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Kooperation in Europa

Modelle aus dem 20. Jahrhundert

Cooperation in Europe

Models from the 20th Century

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Cross-border Cooperation and Euro-regional Structures

Considerations on European Territoriality,
Integration and Identity

Analyzing cooperation in Europe after the breakup of communism focuses one's attention on the borders dividing the continent, nations and sometimes even nations of the same origin. These borders, whether de facto, de jure or popularly imagined, had always a dividing function hindering cooperation between two or more territorially constituted entities. The borders in the Westphalian system of territoriality defined the state's relationship with space and territory and delineated the area of sovereignty and the inhabiting society. The borders were distinctive and significant elements both for the internal spatial and mental constitution as well as for the external perception of those entities formed by them. In the Cold War area the borders played not only a spatial and constitutive role, they had in addition an ideological and political meaning as well as economical, cultural, historical, development and security related characteristics. Thus, borders embodied a geopolitical concept.

In the context of the beginning European integration the meaning of borders began to change in Western Europe and issues of regional and cross-border cooperation became a focal point for the overcoming of the border's dividing function. The geographical and political aspects of borders were joined by the human dimension, addressed by the cross-border processes of cooperation and integration. This was leading to a con-

stantly growing importance of regions, which were recognized as a concept complying both local and national and multi-national needs as well, constituting the idea of a Europe of regions. Meanwhile, the borders in Eastern Europe were strictly separating countries, people and economies, thus hindering cooperation and centralizing the countries. But with the collapse of communism the borders were contested and the „suspension of hostile, dividing state borders and the negative impacts they have had on interstate relations [became] perhaps a uniquely European achievement. For this reason, the European Union’s political identity – and its *raison d’être* – are closely intertwined with the symbolism of transcending and transforming national borders in the interests of integration and peaceful coexistence. For example, cross-border cooperation, supported by the EU since the mid-1980s, has become a ‚trademark‘ of integration and Europeanization and is now firmly established in many border regions within the EU and in numerous neighbouring countries. Furthermore, and in contrast to other international cooperation contexts such as North America, the European Union has actively promoted local and regional cross-border interaction through its regional development and structural aid programs.“¹ Thus, the European Union’s Eastern enlargement implemented modern concepts of restructuring of space and territorial reference in Eastern Europe, too. The centralist and egalitarian approaches were replaced by a more flexible concept which honours diversity and promotes economic development, redistribution of socio-economic welfare, reproduction of social capital and the emergence of socio-economic networks contrasting and complementing the old political networks. In the light of growing international interdependence, globalization, and the global flow of capital, goods, information, and people leading to worldwide networks, the concept of territoriality has to be diluted to a regional, de-territorialized one.

There is no doubt: border and cross-border regions had and still have a great impact on European development because they are mainly

1 Wesley Scott, James, *European Politics of Borders, Border Symbolism and Cross-Border Cooperation*. In: Wilson, Thomas M. / Donnan, Hastings (Eds.): *A Companion to Border Studies*. Hoboken 2012, p. 84.

classified as disadvantaged areas. Cut by administrative boundaries, border areas are often neglected in national policies and – if yet conceptually involved - the building of reasonable entities of cooperation often calls for a cross-border configuration. Especially in centralized countries border regions often have to develop and orientate themselves only towards the national center and spatial planning is primarily devoted to centre's development, even if those regions share more common characteristics with regions in the neighbouring countries. While this was a great obstacle before, the European integration puts border regions in the position to develop in cooperation with the most suitable partners and according to a European spatial development in contrast to the former purely national one. Due to the fact that in the enlarged European Union „there are over 10 thousand kilometers of borders and border areas, which are defined as areas within 25 kilometers of the border, and which currently spread out over a total of 500 thousand square kilometers, giving home to more than 50 million people“² the importance of border regions and the aspect of cooperation cannot be overestimated. In this regard, the European spatial planning developed a differentiated set of approaches to promote cooperation at regional, cross-border and transnational level and to overrule centralistic nation-state oriented tendencies. This is necessary because a „successful spatial development policy, therefore, depends far more on cooperation with the local and regional levels than in other policy areas. Transnational or cross-border actions at this level are crucial for the application of the ESDP [European Spatial Development Perspective, R.T.G].“³ The aim for territorial cohesion, intensified with the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007, emphasized the need of reducing internal disparities in Europe in order to secure the European integration project and „the harmonious development of the entire Community territory and greater economic, social

2 Cressati, Claudio / Pascolini, Mauro / Spizzo, Daniel, The Alpine-Adriatic-Danubian Euroregion. Geo-Political and Institutional Issues. In: *disP – The Planning Review* 46 (2010) 183/4, p. 42.

3 European Commission (Ed.), *European Spatial Development Perspective. Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1999, p. 37.

and territorial cohesion imply the strengthening of territorial cooperation.⁴ The considerably great disparities in the enlarged Union call for a development policy that addresses the Union's territory as a whole. Most Eastern European countries identified „the relationship between territorial cohesion and optimizing the potential of the endogenous characteristics of individual regions“⁵ as the main goals of territorial cohesion, and they have been specified in the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020. The member countries are stressing, that they „consider that the integration of territories through territorial cooperation can be an important factor in fostering global competitiveness. In this way, potentials such as valuable natural, landscape and cultural heritage, city networks and labour markets divided by borders can be better utilized. Attention shall be paid to areas along external borders of the EU in this regard. Territorial integration and cooperation can create a critical mass for development, diminishing economic, social and ecological fragmentation, building mutual trust and social capital.“ The European countries „support transnational and cross border integration of regions going beyond cooperation projects and focusing on developments and results of real cross-border or transnational relevance.“ And finally they „recognise that actions at the cross-border, transnational and inter-regional level have a pivotal role to play in the implementation of territorial priorities of the TA2020. European territorial cooperation has revealed a considerable mobilisation of potential of those cities and regions involved.“⁶

These approaches promote, as the ESDP itself, a European polycentric idea, and polycentrism that counterweights purposes of

4 Regulation (EC) No. 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC). In: Official Journal of the European Union, L 210, p. 19.

5 Cotella, Giancarlo / Adams, Neil / Nunes, Richard Joseph, Engaging in European Spatial Planning. A Central and Eastern European Perspective on the Territorial Cohesion Debate. In: European Planning Studies 20 (2012) 7, p. 1210.

6 Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020. Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions. Agreed at the Informal Ministerial Meeting of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning and Territorial Development on 19th May 2011, Gödöllő, Hungary, pp. 8, 10–11.

centralization and this agenda addresses several aspects: the importance of regions and regional development versus exclusively centralized adjustment; territorial cohesion as a borderless agent for European equity and solidarity that recognizes territorial diversity as a potential and not as a threat; the refining of governance processes with a spatial and not only a national context; the cooperative approach at the Union's internal and external borders fostering European integration and exporting stability in the Union's neighbouring countries as well as institutional structures and cooperative methods; the importance of cultures, languages, traditions as a source of opportunities for an improvement. In a nutshell, cross-border cooperation is together with transnational and interregional cooperation part of the European Territorial Cooperation Objective. All these aspects point at an understanding of border regions that goes far behind the simple concept of a free trade area with the specifications a free movement of people, goods, capital, services, and so on. It must be interpreted as a small-scale re-territorialisation of partly de-territorialised areas for the sake of regional and local development bridging development gaps and introducing solidarity mechanisms.

The end of Cold War, beginning globalization and European integration, shifts that can be seen as moving towards de-territorialisation, changed the understanding of territories and borders, which is now less rigid and less deterministic than in the past. Nonetheless, this de-territorialisation was at the same time accompanied by a bunch of different processes leading to the counter-movement of re-territorialisation,⁷ for example by cross-border cooperation. The European emphasis on regional and cross-border development builds upon a long tradition of institutionalized cross-border cooperation in Western Europe, mostly established through Euroregions which have a territorial point of reference. Since the establishment of the first Euroregion along the German-Dutch border (Euregio) in 1958 this concept found many followers until today. „This was done in an accelerating process involving all the border

7 See the discussion in: Tuathail, Gearóid Ó / Luke, Timothy W., Present at the (Dis) integration. Deterritorialization and Reterritorialization in the New Wor(l)d Order. In: *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 84 (1994) 3, pp. 381–398.

areas of the European Union (EU), stimulated by the INTERREG-A Community Initiative financial support.⁸ Even if a standardized model for a Euroregion doesn't exist, most of them are organized based on civil law as registered association, foundation, non-profit company or by multilateral agreements. Thus, Euroregions are constituted according to the national law of the country, where the headquarter is located. Here they realize a two-dimensional cooperation: a vertical one, as they connect the different political levels from the local, regional, national and European sphere; and horizontal one, by coordinating the cooperation by having the local and regional needs in mind, implying certain conditions in terms of the political and cultural cohesion as well as the compatibility between natural and artificial structures. This kind of cooperation motivates participation, and the cross-border flows are strong, providing positive socioeconomic effects on both sides of the border. Further, civil society and local actors participate permanently in the cooperation, and the territorial articulation defining the border area is strong, because it constitutes a new form of territoriality – now not from a national, but from a regional point of view, separating the Euroregion from the neighbouring administrative units. Insofar the coordination among different planning levels and different sector-specific plans are very complex and require a very high commitment to national and international coordination of cooperation processes – a task that very often fails due to national or local preferences.

Therefore, a top-down harmonization was promoted by the European Union in order to remove barriers at the juridical and administrative level and to boost cross-border cooperation especially in Eastern Europe, where cross-border action often was neglected by national politicians. In this context the above mentioned Regulation 1082/2006 on the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) „is particularly devoted to the enforcement of territorial cooperation processes in Europe as it provides a legal basis in EU law and consequently in the legislation of the different Member States to promote Euroregions even

8 Medeiros, Eduardo, (Re)Defining the Euroregion Concept. In: *European Planning Studies* 19 (2011) 1, 2011, p. 141.

in the most complex transnational contexts.⁹ Insofar, the EGTC is the first European cooperation structure with a legal personality defined by European Law and is a reference model for the organization of a multi-lateral territorial cooperation involving actors from different countries of the Union and different government levels, aiming at the exploitation of the structural funds under the cohesion policy. Even if „the creation of an EGTC should not, however, exclude the possibility of entities from third countries participating,¹⁰ an EGTC shall be made up on the territory of at least two Member States, by them or regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law.¹¹ The regulation „sets out the (few) procedural provisions useful to its institutions and some measures for its existence; and determines some requirements on the part of the participating Member states and other authorities.¹² Even if many aspects essential for EGTC’s functioning are not covered by the regulation, like the statutes or the legislation under which the cooperation is implemented, it makes it easier to establish cooperation by spurring it through the community law. An EGTC requires a legal personality and „the most extensive legal capacity accorded to legal persons under that Member State’s national law.¹³ Hence, the actually bottom-up constitution and development of Euroregions is extended by a top-down harmonization by the Commission. Currently, about 31 EGTC are working and about 11 are in preparation under this new instrument of the EGTC, most of them located in Western Europe.

In Eastern Europe, cross-border cooperation gained a great momentum in the last years, especially after Eastern enlargement. Romania as country bordering on two EU Member States (Bulgaria and Hungary), one candidate country (Serbia) and two non-candidate

9 Fabbro, Sandro, *The Euroregional Planning Approach as a Possible Variant of Regional Planning in Complex Multi-Regional Spaces*. In: *disP – The Planning Review* 46 (2010) 183/4, p. 33.

10 Regulation (EC) 1082/2006, Preamble, No. 16.

11 Regulation (EC) 1082/2006, Article 3, Paragraph 1 and 2.

12 Coen, Leopoldo, *The European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) as a Strategic Agreement for Cooperation Policies*. In: *disP – The Planning Review* 46 (2010) 183/4, p. 98.

13 Regulation (EC) 1082/2006, Article 1, Paragraph 4.

neighbours (Ukraine and Moldova) is a good example characterizing and systemizing the different types and frameworks for cross-border cooperation. Further, Romania „plays one of the most important role in what regards the management of the external borders of the European Union, due to the fact that 1877,1 km of the national borders represents the external border of the EU and almost a third of its territory is involved in territorial cross border cooperation with the non-EU contiguous territory.“¹⁴ Romania not being a Schengen-Member, actual cross-border cooperation faces some comparable obstacles in the different Romanian regions, independent from their legal and financial framework. Some of these cross-border cooperations are already operating according the EGTC framework, others are in planning or approval stage,¹⁵ but all refer to EU Member Countries' territory. In Romania, the required legal framework was created by Government Emergency Ordinance 127/2007 and the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Housing was designated as Notifying Authority to manage Romanian EGTC files.¹⁶ In the programming period 2007–2013, the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism manages Romania's cooperation programs. The first EGTC which has been established under these rules is acting under the denomination Banat – Triplex Confinium European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Limited and started in 2009 by registration by the Hungarian Municipal Court on 5 January 2011. It involves Hungary and Romania as members of the Union cooperating in the EGTC framework with each 37 municipalities and with the participation of eight Serbian municipalities as observers.

14 Grama, Vasile, Opportunities in Territorial Cross Border Cooperation at the EU External Borders. The Case of Romania. In: *Revista Română de Geografie Politică* 13 (2011) 2, p. 262.

15 See Committee of the Regions of the European Union: EGTC Setups, <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/egtc/en-US/Register/already/Pages/welcome.aspx> (4 March 2013). Others, like European Urban Knowledge Network, EGTC Medgidia-Silistra, European Common Future Building European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation, EGTC Bekes-Arad, EGTC Ung-Tisza-Tur, EGTC Ceramic Cities are in approval stage.

16 Ordonanță de Urgență a Guvernului Nr. 127/2007 privind gruparea europeană de cooperare teritorială. In: *Monitorul Oficial al României, Partea I*, Nr. 769/13. 11. 2007, pp. 4–7.

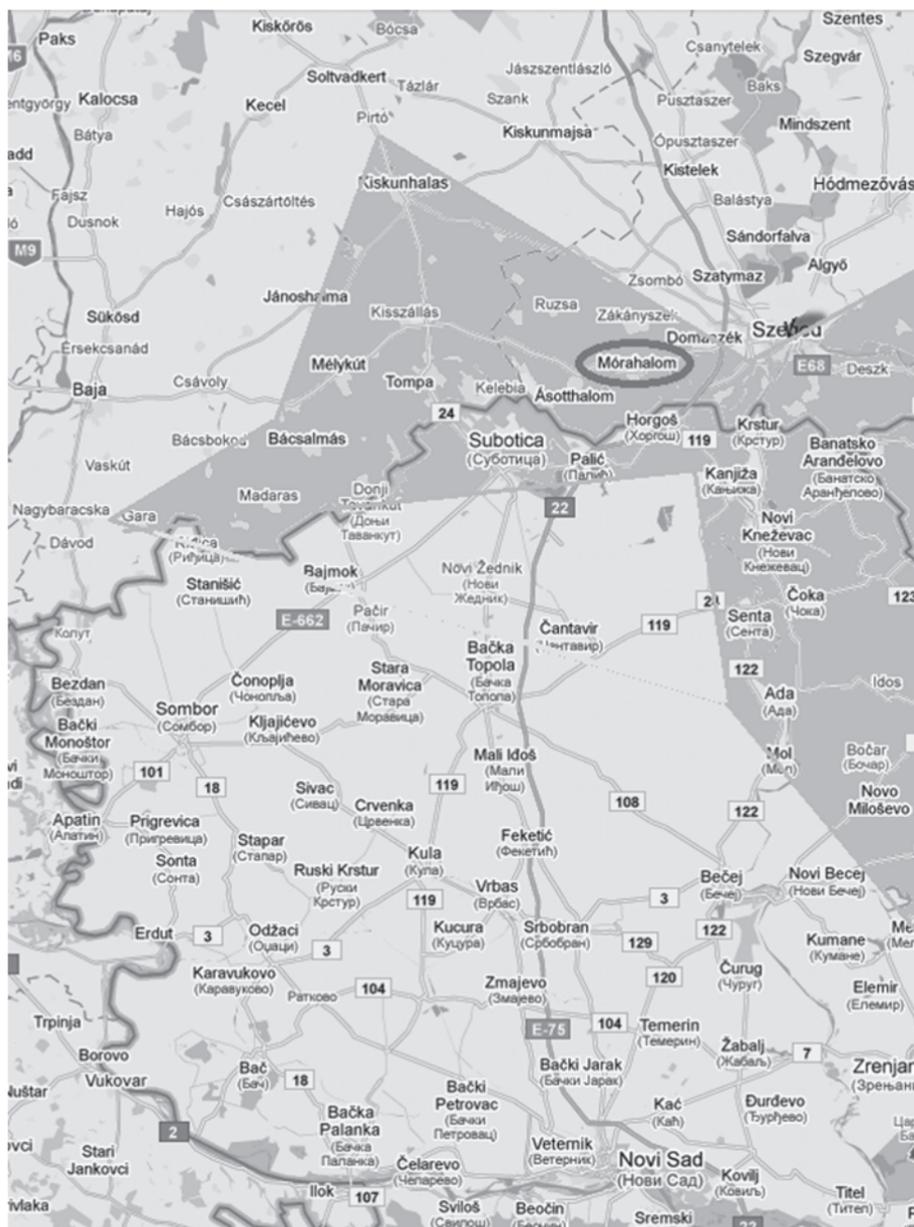
This EGTC builds upon the experiences and structures laid down by the three-party collaboration in the Danube-Kris-Mures-Tisa (DKMT) Regional Cooperation. This Euroregion had been founded in 1997 as a trilateral cooperation connecting Hungarian, Romanian and Serbian administrative units relying on the common historical ground and identity.¹⁷ The fields of cross-border partnership were adopted by continuing the Euroregion's main aims and by implementing territorial cooperation programs and projects co-financed by the Community through the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund or the Cohesion Fund. They give assistance to harmonious development by cross-border cooperation, by strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion, by increasing competitiveness and dynamization of the marginalized border region, and by developing strategies in the areas of the agricultural innovation, exploiting renewable energy sources, infrastructure, education and training.¹⁸ Currently, a second grouping with Romanian participation is working and is called Gate to Europe. It covers four Hungarian and four Romanian municipalities and has some references with the Bihor-Hajdu Bihar Euroregion,¹⁹ but covers a considerably small part of cross-border area.

Besides, bilateral cross-border cooperation programs between Romania and Bulgaria, respectively Romania and Hungary are implemented, affecting all NUTS III-Regions in the border area between these countries. Likewise, they promote contacts between the communities, the economic actors, and the persons from the border area from neighbouring countries, in order to assist joint development of the border area, by increasing the comparative advantages of the area for the benefit of both EU-countries. Main aims are improved transport infrastructure, better flow of information on joint opportunities within

17 Göllner, Ralf Thomas, Die Euroregion Donau-Kreisch-Marosch-Theiß. Grenzüberschreitende Netzwerke als regionalpolitische Entwicklungsstrategie im europäischen Kontext. In: Ungarn-Jahrbuch 29 (2008) pp. 319–374.

18 See the EGTC's website at <http://www.btc-egtc.eu/en/> (4 March 2013).

19 See Cismaş, Laura / Sabău, Cosmin, Cross-Border Cooperation in Europe: The Case of Bihor-Hajdu Bihar Euroregion. In: *International Business Research* 5 (2012) 3, pp. 91–99.



Map 1: The program area of the Banat – Triplex Confinium EGTC²⁰

20 Source: <http://www.btc-egtc.eu/en/introduction> (9 September 2014).





Map 2: The area of the Hungary-Romania Cross-border Cooperation Program 2007–2013²¹

the border area, common natural resources efficiency, strengthening social and economic cohesion, support of cross-border business cooperation and innovation, cooperation in the labour market and education or cooperation between communities. Co-funded by the European

²¹ Source: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/prordn/details_new.cfm?gv_PAY=RO&gv_reg=ALL&gv_PGM=1299&LAN=7&gv_per=2&gv_defl=7 (11 March 2013).



Map 3: The area of the Bulgaria-Romania Cross-border Cooperation Program 2007–2013²²

Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Hungary-Romania as well as the Bulgaria-Romania Cross-border Cooperation Program 2007–2013²³ are an instrument of cohesion policy and regional development within the Union and in the space of an integrating community.

Another important framework in the context of EU-policy with Romania's participation is the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), established by the Regulation No. 1085/2006²⁴ and implemented according to Regulation (EC) 718/2007.²⁵ This instrument for pre-

22 Source: idem (11 March 2013).

23 Details <http://www.huro-cbc.eu/> respectively <http://www.cbcrromaniabulgaria.eu/> (6 March 2013).

24 (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). In: Official Journal of the European Union, L 210, pp. 82–93.

25 Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA). In: Official Journal of the European Union, L 170, pp. 1–66.

accession assistance was implemented within the 2007–2013 European Union financial framework and serves as a financial source both for candidate and potential candidate countries. In a nutshell, the IPA-based cross-border cooperation „shall pursue one or more of the following broad objectives: (a) promoting sustainable economic and social development in the border areas; (b) working together to address common challenges in fields such as environment, natural and cultural heritage, public health and the prevention of and fight against organised crime; (c) ensuring efficient and secure borders; (d) promoting joint small scale actions involving local actors from the border regions.“²⁶ Thus, this program aims at fostering cohesion in the face of enlargement, just as cross-border cooperation in the 1990s tried to support regional development in Romania and other former candidate countries in order to enable accession.

One of these IPA-programs is the Romania-Republic of Serbia IPA Cross-border Cooperation Program, „whose specific objectives are to increase the overall competitiveness of the economy and to improve the quality of life for the communities in the border area.“²⁷ The overall aim is to use joint cross-border projects and common actions by stakeholders from both countries to achieve a more balanced and sustainable socio-economic development in the border area by increasing economic competitiveness and improving the quality of life for border-area communities. The program is based on four priority axes: 1.) Economic and social development (approximately 50 % of total funding) covering support for local/regional economic and social infrastructures, developing tourism, strengthening of the border region's actual identity as a tourist destination, promoting SME development, research and innovation in the border region; 2.) Environment and emergency prevention (approximately 26 % of total funding), for example addressing cross-border environmental challenges, protection and management, developing strategies for waste and waste water management, emergency prepared-

26 Regulation (EC) No 718/2007, Article 86, Paragraph 2.

27 Munteanu, Nicolae-Eugen / Popescu (Stingaciu) Ana-Maria (2012), Cross-Border Cooperation at the External Borders of European Union. In: *Studia Universitatis „Vasile Goldiș“*, Arad, Economic Sciences 12 (2012) p. 167.

ness like flood prevention/control, food safety and health issues. 3.) Promoting „people to people“ exchanges (approximately 14 % of total funding) by supporting the development of civil society and local communities, improving local governance, increasing educational, cultural and sporting exchanges and enhancing social and cultural integration in border areas. 4.) Technical assistance (approximately 10 % of total funding) by supporting program management and implementation.²⁸ In December 2011 a proposal for an IPA II regarding the years 2014 until 2020 was published and the financial allocation to cross-border cooperation programs was limited to 3 % of total financial budget.²⁹ Nevertheless, 14.110 million Euros are proposed for this IPA-term.

Other relevant cross-border frameworks are embedded in the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI),³⁰ which replaced TACIS-cooperation program and will be valid until 2014. As from 2014 the ENPI will be replaced by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).³¹ ENPI, as well as ENI will do, aims with its Joint Operational Program Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova 2007–2013 at promoting economic and social development in border areas adjoining to the non-candidate countries in accordance with the Europe 2020 Strategy. This scope addresses common challenges, ensures efficient and secure borders and promotes people-to-people coopera-

28 IPA-Investment: 2007–2009 = 19.559.062 €; 2010–2011 = 16.446.623 €; 2012–2013 = 17.111.066 €.

National Public Contribution: 2007–2009: 3.451.599 €; 2010–2011 = 2.902.347; 2012–2013 = 3.091.601 €.

http://www.romania-serbia.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=53&Itemid=67&lang=en; <http://www.mdr.ro/comunicare/presa/comunicare/aprobarea-bugetului-programului-ipa-de-cooperare-transfrontaliera-romania-republica-serbia-pentru-perioada-2012-2013> (4 March 2013).

29 Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA II). COM (2011) 838 final, Article 4, Paragraph 1.

30 Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. In: Official Journal of the European Union L310, pp. 1–14.

31 Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument. COM(2011) 839 final.



Map 4: The area of the 'Romania-Serbia' IPA Cross-border Cooperation Program³²

tion. It was set up „in order to avoid the creation of new dividing lines“ and „to remove obstacles to effective cross-border cooperation along the external borders of the European Union. Cross-border cooperation should contribute to an integrated and sustainable regional development between neighbouring border regions and harmonious territorial integration across the Community and with neighbouring countries.“³³ In the Romanian case this open-ended and membership-neutral framework³⁴ applies to the countries Ukraine and Moldova, which don't have

32 Source: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/prordn/details_new.cfm?gv_PAY=RO&gv_reg=ALL&gv_PGM=1352&LAN=7&gv_per=2&gv_defl=7 (11 March 2013).

33 Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006, Preamble, No. 15.

34 Bechev, Dimitar / Nicolaidis, Kalypso, From Policy to Polity. Can the EU's Special Relations with its 'Neighbourhood' be Decentred? In: *Journal of Common Market Studies* 48 (2010) 3, p. 476.

candidate status. This kind of EU-neighbourhood policy should result in the alignment of the national policies, economic structures, security concerns and governmental institutions of the EU's neighbouring countries with those of the EU itself and its member states, but without full institutional and political integration. „The explicit goals of the ENP are thus to create deeper levels of political and economic integration across and beyond the region, while simultaneously hardening external borders and extending transnational institutions and practices for border regulation and management.“³⁵

Cross-border cooperation between Romania, Moldova and Ukraine has some implications regarding the common history and partly common identity, so that the relations in the last two decades were characterised by ups and downs. Romania, acting „as an advocate of Moldova's interests *vis-à-vis* regional, European and international bodies“³⁶, initiated different cross-border cooperations with these neighbours, relying on bilateral and Euro-regional strategies. The establishment of the three Euroregions, Lower Danube (Dunărea de Jos),³⁷ Upper Prut (Prutul de Sus) and Siret-Prut-Nistru was a great commitment for creating of a framework of cooperation between local communities according to the European concepts of cooperation.³⁸ These Euroregions can also be seen as the nucleus for Joint Operational Program Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova 2007–2013, as the concerned territory is largely consistent with the Euro-regional approach. In their configuration, national, cul-

35 Casas-Cortes, Maribel / Cobarrubias, Sebastian / Pickles, John, Re-bordering the neighbourhood: Europe's emerging geographies of non-accession integration. In: European Urban and Regional Studies 20 (2013) 1, p. 44. See also Kostadinova, Valentina, The Commission, ENP and Construction of Borders. In: Geopolitics 14 (2009) 2, pp. 235–255.

36 Şoitu, Conţiu / Şoitu, Daniela, Europeanization at the EU's External Borders: the Case of Romanian-Moldovan Civil Society Cooperation. In: European Integration 32 (2010) 5, p. 497.

37 See Popescu, Gabriel, Transborder State Reterritorialization in Eastern Europe: The Lower Danube Euroregion. Florida State University. Electronic Theses, Treatises and Dissertations. Paper 479, 2006.

38 Marcu, Silvia, Opening the Mind, Challenging the Space: Cross-border Cooperation between Romania and Moldova. In: International Planning Studies 16 (2011) 2, pp. 115–117.

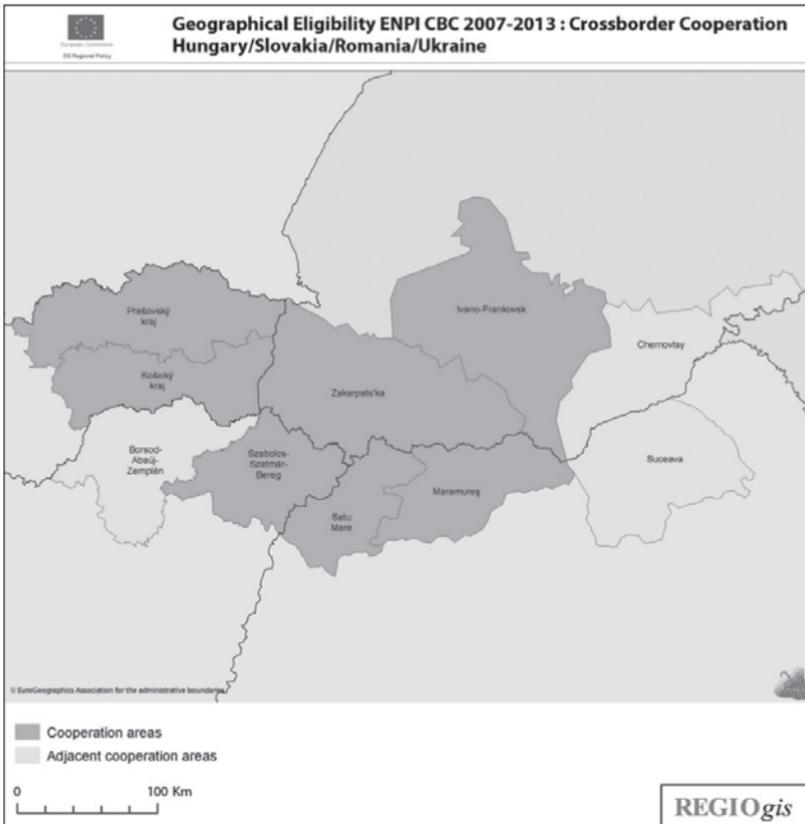
tural, minority specific and aspects of local development and individual contacts played the most important role. Nowadays, the ENPI is the most important instrument of financing. It allocates 126.718.066 Euros for the period 2007–2013 and, consequently, partly ruled out bilateral initiatives. Nevertheless, the „principle area of cross-border cooperation between Romania and Moldova lies clearly within the provision of social and health services as well as in the area of human rights, culture and education. Economic development is another area where cooperation is gradually increasing.“³⁹

The first contract for a major investment project called IMPEFO (Improvement of Cross-Border Cooperation between Moldova and Romania on Petroleum and Food Products) was signed on March 4th, 2013 and aimed at a more effective border management by modernising border crossing points and through cooperation between the Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova and the National Customs Authority of Romania.⁴⁰ Regarding Ukraine, cross-border cooperation had a positive momentum in some regional topics like national parks, improvement of border-crossings, as well as an incentive for promoting reforms, assuming the experience and good practices facilitate both countries' EU accession aspirations. Thus, it shares similar approaches as the Cross-border cooperation program Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine 2007–2013⁴¹ does, because the program fosters activities that involve promoting economic

39 Şoitu 2010, p. 500.

40 <http://www.mdrt.ro/en/comunicare/presa/comunicare/primul-contract-semnat-pentru-un-proiect-major-de-investitii-in-cadrul-programul-operational-comun-romania-ucraina-republica-moldova-2007-2013> (6 March 2013).

41 <http://www.huskroua-cbc.net/> (6 March 2013). The Carpathian Euroregion as one of the first established East European Euroregions should be mentioned as a very important framework, too. Established in 1993 as cross-border regional cooperation between Poland, Slovakia, the Ukraine, Hungary and Romania, it features some negative aspects, „such as the insufficient cross-border governance that results from its formal structural characteristics, its large size, its scarce financial resources, the ambiguity of authority, its historical inheritances, as well as its hypoplastic identity. The CE's economy remains fragmented and considerably backward.“ Tanaka, Hiroshi, Carpathian Euroregion and Cross-Border Governance. In: *The Journal of Comparative Economic Studies* 2 (2006) pp. 59–80. See also Süli-Zakar, István, *The Strategic Development Programme of the Carpathian Euroregion for 2007–2013 Period*. Nyíregyháza 2007.

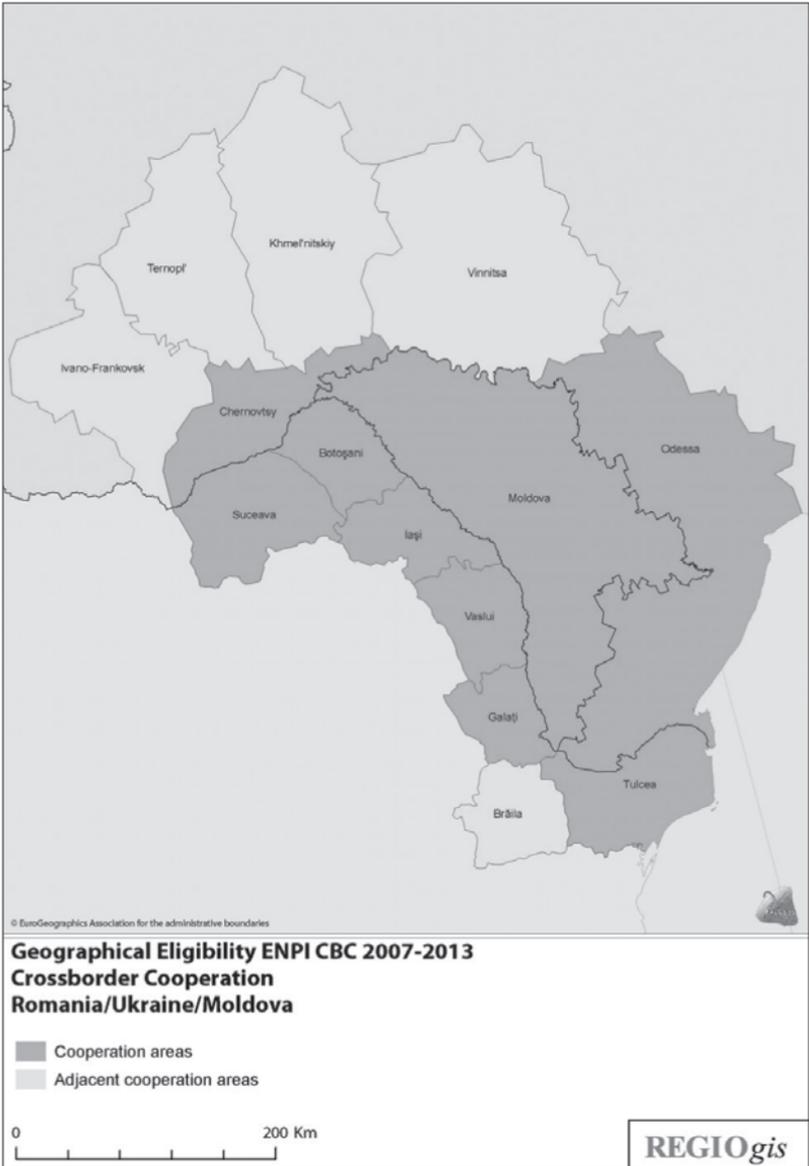


Map 5: Area of the ENPI Cross-Border Cooperation
Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine⁴²

and social development, improvement of the environmental situation, improve the efficiency of the border, and support cultural cooperation.

The role of cross-border cooperation is very important for the development of borderline areas, the participating countries as a whole as well as for the European Union and European Integration. Cross-border cooperation is a key factor in developing border areas, contributing to economic, social and territorial cohesion, reducing regional disparities

⁴² Source: http://www.interact-eu.net/downloads/1312/INTERACT_Factsheet_ENPI_CBC_Hungary_Slovakia_Romania_Ukraine_Programme_2009.pdf (11 March 2013).



*Map 6: Area of the ENPI Cross-Border Cooperation
Romania-Ukraine-Moldova⁴³*

43 http://www.interact-eu.net/downloads/1311/INTERACT_Factsheet_ENPI_CBC_Romania_Ukraine_Republic_of_Moldova_Programme_2009.pdf (11 March 2013).

and allowing to use its economic, technological, social and cultural potential in order to reduce the negative effects of disadvantaged peripheral areas. Above mentioned examples show the different European strategies in promoting cross-border cooperation depending on the targeted area. EU-member countries' cross-border cooperation is more an integration-oriented learning process, aiming at a more balanced and harmonious European territory where borders disappear or, at least, are overlaid by local networks generating a regional entity with an own identity. The sometimes emerging regional identity, that is to say, the identification or attachment to a region and self-definition can boost regional activism and dynamize institutions of cooperation - even if network-building and regional identity are concurrent concepts, given that the first one is a non-territorial, relational and the second one a spatial pattern.⁴⁴

In a second dimension, cross-border cooperation is a tool of an extensive and comprehensive pre-accession strategy, creating the local and regional foundations necessary for membership. By promoting cooperation between at least one member country and candidate countries, methods, structures, institutions and experiences are transferred outside the EU to develop EU's conditionality before beginning accession negotiations. This process is also an appropriate measure to overcome mutual problems like territorial disputes by de-territorialisation and Europeanization. Nevertheless, cross-border cooperation in this context seems to be more hindered due to administrative, financial, political and development related reasons than in the intra-EU sphere.

With reference to neighbouring non-candidate partner countries, cross-border cooperation and the correspondent framework picks up more general development objectives, but fails on practical matters like free movement of people, goods, capital and services in disadvantaged border areas in lesser developed countries. On the one hand, the general political intention is to tighten border regime at the EU's eastern borders; thus it runs counter to de-territorialisation and cooperation. On the other

44 Veemaa, Jaanus, Internationalizing the Spatial Identity of Cross-Border Cooperation. In: *European Planning Studies* 20 (2012) 10, pp. 1647-1666. Zimmerbauer, Kaj, From Image to Identity. Building Regions by Place Promotion. In: *European Planning Studies* 19 (2011) 2, pp. 243-260.

hand, „it produces notions of a European space that is ‚bordered‘ according to perceptions of cultural and ideational affinity, institutional proximity and basic political and economic interests“ potentially leading to an „exacerbation of socioeconomic inequalities and cultural difference through exclusionary practices.“⁴⁵ However, on the long run cross-border cooperation at the external borders seems to be the lasting and predominant option of greater integration between EU members and non-members without an accession. While primarily in the Schengen area internal borders become more and more unimportant so that cross-border cooperation turns to regional cooperation in a European context, action at external borders keeps its cross-border character and framework. Insofar, cross-border cooperation, regional development, and spatial identity building within the European Union as well as at its external borders remain a crucial method of a coherent policy of cohesion and integration.

Zusammenfassung

Formen grenzüberschreitender Zusammenarbeit kommt in Europa seit den 1950er Jahren eine wachsende Bedeutung zu. Anfänglich auf Westeuropa beschränkt, spielen sie seit dem Systemwechsel auch im östlichen Europa eine immer wichtigere Rolle bei der politischen, ökonomischen und individuellen Annäherung. Neben der territorialen Kohäsion im europäischen Kontext sowie der vertieften europäischen Integration dienen grenzüberschreitende Kooperationen der Heranführung potentieller EU-Beitrittsstaaten sowie der Einbindung von Nachbarstaaten, die keine konkrete Beitrittsperspektive haben. Rumänien, das sowohl an EU-Mitgliedsstaaten (Bulgarien, Ungarn) als auch Beitrittskandidaten (Serbien) und Partnerstaaten ohne Beitrittsperspektive (Moldawien, Ukraine) grenzt, dient als Fallbeispiel für die Analyse von Formen grenzüberschreitender Zusammenarbeit sowie von deren europäischem Kontext.

45 Scott, James Wesely, *Bordering and Ordering the European Neighbourhood. A Critical Perspective on EU Territoriality and Geopolitics*. *Trames* 13 (2009) 3, p. 244. Also Scott, James Wesely, *Reflections on EU Geopolitics: Consolidation, Neighbourhood and Civil Society in the Reordering of European Space*. In: *Geopolitics* 16 (2011) 1, pp. 146–175.