certain decisions on the other side. Examples include the creation of *ad hoc* organisations at sub-regional level (the local development agencies in Hungary) or the grouping of municipalities to achieve a critical mass (creation of a regional council in the Czech Republic). The implementation of the INTERREG (and PHARE CBC) programmes generally involved establishing a specific institution and appointing managers, at regional or local level. However, these specialist units are sometimes somewhat isolated, either from the other administrative departments (NPC/Hainaut) or the other players in the area involved (Baltic Sea). They are small and sometimes understaffed (Baltic Sea and Egrensis), thus implicitly indicating that crossborder cooperation is not regarded as a priority warranting the commitment of significant human resources.

In practical terms, the situation is brighter, thanks to the many meetings and exchanges of information that take place at all administrative levels. Cooperation is not the preserve of political decision-makers or departmental heads. In all cases, attitudes are changing. Pragmatism sets in after a few years and institutional dialogue becomes less formal and centralised. Nevertheless, the traditional administrations usually manage to preserve their

prerogatives. As those involved in cooperation cannot replace them, they develop strategies to work around them instead (West Pannonia).

The centralised structure of certain States is less well accepted in border areas than in other regions. National regulations thus tend to be called into question and put in perspective as a consequence of the cooperation partners' differences in responsibilities, in terms of both scope and fields (West Pannonia, NPC/Hainaut). Germany and Austria, two federal countries, are clearly stimulating decentralisation in neighbouring countries (Hungary and the Czech Republic). The influence of neighbours is less clear-cut in the framework of the Baltic Sea cooperation. Nevertheless, this trend should be viewed in the light of the applicant countries' particular situation, as they are going through a phase of transition. To them, the range of possibilities seems much broader than in countries such as France, whose tradition of centralised government is not fundamentally being challenged (NPC/Hainaut, Sea Alps).

The review of political priorities is also indicative of the effect of cooperation and the possibility of redefining strategies from the bottom up (a theme that was extensively discussed in the European Commission's White Paper on European Governance). Although the situation is somewhat mixed, this point seems very promising. The first step appears to be the realisation of the nuisance certain activities can cause, or the effect a decision might have on the other side of the border. In itself, this change in attitude indicates a new approach on the part of the various players, who accept to modify their behaviour by undertaking prior consultation and impact studies. This is easily done in fields such as spatial development (Baltic Sea), urban planning (NPC/Hainaut), waste management (West Pannonia), environmental protection involving the creation of a crossborder park (West Pannonia) or the merger of existing parks (NPC/Hainaut), and transport networks, whether in connection with major strategic decisions (West Pannonia, Egrensis, Sea Alps) or merely the reorganisation of daily services (NPC/Hainaut). In the specific case of players from the education and research sectors, the identification and harmonisation of curricula and choice of research projects also fit very well into this pattern. This form of cooperation is found in all five case studies.

In his analysis, D. Poulenard (NPC/Hainaut) highlighted the geographical configuration as a determining factor. It is more likely that the region will accept to review its policies if the regional capital is a border city than if it is located far from the border. Likewise, J.W. Scott demonstrates how certain capitals located on the Baltic Sea coast have strongly promoted cooperation and are more inclined to change their political priorities (Helsinki, Tallinn and Riga; Copenhagen and Stockholm).

The answers relating to the most dynamic and emerging actors belie the usual assumptions about involvement at regional level. The five studies clearly converge on this point and leave little room for doubt. Those involved in crossborder or transnational cooperation seem to share three main characteristics: they are local, they belong to the public or quasi-public sector and they are concerned about societal issues.

First of all, this observation confirms the impression that such cooperation is primarily a local matter, since the areas of intense cooperation seem to coincide with urban or employment districts. In the political sphere, those who are most closely involved and often provide the main impetus are the local and municipal elected representatives, in particular since they are sometimes the direct project initiators or promoters.

Secondly, the public and quasi-public sector is over-represented. Cooperation schemes involve agents from local authorities and State representatives, professional organisations and consular bodies, development corporations (West Pannonia) and urban planning agencies (NPC/Hainaut), non-profit organisations and universities and schools. The fact that certain players belong to the national authorities does not seem to prevent them from becoming

involved as partners in some areas (NPC/Hainaut, Sea Alps, part of the Baltic Sea), while it appears to rule them out in others (Egrentis, West Pannonia, part of the Baltic Sea).

Lastly, the high level of involvement of civil society and the media in issues relating to daily life and employment is a particularly noteworthy feature. This involvement denotes a fundamental difference with most regional development programmes and everyday life at national level. As a consequence, these forms of cooperation are more closely related to local development or urban governance issues. Just like universities, associations seem to prefer strategies based on cooperation rather than competition. They are anxious to achieve a critical mass to carry out their activities and show flexibility and responsiveness when presented with new opportunities. Generally speaking, as pointed out by D. Poulenard, F. Dardanella and J.W. Scott, they are capable of taking a long-term approach.

On the contrary, the generally low level of involvement of the business community is a recurring and possibly surprising feature. D. Poulenard puts forward two convincing explanations. Small companies – sometimes wrongly – fear unfair competition from their counterparts from the other side of the border, while large companies operate in an international market and therefore have little interest in the emergence of a crossborder market. The fact is that, to date, the presence of a border has seldom encouraged a spirit of cooperation and partnership among businesses, and attitudes are changing very slowly. The Eurocin EEIG is a particular case, mainly because this grouping focuses specifically on the economic aspects of crossborder cooperation in the Sea Alps. But even here, the initiative was taken by chambers of commerce (which have a quasi-public status), and not directly by private-sector companies. Likewise, the industrial parks and "automotive cluster" in West Pannonia are the result of strong involvement on the part of the public authorities, which brought the various parties together and developed the strategies. We should also make a distinction between businesses in situations of competition and networked businesses, whose concerns are fairly similar to those of the public sector. The latter quite often take part in crossborder cooperation schemes.

## **1.2 - What have been the qualitative effects of strategic cooperation in the region? What are the concrete improvements and in what fields have they been achieved?**

The five case studies all show a clear concern on the part of the partners that the areas should be organised as a single homogeneous whole. That objective is pursued by various means, which often reflect specific local features.

In practice, cooperation is somewhat akin to patchwork and the description of borders as "scars left by history"<sup>2</sup> is particularly apt in this context. The measures can broadly be sorted into two categories, depending on whether they focus on the inside of the crossborder area or its positioning vis-à-vis the outside. The main priority seems to be to make the border more permeable for those who have to live with it on a daily basis. In this context, projects focus mainly on the harmonisation of standards and services, the interoperability of networks and the compatibility of regulations. Beyond the immediate benefits the cooperation can bring (and there are many of them), the main qualitative effect is the change in attitudes: there is less hostility. Egrentis is the most striking case of our sample, but F. Miszlivetz also highlights a conclusive Austrian opinion poll. While these results are felt particularly strongly along the external borders, they are also significant in other areas (Sea Alps). P. Jurczek and

---

<sup>2</sup> Tony Kennedy: "Borders are the scars of Europe and some – in Ireland for instance – still itch a little." (Conference of the Committee of the Regions on trans-European cooperation, Maastricht, 13 and 14 September 2001)

B. Köppen confirm that the peaceful resolution of differences is regarded as an achievement. One of the ways of defusing potential conflict is to perform a joint analysis of the situation and arrive at a common diagnosis. The organisation of everyday services figures prominently on the list of success stories, mainly in the fields of health, transport, employment, education and civil protection. Although it is not explicitly mentioned, identity is a permanent concern which explains the importance of cultural activities. These activities are presented either as instruments for promoting dialogue and mutual understanding in areas which feature language and social differences, or as a means of strengthening a feeling of common identity. However, a closer look at the five instances of cooperation shows that the reality is more complex and ambiguous.

In the longer term, the second cooperation priority is to break the isolation of the regions. This is achieved by pooling resources to reach a critical mass. The aim is either to increase the area's weight on the international market, or to ensure that it can put its message across to the central authorities at national or Community level (Baltic Sea). The regions sometimes seek to achieve this objective by participating in networks or associations that bring together other local authorities (Eggenis, Sea Alps).

The cooperation initiatives have yielded a wide range of practical improvements in the economic, social, political and cultural spheres. In this respect, INTERREG's flexible eligibility rules as regards cooperation themes are a positive point. A recurring feature is probably the low level of financing involved, which ruled out major economic or infrastructural investment in all but a few cases (West Pannonia). It must be said, however, that this type of decision is not taken locally but at regional, national or even Community level.

It is worth noting that while the themes match the concerns of the players mentioned above, they do not coincide with the usual priorities of the State authorities (as reflected in national budget headings, for instance), or those of the regional ERDF programmes. Furthermore, these themes often fall outside the scope of the Community's common policies.

As regards the fields in which cooperation is most advanced, communication, information, promotion and data collection top the list. The media (television channels in West Pannonia and NPC/Hainaut, press in the Sea Alps) are significant and occasionally innovative multipliers. Likewise, cultural and educational measures are often mentioned and young people are usually a priority target group. The notable exception of the Sea Alps, where measures are also carried out for elderly people, is due to the latter's demographic weight. In the social sphere, employment, vocational training and health are the subject of particularly close cooperation schemes aiming to integrate the services offered to the population. In the economic area, the focus is either on measures designed to yield results in the medium term (promotion of innovation, common research centres, cooperation between universities, etc.), or on services to businesses (harmonisation of provisions, preparation for the euro's introduction, information, etc.). Leisure is a major cooperation area in which a variety of cultural, sporting and artistic exchanges are organised (such as the Haydn and Liszt festivals in West Pannonia). By encouraging tourism (Sea Alps), these events can have significant economic repercussions. As regards civil protection, activities are wide-ranging, from the organisation of emergency relief services to police cooperation and combating illegal immigration. Regional planning – including environmental protection, nuisance management and transport and urban infrastructure – is a particularly noteworthy cooperation sphere since it is still virtually absent from intergovernmental exchanges.



### **1.3 - What is the external impact of this cooperation? What factors can explain these results?**

The external impact of the cooperation initiatives is ambiguous, for it appears to be both stronger and weaker than foreseen. In any case, it does not necessarily occur where it might have been expected.

The Eurocin EEIG undeniably generated a "local multiplier effect", since it was created by the chambers of commerce of Cuneo, Imperia and Nice and is now set to expand throughout the three cooperating regions after welcoming new members. Likewise, the Baltic Sea cooperation initiative – even if the "local" area in this case is pretty vast – played a driving role by involving over 600 organisations and extending its scope to 11 countries. The experience of "Baltic Bridge" is also exemplary in this respect.

Another positive impact, which could be referred to as a "snowball effect", occurs when two border regions identify an issue which then becomes a priority in other regions. Egrensis, for example, encouraged the involvement of businesses located along the EU's external borders. It would also appear that the concern for sustainable development in the context of transnational regional planning stems, to a significant extent, from the experience of the Baltic Sea.

The impact on national policy and on relations with the central authorities varies considerably from one country to the next. It seems limited in the case of NPC/Hainaut and the Sea Alps, even though the populations of the two French regions involved are among the highest in the country. It is quite strong in the case of Austria, Hungary and the Czech Republic. It is unevenly distributed in the Baltic Sea, since the Polish regions and the German Länder have much more difficulty making their voice heard in their capital cities than their partners in Denmark, Sweden, Finland and the three Baltic States.

Several factors can explain these results. As regards the external factors, while the Community programmes do have a structuring effect, the cooperation is shaped mainly by the national context and the general environment. With respect to this last point, compliance with the Schengen agreements, disparities in income and geographical factors (relief and climate) currently play a decisive role. At central government level, the attention given to crossborder issues varies first of all according to the size of the country, or more specifically to the geographical and psychological distance between the capital city and the border. The second influencing factor is the geopolitical and economic strategy of the State, which is more or less outward-looking. Lastly, the degree of decentralisation and autonomy granted to the local authorities also plays a part.

With respect to internal factors, we can distinguish between two types of border area, depending on the cooperation situation.

- Border areas in which there is a strong incentive to act. Where cooperation is long-standing, it slips into routine and progress becomes very marginal over time (NPC/Hainaut, Baltic Sea). Where cooperation is more recent, rapid progress is made and structural changes tend to be welcomed (West Pannonia).
- Areas where there is not enough impetus to overcome traditional bureaucratic obstacles (Sea Alps) or economic and political problems (Egrensis). In both these cases, cooperation appears to be struggling.

Time appears to be a less crucial factor in the quality of the cooperation than the genuine will to work together. The initiative should not be backed only by elected representatives or officials but also by the population, businesses, teachers, researchers and associations belonging to civil society. Crossborder cooperation ties in with the longer term: ten years may

seem like a very short time to establish new patterns of behaviour, but old relationships, between Austria and Hungary for instance, can very quickly be given a new lease of life as soon as regulatory and police barriers are lifted.

The answers to the questionnaire thus provide conclusive evidence – regarding the quality of the players and fields involved – that the borders of the Union are innovative areas and testing grounds of the future Europe. Further analysis of the results of this survey will enable us to elaborate on this point.

## **2 – The cornerstones of the future Community area**

Encouraged by the reflection on "multilevel governance" and the enthusiasm accompanying the emergence of a border-free Europe, some researchers suggest that crossborder and transnational cooperation initiatives could rapidly lead to the emergence of crossborder regions. In support of this theory, they highlight two concomitant developments that are likely to speed up the reorganisation of the European area. Firstly, regional identities are gaining a higher profile as an indirect consequence of globalisation. "Global" and "local" are often considered to be the two sides of the same coin, one counterbalancing the other at a time when the generosity and efficiency of the Welfare State and national solidarity are beginning to show their limits. Admittedly, there can be no doubt that the predominance of the capital cities over political life is being challenged from all quarters, not just by the autonomous movements.

Secondly, in parallel during the last ten years, the realisation that the Cold War was over has gradually overcome the inhibitions and taboos regarding the intangibility of the borders left by the Second World War<sup>3</sup>. Compared with the constant changes the continent experienced throughout the 19th and during the first half of the 20th century, the last 50 years have seen an unusually long period of stability as regards national borders in both Eastern and Western Europe. The disintegration of Yugoslavia and division of Czechoslovakia graphically illustrate the subsequent process of "liberation", diversely viewed as dangerous or beneficial, positive or negative, by various authors (an issue we do not propose to enter into here). While the subnational upheavals Europe experienced during the 1990s would tend to indicate that the process of reorganisation is not over, in order to give a comprehensive overview of the European landscape, we should add that an opposite process of reunion across borders can also be noted. Though probably Utopian, these theories at least highlight the often underestimated significance of border areas as cornerstones of the future European area. A comparative reading of the five case studies provides a wealth of information on this point.

### **2.1 - Are the current cooperation exercises leading to the emergence of crossborder regions?**

The answer provided by the four crossborder case studies is negative, and as regards the Baltic Sea, the "Via Baltica" and the "Baltic Bridge" projects are seen as symbolic examples by JW. Scot. Meanwhile such a trend could no doubt emerge in certain "natural and traditional" regions that suddenly found themselves split by an international treaty. The high level of activity in the cultural and language learning sectors shows that crossborder cooperation is perceived as an opportunity to revive local cultures (NPC/Hainaut and

---

<sup>3</sup> Rolf Karbaum: "Our two towns, Zgorzelec and Görlitz, are separated by a bridge. They both belonged to the communist world but it was not until 1989 that things began to change." (Conference of the Committee of the Regions on trans-European cooperation, Maastricht, 13 and 14 September 2001)

NPC/Flanders) or a tradition of multi-ethnic tolerance suppressed for a number of decades (coexistence of Croatian, Slovene, Austrian and Hungarian villages in West Pannonia).

Likewise, the joint promotion measures often generate greater awareness of a shared identity, since they encourage two regions and their inhabitants to develop a new "community" straddling the border. This "community" takes shape in a variety of spheres (economy and trade, culture and sports, environment and tourism). But instead of replacing the existing regional and national identities, the emerging identity complements them. Admittedly, the phenomenon has not yet reached a very advanced stage (Baltic Sea, Egrensis, West Pannonia). In some cases, it is even still a distant aim (Sea Alps).

This mitigated result is due to the centralising forces of the Member States (in particular their regulatory and budgetary powers), the persistence of a climate of distrust, and the fact that the cooperation measures are still recent and fragile. In most cases, the outstanding problems would appear to rule out the possibility that a crossborder entity might emerge.

## **2.2 - What are the main obstacles encountered?**

Apart from the shortcomings of INTERREG and PHARE CBC<sup>4</sup>, which we will look at in the next section, closer and broader cooperation is hampered by three types of obstacle. First of all, the absence or shortage of legal, financial and human resources seems to be a constant feature. That is the responsibility of the local players themselves, who seem unable to break out of a sectoral and vertical power game, and of the regional, national and Community authorities, who for the most part have not yet woken up to the full significance of crossborder cooperation. Furthermore, regionalisation has sometimes caused new types of border to emerge, in cases where national regulatory incompatibilities have been compounded by differences at regional level (Egrensis, NPC/Hainaut). In the current context, forging cooperation initiatives between more than two regional partners seems to be difficult (Baltic Sea, Egrensis). Disparities in institutional powers between partners on either side of the border makes procedures slower and more complex (Egrensis). As regards EEIGs, opinions differ. F. Dardanella extols their virtues, claiming that the flexibility of their legal status allows partners to enter into associations without losing their autonomy. On the other hand, D. Poulenard points out the limits of a legal instrument which, in its 12 years of existence, has not been very successful among participants in crossborder cooperation initiatives.

Secondly, the nature and scope of problems is a strong brake to certain forms of cooperation. The list of working themes confirms that border regions are encountering a number of problems a few years ahead of other regions. Examples include the status of minorities – gypsies (Roma) in particular (West Pannonia) –, border security (Baltic Sea, Egrensis) and the economic and social consequences of inward and outward migration (Egrensis, West Pannonia).

Some problems are well beyond the regions' sphere of competence. For instance, Egrensis is a major transit area for goods and people between eastern and western Europe. And the transnational cooperation undertaken in the Baltic Sea is just a minor component of the geopolitical strategies implemented at continental level. The main purpose of cooperation is therefore to defuse conflicts, reduce the greatest disparities and cushion any shocks.

---

<sup>4</sup> Jan Olbrycht: *"The creation of financial cooperation instruments had a positive effect in terms of mainstreaming but it undermined the initial political impetus by transforming these exchanges into technical assistance."* (Conference of the Committee of the Regions on trans-European cooperation, Maastricht, 13 and 14 September 2001)

The cooperation promoters have limited room for manoeuvre, since the only fields they can handle are those which are too new to be covered by the central authorities or which do not directly interfere with the States' exclusive powers. In conclusion, border areas do give a measure of the social, ethnic and political tensions awaiting the enlarged Union.

Thirdly, the predominance of the public sector in the cooperation initiatives – a consequence of the long-winded development processes – has an unwelcome side-effect. Without goading from the business community, the initiatives sometimes forget the need for efficiency (NPC/Hainaut, Baltic Sea).

### **2.3 - What are the expected outcomes?**

The regions involved have clear reasons to be satisfied with the crossborder and transnational cooperation initiatives.

The initiatives seem to be efficient strategies to offset the remoteness and peripheral situation handicapping these areas. Along the external borders, they play a significant role in the rapid acquisition of modern management and public administration methods in regions belonging to the candidate countries. The advice relating to "indigenous development" given by their neighbours from the Burgenland has undoubtedly helped the Hungarian authorities make certain strategic choices with respect to rural development and the environment. In another context, Belgium is benefiting from transfers of experience in the field of urban planning under the NPC/Hainaut exercise.

Cooperation can also lead to the creation of a neutral forum for discussion, thus making it possible to put sensitive working issues on policy agendas – even though these issues would be regarded as taboo or disturbing in other contexts (racism, combating the social exclusion of the Roma, the status of language minorities, etc.). Cooperation also allows a number of issues to be dealt with directly, by persons who are familiar with them and who have to confront them on a daily basis. It further offers a forum for associations whose position, alone on either side of the border, is fragile. In this respect, we can consider that crossborder cooperation is a good means of strengthening and enriching local democracy<sup>5</sup>.

In the economic and social sphere, we are witnessing, as part of the same movement, the creation of new development poles thanks to the increasing permeability of borders. Regions and businesses are systematically exploiting their complementary features, in line with their respective strong points, in the economic sphere (tourism in the case of West Pannonia and the Sea Alps, industry for Egrensis and NPC/Hainaut), and in the social sphere (more or less skilled labour and demographical differences in West Pannonia, the Baltic Sea and Egrensis). They are capitalising on local multiplier effects to achieve economies of scale in joint investment projects, in particular in the field of research and training. Differences thus become a source of creativity and development.

The five case studies therefore present an image of fragmentation rather than harmonious development with respect to European integration – an image which quite closely reflects the analyses of economists and geographical experts on "spatial fractalisation". In these circumstances, crossborder cooperation offers a real opportunity for the Union to make a significant qualitative leap, by demonstrating the added value it can contribute. As regards European governance, it is interesting to note that the benefits of local cooperation tend to

---

<sup>5</sup> Karl-Heinz Klär: *"Such cooperation epitomises the European culture of democracy and the Union's commitment to becoming a power that will not be seen as hegemonic by its neighbours."* (Conference of the Committee of the Regions on trans-European cooperation, Maastricht, 13 and 14 September 2001)

appear in "sensitive" areas relating to the division of Community powers and the subsidiarity principle, such as the internal institutional organisation of the regions and the acquisition of management capability<sup>6</sup>. These advances are all the more important since border issues, if not properly dealt with, could result in a worsening of disparities in restricted areas, in terms of the division of tasks (one side becoming a "dormitory region" and the other a "working region") and the distribution of wealth.

### **3 – Support instruments for crossborder and transnational cooperation**

#### **3.1 - INTERREG's apparent contradictions**

The INTERREG Community initiative, the EU's main instrument to support crossborder and transnational cooperation, has seen its financial resources increase substantially in the past ten years. However, the initiative falls far short of satisfying its beneficiaries.

It notably presents a number of contradictions. We can outline them briefly as follows: the business community is conspicuously absent from crossborder cooperation, yet INTERREG's purpose, as a Structural Fund initiative, is precisely economic and social development. The programme evaluations appear to indicate that cooperation is marking time, yet all regions wish the initiative to be continued. Although each border has its own specific characteristics, networking allows border regions to help each other and share experience. However, this is not properly encouraged by the Commission. The fact that advances in cooperation are not always matched by improvements in the administrative and regional organisation of the Member States sometimes results in new obstacles and regional standards being created instead of differences being reduced. INTERREG acts as a catalyst, but its unwieldy procedures (such as the systematic programming requirements and the multiple accounting checks) discourage even the most dynamic project promoters. Although it has been running for over ten years, INTERREG has not led to the adjustment of legal instruments and financial circuits required to implement genuine crossborder measures rather than just accumulate projects on either side of the border.

The main cause of these contradictions is the mismatch between the objectives assigned to crossborder or transnational cooperation and the instrument established under the Structural Funds. INTERREG cannot be regarded only as a financing resource for small-scale amenities or operations on either side of the border, without overall vision and a common understanding of the complementarities and differences to be exploited within a joint area. It is an ambiguous and complex instrument, and a very atypical member of the "family" of Community initiatives in so far as it relies on bilateral relations, without having a suitable legal framework to draw on.

Some bottlenecks are expected to be removed shortly, in particular thanks to better coordination of the regulations applied to the PHARE and INTERREG programmes and to the creation of single management and payment authorities for all joint programmes and secretariats. However, these adjustments involve only the management frameworks, not the project promoters.

---

<sup>6</sup> Jurgen Rötters: *"Europe is taking shape along its borders; they are areas of experimentation and testing grounds for the future united Europe."* (Conference of the Committee of the Regions on trans-European cooperation, held in Maastricht on 13 and 14 September 2001)

### **3.2 - Proposals for an integrated policy in favour of border regions**

The response to the needs of border regions cannot be left to chance. It calls for a range of new instruments adapted to the economic, social and political challenges involved. It is probably no exaggeration to say that a new integrated policy is required.

First of all, the adjustment of legal provisions to facilitate crossborder and transnational cooperation should not depend solely on local players (who often do not have the necessary powers in this field), or on the exchange of good practice. The task requires a clear definition of priorities and due consideration of the problems involved at the highest Community level, in particular as regards border controls and the status of minority groups. It also entails identifying satisfactory legal instruments for cooperation and management. The proposals of the White Paper on European Governance relating to management agencies, along with the suggestions on "European cooperation areas" and the clarification of the rules governing EEIGs which the AEBR (Association of European Border Regions) has submitted to the Committee of the Regions, form a good basis for reform (see Bibliography).

However, in operational terms and to overcome certain contradictions inherent to INTERREG, we must envisage the development of a specific instrument able to generate the necessary momentum and innovation along all of the EU's borders. This instrument, which would not necessarily draw on the financial appropriation and rationale of the Structural Funds, could take the form of multiannual (3-year) calls for Community projects in each of the following areas:

- the economy, competitiveness and innovation
- public management and administration
- civil society and culture
- the organisation of everyday life and public services (housing, health, security, education, etc.)
- the labour market (employment and training) and migration
- the environment and urban planning

The projects supported would have to be "mainstreamed" after two years, either within the regional or national authorities, or within the private sector. The financial assistance would cover up to 50% or 75% of their costs, depending on the status of the border. The main criterion would not be the Structural Fund zoning system but the recent nature of the cooperation. The programme should provide for genuine "testing ground" follow-up at European level (coordination, evaluation and technical assistance), and should impose requirements relating to innovation and the dissemination of experience. Simple financial rules should be established, providing for a close follow-up of financial flows by the Commission to avoid any delay in disbursements.

### **Conclusion**

The EU's borders should be regarded as areas which can provide valuable information on how to manage difference on a daily basis and achieve negotiated solutions, rather than as problem spots. That is why the border question should not be dealt with in the same way as more standard interregional issues, and does not fit into the exclusive rationale of structural assistance. It calls for a new, integrated Community policy, which should provide for the creation of an instrument for effective financial governance rather than just regional planning.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AEBR (Association of European border Regions) (2001), 'Final draft of the study on Trans-European co-operation' (Comité des régions, Maastricht, septembre 2001)
- Anderson J. et O'Dowd L. (1999), 'Borders, border regions and territoriality: contradictory meanings, changing significance' (Regional Studies Association vol.33.7)
- Anderson J. (2001) 'Theorizing State borders : politics/economics and democracy in capitalism' (Belfast, Centre for International Borders Research Working papers)
- Association of European Border regions – AEBR (2001), *Trans-European co-operation*, Extracts from the final draft of the study to the Committee of the Regions (Maastricht conference, 2001)
- Christiansen Th. et Jørgensen K-E. (2000), 'Transnational governance 'above' and 'below' the State : the changing nature of borders in the New Europe' (Regional & Federal Studies vol.10 n.2)
- Commission européenne, *Schéma de Développement de l'Espace Communautaire, Vers un développement spatial équitable et durable du territoire de l'UE* (Postdam, mai 1999)
- Commission européenne, *Initiative communautaire INTERREG II 1994-99, un premier bilan* (janvier 2000)
- Commission européenne, *Orientations pour l'Initiative communautaire INTERREG 2000-2006* (Communication de la Commission, COM 1101/2000, 28 avril 2000)
- Commission européenne, *Evaluation ex ante et indicateurs pour INTERREG volets A et B*, Nouvelle période de programmation 2000-2006 (Document de travail méthodologique n°7, 2000)
- Commission européenne, *Unité de l'Europe, solidarité des peuples, diversité des territoires*, Deuxième rapport sur la cohésion économique et sociale (février 2001)
- Commission européenne, *Coopération interrégionale volet C INTERREG III* (Communication de la Commission, COM 1188/2001, 15 mai 2001)
- Commission européenne, *Impact de l'élargissement dans les régions limitrophes des pays candidats* (Communication de la Commission, juillet 2001)
- Commission européenne, *Livre blanc sur la gouvernance européenne* (Communication de la Commission, COM 428/2001, 25 juillet 2001)
- Kolher-Koch (1996), 'The strength of weakness, the transformation of governance in the EU' in *The future of the Nation-State : essays on culturalism pluralism and political integration* (London, Routledge)
- Loughlin J. (2000), 'Regional autonomy and state paradigm shifts in Western Europe' (Regional & Federal Studies vol.10 n.2)
- Marks G. (1992), 'Structural policy in the EU' in *Euro-politics : Institutions and policy-making in the « new » European Community* (Washington D.C., The Brookings institution)
- Magris Cl. (2000), *Utopie et désenchantement* (Paris, Editions de l'Arpenteur)
- O'Dowd L. (1998), 'Negotiating State borders : a new sociology for a new Europe ?' Inaugural lecture (Belfast, Centre for International Borders Research)
- Scott J. W. (2001), 'Transnational regionalism as paradigm and political reality: consequences for comparative research and co-operation praxis' (to be published in the Northern European and Baltic Integration Year book)
- Scharpf Fr. (2000), *Gouverner l'Europe* (Paris, Presses de Sciences Po)
- White S., Alden J. et Jones M. T. (2000), 'Peripheral regions of the EU : strengths, weaknesses and policy priorities' in *EU regional policy : Progress, problems and prospects* (Aix-en-Provence, Regional Studies Association annual conference papers)

## **COMMON ANALYSIS GRID**

### **1 - Brief presentation of the area, socio-economic and administrative situation, main features of the cooperation**

### **2 – Has cooperation paved the way for new methods of public policy administration at regional (sub-regional or local) level? Who are the main actors in the process of change?**

- Working methods inside and outside the public sphere, functional organisation in the regional (sub-regional or local) bodies, project management, change of political priorities, expression of the political and economic interests in the co-operation, networking, partnership, involvement of the civil society, emergence of new local and regional players
- At what level does it happen (regional level, sub-regional level, municipal level)?
- What do these change owe to the cross-border (or transnational) co-operation ?

### **3 - What has been the qualitative impact of the strategic co-operation in the region? What practical improvements have been achieved?**

- culture (linguistic and ethnic minorities, education, emergence of a regional identity, ...)
- social issues (reduction of social disparities, flexibility of the labour market, quality of life in general ...),
- economy (innovation potential, companies' dynamism, business networking and co-operation with the universities ...),
- policy making (democracy, peace, political life).
- new issues put on the agenda (environment, equal opportunity, urban planning, fight against crime, ...)

### **4 - What is the external impact of this cooperation?**

- improvement of the relations with other regions (that are not members of the co-operation project),
- changing relationship with the central authorities (national priorities influenced, increased autonomy, ...)
- spill-over effects on the neighbouring areas (attractiveness, competition, widening co-operation...)
- What (geography, politics, social capital, institutions) may explain these results?



## **TRANSBOUNDARY CO-OPERATION IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION**

James Wesley Scott  
Free University of Berlin, Geography Department

### **1 - Introduction: a Baltic Sea Region under construction**

The Baltic Sea Region (BSR) is a European macro region that comprises 11 states in Scandinavia and Central and Eastern Europe<sup>7</sup> and represents an emerging zone of post-Cold War interregional co-operation. It is an area bound together by a common, endangered waterway and natural resource, the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Rim is a highly heterogeneous European macroregion, spanning West and East, Scandinavia and the European Union and "uniting" the advanced industrial democracies of Germany and Scandinavia with the post-socialist societies and economies of Poland, Belarus, the Baltic States and Russia. This constellation is at once asymmetric and asynchronous; in present day European advanced industrial nations and civil societies coexist with unstable and often autocratic regimes that preside over fragile economies. Poland, an associated member of the EU and well on the way to re-establishing a civil society, contrasts starkly with the often chaotic systemic transformation underway in Belarus and Russia. In the case of Russia and Russian minorities living in the Baltic Republics, for example, territorial nationalism and ethnic minority conflicts have again come to the fore.

At the same time, socio-economic indicators vary widely with living standards decreasing as one moves from West to East. Equally, the quality of infrastructure (roads, railways, telecommunications, water treatment, etc.) varies greatly among the countries of the Baltic Sea Region with surface communications and port facilities in the former Soviet republics being the most deficient. As such, the problem of administrative mismatches and disparities in financial resources promises to dog the implementation of international environmental measures. Regional and local governments in Poland and the other post-socialist countries do not enjoy the same executive powers as do those in Germany, Denmark and Finland. Nor are they endowed with large operating budgets with which to participate in interregional co-operation projects. Indeed, most local governments in post-socialist states are forced to maintain a crisis management of sorts - allocating resources exclusively to local problems that require immediate solution. This basic imbalance in resources makes it difficult to forge partnerships based on equality and reciprocity.

Nevertheless, the rapid development of multilateral co-operation in the BSR in the last decade, on the other hand, has been remarkable. Since 1990, attempts to reverse the alarming environmental deterioration of the Baltic, as well as to re-establish normal working relationships between governments of East and West, have provided the rationale for co-operation. The increasing multidimensionality in the means and ways international relations are being conducted has prompted Scandinavian observers to speak of a "New Regionalism" that implies the evolution of a self-defined community of interest that encourages open debate in the solution of complex regional problems (Joeniemmi 1996). It is thus an approach to interregional co-operation that contrasts starkly with centralist, statist and narrowly defined, security-obsessed attitudes that stress the primacy of national sovereignty and, until recently, of regional hegemony. A major step in creating institutions of Baltic Region co-operation in spatial planning and environmental protection was taken in March 1992 at a "summit" of foreign ministers of the so-called Baltic Rim states. On this occasion, a Council of Baltic Sea

---

<sup>7</sup> Going from East to West these are: Norway, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Poland, Belarus, Kaliningrad (Russia), Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland and the Karelian and Russia (St. Petersburg and Karelian Districts).

States (CBSS) was formally established. The Council's agenda includes the promotion of new democratic institutions, as well as interregional co-operation in economic, technological, humanitarian, scientific, cultural and spatial development matters. As Joeniemmi (1999) has pointed out, security issues were deliberately excluded from the Council's activities in order to emphasise *functional* international co-operation and the strengthening of institutions of a democratic civil society. In addition to the Baltic Rim states, the European Union also maintains a seat in the Council.

Besides the CBSS, a plethora of *Baltic* organisations have either been newly established or expanded that also fit the New Regionalist mould, among them the Helsinki Commission (for the protection of the marine environment), the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association and the Union of Baltic Cities. Presently, dozens of initiatives involving cities, regions, chambers of commerce, universities, national governments, NGOs and other actors are either underway or in preparation. Evidence of the transnationalisation of the Baltic Sea Region can be found in the rather recent networking of existing institutions and in the emergence of transnational actors, all engaged in furthering co-operation region-wide. A recent Swedish survey has established a list of almost 600 Baltic Sea actors with the capacity or purpose to operate across borders.<sup>8</sup>

This “hybrid” character of Baltic Sea regionalism, mixing formal and informal avenues of co-operation, is manifested by at least five basic organising principles of transnational co-operation. These are briefly described below and include:

- a) the creation of intergovernmental institutions that provide a forum for state representatives and state agencies to discuss various co-operation issues,
- b) interorganisational forums and NGO networks organised around specific issues,
- c) the existence of EU policies and programmes that encourage interstate co-operation at all levels and that provide project incentives,
- d) global regional development concepts such as VASAB 2010,
- e) local projects and initiatives.

## **2 - The role of European structural initiatives: INTERREG IIC for the Baltic Sea Region**

With the accession of Finland and Sweden to the EU and the enlargement process that will gradually bring in Poland and the Baltic States (as well as Norway?), the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) has become a central geopolitical focus of the EU. As such, since 1995 EU programmes have assumed a much more active role in determining institutional conditions for the development of transnational co-operation in the BSR.

---

<sup>8</sup> See the on-line forum, Ballad, at <http://www.ballad.org/actors>

**Table 1: Structure and Objectives of the INTERREG IIC Initiative for the Baltic Sea Region**

<b>INTERREG IIC Programme</b>	
<b>Overall Objectives</b>	<p>Strengthening the development potential of the BSR</p> <p>Increasing economic and social cohesion</p> <p>Ensuring sustainable development for the region as a whole</p> <p>Promoting a territorial balance by supporting weak points and building on strong points</p>
<b>Main specific Objectives (VASAB)</b>	<p>I. BSR as an integrated partner in European and global society</p> <p>II. Territorial balance between different parts of the region</p> <p>III. Polycentric urban system and settlement structure (7 main specific objectives here)</p> <p>IV. Transport, communication and energy networks link cities and rural areas (9 main specific objectives here)</p> <p>V. Specific areas – development and preservation (4 main specific objectives here)</p>
<b>Priorities, Measures and Sub-Measures</b>	<p>1. Promotion of sustainable development measures in the BSR</p> <p>1.1. Promoting a Baltic urban system and a balanced settlement structure (8 activities eligible for support)</p> <p>1.2. Improving communications and promoting energy solutions as part of sustainable regional development</p> <p>1.2.1. Improving transport infrastructure and modernising transport operations (8 activities eligible for support)</p> <p>1.2.2. Expanding telecommunications capacity (3 activities eligible for support)</p> <p>1.2.3. Promoting energy solutions to support spatial development (4 activities eligible for support)</p> <p>1.3. Promoting integrated management and sustainable development for coastal zones, islands and other specific areas (3 activities eligible for support)</p> <p>2. Promoting a spatial development approach in the BSR</p> <p>2.1. Further development of spatial planning strategies and exchange of experience in the field of spatial planning (7 activities eligible for support)</p> <p>2.2. Management of spatial planning relations in particular for natural and cultural heritage and tourism development (6 activities eligible for support)</p> <p>3. Technical assistance</p>

This study focuses on the European programme for transnational co-operation in planning and regional development, INTERREG IIC, as it has been implemented in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). Local level co-operation financed by INTERREG IIA, and presently under INTERREG IIIA, is one aspect of cross-border projects developing under EU auspices in the BSR. However, within the macroregional context of the Baltic Sea Region, perhaps one of the more “cohesive” in terms of geographic identity, transnational planning remains a central and strategically important feature of cross-border co-operation. The primary objectives of INTERREG IIC-BSR, enumerated in Table 1, support the more general goals of sustainability

cohesion, balanced (polycentral) growth and competitiveness promulgated by EU regional development and planning policies.

As a pilot phase in the development of a European transnational spatial co-operation forum, INTERREG IIC proved exceedingly popular and attracted a total of 120 project proposals, 45 of which were accepted. In total an amount of 45 Million Euros were devoted to INTERREG IIC-BSR for the period 1998-2000. The next phase in the programme INTERREG IIIB-BSR is now well underway and will continue to 2006.

The heterogeneity of the Baltic Region situation suggests that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to directly transfer policy models of transboundary and interregional co-operation, such as those developed within the EU, to this part of Europe. INTERREG IIC thus emphasised the necessity to promote flexible networks based on partnership and project-oriented co-operation. With this in mind, a short assessment of INTERREG IIC as it has been designed and implemented for the Baltic Sea Region follows; the analysis has been synthesised from reports and evaluations produced by the author as well as by the INTERREG IIIB Secretariat, and other sources.<sup>9</sup>

### **3 - Two representative case studies of region-building through INTERREG IIC-BSR**

Because of a symbolic character representative of Baltic regional co-operation, two projects funded through the EU structural initiative INTERREG IIC are worthy of discussion.

The “Baltic Bridge” project refers to a regional and urban planning forum involving German, Polish and Swedish regions. The Baltic subregion defined by “Baltic Bridge” is situated in a transitional area between the advanced Western European economies (Denmark, Germany and Sweden to the West and to the North) and the Central European countries in transition (Poland to the East and eastern German regions in a process of rapid structural change). It is also characterised by large areas of protected natural landscapes. This subregion, furthermore, will be increasingly exposed to spatial effects generated by the growth potentials of two major urban agglomerations, the Berlin metropolitan region and the Øresund region with Copenhagen and the Malmö-Lund conurbation. Major transeuropean transportation axes that connect these nodes of international transaction traverse the “Baltic Bridge” area. Hence, this trilateral space faces the need for solutions to the very problems identified by the VASAB 2010 document in 1994. Participants in the project, which was formally initiated in 1998, are representatives of planning authorities in North-eastern Germany, North-western Poland and Southern Sweden. The “lead partner” is the Joint Planning Office of Berlin-Brandenburg. As with many other INTERREG IIC projects for the BSR, Baltic Bridge integrates in an informal and non-bureaucratic manner Euroregions, existing urban networks and state agencies in defining context-sensitive regional development strategies.

The principal rationales motivating involvement in the project are both political and geographical. While state agencies see for themselves an enhanced role as mediators between national and European institutions, cities seek to avoid marginalisation within an intensifying interregional competition. Szczecin, a major Polish city and an important Baltic port, has been frustrated by Warsaw’s refusal to support the improvement of its road and rail links to Germany and other Polish cities. Despite its strategic location and a population of over 500,000, Szczecin does not enjoy high priority in Poland’s national development schemes,

---

<sup>9</sup> Other sources include: “Intermediate evaluation of the Baltic Sea INTERREG IIC”, Bradley Dunbar Associates and European Policy Research Centre, University of Strathclyde (Glasgow, Scotland), 1999; “Ex-Ante Evaluation of Baltic Sea INTERREG IIIB programme”, Final report of November 2000, Nordregio Eurofutures (Stockholm: Nordregio).

perhaps due to perceptions that proximity to Berlin will at any rate guarantee the city's prosperity. Sweden's port cities on the Scania coast risk losing importance as transportation centres with the opening of the Øresund Bridge between Sweden and Denmark. Furthermore, the German cities between Berlin and the Polish border area are in every sense of the word peripheral centres. Here, the traumatic impact of rapid job losses in agriculture and industry since unification have not been overcome.

In addition, Baltic Bridge is conceived as a framework for sectoral co-operation initiatives in the South Baltic Sea Region. Together with a joint spatial planning platform it aims to assist planning agencies and actors promote co-operative processes in carrying out further measures in the countries involved. The project comprises four focal points around which activities are organised:

- 1) the creation of a strategic regional management for cross-border co-operation on sustainable spatial development,
- 2) the development of urban networks as a means for a sustainable settlement structure,
- 3) the reinforcement and the improvement of communication and transport systems,
- 4) the development of rural areas and areas with structural weaknesses in accordance with the principle of sustainability.

The four corresponding working groups meet four times a year individually and twice a year as a group. Each of the working groups is responsible for developing projects in their respective areas and locating funding sources. Overall co-ordination of the project has been entrusted to external organisations, the World Trade Centre in Frankfurt (Oder) and a private consulting firms. The project has received funding until the end of 2000. A continuation is planned within the framework of the next INTERREG programming phase (2000-2006).

“Via Baltica”, a further networking project within the INTERREG IIC context, developed directly out of deliberations over the implementation of VASAB in 1994 and 1995. It began as a concept for a development corridor between Tampere, Helsinki, Tallinn and Riga (THTR), thus connecting Finland more directly with the Baltic States of Estonia and Latvia. The THTR Development Zone, as it was known, was inaugurated by the Ministries of the Environment of the three participating countries but with Finnish regional administrations playing a central role. The goal of the pilot project was to establish working relationships between various administrative levels and to specifically train Estonian and Latvian planners in modern management techniques. THTR focused on settlement structures and economic co-operation, mobility and infrastructure issues as well as the environmental and cultural heritage. THTR also pursued the political objective of increasing awareness of the spatial consequences of European integration on the Eastern Baltic and thus to promote strategic, long-term planning (Lass 1998).

THTR has since evolved into a much larger network during discussions over future “Transeuropean Networks” in which a Helsinki-Warsaw route along the Baltic coast (feeding in to the major East-West axis between Paris and Moscow) was identified as a priority infrastructure project. The decision was made by the THTR partners to adopt the so-called Via Baltica as a unifying concept for a long-term project involving Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Germany. Via Baltica was submitted to the INTERREG IIC selection committee for consideration and was approved. Work on the project began in 1998.

In keeping with the principles of VASAB, Via Baltica, as does Baltic Bridge, deals with the development of new contexts for co-operation in spatial planning and regional policy that bring “centre” (Finland, Germany) and “periphery” (Poland and the Baltic States) together and that promote a more open atmosphere of political dialogue in the Baltic Sea Region. Perhaps not unsurprisingly, the major focal points of the project - have evolved around issues

dealing with transportation corridors. Indeed, the larger European situation of Baltic Sea cities and regions, as well as that of Berlin and Brandenburg, clearly demonstrate the importance of diagonal connections not necessarily on the main communications axes between major European centres.<sup>10</sup>

The strategic rationale for Via Baltica is both straightforward and compelling. National transportation strategies, particularly in the case of Poland, are focused on investments in high-speed links to major Europe capitals. Fiscal pressures and the drive for EU membership have driven the Polish government to prioritise the East-West axis (Paris-Berlin-Poznan-Warsaw-Moscow) above all other capital investment projects. The other transportation axis that is favoured is a north-south link between the Baltic port of Gdansk (Danzig) and Warsaw. Hence, as is the case with Szczecin, many Polish regions lying off these main corridors face the prospect of being cut off from future economic development. Indeed, Poland could be split between an easily accessible metropolitan core (Warsaw, Poznan and Gdansk) integrated into the larger European economy and a nationally-oriented periphery. This could have drastic consequences for Northeastern Polish regions centred around Bialystok, especially if transportation links to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, presently in a miserable state, are not greatly improved. Logically, the Baltic States are greatly interested in developing a Baltic corridor that connects their capitals (Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn respectively) with Warsaw and Berlin. Presently, the most important international links of the Baltic States are maritime connections to the Nordic countries. While the Baltic States are vitally interested in a high-speed Via Baltica, that is, a diagonal connection between them and the Berlin region, their limited resources and weak political voice do not provide them much leverage. Finland, perhaps the most influential partner, also welcomes the prospect of improved terrestrial connections through Estonia to the rest of Europe but it is more interested in rapidly integrating the Baltic States politically and economically within a “western” context, particularly given the unstable situation in Russia and Belarus.

In this way Via Baltica unites states, regions and cities that sense a need for action in order to avoid marginalisation within an ever-intensifying competition between European regions. Via Baltica, taking advantage of the European Union’s INTERREG IIC initiative is a proactive measure intended less as a challenge to national policies than as an attempt to elaborate alternative regional perspectives. The project partners have openly stated that the need for informal networking and co-operation in broad political, economic and cultural areas exists above and beyond the immediate objective of modernising transportation corridors. Similarly the project partners have placed considerable weight on emphasising the greater European dimension of Via Baltica and shared values that stem from a common cultural heritage. In this way they hope to convey convincing political arguments be developed that may promote such innovative regional perspectives as the Via Baltica.<sup>11</sup>

## **4 - Analysis**

### **4.1 - Has the co-operation open the way to new ways of delivering public policies at regional (sub-regional or town) level? Who are the actors of the change?**

#### **Positive results:**

- promotion of a more comprehensive and regionalist approach to spatial planning

---

<sup>10</sup> The trajectory Berlin-Riga is presently 1303 rail-kilometres in length and requires a net travel time of 21.5 hours. By way of comparison: the route between Avignon-Berlin, 1585 kilometres apart, can be travelled in 13.5 hours (including transfer time).

<sup>11</sup> See Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning (IRS) (1999): Documentation of the Via Baltica Workshop, 9 December 1999 in Berlin. This document was prepared for the Joint Planning Office of Berlin-Brandenburg by IRS, located in Erkner, Germany, and is available through the author.

- providing a “mirror” for the reflection of local practices within larger spatial development context
- development of strategic partnerships within the BSR

#### Problems:

- Start-up difficulties
- complex overall management system
- lack of focus overall in objectives, priorities and actions
- Additional administrative effort (transaction costs) through new working routines and increased works loads involved in project (network) maintenance
- Incompatibility of funding mechanisms INTERREG /PHARE/TACIS
- “network closure” due to technical and insider nature of network actions and to lack ability to communicate added value of spatial planning to civil society and business groups
- Similarly, lack of popular appeal of the programme due to vague, colourless presentation

#### 4.11 - Positive Results

In the specific case of INTERREG IIC-BSR we are dealing with public policy in the areas of regional development and spatial planning. This programme (as well the current INTERREG IIIB strand) was thus conceived as a preparatory measure for more integrated and responsive development policies within the larger spatial context of the Baltic Sea Region. It was not intended to provide immediate material results in terms of investment or other “products”. Immediate effects in terms of the delivery of public services were also not expected, due to the short period involved. The principal aim of INTERREG IIC (at least in the case of the BSR) was network formation and development.

With a temporal horizon of barely three years it would be unrealistic to expect great rationalisation bonuses from INTERREG IIC-BSR in terms of the functional organisation of public agencies. Little change in formal institutional structures was observable as the public sector participants simply “extended” their own departmental concerns and responsibilities into the transnational networks. The main achievement of INTERREG IIC-BSR in the context of policy delivery was the promotion of more differentiated and spatially and sectorally comprehensive approaches to spatial planning. The programme was understood as an opportunity structure that allowed regional planning agencies to invite local governments and specific public/private/non-profit organisations to participate in a process of “pre-policy-formation” that, at the same time, was very much project-oriented. As a result of the establishment of “pre-policy-networks”, numerous regional planning and development strategies were defined that could, in future, provide the basis for concrete action and investment. The programme also achieved shifts in departmental focus in terms of a “Europeanisation” of regional development and spatial planning policies. In the case of the German Länder of Berlin and Brandenburg, for example, much effort was put into developing a Europeanisation strategy as part of its regular regional planning tasks, taking advantage of both INTERREG IIC and IIA strands.

Participants in the 45 project emphasised that the experience of working within an international network of experts with similar concerns helped put local practices into clearer – and critical – perspective. In this way, planning authorities reflected upon their own approaches and priorities and were more able to assess problems in implementing planning guidelines.

Principal actors of change were representatives of public agencies, often at the state level, and depending on the specific network context, regional and local government representatives. As INTERREG IIC-BSR was designed as a public policy instrument, this was to be expected.

#### 4.12 - Problems

In terms of improved management in the area of spatial planning, the results have been less positive. Indeed, INTERREG IIC generated high transaction costs through bureaucratic regulations, a lack of flexibility and a focus on procedure rather than the process. As is the case with all projects operating on the EU's external boundaries, the co-financing the participation of project partners from non-Member States remains very problematic. This problem is unlikely to be solved within the region and a decisive move must be made by the EU to finally make the structural initiatives compatible with pre-accession instruments (PHARE and TACIS-CBC).

Furthermore, the INTERREG IIC-BSR Programme has been characterised by a lack of true focus, operating as a container for than an integrator of diverse spatial concepts and projects. This, as indicated by a survey of its overall objectives, specific objectives, priorities, measures and sub-measures show. Instead of proceeding methodically by translating general objectives into areas of concrete action, the focus became increasingly diluted due to a very "situational" submission and acceptance of project proposals (Nordregio 2001). As a result a rather incoherent mix of projects were financed, that while variegated, did not result in desired synergy effects. Among the projects eventually supported were: feasibility and other pre-investment studies, information exchanges, strategy formulation in various sectors, marketing strategies, plans based on development corridor logistics, geographic information systems, planning manuals/handbooks, etc.

As a result, INTERREG IIC-BSR remained rather vague and without clear orientation above and beyond the programme's statements that accompanied the programme (in the estimation of Nordregio (2001, p. ): "It is recommended that any successor programme of this scale should be focused on a more limited number of clearer objectives in order to achieve a higher impact, with target measures where successful projects would make a discernible difference"). A further problem was that resources were much too limited compared to the large number of project and ambitious objectives pursued. Thus there existed a real risk of spreading resources too thin. Another problem was one of poor marketing of the programme itself. Lacklustre documents and feeble attempts at publicising the initiative ("selling the political message of regional co-operation") were criticised.

In addition, the INTERREG Programme for the Baltic Sea Regions was co-ordinated by two secretariats, reflecting a political compromise between Germany (a relative newcomer to Baltic sea co-operation) and the Scandinavian countries (who see themselves as veterans of regionalism in the Baltic), but complicating the management of the programme. The setting up of separate offices in Rostock (Germany) and Karlskrona (Sweden) signified additional transaction costs with an uneconomic division of labour and problems in maintaining communications between programme co-ordinators and project groups. Lack of clarity regarding the division of tasks between the two secretariats has been criticised as well.

Additionally, considerable procedural problems arose documenting the project activities for the European Commission. Here, the EU applies rigorous conditions for the release of project funds, including the periodic compilation of detailed reports and highly complex accounting procedures. The EU also demands more or less strict adherence to project goals defined in initial proposals submitted for consideration. Should substantive changes in focus take place in the course of practical co-operation, the EU can threaten or cancel financial support. These organisational aspects have proven unexpectedly cumbersome and have been the source of much frustration for the lead partners. The EU's "benchmarking" methods in monitoring progress were based on the identification of concrete inputs and results which proved exceedingly contradictory, given that this first phase of INTERREG IIC was intended as a



preparatory phase and learning process. As a result, the most important aspect of the programme, namely network development through trial and error, was only belatedly recognised by the EU Commission as a valid output.

This lack of flexibility as project priorities shifted was a particular problem, for example, for the German states of Berlin and Brandenburg, where administrative burdens associated with project management and/or participation generated high transaction costs for the understaffed planning agencies, calling into question in some quarters the overall utility of the project. Indeed, as the lead partners themselves have admitted, the project “Baltic Bridge” (number 10 on the project list) most likely would have been abandoned based on a short-term cost-benefit analysis.

It should be perhaps mentioned that, although INTERREG IIC-BSR provided a clear incentive to network formation and development, limitation of networking as a region-building process also became evident. Most of the projects were, in fact, rather closed networks of “elites” interacting according to specific objectives. Public agencies clearly dominated and input from NGOs, business-oriented actors, etc. was relatively minor. While project activities were generally publicised (e.g. websites) there was also little public “outreach” in terms of involving a larger audience in the discussion of project goals and the future of strategic co-operation.

#### 4.13 - What do these changes owe to the cross-border (or transnational) co-operation? What is the result of the evolution of the overall economic and political context?

INTERREG IIC-BSR and its impact must be interpreted within the overall context of post-Cold War “Regionalism” within the Baltic Rim. The INTERREG IIC-BSR programme has both profited from and contributed to more intensive transnational co-operation but it is the overall geopolitical context of EU enlargement and Nordic/Baltic regional identity-formation that is providing co-operation impetus. Interestingly, economic activity is resulting different in patterns of interaction. Trade within the BSR has increased generally and dramatically since 1990 but is often bilaterally or multilaterally focused within groups of countries (Estonia with Finland and Germany, Sweden with Poland and Germany) and certain countries have very little economic interaction (Poland with the Baltic States). INTERREG IIC-BSR was thus able to strengthen spatial planning partnerships in situations where economic logic might have not encouraged it.

#### **4.2 - What have been the qualitative effects of the strategic co-operation in the region? What are the concrete improvements?**

##### Positive results:

- Exchange of experience, methods and technologies seen as successful and beneficial
- Clearer articulation of regional development concerns with a larger Baltic and European development context, including recognition of need for lobbying
- illustrated attempt to integrate various spatial planning concerns within more comprehensive conceptualisations of development corridors
- emphasised importance of sustainability issues (common natural heritage), tourism, and cultural elements in defining a “regionalising” planning process

##### Problems:

- limited focus on economic and business development per se as projects were overwhelmingly dominated by public administration and their direct planning concerns
- projects suffered from a lack of local visibility: “closed” networks in the sense that they were focused on fulfilling “contractual obligations”

- Partnership approach not always satisfactory (imbalances in terms of openness, exchange of information)

#### 4.21 - Positive results

All in all, exchanges of information within the networks and efforts to ensure continuity and a sense of purpose were perhaps the most tangible results in terms of network development and stabilisation.

In terms of regionally localisable effects, the programme promoted a refocusing of local and regional priorities within a larger spatial context. Spatial planners and other actors active in regional development have been encouraged to transcend narrower nationally-oriented perspectives and local patriotisms and comprehend spatial development potentials in both Baltic and wider European terms. One of the catalysts of this widening of planning perspectives has been the exchange of information and planning methods that many of projects including among their activities. The transfer of knowledge in the management of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), SWOT analyses and other planning methods were particularly welcomed by the partner regions in Poland and the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania).

As a result of project experiences, lobbying has been understood by regional and local level actors to be absolutely vital in order to promote co-operation goals. It became clear in many cases (and Via Baltica was a good example) that spatial planning cannot be understood as a purely administrative task but is inherently political. Representatives of regions dealing with problems associated with peripherality realised that only through the production of convincing political arguments and lobbying could they avoid further marginalisation within future European development scenarios. Consequently, the networks that were established with programme support provide strategic partnerships for public agencies attempting to develop alternative strategies to nationally oriented planning and TEN-centred development corridors.<sup>12</sup>

A further locally relevant result appears to have been a development of planning practice regarding both a comprehensive scope and a “holistic” approach to planning where, for example, cultural and environmental factors are perceived as essential to balanced economic development. Urban development, transportation, logistics, tourism, and urban network were thus dealt with in a focused manner but integrated within more general spatial planning concerns. This resulted in more comprehensive conceptualisations of development corridors (TEM-TER) and their possible impacts on the BSR.

#### 4.22 - Problems

In terms of problems with locally or regionally perceptible “outputs”, INTERREG IIC-BSR is rather difficult to assess. Generally, budgets were very limited and very few, if any, investments were permitted. Given that the programme was a preparatory exercise in the development of strategies to guide future investment there appeared to be a surprisingly limited focus on economic and business development per se. Projects were overwhelmingly dominated by public administration and their direct planning concerns while co-operation

---

<sup>12</sup> For example, the Via Baltica steering committee warned, that in order to effectively lobby, the regions must be able to set priorities and concentrate on a few key areas. One region arguing and working alone or the simultaneous promotion of too many objectives will not be able to influence policy (IRS 1999). Via Baltica's activities have been focused on the constitution of a cohesive network and identifying all partners in order to close “gaps” within the Berlin-Baltic trajectory but has yet to develop a cohesive strategy with which to achieve its political goals. It remains to be seen if Via Baltica succeeds in putting its Baltic development and transportation corridor in the political agendas of the EU and respective nation-states.

with private-sector actors within the networks (largely consultancies specialised in specific technical issues) was unproblematic. However, the strategic elements of planning with clear economic development impacts were not discussed in detail with economic actors, either public or private, with the contexts of local/regional fora.

This problem is also related to other programme weaknesses reported by evaluators: Projects suffered from a lack of local visibility and appeared to be “closed” networks in the sense that that project partners were focused on fulfilling “contractual obligations” (goals stated in the proposals submitted to the EU) rather than reaching out to other actors in their regions.

Finally, the partnership relationships that developed within the projects were not always satisfactory. Despite the fact that co-operation was generally unbureaucratic there were imbalances in terms of openness and exchange of information. Oftentimes this was caused by more intensive interaction between key players (who either enjoyed better mutual understanding and rapport or understood the issues in similar ways) than with other project partners. Complaints about a lack of sincerity and application on the part of partners from Poland and the Baltic States (where the material incentives to participate were much smaller) were also raised. In certain cases the political weight of the project partners was highly asymmetric; in the case of Berlin-Brandenburg’s participation (it was involved in 6 INTERREG-IIC-BSR projects) the ministries of two German states (Länder) co-operated with much “weaker” local and regional authorities in Poland, Sweden, and Finland. This was not necessarily a bad thing; much of the rationale behind establishing interorganisational networks is the breaking down of hierarchical and administrative barriers to communication. In this early stage of co-operation, however, it was inevitable that a certain hierarchisation would take place.

#### 4.23 - Are these results long-lasting?

This question cannot be answered here. It remains to be seen if the partnerships stabilise and continue to act as vehicles for information and technology transfer and strategy-building.

### **4.3 - What is the external impact of this co-operation?**

#### Positive results:

- successful integration of planning paradigms contribute to regionalisation
- consensus on sustainability despite fierce economic competition
- networks seen as catalysts for development in the regions
- development of strategic partnerships within the BSR

#### Problems:

- low level of coherence between individual projects
- regional fragmentation due to incompatibility of funding mechanisms

#### **4.31 - Positive Results**

In reviewing the 45 projects funded through INTERREG IIC-BSR, we can say that it has been highly successful in creating horizontal networks across jurisdictional (national) and sectoral boundaries. While network partners were largely from the public sector, the development of semi-formal working groups operating unbureaucratically was a widely achieved goal. Thus despite its short time period, INTERREG IIC-BSR had notable “regionalising” effects. These were possible because of the guaranteed continuity of the programme within the following funding period (2000-2006) and the successful integration of INTERREG IIC with the “bottom-up” planning framework emerging out of the VASAB process. The INTERREG IIC programme for the Baltic Sea Region, which formally got underway at the beginning of 1998, was carefully designed to draw upon co-operation mechanisms in spatial planning that had

previously been established within the BSR. The planning document VASAB 2010 (Visions and Strategies Around the Baltic Sea), agreed by the Baltic Council of Ministers in 1994, served as a foundation. As a result, INTERREG IIC for the BSR was successfully integrated into established Nordic and Baltic co-operation structures for the following reasons: 1) the initiative could depart from a previously defined development vision that had elicited political consensus from the involved countries and 2) the initiative received strong political backing from regional organisations (Nordic Council, Council of Baltic Sea States, Baltic Institute) and national governments (especially Denmark, Sweden and Finland). Synergy effects between INTERREG IIC and VASAB have contributed to more effective definitions of further spatial planning initiatives for the Baltic Sea Region and are being incorporated into the management of the next phase of the programme (INTERREG IIIB).

Furthermore, consensus as to the importance of sustainability issues (common natural heritage), tourism, and cultural elements served to establish (at least during this pilot phase) defining a “regionalising” planning process. This was achieved despite the fierce economic competition between states and regions in the BSR for commanding positions within the emerging European space.

An additional positive result of the programme was the generally favourable response that the network approach to planning co-operation received: because of their ability to focus on specific issues and bring practitioners and policy-makers together, networks were seen as possible catalysts for development in the regions. In fact, many of the networks established during the first phase of the programme are to be continued during the 2000-2006 programming period so that with time, several strategic partnerships between regions might develop.

#### 4.32 - Problems

The most critical drawback of the programme, and one addressed in different parts of this short report, has been a countervailing element of regional fragmentation. This was evident both in a low level of coherence between individual projects and in the incompatibility of funding mechanisms between “East” and “West”.

INTERREG IIC-BSR was heavily criticised by failing to take advantage of the possible synergy effects available by interlinking projects and/or systematising the co-operation objectives to assure projects would complement each other. Instead, a “mixed-bag” of projects resulted that pursued a wide variety of objectives. This lack of linkages between the projects could not be counterbalanced by the twin secretariats in Rostock and Karlskrona, who attempted to put the most favourable “regional” gloss on the programme. However, it must also be mentioned that in this first phase a great deal of experimentation and “learning by doing” was to be expected and that the lack of coherence in the BSR programme has been addressed within the scope of the INTERREG IIIB

Ironically, European involvement is dividing the region according to degrees of affiliation with the EU (e.g. member states, associated states and the CIS) (Tonra and Christiansen 1998). It seems quite clear that financial restrictions as well as complex procedural requirements tend to highlight and perhaps exacerbate asymmetries between unequal partners, that is between EU member states, associated states and the long-term “non-EU”, in the BSR. In certain cases involving co-operation with Poland and the Baltic States, partnership was complicated by ‘diplomatic’ protocol and a lack of continuity in the persons representing the respective partner institutions.

The experiences of the two INTERREG networks discussed above, for example, are quite illustrative of the contradictory role of European opportunity structures for regional co-

operation. In the cases of Via Baltica and Baltic Bridge, problems were encountered in financing the project out of EU funds, as INTERREG and PHARE are destined to different groups of states (that is, EU member and non-member countries) funds taken from these two initiatives can not be combined to jointly fund co-operative projects. The Via Baltic project partners discovered to their chagrin the local PHARE offices in the Baltic states, responsible for co-ordinating EU development aid have also tended to be nationally oriented and much less open to assisting transnational co-operation (Lass 1998).

Nordegio, in its ex-ante evaluation of INTERREG IIIB (2000), has voiced the expectation that the next phase of the initiative, with a time period of six years, will be able to result in more concrete benefits to the programme area, above all by concentrating the potential inherent in the transnational strand of INTERREG IIIB through clearer management structures, more context-sensitive indicators and a stronger political focus both in marketing the project activities as well as orienting work towards decision-making and producing political agreements with concrete results.

#### 4.33 - What (geography, politics, social capital, institutions) may explain these results ?

Again the specific co-operation context developing in the BSR has been conducive to networking and has provided a coherent spatial context within which the programme could unfold (see the first section of this report). Powerful political institutions at national (Danish, Swedish, Finnish ministries) and the subnational levels (public agencies of the Länder of Berlin, Brandenburg, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Schleswig-Holstein) with a clear stake in improving conditions of sustainability and economic development in the BSR were instrumental in developing projects and encouraging the creation of networks. Thus, the BSR enjoyed a clear advantage over other macroregions designated as INTERREG IIC programme areas (CADSES, Atlantic Arc, etc) where the geopolitical context appeared rather contrived.

## REFERENCES

ARL-Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung (2001) Regional Planning and Development around the Baltic Sea, Series: Arbeitsmaterial No. 273, Hannover:ARL.

Baltic Institute (1994) Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010: Towards a Framework for Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region, Karlskrona (Sweden): The Baltic Institute.

Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC) (2000a), *Baltic Sea Cooperation Beyond 2000. Visions and Strategies on the Local and Regional Level*. Copenhagen:BSSSC.

Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC) (2000b), *Quality of Life. A Subregional Contribution to the Implementation of the Northern Dimension*. Copenhagen:BSSSC.

Committee on Spatial Development of the Baltic Sea Region (1997) Visions and Strategies Around the Baltic Sea Region 2010. From Vision to Action, Gdansk:Committee on Spatial Development of the Baltic Sea region.

Christiansen, Thomas and Ben Tonra (1998), 'Fuzzy Politics Around Fuzzy Borders: The European Union's Near Abroad', paper presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> ECPR International Relations Conference, Vienna, Sept 1998.

Interreg IIC Common Secretariat (2000) Projects in Progress, Rostock/Karlskrona:Common Secretariat.

Interreg IIIB Common Secretariat (2000) Spatial Development in Transnational Partnerships in the Baltic Sea Region: The Experience of INTERREG IIC Project Partners, Summary Report on the Quality Forums, August 2000, Rostock/Karlskrona:Common Secretariat.

Interreg IIIB Common Secretariat (2000) INTERREG IIC Baltic Sea Region. Transnational Co-operation in Spatial Planning. A Case Study Evaluation, Rostock/Karlskrona:Common Secretariat.

(IRS) Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning (2001) Conditions and Opportunities for Closer Co-operation in the Field of Spatial Planning (Baltic Bridge Area), IRS: Erkner by Berlin (Germany)

(IRS) Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning (1999). Zusammenfassender Projektbericht 1.18: Grenzübergreifende Regionalentwicklung (Project Report on Transboundary Regional Development), IRS:Erkner by Berlin (Germany).

(IRS) Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning (1999) Documentation of the Via Baltic Workshop, 9 December 1999 in Berlin (prepared for the Joint Spatial Development Department of Berlin-Brandenburg), IRS: Erkner by Berlin (Germany).

Joenniemi, Pertti (1999) 'Bridging the Iron Curtain? Co-operation Around the Baltic Rim', *Working Papers of the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute*, No. 22. (Contact through [www.copri.dk](http://www.copri.dk))

Joenniemi, Pertti (1996) "Interregional Cooperation and a New Regionalist Paradigm", in. Scott, James et. al. (eds.), *Border Regions in Functional Transition - European and North American Perspectives*, Regio-Reihe des Instituts für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung, Volume 9, pp. 53-61.

Joint Spatial Development Department of Berlin and Brandenburg (2001) Metropolitan Areas. Regional Systems of European Capitals – Systems for Sustainable Development, Potsdam:JSDP ([www.metropolitan-areas.com](http://www.metropolitan-areas.com)).

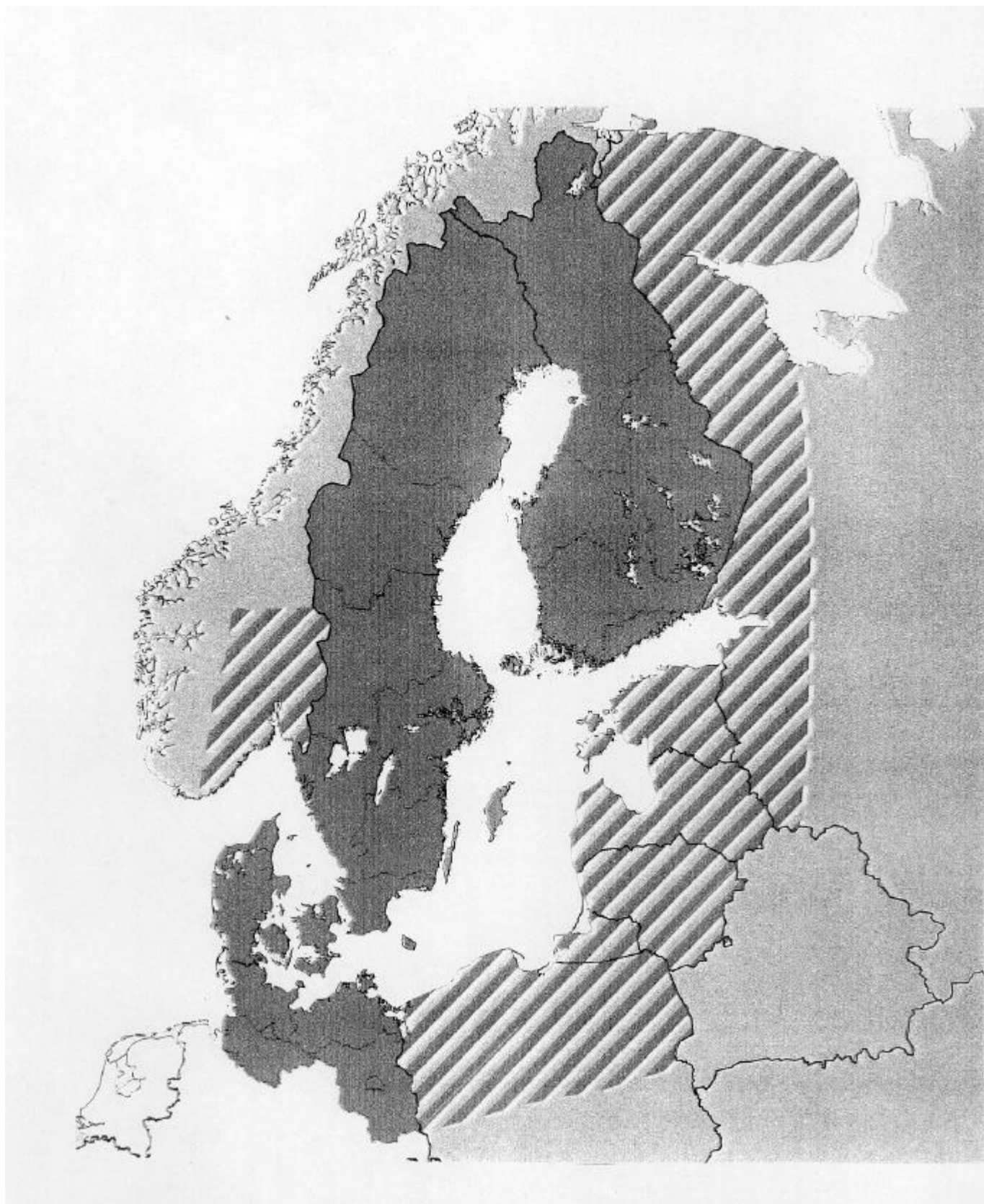
Lass, Juri (1998), 'Transport Infrastructure Networks in the Countries of Northern Europe and Links with the European Network', in: Council of Europe (ed.), *The Challenges Facing European Society with the Approach of the Year 2000. Strategies for the Sustainable Development of Northern States in Europe*. European Regional Planning Series, No. 61, Council of Europe Publishing:Strasbourg (France), pp.69-76.

Nordregio (2000) Ex-Ante Evaluation of Baltic Sea INTERREG IIIB Programme, Final report of November 2000, Stockholm:Nordregio/Eurofutures.

Nordregion (2000) Background Study for VASAB 2010 PLUS. The Baltic Sea Region Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow – Main Spatial Trends, Stockholm:Nordregio.

Parteka, Tomasz (1994) "Die Entwicklung einer ausgewogenen Ostsee-Ökoregion (The Development of a Balanced Baltic Ecoregion)" Paper presented at the Second Network Seminar of Central and East European Institutes of Spatial Science, Bratislava, October 1994.

## Cooperation « Baltic Sea»





## **FRANCO-BELGIAN COOPERATION** **BETWEEN NORD-PAS DE CALAIS AND HAINAUT**

Daniel POULENARD  
Réseau Parcourir, France

### **1 – Brief presentation of the area, socioeconomic and administrative situation, main features of the cooperation**

#### **The area**

The Nord-Pas de Calais/Picardie region in France and the Hainaut province (the only province of the region of Wallonia involved in this cooperation) in Belgium enjoy highly favourable conditions in terms of their geography and history.

Geography played no major part in determining the national and regional borders of these two entities. Both regions belong to a virtually continuous plain, extending from the Paris Basin in the west to the Urals in the east. The only distinctive feature in the relief between France and Belgium is the Artois ridge (and its 100-metre drop) which marks the boundary between the Parisian Basin and the Anglo-Flemish Basin. The tracing of the national border is complex and illogical, as it stems from a succession of military pacts and conquests which very often cut regions off from their natural economic hinterlands. However, the area's topography did facilitate the development of infrastructure. As a result, the crossborder area is now fairly well equipped with good road and rail links and numerous inland waterways, even if some geographical districts remain outside the main communication routes.

In historical and economic terms, the regions on either side of the border have followed parallel paths over the last two centuries. The severe handicaps they have inherited are therefore rather similar. Both regions are experiencing conversion difficulties resulting from:

- the scars left by monoindustry (coal and steel) and the disappearance of large companies
- the small size and relatively low incomes of agricultural holdings (except in Picardie)
- the insufficient development of the services sector in certain fields
- significant technological backwardness (owing to a tradition of low value-added subcontracting)
- a low level of qualifications and major workforce retraining problems
- high unemployment and spreading exclusion (in the Hainaut province, for instance, unemployment was still very high in 2000, at 23.5% of a population of 1.3 million, compared with 20% in the Walloon region and 11.8% in Belgium as a whole)

On account of their significant development handicap, a number of these districts, in both Belgium and France (*arrondissement* of Valenciennes), were classified as "Objective 1 areas" after the launch of Interreg I in 1994. Today, in 2001, the available indicators generally suggest that socioeconomic advances have been greater in the French areas than in their Belgian counterparts.

The environment must be protected and enhanced:

- the area in question features many beautiful landscapes and sites, even if ecological problems remain with respect to environmental protection, industrial conversion and economic redevelopment
- the agricultural sector is in crisis and a trend towards outmigration can be noted in rural and certain periurban areas

## The cooperation framework

The area eligible for crossborder cooperation includes:

- On the French side, the Aisne *département* and part of the Nord *département*. The Aisne *département* has 536,000 inhabitants and experienced a slight population decline (0.3%) between 1990 and 1999. It is part of the Picardie region, whose unemployment rate remains above the national average (12.8% in 1999, compared with 11% for France as a whole). In the Nord *département* (2,555,000 inhabitants), two *agglomérations* are involved: part of Lille (almost 1 million inhabitants) and the city of Valenciennes (357,400 inhabitants). The Nord *département* belongs to the Nord-Pas de Calais region (3,997,000 inhabitants and an unemployment rate of 15.3% in 1999: the second highest after the Languedoc-Roussillon region).
- On the Belgian side, the western part of the Hainaut province (Walloon region).

Some of these districts are covered by Objective 1 and Objective 2, others do not come under any Structural Fund objective. They received EUR 32 million between 1991 and 1993 under Interreg I and EUR 71.52 million between 1994 and 1999 under strand A (crossborder cooperation) of Interreg II.

For the most part, the programme was steered on the Belgian side by a specially established non-profit organisation, together with the Walloon region, and on the French side by the *préfecture* of Nord-Pas de Calais and the relevant *préfectures* and *sous-préfectures* in Picardie, together with the regional authorities of both regions.

The aims and strategic objectives of the 1994-1999 Interreg II programme were to:

- contribute to harmonious economic development: build on existing complementary features;
- establish a framework of crossborder centres of expertise: develop the potential for collaboration in research, training and technology;
- encourage coordination of assets (in the economic, technological, cultural, social, tourist and other fields);
- establish a dense network of relations: increase exchanges so as to nurture a feeling of regional belonging;
- encourage an integrated approach to the crossborder area and its development;
- enhance the attractiveness of the area: improve public services, the environment and the quality of life;
- open up the crossborder area to the outside world: build a common image highlighting the area's assets.

## **2 – Has cooperation paved the way for new methods of public policy administration at regional (sub-regional or local) level? Who are the main actors in the process of change?**

### **2.1 - The general context surrounding the cooperation measures supported by the Interreg II A programme**

To measure the impact of this cooperation exercise in terms of policies, it seems useful to compare it to the other programmes which benefited from Interreg II A assistance in the French border areas (15 programmes between 1994 and 1999).

Interreg II A may essentially be regarded as bringing together or confronting:

- spontaneous forms of cooperation and crossborder exchanges resulting from history and specific to each area, and

- a European logic geared mainly to organising, intensifying and exploiting these flows<sup>13</sup>

The main purpose of Interreg I was to allow the institutions to "get to know one another" and engage in cooperation. Meanwhile, cooperation between local economic agents continued to be undertaken separately. Subsequently, Interreg II made it possible, in most cases, to "reconcile" the two processes by integrating some of the local players into the programme.

This fact must be borne in mind in order to understand the project-shaping process. It would thus be hasty to conclude that genuine cooperation started only with Interreg II. Interreg I corresponded to the period of adjustment required to reconcile a "virtual approach" with the situation on the ground.

We should complete this assessment with other considerations related to the context of each border region. We can make a broad distinction between two types of socioeconomic situation (although other more subjective elements, related to history and culture, are also relevant):

- The first situation is characterised by necessity or "reason". This category includes crossborder conurbations (Lille, Saarbrücken), crossborder employment areas (Geneva), "open" and interdependent areas (Alsace-Rhine valley) and specific types of rural area (valleys, mountain zones, etc.). We find that in this type of area, cultural and institutional differences are overcome because there is a need for cooperation. The area studied in this paper essentially belongs to this category.

- The second crossborder situation is characterised by cooperation which, first and foremost, is prompted by considerations of opportunity. Exchanges in this case have a more directly political and economic connotation and depend on the specific strategies of the various players in each area. The opportunity in question may be a joint infrastructure project or even just the political or economic ambition to expand a sphere of influence.

This "typology" cannot be applied mechanically, however. Since programmes are broken down along geographical and, usually, administrative lines, several situations can be found within the same cooperation area. The participation strategy of the various players can give us a better insight into the "policy-making" impact of cooperation on their action and organisations.

We shall attempt to answer the following three questions:

- Who are the main players involved in the cooperation measures? How did their strategy develop?

- What is the added value of the cooperation measures in terms of "policy"?

- What are the main benefits of and obstacles to the development process?

## **2.2 - Who are the main players involved in the cooperation measures? How did their strategy develop?**

a) The local and regional authorities

Four types of strategy can be identified with respect to the involvement of the local authorities:

- Strategies responding to the need to resolve a structural problem relating to the border.

The partners are usually local authorities at NUTS III or IV level, who are sometimes themselves Interreg project promoters and thus the beneficiaries of the assistance. These

---

<sup>13</sup> This "definition" applies only to Interreg's strand A, i.e. cooperation at local level. Cooperation at higher levels does not fit into this context.

authorities may be seeking to resolve a problem related to transport, spatial organisation or harmonisation within a spontaneous market.

In crossborder urban areas, the primary aim is to use Interreg schemes to ensure greater consistency in the local action of the public authorities. The "mainstream" regional planning policies and the specific crossborder activities of these authorities are closely coordinated.

However, coordinating the implementation of Interreg in these urban areas is problematic in two respects. In the legal field, the impossibility of creating instruments that are genuinely adapted to the new practices introduced by the crossborder dimension is undoubtedly an obstacle to developing initiatives and, above all, maintaining them in the longer term. For instance, the Lille conurbation has been relying, with some success, on association-based arrangements to harmonise its urban policy with that of its Belgian counterparts, but this cooperation has not made it possible to create a new form of organisation.

And as regards local development, intermunicipal policies and urban planning procedures cannot, again for legal reasons, provide for crossborder partnerships. For the Lille conurbation, the primary aim was to use Interreg schemes to ensure greater consistency in the local action of the public authorities. This greater consistency was achieved in particular thanks to the creation of an urban planning agency, although the process remains laborious and fragile.

- Strategies related to the promotion of the local economy.

There are many of them. The local authorities, municipalities, *départements* and regions are all anxious to provide new market opportunities for businesses. That is the purpose, for example, of the tourism-related promotion measures. These measures involve the publication of brochures, participation in trade fairs and cooperation in communication operations based on a common image, etc. By way of example, we might mention the measures carried out under the Nord-Pas de Calais/Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais/Wallonia programmes to attract some of the cross-Channel tourist flows.

- Regional development projects.

Regional development projects tend to be run by authorities at NUTS II and NUTS III level, usually in association with national government departments. The purpose is generally to coordinate road, airport, rail or inland waterway infrastructure. The measures are often limited to preparatory and feasibility studies. In the Nord-Pas de Calais/Wallonia area, this important issue sometimes corresponds to Interreg II C objectives.

- Image-building measures.

Such measures are sometimes designed to use common cultural bases in order to bring the partner areas closer together. In some cases, they boil down to purely political statements of intent: declarations on closer cooperation or even the idea of an identity shared by the two areas. However, the strategy can also generate genuine and fruitful exchanges leading to practical projects. In some initiatives, the original intentions were thwarted by the differences in the powers and responsibilities of each authority.

#### b) The State authorities (on the French side) and regional authorities (on the Belgian side)

At this level, the Interreg programmes essentially involve four types of administrative department: culture, environment, road and infrastructure, and health and employment. They are involved in projects to a varying degree. Some are the initiators of a project, for instance under a common transport plan or a routing study by the infrastructure department. Others are direct participants, one example being cooperation in the field of hospital care organised by the health departments.

In most cases, the departments were involved from the start of the development phase of the Interreg II A programmes. They usually take part only to a very limited degree – with some exceptions – in the implementation of the projects. This can be seen as a weakness, since the objectives of the cooperation measures correspond to their technical responsibilities (regional planning and organisation of public services).

In a "stricken" region such as Nord-Pas de Calais/Wallonia, this limited participation is certainly due to the fact that the administrative departments invested more of their human and financial resources in the main Objective 1, 2 and 5b programmes. Furthermore, crossborder cooperation is not always part of the "corporate culture" of decentralised departments.

#### c) Other public bodies and organisations responsible for services of general interest

In the two regions involved, we mainly find the following situations:

- Public bodies are often both the promoters and participants of projects (for instance in fields such as training and health). In the field of training, these bodies try to respond to the needs of target groups such as unemployed people by offering courses in French and Flemish to improve their chances of finding a job, or they try to meet the needs of specific economic sectors by providing training in activities related to the tourism trade. Some operations are also designed to increase the sphere of influence or strengthen the activity of a public body.
- In other cases, the public bodies are engaged in cooperation because they are responsible for managing infrastructure (such as inland waterways in France, for instance) which is targeted by a crossborder project. Here, the approach is often less enthusiastic than in the previous case.
- Universities and research centres are in a particular position, for they are more aware of the issues at stake in crossborder cooperation on account of their specific status and "culture". That awareness explains their substantial involvement in the programme we are concerned with. The projects promoted by the university and scientific world are based on effective partnership and have a truly crossborder character. They have enabled the creation of genuine "local area networks" in research and development.

The significant participation of public bodies – compared with the private sector, for instance – should be placed in perspective, in so far as their status is better suited to participation in what can be rather cumbersome exercises with a slow return on investment.

#### d) The private sector and businesses

Participation of the private sector is one of the main weaknesses of Interreg II A. The programmes initially displayed a strong commitment in the economic sphere, which has not – or hardly – materialised. On completion of the programme, we must conclude that private-sector participation is the aspect that has least lived up to expectations. A number of explanations can be put forward: mainly fear of competition and lack of economic interest, but also administrative red tape.

The difficulty most often mentioned by those responsible for the programme is the businesses' fear of direct competition. The fear seems justified in the case of service companies and, to a certain extent, crafts and retail businesses. In these sectors, opening a local market to businesses from across the border can create dangerous or "unfair" conditions of competition, simply because labour law has not yet been harmonised. Labour costs – and hence cost prices – can therefore differ. In fact, some programme measures (in particular between the Ardennes and Wallonia) were designed to facilitate the levelling of conditions for businesses operating in neighbouring markets. We should nevertheless point out that crossborder exchanges have long existed in these sectors.

As for the sector-based approaches and the policies to support SMEs and SMIs, the main problem is that businesses are already competing on an international market. They are usually already purchasing and distributing products in an area that goes far beyond the individual crossborder region. They are understandably not very interested in crossborder cooperation. However, some businesses in a same sector may be located near one another on each side or on either side of the border. Those businesses will be interested in taking part in projects designed to strengthen a component of their sector or in contributing to research and development projects. Hence the popularity of certain R&D projects supported by universities, in which research centres have been particularly active.

In addition to the difficulties and advantages related to the context and nature of projects, businesses and private-sector players are reluctant to take part in programmes whose administrative implementation and payoff timescales are not very compatible with private-sector management. Furthermore, the implementation under Interreg of innovative cooperation initiatives of an economic nature would require those responsible for the programmes to accept a greater share of "risk".

#### e) Associations and NGOs

The non-profit sector played an essential part in the programme. Why? Because that category is mainly present and active in the two fields – culture and the environment – which attracted most projects. Associations also occasionally took part in measures relating to training and tourism.

The aim of these associations is twofold. First, they want to expand their influence and disseminate their concerns among a broader public. Second, they wish to secure their income and give themselves an opportunity to improve their offer to the public, particularly in the cultural field.

While the contribution of the non-profit sector remains modest in budgetary terms, the crossborder character of its measures is undeniable. Non-profit organisations are also the local players with most experience in cooperation across the Franco-Belgian border.

### **2.3 - What is the added value of the cooperation in terms of organisation and in terms of "policy"?**

#### a) Regional policy

The crossborder cooperation launched by the Interreg programmes has not had any significant impact on general regional policy on the French side. Despite the statements from local authorities in favour of crossborder partnership, the fact remains that crossborder measures would not get financed if the Interreg programme did not exist.

This low commitment to crossborder cooperation at regional level is due to the following factors:

- The French regions' policy fields and budget do not allow easy participation in crossborder cooperation, unlike those of certain regions in other Member States.

- The significance of the crossborder issue is not perceived in the same way in all regions. The size of the regions and the geographical position of the regional capital also play a role. Crossborder cooperation is less important to the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region (whose capital is Marseille) or the Rhône-Alpes region (whose capital is Lyon) than to the Nord-Pas de Calais region or Alsace (whose capitals, Lille and Strasbourg, are both near borders). Nevertheless, regions – and the Nord-Pas de Calais region in particular – remain one of the main sources of cofinancing for Interreg programmes.

In practice, on the French side, the cooperation resulted in a high investment of human resources (many officials of the region work on ongoing cooperation and exchange schemes with Wallonia), but not in new policy guidelines or a new specific organisation.

On the Belgian side, the Walloon region took a close interest in crossborder issues. Multidisciplinary teams of regional officials have worked on a continuing basis with their French colleagues. But again, the project and financing management arrangements followed traditional procedures, with adjustments rather than any noteworthy innovation.

#### b) Policies at NUTS III and local level

For other local authorities at NUTS III, IV and V level, the situation is different since – particularly in the case of municipalities – they are sometimes themselves promoters of an Interreg project, and are therefore fully involved in the crossborder activities. That is the case of the crossborder conurbation of Lille-Roubaix-Tourcoing-Mouscron-Tournai, for instance<sup>14</sup>.

As for the Nord *département* in France and the Hainaut province in Belgium, the question of crossborder cooperation is relevant to most of their area. They have therefore usually been close partners, even though the crossborder dimension is not always an explicit part of their activities.

#### c) National policies

The issue is more complex as regards regional policy at national level. There is good coordination and *de facto* complementarity between the objectives of the national policies relating to regional planning, solidarity, training and environmental protection and the objectives of the crossborder programme. The French authorities responsible for the programme, the SGAR (*Secrétariat général aux affaires régionales*), were careful to ensure this. The transnational cooperation strand was included in the State-region plan contract.

However, the coordination of the two legal systems, which are the responsibility of the Member States, is problematic. In the legal field, the impossibility of creating instruments that are genuinely adapted to the new practices introduced by the crossborder cooperation is an obstacle to establishing long-term initiatives. And as regards local development, intermunicipal policies and urban development procedures cannot, for legal reasons, easily provide for crossborder partnerships.

#### d) Coordination with other European policies

Generally speaking, we can observe that the management of cooperation programmes follows the procedures applicable to the programming of Community funds quite closely. However, a touch of originality and "daring" might have been introduced in a policy field which, by nature, relies on innovation to uncover new areas for assistance.

### **2.4 - What are the main benefits of and obstacles to the development process?**

#### a) The benefits

The Interreg measures have undoubtedly contributed to regional development. The following outcomes have been noted in the area we are concerned with:

- The regional dimension

---

<sup>14</sup> The crossborder urban area around Lille is the part of the border where cooperation is most intense. COPIC (*Conférence permanente intercommunale transfrontalière*) was created in 1991 by five intermunicipal organisations from France, Flanders and Wallonia. These organisations developed the GROOTSTAD crossborder plan in 1998 (with financing from TERRA).

Crossborder cooperation has highlighted the fact that some regional districts have sometimes been neglected because of their position near the border and because they have specific requirements which are not given a priority at national level (in particular on the Belgian side).

The attention Interreg has attracted to these districts and issues has given greater credibility to the action of the local authorities (at NUTS III and IV level), which tend to be more aware of these trends. The issues were gradually taken into account by the regional authorities, and some projects and measures were included in the 2000-2006 State-region plan contract on the French side. The future programmes are expected to confirm this trend and ensure better coordination between the French regional planning priorities adopted at national level (known as SRADTs, or *schémas régionaux d'aménagement et de développement du territoire*) on the one hand, and the priorities of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) on the other.

- The innovative nature of the projects resulting from cooperation, and emerging fields

The border used to be regarded as an obstacle in the regional development programmes of the Franco-Belgian border area. Today, Interreg has in effect opened up new opportunities, such as the establishment of an expanded labour market for people who, thanks to language training courses (Nord-Pas de Calais/Flanders) and joint training courses (Nord-Pas de Calais/Wallonia), will be able to carry out their activity on either side of the border. These operations, even implemented on a small scale, are promising.

For instance, Interreg has significantly boosted economic development in the field of tourism. Measures in this field have made it possible to achieve genuine interaction, since the two sides of the border have jointly benefited from multiplier effects with respect to attracting visitors.

- Economies of scale

As regards exchanges related to research and development, for instance, several universities located near one another (in Tournai, Dunkerque, Mons, etc.) have collaborated on certain fields. In terms of regional development, this cooperation is a significant achievement, allowing universities to acquire greater "autonomy", in particular from their large counterparts in the national capitals.

- Quicker overcoming of handicaps and institutional deadlock

Cooperation has also made it possible to deal with the border-related handicaps more quickly, particularly in the crossborder conurbation (organisation of certain forms of transport and health services) and the environment.

- Effects on regional planning and spatial organisation

In areas such as transport, the effects are still limited, despite the success of the high-speed train (whose ambitions are on quite another scale). Initiatives do sometimes not go beyond studies and declarations of intent. As a whole, the public transport backbones (including air transport) still converge on regional and national capitals.

#### b) The obstacles

The obstacles noted in this cooperation exercise are often similar to those found in other regions. However, they give more cause for concern than elsewhere in view of the "obvious" need for cooperation<sup>15</sup>.

---

<sup>15</sup> Despite these sometimes negative findings, we must underline that the programme was coordinated by a highly efficient Franco-Belgian team which introduced major innovations in the management and monitoring procedures.



The Interreg cooperation programmes did not (and still do not) live up to the expectations of civil society. The Nord-Pas de Calais/Wallonia area proved particularly disappointing in this respect, despite the fact that – unlike in the Nord-Pas de Calais/Flanders area – there was no language barrier.

This "shortfall" can be seen at several levels.

- First of all, it results from the restrictions of the framework allowed by Interreg cooperation. Interreg I and II have enabled the Belgian and French regions to develop a crossborder cooperation process. However, the programme has now reached a point at which it can go no further. The transition from "crossborder process" to "crossborder area" cannot be achieved without substantial harmonisation of not only legal, but also technical, taxation and administrative provisions at national level. The lack of a suitable European legal status for a crossborder management body (the EEIG solves only a limited number of problems) is the most striking example of this. Likewise, there is a pressing need for a single operational programme governing cooperation measures between France and Belgium (i.e. a truly transnational programme) and, most importantly, a single and transnational support framework, if a comprehensive and integrated vision of cooperation and planning is to be achieved.

- Secondly, it can be explained by the organisational aspects of the cooperation, which patently "favour" public institutions and bodies. We have noted that the private sector had great difficulty in becoming involved in such mechanisms. Furthermore, in the management of programmes, the standardisation of procedures prevents sufficient consideration from being given to each territorial level. The cooperation cannot be organised in the same way for "common" or shared areas – such as crossborder conurbations – as for "networks" operating on a larger scale.

#### By way of provisional conclusion

Two courses of action seem necessary today, if we are to adapt the cooperation process to the situation on the ground and build genuine momentum towards achieving European integration at the local crossborder level.

- Ensuring that cooperation is open to all sectors and all types of participant, to allow the local population in these areas to take part, at local level, in building European citizenship. This objective requires simplifying the programmes and financing procedures and encouraging a "learning process" with respect to cooperation. That is a precondition for establishing a Euroregion bringing together several regional "identities". The current, predominantly "institutional", form of cooperation has not yet been properly opened up to civil society.

- Creating the tools and bodies capable of building genuine crossborder momentum. We have reached the limits of what can be achieved with the current makeshift arrangements. Firm political will is now needed from both the regional authorities and the European Commission. Interreg must focus on innovation at local level.

In spite of its many limitations, is Interreg's aim not to be a privileged instrument for "research and development" in the field of European integration?

### **3 – What has been the qualitative impact of strategic cooperation in the region? What practical improvements have been achieved?**

For the purposes of facilitating qualitative assessment and comparison, a few examples are given below to illustrate the proposed analysis criteria.

#### **Culture**

Most projects (several dozen) were carried out in the fields of culture and tourism, notably because they were put forward by associations that had already been in close contact with one another for some time.

The various projects achieved the following:

- Pooling of artistic and technical resources. This was the purpose, for instance, of the cooperation between the theatres of Villeneuve d'Ascq and Tournai. The practical objective was to share equipment, create a bus network serving the theatres during performances in the two cities, exchange productions, and share communication resources and computerised ticketing facilities.
- Networking. Most networking projects involved itinerant exhibitions in venues located on either side of the border, or joint communication campaigns. The networking was facilitated by the fact that the architectural and historical heritage is usually "divided" by the administrative border.
- Creating the conditions for the "awakening" or "reawakening" of a shared identity. This was a particular focus of cooperation between Nord-Pas de Calais and Flanders. Many initiatives centred on the culture common to Flanders in Belgium and the north-east of the Pas de Calais *département* (literature cafés, document translation, music bands, etc.). In the Nord/Hainaut area, since the border is fairly open, exchanges often occur spontaneously without need for institutional assistance. We might nevertheless mention the cooperation between No Télé in Tournai and Canal 9 in Lille, on the development of educational programmes and generalist broadcasts (between 500,000 and 600,000 subscribers).

#### **Social issues**

In this field, the main schemes focused on the following:

- Training and vocational reintegration. A "Franco-Belgian passport" was introduced to allow exchanges of trainees between France and Belgium after a common period of training. The operation was promoted by organisations that help the unemployed and by the association of exporting businesses of Hainaut. Since both areas have very high unemployment, the purpose of the training was to expand job opportunities by creating a genuinely transnational employment area.
- Consistency of public services. Many achievements were recorded. In the health field, the mutual fund organisations of the two regions have collaborated on increasing consistency between hospital services, coordinating emergency systems, designing a common hospital map, etc. This type of operation was repeated in rural areas, in particular in Thiérache (Hirson/Chimay). A common distance care system was also established in the Lille/Tournai conurbation.

#### **Economy**

The most important operations involved assistance for businesses and specialist training.

- Assistance for businesses. A technological research centre (CRITT) was created for the ceramics sector between Mons and Maubeuge (40 employees). The resources and services of the development agencies in the Lille conurbation were pooled. In particular, these centres

enable craftspeople (in the building trade for instance) to work in both regions in full compliance with the legislation in force. The operation contributes to the geographical development of markets.

- Common specialist training. In addition to their crossborder aspects, the training courses result in economies of scale in specialist fields, for instance for training in quality assurance or logistics.

### **Policy-making**

The crossborder dimension seems to have been well integrated in this area, at least as far as the speeches of local elected representatives are concerned. However, the practical achievements are still limited, despite the declared intention to develop common instruments for the overall management of the Lille conurbation.

### **Environment and urban management**

In the environment field, one of the main measures is the pooling of resources for the management of industrial waste, and in particular the waste linked to economic conversion. This cooperation involves the École des mines in Douai. There are also several nature protection schemes, such as the cooperation project between two regional parks: "Plaines de l'Escaut" on the Belgian side and "Scarpe Escaut" on the French side.

With respect to urban management, we might mention a joint database of aerial pictures, and daily cooperation, usually on an informal footing, between municipalities in the Franco-Belgian conurbation.

### **4 – What is the external impact of this cooperation?**

The cooperation between Nord-Pas de Calais and Wallonia is in a rather particular situation with respect to opportunities for relations with other regions. Both Nord-Pas de Calais and Wallonia are flanked by regions that are turned towards capital cities (Paris, Brussels and, further north, London). These neighbouring regions have other challenges to cope with and are less open to "local" crossborder cooperation, for the regional governance essentially reflects the concerns found at national level. Unlike other regions, they do not spontaneously feel that they belong to a cluster of regions or have an identity at European level.

The authorities around the Mediterranean rim, whether they are near a border or not, plan to take an active part in the forthcoming Interreg III B programme (MEDOC), because the "Mediterranean Arc" and "Latin Arc" are concepts they can spontaneously relate to. That is certainly not the case in the Nord-Pas de Calais region and the Hainaut province. Historically, both followed an individual development pattern, that was geographically limited and did not spill over into neighbouring regions.

However, Nord-Pas de Calais and Wallonia can deepen and expand their sphere of cooperation within the various existing or planned "networks" (London-Paris-Brussels-Frankfurt "triangle" or "quadrangle"). This cooperation, in the field of transport networks or between universities, will contribute to establishing a multiregional dimension, but one which will be more technocratic and will no doubt be felt less strongly by the European citizen.

Review of existing or missing cooperation measures in 2000 and of cooperation instruments implemented as part of the Franco-Belgian cooperation between Nord-Pas de Calais/Picardie and Wallonia

(taken from the *ex ante* assessment of the Interreg III A France-Belgium programme)

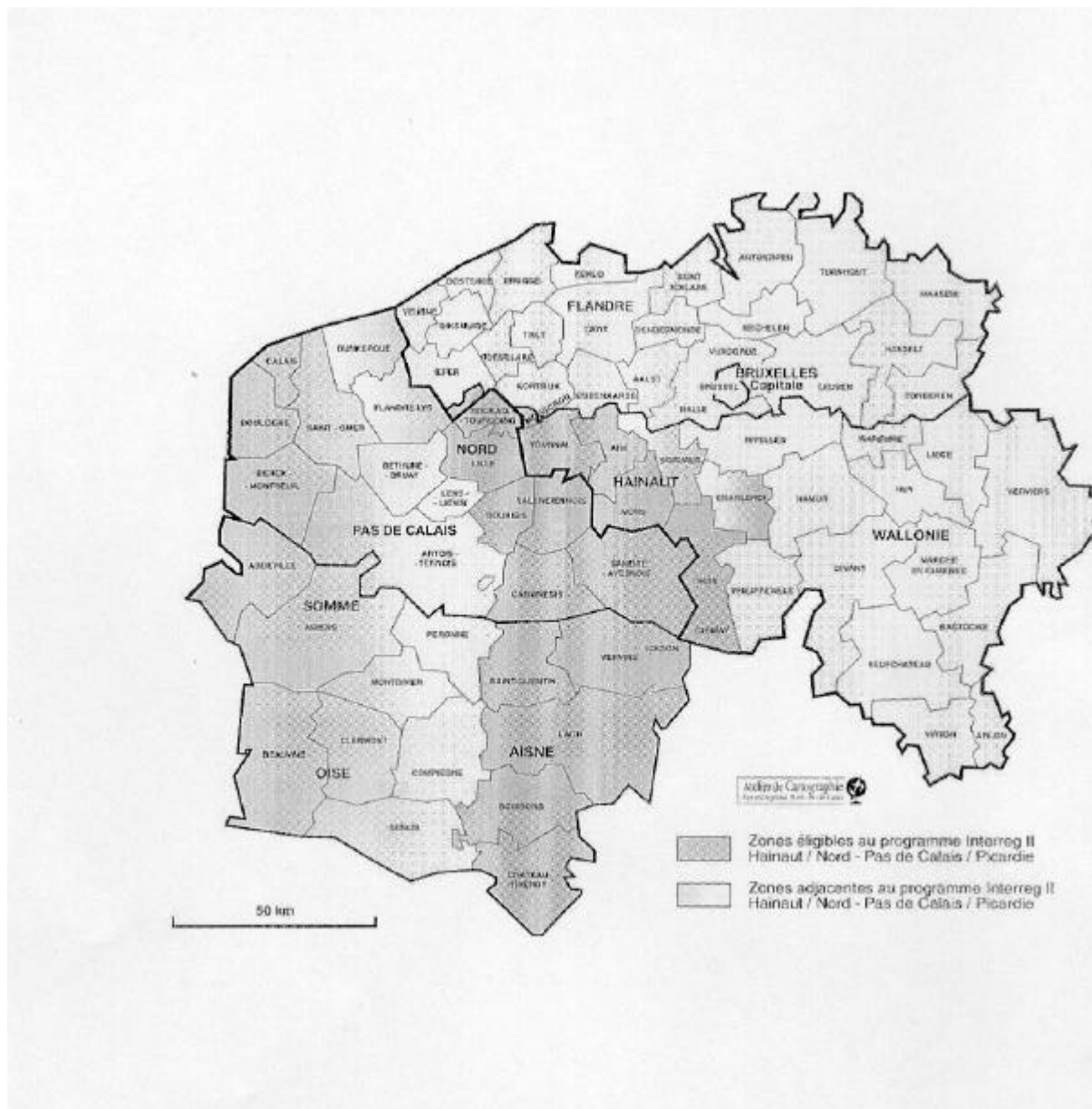
<i>Cooperation theme (selected with reference to the themes usually targeted by crossborder cooperation)</i>	<b>Project names and areas involved (the "grey" cooperation initiatives were undertaken outside Interreg)</b>
<b>LOCAL SERVICES</b>	
<b>Communication resources</b>	
Telephone	
Postal services	
Optical networks	Mons-Valenciennes
<b>Health services</b>	
<b>Technical cooperation</b>	Télé Médecine, Lille-Tournai and Mons-Valenciennes
<b>Cooperation on financial systems</b>	Mutual funds and CRAM, health observatories
Joint service provision	Chimay-Hirson, Tournai-Tourcoing and Mouscron-Tourcoing
Health promotion	Hainaut-Aisne and Charleroi-Lille
<b>Emergency services</b>	
SAMU SMUR	Chimay-Hirson
Fire	Chimay-Hirson
Civil protection	
<b>Other social services</b>	
Assistance for women	
Assistance for drug addicts	Lille Maubeuge Charleroi Mons Tournai
<b>Other services to the population</b>	
Consumer information	Test Achats, CRC
Information for young people	Tournai-Lille
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>To promote crossborder relations</b>	
Support for crossborder trade	BDTE
Partnerships between SMEs	Technology fairs, CTDIC, textiles centre
R&D, universities and companies	OCASICHA, Eurowood
Financial instruments, investment	FAIT FINORPA
Support for local projects	SAW, Binche unit, Comines, Charleroi
Export assistance	Eurochallenge Missions d'affaires
Crafts heritage	Ceramics
<b>Agriculture and forestry</b>	
Agri-poles	Chimay-Avesnes
Wood sector	Wood energy network, organic cat litter
Organic farming	
Fruit and vegetables	Search for traditional varieties
Livestock farming	
<b>CROSSBORDER LOCAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Nature parks	Parc du Hainaut
Ongoing cooperation instruments	COPIT
Blueprint for outline plan	Vallée de la Sambre
Informal collaboration	« Trois frontières », Fourmies, Hirson, Chimay
<b>EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	
Training courses	48 vocational reintegration training projects (social assistants and new jobs)
Language training	Building sector
<b>MOBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY</b>	
Analysis instrument	
<b>Crossborder mobility</b>	
Inland waterways	Autonomous central and west port and Lille river port

Rail	Charleroi-Aumoye and Mons-Valenciennes lines
Road	Eastern bypass around Lille and Charleroi-Maubeuge
Multimodal	Lille river port, Dourges node, multimodal platform of Charleroi-Chatelet
<b>Personal mobility</b>	
Bus links	Mouscron-Tourcoing-Roubaix and Ploegsteert-Armentières-Comines
Passenger rail links	Mons-Valenciennes
Local routes	
<b>ENVIRONMENT AND RISK PREVENTION</b>	
<b>Management instruments and plan</b>	
Crossborder disaster relief plan	SEVEX programme
Crossborder river contract	Sambre
Floods	
Nature park plan	Parc naturel du Hainaut
Regional development outline plan	GROOTSTAD crossborder development plan, Val de Sambre Borinage, Axe Charlemagne
Waste plan	
Impact surveys	Wood energy
<b>Natural heritage</b>	
Nature park, reserves	Scarpe Escaut, Sud Hainaut Avesnois, Pays des collines, Oise
Environmental networks	Bocages
<b>Pollution</b>	
Brownfield sites, derelict industrial areas	OCASICHA
Identification and treatment of pollution	Mons St Quentin air pollution
<b>Geology and hydrology</b>	
Water table management	Transhennuyère
<b>Water treatment investment</b>	Purification of Lysse station, joint cleansing
<b>TOURISM, HERITAGE AND CULTURE</b>	
<b>Tourist circuits</b>	
Definition	Fortified towns, Euraphis, Thiérache, fables, tales and legends
Promotion	River tourism, agritourism, parks and gardens
Investment	River tourism, agritourism, pathways
<b>Tourist infrastructure</b>	Fortified towns, tourist information system, river tourism and RAVEL
<b>Joint cultural activities</b>	Chimay-Hirson-Fourmies, Tournai-Villeneuve d'Ascq, Peruwelz-Vieux Condé

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Une frontière ambivalente, UFR de Géographie de Lille I, Université libre de Bruxelles, Avril 1998, 47 pages.
- « Les retrouvailles des cousins de Flandre si longtemps séparés » article du journal LE MONDE du mardi 24 juillet 2001 page 9.
- Evaluation ex ante du programmes INTERREG III Franco Belge, Rapport final, ADE, C3E, I DEV, 29 décembre 2000.
- Evaluation intermédiaire INTERREG II Hainaut Nord-Pas-De-Calais Picardie, Beture conseil, ULB, Fircam, juin 1999.
- Site de la Région Nord Pas de Calais [www.cr.npdc.fr](http://www.cr.npdc.fr).
- Evaluation INTERREG II Wallonie Lorraine Luxembourg BSB Tandem SA février 1999.
- Programme Opérationnel INTERREG II 1994-1999 , Ministère de la Région Wallonne, Préfecture de la Région Lorraine, Ministère de l'aménagement du territoire Luxembourg, octobre 1995.
- Initiative Communautaire INTERREG II 1995-1999 , Préfecture de la Région Champagne Ardennes, Gouvernement de la Région Wallonne, mars 1996.
- Programme Opérationnel INTERREG II Nord Pas de Calais Flandre Occidentale, novembre 1996.
- La dynamique de la coopération transfrontalière dans le cadre de la préparation des Contrats de Plan Etat Région, TMO Région, juillet 1999.
- Evaluation intermédiaire du programme opérationnel INTERREG II 1995-1999, Wallonie Champagne Ardennes, ADE juillet 1999.
- Evaluation nationale finale des programmes INTERREG II volet A , DATAR , Michel Titecat (INGEROP) et Daniel Poulenard (Réseau Parcourir) février 2000.

## Cooperation « Nord-pas de Calais / Hainaut »







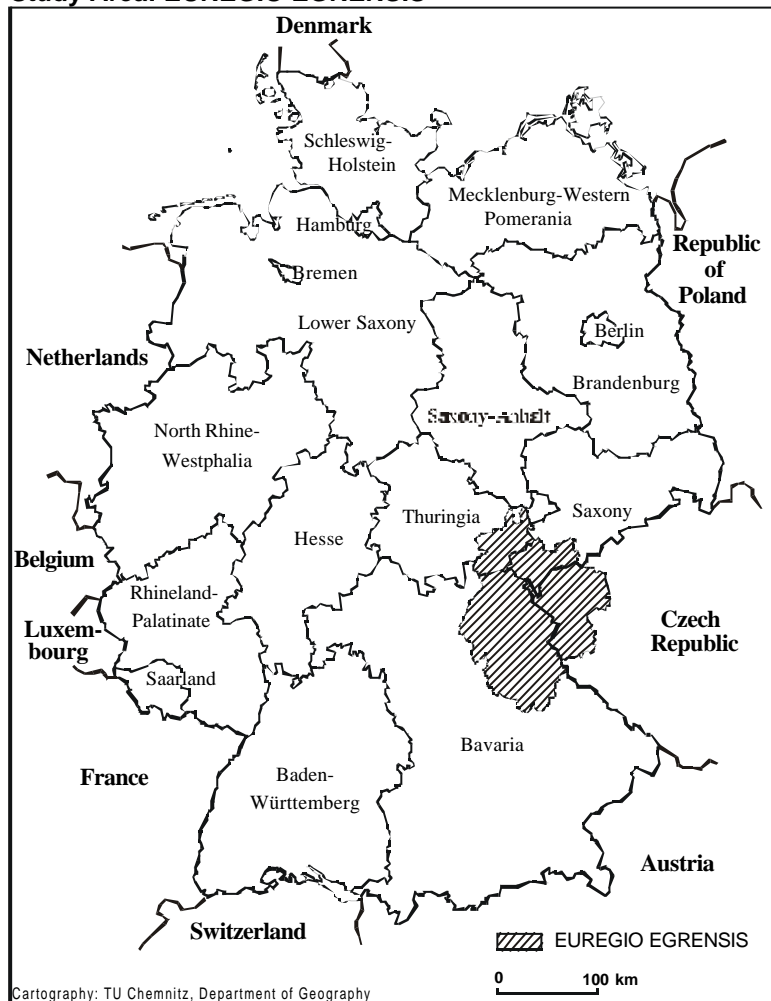
## EUREGIO EGRENSIS

Prof. Dr. Peter Jurczek and Dipl.-Geogr. Bernhard Köppen, TU Chemnitz

### 1 - Brief presentation of the area, socio-economic and administrative situation, main features of the co-operation

Its central location is one of the most significant characteristics of the Euregio Egrensis when one looks at it in geographical terms. It consists of sections of German Laender – Bavaria in the west, Saxony and Thuringia in the north-east – and parts of the Czech Republic's territory in the east and south-east. Here, one important spatial characteristic of the Euroregion becomes visible, for the outer border of the EU that crosses it means a border of wealth at the same time. But there are significant disparities even within the German part. Upper Franconia and Upper Palatinate, structurally weak areas of Bavaria, show more favourable characteristics than Saxony, formally part of the GDR. Therefore, all participating Saxon regions are - like all of eastern Germany – first priority areas of EU funding (Objective 1).

**Study Area: EUREGIO EGRENSIS**



Historically, the area was an ethnic and linguistic unity until the end of World War II. Its centre was the town of Eger (Cheb). All individual parts of today's Euroregion, on the other hand, have belonged to different administrative territorial entities since the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, the region was characterised by intense cultural and economic interactions. This is the starting point of a new and successful co-operation.

The Second World War and its aftermath can be seen as a break since it resulted in the expulsion, resettlement and flight of a large part of the German majority from the north-west of Czechoslovakia. The former strongly inter-linked economic and living space was parted by the "iron curtain" and, thus, became a peripheral area. Additionally, people from the eastern part of the CSSR were settled in the area. In the course of decades, the political border has become a linguistic border. This not entirely reviewed chapter of German-Czech history still holds a certain potential for conflict, which, among other things, is expressed by antipathy towards the respective "other." In this connection, the relationship between the Western and Eastern German populations, which is not always harmonious due to different experiences during forty years of separation and to economic difficulties in Eastern Germany caused by the transformation, should be mentioned.

Concerning the natural space, the area is a low-mountain region. It is characterised by large woods and a harsh climate. Large settlements are located in the valleys. The Euroregion is an important area of transit between Western Europe, Middle Europe and Eastern Europe. While natural characteristics hinder the development of proper roads, these features provide a wealth of inherent potential for the tourism industry. There are, for example, some world-famous spas in the region.

The study area can be mostly classified as rural. The population is small; however, the population density varies significantly and reaches maximum values in the industrialised areas along the main traffic routes. About 2,033,500 people live in an area of 1,753,978 hectares. The Bavarian part has the largest population (1,027,500); the smallest population lives in Thuringia (226,600). In the Saxon and Czech part, live 423,260 and 356,140 people respectively. The Czech part has the lowest population density with only 76 people per square kilometre; the Saxon part has the highest with 218 people per square kilometre. In Bavaria and Thuringia, this number is 115 people per square kilometre or 114 people per square kilometre. Only the Czech section of Euregio Egrensis shows an increase in population. There is a decrease in all other parts. Concerning migration, only the Bavarian part shows some gains. The Saxon- Thuringian and Czech parts suffer from losses.

The tendencies of migration from the region are closely connected with economic structure, which is based on agriculture, tourism and the production of consumer goods from textile, porcelain and glass industries. This structuring has proved to be problematic, as structural changes have had a negative impact on these old industries. The unemployment rate is 8.5% in the Czech section of the Euroregion, 17% in the Saxon-Thuringian section, and roughly 7% in the Bavarian section. If one keeps to the economic profile "industry," there is some potential in the development of the electrical goods industry and the mechanical engineering industry. Some German companies already profit from low wages in the Czech Republic and have started to establish subsidiaries. Czech workers, on the other hand, occupy jobs in Germany, especially in Bavaria. As a result, there are large numbers of commuters from the Czech Republic and Saxony to Bavaria.

The service sector is gaining importance in this still industrially, and partly agriculturally, shaped region. This process is not just limited to the branch of tourism, which stagnated in the last years, but is due to the dynamism of commerce and the region's function as an area of transit. The border crossing points Schönberg/Vojtanov, Selb and Rozvadov are especially

important to the long-distance travel of heavy-goods vehicles in and from Eastern and South-eastern Europe.

The problem of crime in the border region is a negative consequence of the different degree of prosperity in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Czech Republic. Illegal migration and the smuggling of goods are the most serious offences.

Due to its rather unfavourable industrial structure, the different degree of prosperity in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Czech Republic, and the disadvantages of the natural space, the inhabitants of the Euregio Egrensis region are confronted with numerous problems and unsolved tasks. However, it has to be mentioned that formerly typical, strong regional relations have been revived, extended and intensified after the opening of the borders in 1989. The location in the centre of Europe has to be seen as a chance, especially concerning an expected Czech joining of the EU, and also to avoid a reduction of the region to a mere area of transit.

## **2 - Has co-operation paved the way for new methods of public policy administration at regional (sub-regional or local) level? Who are the main actors of the process of change?**

The German-Czech co-operation – exemplarily described with the example of Euregio Egrensis – has partly induced new ways of delivering public policies. This general evaluation can be differentiated on several spatial levels.

Because the European Commission handles the Laender of the Federal Republic of Germany as regions, this aspect should be dealt with first. After an initial hesitation – possibly to avoid extreme regional behaviour in the border region – the respective Laender, in this case Bavaria, Saxony and Thuringia, now support their Euroregions persistently. Their interests are dealt with by the Minister President's Offices and the Departments of Economy as a matter of priority. Additional staff has been recruited to cope with all of the tasks connected to the German-Czech co-operation, as well as with the realisation of funding programmes, such as Interreg. According to the political importance of the German-Czech co-operation (i.e. concerning thoughts about the eastern expansion of the EU, discussions about demands of specific ethnic groups like the Sudeten Germans) the joint action in the border region is realised in an intensive manner.

From the German point of view, the Euroregions are on a sub-regional level. This principle is seen so clearly that the German-Czech co-operation founded new ways of politics. This is particularly true for the joint-project work, which occurs without changing or neglecting established structures of communication in the respective sections (of Bavaria, Saxony, Thuringia, the Czech Republic). Although towns and municipalities actively take part in the co-operation as a rule, it is done case-wise and intensifies as the border nears.

At the founding of Euroregions, there was even more antipathy towards a border-crossing co-operation on the national level of the Czech side than in the south-eastern German counties. On the one hand, this was caused by Czech centralism, on the other hand, by an evaluation of the historical development of the Egerland and the danger of a separatist movement. In the meantime, such antipathies seemed to be dispelled, or at least minimised, by the Czech Republic's desire to join the EU.

Another obstacle was the absence of an intermediate administrative level, which forced mayors and regional councils to communicate directly with the national government and the departments in Prague. This deficit was recently taken into account when an intermediate council, similar to the German administrative districts, was established. Moreover, no

additional posts in local councils were created (e.g. for dealing with the European issues). As a rule within the context of the Euregio Egrensis, some mayors commit themselves to cross-border co-operation together with their local parliaments and other key figures from several sectors. In other cases, lethargy and/or prejudices of decision makers dominate, although in a decreasing intensity.

Thus, local politicians who cooperate in the Euroregions are, along with key figures from several sectors, the competent actors of change, followed by state officials who function as a communication link between the local level and the European Commission.

The most important working methods follow from this: Directly comprehensible activities within the Euroregions are in particular recognised within the border region. In contrast, decisions at the state level, mainly made outside the public, are primarily part of national reporting (e.g. via newspapers, national radio and television).

Even though no new departments are established at the regional and local level, some additional workers, at least as part-time employees, are recruited. As a rule, qualified staff has been employed in the newly founded Euroregions. The number of employees at disposal (as a rule one manager, one secretary and one project supervisor), however, does not correspond to the actual needs.

The project management attempts to initiate or partly implement border-crossing projects with much commitment and creativity. Despite considerable success, there are some hindering factors such as separately organised management (on the Bavarian, Saxon-Thuringian, and Czech side), inadequate infrastructure, and limited decision-making powers.

The change of political priorities is expressed by the fact that respective guidelines are no longer oriented towards the improvement of living conditions in the peripheral areas along the border, but towards border-crossing development and co-operation, though often only after problems concerning one's own situation were solved. The close co-operation, especially between local action groups, across the border and the orientation of joint aims of development according to economic indicators are expressions of the political and economic interests in the co-operation.

As a result, active networks of many institutions and people from all sectors of the political, economic and social life have developed in the Euroregions, although their own tasks still have priority. Additionally, many cross-border partnerships between public (e.g. municipalities, districts), semi-public (e.g. associations, churches) and private institutions (e.g. clubs) can be detected. On the one hand, civil society gets involved through regular information, public events and motivation. On the other hand, there are many cross-border activities – mainly in an organised form (e.g. societies) – initiated by the population itself.

Concerning the emergence of new local and regional players, such key persons exist on all levels. In most cases, they have already worked in their respective institutions before the new challenges motivate them to become very involved. In order of importance, this concerns the following: the sub-regional level (Euroregion), the regional level (county) and the local level.

The necessity of cross-border co-operation initiated these changes after the political change. Acceleration and further qualification were stimulated by successes (and failures) of the actual co-operation. The process was financially accompanied and supported by respective EU funds. Not least because of the forthcoming expansion of the EU, expected structures can be stimulated within a smaller area, and, thus, may bring forward clues for larger co-operation models.

### **3 - What has been the qualitative impact of the strategic co-operation in the region? What practical improvements have been achieved?**

There are definitely a number of aspects that make up the qualitative effects of the strategic co-operation within Euregio Egrensis. After the political change, the priority was to get acquainted on a professional and personal level. Furthermore, a continuous co-operation had to be established and consolidated despite fifty years of different political systems and cultures. In the case of the Euregio Egrensis, this proved to be especially difficult, for the core of the region, the former Egerland, was a historically disputed area. Additionally, the people that are involved in the Euroregion came from different political systems, namely from the socialist systems of the former GDR and Czechoslovakia, and the democratic system of the Federal Republic of Germany, member state of the EU. Leaving aside the challenge of successfully realising free-market thinking and actions within a short period of time, the substantial transformation processes of the last ten years have equally shaped political, social, cultural, ecological and other matters.

Therefore it was essential to establish and foster contacts between the partners. The first tasks were to gradually remove differences caused by differing political systems, to reconcile missing experiences and to break down possible antipathy. The period of building up the cross-border co-operation was meant to establish mutual understanding and support. Such processes take more time than expected. Successes of the co-operation are first visible amongst the decision makers and key figures before they are recognised in the general public. Here, the frequent changes of contact persons, as in the Saxon-Thuringian and Czech section during the first years of co-operation, were an obstacle. In addition, events on a higher political level (e.g. negative comments of a politician on the national level) or serious internal problems of only one co-operation partner (e.g. concerning the development of national regions or municipalities) may slow down the process of integration.

After about ten years of co-operation in the Euregio Egrensis, the following important, concrete improvements are to be named:

- Successes in seeking, establishing, stabilising and fostering contacts
- Readiness and ability to co-operate across borders despite a long period of belonging to different political systems and cultures
- Interest in each other and an understanding of the wishes and interests of the respective co-operation partner
- Above average commitment to achieving the commonly established goals
- Joint presentation and advertisement on the national and, above all, international level
- Concrete implementation of measures concerning the well-being of the area's population
- Successful co-operation of persons at the working level (e.g. forestry, tourism, schools/universities, nature conservation, sports, culture)
- Co-operative euroregional marketing and management
- Strengthening the sentiment of solidarity amongst the population of Upper Franconia, Upper Palatinate, the Vogtland or South-western Saxony and South-western Thuringia, as well as North-western Bohemia

The following passage deals with several sectors that show most clearly the qualitative effects and concrete improvements. Concerning culture, single projects, thematic events, media-related reporting etc. efforts should be made to bring Euregio Egrensis closer together. The education sector, involving activities of schools (e.g. language courses, exchange of pupils) and universities (e.g. GIS, symposiums), is of special importance. In spite of the real demand, there are enormous problems in realising these projects since Interreg has financed such people-to-people projects insufficiently or not at all. Due to the strong local identities in the

areas of the Euregio Egrensis, it seems to be a utopian goal to develop a regional identity in the stricter sense across the national and regional borders. But the acceptance of the euroregional area is empirically proven by the high proportion of the population that knows about Euregio Egrensis and its tasks, as well as projects funded by the EU.

Concerning social issues, a gradual reduction of social disparities can be detected within the Euroregion, although its socio-economic level is still lower than that of respective central regions. The labour market is – not least due to the high unemployment rates – strongly divided between the two countries. Additionally, it is a critical aspect in light of the Czech Republic's expected joining of the EU, because south-east-German players – as well as Czech representatives (e.g. because of the fear of losing qualified workers) – want to limit the flexibility of the labour market and, therefore, demand appropriate transitional periods.

The situation of the economy within the cross-border co-operation is ambivalent. Business networks and Joint-Ventures are functioning. But they are normally based on internal decisions of companies, and, thus, the public is rarely informed about them. The companies' dynamism and innovation potential could be used even more effectively if private enterprises were allowed to directly take part in funding programmes like Interreg and Phare CBC. Support is given indirectly, for instance through associations. Examples are the successful co-operation between the IHK of Upper Franconia and the professional association of the Egerland, or the frequent use of the IHK-owned centre of contact concerning the Saxon-Czech economic co-operation.

In the sphere of politics, the partners on the local level continuously come closer together as a result of regular meetings of politicians. Party politics, however, plays only a minor role here. As a rule, democracy is translated into reality. This complex of themes was dealt with in numerous events, especially right after the political change. Peace is considered natural, so no special actions are taken here. Exceptionally, the topic appears as a minor point on the schedule of meetings or in the form of programmatic objectives. Concerning the political life, the Euregio Egrensis is often visited by regional, national and European politicians in order to get acquainted with the specific euroregional problems.

How about the new issues put on the agenda? As a rule, they are by thought integrated into the catalogue of projects that meet the criteria for being funded. But there are problems concerning responsibility for concrete material support. Considering the present function of the German-Czech border as an outer border of the EU, the fight against crime is a special problem. The interest in questions concerning the law (e.g. jurisdiction), or in emergency services (e.g. non-bureaucratic help across the border), represent additional topics.

Despite initial problems of communication and a constant change between upward and downward trends, the cross-border co-operation presumably has a firm foundation after ten years of existence. Here, qualitative aspects are of a special importance, although their efficiency may be enormously increased by granting financial support (e.g. Interreg, Phare CBC). In addition, the human potential plays another substantive role and, consequently, must be increasingly invested in.

#### **4 - What is the external impact of this co-operation?**

First, it is to be mentioned that the cross-border co-operation developed from the necessity of working together after the political change that mobilised endogenous powers. In the time following, it was possible to win higher authorities (e.g. the German regional governments, the responsible national institutions, the European Commission) over to support. But, at the same time, they themselves were also aware that the border regions and their activists needed

help (e.g. by funds of Interreg or Phare). In the meantime, the involved partners of communication have adapted to their respective tasks and developed a constructive mutual relationship on a partnership basis. Additionally, partners from inside (e.g. regional press, foundations) and outside the region (e.g. associations, interest groups) were won over.

Concerning the improvement of the relations with other regions, the Euregio Egrensis has, on the one hand, integrated into the structures of the directly neighbouring marketing regions (Oberfranken Offensiv e. V., Initiative Südwestsachsen e. V.) and vice versa. On the other hand, it is an active member of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), which represents the interests of all European border regions. Additionally, both direct (e.g. with the Finnish Päijät-Hämeen Liitto) and indirect contacts (e.g. with the regions of Trieste and Salzburg) have been established throughout Europe. These contacts prove to be important in gaining information and stimulus.

As already mentioned, the relationship with the central authorities has improved since the foundation of the Euroregion. This is in particular true for the Bavarian, Saxon, Thuringian and Czech parts and their relationship with the respective regional government, or the national government of the Czech Republic. At the same time, the function of Euregio Egrensis as an instrument of co-operation in the south-east-German border region, and the region as a whole, is acknowledged on the national level. An expansion of the euroregional autonomy, though, is unlikely. This is mainly due to the integration of most local players (e.g. mayors, heads of institutions, representatives of associations) into the grown structures of their respective authorities. Therefore, the Euroregions should increasingly have a say in matters directly concerning their interests (e.g. in the committee controlling the approval of Interreg projects).

Spill-over effects on the neighbouring areas exist in many different ways. For instance, this concerns areas that are direct neighbours of the border districts and areas that want to realise relevant border-crossing projects, preferably financed by Interreg. Although this is, in principle, a possible option (namely by up to 20% of the Interreg funds), there is, unfortunately, insufficient information about it. Thus, in spite of interesting projects, many applicants are prevented from applying for financial support. This problem particularly concerns Thuringian districts that actively participate in the Euroregion but that cannot profit from Interreg funds due to the exclusion of the Free State of Thuringia. Therefore, measures should be introduced that would allow these and similar districts to profit from Interreg funds.

The formal level, where districts of the so-called second row (e.g. Kronach) became new members of the Euregio Egrensis, should also be mentioned. At the same time, though, there are regions that meet the demands of being funded but that are not members of the Euregio Egrensis. Such regions should apply for membership in order to further strengthen the Euroregion.

In summary, one can say that these results are primarily explained by institutional interconnections, the social capital and the political milieu.

Finally, some problems that limit the success of the cross-border co-operation will be discussed. This is done by taking special account of the instruments of funding that play an important role for granting Interreg and Phare funds. The greatest difficulties are the following:

Although the funding period of Interreg III formally began at the beginning of 2000, the coordination of the funding documents between the European Commission and the regional authorities (state, counties) took so long that the measures identified still cannot be realised. This delay of now nineteen months (by end of July 2001) is by no means a motivation for the players in the Euroregions and causes misunderstanding, anger and resignation among them.

In particular, this negatively affects the local decision makers and their staff because they have to put potential project investors off, and they are limited in their own working efforts.

Less professional but innovative project investors may give up because the complicated application, the examination, or the approval or disapproval of the cross-border projects all take a very long time. Furthermore, there occur problems concerning the intelligence of decisions about whether to fund projects. This intelligence needs further improvement. The already stated facts alone are proof that the information on the European, national, regional and local level must be improved.

An additionally negative fact is that Interreg and Phare are still incompatible. Their differing structures hinder the co-operative project work and joint spatial development across the German-Czech border considerably. The different funding modalities in the Bavarian and Saxon parts of the Euregio Egrensis are also unfavourable. This concerns less the disparate, large funding sums, especially since they are objectively justified, but rather the unlikely implementations that limit the realisation of trilateral measures. In this connection, it should be remarked that it seems to be counterproductive to impose additional conditions on the regional level (e.g. by a restrictive interpretation of the EU funding guidelines or by using national funding guidelines as a basis).

The different projects are rather to be financed on the basis of their border-crossing relevance and by renunciation of bureaucratic conditions. Concerning the character of projects, both economic enterprises in the stricter sense, and programmes that intensify soft location factors (culture, sports, education, science etc.) should be increasingly supported in the future. The latter should be realised through support of small projects.

To dispel the economy-oriented deficit, the “Association of business associations along the borders of Middle and East European states joining the EU,” was founded in September 1998. It demands, “for a time of transition, to consider the special situation of the regions along the border of these states and, therefore, to allow special support in order to cope with the economic and social changes,” as well as an improvement in the location factors of the border regions and, thus, an amelioration of their ability to compete on a long-term basis. In July 2001, the European Commission proposed nearly 400 million DM to support the 23 border regions that are affected by the eastern expansion of the EU. This amount was considered by those at the local level to be too small. The chambers of commerce also argue for a greater emphasis on economic and business management aspects of the cross-border co-operation ([www.ts.camcom.it](http://www.ts.camcom.it)). This idea originated within Euregio Egrensis and is now widely accepted.

With this comes the demand for temporary limitation of the flexibility of eastern and middle European employees and service providers after their states joined the EU. In this way, their expected sudden migration might be prevented in order to give the border regions and their inhabitants some time to prepare for the new situation.

The large amount of stated tasks demands a very high degree of commitment from the euroregional players. In view of this, the regional offices seem to be under-equipped with regards to staff and material. Another question is, how is it possible in the long term to integrate the activities even more and, consequently, make them more effective within the Euroregions, despite the organisational division into three (in case of the Euregio Egrensis) or two parts (as in other Euroregions)?

Nevertheless, it can be stated that cross-border co-operation in Euregio Egrensis is pursued on a high level ten years after the political change. Therefore - by renouncing every unnecessary bureaucracy - all future euroregional efforts should be supported on the regional and national



level in order to successfully reduce all disparities that will presumably remain for some time. At the same time, Euroregions have the task of meeting the high expectations, of lastingly bringing in their endogenous potential and of coordinating their organisational structure properly.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Landesentwicklung und Umweltfragen et al. (Ed.): Trilaterales Entwicklungskonzept für den bayerisch-sächsisch-tschechischen Grenzraum, München/Dresden/Prag 1994.

Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Landesentwicklung und Umweltfragen et al. (Ed.): Interreg III-Phase CBC Raumkonzept für den bayerisch-tschechischen Grenzraum, München/Prag 1999.

Europäische Kommission u. a. (Ed.): Die Osterweiterung der Europäischen Union und ihre Bedeutung für die Euroregionen im deutsch-tschechischen und deutsch-polnischen Grenzraum = 2. Bayerisch-sächsisches Relaistreffen, München/Marktreidwitz 1999.

Euregio Egrensis u. a. (Ed.): Nachbarn im Haus Europa. Perspektiven der EU-Osterweiterung für die Region = Tutzing Materialie Nr. 83, Tutzing/Marktreidwitz 1999.

Institut für Stadtforschung und Strukturpolitik GmbH: Evaluierungsstudie über den Einsatz der Strukturfondsmittel der Europäischen Union im Rahmen der Gemeinschaftsinitiative Interreg II in den Freistaaten Sachsen und Bayern, Berlin 1998.

Jurczek, P.: Grenzüberschreitende Entwicklungskonzepte und deren Umsetzung: das Dreiländereck Bayern – Sachsen – Böhmen als Beispiel; in: Beiträge zur Angewandten Sozialgeographie, S. 180 – 187, Augsburg 1993.

Jurczek, P.: Grenzüberschreitende Regionalentwicklung im bayerisch-sächsisch-tschechischen Grenzraum; in: Miscellanea Geographica, H. 1, S. 19 – 23, Plzen/Pilsen 1993.

Jurczek, P.: Möglichkeiten und Schwierigkeiten der grenzüberschreitenden Entwicklung sowie Formen der grenzübergreifenden Kooperation im sächsisch-bayerisch-tschechischen Dreiländereck; in: Praxis Kultur- und Sozialgeographie; H. 15, S. 35 – 42, Potsdam 1996.

Jurczek, P. (Ed.): Regionale Entwicklung über Staatsgrenzen. Das Beispiel der Euregio Egrensis = Kommunal- und Regionalstudien, H. 23, Kronach/München/Bonn 1996.

Jurczek, P.: The Inception of a Joint Development concept in the Bavaria-Saxonia-Bohemia Triangle; in: Occasional Papers, Joensuu 1996.

Jurczek, P.: Einschätzung der Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit im sächsisch-böhmischen Grenzgebiet = Beiträge zur Kommunal- und Regionalentwicklung, H. 29, Chemnitz 1997.

Jurczek, P.: Zwischenbilanz der grenzübergreifenden Zusammenarbeit in den deutsch-tschechischen Euroregionen, dargestellt am Beispiel der Euregio Egrensis; in: Experimentelle Geographie und Planung, Augsburg 1997.

Jurczek, P.: Das Problem der Grenze: Schwierigkeiten der regionalen Entwicklung im sächsisch-böhmischen Grenzgebiet und Vorschläge zu deren Lösung; in: Gute Nachbarn – Schlechte Nachbarn I, S. 7-12, Chemnitz 1998.

Jurczek, P.: Chancen und Probleme der grenzübergreifenden Zusammenarbeit an der deutschen Ostgrenze; in: Grenzübergreifende Kooperation im östlichen Mitteleuropa = Occasional Papers, Nr. 19, S. 114 – 122, Tübingen 1998.

Jurczek, P.: Strukturelle Einbindung der Landkreise Greiz und Saale-Orla in die Euregio Egrensis, unveröffentlichte Studie im Auftrag der Thüringer Staatskanzlei, Erfurt/Greiz 2000

Jurczek, P.: Perspektiven der grenzübergreifenden Zusammenarbeit im Vierländereck Sachsen, Thüringen – Bayern – Böhmen zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts; in: Gute Nachbarn – schlechte Nachbarn III, S. 7-15, Chemnitz 2000.

Jurczek, P. et al.: Ansätze zur grenzüberschreitenden Entwicklung in der Euregio Egrensis; in: Frankfurter Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeographische Schriften, H. 67, S. 109 – 137, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

Jurczek, P. et al.: Datenatlas für das Gebiet der Euregio Egrensis = Beiträge zur Kommunal- und Regionalentwicklung, Chemnitz 1998.

Lippert, J.: Grenzüberschreitende Entwicklungskonzepte. Ein neuer Weg der bayerischen Landesplanung an der Ostgrenze der EU (Diss.) = Kommunal- und Regionalstudien, H. 27, Kronach/München/Bonn 1997.

Müller, B. et al.: Sächsisch-Tschechisches Entwicklungskonzept für Interreg III/Phare CBC, Dresden/Prag 1999.



**THE HAYDN-LISZT QUARTET:**  
**NEW INSTITUTIONS, SOCIAL ACTORS AND NETWORKING**  
**IN THE WEST-PANNON EUROREGION**

Ferenc Miszlivetz

Institute for Social and European Studies in Koszeg-Szombathely

The 1990s were the years of learning for Central Europe not only in terms of market economics but in terms of joining the European integration processes as well. This is especially true for the establishment of the institutional frames for regions and regional development and cooperation. As a result, seven regions were created in Hungary without the dissolution of the counties, the traditional units of Hungarian public administration. Regions in Hungary are in the process of institutional stabilization and are trying to become real players in domestic and European politics. The Western-Transdanubian region which consists of the three western-border counties of Győr-Sopron, Vas and Zala, is outstandingly positioned among them, since together with Burgenland in Austria, it constitutes the West-Pannon Euroregion, the only one in Hungary with EU borders.

Three quarters of the entire population of 1.3 million and territory of the West-Pannonia belongs to Hungary. As a consequence, the institutional and social development of the three counties of Western Transdanubia play a determining role in the ongoing process of Euroregionalization.

Since the abolition of the Iron Curtain, this development has been both dynamic and uninterrupted. The Hungarian part of the West Pannon Euroregion is among the most successful in Hungary, whereas Burgenland is the least developed in Austria, thus the center of periphery meets here the periphery of the center.

Interpersonal, social, economic and political relationships traditionally play a vital role throughout the entire border region, thus providing an excellent base for institution-building and networking within the recently institutionalized frames of Western Transdanubia. Social cohesion of the new Euroregion can be strengthened by ethnic groups and minorities traditionally living peacefully side-by-side on both sides of the EU's eastern border.

With the opening of borders in 1989, crossborder labor market relations have intensified. Many Hungarian citizens, searching for higher income possibilities, have adjusted themselves to the requirements of the Austrian labor market during the past decade. Most of the commuting migrants have found employment opportunities in the service sector, agriculture and construction industry. The rising proportion of comparatively cheap migrant labor can provoke social and political tensions, and as a consequence this sensitive issue needs special attention during the process of framing crossborder regional labor relations.

Why does Western Transdanubia play a special role among the seven Hungarian regions? As the only EU frontier region, economically more advanced than the others in the past decade, it went through a faster learning process and has a good chance to serve as a model and provide assistance to the reform of the entire Hungarian regional development system. Although Győr, as the largest city and industrial center in the region, plays an eminent economic role and attracts the vast majority of foreign capital investment, West Pannonia does not have a regional capital center. Its awakening middle-sized cities, with strong multicultural and ethnically mixed populations provide an opportunity for a regional, crossborder city-network together with a larger circle of Austrian, Slovenian, Croatian and Slovak cities. This emerging

chain of cities could become the firm base of a new Central European core region. Being the gateway to the EU, the West-Pannon Euroregion builds its strategy on the unique position of an intersection of five countries. (See maps in appendix).

Statistics underly this dynamism: 65% of the entire traffic oriented abroad in Hungary is concentrated at the border crossings in West-Pannonia. Western Hungary has traditionally been open in its culture and economy. After Greater Budapest, it is the most attractive target area for foreign capital investment. The ratio of employment is exceptionally high and the unemployment rate is by far the lowest in Hungary. This part of the country has been able to preserve its natural environment and cultural heritage intact during the years of the Cold War paradoxically because of its proximity to the Iron Curtain. At the same time, this highly controlled and politically sensitive region was exposed to constant police surveillance and the search for illegal immigrants. Institutional and cultural development was purposely held back. The "Iron Curtain psychosis" still leaves an imprint on social life and explains the lack of institutional innovation and social entrepreneurial spirit, at the beginning of the post-Cold War period. Although a multiparty system was rapidly and smoothly implemented and democratic elections were unharassed, the surviving institutions as well as the democratically elected city and county self-governments were unable to rid themselves of old work methods and remained largely closed institutions which performed in the old spirit. Although the rhetoric and ideology had radically changed, instead of innovation and opening-up to the world, they were more characterized by a lack of trust and cooperation.

Therefore, it was a real breakthrough when, from the second half of the 1990s, new actors emerged and became activated both in civil society and in the realm of public administration. By the turn of the millenium, the new actors had taken up key positions in regional and spacial development and in Phare CBC project management new working methods were introduced and the spirit of trust and cooperation slowly began to gain momentum. This has not been an easy battle and still not over. But as a consequence, real change occurred and there have been successes. Continuity in institutional life has been fundamentally broken.

Strategic planning, a blasphemy for a long time, has regained its legitimacy and returned to public discourse and administrative thinking. In the last few years, county and city governments established strategic planning departments. Within this institutional rejuvenation, new financial resources became available, such as Phare CBC, and played an important, if not decisive, role. Ridding themselves of hierarchical attitudes, self-governments began to build coalitions with NGOs and started to play an initiating role vis-a-vis the central government. This new attitude has recently penetrated the institutional world of the "old" players to a lesser degree. Wherever it is present, regional thinking and developmental processes work efficiently.

## **1 – New Players**

After Austria became an EU memberstate in 1995, the opportunity opened for Hungary to join the EU support programs of crossborder cooperation. The participation of Hungary and pre-eminently Western Transdanubia in these programs was made possible by the availability of EU resources.

### **1.1 - The Regional Development Council**

Regions in Hungary, including Euroregions, are *in statu nascendi* in all meanings of the phrase. Their legal/constitutional and administrative status is uncertain and subject to political bargaining. This weakness, however, is at the same time their strength, since their uncertain state provides a larger space for manuevre and greater flexibility vis-a-vis the unwritten rules

of a hierarchical world. The Western Danubian Regional Council was established in 1997 by Győr-Sopron and Vas counties and it was reestablished in 1999, when Zala county joined.

The Councils' committees elaborated the regional priorities such as human resource development, entrepreneurial and technological innovation and the development of regional institutions; its committees are responsible for the realization of these priorities.

There is a conscious effort, from the side of the Council, to shape cooperation with the traditional bodies of public administration in order to harmonize mid-term regional and state sectoral development strategies. Most of the decentralized organizations are in favor of this cooperation since they understand that an improved, extended and intensified flow of information serves their interests and they can get a more comprehensive and up-to-date picture of regional changes via networking.

The *Regional Development Council* integrates different functions: it is a body of professional experts, at the same time it acts as a virtual regional parliament.

The *Regional Development Agency* is the executive branch of the Council and the engine of regional and crossborder cooperation. Its primary role is to realize the priorities of the Council and to create a new and unified image of the region. It supports the initiatives of micro-regions and organizes workshops, fora and conferences to promote the interactivity of different regional players.

The Agency has a direct effect on the everyday life of the population, on the business sphere, and on the decisionmaking bodies at all levels of governance.

Micro-regions and micro-regional associations started to come into existence in Hungary in 1992. Their creation was supported by local self-governments, and in 1996 a law ordered their establishment. Their *characteristica specifica* is their simultaneous organization from above and below. The truly efficient micro-regions are led by strong personalities with the ability of social innovation; thanks to the crossborder dialogue and assistance from their Austrian partners, their professional attitude is shaped by EU experience.

The example of the Zalakar Microregional Development Association demonstrates how efficient a micro-region can be in adopting a cooperative attitude. After its establishment in 1992, it needed 7-8 years to become a real player. Since 1999, it runs a professional service company in the public interest. Among many things, they offer a social program for marginalized families with the help of the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs. In cooperation with the Ministry of Traffic and Communication they established a "Telehouse" which functions as a sort of information center; with the assistance of the Ministry of Agriculture they organized a "wine road", etc. In the year 2000, they began a management program for women. This example shows that for a proper change in institutional attitude, a period of 7-9 years is required. This time frame is probably enough for new actors to learn how to build efficient partner-relationships with each other and with traditional players.

## **1.2 – Other achievements**

Similar success stories can be mentioned from Vas county and Győr-Sopron county as well. The *Pannonhalma Micro-region Development Association* supported by a private, local ecological foundation functions as a regional ecological center and has developed a model of bio-agriculture (farming), combined with the utilization of renewable resources like solar energy. This example demonstrates a spontaneously developing, functional association which takes advantage of a formally established structure in pursuit of its goals. After success was demonstrated, the 23 previously passive rural self-governments became full supporters of the

program.

The training program for career advisors, launched by *Reginnov Consulting Ltd.* in Vasvár, is a genuine model for crossborder cooperation. This path-breaking program fits the crossborder strategy of Western Hungary and Eastern Austria. Parallel applications were submitted to the Phare CBC by the Vas County Labor Center and by the Burgenland Employment Office to Intereg II. The project is also connected to the training of social-economic managers and to the crossborder cooperation development program elaborated in 1999, which led to the establishment of two employment information centers. The training was realized in 1998-99 and represents a successful twin program at two venues: at Szombathely (Hungary) and Oberwart (Austria).

Further examples for the gradual development of the spirit of cooperation can be seen in the *Naturpark Association* in Köszeg, and the *Savaria Scientific Society* in Szombathely. After several years of experimentation and „bowling alone,” all of these new initiatives have attained the practise of cooperation which guarantees long term sustainability. An outstanding example of this change in attitude is the *Reflex Ecological Organization* from Győr which has turned from a radical "deep green," non-cooperative protest NGO into a networking development institution with a broad regional perspective without abandoning their green commitments. In cooperation with the regional Environmental Center they are establishing Green Points throughout the region, pursuing the principles of horizontal networking and sustainability.

The successful micro-regions and the civil organizations cooperating with them are recognizing the possibilities for social dialogue within newly established frames via employing the methods of conscious planning. Comparing them to the old players at the county level with a thousand years of tradition in public administration, their result- and success-oriented attitude and efficiency is even more outstanding.

*TERET - The Consultation Council for Developmental Regions* was established in January 2001 by the 7 Hungarian regions in order to enable and empower regional actors at the national level. The Council closely cooperates with representatives for the Hungarian regions in Brussels. Its dual aim is successful preparation by the counties for EU accession and the strengthening of the role of regions in long term development policy implementation.

## **2 - A double leap: enabling new institutional levels**

Many other empirical examples prove that the 1990s were the decade of institutional learning, renewal and the period of shaping new thinking. Institutional change took place at two levels: vis-a-vis traditional institutional structures characterized by a lack of cooperation among old players like county and city governments, the level of micro-regional associations emerged above local (village) municipalities and above the county level the region was established. This development has encouraged local self-governments to break out from their isolation and counties found new space for manoeuvre which gave them the chance to get rid of their paralyzing rivalry which is often accompanied by nostalgia for the ancien regime.

A specific, common feature of the micro-regions and regions is the lack of a legal/constitutional status, at the same time, their role and capacity in institution-building is *de facto* increasingly recognized at both the national and EU levels. Exactly the transitory character of these developmental bodies provides them with the chance to soften and dissolve old, petrified structures and to exercise their "soft" functions when facing bureaucratic, financial and political challenges.



There are strong family ties among the new actors. Micro-regions and their associations understand the new language of the region better than anyone else. They began themselves to build their own administrative structures, networks and apparatus. On the other hand, the Regional Development Council and the Regional Development Agency provide them with well-targeted assistance for capacity-building. This double effect leads to the consolidation of the system of regional networks and relations. For the representation of this new micro-level, competing ideas have emerged. One was the establishment of a regional "mini-ministry," which involves the danger of reestablishing traditional hierarchical structures at the regional level. Instead, the Regional Development Agency decided in favor of regional network management. Its success in the last two years is astonishing. The building up of the regional network has been in large part accomplished.

How can this fast network development be explained? The beginning of the transition period was characterized by a new kind of atomization both in the world of civil society and in official institutions. Half a decade was needed to realize that individual solutions are not all that efficient. Long term projects, based on proper ideas can be fully realized only in cooperation. These examples are attractive models. Their success has made an impact on many other civil and official institutions who have slowly come to realize that there is no alternative to cooperation if they want to stabilize early success and secure the path for further development. From the second half of the 1990s, therefore, one can observe an obvious shift of emphasis within successful institutions towards sustainability and organized structures accompanied by long term strategic thinking. After the initial period of sparkling successes, long term life-processes came to the forefront. The new actors have gradually developed a sense of timing and the ability to program.

The shaping of the micro-level, between local and national governments, has the utmost significance for the EU integration process. We are witnessing the birth of new phenomena and institutions whose unintended results and natural imbalances might seriously influence both political and social life. Representatives of political life on the traditional, local level have largely recognized the new chances offered by the micro-level. They understood that solutions to burning problems cannot be found within the traditional institutional frameworks of counties and local municipalities.

At the same time, regionalization, as a politics-shaping force, has not fully materialized at the national level. It is still more rhetoric than reality. As a consequence, "old" and "new" coexist according to the rules of spontaneous and planned development in a peculiar combination of symbiosis and antagonism. Old hierarchies are covered with new functions, inflexible and rigid structures are softening, the practise of spontaneous politics gains momentum. The new rules of the game have not chrystallized because there has been no breakthrough neither at the national level of politics nor in public thinking. The game, however, is not over. The legal status of the region needs to be guaranteed by constitutional amendment.

## **2.1 - Intelligent regions: moving further on the road of networking**

The region of West-Pannonia can serve as a model for regional development elsewhere since it demonstrates in the practise of everyday life the principle of horizontal networking. There is nothing like "the center" in the region. The success stories indirectly prove that the region cannot be organized from above. All players decide themselves with what and to what extent they contribute to regional construction. Despite proven successes, old fashioned, institutional mentality has remained and most likely these two different behaviors will clash for a long time to come. This chaos, however, is productive in as much as it gives new forms for hitherto suppressed tensions. It makes hidden conflicts open and subject to public discourse.

The speedy expansion of information technology is likely to give a serious push to horizontal networking and institutionalized partnerships among old and new players. The building up of info-parks, tele-houses, and the regional intranet has begun and moves forward intermittently.

By the spring of 2002, a new Phare CBC program will be launched which provides each micro-region with 3-5 work stations and free Internet access for two years. These new opportunities to reach crucial information will significantly reduce the hierarchical dependence on central offices and therefore render the constraints of adjustments obsolete.

## **2.2 - Project Management**

The Western Hungarian Regional Development Agency has shown its capacity to innovate in the field of management, in so far as it has brought the programs and complexities of regional development to applicants. This interactivity is an entirely new element in Hungarian public administration, institutional and regional development.

There were, and there still are, disturbing elements and obstacles to crossborder, regional integration. Crossborder cooperation was not enhanced by the EU failure to harmonize the Interreg and Phare CBC programs. Disharmony became of permanent feature as a result of different deadlines and Hungary always lagged behind Austria. Today this situation has actually reversed since the EU has blocked the start of a new Austrian Interreg program. It is, therefore, hard to discuss common management. This makes sense only if partners are mobilizing national resources in order to achieve common goals (or pursue common interests).

"By making joint management impossible, the European Commission sometimes irritates both partners so much that they realize their projects out of their own resources," says Gábor Györffy, the executive director of the Regional Development Agency.

## **2.3 - At what levels did significant changes occur thanks to cooperation?**

First of all at the regional level. Five years ago, in Hungary, there was no mezo-level in governance. Today it is reality even if not in legal and constitutional terms. The process began in 1996 and increased in speed from 1999 on. Despite disharmony and administrative frustration, Western Hungary gained significant advantages as a result of crossborder cooperation in comparison to other regions of the country. Crossborder cooperation and interactivity among different players is more advanced in the Euroregion of West Pannonia than in any other Euroregion with Hungarian participation. A shift can be observed even at the level of the city and county self-governments from traditional institutional behavior towards a more open, and cooperative one. It might be too early, however, to speak in terms of a breakthrough. The same is true at the level of national institutions, sectoral branches and ministries.

## **3 - Changing Austrian attitudes**

An open attitude and helpfulness in terms of setting up crossborder projects and institutions was always present on the Austrian side during the post-Cold War period, although in a rather sporadic, isolated way. A comprehensive approach and an overall enthusiasm about Eastern enlargement failed, however, at the national level as well as at the regional level. Apart from their political ideology, political leaders (landeshauptmann) of Burgenland and other provinces in the border region regularly expressed their deep concerns about the social

consequences of Eastern enlargement. Despite the fact that at the national level there is still some ambiguity concerning the „inevitable negative consequences” of Eastern enlargement, the approach of Burgenland as well as other provinces, such as Steiermark, has recently become obviously and outspokenly positive. There are more and more visits, meetings, and workshops among politicians and administrative bodies. In August 2001, Hans Niessl, the president (Landeshauptmann) of Burgenland at a press conference urged Burgenland society to speed up crossborder cooperation in the fields of transport, communication and tourism. Local society does not seem to be frightened by the perspective of border-elimination. The results of the latest empirical research conducted by the College of International Economic Relations in Eisenstadt demonstrate that 59% of the population in Burgenland supports Hungary’s EU accession, whereas only 21% reject it fully. Local politicians present at the meeting stressed the economic and cultural dynamizing effects of the process of enlargement for Burgenland and declared the importance of joint Austrian-Hungarian lobbying in Brussels. According to Niessl only through stronger crossborder cooperation and regional integration does Burgenland have a chance to rid itself of its peripheral position within the EU. As he formulated „after the elimination of borders, the West Pannon Euroregion might even become a „European spring board.” (The interview with Niessl was published in *Vas Népe*, the local daily of County Vas on August 22, 2001).

This is certainly one possibility, but to achieve this ambitious aim one has to travel down a long and difficult road. Infrastructure, public transport and communication are underdeveloped in the border region. Many of the railway connections were cut and some even destroyed during the Cold War. Turning dreams into reality, the great cities, cultural and industrial centers have to be made easily assessable. There is an old national plan in Austria to develop a high speed train connection between Wein and Graz. The straight line between the two cities would cross Burgenland. The cost, however, is very high since the railway would also have to scale high mountains. An alternative is to build the new line via Sopron and Szombathely. This would be significantly less expensive and, at the same time, it would increase the blood circulation of West Pannonia. This would create a win-win situation and the possibility to overcome the exclusive „national interest” argumentation. High level Austrian national politicians condemned the perpetrators of the second variant as „betrayers of Austrian interests”; nevertheless, regional politicians and bureaucracies have resisted this pressure and won the case. Regional, crossborder interests and rationality in this case proved stronger than national ideology.

#### **4 - What has been the qualitative impact of the strategic co-operation in the region? What practical improvements have been achieved?**

The new Euroregion provides an excellent frame and conditions for the West-Pannon border region to nurture its Central European identity, multicultural and multilingual traditions. The cities in this region have both Hungarian and German and sometimes also Croatian and Slovenian names, according to the ethnic origin of local populations which have never been homogenous. Populations on the two sides of the border mostly understand each other's languages. In Western Hungary German is still the most widespread foreign language. Thanks to open borders and intensified crossborder activities, such as shopping-tourism, dentist-tourism, etc., a growing part of the population in Burgenland speaks and learns Hungarian. More and more secondary school students from Hungary are enrolled in Austria and bilateral cooperation between gymnasiums and specialized schools have become an everyday practice. The need for stronger and regulated crossborder cooperation has been recently formulated at the level of higher education as well.

The European University Center for Peace Studies in Stadtschlaining and the Center for European Studies at the Berzsényi College in Szombathely have been regularly working together since the early 1990s. Since 1996, the Savaria International Summer University in Köszeg can be seen as a "mirror" project of the Summer Academy in Stadtschlaining. From this cooperation was born the idea of a virtual, crossborder university with a Szombathely-Köszeg-Stadtschlaining triangle. (These cities are approximately 20-30 kilometers from each other.) As a first step, the introduction of a joint university degree program in International and European Studies is planned.

Approaching the expected date of enlargement, cultural relations have intensified in other terrains as well. "Hello Neighbour!" - a Euroregional project is a bilingual TV series which was launched in 2000 about matters of common interest and recent developments in European integration. The number of music festivals and concert series is steadily increasing. Parallel to the famous international Haydn festivals in Eisenstadt (Kismarton) (Haydn lived and worked in Eisenstadt, the largest city in Burgenland, located 10 km from Sopron), the city of Sopron (Odenburg) initiated a Franz Liszt Festival (Franz Liszt was born in a small village near Sopron and gave many concerts in the city and neighborhood). Playing together is not ordered from above or the result of budget constraints, it has become part of a new common sense and has even found spontaneous and artistic expressions.

The West Pannon Euroregion has formed a working group in order to establish links between the common cultural heritage and the high quality wellness tourism and started to explore the cultural history of Pannonia and put together a guide to the common historical heritage.

A striking example of well-spirited and publically useful crossborder cooperation is the *Geschriebenstein Naturpark Association* which encompasses the highest point in the Köszeg hills which is also the highest point in West Pannonia. It was here that the Iron Curtain cut Hungary off from Europe until 1989. Even after 1989, over half of the buena vista belongs to Austria and the other part to Hungary. A successful crossborder initiative from the Austrian side in the first half of the 1990s was the establishment of the *Geschriebenstein Naturpark Verbund*; a few years later in 1997, the Hungarian mirror institution, *Irótkő Naturpark Egyesület*, came into existence and is successfully functioning. Today they publish joint, bilingual maps, brochures and calendars of cultural and touristic events of the Köszeg Hill and its neighborhood. The hill is no longer cut in half; the new maps do not show the national borders.

In the field of the economy, industrial parks and clusters are the most obvious manifestations of new methods and innovation. The economic working group of the West-Pannon Euroregion has organized crossborder cooperation between industrial parks since 1999. The industrial park located on the border at Szentgotthard and Heiligenkreuz became a special industrial zone. The working group is responsible for the elaboration of marketing strategy of the region, for concrete, harmonized development of services, for the more intensive utilization of renewable resources, for creating a friendlier environment and better networking conditions for small- and medium-size enterprises, etc.

In October 2000, the West Pannon Regional Development Agency launched a new program called the "Pannon Business Initiative," with the declared aims to create an attractive, innovative business environment and to strengthen the social and economic cohesion of the region. The impact of the program can be felt in the increasing interactivity and partnership among spacial and economic development organizations in the region. The development policy based on the principle of networking is able to transfer the economic dynamism of big business to the world of small enterprises. After the successful launch of the Pannon Automotive Cluster, the Pannon Business Initiative attempts to create the framework

conditions for further clustering in other dynamic branches such as in the electronics, wood, fruit production and thermal tourism industries.

The new dynamism has slowly reached other related areas such as research and development and higher education. Joint workshops, conferences, and negotiations about common strategies have become frequent events and the flow of information has intensified between university centers, research institutes, NGOs and the business sector. Mutual recognition of long term inter-dependencies and the recognition of the central role of culture in its broadest terms, and scientific research (including social sciences) are the most recent and novel results of joint developmental efforts. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences has expressed its interest in co-establishing academic research centers and even a Regional Committee in Kőszeg and Szombathely with the clear aim to foster crossborder and all-European research agendas and to strengthen higher education standards. The regional Association of the National Alliance of Industrialists together with Chambers of Commerce are lobbying together with educational centers for institutional improvements.

The first fruits can be harvested from the successful realization and institutional introduction of the principles of networking and partnership. It made an impact on political life, as well. Within interregional working relationships, the practice and principle of horizontal, co-decisions and transparent decisionmaking came to the forefront at the expense of the old practices of secrecy and partisanship which can no longer avoid entering networks of cooperation. Old methods and ungrounded "democratic" decisions reached by secret voting are being questioned by the new partners. In many ways this signals the real end of the ancien regime in the countryside where the survival of institutional enclaves was made possible by their relative lack of importance and peripheral positions. In a certain way, regionalization can be interpreted as a new way of mobilizing the dormant energies of civil society locally, and pushing further the blocked process of social democratization through fostering tendencies of decentralization on the national level. Thus the success of regionalization is linked to democratization.

West-Pannonia is traditionally a region of peaceful coexistence among different ethnic and religious groups. Slovenians, Croats, Slovaks, Austrians, Germans, Vends, etc., can be found living together in settlements, cultivating their cultural and linguistic roots. Pannonia has become a generic term for this. It began to recognize, enjoy and propagate its multicultural and multilingual character. A recent cultural project of the Europe House in Eisenstadt, "Polis Pannonia," is a telling example for new efforts of civil society to revitalize the best values and traditions of this frontier region: and initiate open fora for discussion on hitherto undiscussed or suppressed elements of common history.

Recently, civil society went through an intense process of institutionalization in the entire region. This process, intertwined with European integration and globalization, has resulted in a new consciousness and thematization of public issues: ecological awareness, questions of human rights and minorities, intolerance and discrimination against the Roma, alternative programs for education and training of the socially marginalized. The new social environment provided by the Euroregion and its new players favors the flourishing of civil society and vice versa, civil society is participating vigorously in the process of regionalization.

Thanks to its historic traditions, geographic location and economic success, Western Hungary is ready for the further intensification of crossborder cooperation. Social, cultural and economic synergies underlie the legitimacy and plausibility of the Euroregion. There are numerous examples of local obstacles and administrative clumsiness, but this can be overcome. In a paradoxical way, the great advantage of the region is its malleability, soft structures and amorphous character. Great processes of transformation, symbolized by a break

with the past, would have gotten stuck within more rigid structures.

The results and accomplishments of regionalization can be explained by the aggregate impact of the new economy, highly developed human resources, culturally anchored social capital and by the new, dynamic, open and flexible institutions and actors. At the same time, the local representatives of national politics, for the time being, are rather passive followers and observers of the changes and not instigators.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. *Local Development and Socio-Spatial Organization: Trends, Problems and Policies: the Case of Korper, Slovenia.* Budapest: Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, 2000
2. András Inotai: *What is Novel about Eastern Enlargement of the European Union? The Costs and Benefits of Eastern Enlargement of the European Union.* Budapest: Institute for World Economics Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1997
3. *Regional Policy and Local Governments.* (ed. by Gyula Horváth) Pécs: Centre for Regional Studies, 1991. 215 p.
4. *Az Európai Unió politikái.* [Policies of the European Union] (ed. by. Tamás Kende and Tamás Szűcs) Budapest: Osiris, 2000. 611 p.
5. Ilona Kovács, Pálné: *Regionális politika és közigazgatás.* [Regional policy and public administration] Budapest, Pécs: Dialóg Campus: 1999. 282 p.
6. Gyula Horváth: *Európai regionális politika.* [European regional policy]. Budapest, Pécs : Dialóg Campus: 1998. 501 p.
7. *Régiók Európája, az Európai Unió regionális politikája.* [Regions of Europe, the regional policy of the European Union] Budapest: Külügyminisztérium, 1999. 24 p.
8. *A regionális és határon átnyúló együttm űködés.* [Regional cross-border cooperation]. Szombathely, Institute for Social and European Studies, 2001. 72 p.
9. *Preparing for a New Europe: ISES "Preparity" Final Report.* (ed. by Jody Jensen, Ferenc Miszlivetz) Szombathely: Institute for Social and European Studies, 2001. 197 p.
10. *Regional policy. Budapest, Hungarian Strategic Task Force for Hungarian Integration* – Prime Minister's Office, 2000. 18 p.
11. *Regions and Cities in the Global World: in Honour of György Enyedi.* (ed. by Gyula Horváth) Pécs: Centre for Regional Studies, 2000. 243 p.
12. János Rechnitzer: *Területi stratégiák.* [Spatial strategies]. Budapest–Pécs: Dialóg Campus, 1998. 348 p.
13. *Working for the Regions.* Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2001. 32 p.
14. Attila Buday-Sántha: *Vidékpolitika – agrárpolitika: a Magyar agrárgazdaság és az Európai Unió.* [Rural development and agricultural policies] Budapest, Pécs : Dialóg Campus, 2001. 463 p.
15. *Urban Success Stories: Building a Better Tomorrow in Deprived Neighbourhoods.* Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2000. 29 p.
16. *Piaci döbbenet: Közép- és Kelet- Európa társadalmi gazdasági újjáépítésének feladatai.* [Market shock: Reconstruction of Eastern and Central Europe]. Budapest: Robert Triffin- Szirák Alapítvány, 1995. 142 p.
17. *Spatial Perspectives for the Enlargement of the European Union.* Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2000. 84 p
18. *Inclusive Cities: Building Local Capacity for Development.* Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2000. 111 p.
19. Ákos Kengyel: *Az Európai Unió regionális politikája.* [Regional policy of the European Union]. Budapest: Aula, 1999. 203 p.
20. *Elválaszt és összeköt a határ: társadalmi és gazdasági változások az osztrák-magyar határmenti térségben.* Pécs; Győr: MTA Regionális Kutatások Központja, 1999. 307 p. [Social economic changes in the Austrian–Hungarian border. ]
21. *Austria-Hungary Phare CBC Joint Programme 2001-2006.*

22. *SUSTRAIN Fenntartható Közlekedési Infrastruktúra. A gazdaságfejlesztés feltételei a Nyugat-dunántúli régióban.* [Sustainable development in traffic in Western Transdanubia] Nyugat-dunántúli Regionális Fejlesztési Tanács, 2000. 81.p.
23. *Együttműködési megállapodás a Nyugat-Dunántúlért.* [Agreement for cooperation in Western Transdanubia] 3 p.
24. *A Nyugat-dunántúli régió egészségügyi programja.* Vezetői összefoglaló. [Health programme in Western Transdanubia]. Nyugat-dunántúli Regionális Fejlesztési Tanács, 2000. 89 p.
25. *A Nyugat-dunántúli régió intézményfejlesztési és kistérségi kapacitásépítési cselekvési terve.* Excellence Rt., 2000. 89 p. [Institution development and action plan in Western Transdanubia]
26. *Polis Pannonia: Lesarten zur Bildung des Plitischen.* (ed. by Hans Göttel) Europahaus Burgenland : Almanach 2000.
27. Ottó Balogh, Gábor Györffy, Balázs Wächter: *Határkőnél. Az osztrák-magyar határon átnyúló együttműködési program hatása.* [Austrian–Hungarian cross-border cooperation] 2000. 23 p.
28. Gábor Györffy: *West-Pannonia. A Region Woven by Open Cooperation Networks.* West-Pannon Development Agency.
29. *A Nyugat-dunántúli régió területfejlesztés programja.* Győr, [Spatial development programme in Western Transdanubia] 2000. 118 p.
30. *A nyugat-dunántúli régió kutatás és fejlesztés cselekvési terve 2001-2003.* [Research and development programme in Western Transdanubia] 2001. 19 p.
31. *Előzetes regionális fejlesztési terv.* 2001. 62 p. [Regional development plan]
32. Antal Wiktora, Tamás Csapó: *Humán erőforrás fejlesztési program.* [Human resource development programme] Szombathely, 2001. 55 p.
33. János Pusztay: *Urbi et region.* Szombathely, Savaria University Press, 1998.
34. *Keretszerződés az EuRégió West/Nyugat-Pannónia Burgenland, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Vas együttműködéséről* [Contract about cooperation among Burgeland, Győr-Moson-Sopron County and Vas County]
35. *Az EuRégió West/Nyugat-Pannónia Tanácsának ügyrendje* (manuscript)
36. *Az EuRégió West/Nyugat-Pannónia Elnökségének ügyrendje* (manuscript)
37. *Az EuRégió West/Nyugat-Pannónia Titkárságának ügyrendje* (manuscript)
38. *Az EuRégió West/Nyugat-Pannónia Tanács-, Elnökség-, Titkárság- és munkacsoport üléseinek jegyzőkönyvei* (manuscript)
39. *The Complex Regional Development Concept of the Western Cross-border Region of Hungary* (manuscript)
40. *A Nyugat-Dunántúli régió területfejlesztési stratégiája és Phare 2000 programdokumentuma* [Regional development strategy in Western Transdanubia]
41. <http://www.westpa.hu/>
42. <http://europa.eu.int/>



## Cooperation « West Pannonia »





## **ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN FRANCE AND ITALY:** **THE "SEA ALPS"**

Ferruccio Dardanella (Eurocin EEIG)

### **1 – Brief presentation of the area, socioeconomic and administrative situation, main features of the cooperation**

The "European Economic Region of the Sea Alps" was created a few years ago as part of the crossborder cooperation between France and Italy. Testifying to a long history of migration and exchanges, this area remains to be further shaped and developed by future generations, building on strong values of personal freedom and solidarity between peoples.

The area, comprising the regions of Piedmont, Liguria and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, is comparable to – or larger than – several of the European Union's founding States.

The area's 70,000 sq. km are home to almost 11 million inhabitants. It numbers five cities with a population of over 500,000 (Turin, Marseille, Genoa, Nice and Toulon) and 22 municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants. Not to mention 150 sailing resorts, 140 ski resorts, thousands of historical monuments, dozens of art cities, famous castles, nature parks and reserves, extraordinary lakes and precious thermal springs, 6,500 hotels, 1,100 camping sites, luxury conference facilities and a gastronomic tradition that is the envy of the world... Tourism has already abolished the internal borders of this major holiday region, whose Riviera stretches from the Côte d'Azur to Liguria.

The geographical proximity of the three above-mentioned regions and cultural affinities between their inhabitants no doubt contributed to the development of the socioeconomic cooperation project. However, we should note that only the strength of economic arguments eventually managed to overcome political difficulties, demonstrating the potential benefits of uniting the three stable and strong economies.

Cooperation led to the formation of the Eurocin European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG), the first European crossborder company bringing together legal persons and institutions. It was created on the initiative of the chambers of commerce of Cuneo, Imperia and Nice and has since welcomed a number of other public- and private-sector organisations.

The following new members formally joined when Eurocin's general assembly met in October 2000:

- on the Italian side: the chambers of commerce of Asti, Alessandria and Genoa, Unioncamere Piemonte, the City of Cuneo, the European Regional Bank, S.I.TRA.CI (*Società italiana del traffico del Ciriegia*), the local tourist agency in Cuneo and the port authorities of Savona
- on the French side: the chambers of commerce of Marseille and Toulon

In geographical terms, the Eurocin EEIG has gradually expanded within the Sea Alps area from the initial core formed by Cuneo, Imperia and Nice to more outlying areas (Alessandria, Asti, Turin, Genoa, Savona, Marseille and Toulon). The EEIG's members currently operate within an area of 38,702 sq. km. The Eurocin EEIG encompasses approximately 55% of the total area of the Sea Alps Euroregion, and some 78% of its population.

In the longer term, we expect the EEIG to spread to the entire Euroregion, for many other public- and private-sector organisations have expressed an interest in taking an active part in the grouping's projects.

The main aim of this new European economic region is to establish, step by step, the conditions for the emergence of a genuine Euroregion, by building and capitalising on the shared interests of the people of Piedmont, Liguria and the Côte d'Azur.

## **2 – Has the cooperation paved the way for new methods of public policy administration at regional (sub-regional or local) level? Who are the main actors in the process of change?**

### **2.1 -The Eurocin EEIG, its legal framework and main tasks**

Regulation No. 2137/85 on the European Economic Interest Grouping came into force on 1 July 1989. It provided economic operators in the Union with a new and original legal instrument for transnational cooperation. EEIGs enable businesses (in particular SMEs) to cooperate within entities that have full legal capacity, while remaining independent.

The EEIGs effectively combine these two imperatives by offering very flexible establishment and operating provisions as regards location, and simplified running and management procedures.

The Community and national provisions also give EEIGs some leeway in determining their objectives. As a result, this form of alliance becomes very interesting for many businesses, affording them greater marketing and negotiation power than they could hope to have on their own.

The specific features of this legal status – in particular the ability to integrate activities with foreign partners while preserving complete freedom – should make it very popular in the coming years, in particular among SMEs. However, the trend has not yet taken hold at European level.

The Eurocin EEIG, established on 19 May 1994, is the first EEIG bringing together chambers of commerce located in border regions.

It was created to promote economic, cultural and scientific integration by encouraging crossborder exchanges and promoting a common image both within and outside the Euroregion.

The grouping's aim is to bring together the energies and skills of its member organisations, with the help of the local and regional authorities. Generally speaking, the EEIG can carry out the following tasks:

- manage in its own name, as publisher, activities related to traditional and audiovisual communication media
- publish and disseminate journals and newsletters for the business community and social organisations in the Sea Alps triangle (Cuneo and Imperia provinces, Alpes-Maritimes département)
- organise, manage and participate in fairs, exhibitions and national and international business events
- conduct market studies, projects and research
- draw up sales promotion plans, and advertising and public relations campaigns
- promote the marketing of products and services from the Sea Alps triangle
- raise national and/or Community funds to achieve social objectives

Eurocin, as one of the European Commission's accredited administrative partners and as a body responsible for managing crossborder cooperation projects, is a prime partner in

initiatives its members might want to implement using assistance from the Community's Structural Funds and the various Community programmes (such as INTERREG III).

The innovative nature of the initiative, endorsed by a cooperation agreement concluded between the three founding chambers of commerce in July 1993, required a number of administrative obstacles to be overcome on both the Italian and the French side.

Crucial to overcoming these difficulties, and engaging in effective economic cooperation, was the determination of the three partners to bring the project of a European economic region in the Sea Alps to fruition.

## **2.2 -Relations with the public authorities**

As a private-sector body under Community law, the Eurocin EEIG's purpose is to promote the interests of the business community, and therefore of local small and medium-sized companies.

The EEIG has become a representative for the projects and initiatives put forward by its members from both the public and the private sector.

From this point of view, the relations the EEIG has established with the public authorities on either side of the border are very different, since its only members on the French side are chambers of commerce, and these have a lot less power than their Italian counterparts. By contrast, a variety of legal statuses are represented on the Italian side: tourist agency, municipality, chamber of commerce and *Unioncamere*.

The Eurocin EEIG and these public bodies have established a steady working relationship involving collaboration in a variety of fields such as tourism, infrastructure and economic activities.

However, cooperation is most active in the tourism and transport sectors. The coordination and planning of measures between the Eurocin EEIG and S.I.TRA.CI are designed to promote joint modernisation, interaction and development, in order to overcome the difficulties faced by certain outlying districts.

In the field of training and employment, the border towns of Menton and Ventimiglia have engaged in cooperation to set up a crossborder European employment service (Eures). The project is managed by SEMAM (*Société mixte des Alpes maritimes*). It consists of a network of public- and private-sector partners, which provides workers and businesses with information, advice and other forms of assistance with a view to increasing labour mobility across the border. The French and Italian labour ministries and employment services are taking part, along with chambers of commerce, associations, regional confederations, the regional authorities of Liguria and the municipal authorities of Menton and Ventimiglia.

## **2.3 - The EEIG and civil society**

The involvement of civil society is steadily growing, thanks to improved mutual understanding and the awareness that sound Franco-Italian crossborder relations are being forged. A number of organisations and institutions have asked the Eurocin EEIG to contribute to and endorse their projects. However, the EEIG has refrained from accepting too many requests, for fear of neglecting its primary economic objective. The experiments are very diverse: information in schools, sporting and cultural events, joint publishing of crossborder publications, etc. By way of example, we might mention an agreement between the two main

daily newspapers in the area, *La Stampa* and *Nice Matin*. During the summer, anyone buying one of these papers gets the other one free.

Sport also offers many opportunities for collaborative exchanges, irrespective of colours, flags... and therefore borders. Many sporting events (cycling, athletics, etc.) are held on a regular basis, and allow participants from both sides of the border to meet and compete against one another. Generally speaking, young people are a priority target group which is particularly enthusiastic about the concept of Euroregion.

The Eurocin EEIG has also contributed to conferences organised by cultural and professional organisations such as the Rotary Club and the Lyons Club.

Conferences intended for an older audience (elderly people from Liguria, Alpes-Maritimes and Piedmont) have been organised to discuss and take stock of the situation regarding crossborder issues of concern to that age group.

Crossborder education and training are vital, to ensure that specific knowledge is disseminated among young people as well. With this in mind, a bilingual video cassette<sup>16</sup> (distributed to newspapers, television channels and secondary schools in the area) outlines the development of the Euroregion over the last two years, along with the main crossborder cooperation measures implemented in the economic, tourist, health, cultural and other spheres.

### **3 – What has been the qualitative impact of strategic cooperation in the region? What practical improvements have been achieved and what are the sectors involved?**

#### **3.1 - Economic cooperation**

Crossborder economic cooperation between Italy and France is emerging as a natural and spontaneous result of the "market" and of the potential for reaping practical economic benefits. It has opened up new and promising opportunities for businesses thanks to the combined use of endogenous networks in the crossborder area. It has enabled companies to build on their complementary assets and exploit each other's specialist skills, thus generating multiplier effects across the Euroregion.

The cooperation therefore depends not only on intermediary frameworks and public-sector players, but also on the active participation of the businesses themselves.

At crossborder level, the relationship between those participating in the initiative has entered a new phase, involving both cooperation and competition. Competition and cooperation are not incompatible; on the contrary, they complement each other. Businesses need to cooperate to be competitive and to be competitive if they are to secure the best cooperation methods and partners.

#### **- The Euroregion's economic outlook: "For an integrated crossborder economy"**

In 1994, a working party bringing together the chambers of commerce and industry and the statistics agencies INSEE and ISTAT produced an economic publication called "*Pour une économie transfrontalière intégrée*". The document was subsequently updated in 1997 and 2000. The purpose of the publication is to report on the consolidation of local experiments that have made a substantial contribution to the future of the European information network on economic statistics.

---

<sup>16</sup> "*Le Alpi del Mare – Les Alpes de la Mer*" Assemblea EUROGIN GEIE – Lunedì 23 ottobre 2000. Castello di Grinzane Cavour. Artic Video Produzioni video televisive, Cuneo.

#### - The crossborder euro project

The Eurocin EEIG was the leader of this project implemented under INTERREG II. The purpose of the initiative was to increase awareness of and support for the introduction of the euro among the Euroregion's population, in order to promote commercial and economic exchanges. It was intended for all local businesses requiring practical information on the new currency. The project produced a publication, *"L'Euro e l'impresa nell'area transfrontaliera delle Alpi del Mare"*, which surveyed the attitudes of businesses in the provinces of Nice, Cuneo and Imperia towards the new currency and identified the main issues needing urgent attention.

#### - Information guides for businesses

The chamber of commerce of Cuneo and the interconsular association of Alpes de Haute-Provence produced two guides in 1996: *"Entreprendre dans la province de Cuneo"* and *"Imprenditorialità nelle Alpi di Alta Provenza"*. Their purpose is to provide entrepreneurs with information, organised by sector of activity, on the features of the two regions, along with many legal, tax and administrative details they need to know to start business activities in the two areas.

#### - Crossborder database

Seven French and Italian chambers of commerce (Cuneo, Genoa, Marseille-Provence-Pays d'Arles, Nice, Côte d'Azur, Savona and Turin) decided to collaborate on setting up a database and distributing business directories. With this in mind, the chambers of commerce and industry of Cuneo, Genoa, Marseilles-Provence-Pays d'Arles, Nice Côte d'Azur, Savona and Turin began compiling a joint database of the businesses in their area (businesses with more than 50 employees, innovative businesses, subcontracting businesses and import/export businesses). Given the large number of businesses involved, the database information was published in three directories: industry/construction, trade and services.

### **3.2 - Cooperation on promotion and tourism**

Tourism is the ideal vehicle for ensuring the structural adjustment and development of the Sea Alps Euroregion. The cooperation makes the best possible use of the area's tourist resources (coastline, mountains, quality of the natural environment, cultural heritage). Many initiatives were launched to raise the profile of the Sea Alps, both within and outside the Euroregion, by promoting the area and its agrifood products. The Euroregion has demonstrated that it was willing and able to move into the international market by diversifying its supply of tourist products, improving its marketing, promotion and infrastructure management and focusing on the concept of "total quality" of products and services.

#### - Mercedes Omnibus Tage

The Sea Alps are opening up to the German-speaking market. Eurocin therefore took part, during two weekends in November 1999 (13-14 and 20-21), in a biannual event held in Frankfurt in partnership with Mercedes-Benz. The meeting brings together over 6,500 European coach operators who use the tourist coaches of the well-known German manufacturer. The crossborder region occupied a 250-square-metre stand, to present its natural assets and gastronomic specialities. Visitors sampled local products and were offered gifts centred on the Sea Alps' three most typical commodities: wine, oil and perfume.

#### - The golden keys of tourism

We should also mention the first crossborder edition of the "*Clés d'or du tourisme*" competition, organised by Eurocin as leading partner in collaboration with:

- the chamber of commerce of Cuneo
- *La Stampa* and *Nice Matin*
- l'Alliance française in Cuneo (a private school which teaches French)

The event was held in 1998 and rewarded a city of the province of Cuneo and a city of the Côte d'Azur for their promotion skills, in particular as regards international tourism.

#### - The taste fair of the Sea Alps

This initiative was held in 1999 at Priamar Castle in Savona, and allowed visitors to get to know and appreciate the wealth of natural tastes and perfumes available in the Sea Alps.

#### - The September Sea Alps Fair

The Sea Alps Fair was organised in September 1996 and 1997 to present the products of the three areas belonging to the Eurocin EEIG.

### **3.3 - Social and cultural cooperation**

Social and cultural cooperation is a precondition for other forms of collaboration. It is the first step towards forging links between crossborder inhabitants and encourages mutual understanding of points in common and differences with respect to culture, society and traditions.

By enriching the social and cultural life of an area such as the Sea Alps, cultural cooperation also has interesting spinoff effects on the area's tourist potential and appeal for foreign investors and businesses.

The television and press media play a major role in raising the public's awareness of cooperation, in particular when they present the crossborder Euroregion as a "cultural and economic unit".

Even if physical and administrative borders are becoming less significant, psychological barriers remain. Happily, the Sea Alps are fortunate to share a common cultural background, that is both Mediterranean and Latin. Overall, even if some notable differences remain between the areas making up the Euroregion, they are tending to decrease.

#### - Europartnership between the Eurocin EEIG and three universities

The Eurocin EEIG has concluded a partnership agreement with the universities of Genoa, Nice and Turin to exchange information and develop common measures, such as crossborder training courses and placements. The focus is on vocational training and labour market mobility in particular. Measures and projects must be designed and organised in a way that makes them eligible for Community financing from INTERREG and/or the Structural Funds. Community financial assistance is directly managed by the Eurocin EEIG.

#### - *Il Rendez-vous*

A 100-page magazine called *Il rendez-vous* was published to encourage information dissemination and speed up economic, cultural and scientific integration in the area. This Sea Alps magazine was presented as the "first bilingual French-Italian Euroregional publication".

#### - Collaboration between *La Stampa* and *Nice Matin*



*La Stampa* and *Nice Matin*, the two main Italian and French newspapers, have concluded a collaboration agreement relating to coverage of the main promotional and tourist initiatives in the Sea Alps. The articles keep readers informed about the main events in the entire area.

#### **4 – What is the external impact of this cooperation?**

In the space of more than 7 years, the Sea Alps have become a reality thanks to the various measures undertaken. The Eurocin EEIG expanded its geographical scope after new members joined in October 2000, and has since received further requests for membership.

During the new period (2000-2006), the cooperation programme, christened **ALCOTRA** (*Alpes latines / coopération transfrontalière*), will focus on crossborder cooperation (INTERREG III A).

The area includes the eligible NUTS III areas located on either side of the Franco-Italian Alpine border. These are the following:

- . the autonomous region of Valle d'Aosta
- . the provinces of Turin and Cuneo (Piedmont region)
- . the province of Imperia (Liguria region)
- . the *départements* of Savoie and Haute-Savoie (Rhônes-Alpes region)
- . the *départements* of Hautes-Alpes, Alpes de Haute-Provence and Alpes-Maritimes (Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region)

ALCOTRA's purpose is to:

- Continue the work undertaken by the two previous programmes over a period of ten years (1991-1993 and 1994-1999), by building on the cooperation achieved to date and making a determined effort to tackle the difficulties that have sometimes prevented the areas from delivering their full potential.
- Combine the scopes of the various strands of INTERREG III (A – internal borders and B/C – external borders) through concerted initiatives relating to the strategic priorities of the areas belonging to the crossborder cooperation programme. It is worth pointing out in this connection that the five regions involved in the INTERREG III A programme are also included in two INTERREG III B areas (the Alpine area, and the West Mediterranean/Latin Alps area).

The proposed projects include a "typical Sea Alps produce" quality label, a quadrilingual website bringing together all the other websites set up in the area, tourist and cultural routes centred on the historical figure of Napoleon Bonaparte, fairs and other trade events, a bilingual newsletter and a promotional operation targeting Germany.

The Eurocin EEIG also intends to lobby European, national and regional decision-makers. The goal is to ensure that the area is integrated more closely into the multimodal infrastructure and transport networks of southern Europe and northern Italy, particularly in the context of the completion of the Alpine tunnels and the strengthening of road, rail, sea and air links.

At European level, crossborder cooperation has an essential role to play in ensuring the stability of the integration process.

The Union's regional development and enlargement to new Member States is the new setting in which crossborder cooperation can forge new relations and strengthen existing partnerships.

For long-standing Member States with a common border, such as France and Italy, crossborder cooperation has become a central and strategic factor which must be exploited at

all levels: region, province or *département*, and municipality. This cooperation can help to overcome the remoteness and exclusion which have handicapped a number of border areas for some time.

The case of the Sea Alps Euroregion is particularly significant, because it is a practical and efficient framework for the implementation of crossborder cooperation initiatives. Even though all of the Euroregion's members are anxious to collaborate, it is far from easy to coordinate all their ideas.

The Eurocin EEIG is a comparatively "young" but promising economic entity. Its main successes have been the positive economic repercussions in the tourist sector, which very quickly demonstrated the advantages of cooperation. As regards the development of other projects, however, we will have to wait. The results will emerge only in the longer term. We will therefore just have to keep working, together with all those involved, and promoting new strategies. It is therefore crucial that this cooperation should be based on a crossborder culture that can enhance the complementary aspects and joint initiatives underlying this Euroregion's prosperity.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Accordo di cooperazione transfrontaliera per la creazione di un gruppo di concertazione tra le province di Imperia e di Cuneo e il Dipartimento delle Alpi Marittime, “Conferenza delle Tre Province”, 26 marzo 1997.
- Accordo di Roma del 26 novembre 1993 tra Italia e Francia.
- AGEF, “Carta europea delle regioni di confine e transfrontaliere”, Gronau, 1995.
- AGEF, *Guida pratica della cooperazione transfrontaliera*, Gronau, 1997.
- ARTIC VIDEO Produzioni Video Televisive, “Le Alpi del Mare” Assemblea Eurocin Geie Castello di Grinzane Cavour Lunedì 23 ottobre 2000.
- BADINI CONFALONIERI A., Il GEIE Disciplina comunitaria e profili operativi nell’ordinamento italiano, Torino, UTET, 1999.
- BALLARINO T., Lineamenti di diritto comunitario e dell’Unione Europea, Padova, CEDAM, 1997.
- BARNIER M., Le regioni al centro della costruzione europea, in L’Europa senza frontiere, Commissione Europea, Giugno-Luglio 2000.
- BECATTINI G. - G.BIANCHI, Analisi dello sviluppo multiregionale note economiche, N.5/6 1985.
- BERIO E., Alpazur: la cooperazione transfrontaliera nell’interregione delle Alpi meridionali Nizza, Cuneo, Imperia distretto europeo, Istituto storico della resistenza, 1992.
- BERNARDI P.G., “Verso la regione europea delle Alpi del mare, Appunti in margine al progetto di “Euro C.I.N. GEIE”, 1996.
- BEYERLIN “Transfront cooperation between Local or Regional Authorities, in Encyclopaedia of Public International Law, 6, 1983.
- BONAVERO P., Le politiche di coesione dell’Unione Europea, in, L’Europa delle Regioni e delle Reti, a cura di BONAVERO P.-E.DANSERO, Utet, Torino, 1998.
- BONAVERO P.-E.DANSERO, L’Europa delle Regioni e delle Reti, Utet, Torino, 1998.
- BRAMANTI A., RATTI R., Verso un’Europa delle regioni: la cooperazione economica transfrontaliera come opportunità e sfida, F.Angeli, Milano, 1993.
- BRESSO M., “Futuro della cooperazione transfrontaliera in Europa”, intervento della Presidente della Provincia di Torino alla Conferenza annuale LACE TAP, Nizza 23-24 novembre 1998.
- BUFFON M., “Le regioni transfrontaliere nel processo di unificazione europea”, in L’Europa delle regioni e delle reti, a cura di Bonavero-Dansero, UTET, Torino, 1998.
- CALAMIA M., Sul ruolo degli enti minori in materia internazionale. La convenzione sulla cooperazione transfrontaliera del 21 maggio 1980, Riv. Dir. Int. Priv e Proc. 1981.
- CAPPELLIN P. L’internalizzazione delle economie di Alpe Adria e la cooperazione interregionale, Relazione presentata al Convegno Internazionale Alpe Adria. Novembre 1990.
- Carta di cooperazione transfrontaliera franco-italiana, 15 giugno 1998.
- Carta di Paternariato “Verso un’Euro Regione”, Nizza, 24 ottobre 1997.
- CCI Nice, CCIAAA Cuneo, Unione Industriale Cuneo, Union Patronale Interprofessionelle des Alpes Maritimes, Nice/Cuneo, Una economica senza frontiere, Cuneo, 1990.
- CCIAA Cuneo - CCI Nice, “Repertorio delle imprese di servizi con 50 addetti ed oltre”, Savona, ottobre 1997.
- Centre for economy policy research, Europa: l’integrazione flessibile, 1995.
- CESDI: Ricerca finalizzata al programma operativo di iniziativa comunitaria INTERREG I Italia-Francia, 1992.
- CNEL, Laboratori territoriali, Le rappresentanze nella questione settentrionale, Roma 1996.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA “L’Europa in movimento”, Bruxelles, 1998.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA “L’unificazione Europea”, Periodico, Bruxelles, 1995.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “Agenda 2000, Rafforzare e ampliare l’Unione Europea”, Bruxelles, 2000.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “Azioni di cooperazione interregionale e di innovazione economica regionale. Quadro di riferimento per una politica di cooperazione interregionale e di innovazione economica per gli anni 1995-1999”

- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “EUROPA 2000, sviluppo per lo sviluppo del territorio comunitario”, 1992.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “FERS ed azioni innovative”, 18 luglio 2000.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “Fondi Strutturali e coordinamento con il Fondo di Coesione, Linee direttrici per i programmi del periodo 2000-2006”, Lussemburgo.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “In che modo l’Unione Europea affronta i problemi sociali e regionali?”, Lussemburgo, 1996.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “Iniziative comunitarie: primo bilancio”, “Info background”.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “Innovazione & Trasferimento Tecnologico”, Bruxelles, novembre 1999.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “Joint European Venture, Un programma dell’Unione europea”, Lussemburgo 1999.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “L’Europa dalla A alla Z. Guida all’integrazione europea”, Lussemburgo, 1997.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “L’Unione europea e il commercio mondiale”, Bruxelles, 1999.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “La Cultura: una risorsa per le regioni”, Lussemburgo, 1999.
- COMMISSIONE EUROPEA, “La vostra impresa e l’Euro”, Lussemburgo, 2000.
- CONDORELLI L.–SALERNO F., Le relazioni transfrontaliere tra comunità locali in Europa nel diritto internazionale ed europeo, in *Le Alpi per l’Europa. Una proposta politica* 32 A 180, in Riv. Trim. dir. pubb. 1986.
- Conferenza transfrontaliera franco-italiana delle Province e dei Dipartimenti delle Alpi Occidentali del 15 giugno 1998.
- CONSIGLIO D’EUROPA, Manuale sulla cooperazione transfrontaliera in Europa ad uso delle collettività locali e regionali, Roma, Presidenza del Consiglio dei ministri, Dipartimento per l’informazione e l’editoria, 1996.
- Convenzione di cooperazione tra le Camere di commercio e industria di Nizza. Imperia e Cuneo stipulata il 2 luglio 1993.
- Cooperazione transfrontaliera permanente. Atti del seminario, Bardonecchia 26 febbraio 1999.
- DAMMEYER M., “Aumenta l’importanza delle regioni”, in *L’Europa senza frontiere*, Commissione Europea, ottobre 1999.
- DARDANELLO F., “E’ nata la nuova rivista della regione europea Alpi del Mare”, in *Punto sulla situazione*, 28/07/1995.
- DE ANGELIS L., Responsabilità patrimoniale nel GEIE e in altri istituti di cooperazione tra imprenditori, in *Le società*, Febbraio 1990.
- DE MARCHI B., Cooperazione regionale nell’area alpina, F. Angeli, Milano.
- DEKAI N., MARCANTONI M., Il giusto confine, in *Il Sole 24 Ore*, Milano, 1992.
- DELFINO S., “I SEGRETI DELL’EURO: UN MEETING A SANREMO”, in *LA STAMPA*, 09/06/2000.
- DELLI ZOTTI G.- DE MARCHI B., Cooperazione regionale nell’area alpina, Milano, 1985.
- DELLI ZOTTI G., Problemi e prospettive della cooperazione transfrontaliera, in *ISIG* N° 3.
- DG XVI, “Europa 2000+ Cooperazione per lo sviluppo del territorio europeo”, Ufficio delle pubblicazioni ufficiali delle Comunità europee, Lussemburgo 1995.
- EURAZUR, Liguria/Provenza-Alpi-Costa Azzurra, Imperia, 1998.
- EUROPAREGIONI “Settimanale d’informazione europea a cura dell’associazione Italiana per il Consiglio dei Comuni e delle Regioni d’Europa”, 05/03/1999, n°8.
- EUROSTAT, Panorama dell’Euro Regione, Piemonte-Liguria-Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, Per una economia transfrontaliera integrata, dicembre 1999.
- FERLAINO F., “La macro-regione delle Alpi Occidentali”, in “L’Europa delle regioni e delle reti”, a cura di P.BONAVERO- E.DANSERO, UTET, Torino 1998.
- FERRANDO G., “La regione delle Alpi del mare amplia i confini con nuovi soci”, in *La Stampa*, 23/10/2000.
- FERRANDO G., “Nuove sfide dalle Alpi del Mare”, in *La Stampa*, 24 ottobre 2000.
- FERRANDO G., “Banca dati transfrontaliera dell’Euroregione delle Alpi del Mare”, in *La Stampa*, 19/12/1997.
- FERRANDO G., “L’Euroregione Alpi del Mare dà voce a 800 mila imprese”, in *La Stampa*, 15/03/2000.

- FERRARA W., La cooperazione transfrontaliera e le Euroregioni: la normativa europea, in Problemi e prospettive dello sviluppo di Euroregioni sul confine Nord-Orientale italiano: il caso del Friuli-Venezia Giulia., a cura di A. GASPARINI, Trieste.
- FICOLA, "INTERREG III: continuità nelle nuove opportunità di cooperazione fra le regioni europee", Europa info, 2/2000.
- FRANCHET Y., "Per un'economia transfrontaliera integrata", Genova 1994.
- G. PORRO, S. CANTONI, Digesto, UTET, Torino, 1998.
- GARASSINO G., "Un traforo per i "nipoti" ?", in Il Saviglianese, 30/11/1995.
- GAVEGLIO R., Un nuovo tunnel alpino fra Cuneo e L'Europa, in Il Giornale di Fossano, 01/12/1995.
- GOLINELLI G.M. (1992), Il confronto tra capitalismi nazionali: la specificità italiana, in Finanza Marketing e Produzione, Supplemento al n.4/1994.
- GUERINI C., Euromarketing: tra euroglobalizzazione e approcci multidomestici, in E.VALDANI-S.CASTALDO, Il management in transizione nell'Europa "quasi compita", Milano 1999, p.118.
- IRER, Regioni, Costituzione e rapporti internazionali: relazioni con la Comunità europea e cooperazione transfrontaliera, F.Angeli, Milano, 1995.
- IRES-CIMEGREF, Atlante delle Alpi Occidentali, Progetto INTERREG-CEE, Torino-Grenoble, 1996.
- L'Euro e l'impresa nell'area transfrontaliera delle Alpi del Mare, Genova, giugno 2000.
- LACE , Aspetti istituzionali della cooperazione transfrontaliera, Gronau, settembre 1998.
- LACE, Vademecum cooperazione transfrontaliera e interregionale ai confini esterni dell'Unione Europea, Gronau, 1997.
- LEONARDI R., Coesione, convergenza e integrazione nell'Unione Europea, 1998, Soc. Editrice Il Mulino.
- M.R., "Alpi del Mare, il progetto per certificare la qualità", in Gazzetta d'Alba, 25/10/2000.
- M.V. "Tenda bis prima del Mercantour", in La Stampa, 24/10/1995.
- MAFFEO G., La cooperazione regionale transfrontaliera, in Le Regioni nell'ordinamento europeo e internazionale, Ed Giuffrè, Milano, 1998.
- MAGNET J., "Le tunnel de Mercantour", in Nice Matin, 04/09/1995.
- MAILLET P.-VELO D., L'Europa a Geometria variabile, Roma, 1996.
- MAIORCA S.- ALBY E., *G.E.I.E., Torino, UTET, 1998.*
- MARRO G.P., "Le Alpi del Mare a MOT di Francoforte", in La Stampa, 15/11/1999.
- MARRO G.P., "Cooperazione Piemonte-Liguria-Costa Azzurra, Si sigla il documento tra le Camere di Commercio regionali", in La Stampa, 27/10/1997
- MARRO G.P., "Grazie ad un accordo siglato a seguito della partecipazione al MOT di Francoforte tremila tedeschi nel cuneese in marzo ed aprile", in La Stampa, 10/03/2000.
- MARRO G.P., "La prima Euroregione, le Alpi del Mare a Bruxelles", in La Stampa, 04/02/1998.
- MARRO G.P., "Le Alpi del Mare hanno una rivista" La Stampa 08/07/1995.
- MARRO G.P., "Sul Mercantour Cuneo e Nizza alleate", in La Stampa, 28/11/1995.
- MARRO G.P., "Una Regione che guarda lontano con oltre dieci milioni di abitanti", in La Stampa, 23/06/2000.
- MARRO GP, "Grazie ad un accordo siglato a seguito della partecipazione al MOT di Francoforte tremila tedeschi nel cuneese in marzo ed aprile", in La Stampa, 10/03/1999.
- MASI P., Il gruppo europeo di interesse economico (Commento al Regolamento CEE n.2137/85 del 25 luglio 1985 e al d.lg 23 luglio 1991, n.240), Torino 1994.
- MINISTRO DELL'INTERNO, Primo rapporto sulla cooperazione transfrontaliera, Roma, 1994 e 1996.
- MONGIELLO A, Il gruppo di interesse economico, in Trattato di dir. comm. Dir. da Galgano, XVII, Padova, 1994.
- MONTICELLI G.L.- PITTAU F., La convenzione europea sulla cooperazione transfrontaliera: precedenti storici e prospettive di sviluppo, in Affari sociali internazionali n.2, 1986.
- Mozione sulle vie di comunicazione franco-italiane attraverso le Alpi, adottata dall'Assemblea Generale della CPFI che ha avuto luogo a Courmayeur il 17 settembre 1993.
- PADRONO A., Note sulla "cooperazione transfrontaliera" a livello statale, regionale e sub-regionale, in Quaderni regionali , marzo 1998 ,n.1.

- PANETTA E., La cooperazione soprafrontaliera tra enti pubblici e privati quale validissimo strumento per l'unificazione europea, in Riv.Amm.della Rep.It., 1990.
- PAPOUTSIS C., La vostra impresa e l'Euro, Lussemburgo, 2000.
- PEGORARO L., RINELLA A., Cooperazione transfrontaliera e potere estero: profili comparatistici (con particolare riferimento ad alcuni ordinamenti confinanti con l'Italia), in Le Regioni XXVI, n.6, dicembre 1998.
- PEYRAT J., Sindaco di Nizza, intervista agosto 1995.
- Piano di lavoro per l'elaborazione del programma INTERREG IIIA Italia-Francia (Alpi), ALCOTRA Cooperazione transfrontaliera Alpi Latine, marzo 2000.
- PIETROBON A., Il gruppo europeo di interesse economico(GEIE), in Rivista diritto civile, II, 1989.
- PORRO G., CANTONI S., Digesto, UTET, Torino, 1998.
- PRETO A., "Con il GEIE una rete europea per la cooperazione tra gli studi" in Il Sole 24 ore 27/04/1999.
- Programma INTERREG IIIA Italia-Francia (Alpi), ALCOTRA Cooperazione transfrontaliera Alpi Latine, Valutazione ex-Ante, settembre 2000.
- Provincia Informa, La cooperazione transfrontaliera. INTERREG II, Torino, febbraio 1999.
- Provincia Informa, Torino, febbraio 2000.
- Provincia Informa, Torino, gennaio 2000.
- Provincia Informa, Torino, maggio 2000.
- Provincia Informa, Torino, marzo 1999.
- Provincia Informa, Torino, settembre 1997.
- Provincia Informa, Torino, settembre 1999.
- R.D., "Cuneo cerca di avvicinarsi alla Francia", in Corriere di Savigliano e dintorni, 05/01/1996.
- R.S., "Iniziate un'attività nel Cuneese!", in Provincia Granda, 29/12/1995.
- R.S. "Cuneo guarda alla Francia" in Il Corriere di Alba e Bra Langhe e Roero, 03/10/1995.
- RATTI R., Lo studio degli effetti spaziali delle frontiere nell'ora del "Grande Mercato Unico Europeo, 1990, Ire, Bellinzona.
- RATTI R., Regioni di frontiera e sviluppo economico: richiami teorici e quadro evolutivo dei rapporti di collaborazione italo-svizzeri, 1989b, In De Guttry A., Ronzitti N.
- RATTI R., Théorie du développement des régions frontalières, 1991, Fribourg.
- RIITTA ON. MYLLER, "Relazione sulla cooperazione transfrontaliera e interregionale", in L'Europa senza frontiere, Commissione Europea, 23 aprile 1997.
- ROMUS P., "L'Europe et les régions", Nathan , 1979, Paris.
- RONZITTI N., I rapporti transfrontalieri delle regioni, In Quaderni regionali , n.1-2, 1989, Le Regioni a. XVII, n. 4, agosto 1989.
- ROSSIGNOLO C., "La politica dell'Unione Europea per la cooperazione transfrontaliera", in L'Europa delle regioni e delle reti, di P.BONAVERO, E. DANSERO, UTET, Torino, 1998.
- SACERDOTI G., La cooperazione interregionale europea tra vincoli costituzionali e principi del diritto internazionale, in Regioni, Costituzione e rapporti internazionali, Milano, 1995
- SAPIENZA R., I problemi regionali nel mercato unico europeo, Svimez, Il Mulino, Bologna. 1991
- SENN L., L'Europa delle regioni: dal locale al sovranazionale, in Persone & Imprese, 1991a N.1/3, Liguori, Napoli.
- SENN L., Mercato Unico e collaborazione interregionale, tra concorrenza e solidarietà Regione Trentino Alto Adige, Europa senza frontiere: il particolare ruolo delle Camere di Commercio, Trento. 1992.
- Statuto e Regolamento dell'Eurocin GEIE
- STEVELBERG , "ALPAZUR. modèle de region fonctionnelle européenne et transfrontaliere", en "Les Regions Transfrontalieres de l'Europe", colloque de Geneve 1975.
- STRAPPAGHETTI, "Le iniziative comunitarie : uno speciale strumento di crescita", Europa info, 2/2000.
- STRASSOLDO R., Frontier regions and regionale planning an analytical study, Council of Europe, Cemat, BP10, Strasbourg, 1973.
- UNIONE EUROPEA, Inforegio, "Cooperazione per il territorio europeo", Lussemburgo, 15/09/1998.

- VACCA C., Recezione nell'ordinamento italiano del GEIE e libere professioni, Corriere giuridico, 1990.
- VIALE L., "Un piano di cooperazione transfrontaliera per i problemi comuni franco-italiani" in "Le Pietre & il Mare" Rivista trimestrale delle Province Liguri , n.1, 1991.
- VIALE M., Gli strumenti giuridici della cooperazione transfrontaliera Franco-Italiana, Agosto 2000, Imperia.
- VICO M., "Cuneo, Imperia e Nizza alleate", La Stampa, 19/05/1995.
- WULF MATHIES M., Introduzione in "Guida pratica della cooperazione transfrontaliera", Gronau, 1997 .
- [www.alpidelmare.net](http://www.alpidelmare.net)
- [www.cn.camcom.it/G.E.I.E./storia.html](http://www.cn.camcom.it/G.E.I.E./storia.html)
- [www.comuni.it/servizi/eu.htm](http://www.comuni.it/servizi/eu.htm)
- [www.cordis.lu/rc/home.html](http://www.cordis.lu/rc/home.html)
- [www.esteri.it/polestra/ue/fondistrut/fondistr.htm](http://www.esteri.it/polestra/ue/fondistrut/fondistr.htm)
- [www.eurocin.org](http://www.eurocin.org)
- [www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg5/dgv.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg5/dgv.htm)
- [www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/equal/index\\_eu.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equal/index_eu.htm)
- [www.europa.eu.int/comm/regional\\_policy/index\\_it.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/index_it.html)
- [www.europarl.eu.int/dg1/a4/it/a4-97/a4-0161.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/dg1/a4/it/a4-97/a4-0161.htm)
- [www.inforegio.cec.eu.int\\_voce\\_documenti](http://www.inforegio.cec.eu.int_voce_documenti)
- [www.ise-europa.it/bollettini/inforegio/inforegio72-oo.html](http://www.ise-europa.it/bollettini/inforegio/inforegio72-oo.html)
- [www.murst.it/Ricerca/Eureka/indice.html](http://www.murst.it/Ricerca/Eureka/indice.html)
- [www.passnet.com/151.4.120.254/gu\\_w.nsf/d1Open](http://www.passnet.com/151.4.120.254/gu_w.nsf/d1Open)

## Cooperation « Sea Alps »

