

# European Territories: From Cooperation to Integration?

edited by  
**Grzegorz Gorzelak**  
**Katarzyna Zawalińska**



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## INTRODUCTION

This publication summarises selected findings from the project TERCO – *European Territorial Cooperation as a Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life* – which was completed as part of the ESPON 2007-2013 Programme. The project focused on various types of territorial cooperation (INTERREG A, B, C, twinning cities, transcontinental cooperation) and their impact on the socio-economic development of the cooperating territories.

Over the last decade, a large number of policy documents have addressed the role of territorial approaches in regional development. In its Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion, the European Commission emphasises the role of territorial cooperation and attaches great importance to it in the framework of European territorial development and in the ‘long-term and sustainable growth performance of the EU as a whole’ (CEC, 2008a: 3). In order to deal with environmental, economic and social challenges, the cooperation of stakeholders across national borders, different policy sectors and policy levels is required. The European Commission notes that ‘...in the new Member States ... much remains to be done to develop coherent policies for infrastructure and economic cooperation’ and that ‘...external border regions lag further behind in economic development and GDP per head’ (CEC, 2008a: 8). Accordingly, in its title this book poses the relevant question of whether cooperation truly leads to territorial integration, which would be a desirable outcome of the policy.

From a historical perspective, the main objective of EU territorial cooperation (TC) was to overcome the negative effects of borders as barriers, maximise potential synergies, promote joint solutions to common problems and, as a result, promote further harmonious and balanced integration of the EU territory and enhance the quality of life for citizens. However, the expectations of TC have expanded over time to encompass contributions to economic development and competitiveness (TA2020,

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<sup>1</sup> EUROREG, University of Warsaw.

2011: 7), territorial integration (Fifth Cohesion Report, 2010: 202), city networking (TA2020, 2011: 7), good neighbourhood relations (Territorial State, 2011: 28), labour markets (CEC, 2011d: 3), and the unification of natural ecosystems divided by borders.

In contrast to the growing expectations, TC currently faces a number of challenges. For example, it is biased towards old Member States (MS), e.g. the great majority of leaders in INTERREG projects are from the old MS. A positive development in this respect is the implementation of the new European instrument of the 'European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation' (EGTC): it has been used – albeit to a limited extent – in both old and new Member States, and it is regarded in new Member States as of major assistance in organising territorial cooperation for less experienced actors. Cooperation across EU borders is still cumbersome. At the level of specific EU-neighbouring state partnerships, the ENPI-CBC<sup>2</sup> programme envisaged the creation of a single funding vehicle with joint managing authorities, but in practice it has limited authority to decide on project funding and management. Furthermore, the application of development aid rules presently appears inappropriate for cross-border cooperation in the area of regional development, as joint projects are burdened by onerous contracting rules.

Accordingly, strengthening territorial cooperation to make it achieve what is expected requires further research on understanding cooperation drivers, determinants and governance structures, which may result in greater interest by regions, cities and countries to enter into cooperation arrangements. TERCO investigated the issues by applying new research methods that have never been used in research on territorial cooperation (i.e. models of successful cooperation and network analyses of twinning cities), it established the working definition of territorial cooperation, and it created a pan-European database on twinning-city networks. It analysed five types of territorial cooperation (twinning cities, cross-border, interregional, transnational, and transcontinental) for the whole ESPON area as well as within nine case studies covering 19 countries.<sup>3</sup> TERCO investigated the impact of those TC types on socio-economic development (indicated by economic growth, job creation, and quality-of-life improvements) and various types of international flows (such as FDI, migration, and international trade). TERCO investigated the current adequacy and future needs of TC in terms of geographical coverage,

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<sup>2</sup> European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument – Cross-Border Cooperation.

<sup>3</sup> Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), Czech Republic (CZ), Germany (DE), Spain (ES), Finland (FI), France (FR), Greece (GR), Uruguay (UY), Argentina (AR), Morocco (MO), Norway (NO), Poland (PL), Russia (RU), Sweden (SE), Slovakia (SK), Turkey (TR), Ukraine (UA), United Kingdom (UK).

thematic domains, governance and good practices. It also addressed the issue of the TC contribution to territorial integration.

This book presents selected issues from the project and in addition two chapters by invited authors – Philippe Doucet and Joaquín Farinós Dasí – who played the role of ‘sounding board’ in the project. The book consists of three parts. The first one deals with theoretical and political considerations on territorial cooperation and territorial integration. It begins by establishing the state of the art on those subjects, and presents some theoretical debate and possible means of achieving territorial integration via territorial cooperation. The second part presents various types of territorial cooperation analysed from different perspectives – of the programme, projects and regions. It sheds new light on the typology of territorial cooperation, its governance, determinants and obstacles. This part also addresses the issue of territorial cooperation beyond Europe (with North Africa and South America). The third part of the book presents a collection of six case studies (Finland-Russia, Poland-Slovakia-Ukraine, Poland-Germany-Czech Republic, Belgium-France, Scotland-Norway-Sweden, Greece-Bulgaria-Turkey) that illustrate the successes and problems related to territorial cooperation.

We would like to emphasise that this book encapsulates only a small part of the research carried out as part of the ESPON TERCO project. The remaining analyses, which address such issues as the adequacy of geographical areas and domains of territorial cooperation, specific territorial structures and full case study reports with analytical tools and maps can be found in the TERCO Final Project Reports available on the ESPON programme website: [www.espon.eu](http://www.espon.eu). We also recommend the individual TERCO project website [www.esponterco.eu](http://www.esponterco.eu).

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Any opinions, findings or recommendations in this book are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect views of the aforementioned parties.





## PART I

# TERRITORIAL COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS



JAMES W. SCOTT <sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 TERRITORIAL COOPERATION – THE RESEARCH STATE OF THE ART

### INTRODUCTION

Territorial cooperation (TC), as understood in European Union parlance, is a form of governance in the areas of spatial planning, economic development and, more generally, regional politics that transcends state borders and that is carried out by sub-state and non-state actors. In academic debate, territorial cooperation is most generally known as ‘cross-border cooperation’ (CBC), but both terms basically have equivalent meanings. Put more poignantly, CBC/TC can be defined as political projects carried out by private, state and, to an extent, third-sector actors with the express goal of extracting benefit from joint initiatives in various economic, social, environmental and political fields. Through new forms of political and economic interaction – both institutional and informal – it has been suggested that greater cost-effectiveness in public investment can be achieved, economic complementarities exploited, the scope for strategic planning widened, and environmental problems more directly and effectively addressed. For these reasons, CBC/TC clearly promotes the wider goals of European Cohesion.

Research interest in CBC and/or TC has been spurred by the momentous political changes of the past two decades.<sup>2</sup> While the concept of CBC is not new, it is the context of post-Cold War change that has elevated CBC to the paradigmatic status it now enjoys. ‘De-bordering’ within the enlarged European Union and new cross-border relations in Central and Eastern Europe indicate that not only states but citizens, communities and regions have chosen to open new avenues of communication with their neighbours across national boundaries. Furthermore, in those contexts where states

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<sup>1</sup> Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Scott and Liikanen (2011); Scott (2006); the special issue of *Regional Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 7, 1999, edited by Anderson and O’Dowd; and *European Research in Regional Science*, Vol. 10 (2000).

have (re)gained their independence and new borders have emerged,<sup>3</sup> Euro-regions, cross-border city partnerships and similar cooperation vehicles have also come into being (Scott, 2006). CBC/TC within the EU and at the EU's external borders aims at managing issues that transcend the confines of individual communities – issues that include social affairs, economic development, minority rights, cross-border employment and trade, the environment, etc. Cross-border cooperation also involves attempts to exploit borderlands situations, using borders as a resource for economic and cultural exchange as well as for building political coalitions for regional development purposes (Popescu, 2008).

This chapter briefly discusses the research state of the art on CBC/TC and the insights it has provided on conditions that affect cooperation. In general, the research state of the art suggests that CBC/TC outcomes are contingent upon multilevel factors: (i) local institutional and structural conditions, (ii) policy frameworks that operate at the European and national levels, and (iii) geopolitical contexts that can enable as well as constrain cross-border cooperation. It is therefore important to recognise basic differences between regional situations with respect to the role of the state, CBC agendas and modes of supporting cross-border cooperation. Research has also suggested lessons that might be learned by critically scrutinising cross-border cooperation experience in Europe over the past two decades.

## **FROM PARADIPLMACY TO CROSS-BORDER AND TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

Cross-border cooperation between states has been the subject of interdisciplinary and comparative study for almost three decades. This research has been driven by at least one general core concern, i.e. transformations of nation-states and their consequences for economic, political, social and cultural life. Originally, research focused on urban and regional forms of 'subsovereign paradiplomacy'; the pioneering work of Duchacek (1986), Soldatos (1993) and others indicated how cities and regions have pursued economic development and political aims through international cooperation. For example, transboundary strategic alliances between cities, regions and other sub-national governments as well as the initiatives of cities to promote their economic and political interests received considerable research attention internationally during the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Such as the Baltic States, Ukraine, Moldova, Russia and the Balkans.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Briner (1986), Church and Reid (1996), and Steiner and Stürn (1993).

Partly spurred on by the European Union, the focus of research shifted during the 1990s from empirical research on transnational urban networks and their cooperation mechanisms to the study of local and regional forms of policy-relevant cross-border interaction. A particular European characteristic of this emergent research field has been a more contextually sensitive understanding of the nature of borders. In common understanding, borders are significant state-level processes of ‘ordering’. Borders, however, also refer to symbolic boundaries and societal processes that help construct societies at a more general level. In terms of everyday life, borders are formed by the spatial organisation of difference; both the reproduction of symbolic systems and the creation of subjective distinctions (borders) between self and other are central to human perception and the organisation of human societies.<sup>5</sup> In some cases, borders mark transitions, both physical and cognitive, between different spaces; ‘borderlands’ define these transitions in concrete spatial terms as evidenced by increasing tendencies towards cross-border cooperation – particularly in Europe (Kolossoff and Scott, 2012). In sum and with particular reference to the EU-European situation, borders are seen to play an important role in framing and regulating social relations as well as setting conditions for local and regional development.

The process of ‘Europeanisation’ – defined in terms of a gradual diffusion of supranational understandings of citizenship, territoriality, identity and governance – is closely related to CBC/TC as well as to changing concepts of borders, both within the EU and beyond the EU’s own borders (Scott and Liikanen, 2011). A central aspect of this process is the definition of rules, norms and practices that recast national spaces as integral elements of an international political community; from this derive the objectives and values that create a common set of discourses in which various political and social issues can be negotiated. The principal characteristic of this process is the transcendence of strictly national orientations in public policy, development policies and identity. Indeed, the construction of the European Union is in large part an attempt to create a coherent political, social and economic space within a clearly defined multinational community (the EU27). Borders play an important role in the representation of European nation-states and the EU, as well as in EU representation in relations with its neighbours. Cross-border cooperation at the interstate, regional and local levels is seen to provide ideational foundations for a networked Europe through symbolic representations of European space and its future development perspectives.

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<sup>5</sup> Informative sources on border research in Europe and in more international terms are two major anthologies that have recently appeared: Wilson and Donnan (2012), and Wastl-Walter (2011).

CBC/TC research has also focused on the European Union's impact on the nature of cross-border relations in Eastern and Central Europe (Popescu, 2008; Zhurzhenko, 2010; Scott, 2006). The EU's influence has been felt at a geopolitical level but also at a more basic societal level (Scott, 2005). On the one hand, prospective benefits of closer relations with the EU (including hopes of membership) have provided a context for rapprochement and development. On the other hand, concrete material incentives provided by the EU have been used to begin developing local and regional cooperation initiatives. In preparing Central and East European countries for membership, the EU adopted a strategy based on institutionalised CBC and aimed at a gradual lessening of the barrier function of national borders. These policies have also been aimed at integrating previously divided border regions in order to build a more cohesive European space.

## COOPERATION AND COHESION

From an official EU standpoint, the achievement of cohesion and coherence are central goals of political integration and embodied in the 2001 White Paper on European Governance. Good internal governance and a responsive and democratic institutional architecture are, furthermore, understood to be prerequisites for promoting 'change at an international level' (CEC, 2001: 26).<sup>6</sup> In more concrete terms, this involves a process of community-building based on common rules and principles (including the so-called *acquis communautaire*) as well as adherence to a comprehensive set of political and ethical values (Antonsich, 2002; Joeniemmi, 2002).<sup>7</sup> As a result, political exigencies of integration and enlargement as well as basic principles of EU policy, particularly structural policy, have

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<sup>6</sup> The White Paper continues along these lines with an appeal for greater geopolitical presence in order to strengthen the EU's sense of purpose: 'The objectives of peace, growth, employment and social justice pursued within the Union must also be promoted outside for them to be effectively attained at both European and global levels. This responds to citizens' expectations for a powerful Union on a world stage. Successful international action reinforces European identity and the importance of shared values within the Union' (CEC, 2001: 26-27).

<sup>7</sup> A notable element of the Maastricht Treaty was the introduction (in Articles 8-8e) of legal and conceptual elements of formal European citizenship into an integration process hitherto characterised primarily by economic issues. Going a step further, one of the implicit goals of the 1998 Treaty of Amsterdam is the promotion of a European public sphere through the establishment of common (that is unifying) constitutional principles and intergovernmental processes. These arrangements are also intended to support the definition and acceptance of emerging common values such as in the area of human rights, women's rights, democracy, etc. (Pérez Diaz, 1994).

decisively influenced the development of transboundary cooperation in Europe. Over the last decades, structures of transboundary cooperation in Europe's border regions have been built up through a combination of local initiatives and supportive measures implemented by national and European Union (EU) institutions (Kennard, 2003). This has resulted in a complex multilevel framework of formal institutions, political associations, lobbies and incentive programmes. In addition, the EU's increasing emphasis on 'regionalisation' and new forms of local and regional initiative, including the development of strategic alliances and 'networks', are programmatic aspects of regional policy that have promoted the concept of border regions as zones of cooperation and economic 'synergies' (Scott, 1999).

At the pan-European level, spatial planning promotes a decidedly 'post-national' perspective within the larger post-1990 geopolitical context of European development. Indeed, one of the principal assumptions underlying cross-border planning exercises is that symbolism guides collective action by creating a sense of common understanding and providing a 'language' that promotes consensus-building (Groth, 2000). Alternative European geographies are being defined, among others, through symbolic planning concepts, the transnationalisation of space through networks and flexible regionalisation, and network-like forms of governance (Scott, 2002a). These initiatives culminated in the elaboration of a European Spatial Development Perspective, or ESDP, in 1999 (CEC, 1999a). Although not a Community-level policy in the sense of agriculture or regional development,<sup>8</sup> the ESDP, together with the ESPON programme of creating a Europe-wide planning database, has provided a policy framework of an advisory nature, agreed by the European Ministers of Spatial Planning, that pursues sustainable economic development and socio-economic cohesion.

## **BORDER STUDIES PERSPECTIVES ON CROSS-BORDER GOVERNANCE AND COOPERATION**

Building upon the conceptual foundations of 'subnational paradiplomacy', border studies, particularly in the European case, developed a specific focus during the 1990s and early 2000s on cross-border policy integration as a form of 'multilevel governance' (Perkmann, 1999; Lepik, 2012). This focus remains an important one in terms of CBC policy within

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<sup>8</sup> Central to ESDP is a focus on regional urban systems, urban-rural relationships, access to development opportunity structures and a concern for a diverse natural and cultural heritage. These spatial strategies cross-cut traditional nationally-oriented development practice; in effect, nothing less than an 'EU-Europeanisation' of regional and local political spaces is being attempted (see Jensen and Richardson, 2004).

the EU.<sup>9</sup> However, if the former approach positioned CBC within a context of globalisation and transnational networks, the European perspective has been largely influenced by formal, structural understandings of transnational governance (see Blatter, 1997, 2004). For example, in order to overcome traditional forms of intergovernmentalism, institutionalisation at the local and regional levels was seen as a necessary element for successful CBC (Scott, 2000). Prospects for transboundary regionalisation have been thus defined by the outcomes of a gradual and complex process of institutional innovation and capacity-building at national, state and local levels. At the same time, the emergence of new planning forms across borders were prophesised in terms of regional dialogue. Dialogue, together with adequate strategies with which to reconcile and coordinate diverse interests, were seen to offer considerable promise for developing transboundary alliances between cities and their regions (van Geenhuizen *et al.*, 1996; Leibenath *et al.*, 2008).

The EU has played a crucial role in supporting local and regional cross-border governance processes, as these are seen to be important aspects of interstate integration and a mechanism for deepening relations with non-EU neighbours. The principal strategy pursued by the EU in supporting CBC has been to couple the development of local and regional cooperation structures with more general regional development policies. This has necessitated a process of institution-building, generally, but not exclusively, in the form of so-called Euroregions or other cross-border associations in response to the EU's policy initiatives (and its more or less explicit institutionalisation imperative). The main goal of Euroregions and similar organisations is to promote mutual learning and cooperative initiatives across borders in order to address specific regional economic, environmental, social and institutional problems. These associations, many with their own cross-border administrative bodies (e.g. councils), represent an additional, albeit strictly advisory, regional governance structure and play a vital role in channelling European regional development support into the border regions. In order to structure their long-term operations and, at the same time, satisfy European Union requirements for regional development assistance, the Euroregions define Transboundary Development Concepts (TDCs) that identify principle objectives of transboundary cooperation and define possible courses of action. TDCs build the basis for concrete projects, proposals for which can then be submitted to the EU, national governments or other funding sources for support.

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<sup>9</sup> See for example the presentation on Multilevel Governance and CBC, available at: [http://www.cesci-net.eu/tiny\\_mce/uploaded/SimonaPohlova\\_091210.pdf](http://www.cesci-net.eu/tiny_mce/uploaded/SimonaPohlova_091210.pdf).



Euroregions were pioneered and developed as locally-based cooperation initiatives in Dutch-German border regions as early as the 1960s (Perkmann, 2007). Since then, Euroregions have become part of complex policy networks at the European and national levels and have contributed to ‘institutional thickness’ in transboundary planning, particularly along Germany’s borders. Indeed, the Dutch-German EUREGIO, an Euroregion with its own local council and close ties to German and Dutch state agencies, has served as a model of sorts for the development of border-region associations within the European Union. In its different phases of development, CBC has been characterised by the adaptation of existing institutional structures to new opportunities and problems set by recent geopolitical changes. Given the long track record of cross-border cooperation in Western Europe, it is not surprising that cooperation stakeholders in Central and Eastern Europe have emulated many of the institutions and projects pioneered within the EU.

Looking back on the history of cross-border cooperation within the EU, multilevel institutional mechanisms for transboundary cooperation in Europe appear to have contributed significantly to the development of new interregional and transnational working relationships (Perkmann, 2002b). The popularity of the Euroregion concept is undeniable. These associations are now a ubiquitous feature along the EU’s external borders as well as in many non-EU European contexts (Bojar, 2008; Perkmann, 2002b; Popescu, 2011). The EU structural initiative INTERREG, now in its fourth programming phase (2007-2013), has supported numerous transboundary and transnational cooperation projects between regions. Financed from the EU Structural Funds, INTERREG has disbursed well over €10 billion, making it the Community’s largest structural initiative. In addition, programmes targeted for Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, most prominently PHARE, TACIS and more recently the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument, have provided supplemental funds for cross-border projects in regions on the EU’s external boundaries.

### **CBC AS A PROJECT OF CROSS-BORDER REGIONAL ‘CONSTRUCTION’**

The problems inherent in the governance approach to understanding CBC and its dynamics are self-evident and not only due to rather modest cooperation results (Gualini, 2003). One major weakness of this approach was the frequent neglect of multilevel governance contexts and the application of largely untested assumptions based on ‘new regionalist’ theoretical perspectives. Unsurprisingly, research has cast serious doubt

upon the notion that induced, and institutionally ‘thick’, cross-border governance can by itself lead to a transcending of boundaries in policy terms. Partly as a response to the limitations of the governance approach, borders scholars, especially since the turn of the Millennium, have elaborated social constructivist understandings of CBC as a contested regional development project (Bürkner, 2006; Kramsch and Hooper, 2004; Perkmann, 2007; Kolossov and Scott, 2012). Consequently, several issues of theoretical and practical interest have emerged in the research state of the art:

- relations between ‘material’ and ‘discursive’ regionalism and ‘abstract’ and ‘real’ spatial contexts;
- the role of historical memory in framing border-related issues;
- the ‘Europeanisation’ of local and regional politics through EU policies and initiatives;
- the role of local milieu and socio-political contexts; and
- the multiple role of different actor-networks in promoting transboundary cooperation (‘navigating’ complex borderland political contexts and assuming multiple identities, transcending the limitations of local context, if necessary).

Cross-border cooperation has been promoted by the EU on the assumption that national and local identities can be complemented (perhaps partly transcended) and goals of co-development realised within a broader – European – vision of community. As such, borders have been used as explicit symbols of European integration, political community, shared values and, hence, identity by very different actors (Lepik, 2009; Perkmann, 2005; Popescu, 2008). Consequently, the Euroregion concept has proved a powerful tool with which to transport European values and objectives (see Bojar, 2008). Nevertheless, the normative political language of integration often contrasts with local realities where cross-border cooperation (CBC) reflects competing territorial logics at the EU, national, regional and, local levels and conflicting attitudes towards more open borders (Popescu, 2008). As a result, cross-border cooperation is not uncontested. A resurgence of nationalism and retreat into national cultures has taken place in several EU Member States and has, for example, affected local cooperation between Germany and Poland and Hungary and Slovakia.<sup>10</sup> Conflicts between ‘Europeanising’ and ‘re-nationalising’ conceptions of borders can in fact be interpreted in terms of identity politics serving specific groups within border regions.

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<sup>10</sup> See Bürkner (2006). In its edition of 20 October, 2009, the Hungarian daily *Népszabadság* (‘*Nem jött létre a ‘régiók Európája’*’, reporter: István Tanács) lamented a lack of true cross-border cooperation with neighbouring states, citing national particularisms and limited European vision.

The above also suggests that CBC can be understood as a form of transnational ‘place-making’ or region-building in terms of multilevel interrelationships between structure and agency. In order to comprehend the complex nature of borders and border-related identity, it is essential that these be understood as social constructs that reflect, for example, ‘Europeanising’ and ‘nationalising’ influences upon cross-border interaction as well as opportunity structures providing CBC incentives. With specific regard to ‘Europeanisation’ and its role in the construction of cross-border cooperation contexts, European policies have been aimed at networking cities and regions within a theoretically borderless European space (but without violating the formal space of administrative regulation). This is evidenced by a proliferation of initiatives aimed at promoting transnational networking, including Research, Training and Development schemes (such as the multi-billion euro framework programmes), the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), Visions and Strategies for the Baltic Sea Region VASAB, INTERREG, and the ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observatory Network) programme. Since 1990, European spatial policies have also been conspicuously cartographic in nature; blue bananas, the meso-regional zones of INTERREG (of which the BSR is one), Euroregions, programme regions, networks and trans-European urban and regional hierarchies have emerged as central elements in the definition of an integrating European economic and political space (Scott, 2002a).

## **ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF CBC/TC AND SOME CONCLUSIONS**

Although the promotion of territorial cooperation and a sense of cross-border ‘regionness’ through common institutions has been intensive in theory, institutionalisation patterns have been uneven in practice – with regard to both governance capacities and their performance in terms of actual cooperation.<sup>11</sup> Despite undeniable successes, Euroregions have clearly not automatically guaranteed the establishment of new public- and private-sector alliances to address regional and local development issues. European experience would also seem to indicate that, ironically, cooperation practices have maintained an administrative, technocratic and ‘official’ character that has not yet sufficiently encouraged citizen action

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<sup>11</sup> Early critical observations of cross-border cooperation are provided in, for example: European Parliament (1997), Mønnesland (1999), and Notre Europe (2001), as well as in evaluations of EU structural policies such as INTERREG ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/p3226\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/p3226_en.htm)).

and public-sector participation, particularly in areas characterised by stark socio-economic asymmetries, such the German-Polish border region (Matthiesen, 2002).

In the most ‘successful’ – that is, the most well-organised – border regions (e.g. the Dutch-German Euroregions), public-sector and NGO cooperation has been productive in many areas, especially in questions of environmental protection, local services and cultural activities. Additionally, successful cases (e.g. German-Dutch, Austrian-Hungarian regional projects) seem to involve a process of pragmatic incrementalism, with ‘learning-by-doing’ procedures and a gradual process of institutionalisation. As working relationships have solidified, experience in joint project development has accumulated and expertise in promoting regional interests has increased, as has the capacity of regional actors to take on large-scale problems and projects. Furthermore, in well-organised border regions (e.g. the Dutch-German Euroregions), public-sector and NGO cooperation has been productive in many areas, especially in questions of environmental protection, local services and cultural activities.

On the other hand, however, the research state of the art indicates a number of problems in CBC/TC that appear to be of a more persistent nature. In less successful cases, for example, cross-border projects have merely served to enhance local budgets without stimulating true cooperation. Generally speaking, it has also been very difficult to stimulate private-sector participation in cross-border regional development. Explanations for these mixed results have been accumulated through numerous case studies, but it appears that the transcending of borders is a much more complex socio-spatial process than most empirical research has been able to capture.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, given the ambiguous results of institutionalised forms of local and regional CBC within Western Europe, what can be said about the situation in the new Member States – and, for that matter, at the EU’s external borders? Gabriel Popescu (2006), for example, has critically assessed EU institutionalisation strategies in Central and Eastern Europe – an area of complex social, economic and political diversity. Popescu argues that Euroregions often tend to be ‘co-opted’ by specific interests seeking to benefit from direct EU support. As a result, Popescu states that Euroregions, especially those emerging in Central and Eastern Europe, are ‘top-down’ creations, inhibiting processes of region-building through local initiative.

In conclusion, exhaustive appraisals of the results of transboundary co-operation in Europe are difficult due to the vast number of border-region

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<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Henk van Houtum’s (2002) essay on ‘borders of comfort’ and their effects on restricting cross-border economic networking.

initiatives either completed or under realisation. However, the well-documented experiences of transboundary associations in the Benelux countries and the Dutch-German border regions, as well as those of asymmetric regions, such as in the German-Polish context, might serve as a measurement, particularly due to the uniquely favourable conditions for effective transboundary cooperation in this part of Europe.<sup>13</sup> Based on these experiences, at least three very general conclusions are possible.<sup>14</sup>

i) Cooperation between representatives of public agencies, universities and, to a lesser extent, non-profit organisations has been generally successful in relatively straightforward projects of clear but limited focus in areas such as environmental protection (creating transboundary parklands and nature reserves), transportation infrastructure, vocational training, cultural activities, and public agency networking.

ii) The encouragement of private-sector networking and investment as well as effective transboundary co-ordination of land-use plans and urban development remains elusive. Cooperation incentives and the establishment of business information centres have proven insufficient in changing nationally-focused investment behaviour and inter-firm networking, even in such culturally homogeneous border regions.

iii) Successful territorial/cross-border cooperation requires a sense of local purpose, adequate institutional capacity and an understanding of the border as a resource. If these conditions are not met, cooperation usually becomes perfunctory, unsustainable and largely – and in negative terms – symbolic.

To put things in a more general perspective, rarely has CBC/TC produced rapid results in terms of economic growth and regional development. However, institutional change elicited by EU policies and funding mechanisms has led to a degree of ‘Europeanisation’ of cooperation contexts and thus of spatial planning and development dialogue. This is evident in the discourses, agendas and practices of cross-border actors; they very often legitimise their activities by referring to the wider political, economic and spatial contexts within which their own region must develop (Scott, 2007).

Local and regional actors develop cooperation mechanisms situationally and in ways that reflect both political opportunities and social and structural constraints. Nevertheless, the results gathered within the scope of various research projects appear to highlight the value of open-ended,

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<sup>13</sup> The conditions include: equal standards of wealth, close cultural ties and linguistic affinities, strong local governments, a high degree of regional political autonomy and similar regional development problems.

<sup>14</sup> Based on reports compiled by van Ruiten (1996), Rodemann (1997) and Scott (1999).

project-oriented cooperation that is less rule-based.<sup>15</sup> Territorial and cross-border cooperation involve processes that should create environments of trust and networks of actors. Almost by definition, these features can only produce long-term benefits with regard to the ambitious goals of European Cohesion.

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<sup>15</sup> See reports from the EXLINEA (<http://www.exlinea.comparative-research.net/>) and EUDIMENSIONS (<http://www.eudimensions.border-research.eu/>) research projects, both funded by European Union Framework Programmes.

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## **1.2 TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION – FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Among several questions relevant to territorial cooperation, the ambitious TERCO project of the ESPON 2013 programme addressed a core issue, namely territorial integration (TI).<sup>2</sup> Territorial integration could perhaps be regarded as the ultimate objective of territorial cooperation, but it was rarely referred to in the early INTERREG experiments. More recently, it has sometimes been mistaken for ‘territorial cohesion’, the new paradigm of EU Cohesion policy. Despite the possible semantic overlap between these two notions, both characterised by a rather generic nature, it must be stressed that TI refers to a more specific and less vague reality than does ‘territorial cohesion’, which is so elusive a concept that the European Commission avoided its definition even in the dedicated Green Paper (CEC, 2008a).

This paper attempts to shed further light on the TI concept. Three themes are examined in succession: first, the exact meaning of territorial integration; second, the position of TI in the EU policy debate; and third, TI-related decision-making processes and structures or, expressed otherwise, the issue of TI governance.

### **TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION REVISITED**

Territorial integration is not a recently-coined expression, but instead has already been used in various contexts and with several distinct connotations. Accordingly, there is no unique and commonly agreed definition of the concept.

After World War II and until the 1960s, TI seems to have been frequently referred to – especially in the French literature – as a quasi-synonym of

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<sup>1</sup> Géphyres – European and cross-border territorial development, France.

<sup>2</sup> TERCO Main Report (2012) chapter 2.5.1. Contribution of TC to territorial integration [http://www.espon.eu/export/sites/default/Documents/Projects/AppliedResearch/TERCO/Final\\_Report/TERCO\\_FR\\_MainReport\\_Dec2012.pdf](http://www.espon.eu/export/sites/default/Documents/Projects/AppliedResearch/TERCO/Final_Report/TERCO_FR_MainReport_Dec2012.pdf).

‘regional integration’. For example, André Marchal’s interesting book (1965) dedicated to TI addresses the various integration processes experienced by large international groupings such as the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC), the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), etc. Marchal makes a distinction between two main typical approaches to TI: the liberal approach, concentrating on the integration of markets, and the planned (*dirigiste*) approach, geared towards the integration of economies. Drawing on the TI-related literature published at the time,<sup>3</sup> Marchal identifies five steps of the TI process understood as ‘leading to a higher degree of unity’: the free-trade area, the customs union, the common market, the economic union, and full economic integration, which entails unifying economic, monetary, taxation and social policies. With regard to this ultimate stage of the integration process, Marchal specifies that this is the stage reached by all modern nations, and towards which the EEC aspires (Marchal, 1965: 33).<sup>4</sup> It is indeed worth emphasising that the formation of nations is relatively recent and also results from a long-lasting territorial integration process. Nevertheless, this process is not irreversible, as exemplified by the recent disintegrations of the USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

Understood as such, the ‘territorial integration’ expression seems to have been definitively superseded by ‘regional integration’. The phenomenon has been renamed, but it remains more topical than ever. Regional integration is taking place in many parts of the world. It is deliberately encouraged by the African Union, which has promoted the integrated development of groupings of nations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), etc. In other continents, examples of regional integration processes include MERCOSUR (created by Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay,<sup>5</sup> joined by Venezuela on 31 July 2012, and Bolivia became an accessing member on 7 December 2012), ASEAN (Association of South-east Asian Nations, between Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), etc.

In the regional integration process, the economic and political dimensions are clearly dominant, even though other aspects (such as environmental, social or cultural issues) may also be addressed in the joint

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<sup>3</sup> Especially Balassa (1961).

<sup>4</sup> ‘C’est le stade qu’ont atteint toutes les nations modernes et c’est celui vers lequel tend la CEE’.

<sup>5</sup> Paraguay has been suspended from Mercosur.



approach. Proponents of full regional integration, such as Marchal and many others, have always insisted that the political dimension is essential. In other words, the initial free trade area step, which tends to be the only concern of the liberal approach, must be rapidly supplemented with other components of a more political nature. Otherwise, free trade will rapidly penalise weaker partners of the integration area and favour some form of ‘uneven integration’, which deepens the development gap between strong partners and those lagging behind. An extreme example of such a process was the metropole-periphery relationship in former colonial empires. Conversely, EU regional policy was and remains essential to secure a harmonious and fair development of the entire EU territory.

Nowadays, the expression ‘territorial integration’ seems to have been revived, especially in the framework of EU Cohesion policy and even more in INTERREG territorial cooperation, but with a slightly different interpretation. According to a definition recently proposed in a background report published by the Polish Presidency of the EU, TI should be understood as ‘the process of reshaping functional areas to make them evolve into a consistent geographical entity; this entails overcoming the various negative effects stemming from the presence of one or more administrative borders, which hamper harmonious territorial development’ (Böhme *et al.*, 2011: 29).

Defined as such, TI can operate in several contexts, depending on the geographic functional area considered. Very often, the purpose of this new TI approach is to design and implement appropriate policies for an area that does not fit the geographic remit of any existing public local, regional or national authority. There are countless examples of such policies based on cooperation between local authorities to implement a joint development strategy in a common metropolitan area. A similar process can also take place between local or regional communities neighbouring a common national border (dubbed ‘cross-border cooperation’ in INTERREG terminology) or belonging to a common macro-region overlapping several national territories (the geographic scale of the INTERREG ‘transnational cooperation’). This does not mean that action taken by public authorities is essential for TI to take place. Whatever the geographic scale, other actors, including the private sector, civil society and individuals, behave as TI agents, e.g. frontier workers, organisers of international events, cross-border traders, foreign direct investors, etc. After a while, however, public authorities often end up engaging in territorial cooperation to catalyse the TI process.

‘Regional integration’ (also named ‘territorial integration’ in the 1950s and 1960s) and TI (in its recent acceptance) pursue very similar objectives and therefore do not fundamentally differ from one another. However,

the former concentrates on the economic and political dimensions of the integration process (which may ultimately lead to a genuine unification of the integration area, for example through the establishment of a federation), whereas the latter's purpose is more pragmatic and diverse, focused on streamlining the functioning of the common integration area in various domains (e.g. mobility and public transport, water and other natural resource conservation, trade, R&D, healthcare and other services of general interest, etc.)

## POSITION OF TI IN THE CURRENT EU POLICY DEBATE

The awareness-raising process that led, in the framework of the EU, to the current debate on TI and related territorial cooperation practices was initiated two decades ago. In 1991, the European Commission published a first communication entitled 'Europe 2000: Outlook for the Development of the Community's Territory' (European Commission, 1991). This publication was supplemented, three years later, by a second communication entitled 'Europe 2000+, Cooperation for European Territorial Development' (European Commission, 1994). European territorial development was not a completely unexplored area at the time,<sup>6</sup> but these two communications were regarded as important milestones in the process that led to the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) in 1999. The policy analysis provided by 'Europe 2000' and 'Europe 2000+' was full of profound and stimulating insights. In particular, a map published in 'Europe 2000' provided a type of 'post-Westphalian'<sup>7</sup> picture of the European Community: it was not subdivided into 12 national territories<sup>8</sup> but instead into eight 'regional groupings'.<sup>9</sup> Territorial trends were analysed in each of these groupings, with a particular focus on the interdependent relationships between the various areas they encompassed. Although 'territorial integration' was not explicitly referred to in these studies, it seems clear that their publication powerfully fertilised

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<sup>6</sup> For example, the CEMAT (French acronym standing for 'Conférence européenne des Ministres de l'Aménagement du Territoire', i.e. European Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning) of the Council of Europe, had already been working for more than two decades on the same topic.

<sup>7</sup> The Peace of Westphalia (1648) is generally recognised as the origin of sovereign nation-states in Europe.

<sup>8</sup> Sweden, Finland and Austria joined the EU on 1 January 1995. Before this enlargement, the EU membership was limited to 12 Member States.

<sup>9</sup> Namely 'North Sea regions', 'Centre Capitals', 'Atlantic Arc', 'Alpine Arc', 'Continental Diagonal', 'New (German) Länder', 'Mediterranean regions', and 'Ultra-peripheral regions'. European Commission (1991: 22-23, Map 2) and European Commission (1994: 169-170, Map 27).

a new line of thought in the area of European territorial development, while raising awareness about the need for transnational cooperation. It was no coincidence that the INTERREG IIC guidelines, introducing a new strand on transnational cooperation in the INTERREG II Community Initiative, were published in 1996 (European Commission, 1996).

However, there is no explicit reference to territorial integration in these guidelines or in the ESDP adopted in 1999. Nevertheless, the word ‘integration’ appears repeatedly in the ESDP text, for example in references to the global integration process, the need for integration of policies, and incidentally to ‘regional’ and ‘spatial’ integration.<sup>10</sup> As far as global integration is concerned, one of the key messages of the ESDP is that the so-called ‘Pentagon’ area (defined by the metropolises of London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg) is the only global economic integration zone in the European territory, and other such zones should be developed to rebalance EU territorial development (European Commission, 1999: 21). There is of course some connection between the notion of ‘integration zones’ and that of ‘territorial integration’.

In the first version of the Territorial Agenda of the EU approved in 2007, there is one incidental reference to ‘territorial integration’.<sup>11</sup> The document also states that ‘accelerating integration of our regions, including cross-border areas, in global economic competition, and at the same time increasing dependencies of states and regions in the world’ rank among ‘major new territorial challenges we are facing today’.<sup>12</sup> In this approach, territorial integration is thus not considered as a policy objective, but instead as a challenging trend. By contrast, the revised version of the Territorial Agenda (or ‘TA2020’, approved on 19 May 2011 in Gödöllő) includes ‘territorial integration in cross-border and transnational functional regions’ in the list of ‘territorial priorities for the development of the EU’. The relevant quotation is as follows:

We 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. Cross border and transnational

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<sup>10</sup> One occurrence each.

<sup>11</sup> ‘An important aspect is the territorial integration of places where people live.’ Informal ministerial meeting on urban development and territorial cohesion (2007: § 3).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*: § 7.

functional regions may require proper policy coordination between different countries.

We 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. European Territorial Cooperation should be better embedded within national, regional and local development strategies.<sup>13</sup>

Commenting on European territorial cooperation, TA2020 considers that ‘European territorial cooperation has revealed a considerable mobilisation of potential of those cities and regions involved. Nevertheless, there remains room for improvement, especially to ensure that operations contribute to genuine territorial integration by promoting the sustainable enlargement of markets for workers, consumers and SMEs, and more efficient access to private and public services’.<sup>14</sup>

This second quotation from TA2020 effectively summarises the state of affairs in the area of EU INTERREG cooperation. The outcome of progress made by four generations of INTERREG programmes is undisputedly positive, but it took a long while until awareness was raised about the need to promote tangible territorial integration in this framework. With modest ERDF support worth ECU 800 millions, the achievements of the INTERREG Community Initiative in the 1989-1993 programming period deserve to be regarded as the first real breakthrough. REGEN, dedicated to the energy networks, was also rightly regarded as another form of territorial cooperation and as such was extended into the following 1994-1999 programming under Strand B of INTERREG II. There is little doubt about the REGEN and INTERREG IIB contributions to TI, but serious doubts can be expressed in this respect with regard to the first generation of INTERREG projects. As defined in the INTERREG guidelines, the main goal of this Community Initiative was ‘to help border areas to prepare for a frontier-free Europe’ (CEC, 1993), not to promote TI. It even seems that cross-border cooperation as such, albeit encouraged, did not rank among the project eligibility criteria. This means that various operations merely consisted of regional development activities in a border area, without any other action being taken in a neighbouring area on the other side of the border.

This type of practice survived in later INTERREG operations of Strand A, i.e. those dedicated to cross-border cooperation. Whereas strong and intense cooperation took place in various INTERREG II and III pro-

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<sup>13</sup> Informal ministerial meeting of ministers responsible for spatial planning and territorial development (2011: §§ 31-32).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*: § 52.

INTERREG: evolution of ERDF funding (in billion EUR)				
	1989-1993	1994-1999	2000-2006	2007-2013
Cross-border cooperation	INTERREG <b>0.8</b>	INTERREG IIA <b>2.66</b>	INTERREG IIIA <b>3.26</b> (67%)	INTERREG IVA <b>5.7</b> (78%)
Energy networks	REGEN <b>0.3</b>	INTERREG IIB <b>0.5</b>		
Transnational cooperation		INTERREG IIC <b>0.42</b>	INTERREG IIIB <b>1.32</b> (27%)	INTERREG IVB <b>1.3</b> (18%)
Interregional cooperation			INTERREG IIIC <b>0.29</b> (6%)	INTERREG IVC + networks <b>0.3</b> (4%)
Networks			ESPON/ORATE INTERACT <b>0.05</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>3.58</b>	<b>4.92</b>	<b>7.3</b>

grammes, geared towards long-term achievements and often catalysed by the action of standing conferences named ‘Euroregions’, the European Commission also recognised, in its INTERREG III guidelines, that these good practices were more the exception than the rule: the INTERREG II experience revealed that it was ‘difficult to establish genuine cross-border activity jointly’, and that this had led in some cases to ‘perverse effects such as parallel projects on each side of the border’, which ‘prevented border regions from reaping the full benefits of cooperation’ (European Commission, 2004, §5: 3). To avoid a repetition of such questionable practices, various provisions relating to the joint programming, selection and implementation of cooperation projects were included in the INTERREG III guidelines. However, this turned out to be insufficient, probably because of the lack of a clear definition of ‘joint projects’ in the guidelines. According to the INTERREG III ex-post evaluation report, ‘only 39 out of the 57 examined Strand-A programmes indicated a share of truly joint cross-border projects among all approved projects higher than 90 percent (36 programmes indicate a share of 100 percent)’ (Panteia *et al.*, 2010: 68).

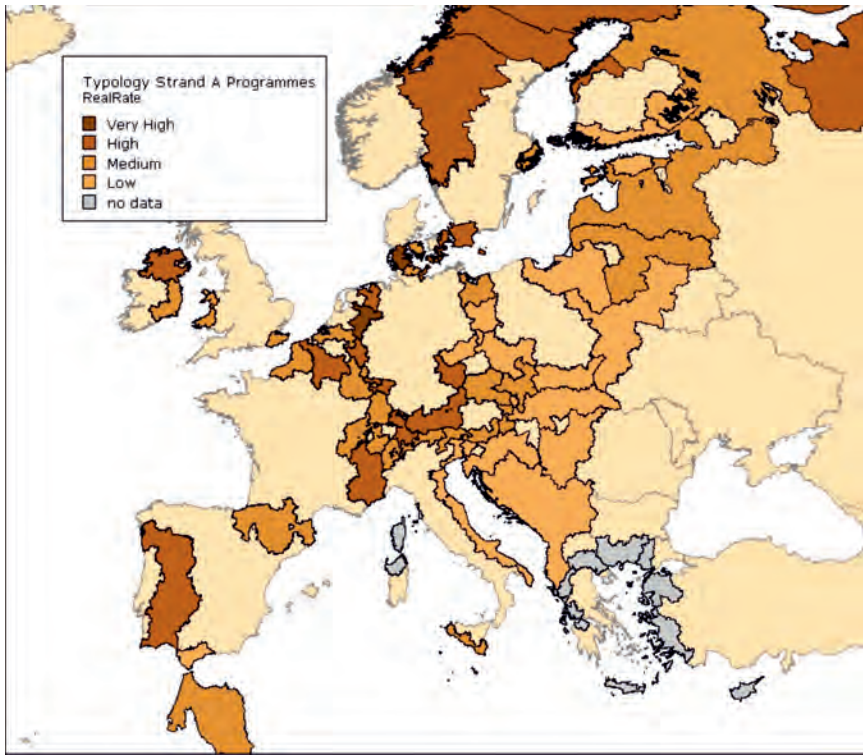
This means that a significant number of so-called ‘one-sided projects’ were still approved in the framework of INTERREG IIIA programmes. This of course impacted on the intensity of INTERREG cooperation, especially at the former and new<sup>15</sup> external borders of the EU, as can be seen on the map below. This lower cooperation intensity at the external borders was not surprising, since ‘until 2004, the EU funding procedures applied for programmes along old/new external borders were very cumbersome (i.e. a combination of INTERREG IIIA and the PHARE/TACIS-CBC or MEDA funding schemes)’ (Panteia *et al.*, 2010: 18).

Because of their different rules of functioning, INTERREG III programmes in Strands B and C (respectively ‘transnational’ and ‘interregional’ cooperation) never approved one-sided projects. All their projects were jointly developed, jointly funded, and jointly staffed. Does this mean that this kind of operation (also Strand A projects sharing the same characteristics) contributed to TI? This was not the case with Strand C projects, but for a simple reason: Strand C interregional cooperation was explicitly dedicated to sharing experience and transferring know-how, and not to TI as such.

What about the other two strands? First, it is worth stressing that TI, even though not formally defined, was explicitly referred to as a key objective of INTERREG IIIB.<sup>16</sup> This was no longer the case in ERDF

<sup>15</sup> Respectively before and after ten new Member States (CY, CZ, EE, HU, LV, LT, PL, MT, SI, SK) joined the EU on 1 May 2004.

<sup>16</sup> The aim of Strand B of the INTERREG III Community Initiative was worded as follows: ‘Transnational cooperation between national, regional and local authorities aims



**Figure 1** Depth and intensity of cooperation achieved by INTERREG IIIA programmes

Source: Panteia *et al.*, 2010: 60 (Map 2.1).

Regulation 1080/2006,<sup>17</sup> where Article 6 is dedicated to European territorial cooperation.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, relatively similar notions were mentioned in the same article, for example ‘integrated territorial development’ (but this could refer to integration between sectoral policies with a territorial impact) and ‘strategic integration of development zones’ under item ‘(d) sustainable urban development’. Interestingly, an explicit reference to territorial integration has been reintroduced in Article 2 (2) of the draft regulation on European territorial cooperation for the 2014-2020 programming period (European Commission, 2012).

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to promote a higher degree of territorial integration across large groupings of European regions, with a view to achieving sustainable, harmonious and balanced development in the Community and better territorial integration with candidate and other neighbouring countries’ (European Commission, 2004: Article 12).

<sup>17</sup> European Parliament (2006a).

<sup>18</sup> In practice, the ‘European territorial cooperation’ objective was renamed ‘INTER-REG IV’ by the community of participants in INTERREG programmes, Article 6.



Although a reference to a TI objective would also make sense in the definition of the cross-border cooperation strand, an even vaguer notion — ‘integrated regional development’ — appears as a policy objective in Article 2 (1) of the same draft regulation. ‘Joint strategies for sustainable territorial development’ were mentioned in the section dedicated to cross-border cooperation in the INTERREG III guidelines and in the ERDF Regulation 1080/2006.<sup>19</sup>

At the level of the INTERREG operations, and considering ‘joint’ projects<sup>20</sup> only, a distinction between four main types of achievements can be made:

- exchange of experience: the project partners compare their respective practices;
- transfer of know-how: the partners change their practice by learning from each other;
- resource pooling: the partners utilise human, technical, financial and other resources in common to increase their efficiency (generally to reach a critical mass that would remain inaccessible on an individual basis); and
- tackling transboundary<sup>21</sup> issues: the partners tackle issues that cannot be properly solved without cooperation.

The sequence of the above list corresponds to a growing degree of cooperation intensity.<sup>22</sup> The four types of achievements listed are not mutually exclusive, i.e. they may definitely be combined in the implementation of a single operation. However, tackling a transboundary issue effectively is the only practice conducive to territorial integration as understood by Böhme *et al.* (2011).<sup>23</sup> In the same publication, the following examples of transboundary issues were provided:

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<sup>19</sup> European Commission (2004: § 9); European Parliament (2006a: Art. 6-1).

<sup>20</sup> As opposed to ‘one-sided projects’ in the terminology of the INTERREG III ex-post evaluation.

<sup>21</sup> As recommended by Dühr, Colomb and Nadin (2010: 30), the word ‘transboundary’ is used here in a more generic form, which ‘retains a sense of both transcending boundaries and cooperation across different territorial spaces’.

<sup>22</sup> A more sophisticated scale has been proposed by Colomb to describe the ‘intensity and scope of transnational cooperation’, which involves five degrees of intensity: (i) exchanging experience; (ii) testing or transferring different approaches to tackle a common problem; (iii) sharing or pooling tools and resources to tackle a common problem; (iv) jointly realising a transnational action/investment; and (v) jointly producing and implementing a transnational spatial strategy (Colomb, 2007: 358). The ESPON 2013 TERCO project (TERCO Main Report, 2012) has drawn on Colomb’s scale to elaborate its ‘model of successful territorial cooperation’.

<sup>23</sup> Definition in the above quotation of Böhme *et al.* (2011: 20).



- lack of integration of public transport in a cross-border metropolitan area;
- obstacles to the cross-border mobility of the workforce and lack of labour market integration in border areas;
- administrative, linguistic and other types of problems limiting cross-border access to healthcare;
- insufficient development of transnational freight (e.g. difficulty encountered in developing new service lines for different modes such as short-sea-shipping and freight-ways);
- lack of integration of SMEs in international R&D networks; and
- drought, floods, river/groundwater pollution in downstream regions of a transnational river basin triggered by inappropriate action/policy in upstream regions.

As defined in the guidance notes of the INTERREG IIIB and IVB North-West Europe programmes, a transnational issue ‘cannot be tackled satisfactorily at local, regional or national level without transnational cooperation’.<sup>24</sup> Replacing ‘transnational’ by ‘transboundary’ should in principle suffice to transpose this notion to other contexts, for example a metropolitan area bringing together several local authorities, a grouping of local or regional authorities on both sides of a common border, or even a regional integration process at the sub-continental level. Tackling transboundary issues therefore lies at the core of any territorial integration process.

While pointing to some interesting cases of territorial integration, the conclusions of the INTERREG III ex-post evaluation considered that substantial room for improvement remained in this respect for operations in the 2007-2013 programming period (Panteia *et al.*, 2010: 21). It seems indeed that INTERREG III projects that effectively tackled a transboundary issue remained more the exception than the rule. Moreover, fears may be expressed about progress made in this respect in the framework of the current INTERREG IV programmes, all the more so because TI, as explained above, was not explicitly mentioned in Article 6 of ERDF Regulation 1080/2006, after being identified as a key objective in the INTERREG III guidelines.

The reintroduction of a reference to TI in the draft regulation on European territorial cooperation (European Commission, 2012) could herald significant progress towards effective TI in European territorial co-

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<sup>24</sup> Colomb (2007: 257), quoting the *Guidelines for Project Promoters* of the INTERREG IIIB NWE programme; also Guidance Note 7 (‘Transnationality’) of the INTERREG IVB NWE programme website: [http://www.nweurope.eu/index.php?act=page&page\\_on=documents&id=384](http://www.nweurope.eu/index.php?act=page&page_on=documents&id=384)

operation in the coming 2014-2020 period, provided of course that TI is explicitly presented as a key policy objective in INTERREG V operational programmes, and reflected as such in their intervention logic. Until now, in too many INTERREG programmes, the SWOT analysis has remained very similar to that of other ERDF-funded programmes. As pointed out by Böhme *et al.* (2011: 21), ‘facts and trends analysed include population size and growth, GDP/head, water quality or biodiversity in specific areas etc., instead of addressing information shedding light on issues of cross-border or transnational relevance (population migrations, workforce mobility, transport flows, cross-border or transnational trade, water pollution transfer, protected species migrations, etc.)’.

That said, TI can be promoted and has been effectively pursued in several other contexts than INTERREG territorial cooperation. The late Jacques Robert, a prominent expert who pioneered the analysis of European territorial development, dedicated the last chapter of his monumental monograph *Le territoire européen* to the TI of the European continent (Robert, 2011: 246-322). He described this integration as a long-lasting historical process dating back to the Roman Empire, characterised by an alternation of ebb-and-flow phases. At the continental level, European TI was deteriorating in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as a result of the intense domestic TI process taking place within the nation-states. After World War II, a new wave of TI took place at the continental level, first on either side of the Iron Curtain, then on the entire continent after the end of the Cold War. Several factors decisively contributed to this TI process, including the progressive completion of the Trans-European Transport Networks (the HST network as well as fixed links such as the Øresund Bridge or the Channel Tunnel were major TI breakthroughs) and the liberalisation of the transport markets, as well as the development of economic and technological networks and the dramatic surge in people, goods and capital mobility: migrations, cross-border commuting, trade of goods and services on the Single Market, flows of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), etc.

However, this impressive TI process has not made the European territory significantly more homogeneous in terms of the geographic distribution of prosperity. A convergence process took place between national economies,<sup>25</sup> but interregional disparities were not significantly alleviated or became even more acute. According to Robert (2011: 319), a key determinant of this situation seems to be the rapidity and intensity of the globalisation process, which compels European economic operators to engage in excessive territorial concentration to safeguard various

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<sup>25</sup> But this process has been put in jeopardy by the recent financial crisis.

competitive edges in order to offset lower labour costs and accumulation of capital in countries with emerging markets or which export energy or raw materials.

## TI GOVERNANCE

The above section reviewed the nature and content of TI and its position in the EU policy debate. This is now supplemented with some brief comments concerning TI implementation mechanisms, particularly related to its governance aspects.

TI governance is a complex issue, especially when applied to trans-boundary cooperation: in that context, the integration area overlaps nation-state territories, which may give rise to conflicts of competence.

In terms of content and process, decisions made by transboundary groupings of local/regional authorities differ from those made in the regional integration process of international organisations. Many such organisations initially concentrated on economic integration, and some of them (the EU in particular) progressively widened their remit. In cross-border or transnational cooperation, economic development was generally considered as one important cooperation topic among many others, and not necessarily the top priority (cooperation often focused on cultural, environmental or other issues). This probably explains why administrations responsible for territorial development or environmental policy, accustomed to dealing with the integration of various sectoral policies, were often involved in transboundary territorial cooperation processes. In many cases, this also led to the elaboration of joint strategies, such as ‘spatial visions’, all of which were of a non-binding nature, but were nevertheless meant to promote an integrated territorial approach.

Depending on the nature of specific domestic circumstances, this type of cooperation was more-or-less confronted with difficult problems resulting from the insufficient autonomy of the local or regional authorities involved. Difficulties were of course particularly acute in countries with a strong centralist administrative tradition.

To tackle the issue, EGTC Regulation 1082/2006 was adopted in July 2006.<sup>26</sup> EGTC stands for ‘European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation’. This long-awaited<sup>27</sup> legal instrument has rightly been recognised as a significant breakthrough to promote further progress in the area of territo-

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<sup>26</sup> European Parliament (2006b).

<sup>27</sup> Robert (2011: 302) indicates that a first but unsuccessful attempt in this direction was made in 1976 in the European Parliament by Horst Gerlach, German MEP and President of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR).

rial cooperation. It allows public bodies (and their associations) to acquire joint legal personality to facilitate and promote their territorial cooperation activities. On 5 October 2012, 31 such EGTCs had been formally registered (Committee of the Regions, 2012a).

Special care was taken to include a provision in the ERDF Regulation to reassure national authorities that no serious conflict of competence would arise as a result of the relative autonomy conferred on EGTCs. Indeed, Article 7 §4 of the regulation reads: ‘The tasks given to an EGTC by its members shall not concern the exercise of powers conferred by public law or of duties whose object is to safeguard the general interests of the State or of other public authorities, such as police or regulatory powers, justice and foreign policy’. Subject to compliance with this important restriction, an EGTC is entitled to make formal decisions – even by majority voting, should its statutes allow this – on a wide array of cooperation-related activities.

The EGTC instrument is more than welcome, especially in countries where territorial cooperation had to face difficult legal and administrative hurdles. In other countries, the creation of an EGTC may not be essential. On balance, the significant administrative burden of creating and running an EGTC may sometimes turn out to be heavier than that of managing co-operation on a more pragmatic basis.

Even where the EGTC (and the EU Structural Funds) happen to be very helpful means to an end, the end should always take precedence over the means. It seems reasonable to consider that TI should be the main aim pursued by any form of territorial cooperation across local,<sup>28</sup> regional or national boundaries. As TI will always remain a long-lasting process, it is critical for territorial cooperation to engage in joint long-term visioning exercises. A common territorial strategy should be elaborated, implemented and regularly updated by participating authorities and other key players, transcending the time horizon of the successive EU Cohesion policy programming periods. Several exercises of this type have already been conducted successfully. The transnational cooperation in the Baltic Sea macro-region is probably the most acknowledged archetype of such long-term TI processes, but several similar transboundary experiments have been initiated elsewhere in Europe: since 1958,<sup>29</sup> 75 ‘Euroregions’ have been created on the European continent.<sup>30</sup> As its name suggests, this type of cooperation provides the participating partners with an opportunity

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<sup>28</sup> This includes the domestic context, for example territorial cooperation between the local authorities of a large metropolitan area.

<sup>29</sup> The first Euroregion, ‘Euregio Enschede-Gronau’, was created in 1958.

<sup>30</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Euroregions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Euroregions). This seems to be the list of Euroregions recognised by the Council of Europe, but is apparently not available on <http://hub.coe.int/>.

to become familiar with the intricacies of territorial, and also European, integration. Building the common European house is not simple matter. The process is demanding, and often requires difficult choices. For example, qualified majority voting, albeit less popular than decision by consensus, is more efficient and probably even more democratic (after all, consensus is tantamount to giving a veto right to everybody). In the history of the European Community, it took a long time for participating Member States to accept the so-called ‘Community method’, i.e. a combination of the right of initiative of the European Commission and qualified majority voting for decisions made by the Council of Ministers. This process took place in Brussels, in ‘Eurocratic circles’, relatively far removed from the European citizen. Progress made towards TI through long-standing transboundary cooperation in Euroregions provides scope for European citizens to become acquainted with the intricacy, as well as the legitimacy and usefulness, of cross-border, macro-regional and European territorial integration.

JOAQUÍN FARINÓS DASÍ<sup>1</sup>

### **1.3 TERRITORIAL COOPERATION AS A MEANS OF ACHIEVING TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION? FROM LOCAL PLACE-BASED TO EUROPEAN UNION TERRITORIAL COHESION**

*As purely economic relationships let people separated to each other (en dehors les uns des autres), it is possible to have very important [economic relationships] without participating for this reason to a common existence. Trade flows over the boundaries which separate the nations do not imply that those boundaries no more exist (Durkheim, 1897: Suicide).*

*When people are separated by space, the unity is the result of actions and reactions that they exchange to each other; because the unity of a complex whole does not mean anything else than the cohesion, and the cohesion can only be obtained through the mutual cooperation between common forces (Simmel, 1897: Comment les formes sociales se maintiennent-elles?).*

(Both quoted by De Boe *et al.*, 1999: 24-25)

### **GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT RE-INTERPRETED: WHICH FUTURE FOR EUROPEAN UNION?**

Generally speaking, there is no doubt amongst many sectors and groups of academicians and decision-makers that Europe is experiencing one of its most crucial and challenging periods. Two main issues – mutually interrelated – are the feasible future for the European Union (EU) project (a reality that is progressively under threat) and how to handle the current economic and financial crisis. The way chosen in response to the challenges of globalisation will be the way that the EU project will be defined or re-defined.

Expressed more simply, the current situation across the world is the result of a new stage of capitalism – globalisation – that represents important changes from the previous *status quo*. Among them, a combination of factors is especially crucial: the loss of citizens' control regarding their

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future, the loss of national and even supra-national control over financial international fluxes and its effects, the loss of the redistributive character of the market production model, and a progressive concentration of benefits and reduction of middle classes that are essential for sustaining demand and markets (and therefore production and enterprises in the real economy). In sum, capitalism cannot solve its own problems and its regular crises, but instead can only displace them geographically (Harvey, 2010). Accordingly, within this new globalised context where no more displacement is easy or even possible, except across other unexplored places – seas and space – or over time, it can no longer be democratic (Streeck, 2011).

How we reached this new situation can be simply summarised as the need to sustain and reinforce increasing accumulation of benefits despite economic crisis effects in the mid-1980s (third crisis – end [?] of traditional welfare state); after re-inventing/regaining/strengthening market rules by the end of the 1990s with neo-liberal approaches, to finally predating and hypothecating the future in the early 2000s; until the current financial global crisis. This new crisis seems to be a limit that impedes to move current borderlines and to overcome thresholds looking for new alternatives. It is leading to an easier (‘*déjà vu*’) solution instead: a reversal (mainly in social rights) as the only possible solution; that is, to maintain the traditional capitalistic production system (more pure and powerful) as the only way or possible choice.

Trying to find alternatives to this option, which is not at all satisfactory, are voices arguing for changing conditions if we really want more Europe instead of a progressive re-nationalisation (as an additional way to go back): more supra-national control of policies and fluxes at EU level (including appropriate management of fiscal heavens), a more cohesive Europe, and more territorially (place-based) oriented. It means a model of competitiveness based on specific resources (local, endogenous, own, differentiated; in line with old Delors’ idea of local employment opportunities recently revived as ‘bottom-up development’ – Panorama, 2012) instead of common or banal resources. The content of this chapter focuses only on the two last ones.

EU construction history, as well as European Spatial Planning (Faludi, 2010), as a new and clear example of a ‘Tower of Babel’, can be interpreted in a deliberative perspective: as a result of concrete initiatives and projects trying to overcome all kind of barriers and shortcomings due cultural as well as socioeconomic differences. Until now, that was not an insurmountable problem, trying to progress EU integration through instruments and policies such as European regional policy, the ESDP and Territorial Agendas looking for coherence and territorial cohesion ideas

and objectives, as well as Territorial Cooperation initiatives. If ‘reinforced cooperation’ has been avoided until now, the current situation seems to be different (two or more Europes, no longer precisely understood as ‘little Europe’ or part of a common project); when more difficult and traumatic could be the impacts on the European Union project of taking the decision of an EU at several speeds and classes. This leads to a necessary reflection about more appropriate relations between cohesion/coherence and enlargement, over time and with regard to the subsequent pace and rhythm.

This new territorial situation of the EU with variable geometries due to both enlargement processes and cooperation with neighbouring countries – without any possibility to develop new policies and instruments, if they mean more bureaucracy, more new instruments and more funds – is asking each time more clearly for more coherence for policies and cohesion among territories through territorial cooperation. A new and more evolved territorial cooperation practice not only looks for shared minimums or punctual projects, but also local development strategies, spatial visions, enhancing effective integration of local territories as part of a bottom-up strategy to face globalisation challenges by offering not only local responses but also alternative spatial sustainable development models based on own potential (place-based, as the Barca Report 2009 points out).

### **GALLERY OR SALAD OF CONCEPTS... AGAIN! FROM SPATIAL ARTICULATION TO TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION**

As De Boe *et al.* (1999: 8) pointed out, *spatial integration* was an important criterion in assessing the situation of the various parts of the European territory during the preparation of the first project of the ESDP. In fact, it was initially named *spatial articulation* when it first appeared in 1995, and it focused specifically on cross-border relationships. Finally cross-border has been the favourite form of territorial cooperation at EU level until now (e.g. territorial integration in cross-border as well as transnational functional regions as a key factor in global competition, facilitating the better utilisation of development potential, and the protection of the natural environment is the third priority of the current Territorial Agenda (TA2020); however, it also should be noted that all six priorities are closely related to territorial cooperation). Nevertheless, this meaning was extended into a more comprehensive vision. According to the Final ESDP Draft presented in Noordwijk in 1997:

Spatial integration expresses the opportunities for and level of (economic, cultural) interaction within and between areas and may reflect the willingness



to cooperate. It also indicates, for example, levels of connectivity between transport systems of different geographical scales. Spatial integration is positively influenced by the presence of efficient administrative bodies, physical and functional complementarity between areas, and the absence of cultural and political controversies.

The subsequent ESDP version (from Glasgow, 1998) maintained the definition, while removing the terms *economic* and *cultural*, and extended the meaning to all kinds of relationships. However, as usual when discussing relationships between economic and territorial goals, the term 'spatial integration' almost disappears in the official final ESDP version adopted in Potsdam in May 1999. Instead, the term 'European Integration' is preferred, understood as integration of non-member countries into the European Union, a challenge as well as an opportunity for the balanced development of the European territory (in a similar way to CEMAT's opinion in its *Guidelines for Sustainable Spatial Planning in Europe*). 'European Integration' also is referred to transport issues, and most related to the 'Economic' dimension (e.g. Zones of Global Economic Integration) rather with the 'Spatial' one.

In any case, the balanced development of the European territory seems difficult to achieve without Spatial Integration; but it is directly impossible without Territorial Integration. The ESDP Noordwijk draft defined 'Spatial Integration' as: '*Opportunities – [not defining which kind, so a large range of issues would be possible] – for and level of interaction within and between areas*'. Accordingly, with De Boe *et al.* (1999: 7), there are several understandings of the integration concept: originally (and still mainly predominant nowadays) economic integration (Single Market), subsequently evolved to 'economic and social cohesion' in the Maastricht Treaty, and was then promoted to social integration in the Treaty of European Union (TEU), and last but not least, to Territorial Cohesion in The Amsterdam Treaty (Art. 7D), and included in the Lisbon 2007 TEU, which entered in force from 2009. Two other alternative interpretations are possible: integration (coherence, concurrence, coordination of territorial impacts/effects) between sectoral policies with territorial impacts and among different stakeholders involved in common projects on a given territory, as well as a means of identifying functional territorial units as efficient space to live and work.

The latter two especially enhance the spatial dimension of integration, complementing the previous predominant economic one. In this way, spatial integration is considered as a crucial aspect for European spatial planning and spatial sustainable development through territorial place-based spatial visions or sustainable development strategies (from local,

place-based, to transnational level). This interpretation is similar to that given by Böhme *et al.* (2010: 9) for the ‘territorial integration’ concept: ‘process [that may take place at various geographical scales] of reshaping functional areas to make them evolve into a consistent geographical entity; this entails overcoming the various negative effects stemming from the presence of one or more administrative borders, which hamper harmonious territorial development’. In this new idea of territorial integration and functional areas, several processes of territorial groupings of functional or homogeneous areas are included, in accordance with several criteria (commuting, voluntary agreements to define common local strategies, including cross-border and other). In all cases, Territorial Cohesion is behind them, through Territorial Cooperation, polycentrism and urban-rural partnerships.

Explicit references to ‘functional regions’ have been made in EU documents and proposed regulations for the next EU financial framework for 2014-2020; so it appears that it will be an important piece in the design and implementation of some instruments of EU cohesion, rural development and sectoral policies in the next programming period. The above-mentioned document entitled *How to Strengthen the Territorial Dimension of Europe 2020 and EU Cohesion Policy* relates functional regions with: the enlargement of local job markets, achievement of critical mass through territorial cooperation, accessibility to growth poles and secondary regional centres, public transport connections to regional centres, and compact cities (sustainable cities). In turn, the document entitled *Effective Instruments Supporting Territorial Development. Strengthening the Urban Dimension and Local Development within Cohesion Policy* (MRD, 2011) closely relates strengthening urban-rural relationships with: the development of entrepreneurial capacity, enhancement of human and social capital, enhancement of social services, enhancement of linkages with urban areas, and the increase of the residential and economic attractiveness of rural areas. In addition, the OECD (2011) underlines five fields for urban-rural partnerships: exchange of services and public goods (both in urban and rural areas by both urban and rural users); exchange of goods (also in both directions); exchange of financial resources; infrastructure (transport, facilities, ICT) connecting both areas; and mobility (commuting and migration).

Even though few explicit references are made to ‘Spatial Integration’ in European documents, ‘Territorial Cohesion’ has become the major theme at supra-national (EU) level; and ‘Polycentrism’ and ‘Territorial Cooperation’ (from local to EU level) are understood as the preferred ways to achieve it. In a common understanding (Wikipedia), Territorial Cohesion ‘is intended to strengthen the European regions, promote

territorial integration and produce coherence of EU policies so as to contribute to the sustainable development and global competitiveness of the EU'. A crucial issue for integration is to achieve an appropriate balance between spatial/territorial equity and diversity, which strongly relates to the crucial question of the appropriate balance between enlargement and cooperation with neighbouring regions and states and stronger internal cohesion inside EU borders. This question is addressed in the final section of this paper.

Existence of flows between places is not enough to ensure spatial integration, and accordingly 'willingness to cooperate' must also be included. This cooperation willingness can occur from the local (place-based) level to the transnational level, and it opens new perspectives for future European Regional Policy (2014+) and for new areas with fuzzy boundaries (variable geometries) on which to base new strategic spatial planning (Allmendinger and Haughton, 2009; Faludi, 2010; Haughton *et al.*, 2010). In fact, anything new but old challenges revisited instead: How to adapt space and territory, functional-real versus administrative units (to new variable geometries), vectoral/fluxes versus surface/plain space, space and place (two concepts initially with very different meanings but each time close), emergence and prevalence of the subregional rather than the local scale for planning (reemergence of metropolitan areas as planning units), etc. How to apply and make theory effective in practice seems to be behind this new (old) idea of 'soft spaces' and 'soft planning for soft spaces'. In this context, new governance routines and new practices are emerging, as well as new pieces of legislation and instruments, more oriented, it seems, to Strategic Spatial Planning. This renewed Strategic Spatial Planning can be considered as a preliminary manifestation of democratic governance and a socio-territorial innovation for this new soft planning (Farinós, 2010).

#### **NO LOCAL STRATEGIES WITHOUT COMBINING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DIAGNOSTIC; NO STRATEGIES WITHOUT TERRITORIAL COOPERATION; NO STRATEGIES WITHOUT EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COHESION IN MIND**

According to the ESDP document (CEC, 1999a: 3-4) '... In the interests of closer European integration, the Ministers consider cooperation on regional development among the Member States and among their regions and local authorities necessary. Regional and local authorities must work together in the future across national boundaries'. The ESDP is considered a suitable reference document for encouraging cooperation, while at the

same time respecting the principle of subsidiarity. Some Policy Options specifically address territorial cooperation. For example:

(1) Strengthening several larger zones of global economic integration in the EU, equipped with high-quality global functions and services, including the peripheral areas, through transnational spatial development strategies.

(30) Better co-ordination of spatial development policy and land-use planning with transport and telecommunications planning.

More recently, from a political point of view, Territorial Cooperation is also understood as a key issue in the EU context: 'European Territorial Cooperation offers a unique opportunity for regions and Member States to divert from the national logic and develop a shared space together, build ties over borders and learn from one another. It is a laboratory of EU integration and EU territorial cohesion' (José Palma Andres, Director, Directorate-General for Regional Policy). 'As the third objective of cohesion policy, European Territorial Cooperation is central to the construction of a common European space, and a cornerstone of European integration, it has clear European added value: helping to ensure that borders are not barriers, bringing Europeans closer together, helping to solve common problems, facilitating the sharing of ideas and assets, and encouraging strategic work towards common goals. The huge cooperation community involving stakeholders at regional and local level, Members of the European Parliament and many of our partners in the Member States share the conviction that cooperation is a great European tool with a lot of potential still to be explored' (Johannes Hahn, Member of the European Commission in charge of Regional Policy).

According to the Inforegio Regional Policy webpage, 'European Territorial Cooperation is central to the construction of a common European space, and a cornerstone of European integration. It has clear European added value: helping to ensure that borders are not barriers, bringing Europeans closer together, helping to solve common problems, facilitating the sharing of ideas and assets, and encouraging strategic work towards common goals'. Current Territorial Cooperation experiences between regions and countries have adopted several forms:<sup>2</sup>

- third objective of European Regional Policy: 53 cross-border cooperation programmes, 13 transnational cooperation programmes, the interregional cooperation programme (INTERREG IVC) and three networking programmes (URBACT II, INTERACT II and ESPON) cover all 27 Member States of the EU.
- two macro-regional strategies: the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/index_en.cfm)

- the Regions for Economic Change initiative, aiming to promote the exchange of good practice between Europe's regions.
- other forms of cooperation and networking: the annual European Week of Cities and Regions ('Open Days') event; the RegioNetwork 2020, an online cooperation platform; and International Cooperation.

Territorial Cooperation cannot be based solely on willingness; it also relates to the need to cooperate. Some arguments have already been presented about this need, both from a local-level point of view (Farinós, 2004) and from a transnational perspective (Farinós, 2009), not only because of the need to achieve economies of scale or sufficient influence or lobbying capacity, but also as a favourite way of achieving territorial cohesion at EU level in a reinterpretation of goals for European Regional Policy. But Territorial Cohesion is a polyhedral and difficult concept to operationalise from both a theoretical as well as a political point of view.

According to Territorial Agenda 2020 (TA2020, 2011: 4-5), '(9) Territorial cohesion complements solidarity mechanisms with a qualitative approach and clarifies that development opportunities are best tailored to the specificities of an area. Regions might need external support to find their own paths of sustainable development, with particular attention paid to those regions lagging behind. Regional interdependencies are increasingly important, which calls for continued networking, cooperation and integration between various regions of the EU at all relevant territorial levels... (17) Deepening and widening of EU integration is challenged by internal factors such as regions divided by administrative borders, and differences in fiscal discipline and commitment between Member States. Changes in one part of Europe can have effects in other parts of the continent due to the growing interdependences of regions'.

Territorial Cohesion relates not only to a redistributive function among territories, financial solidarity and spatial justice (for example, through the appropriate distribution of services of general interest, economic and otherwise), but also, as recently enhanced, to competitiveness, endogenous development, sustainability and good governance (Farinós, 2006). When talking about Territorial Cohesion, it signifies an addition to economic and social factors of a new spatial planning perspective in decision-making (by harmonising and coordinating all sectoral policies applied to territories) in order to promote sustainable and well-structured development.

In 2012, as occurred previously in 2006, when Member States were negotiating the next Community financial framework for the 2014+ period, with a weak – even ailing – European Union project, Territorial Cohesion appeared more clearly as the most evident attempt to create a legacy for the Community method and a united Europe from two different points of view: (i) as a political project by giving a pro-active role to places

(territories) in order to ‘produce’ Europe (as a common space through European policies) and make it stronger; and (ii) as the best way to face globalisation challenges and enhance Europe’s place in the world.

How can competitiveness be combined with spatial justice? Must there be hierarchical relations between them, or it is possible to achieve an intermediate path? This mixed ‘third-way’ option to secure balanced spatial development combines territorial cooperation (through networks and partnerships promotion) with better coherence (coordination) among policies with territorial impact. This option seems to be the natural result of an integration process of the two objectives (competitiveness and balance) and the two more solid spatial planning traditions: regional economic development (pursuing spatial justice) and integrated/comprehensive planning (pursuing bottom-up spatial development in a well-structured multilevel system). The first approach tries to adapt places to policies; the second approach pays more attention to the strengths of each territory and to a better accommodation of policy instruments within them.

In summary, Territorial Cohesion looks for:

- Improvement in the competitiveness of European territories through appropriate use of own (and diverse) territorial potential (capital);
- Territorial balance, by respecting principles of justice and equity, through general interest services and paying special attention to disadvantaged areas (e.g. mountainous, rural, low-density, border, peripheral, islands, vulnerable to natural risks, industrial transition). A clear distinction should be made between imbalance and inequality;
- Promotion of balanced spatial development through territorial cooperation, sectoral policies coordination (coherence objective), multi-level coordination (by promoting spatial/cohesion plans from local to EU level), partnerships (between territories such as urban/rural, and between stakeholders, preferably public/private) and participation.

From a territorial development point of view (understood not only as successful competitiveness and growth, but also as appropriate wellbeing and quality of life), and taking into account that ‘in a globalising and interrelated world economy ... competitiveness also depends on building links with other territories to ensure that common assets are used in a coordinated and sustainable way’, Territorial Cooperation becomes an efficient instrument for services delivery, supporting local-residential solidarity in economies (*bassins de vie*) and competitive production in the current globalised context. ‘Cooperation along with the flow of technology and ideas as well as goods, services and capital is becoming an ever more vital aspect of territorial development and a key factor underpinning the long-term and sustainable growth performance of the EU as a whole’ (CEC,



2008a: 3). For all these reasons, mobilisation and the appropriate use of all available territorial potential is needed (German Presidency, 2007).

All this relates to a revisited interpretation of local territorial development, by combining EU support and Cohesion Policy with place-based own efforts. Not only is the future of Cohesion Policy (former European Regional Policy) at stake, but also real and efficient possibilities to find appropriate ways for spatial developments, not limited to following the traditional or orthodox framework of the current production system. Around 20 years ago, George Benko pointed out that some regions win, while other regions lose; this means, in essence, that not all regions can or should operate in the same common, standardised way. Concepts such as the new culture economy, character (usually applied to landscape), and place-based actions retrieve the endogenous side (based on specific resources instead of generic ones) of local territorial sustainable development.

The European Commission has proposed a new set of rules for the Structural Funds in the next programming period that includes new financial instruments such as Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI<sup>3</sup> (with both top-down and bottom-up characteristics) and community-led local development initiatives (bottom-up). The use of 'functional regions' in the design and implementation of development strategies, policies and programmes requires territorial coordination, cooperation and partnerships, as well as flexible and multilevel forms of territorial governance. In accordance with previous experience (ESPON 2.3.2 Project), there are three main axes to be taken into account: vertical, horizontal and participation. From the multilevel (vertical) point of view, it seems easier, due to some generic trend towards decentralisation-devolution across Europe. There is political will and political sympathy for this action, even though in some cases it is not necessary to create new intermediate levels, but rather new efficient routines that are integrated and participative. More difficulties appear in attempts to develop the horizontal dimension of territorial governance. This is generally not the case with territorial cooperation (where inter-administrative agreements are increasingly common, with clear positive instruments such as the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation – EGTC – at transnational level), but it is the case with cross-sectoral policies coordination, in pursuit of more coherence and concurrence. This is the main challenge to be faced. It seems easier at local level through the use of coordination forums (formal), policy packages (formal) or local visions (more strategic ones). Regarding the third key question (participation), cultural traditions, political culture and political will seem to be crucial,

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<sup>3</sup> See [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/iti\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/iti_en.pdf)

but in some cases they are absent. Financial incentives and even penalties for those that are not committed can certainly help as demonstrations or in producing an inductive effect. Renewed and real strategic spatial plans, which have been supported for years (at supralocal and subregional levels), seem to be one of the better ways to achieve the objective of reinforcing the importance of functional regions and strengthening urban-rural relationships.

The territorial dimension of development relates not only to placing economic development processes as common players inside administrative borders in the current economic global system, but also takes into account available resources and citizens' wishes and the impacts of the chosen options on each territory. In other words, availability of resources is not enough; other essential factors include their organisation and establishing cooperation routines in order to make them profitable in an appropriate way that addresses common desired goals (Van der Berg *et al.*, 1997).

Current processes are supralocally based (all resources can be moved or delocated – and so became generic), but this cannot apply to people, and therefore places should develop and commonly agree strategies adapted to each particular situation, trying to choose development options or a combination of options, by appropriately combining and integrating internal and external diagnostics. In this scenario, diversified strategies are needed in a plurinational context (such as the EU), within an integrated, multilevel and single vision of territorial cohesion, since local scale to supranational (as in the case of Zones of Global Economic Integration), by means of territorial cooperation strategies (spatial visions), also includes differential expenditure and inflation measures (expansive in the case of Euro-Mark/first speed Member States) at this time of financial crisis. None of this will be possible without clear and decided reinforcement of Territorial Cohesion Policy inside the EU, understood as a whole (federal), and as a global economic region, but also with adequate living space for its citizens.

## FINAL REMARKS.

'Growth in the Neighbourhood area', or looking for potential growth and crisis solutions outside EU external borders where new territorial capital should be explored and discovered, seems to be a very common strategy to solve this new (cyclical) capitalism crisis; moving problems geographically, as stated by Harvey. This time, within a global context, where increased displacements become more difficult each time, and when the European Union's own position and role as a global player is at stake, the situation seems to be different... or perhaps not. We should decide about our future, about key financial actors and decisions-makers.



But what about real democratic governance? What about real sustainable spatial development? What about wellbeing and quality of life? What about new styles and models of production; not necessary radical, but transitional or mixed, between old and new, in the right combination of competitiveness, innovation, creativity, culture economy, residential economies/cohesion, community and environmental services? What about balanced weight between external integration and internal coherence/cohesion, and their relationship with the choice of development models? Which speed and rhythms are appropriate for enlargement, and under which conditions and momentum? Again, the answer is related to an old and key question: Which idea and what kind of future is desired for the European Union – anything more than just the Single Market, anything else other than intergovernmental routines, any possibility of real political integration?

Throughout this text, I have argued and defended the case that ‘more Europe’ is needed, as well as more Territorial Cohesion, through Territorial Cooperation, in order to achieve more efficient and intelligent Territorial Integration. Territorial Cohesion itself not only means but also makes possible combinations of multilevel spatial development initiatives and strategies in a pluri-national and pluri-regional context such as the EU. Original, endogenous, place-based, not banal, not homogenised (despite the long and recent economic history since the 19<sup>th</sup> century) alternatives for development are required. Rather than accepting ‘limited expectations’, intelligent, ambitious, humanistic and ethical strategies and practices are more necessary than ever. That applies not only to economic growth and development, spatial perspectives, strategies and visions, and not only to new detailed boundaries and planning (for new variable and iterative boundaries), but also to a new understanding of the EU ‘territoriality’: between traditional (national) cultural narratives, storylines and a sense of ownership, and the necessary (slow but strong) construction of new socio-territorial bonds/ties in order to avoid undesirable territorial alienation processes (uprooting without exile) in such a globalised world of non-places and evanescent territories. Territory matters, but in addition – for common futures – cohesion matters.

*IRENE MCMASTER<sup>1</sup>*

## **1.4 EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION: OVERVIEW AND EVALUATION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the current context of increasing internationalisation, globalisation and integration, it is clear that interconnections, interrelations and cooperation between countries and regions have intensified and expanded. Related to this is a surge in interest in territorial cooperation in the three forms of cross-border (between adjacent regions), transnational (involving regional and local authorities) and interregional (large-scale information exchange and sharing of experience) cooperation (Perkmann, 2003; Scott, 2002b).

In broad terms, territorial cooperation creates fields for functional cooperation in the areas of competence of the territorial units involved and is seen as pragmatic cooperation oriented towards problem-solving (Schmitt-Egner, 2005). The territories involved seek to solve common problems, jointly exploit development potentials and strengthen their position nationally and internationally. However, the way that territories pursue these goals and organise the cooperation varies.

In the EU, given the high level of political integration amongst the Member States and the large number of relatively small countries, numerous rules and structures have accumulated to guide and support territorial cooperation. In the EU context, territorial cooperation is viewed as an important channel for reinforcing territorial cohesion and integration. Looking to the future, contemporary and past experiences with territorial cooperation offer valuable lessons for maximising the beneficial impacts of territorial cooperation (Pedrazzini, 2005). With this in mind, this chapter outlines the evolution of European territorial cooperation, assesses its achievements, and reviews the challenges experienced thus far.

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## EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION – EVOLUTION<sup>2</sup>

European Territorial Cooperation has a lengthy history and has involved a wide range of initiatives. INTERREG, introduced in 1990, is currently the most widely recognised form of cooperation. However, European cross-border cooperation already existed long before INTERREG was adopted. In 1958, the first ‘Euroregion’, EUREGIO, was established at the German-Dutch border, and institutional cross-border cooperation developed throughout the 1960s and 1970s, in particular along the Rhine in the West and in Northern Europe (INTERACT, 2010c). A cross-border cooperation development strategy, within EUREGIO, received financial support from the European Economic Community as early as 1972.

INTERREG I was introduced in 1990 and supported 31 cross-border programmes. It introduced an international dimension to the EU’s existing Structural Funds programming, and, in the context of the Single Market, was a tangible expression of the objective of European integration.<sup>3</sup> The initiative was both expanded and diversified for the 1994-1999 programme period, embracing three different types of multi-national programme:

- Strand A was focused on cross-border cooperation and so extended the activities of INTERREG I;
- Strand B, which would only exist in the 1994-1999 programme period, involved the completion of energy networks; and
- Strand C, introduced in 1996, addressed cooperation in regional and spatial planning, building on increased European policy interest in this field in the context of the European Spatial Development Perspective.

By the end of the 1994-1999 period, 75 INTERREG II programmes were being implemented. In the 2000-2006 period, INTERREG continued into a third phase with an ERDF allocation of €4.875 billion (1999 prices). It was divided into three strands.

- **A – Cross-border cooperation.** This strand promoted cooperation between adjacent regions with the aim of developing social and economic cross-border integration through common development strategies. This was equivalent to INTERREG IIA and included the longest-running INTERREG programmes.
- **B – Transnational cooperation.** Involving national, regional and local authorities, this strand aimed to promote better integration within the Union through the formation of large groups of European regions whose integration is strengthened through a range of strategic and

<sup>2</sup> This section draws in part on Mirwaldt *et al.* (2008).

<sup>3</sup> The account of the first two phases of INTERREG was informed largely by LRDP (2003).

conceptual initiatives. These programmes built on activities piloted under INTERREG IIC.

- **C – Interregional cooperation.** This strand was newly introduced and aimed to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and instruments through large-scale information exchange and sharing experience (networks). It was focused on learning about policy rather than delivering it.

Two additional related programmes were operated under Article 53 of the INTERREG guidelines.

- **ESPON.** The European Spatial Planning Observatory Network (ESPON) is financed jointly by the European Union and the Member States, as well as other neighbouring states. It is a cooperation network involving national spatial planning institutes, and it focuses on the observation and analysis of territorial and regional development trends in Europe. It operates by financing research studies in the field of spatial planning and generates results and learning of potential relevance to all INTERREG strands.
- **INTERACT.** This programme was launched in 2002, seeking to build on the experience and lessons of INTERREG I and II. It aimed to improve the effectiveness of implementation of INTERREG III during the 2000-2006 programme period by enabling the exchange of experience, networking and information dissemination about INTERREG programming. It also offered support to those involved in managing INTERREG III programmes and projects.

INTERREG retained a high level of political importance in 2000-2006, providing an instrument that promoted the deepening of European integration in tangible ways, at different scales and in different fields. This is further reflected in the continuation of INTERREG into the 2007-2013 programme period. The 2007-2013 phase of European territorial cooperation continues to aim at 'strengthening cross-border cooperation...transnational cooperation... ..and inter-territorial cooperation' (Article 3.2 c). However, a number of changes were introduced for the 2007-2013 period. A fundamental change is a shift in the status of INTERREG from a Community Initiative to the 'European Territorial Cooperation' Objective, which is thought to give the cooperation element 'higher visibility' and a 'firmer legal base' than in the past (DG Regio, 2007). The broad aims of the Objective are:

- development of economic and social cross-border activities;
- establishment and development of transnational cooperation, including bilateral cooperation between maritime regions; and
- increasing the efficiency of regional policy through interregional promotion and cooperation, networking, and the exchange of experience between regional and local authorities (DG Regio, 2008).

For the 2007-2013 period, the Commission emphasised the need for a more strategic approach to programming. Programmes are expected to establish a clear, coherent policy response that addresses EU objectives and the specific needs of the programme area. The three-strand structure of INTERREG has been retained, but with some modifications in eligible areas and activities.

- **A – Cross-border cooperation:** for solving local problems, including strategic projects. Only regions adjacent to national borders are eligible. Two modifications were made to the eligibility of some maritime and external border areas, which have led to change in the geographical coverage of some programmes. Eligible areas are NUTS 3 regions along all internal and some external land borders as well as maritime borders separated by a maximum of 150 km.
- **B – Transnational cooperation:** concrete projects important for a specific geographical programme area. In total, there are 13 separate programme areas. There has been a move away from support of spatial planning and spatial development issues.
- **C – Interregional cooperation:** an interregional cooperation programme (INTERREG IVC) and three networking programmes (URBACT II, INTERACT II and ESPON) cover all 27 Member States of the EU. They provide a framework for exchanging experience between regional and local bodies in different countries. Jointly with the URBACT II programme, the INTERREG IVC programme is the main vehicle for the EU initiative ‘Regions for Economic Change’, which aims to support regional and urban networks in developing and sharing best practice in economic modernisation.


In terms of resources, the Territorial Cooperation Objective has 2.5 per cent of the overall budget for Cohesion policy. The transition in the scope of INTERREG through the four phases described above is shown in Table 1. Arrows indicate where initiatives have been carried over into a subsequent programme phase. Strand A has seen the greatest overall continuity across all four rounds of INTERREG programming. Within the A and B strands, the longevity of programmes varies, with only a minority having retained the same structures and geographical scope for the maximum period for which these strands of activity have been operating.

European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) is now an established strand of the EU Cohesion policy framework, contributing to the main aim of fostering balanced development by strengthening cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation. At present, the ETC Objective extends to 53 cross-border programmes, 13 transnational programmes and an interregional cooperation programme, and it affects over 500 million

Table 1 Scope and numbers of INTERREG I, II, III and IV programmes\*

Theme	INTERREG I 1990-1993	INTERREG II 1994-1999	INTERREG III 2000-2006	INTERREG IV 2007-2013
Total	31 programmes	79 programmes	72 programmes	
Cross-border cooperation	INTERREG I 31 programmes (4 maritime)	INTERREG IIA 59 programmes	INTERREG IIIA 53 programmes	INTERREG IVA 3. 53 programmes
4. Completion of energy networks	5. n/a	6. INTERREG IIB Continuation of the Regen Community Initiative 3 programmes Operated as collections of projects rather than 'programmes'	7. n/a	8. n/a
Transnational cooperation	n/a	INTERREG IIC & Article 10 Pilot Actions 13 INTERREG IIC programmes focused on regional and spatial planning – context of ESDP	INTERREG IIIB 13 INTERREG IIIB programmes (Most relate to previous transnational cooperation and Article 20 pilot actions. Two new programmes target outermost regions)	INTERREG IVB 8.1.1 13 INTERREG IVB programmes (Most relate to previous transnational cooperation areas, with some shifts and expansions of programme areas)

Table 1 – continued

Theme	INTERREG I 1990-1993	INTERREG II 1994-1999	INTERREG III 2000-2006	INTERREG IV 2007-2013
Interregional cooperation	8.1.2 n/a	8.1.3 n/a	8.1.4 INTERREG IIIC	8.1.5 INTERREG IVC
			<p>Pan-European programme 4 programmes to divide the EU administratively into four sectors</p> 	<p>The interregional cooperation programme (INTERREG IVC) and 3 networking programmes (URBACT II, INTERACT II and ESPON) cover all 27 Member States of the EU. They provide a framework for exchanging experience between regional and local bodies in different countries</p>

Source: Adapted from S. Taylor *et al.* (2004).

\* Arrows indicate initiatives continued into a subsequent programme period.

Europeans. The current budget of €8.7 billion accounts for 2.5 percent of the total ERDF budget and funds a diverse range of projects.

The evolution of INTERREG has been accompanied by changes in additional programmes and initiatives that also incorporate a particular focus on European Territorial Cooperation. The 2007-2013 programme period has seen the emergence of new instruments for territorial cooperation in the form of tailor-made responses to address macro-regional challenges. Macro-regional strategies are broad-based integrated instruments that include 'territories from a number of different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges' (Samecki, 2009). The aims of the strategies are to focus on the alignment of policies and funding to increase policy coherence and the overall impact of public spending. Thus, the macro-region is 'a concept' to be implemented with no additional funding, no additional institutions, and no additional legislation. Instead, the focus is on the effective and coordinated use of existing resources.

To date, the Commission has endorsed two macro-regional strategies, for the Baltic Sea region (EUSBSR) and for the Danube Region (EUSDR). Both the EUSDR and EUSBSR cover large territories and are associated with natural structures that face specific common challenges (Bengtsson, 2009). Other potential macro-regions identified include those for the Alpine, Black Sea, Mediterranean and North Sea areas (Schymik, 2011; Mirwaldt and McMaster, 2010).

In contrast to the macro-region concept, the European regulation on the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), introduced in 2006, is important in putting territorial cooperation on a legal footing by giving it a legal personality. The EGTC was developed to make territorial cooperation more strategic but – at the same time – more flexible and simple. In theory, the EGTC regulation should reduce the difficulties encountered by Member States and, in particular, by regional and local authorities in implementing and managing cooperation activities in the context of differing national laws and procedures. However, to date, the EGTC instrument has not been widely applied; up to October 2012, 31 EGTCs had been established (CoR, 2012a).

The EU also has a long-standing commitment to promoting territorial cooperation along its external borders. In 1994, in the lead up to EU enlargements in 2004 and 2006, Phare CBC was introduced to assist border regions in applicant countries and to promote integration, with the aim of accelerating economic convergence and supporting preparations for the INTERREG programme. Between 2000 and 2003, €163 million was available each year to the Phare CBC programme. In 2003, this figure was supplemented by an External Border Initiative (€33 million), which



supported CBC-type investments at the future external border of the EU. In 2007, Phare CBC was replaced by a cross-border component of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). There are currently ten IPA CBC programmes, covering regions in Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Albania and Croatia and neighbouring EU Member State regions (INTERACT, 2012).

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) also addresses external territorial cooperation. ENPI has been operational since 2007, when it replaced previous EU cooperation programmes TACIS (for the Eastern European countries) and MEDA (for the Mediterranean countries). It is the main source of funding for 17 partner countries (ten Mediterranean and six Eastern European countries, plus Russia). Cross-border cooperation is a key priority of the ENPI. Two types of CBC programmes can be established: land-border programmes between two or more countries sharing a common border (or short sea-crossing) and multilateral programmes covering a sea basin (EUROPEAID, 2012). There are 13 ENPI CBC programmes, which aim to address the following overall objectives: promote economic and social development in border areas; address common challenges; ensure efficient and secure borders; and promote people-to-people cooperation (EUROPEAID, 2012).

As the preceding discussion has highlighted, European Territorial Cooperation has a long and established history. It has addressed a wide variety of issues through numerous initiatives, instruments and programmes. The following sections offer a brief overview of the impacts, added value and challenges involved.

## **THE IMPACT AND ADDED VALUE OF EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

With the issue of territorial cohesion gaining increased policy prominence and looking forward to a new Cohesion policy programme period, it is timely to ask: what has been the impact and added value of ETC? This theme is the subject of formal evaluation reports and also the subject of wider debate. Assessments largely fall into two main categories: assessments of quantitative impacts and studies of qualitative results.

### **Quantitative Impact and Added Value**

The financial resources attached to ETC are not large. For example, INTERREG III had an overall budget of €5.8 billion for the 2000-2006 period (CEC, 2007a). Consequently, the physical, measurable results and impacts of INTERREG and its direct contribution to territorial cohesion,

in terms of concrete outputs, can be limited. Put in rather stark terms, one commentator suggested that INTERREG IIC and IIIB have 'hardly any tangible outputs' (Böhme, 2005).

Nevertheless, the achievements, impact or added value of ETC can be viewed in terms of the quantitative effects of EU funding in leveraging additional resources for economic development through 'financial pooling', acting as a catalyst for regeneration and encouraging partners to undertake subregional projects that might otherwise not take place (Martin and Tyler, 2006). On this basis, assessments involve measures of: the scale of outputs/outcomes, i.e. where programmes have boosted the outputs and results of programmes or projects by increasing their scale; and the scope of outputs/outcomes, i.e. support allowing different types of outputs and outcomes that were not originally envisaged (Scottish Executive, 2006: 4). Taking this type of approach, the European Commission credits INTERREG, for example, with a significant leverage effect (CEC, 2007a: 118). Similarly, ETC resources have generated cooperation across borders that have resulted in new solutions to development problems, e.g. cooperation in transnational river basins to improve the planning of land use in flood-risk areas (Colomb, 2007: 347).

However, more generally, the impact and added value of ETC programmes in terms of 'concrete' outputs is difficult to measure for a number of reasons. First, the comparatively small scale of financial resources places clear limitations on the quantitative impact that the programme can have. The programmes generally are not in a position to fund a large number of major projects with significant territorial, economic, social or environmental impacts. Second, the 'breadth' and scope of the programme objectives and priorities, compared to the financial resources available, make it particularly difficult to clearly demonstrate 'concrete' programme results and impacts (Taylor *et al.*, 2004). Third, for a large number of programmes, the large geographical scale of the programme area means that resources are spread widely and measurable impacts are not immediately apparent in all regions. Shortcomings in monitoring systems and data collection further complicate the identification of programme impacts and outputs (Taylor *et al.*, 2004).

### **Qualitative Impacts and Added Value**

Despite the difficulties of measuring the qualitative impact of ETC, it is widely acknowledged that territorial cooperation can have a substantial 'qualitative impact', e.g. through opportunities for exchange of experience and learning, and the adoption of innovative elements, processes or responses into domestic policy.

## (i) Political symbolism

Cooperation programmes address areas of potentially high political and symbolic added value. Territorial cooperation obviously has major symbolic significance for the EU project of European integration and the objective of territorial cohesion, particularly in an enlarged EU with increased development disparities. ETC initiatives offer tools which, at least on paper, directly address the EU goals of territorial cohesion and integration, and increase the visibility of the EU and its funding mechanisms by engaging with a range of partners at different administrative levels and in new geographic areas (Ferry and Gross, 2005).

## (ii) Additionality and innovation

ETC interventions are additional to domestic policy initiatives due to their transnational nature (EKOS, 2006). European Territorial Cooperation programmes support distinctive fields of intervention. For example, a novel aspect of INTERREG is its operation in distinctive policy areas, in comparison to mainstream Structural Funds programmes. In the past, INTERREG has been the only EU funding instrument that explicitly dealt with territorial development and spatial planning (Colomb, 2007). In doing so, INTERREG programmes have increased awareness of place-based opportunities and spatial positioning in both transnational and European contexts (Böhme *et al.*, 2003a: 45).

ETC interventions have enabled specific problems to be tackled that could not have been addressed through other support programmes. For instance, INTERREG is credited with helping cross-border cooperation networks move on from 'more or less ceremonial interaction towards the realisation of concrete projects' (Perkmann, 1999: 662) and increasing the number of organisations involved (Church and Reid, 1999). Programmes can also constitute an initial stimulus for cross-border cooperation. For instance, an evaluation of the INTERREG II Spain—Morocco programme found that the programme represented an 'opportunity to create a solid environment for cross-border economic, commercial, and service exchanges' and suggested that it could be advantageous to improve the coordination of this type of programme with other instruments of EU Foreign Policy (Marchante *et al.*, 2002: 18). Thus, ETC interventions can be seen as potential catalysts – providing opportunities that lead either to new and additional activities, or to pre-existing priorities being taken forward in a different way, opening up new possibilities to enhance strategic coherence and coordination, synergies, learning, new economic development directions and economies of scale (Taylor *et al.*, 2004).

### (iii) Learning and exchange

One of the most widely recognised contributions of ETC is the opportunity for learning and exchange of experience (BBR, 2008). Through ETC, policy-makers and planners are 'now routinely involved in trans-boundary cooperation networks and interrregional collaboration initiatives and thus subject to foreign experiences and exposed to a variety of ... approaches ... leading to horizontal processes of policy transfer and institutional adaptation between Member States and regions' (Dühr, Stead and Zonneveld, 2007: 291). A wide range of studies highlight learning and exchange of experience as key motivations behind partner involvement in ETC. For instance, 76 percent of respondents questioned as part of an ESPON study of the territorial impact of Structural Funds programmes listed exchange of experience and information as a key driver for becoming involved in INTERREG programmes. Seventy percent highlighted the benefit of establishing collaborative networks and seeking new solutions to similar problems (Böhme *et al.*, 2003a: 134).

### (iv) Trans-border relationships

ETC activities can result in a significant increase in the number, intensity and dynamics of cross-border contacts at national, regional and local levels. It has been suggested that cross-border regions can be characterised as 'terrains for the emergence of new transnational actors and new opportunities for existing actors' (Perkmann, 1999: 658). For example, INTERREG is credited with the 'invention' of new regions as spaces and arenas for cooperation at cross-border and transnational levels (Gualini, 2008: 13).

### (v) Internationalisation and decentralisation

By their nature, ETC interventions involve a high level of horizontal and vertical communication and coordination. Territorial cooperation can bring a wide range of actors into the process and help ensure that projects are genuinely bottom-up, with local networks playing an essential role in the delivery of the programme (Perkmann, 1999). They can encourage new public conceptions of regions and the creation of new identities (e.g. Skärgården), institutions and cross-border governance systems. In some cases, the involvement of local and regional authorities in the INTERREG programme can mean that they enter a field long reserved for central state actors (Taylor *et al.*, 2004).

## Barriers and Challenges

The contributions of ETC are well recognised. Equally, there are well-recognised barriers and challenges inherent in territorial cooperation. First, the benefits of cooperation strategies can be more symbolic than tangible in nature and as a result are difficult to capture: although long-term gains may be assumed, short-term benefits can be elusive (Ferry and Gross, 2005). In many cases, the large geographical scale of the cooperation area means that resources are spread widely and measurable impacts may not be immediately apparent in all regions (Taylor *et al.*, 2004). Thus, a common problem of evaluating cooperation activities is the difficulty of identifying concrete impacts, disaggregating effects from other public expenditure and determining cause-and-effect and assessing the continuity and sustainability of activities.

Second, establishing an appropriate strategic and thematic focus for cooperation can be contentious and time-consuming. Often, projects and programmes are characterised by interdisciplinarity and national diversity. This involves working within the constraints of one or more foreign languages, experiencing challenges associated with cultural diversity, and overcoming difficulties with communicating across sectoral boundaries (Böhme, 2005). Thus, cooperation processes could be constrained by factors such as: uneven levels of commitment; the absence of a coherent implementation strategy; the lack of instruments to promote the objectives of cooperation; and direct competition on some issues. The appropriate 'spaces' and 'levels' for cooperation can also be difficult to establish. For instance, research on INTERREG has shown that some areas have found it difficult to achieve common purpose and strategic project cooperation (Taylor *et al.*, 2004). It is difficult to set boundaries on cooperation, such as whom to include and exclude, and at what level to participate, e.g. national government, regional authorities, agencies or private companies?

Finally, the complexity inherent in many territorial cooperation arrangements has important implications for the perceived high cost and administrative burdens involved (Wassenhoven, 2008). Being additional to mainstream policy means that cooperation activities often require dedicated delivery structures and strong promotional activities in order to be delivered successfully, while the amount of resources available is often relatively small. Delivering cooperation activities that can span multiple local, regional and national boundaries with different financial, administrative and regulatory systems can involve a high administrative cost. Moreover, guaranteeing that activities under this heading are integrated with larger domestic development strategies, while avoiding becoming subsumed by them, is a challenge.

## CONCLUSIONS

As this chapter has emphasised, European Territorial Cooperation has a lengthy history and has involved a wide range of initiatives. There is strong support for territorial cooperation and recognition of its added value. Over time, the profile of territorial cooperation has increased at national and EU levels. The introduction of new forms of support for territorial cooperation, such as the EGTC and macro-regions, has intensified debate on the issue and raised its profile. Associated with this, expectations of what ETC could and should deliver have increased. Yet, there are ongoing concerns about the effectiveness of ETC, for example in relation to delivering tangible results, and capturing and quantifying benefits, and there have been calls for greater simplification and standardisation of rules and procedures across Member States.

With these challenges in mind, key questions and issues for ETC in the future include:

- developing and maintaining a clear strategic focus for ETC;
- strategic links with other forms of cooperation and mainstream interventions, in order to maximise impact;
- maximising partnerships, so that cooperation draws in more partners and deepens existing arrangements;
- delivering, capturing and conveying results; and
- maximising efficiency and effectiveness, simplifying the management and implementation of projects and programmes.

## PART II

### EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION FROM TERCO PERSPECTIVE





ADAM PŁOSZAJ <sup>1</sup>

## **2.1 TWO FACES OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION IN EUROPE: TWINNING CITIES AND EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses cooperation between entities from various European regions taking place within so-called twinning cities and projects financed from EU funds in the frame of INTERREG B and INTERREG C programmes. City twinning is an interesting phenomenon with various spatial aspects. It comprises formal cooperation agreements made between local commune (city) authorities usually located in different countries. The INTERREG analysis concerns two types of cooperation: transnational cooperation and interregional cooperation. Transnational cooperation takes place across large multi-national spaces; interregional cooperation concerns non-contiguous regions across the whole territory of the EU. The cooperation takes place as part of projects financed from ERFD funds. In 2000-2006, transnational cooperation was financed within 11 operational programmes within the INTERREG IIIB initiative. In 2007-2013, transnational cooperation is financed as part of 13 transnational programmes under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective (the name INTERREG is not officially used, but due to large similarity of the initiatives in this paper, for the sake of brevity, the term INTERREG IVB will be used). In addition, interregional cooperation is financed from ERDF funds, in 2000-2006 within the INTERREG IIIC programme and in 2007-2013 within INTERREG IVC.

### **Sources of Data**

The analysis uses data on INTERREG III and IV projects collected from official publications (databases, reports, project lists, etc.) by

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institutions managing particular programmes. Due to the low importance given to spatial analyses of ESPON space, the analysis excludes one INTERREG IIIB programme, namely 'Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands' and three INTERREG IVB programmes, namely 'Indian Ocean Area', 'Macronesia' and 'Caribbean Area'. Source data represent the state of affairs as at the beginning of 2011 – consequently, they include all of the completed programmes from 2000-2006, and for programmes from 2007-2013 the data are fragmentary and include projects that had been started or approved for implementation by the beginning of 2011. Based on the primary data, a database of projects and associated partners was built, encompassing all the programmes taken into account. Subsequently, project partners were ascribed to particular European regions at NUTS 2 level (according to the location of the headquarters of the organisation, or the location of the division taking part in the project). Partners were located qualitatively, which required manual ascription of each record. It is important to underline that the project used primary data on projects and partners (above all, derived from programme-level databases). However, during the TERCO project lifetime, the KEEP tool and database was developed by the INTERACT programme.<sup>2</sup> The KEEP database contains datasets for projects and partners from the 2000-2006 INTERREG and 2007-2013 European Territorial Cooperation programmes. This database offers considerable opportunities for research in territorial cooperation, but due to the TERCO project timeline, the KEEP tool was not used for this project.

The data collected for twinning cities were based on an analysis of Wikipedia pages of communes and cities. Use of this source of data was determined by the lack of official sources. The data from Wikipedia were collected in the period of July-October 2011 through the use of crawling software and data mining and cleaning algorithms created for the purpose of the study.<sup>3</sup>

## **SPATIAL PATTERNS OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION (INTERREG IIIB AND IVB)**

The implementation of projects within INTERREG IIIB and IVB programmes took place within predetermined areas, both in the EU countries and neighbouring countries. The cooperation areas within par-

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<sup>2</sup> KEEP is an online tool and internet portal containing comprehensive information on all European Territorial Cooperation projects. It was developed within INTERACT Project. Read more: [http://www.interact-eu.net/keep/what\\_is\\_keep/227/2259](http://www.interact-eu.net/keep/what_is_keep/227/2259)

<sup>3</sup> The author would like to take the opportunity to thank Jakub Herczyński for the help with crawling and processing the data.

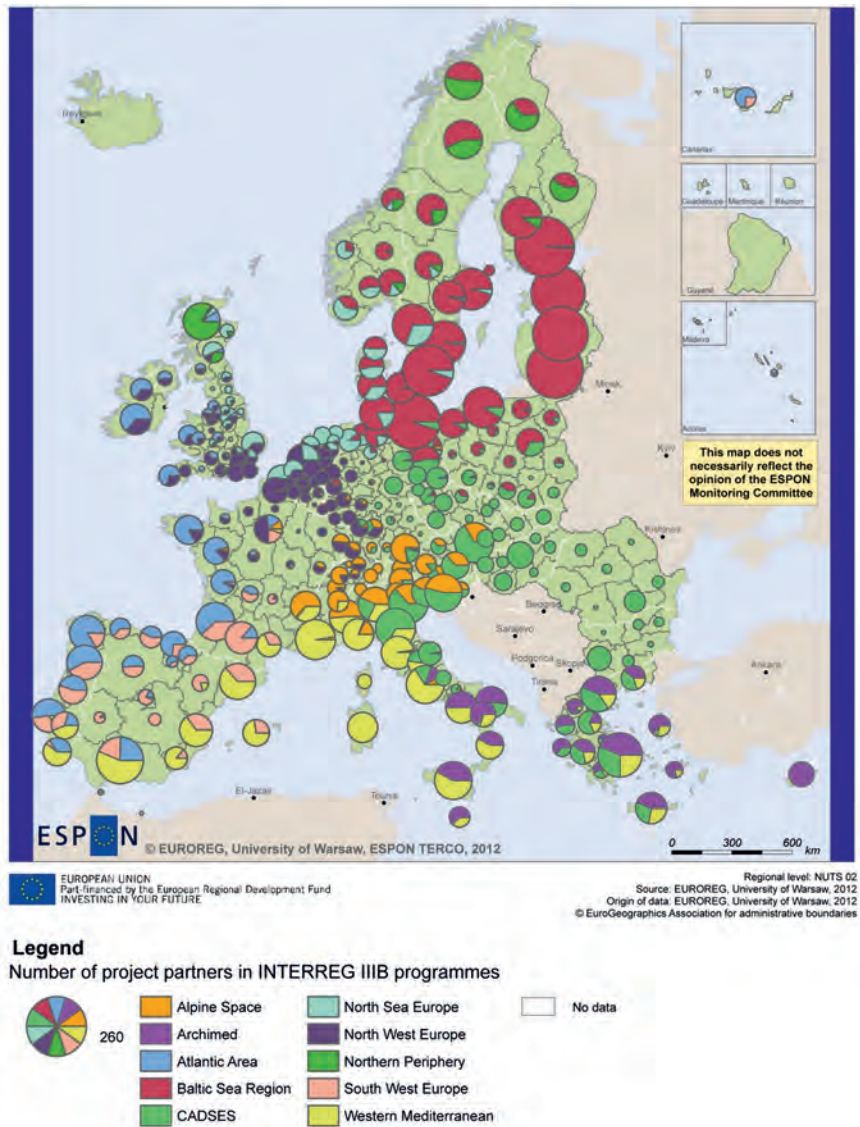
ticular programmes are presented in Figures 1 and 2. Note that the areas of cooperation changed to some extent in both of the analysed periods. Moreover, the areas of particular programmes are not mutually exclusive, i.e. some regions may participate in more than one programme (and in a maximum of four).

In ten programmes within the INTERREG IIIB initiative, fewer than 1,000 projects were implemented, in which about 9,000 partners participated (a partner is interpreted as each participation of a given entity in a project, i.e. if a given entity took part in two projects it is counted as two partners). On the other hand, within INTERREG IVB programmes, 500 projects had started implementation by the beginning of 2011, with over 5,200 partners. Particular programmes are quite diverse, both in terms of the number of implemented projects and the number of partners, but also with regard to the number of NUTS 2 regions from which the partners originated. The relative measures characterising the programmes are also diversified, such as the average number of partners per project and the number of projects per region in which the projects within a given programme were implemented. The large diversity of programmes – within both INTERREG IIIB and INTERREG IVB – makes general comparative analyses or analyses including the whole ESPON space more difficult, and their results depend largely on the characteristics of the programmes, which in turn result from the principles assumed within particular programmes.

European regions (NUTS 3) differ significantly in terms of their involvement in the implementation of projects within INTERREG IIIB and IVB initiatives. This is connected to some extent with the aforementioned diversity of particular programmes. Moreover, an important factor determining the diversity is the fact that some regions could have benefited from more than one programme in both the INTERREG IIIB and the INTERREG IVB implementation periods. Therefore, the observed diversity should be treated as largely resulting from the accepted set-up of INTERREG IIIB and IVB initiatives and particular programmes within them.

In the case of projects within the INTERREG IIIB initiative, there is a very high level of activity of institutions from the Baltic Sea Region programme area. A large number of projects is also typical for Italian regions and those French, Spanish and Portuguese regions located in the Mediterranean or the Atlantic Ocean region – in their case the projects were implemented within more than one programme. In the case of some countries – particularly Spain, France, Germany and Poland – there is a perceptible difference in the level of activity between coastal regions, which are characterised by a large number of project partners, and the hinterland regions, where the number of partners implementing projects was significantly smaller (see Figure 1).

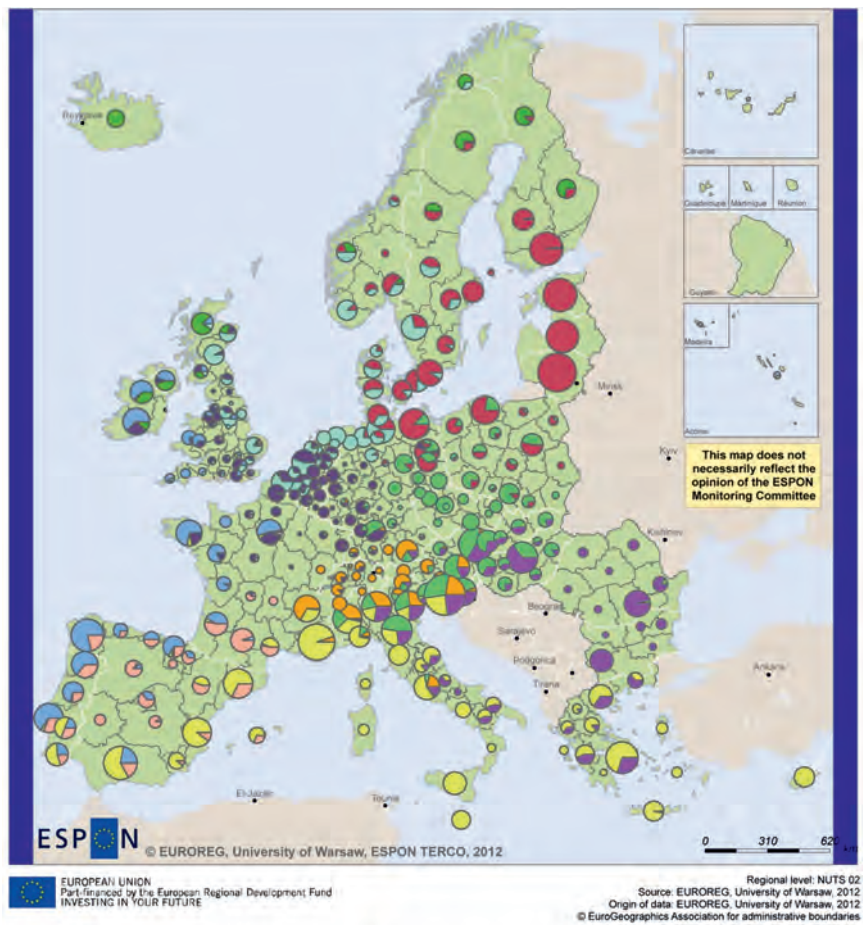
In the subsequent period (INTERREG IVB), the pattern of participation in implementation of transnational cooperation projects is quite similar (see Figure 2). There is still greater interest in projects in coastal and Atlantic regions than in those in the hinterland of particular countries. One of the more pronounced changes is the relative decline in the number of projects implemented in the Baltic Sea basin. Moreover, the large



**Figure 1** Number of project partners in INTERREG IIIB programmes

Source: Author's elaboration.

involvement of regions in Northern Italy and Slovenia is notable, which are active in as many as four programmes (which should be interpreted as one more manifestation of the influence of the set-up of the initiative under discussion, i.e. the entities from regions ascribed to more than one programme use the opportunities created to implement projects within various macro-regions designated in particular programmes).



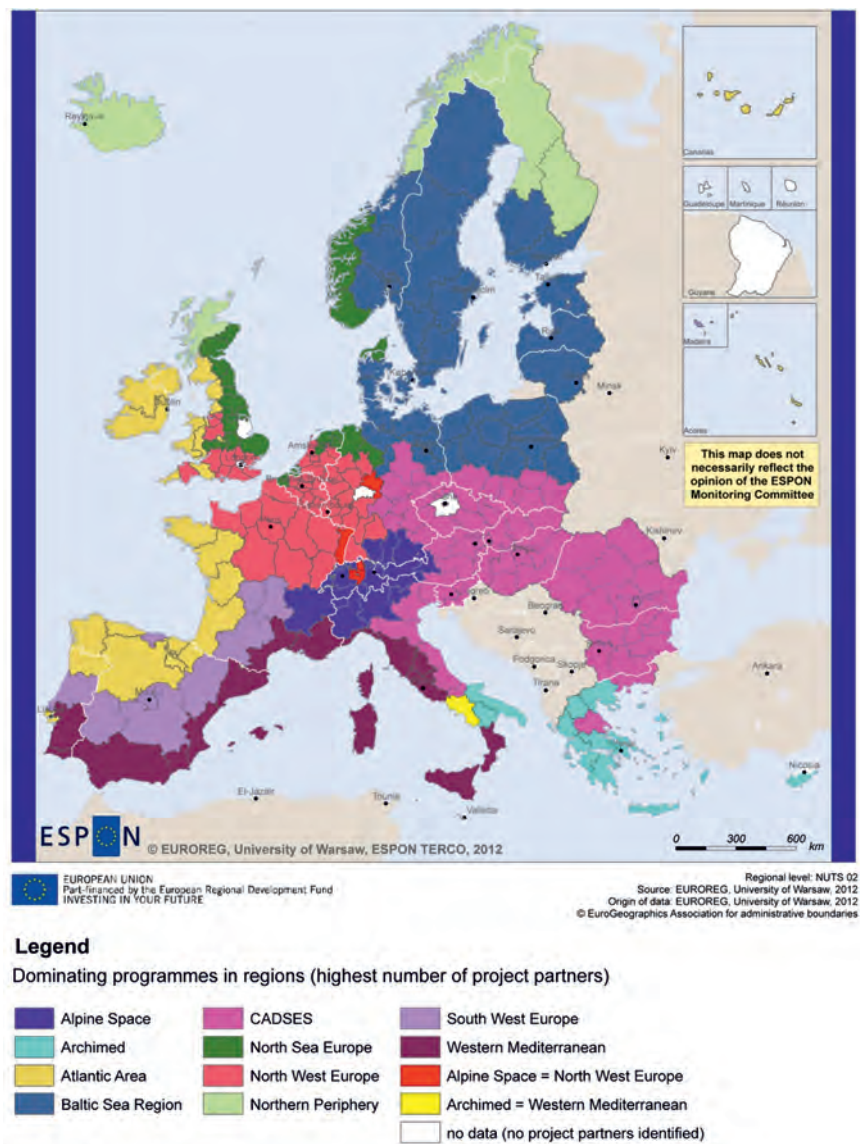
**Legend**  
Number of project partners in INTERREG IVB programmes (as of January 2011)



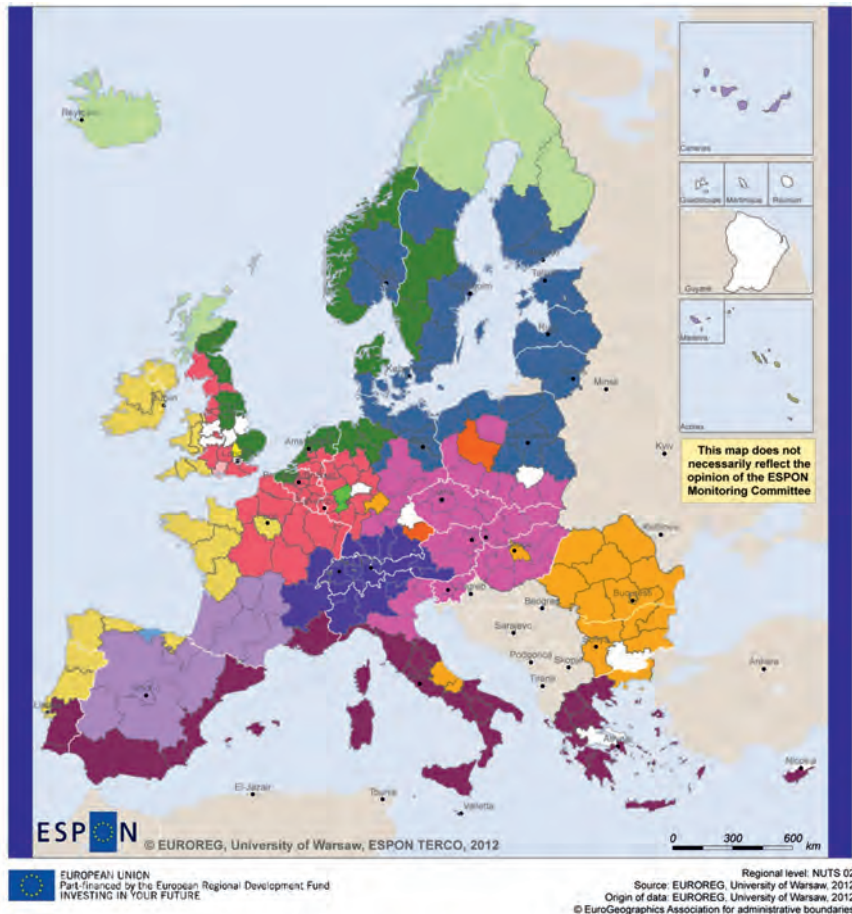
**Figure 2** Number of project partners in INTERREG IVB programmes  
Source: Author's elaboration.



Entities located in a large part of the regions could take part in more than one transnational cooperation programme (as can be seen in Figures 1 and 2), making it possible to analyse their preferences of participation in particular programmes. By ascribing each region to the programme in which the highest number of its partners participated, a simpler typology of cooperation areas within transnational cooperation can be derived.



Due to predetermined areas of particular programmes, as well as the fact that some regions were included in only one programme, the results of such a typology must be interpreted with caution. Simultaneously, an unquestionable benefit of the proposed typology is the fact that it divides up the whole ESPON space (as opposed to the areas specified in particular



### Legend

Dominating programmes in regions (highest number of project partners)

Alpine Space	North Sea Region	Central Europe = Baltic Sea Region
Atlantic Area	North West Europe	Atlantic Area = South West Europe
Baltic Sea Region	Northern Periphery	Atlantic Area = Mediterranean = North Sea Region
Central Europe	South East Europe	Atlantic Area = North West Europe = North Sea
Mediterranean	South West Europe	Alpine Space = Central = North West = South East
		no data (no project partners identified)

**Figure 4** Dominating INTERREG IVB programmes

Source: Author's elaboration.

transnational cooperation programmes, which are not mutually exclusive) in a complete and exclusive manner.

In the case of INTERREG IIIB, the typology of areas of preference in cooperation within particular programmes seems to form functional areas (see Figure 3), such as, for example, the Baltic Sea basin, the North Sea basin, the Alpine Space, the Mediterranean coast, the Atlantic coast, hinterland areas of Spain and France, and the European Pentagon area (but excluding its southern part). Of particular interest is the division between the countries in the area that are included in whole or in significant part in more than one programme. Therefore, in the case of Poland, a sensible and obvious division can clearly be seen with the northern part predisposed towards cooperation with the Baltic Sea area and the southern part cooperating with the Central and Eastern European regions.

The typology resulting from the analysis of INTERREG IVB is very similar (see Figure 4). Larger differences are associated with changes in the programmes' areas. This applies in particular to the division of the CADSES programme (from the INTERREG IIIB initiative) into two programmes – Central Europe and South East Europe – as well as combining two previously separate areas of the Western Mediterranean and Archimed into one area of Mediterranean programme. The pattern emerging from the analysis of predominance of INTERREG IVB programmes is less pronounced than in the case of the previous initiative. This outcome results from the fact that the programmes are still under implementation, and therefore the number of partners and projects taken into account is two times lower than in the case of INTERREG IIIB – it should be expected that, when all projects are taken into account, the coherence of areas thus established will increase.

The simple typology presented seems to confirm firstly the fact that the areas of particular programmes are determined quite broadly, and secondly that such delimitation allows (or rather does not prevent) the entities implementing the projects to reconstruct the functional areas of cooperation.

The location of project leaders is an important factor determining the European transnational cooperation space. Despite the partner-based, cooperative character of the projects, the role of a consortium leader is privileged. This can usually be seen in the decisive influence on the subject-related shape of the project (determined largely at the stage of preparation of the concept of the project by the future leader, who can, but does not have to, take into account the propositions of the partners); and also in the higher level of financing related to the greater amount of coordination work that the project leader must perform. The fact that the project leader has



considerable freedom in selecting partners for the project implementation is also important.

The analysis of the spatial distribution of INTERREG IIIB project leaders mostly shows a small number of leaders coming from new Member States, i.e. from the EU12. This confirms the predominance of cooperation within this initiative by partners from so-called 'old' EU countries, who are concentrated only in certain regions. This situation probably results from the lesser experience in project implementation of entities from the new Member States. Consequently, the benefits from cooperation may be unevenly distributed, to the disadvantage of the regions of the new Member States (providing that the coordinators from the 'old' EU more-or-less consciously shape the projects in a way that is better suited to the needs of their home regions). In the subsequent programme period (INTERREG IVB), the situation remains very similar, which may result from the still-limited experience and slow pace of organisational learning by entities from the new Member States (or constantly growing potential and competitive advantage resulting from accumulation of experience in the case of the 'old' EU countries).

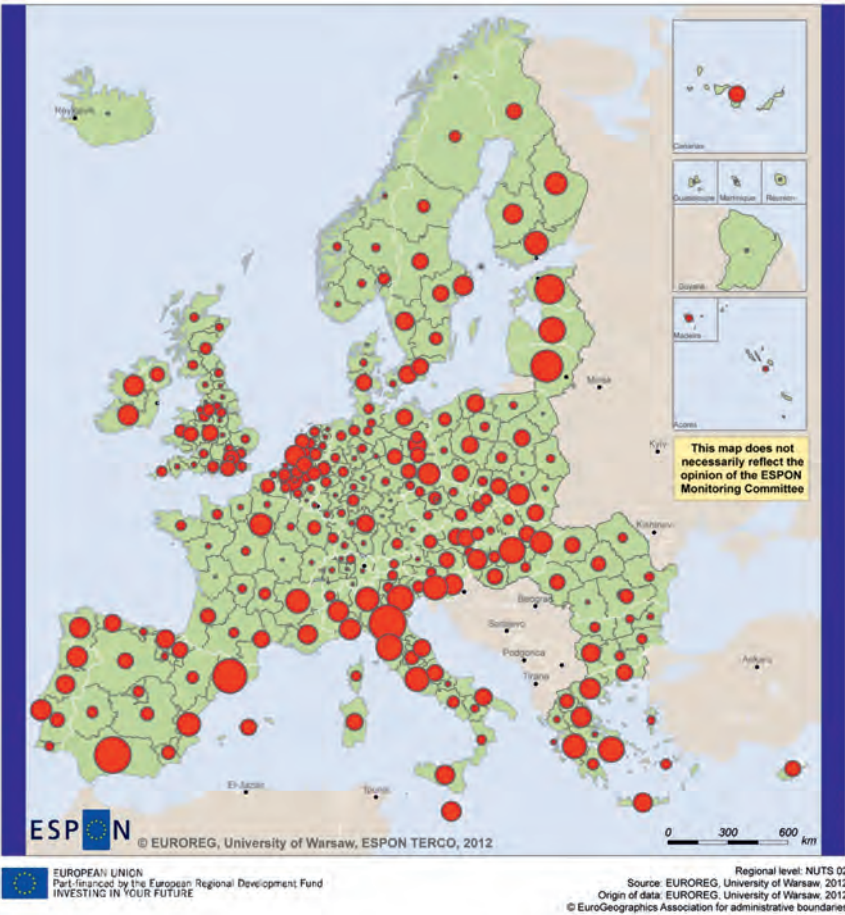
### **SPATIAL PATTERNS OF INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION IN INTERREG IIIC AND IVC**

Interregional cooperation projects within INTERREG IIIC and INTERREG IVC initiatives could have been implemented by project consortia from the whole ESPON space. This means that the entities from particular regions had formally equal opportunities in the implementation of projects. Thus, it seems that in this case the cooperation network has a more natural character than the cooperation networks in transnational cooperation (INTERREG IIIB and IVB), where the cooperation had to fit the predetermined areas. INTERREG IIIC and IVC have exactly the same spatial delimitation, and for that reason they can be analysed together (unlike IIIB and IVC, where spatial delimitation has significantly changed between the 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 periods). However, it should be noted that the INTERREG IIIC and IV programme requirements also impact on the shape of cooperation network, as they prefer project consortia comprising representatives of various European regions and macro-regions.

Under the INTERREG IIIC and IVC initiatives, 384 projects were implemented (as of January 2011) with over 4,000 partners. The spatial distribution of project partners is presented in Figure 5. Similarly, as in the case of transnational cooperation (INTERREG IIIB and IVB), a small

number of project leaders coming from regions of the new member countries (EU12) is also noticeable within INTERREG IIIC and IVC.

The cooperation network between regions within the ESPON space built upon the participation of entities from particular regions in project consortia creates a coherent component with typical network characteristics – it is primarily a scale-free network, i.e. the distribution of the number of relations to other regions is not a natural distribution, but an exponential



**Legend**  
Number of project partners in INTERREG IIIC and IVC programmes

- 89
- 40
- 10
- No data

**Figure 5** INERREG IIIC and IVC – partners in regions

Source: Author's elaboration.

one – there is a large number of regions with a small number of relations to other regions, and few regions with links to numerous other regions. Therefore, the analysed regional cooperation network typically has a so-called ‘scale-free network’ shape.

Correlational analysis of the number of projects and the number of partners in particular regions as well as the basic measures describing the regional cooperation network within INTERREG IIIC and IVC – the number of relations with partners from other regions and the number of regions with which there is at least one relation – shows very high correlation coefficients, amounting to over 0.9. This means that the basic factor explaining the spatial distribution of the cooperation network is in this case simply the number of implemented projects in regions or entities – project partners – involved in them (moreover, the spatial pattern based on all four analysed measures is very similar, and consequently there is no need to make detailed analyses – i.e. create and analyse maps – for each of these dimensions).

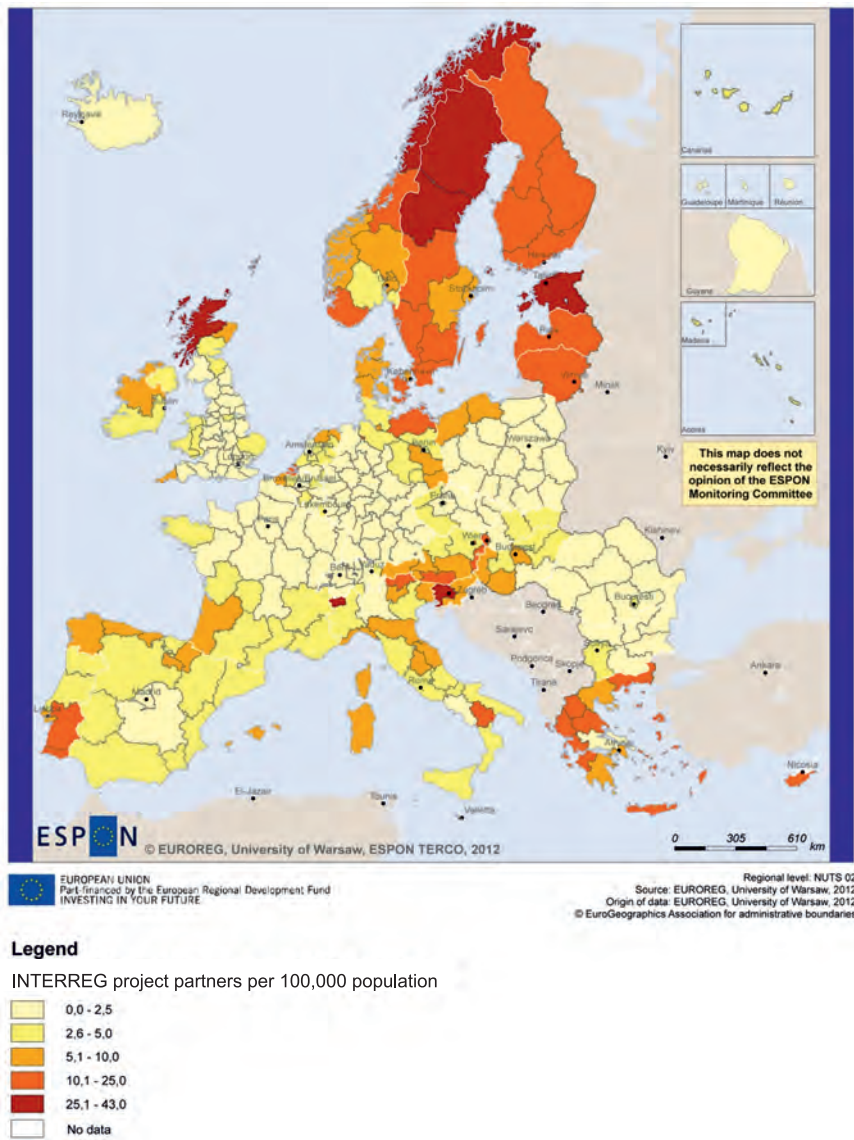
## **TRANSNATIONAL AND INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION – RELATIVE MEASURES**

The analyses presented above were drawn from the basic absolute data. In order to better understand the spatial diversity, it is also worth looking at the relativised data. To do so, the data on transnational and interregional cooperation projects were related to the number of inhabitants of the regions, to the regional GDP, and also to the number of local authorities in a given region. The analyses are based on the total data for all projects implemented within the discussed INTERREG IIIB, IVB, IIIC and IVC programmes.

Relativisation of the number of project partners with the number of inhabitants of regions can be interpreted as a form of measure of intensity of involvement in cooperation. The highest values of this index are recorded in regions with large number of projects, but also those with a small population. The activity of Scandinavian regions is particularly noticeable. It complies with a general trend for greater intensity of cooperation in regions located in the spatial peripheries as compared to the European centre. Worth noting is especially the small relative involvement in implementation of projects in the vast majority of regions constituting the continental centres, i.e. the so-called Pentagon (see Figure 6).

A quite similar picture emerges from the map representing the number of project partners in regions relativised with the value of the regional GDP (see Figure 7). In this case, however, the predominance of Scandinavian regions is less pronounced – of course due to the fact that their GDP is very high – and the relatively poorer regions of Central and Eastern Europe,

the Balkans or the Iberian Peninsula have a stronger position. From this perspective, the European Pentagon does not seem to be an area of particularly intensive transnational and interregional cooperation.

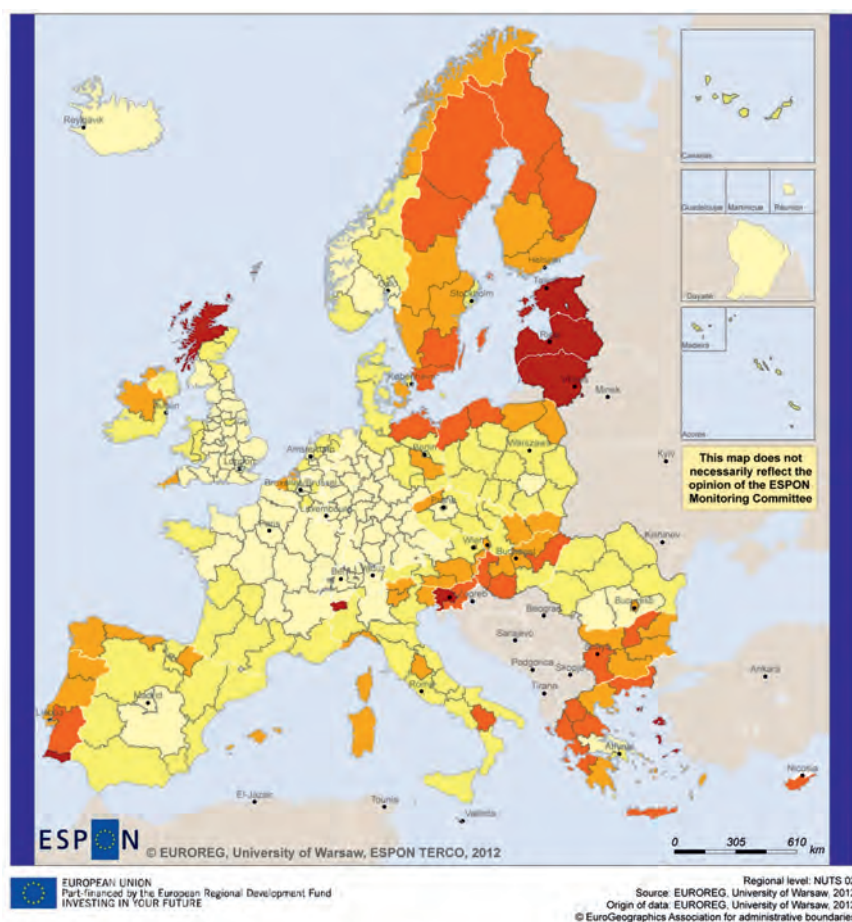


**Figure 6** INERREG projects partners per 100,000 population

Source: Author's elaboration.

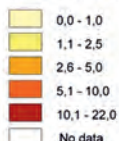
In constructing the third relative measure, data on the number of local authorities in the region were used, defined for the purpose as the number

of NUTS 5 units in a given NUTS 2 region. It should be stressed that due to various approaches employed by local authorities in particular countries to establish their competences, including territorial competence, the countries differ significantly in the number of NUTS 5 units within an average region. For example, in France there is a large number of communes with small areas, and in Sweden communes are vast and consequently their number



### Legend

INTERREG project partners per €1 million GDP



**Figure 7** INTERREG projects partners per €1 million GDP

Source: Author's elaboration.

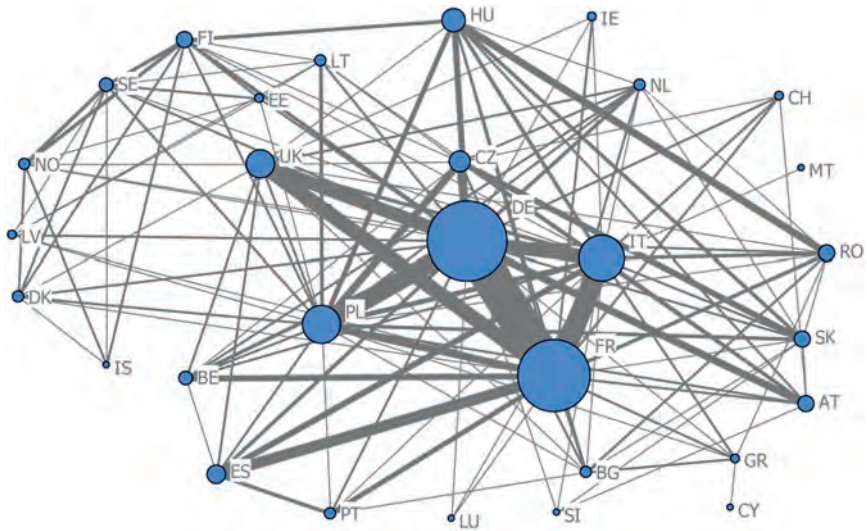


is much smaller. Therefore, it comes as little surprise that the regions of countries in which communes are relatively large, and which consequently have a smaller number in NUTS 2 regions, have the highest values of the discussed index (Scandinavian and Baltic countries). Attention should also be directed to the regions of the Netherlands and Belgium, which recorded mean results in the previously discussed two relative approaches, but which stand out in this approach. High values of the index are also recorded – for obvious reasons – in regions consisting of one city that simultaneously constitutes a region, such as Prague, Bucharest or Berlin.

**TWINNING CITIES**

**Twinning Cities – National Level**

By aggregating all twinning-cities agreements at the national level, the general pattern of cooperation within this form of cooperation in ESPON space can be traced. The largest number of twinning-cities agreements was recorded in Germany (3.3 thousand), France (2.5 thousand), Italy (2 thousand), Poland (1.2 thousand), Spain (0.9 thousand) and the United Kingdom (0.8 thousand). The analysed number of twinning-cities agreements depends, of course, on the size of the country, and in particular



**Figure 8** Twinning cities at country level\*

Source: Author's elaboration.

\* The size of the nodes corresponds to the number of twinning-cities agreements in a given country.  
The thickness of the lines joining the nodes corresponds to the number of twinning-cities agreements between specific countries.

on the number of communes (cities) that can enter into such agreements. The highest numbers of twinning-cities agreements per commune (local administrative unit) are in Finland (1.15), Sweden (1), Estonia (0.59), the Netherlands (0.55), Belgium (0.54), Norway (0.54), Iceland (0.52), Malta (0.51), Poland (0.5), Slovenia (0.45) and Luxemburg (0.45). Taking into account the number of relations between particular countries, the highest number of agreements is observed between communes (cities) of France and Germany (0.65 thousand), France and Italy (0.35 thousand), Germany and Poland (0.31 thousand), France and the United Kingdom (0.24 thousand), Germany and Italy (0.22 thousand), and Germany and the United Kingdom (0.22 thousand) (see Figure 8).

### **Twinning Cities – Regional Level**

All the analyses presented in the following part of the paper were made at the NUTS 2 level, i.e. they use data on twinning-cities agreements aggregated at the regional level. The largest number of twinning-cities agreements among regions in ESPON space is recorded in Île-de-France region, which has 474 agreements. The next region, Rhône-Alpes, has a significantly smaller number of twinning-cities agreements, with 305. Generally speaking, all regions in ESPON space are involved in cooperation in the form of twinning cities, even though there are obvious differences in the intensity of this cooperation, understood as the number of agreements per communes of a given region (see Figure 9). More detailed analyses of the values relativised with the regions' population, size of the regional GDP, and the number of local authorities show even more dimensions of diversification.

In respect of the number of twinning-cities agreements per 100,000 inhabitants of a region, the regions that stand out are Iceland, regions of Finland, some regions of Norway, Estonia, regions of Eastern Germany and Western Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary (see Figure 10). On the other hand, particularly low values of the discussed index are recorded in the regions of the United Kingdom, which probably results from the relatively limited competences of the local authorities in this country (they have no appropriate potential for developing cooperation), as well as the fact that the regions there are quite populous.

On the other hand, looking at the number of twinning-cities agreements relative to the size of the regional GDP, a high position for Central and Eastern European countries can be observed (see Figure 11) – in this case the results depend both on high activity in this form of cooperation and on relatively low values of regional GDP in the area.

Other features of diversities can be observed when comparing the number of twinning-cities agreements to the number of local authorities in the regions. In this case, the regions that particularly stand out are the Nordic countries (excluding Denmark, however) as well as regions of Northern-Western Germany (Ruhr region) (see Figure 12).

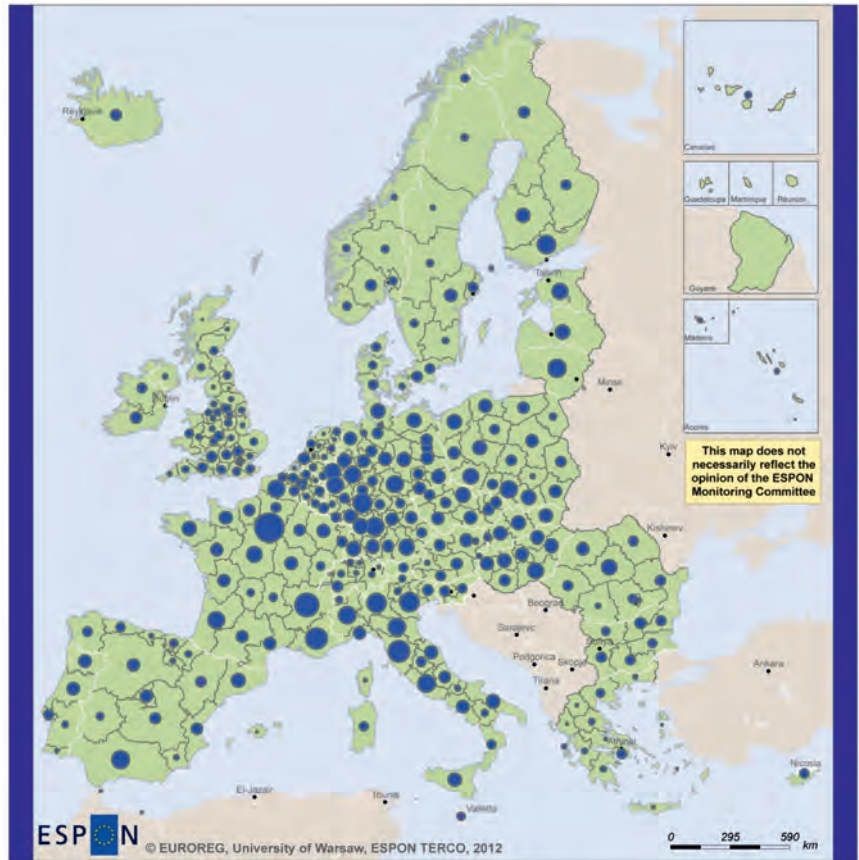
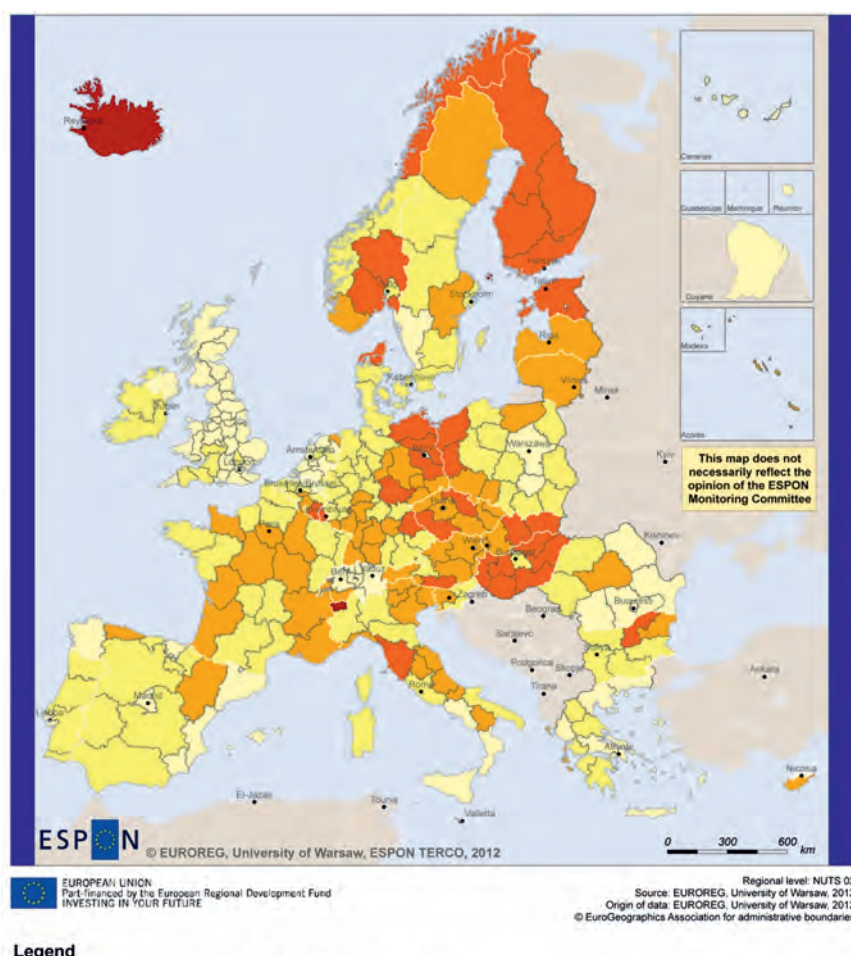


Figure 9 City twinning

Source: Author's elaboration.

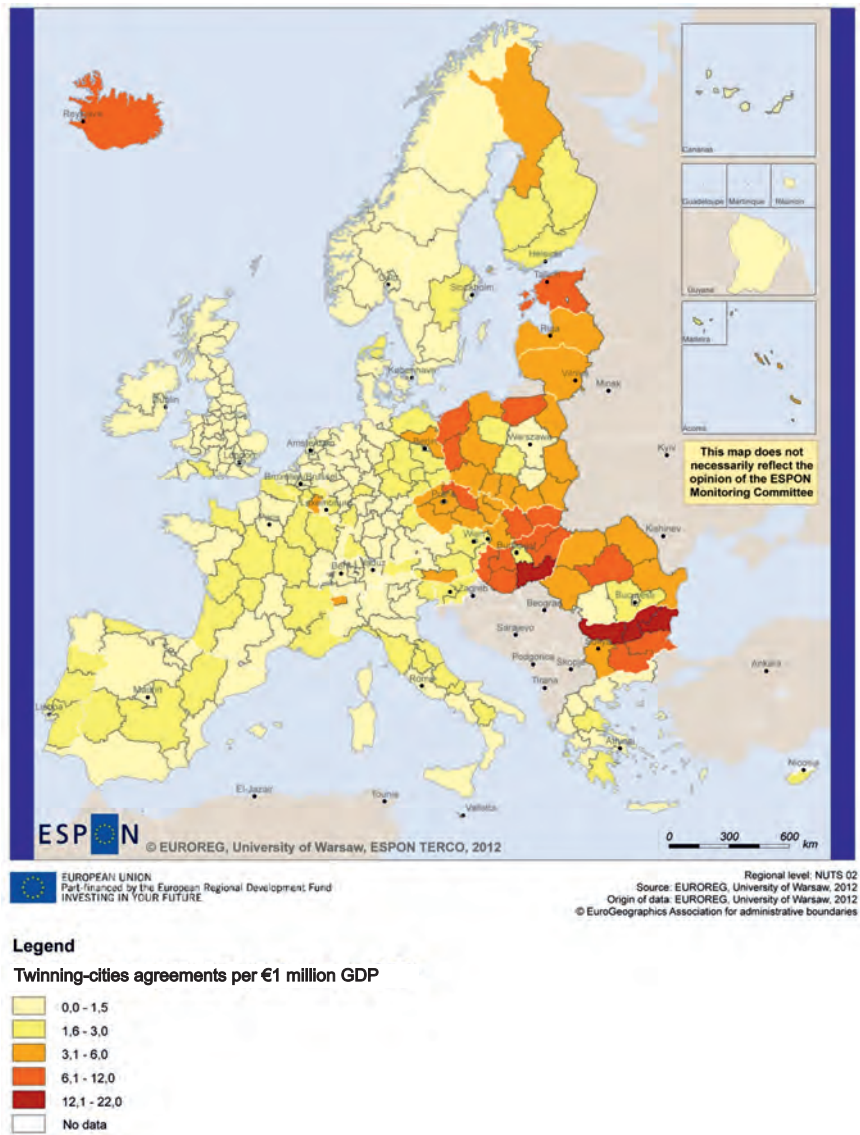


In the majority of European regions, only a small percentage of communes have twinning-cities agreements (see Figure 13). Only some regions does this form of cooperation involve more than 20 percent of the communes – in Sweden, Norway and Finland, Belgium, Netherlands, North-Western Germany, Western Poland, and Central Italy.



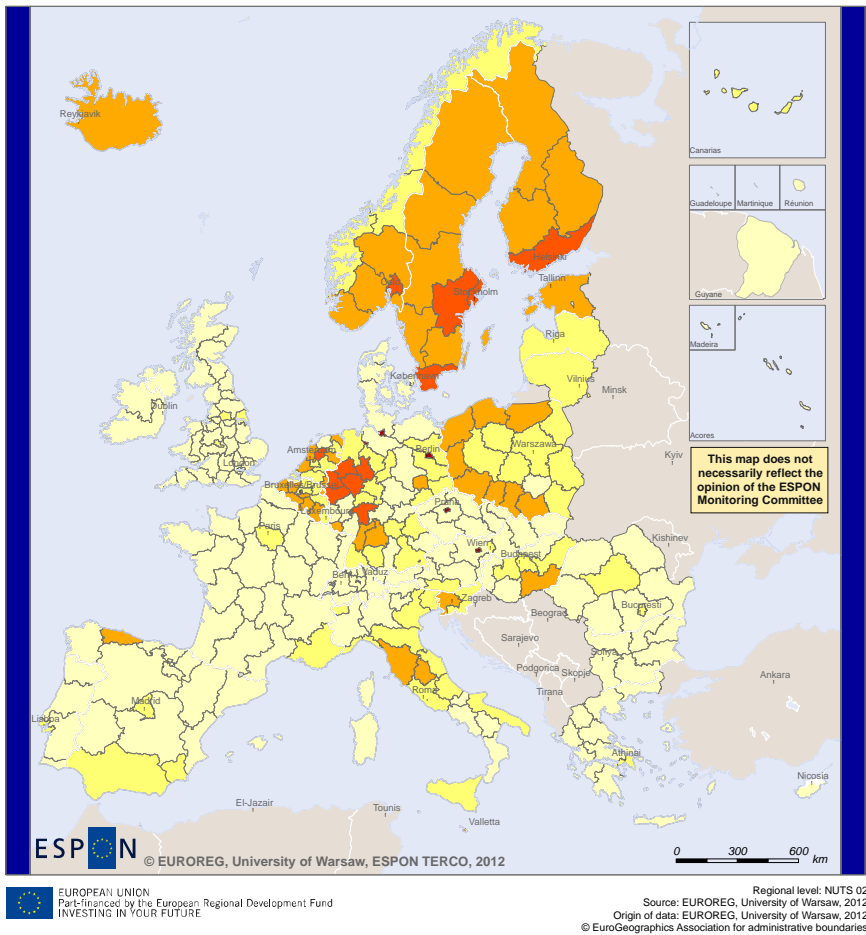
**Figure 10** Twinning-cities agreements per 100,000 population

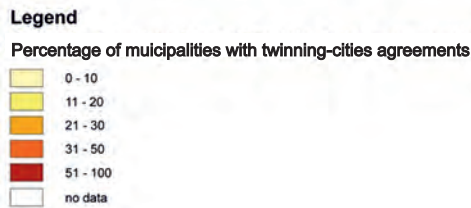
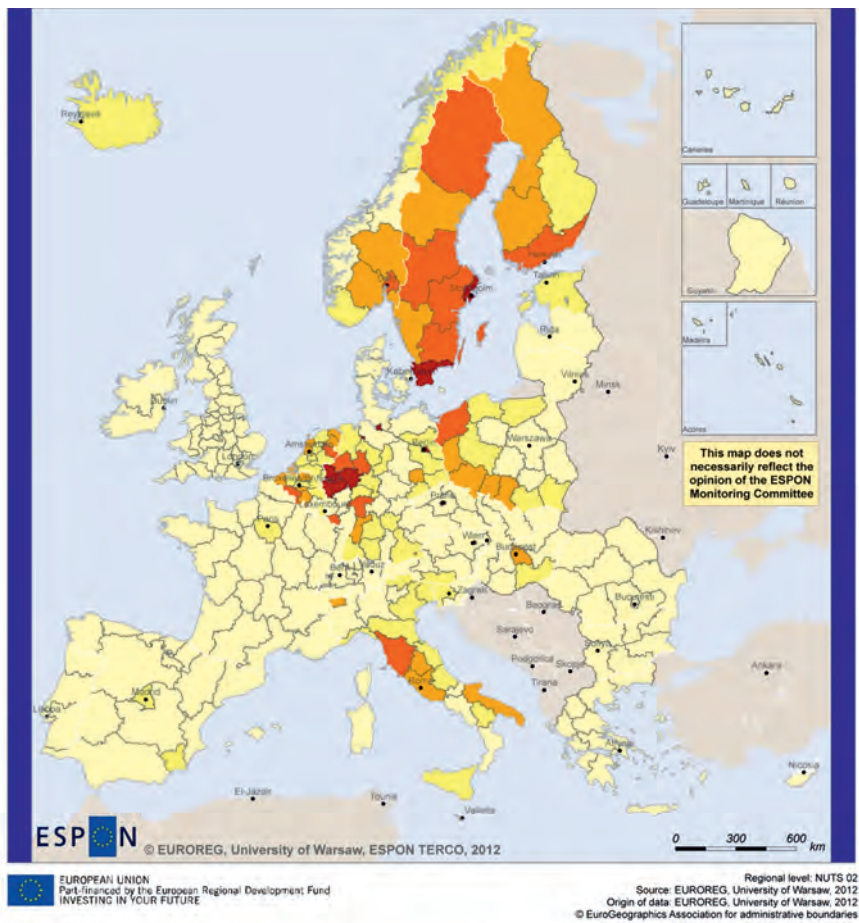
Source: Author's elaboration.



**Figure 11** Twinning cities agreements per €1 million GDP

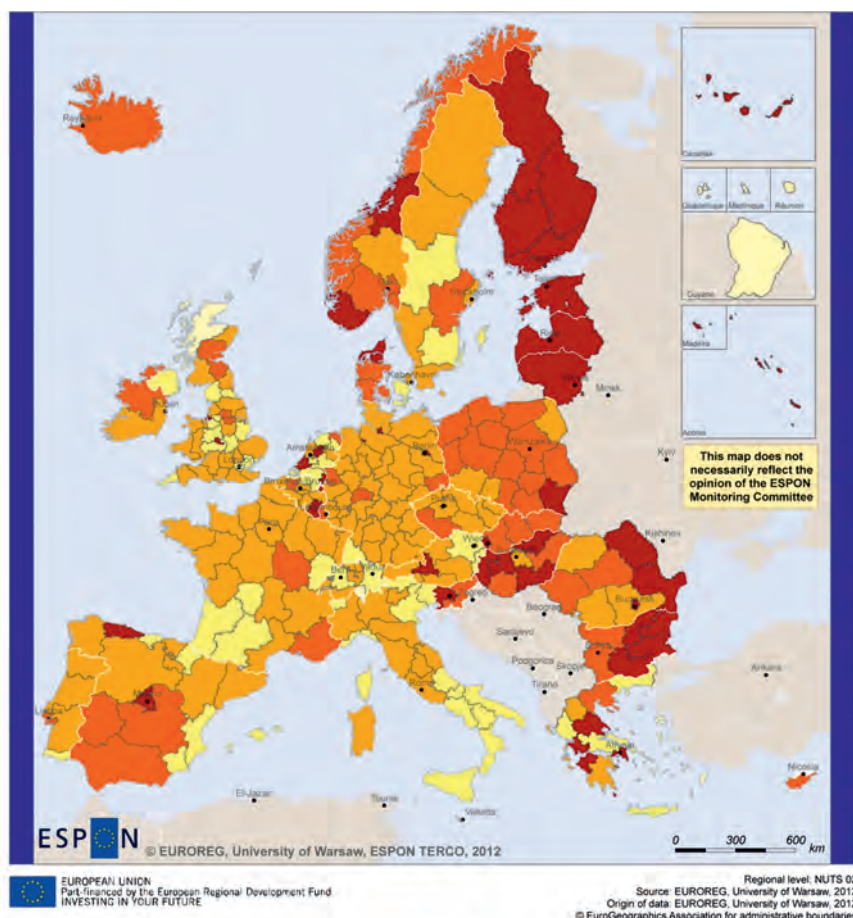
Source: Author's elaboration.





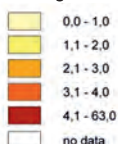
**Figure 13** Percentage of municipalities with twinning-cities agreements

Source: Author's elaboration.



### Legend

Average number of twinning-cities municipality with at least one twinning-cities agreement



**Figure 14** Average number of twinning cities per municipality with at least one twinning-cities agreement

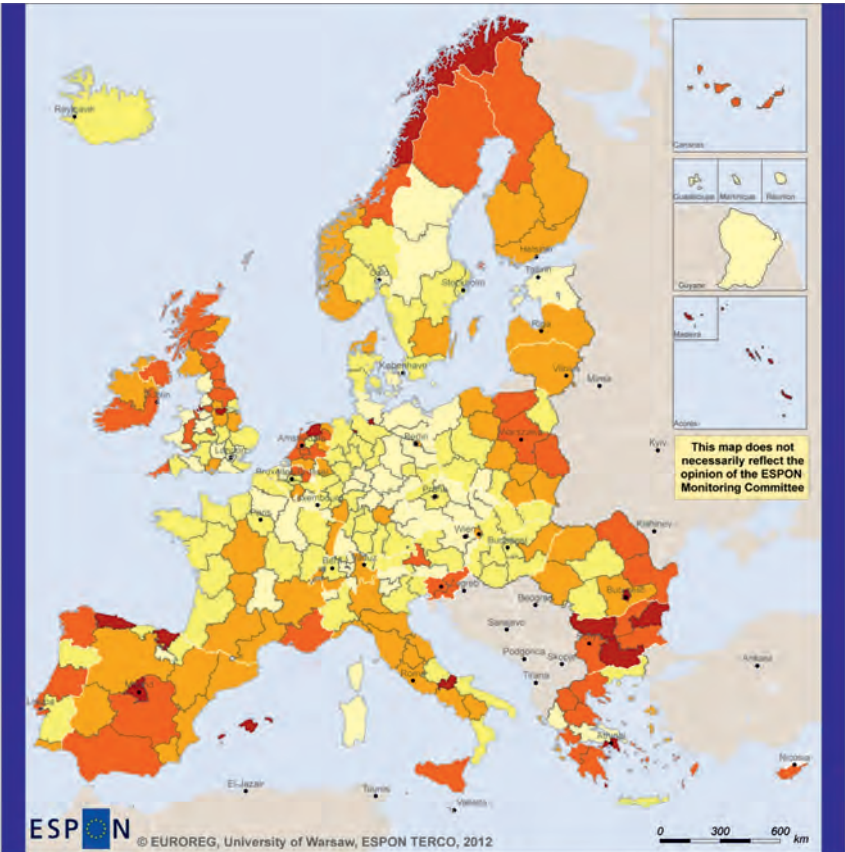
Source: Author's elaboration.

Taking into account the mean number of twinning-cities agreements per commune with at least one such agreement, it can be seen that most regions have an average of two or three agreements (see Figure 14). Higher values of the index, i.e. four, five or more agreements, are recorded mostly in regions located in the Eastern part of ESPON space (in particular Finland, the Baltic countries, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria).



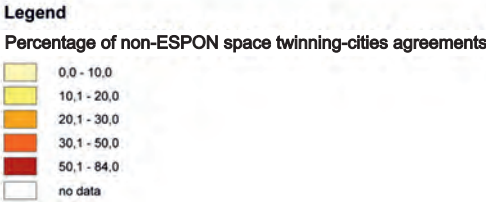
Twinning-Cities – Cooperation Within and Beyond ESPON Space

The data on cooperation within twinning-cities agreements also allows the analysis of cooperation extending beyond the ESPON space (as twinning-cities agreements are made between communes and cities throughout the world). Particular regions within ESPON space differ in their involvement in cooperation outside of this space (see Figure 15),



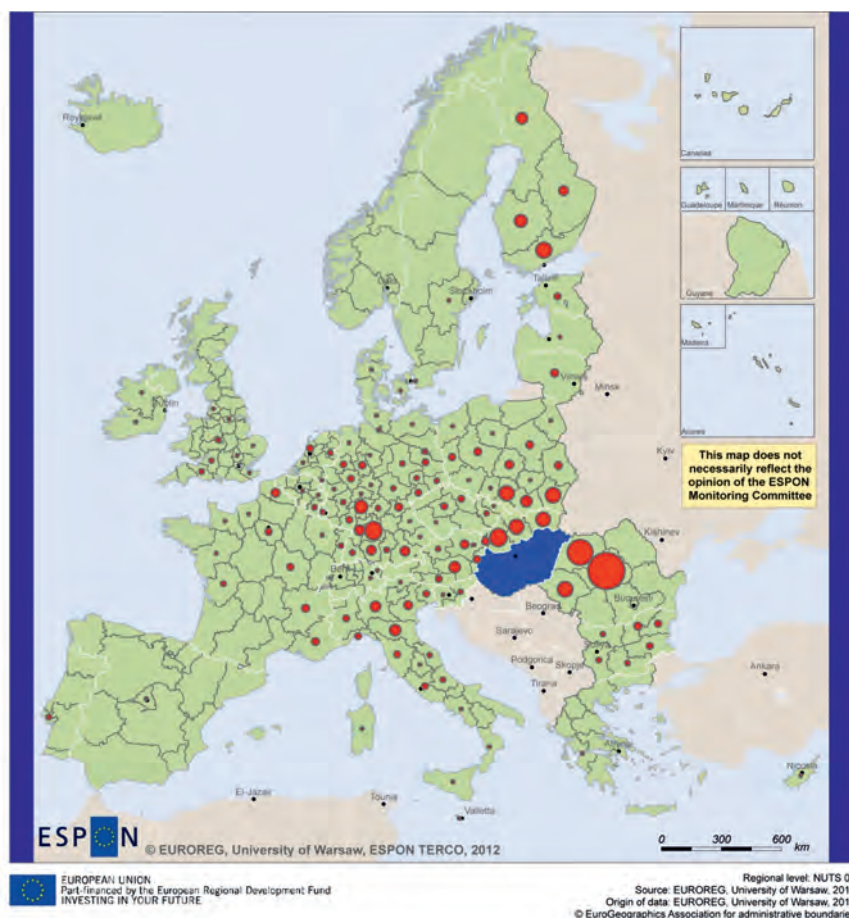
EUROPEAN UNION  
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Regional level: NUTS 02  
Source: EUROREG, University of Warsaw, 2012  
Origin of data: EUROREG, University of Warsaw, 2012  
© EuroGeographics Association for administrative boundaries



**Figure 15** Percentage of non-ESPON space twinning-cities agreements

Source: Author's elaboration.



### Legend

Twinning-cities agreements with Hungary



**Figure 16** Twinning-cities – Hungary

Source: Author's elaboration.

with greater involvement visible in regions located in the peripheries of the analysed space. It should be underlined, however, that the regions of Netherlands are an exception to this rule, as they are located in the geographical and economic centre of the EU but have significant cooperation beyond the ESPON space.

The intensity of cooperation with selected countries (regions) of the world differs significantly throughout the regions of Europe. Cooperation

with communes and cities in the USA as part of twinning cities takes place in almost all regions of ESPON space, but it is significantly more frequent in the west of the continent. Particularly noticeable is the significant involvement of Irish communes and cities in cooperation with communes and cities in the USA. On the other hand, with regard to cooperation with countries from Latin America, Spain, Portugal, and Northern regions of Italy are particularly active. This shows the importance of cultural closeness and the influence of history on the directions of cooperation within twinning cities. Similar explanation may be offered for cooperation with Russia and the Ukraine, although in this case cultural factors and the spatial proximity are both important.

The basic conclusion that can be formulated based on the analysis of twinning-cities cooperation within ESPON space concerns the great importance of spatial proximity. For all countries, it is visible that cooperation is particularly intensive with the closest neighbours, while relations with regions located far away occur relatively rarely. An additional factor apart from spatial proximity is connected with historical and cultural determinants (it should be underlined that they are usually inextricably connected with spatial proximity). These are precisely the historical and cultural factors that can explain particularly intensive cooperation between communes and cities from Hungarian and Romanian regions, i.e. North-West, Centre, and West, which in the past used to be the Transylvania region connected with Hungary (see Figure 16).

## **CONCLUSIONS – SIMILAR OR DIFFERENT SPATIAL PATTERNS OF COOPERATION?**

Cooperation within INTERREG B and C programmes and twinning cities is diversified in many respects. This pertains both to the entities undertaking cooperation (in the case of twinning cities, these can only be local authorities, but in the case of INTERREG the catalogue of eligible entities is much broader), determining the spatial scope of cooperation (predetermined macro-regions in the case of INTERREG B vs. total freedom in the case of twinning cities), and finally the topics of cooperation. Bearing those differences in mind, there is still scope to compare the spatial patterns of cooperation in both forms. Such analysis can primarily serve to determine whether macro-regions within INTERREG B were well defined, i.e. for particular regions, if a large part of relations within twinning cities takes place solely within the frames of their respective macro-regions, this may confirm proper delimitation of such macro-regions.



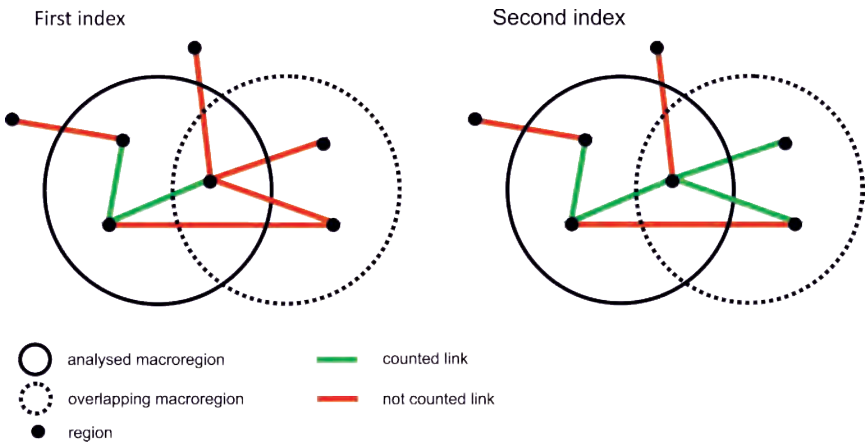
### **INTERREG C and Twinning Cities**

Comparing the directions of cooperation within INTERREG C and twinning cities is quite simple, as cooperation within the INTERREG C initiative included the whole ESPON space – therefore it is possible to compare exactly the same areas for both forms of cooperation. For the purposes of this analysis, a comparison was made for each country of ESPON space of the pattern of cooperation at the NUTS 2 level within INTERREG and twinning cities. More precisely, two variables were correlated for each country: the number of twinning-cities agreements and the number of INTERREG IIIC and IVC project partners in all NUTS 2 regions in ESPON space that cooperated under these forms with entities from a given country. The values of the resulting Pearson correlation coefficients are low and very low. Only for three countries (Iceland, Germany, and Poland) was the correlation coefficient higher than 0.3 (the highest value was for Iceland – 0.34). For the remaining countries, the values were lower or significantly lower. This means that the spatial patterns of cooperation (or the cooperation networks) at regional level in each of the analysed forms are rather different. To some extent, this is connected with the different character of the analysed forms of cooperation. As shown earlier in this chapter, cooperation within twinning cities is largely influenced by spatial proximity. On the other hand, spatial proximity is not important in the case of INTERREG C, in fact it is quite the opposite: projects that link partners from different parts of the continent are preferred. The discussed results can be interpreted as a manifestation of a positive phenomenon of complementarity of the two modes of cooperation. Within twinning cities, the cooperation takes place with spatially closer partners; in the case of INTERREG C, the spatial scope of cooperation is significantly broader.

### **INTERREG IVB and Twinning Cities**

Comparison of the spatial pattern of cooperation within twinning cities and INTERREG IVB must take into account the fact that the cooperation within the latter form could take place within predetermined macro-regions. Consequently, a parallel analysis for INTERREG C and twinning cities would be unjustified. Therefore, a different approach was used in this case. Firstly, for each of the INTERREG IVB macro-regions, the percentage of relations within twinning cities in a given macro-region was calculated (in the case of this index and the next index, twinning cities within the limits of the ESPON space were used as a reference point). Secondly, for each of the macro-regions, a calculation was made of the percentage of relations within twinning cities limited to single INTERREG IVB macro-regions

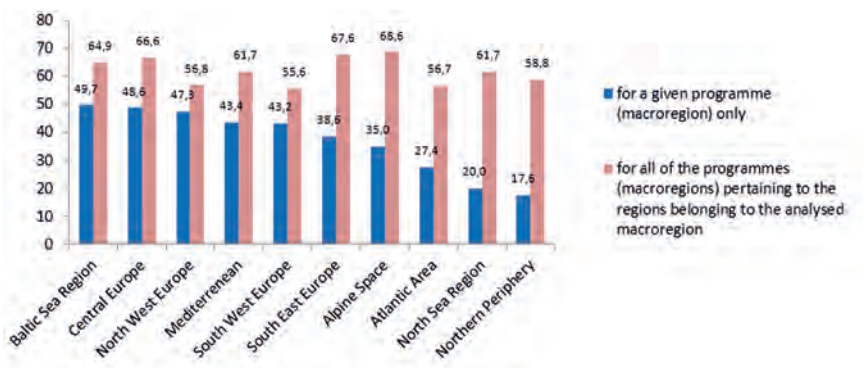
pertaining to each of the regions belonging to the analysed macro-region. The first and second indexes differ, in that in the first case only the area of a given macro-region is analysed, while in the second case all regions included in a macro-region are analysed, plus – for each of them – all macro-regions to which they were ascribed. The second index takes into account all possibilities for cooperation (in all eligible macro-regions) open to regions from a given macro-region (see Figure 17).



**Figure 17** Construction of indexes used in the analysis

Source: Author's elaboration.

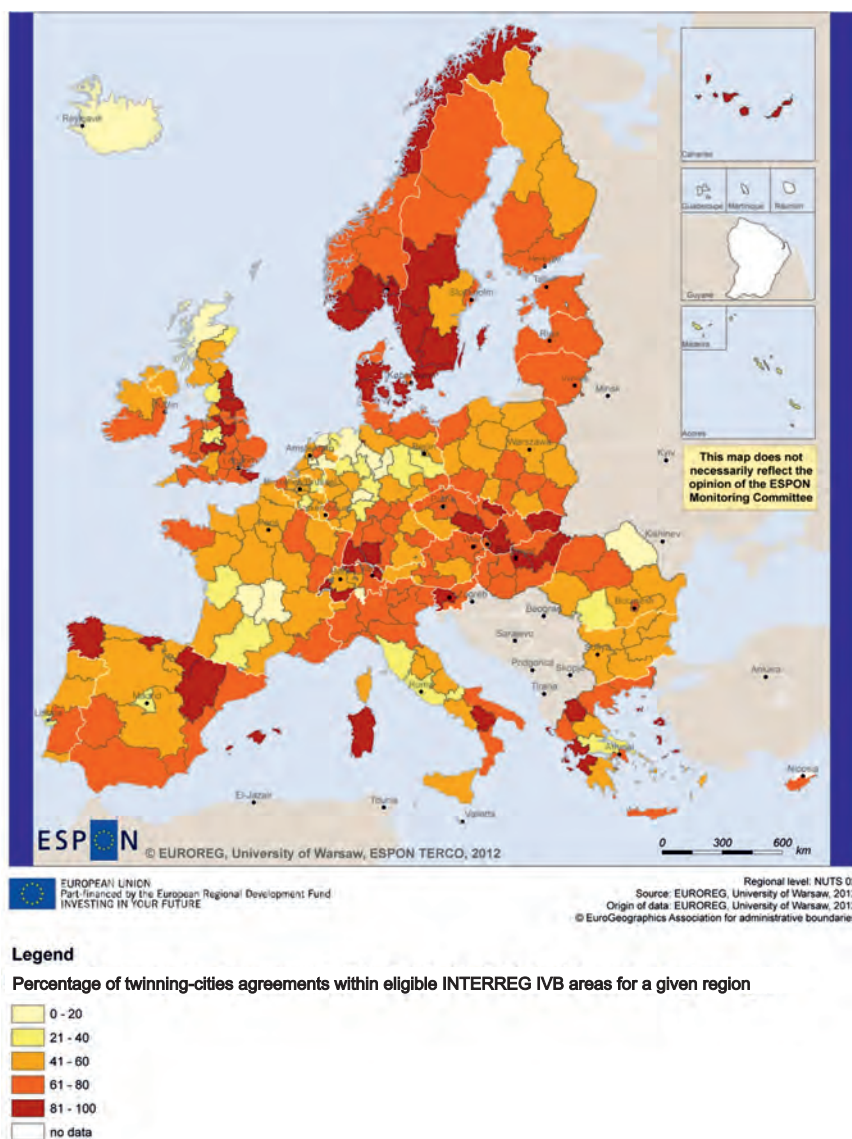
Both indexes are presented in a diagram (see Figure 18). In the case of the first index, there is a significant diversification of the value of nearly 16 to 50 percent of twinning-cities agreements limited solely to the macro-



**Figure 18** Percentage of twinning-cities agreements within eligible INTERREG IVB areas

Source: Author's elaboration.

region. In this perspective, INTERREG IVB macro-regions best adjusted to the cooperation network within twinning-cities agreements comprise the Baltic Sea Region, Central Europe, and North West Europe. The weakest in this respect are the Northern macro-regions of the Northern Periphery and the North Sea Region. However, a completely different picture emerges from the value of the second index, which takes into



account the fact that particular regions were frequently ascribed to more than one INTERREG IVB macro-region. In this case, the values of the index are not so diversified and vary between 55 percent and 69 percent. It is significant that the values of the second index are also high in the case of macro-regions with low values obtained from the first perspective. This means that on this basis it can be deduced that, firstly, the delimitation of INTERREG IVB macro-regions is appropriate and, secondly, that from the point of view of shaping appropriate cooperation networks for regions, the overlapping of areas of macro-regions is useful, as this allows regional entities to select appropriate cooperation partners.

The third perspective on the spatial comparison of cooperation patterns of INTERREG IVB and twinning cities is offered by analysis at the regional level. In this case, a calculation was made for each of the regions of the percentage of relations within twinning cities limited to INTERREG IVB macro-regions to which a given region was ascribed (twinning cities within the ESPON space were used as a reference point). The results of the analysis show that in a significant majority of regions the cooperation within twinning cities is limited to the INTERREG IVB macro-regions to which they are ascribed. In the case of some macro-regions, the index is very high, exceeding 80 percent. Only for a few regions is the index lower than 40 percent and 20 percent. This pertains particularly to the central and north-west regions of Germany, regions of the Massif Central in France, the Romanian North-East region, northern peripheries of Scotland and to Iceland (see Figure 19). It seems that the results presented can be interpreted as confirming the good delimitation of INTERREG IVB macro-regions that correspond to preferences regarding the directions of cooperation expressed in grassroots relations and in the form of twinning cities.

MACIEJ SMĘTKOWSKI <sup>1</sup>

## **2.2 TYPOLOGIES OF REGIONS ACCORDING TO DETERMINANTS AND TYPES OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Territorial cooperation is a broad concept which, for the purposes of this chapter, has been narrowed to denote ‘cooperation between public authorities representing different levels of territorial government’. This part of the book sets out to indicate the determinants of such cooperation at the regional level using quantitative data and associated methodologies. It should be noted that the analyses were complicated by the broad topical range of territorial cooperation, which can range from infrastructural investments (such as community centres, tourist information centres, road infrastructure) to promotional activities aimed at fostering the development of tourism or supporting business networks. Such dissimilar fields of activity necessitate the use of varied financial resources in cooperation, which may make it difficult to identify its support structure.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of this chapter is to establish correlations between territorial cooperation indicators and conditions underpinning cooperation, identified on the basis of a literature review. The analyses were static in character, comparing territorial cooperation on the basis of information on twinning agreements concluded between municipalities (gathered in 2011) and summary data about projects implemented by territorial governments and NGOs as part of INTERREG B and C in the 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 periods, with data for the years 2008 and 2009 illustrating the correlations in question.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> EUROREG, University of Warsaw

<sup>2</sup> In effect, it is necessary to verify the results obtained in quantitative analyses using in-depth, qualitative case studies (see Part III of the book).

<sup>3</sup> Population change from 2002-2008 and GDP dynamics from 2000-2008 were also taken into account.

Due to the availability of statistical data, the spatial extent of the analysis was narrowed to the regions of the EU Member States. Nevertheless, whenever possible, and particularly with regard to typologies of the determinants of cooperation, the situation in all the ESPON countries is discussed (i.e. with the addition of Norway, Switzerland and Iceland).

Data were collected for the NUTS 2 level, although some supplementary analyses were conducted for selected large cities for which Urban Audit data were available. It should be noted at the outset that, in the former approach, data were analysed indirectly, since territorial cooperation typically involved local governments, whereas aggregated data at the regional level provided the basis for the analysis proper.

In line with the requirements concerning the triangulation of results, the following research methods were used: correlation analysis, principal component analysis, and cluster analysis. This methodology made it possible to show the many dimensions of territorial cooperation, which in turn allowed the formulation of plausible interpretations.

The variables for the study were selected using different groups of factors affecting territorial cooperation based on the literature review (see Table 1).

**Table 1** Selected determinants of territorial cooperation and diagnostic variables

Determinants	Variable or group of variables
Transport accessibility	Distance from Brussels Distance from the national capital International airport by category
Level of socio-economic development	Demographic potential Economic potential Economic structure Labour market situation
Local governments / financial resources	Average population in municipality Share of territorial governments in total general government revenue Share of expenditure on administration in total expenditure
Language skills	Teaching of foreign languages at schools Declared knowledge of foreign languages
Tourism	Tourist traffic (nights spent and share of foreign tourists)

Source: Author's elaboration (for details see Annex 1).

First, the accessibility of a given region was taken into account from three different perspectives or approaches, i.e. global, European and national. The first approach assumed the presence of an international

airport in the region, the significance of which was classified within one of five categories based on the number of passengers handled. The second approach looked at the location of a given region in relation to the region that was the 'stylised' centre of the ESPON area, i.e. Brussels (ranked fifth in terms of regional multimodal accessibility in Europe). In the third approach, accessibility related to the distance from the capital of a given country. The broadest (second) group of the applied variables illustrates different aspects of socio-economic development in a given region. These primarily include the region's demographic potential, i.e. population density, population change and its components (natural increase and migration balance), and the old-age dependency ratio. The next step looked at the economic potential expressed in per capita GDP using different approaches, viz. as an absolute value (in EUR), relativised by the purchasing power parity (PPS) and the national average. In addition, GDP dynamics in 2000-2008 were taken into account, both in real terms (percentage) and as a percentage change relative to the EU average. Furthermore, the economic structure was thoroughly analysed (for six sectors), and the labour market analysis involved employment figures and unemployment rates. Another aspect of the analysis – looking at the role of local governments and their financial resources – was discussed on the basis of statistics from the national level. In particular, the average size of municipalities in terms of population was determined (the regional level), as was their share in the total general government revenue, their financial independence expressed as the percentage of taxes in their revenue, and the volume of expenditure on regional and local administration (the national level). The last groups of variables to be analysed included the language competences of the region's inhabitants, understood as the teaching of major foreign languages in schools and their declared knowledge by adults, as well as the tourism potential expressed by the actual bed occupancy and the percentage of foreign tourists.

Of necessity, a number of significant factors of territorial cooperation were not included (such as historical, legal and cultural aspects) in the quantitative survey, principally due to difficulties in their quantification or the absence of adequate data.

Furthermore, it was decided that those regions that were distinctly different from the remaining ones in terms of twinning agreements and the number of partners participating in INTERREG projects would be ruled out of the analysis. As a result, the following NUTS 2 regions were excluded:

- most of the large cities making up the administrative regions at NUTS 2 level – Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, but also Vienna and Prague;



- regions with a very small population (and usually attractive in terms of tourism) – the Åland Islands in Finland and the Aosta Valley in Italy; and
- the island regions of Portugal (Madeira, Azores) and Spain (Canary Islands), as well as the overseas departments of France.

These exclusions were due to the nature of the administrative system in individual countries and geographical considerations in case of island regions. In consequence, the correlation study included 257 other NUTS 2 regions situated in the EU Member States.

## **TERRITORIAL COOPERATION DETERMINANTS**

The identification of territorial cooperation determinants is complicated as a result of the different dimensions of TC as well as the broad set of determinants. Therefore, the following steps were taken in order to make the results as plausible as possible. In the first step, the correlations between different indicators of TC were conducted to show the interplay between different dimensions of TC. The next step was devoted to an explorative analysis of correlations between TC indicators and other variables. These analyses provide a background for typologies of regions based on selected determinants of territorial cooperation.

### **The Correlations Between Territorial Cooperation Indicators**

An analysis of the correlation between groups of territorial cooperation indicators suggests that strong interrelationships exist both within and between these groups (see Table 2).

In particular, this applies to the number of INTERREG projects and, to a lesser degree, to twinning agreements per capita and per GDP. This means that the directions in which the demographic and economic potential influenced territorial cooperation were convergent. In addition, there were – albeit weak – linkages between the average number of twinning cities per local government and the number of linkages reaching beyond the ESPON area. A larger number of twinning cities proved that local government was more involved in cooperation reaching beyond the ESPON boundaries. This also coincided with a greater spatial extent of linkages within the ESPON area.

There were visible strong linkages between the number of twinning cities per local government and the number of INTERREG projects per local government. This means that municipalities that were active in one type of cooperation were also active in the other. However, the relationships between the number of twinning agreements and INTERREG projects





Table 2 Continued

	Twinning Cities per 100,000 population	Twinning Cities per €1 million GDP	Twinning Cities per local government	INTERREG projects per 100,000 population	INTERREG projects per €1 million GDP	INTERREG projects per local government	Percent of municipalities with twinning cities	Average number of twinning cities	Share of linkages beyond the ESPON area	Average distance between twinning cities within the ESPON area
Share of municipalities with twinning cities	0.15	0.05	<u>0.88</u>	0.16	0.07	<u>0.61</u>	x	0.02	-0.02	-0.08
Average number of twinning cities	0.24	<b>0.40</b>	<b>0.35</b>	0.01	0.17	0.14	0.02	x	<b>0.41</b>	0.14
Share of links beyond the ESPON area	-0.28	0.05	0.07	0.12	0.15	0.13	-0.02	<b>0.41</b>	x	<b>0.43</b>
Average distance between twinning cities within the ESPON area	-0.30	-0.04	0.04	0.19	0.20	0.12	-0.08	0.14	<b>0.43</b>	x

Source: Author's elaboration.

per capita and GDP were much weaker – although in this case, some statistically significant correlations could also be observed.

Quite obviously, the percentage of municipalities with twinning agreements was very strongly correlated with the number of twinning cities per local government. Weaker correlation could be found in cases of an average number of twinning agreements and average number of twinning cities per local government. This could imply that the number of twinning agreements was quite discernibly affected by the presence of municipalities with a large number of linkages. One last pertinent interrelationship was the negative correlation between the number of twinning cities in relation to the region's inhabitants and the distance between the twin cities within the ESPON area. This could suggest that cooperation of municipalities with well-developed, intensive cooperation links was mostly focused on the neighbouring regions.

### **Selected Determinants of Territorial Cooperation**

An analysis of the correlation between indicators and its determinants shows that the intensity of territorial cooperation depends on a number of factors which, after examination of their mutual interrelationships, could be reduced to the most pertinent issues presented below (see Table 3).

To some extent, the number of twinning cities of local governments in relation to the region's population is a function of local government financial independence (share of taxes in the territorial government's revenues) –  $r=0.35$ , or  $r=0.45$  without Romania. This means that the greater the financial independence of the territorial government (mostly at local level), the stronger the cooperation with twinning cities, expressed as the number of twinning agreements per 100,000 population of a given region. Interestingly, no such correlation was observed in the case of INTERREG projects. This fact is rather difficult to interpret, and it can indicate that this is a function of the sources of funding for such cooperation, which in the former case involves the local government's own funds, and in the latter case involves external funding.

There was also a visibly strong negative correlation between the number of twin cities per €1 million regional GDP and the level of economic development (GDP per capita). Potentially, this could mean that less-developed regions show a greater propensity to engage in territorial cooperation. However, an analysis of the scatter plot (see Figure 2) indicates that two categories of territorial governments exist: the poorer ones, where GDP per capita is lower than approximately €4,000; and the wealthier ones, where GDP per capita is above that threshold. This boundary has a spatial dimension, as it separates the better-off EU15 Member States

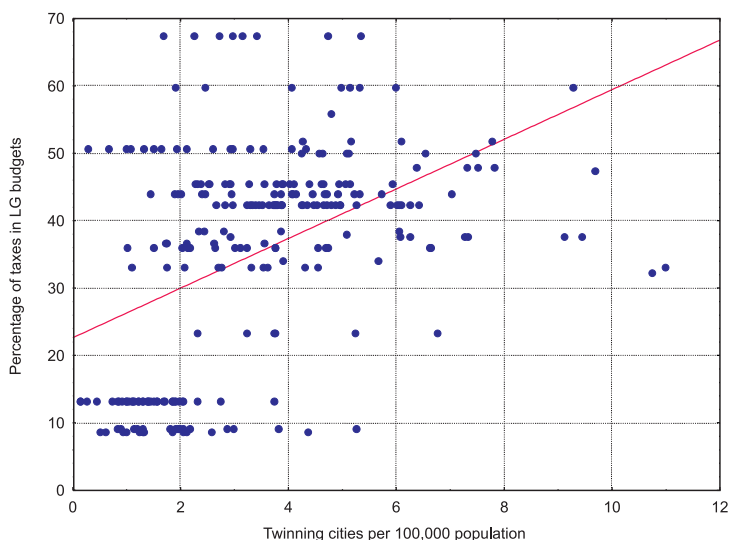
**Table 3** Selected significant correlations between territorial cooperation indicators and potential determinants\*

Indicators of TC: Determinants of TC:	Twinning Cities per 100 000 population	Twinning Cities per € million GDP	Twinning Cities per local government	INTERREG projects per 100,000 population	INTERREG projects per € million GDP	INTERREG projects per local government	Percent of municipalities with twinning cities	Average number of twinning cities	Share of linkages beyond the ESPON area	Average distance between twinning cities within the ESPON area
a) Share of taxes in LG revenues	<u>0.35</u>	0.14	0.07	0.07	0.02	0.13	0.12	0.06	-0.15	<b>-0.33</b>
b) GDP per capita 2008	-0.08	<u>-0.57</u>	0.08	0.08	-0.29	0.22	0.22	-0.13	-0.05	-0.07
c) Inhabitants per municipality	-0.20	-0.03	<u>0.79</u>	0.04	0.01	<b>0.62</b>	0.76	0.32	0.25	0.11
d) Distance to the ESPON centre	0.02	0.32	0.04	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.55</b>	0.22	-0.09	0.24	<u>0.34</u>	<u><b>0.42</b></u>

Source: Author's elaboration.

\* Significant correlations in bold and underlined are described in detail below.

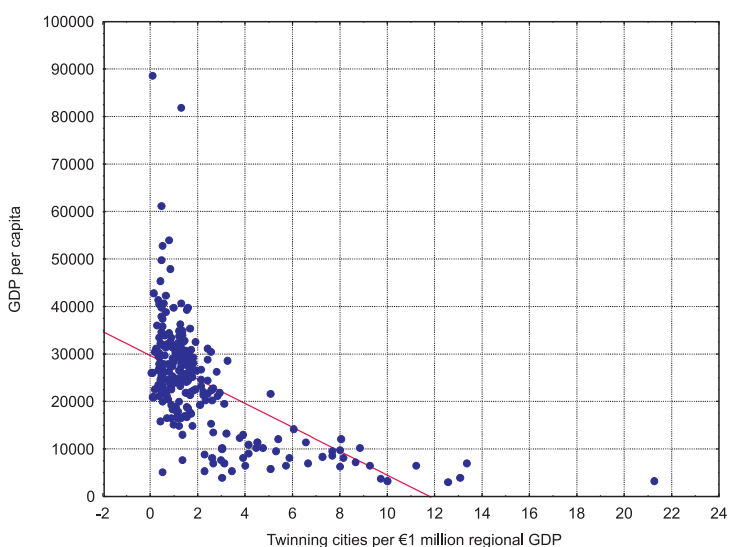
from the new Member States, located primarily in Central and Eastern Europe. On the other hand, within the two groups analysed separately, this correlation is not statistically significant ( $r=-0.18$  and  $r=0.08$ , respectively).



**Figure 1** Intensity of territorial cooperation and financial independence of local governments\*

Source: Author's elaboration.

\* Excluding regions of Romania.

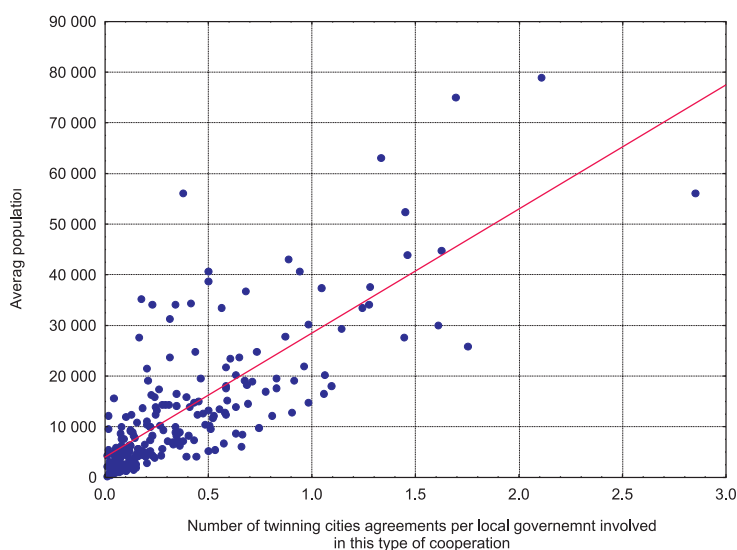


**Figure 2** Territorial cooperation and the level of economic development

Source: Author's elaboration.

Furthermore, only a very weak correlation could be observed between the number of twinning agreements and the level of economic development relativised by the national average ( $r=-0.24$ ). This was probably due to the fact that the less-developed regions had a peripheral location along the state borders, a factor which could indeed foster the development of cross-border cooperation.

Another strong correlation was observed in the relationship between the number of twinning cities per individual municipality of a given region and the average size of the municipality in the region measured by the number of the population (see Figure 3). This means that the more populous the municipalities in a given region, the more twinning agreements they would sign. This is due to the fact that twinning city cooperation was mostly pursued by large cities, whereas scattered municipalities stood less chance of engaging in territorial cooperation. This suggests that the administrative systems in place in individual countries can potentially strongly affect the scale of territorial cooperation.



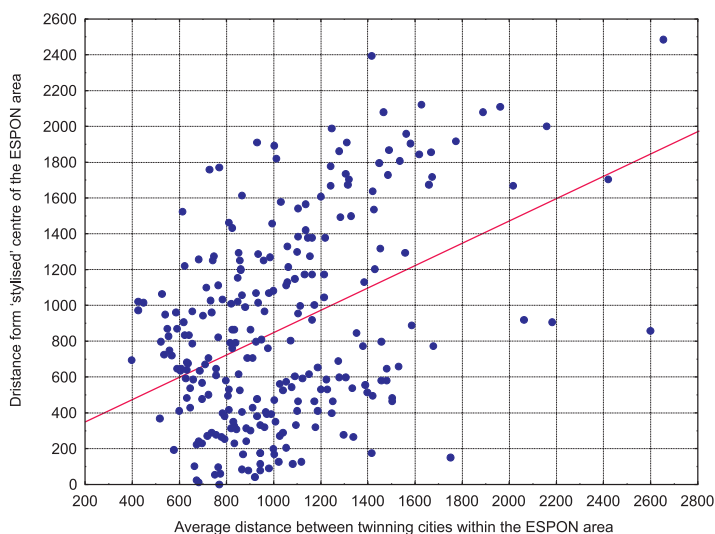
**Figure 3** Intensity of territorial cooperation and the average size of municipalities in terms of population

Source: Author's elaboration.

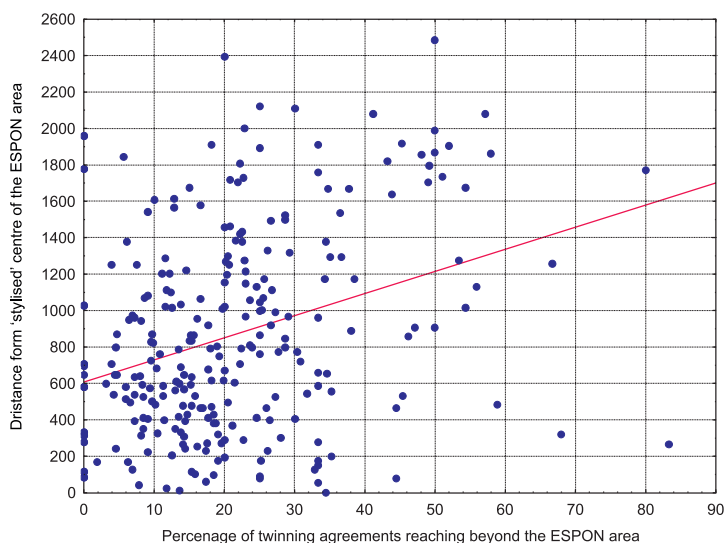
This correlation is corroborated by comparing the number of twinning agreements with the population of cities, taking into account the 325 largest European cities (Urban Audit data). This analysis showed that the larger the city, the more twinning agreements it had signed ( $r=0.56$ ), particularly with respect to agreements reaching beyond the ESPON area ( $r=0.65$ ).

Interestingly, this correlation is very weak in the case of agreements concluded within the ESPON area ( $r=0.27$ ). In addition, when the number of agreements is transposed into 100,000 population, smaller cities turn out to be relatively more engaged in territorial cooperation ( $r=-0.37$ ). This

a) Average distance between twinning cities within the ESPON area



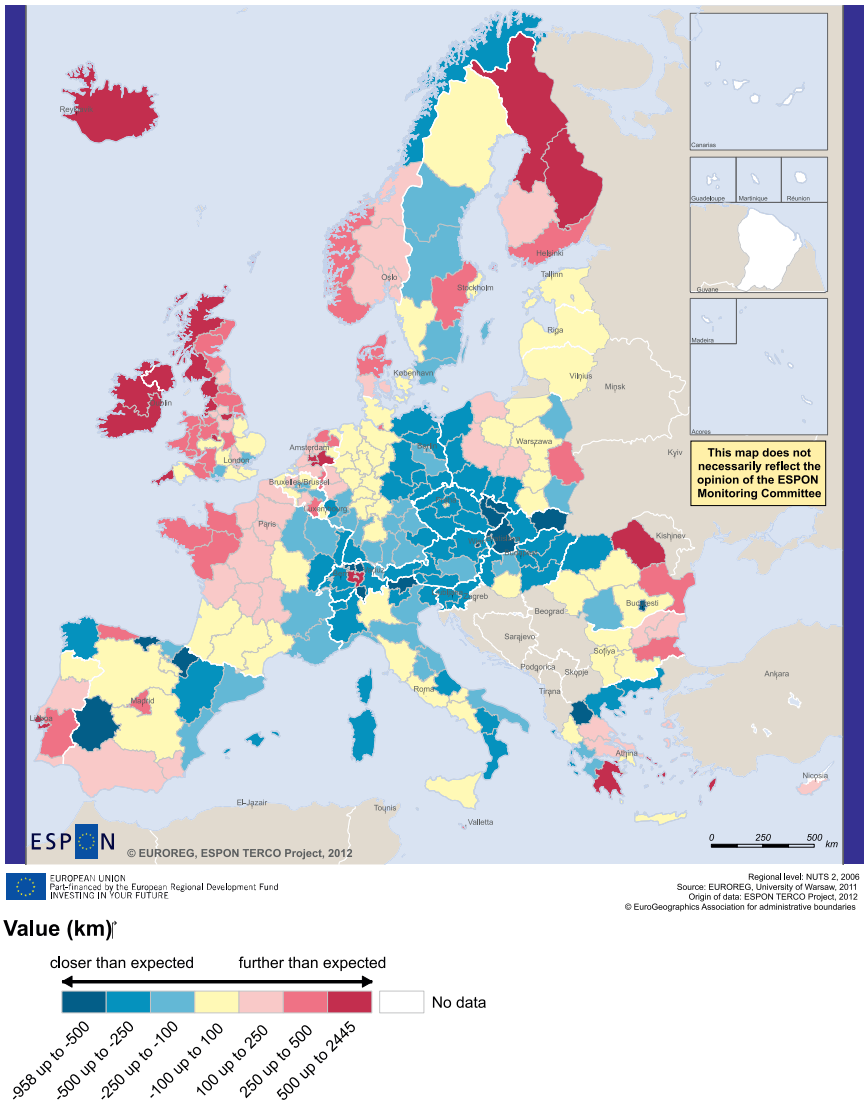
b) Percentage of linkages with twinning cities located outside the ESPON area



**Figure 4** Extent of territorial cooperation and distance from the centre of the ESPON area

Source: Author's elaboration.

can indicate that, on the one hand, larger cities have adequate resources to get involved in broader cooperation of a transcontinental nature and, on the other hand, cooperation within the ESPON area is limited by the number of potential partners of a comparable size. Furthermore, this means that the number of partners is not a simple function of the size of a given city,



**Figure 5** Average distance to twinning city within the ESPON area in relation to the distance expected on the basis of the distance from the centre of the ESPON area [regression residuals in km]

Source: Author's elaboration.



but rather that there are certain thresholds dependent on the category of the size of a given city.

There was also an observable correlation between the 'peripheral location' within the ESPON area and the distance of cooperation pursued under ESPON and the percentage of twinning agreements reaching beyond the ESPON area (see Figure 4). In particular, municipalities located in the peripheral regions were, of necessity, forced to establish cooperation with twinning cities located further away within the ESPON area (see Figure 4a). Quite interestingly, this correlation was not very strong. In addition, two groups of regions could be observed: one that pursued cooperation over a much longer distance and one over a considerably shorter distance than would be anticipated on the basis of the distance from the centre of the ESPON area (see Figure 5). The former group primarily included regions from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, northern England, Bretagne, but also Finland, Portugal, Greece and some regions of Poland, Bulgaria and Romania as well as the Dutch regions. At the other end of the spectrum, there were some Central European regions: from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, former GDR, Austria and – to some extent – northern Italy and also some regions of Greece and Spain.

On the other hand, there was a statistical correlation between the distance from the centre of the ESPON area and the percentage of twinning cities located beyond this area (see Figure 4b). This could be explained above all by cooperation with the neighbouring countries that were not part of the ESPON area (land or sea borders), pursued mostly by the regions of the border countries ( $r=0.37$ ). However, being located within the ESPON area did not in any way affect the percentage of twinning agreements of a transcontinental nature which, as noted above, were in most cases concluded by large cities.

### **Typology of Regions Based on Selected Determinants of Territorial Cooperation**

Based on these relationships, a simplified typology of the determinants of cooperation (having the form of inter-municipal twinning agreements) can be proposed. On the one hand, it takes into account the average size of municipalities in a given region, which could show the intensity of cooperation measured by the number of twinning agreements, and on the other hand, it includes the distance from the centre of the ESPON area, which can have a bearing on the range of such cooperation, measured by the distance to the twin city within the ESPON area and also by the share of agreements with cities situated in countries outside the ESPON area.

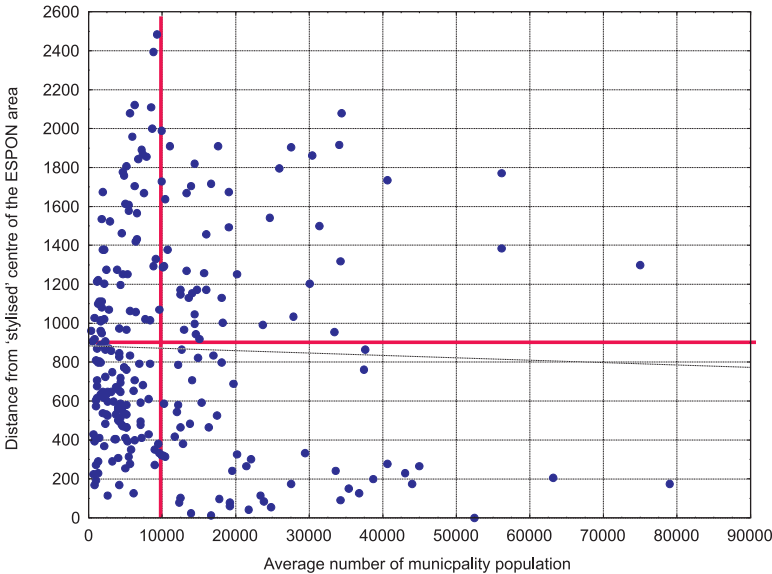
**Table 4** Potential determinants of territorial cooperation at the regional level

	Core areas	Periphery areas
<b>Large municipalities</b>	Well-developed local cooperation networks (1)	Cooperation beyond the ESPON area (2)
<b>Small municipalities</b>	Small range of cooperation (3)	Low intensity of cooperation (4)

Source: Author’s elaboration.

On this basis, four potential model situations can be distinguished (see Table 4):

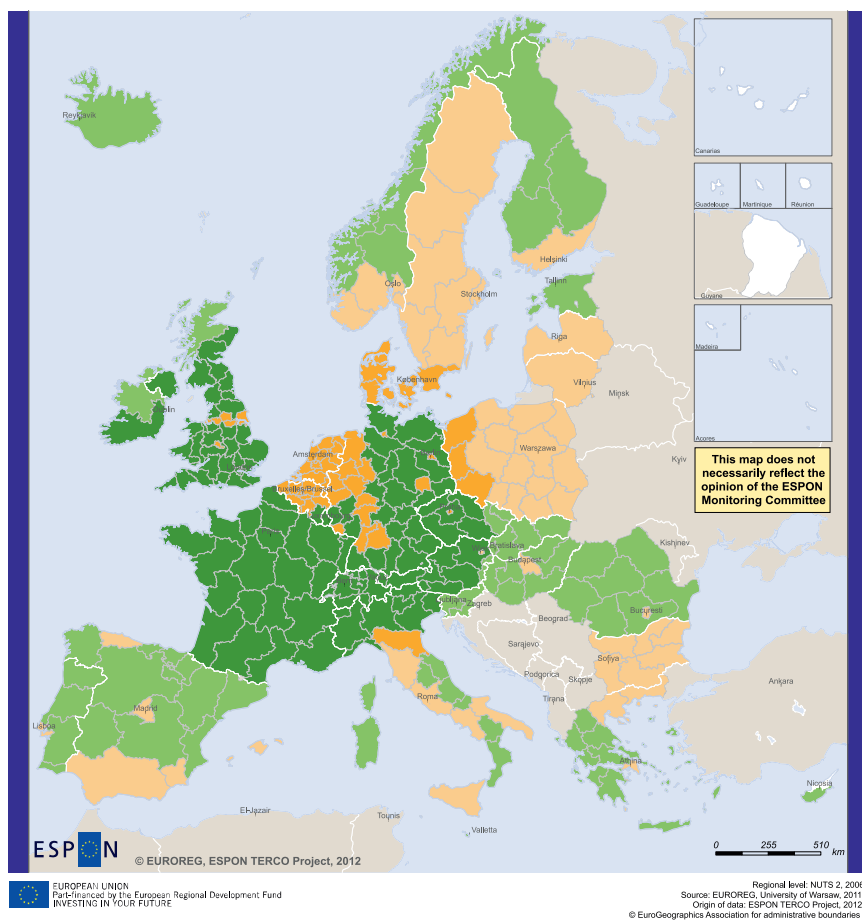
- I. Regions made up of large municipalities situated in the centre of the ESPON area, characterised by strongly developed local cooperation networks.
- II. Regions made up of large municipalities with a peripheral location, acting as the main centres of territorial cooperation reaching beyond the ESPON area, in particular in its cross-border dimension.
- III. Regions made up of small municipalities situated in the centre of the ESPON area, characterised by a relatively small spatial extent of co-operation.
- IV. Regions made up of small municipalities with a peripheral location, characterised by a relatively low intensity of cooperation.



**Figure 6** Size of municipalities in NUTS2 regions and the distance from Brussels – the ‘stylised’ centre of the ESPON area

Source: Author’s elaboration.

The division was made, taking into account the weighted average size of municipalities measured by the number of the population (rounded up to the nearest 1,000, i.e. 10,000) and the average distance from the centre of the ESPON area (rounded up to the nearest 100 km, i.e. 900), which in effect produced the following population sizes for the regions representing the distinguished models: (i) 54; (ii) 46; (iii) 98; and (iv) 63 (see Figures 6 and 7).



**Table 5** Characteristics of territorial cooperation by type of regions

	Twinning Cities per 100,000 population	Twinning Cities per €1 million GDP	Twinning Cities per local government	Percent of municipalities with twinning cities	Average number of twinning cities	Share of linkages beyond the ESPON area	Average distance between twinning cities within the ESPON area
Well-developed local cooperation networks (1)	2.8	1.2	2.18	28.3	4.3	25.4	1 044.8
Poles of cooperation beyond the ESPON area (2)	3.0	3.3	0.99	20.3	4.1	32.5	1 180.4
Small range of cooperation (3)	3.7	1.5	0.13	5.5	2.4	16.0	930.3
Low intensity of cooperation (4)	4.2	3.1	0.17	6.2	3.0	23.7	1 135.3

Source: Author's elaboration.

The former type includes on the one hand regions from the Benelux countries and those from the north-western part of Germany, and on the other hand regions of large English cities and regions situated at the periphery of the 900 km distance from the centre, i.e. regions of Denmark, southern Sweden and southern Norway, western Poland and northern Italy. Municipalities in the remaining part of this area were relatively small, which categorises them as Type 3; in addition to the countries listed above, they included regions in France, the Czech Republic and Austria. Type 2 was notably represented by the Baltic countries (with the exception of Estonia and the Finnish regions not situated on the southern coast), Bulgaria and northern Greece, some regions of Italy and Spain, as well as the metropolitan regions of Budapest, Bucharest and Vienna. Type 4 included mostly the regions of Portugal, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, as well as Spain, Finland and Greece.

The values of the indicators for the individual types to some extent corroborated the typology of cooperation described above (see Table 5).

In particular, both the first and second types of reasons were characterised by the most intensive cooperation: respectively, 28 percent and 20 percent of municipalities in their regions were engaged in cooperation, and each of them had over four partners on average. Furthermore, in cases of Type 2, there was a significant share of linkages (more than 32 percent) reaching beyond the ESPON area, as compared to merely 24 percent in Type 4. It should be noted, however, that, other than the selected examples, Type 2 was not polar in character but rather zonal, and included entire countries.

As expected, Type 3 was characterised by a small spatial range of cooperation, which was expressed on the one hand by the small distance between the twinning cities in the ESPON area, and on the other hand by a low percentage of agreements going beyond this area. In addition, in the latter case the intensity of cooperation was relatively low, as only 5.5 percent of the territorial governments in each region had two partners on average; this intensity was also low in relation to the economic potential, although not as bad when compared with the demographic potential. At the same time, Type 4 did not have a particularly poorly developed cooperation network, especially in respect of the demographic and economic potential, although only 6.2 percent of territorial governments were involved in cooperation within quite a broad spatial range.

## **TPOLOGY OF REGIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

### **Principal Components of Regional Differentiation from the Perspective of Territorial Cooperation Determinants**

The above analyses did not fully acknowledge the many dimensions of the relationships between the variables examined. For this reason, based on the compiled data, an attempt was made to identify the meta-dimensions of differences in the European space in respect of the determinants of territorial cooperation. To this end, a factor analysis was carried out using the principal component (PCA) method. In effect, the number of the analysed variables was reduced, and they were replaced by mutually uncorrelated principal components. As a result, the number of variables was lessened without any loss to the key stock of information.

All the variables were used to identify the principal components, while applying the following boundary conditions relating to: minimum coefficient of variance (0.1) and maximum correlation (0.7), as well as minimum correlation with the principal component (0.4). Then, based on the analysis of the scree test, four principal components were identified. Following the Varimax rotation, these components explained 60 percent of the total variance of the analysed regions (see Figure 8):

- Component 1: core-periphery regions ('core character')
- Component 2: high-low attractiveness ('attractiveness')
- Component 3: low-high economically dependency within countries ('problem character')
- Component 4: metropolitan-other regions ('metropolitan character')

The first component illustrated the classical bipolar dimension of the disparities of European space, associated mainly with the level of economic development measured by GDP per capita, which was typically accompanied by: modern economic structure (low share of GVA generated by agriculture), high level of economic activity (employment rate) and high-quality human capital (education, foreign language skills). Regions with high values of these components were located in the European core, made up of the 'blue banana' regions plus the core areas of the Nordic countries and Paris as well as the urban regions of Scotland and Ireland. On the other hand, regions with the lowest values of this component were located in Central and Eastern European countries, Greece, Portugal, southern Italy and Spain.

The second component highlighted the 'attractiveness' of regions, understood, on the one hand, as an increase in the population owing to a positive balance of migration and natural increase, and on the other hand as being attractive to tourists, including those from abroad. This was coupled

by a boom in residential housing development, with a parallel weakness of other economic sectors, particularly industry. In addition, local government expenditure in these regions included significant outlays on administration. This type of region was the one most commonly encountered in the Mediterranean countries, particularly in Spain, Greece, southern France, and to a lesser extent in Italy. Furthermore, this type of region was typical of the Alpine countries: western Austria and northern Italy.

Figure 8a Component 1: core-periphery regions ('core character')

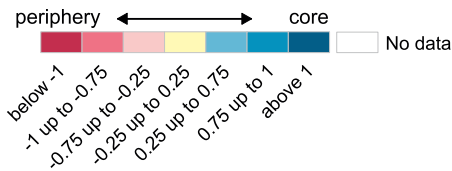
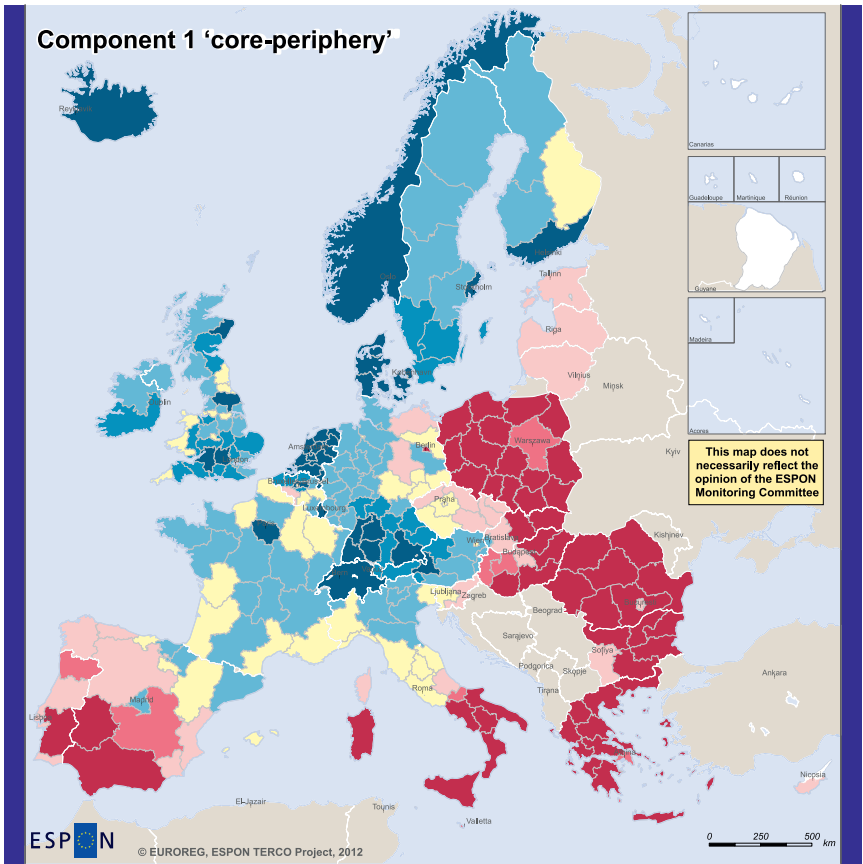
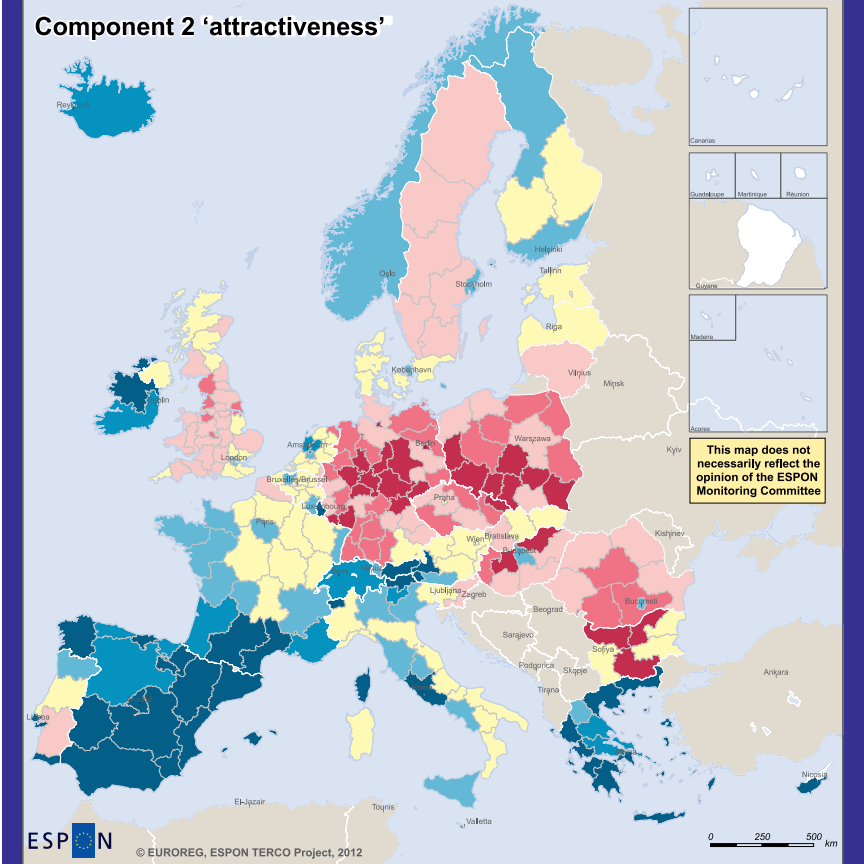


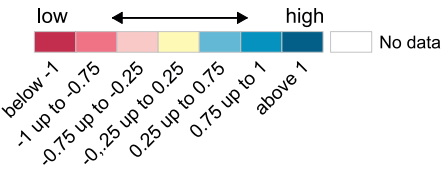


Figure 8b Component 2: high-low attractiveness ('attractiveness')

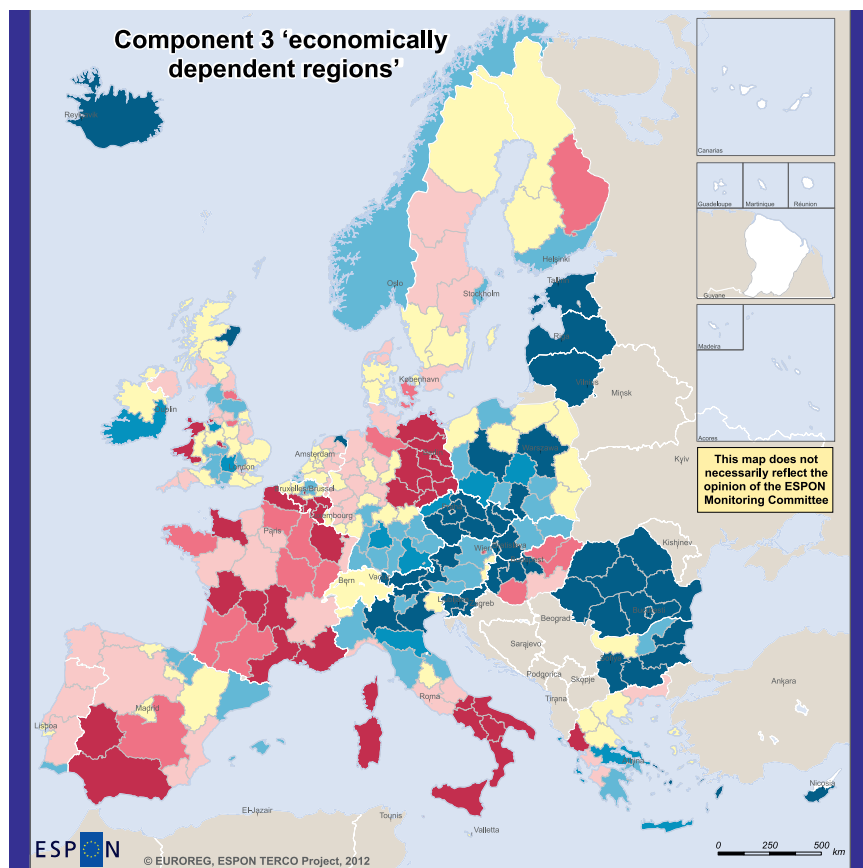


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Regional level NUTS 2, 2006; NUTS 0 for NO and CH  
Source: EUROREG, University of Warsaw, 2011  
Origin of data: ESPON TERCO Project, 2012  
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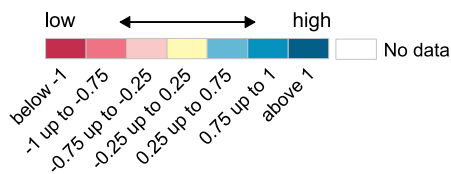


**Figure 8c** Component 3: low-high economical dependency within countries 'problem character')

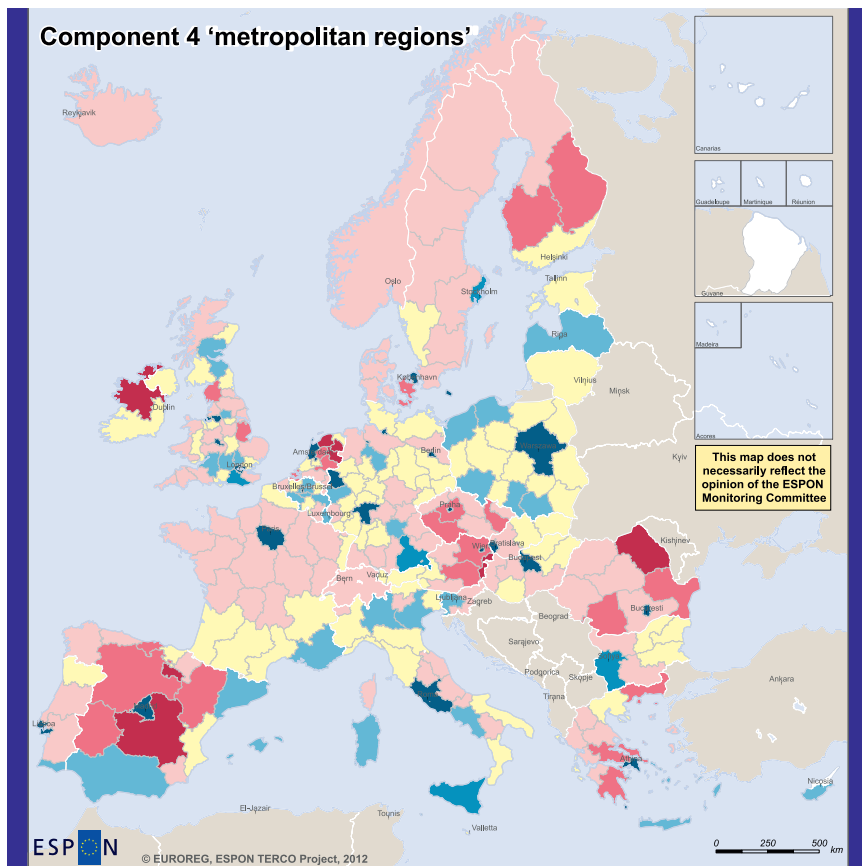


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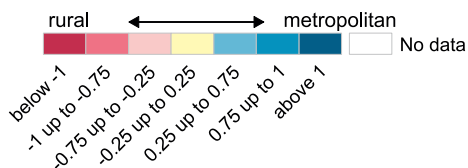


below -1  
-1 up to -0.75  
-0.75 up to -0.25  
-0.25 up to 0.25  
0.25 up to 0.75  
0.75 up to 1  
above 1

**Figure 8d** Component 4: metropolitan-other regions ('metropolitan character')

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Source: EUROREG, University of Warsaw, 2011  
Origin of data: ESPON TERCO Project, 2012  
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**Figure 8** Principal components of regional differentiation from the perspective of territorial cooperation determinants

Source: Author's elaboration.

The third component identified the 'problem character' of regions, understood as a high share of public services in gross value-added, coupled with a low rate of economic development, a high rate of unemployment, and in many cases a low development level in comparison with the national average. In the period in question, this was notably visible in the regions of southern Italy, eastern Germany, southern Spain and most of the regions in France. In the remaining countries, high values of this particular component were observable in only a few regions. On the other hand, a swift pace of economic growth could be observed in the majority of Central and Eastern European countries, southern Germany, northern Italy and Austria.

The last distinguished component indicated the metropolitan character of a given region, particularly in the national context. It was associated with a high development level as compared with the rest of the country, location of a major international airport, high population density and a large number of the population per one territorial government. All this suggested the existence of large cities in the region, notably the capital city, which would additionally attract foreign tourists. High values of this component typified regions where the European metropolitan growth areas (MEGAs), defined in ESPON 1.1.1., were located. At the other end of the spectrum, there were usually regions which were their direct neighbours, probably due to the so-called 'shadow of the metropolis' effect.

Altogether, the adopted components explained approximately 60 per cent of the variance of European regions, which points to the existence of other reasons determining the specific character of individual countries and macro-regions of the European continent which were not taken into account in the analyses.

The distinguished meta-dimensions of European space were rather weakly correlated with the analysed indicators of territorial cooperation (see Table 7). The strongest negative correlation could be observed between the first component, i.e. the 'core character', and the number of twin cities per €1 million GDP of the regional income. The origin of this correlation, generated by the division into the old and new Member States, was discussed above, as it in fact repeated the interdependency between the GDP per capita and this particular indicator. The same (although on a smaller scale) could be observed in the case of INTERREG projects. In addition, it was visible that more peripheral regions, i.e. those situated near the boundaries of the ESPON area, which had a lower level of development, would more frequently become involved in cooperation with countries from outside this area and that municipalities engaged in territorial cooperation had signed more twinning agreements.

**Table 7** Correlation between territorial cooperation indicators and principal components of the disparities in European space\*

Component	Twinning Cities per 100,000 population	Twinning Cities per €1 million GDP	Twinning Cities per local government	INTERREG projects per 100,000 population	INTERREG projects per €1 million GDP	INTERREG projects per local government	Percent of municipalities with twinning cities	Average number of twinning cities	Share of linkages beyond the ESPON area	Average distance between twinning cities within the ESPON area
'core character'	-0.09	<b>-0.55</b>	0.03	-0.02	<b>-0.35</b>	0.13	0.14	<b>-0.20</b>	<b>-0.19</b>	-0.14
'attractiveness'	-0.20	-0.33	-0.19	0.36	<b>0.22</b>	0.13	-0.15	-0.10	<b>0.23</b>	<b>0.18</b>
'problem character'	-0.04	<b>-0.20</b>	-0.13	-0.05	-0.15	-0.08	-0.01	<b>-0.31</b>	-0.15	0.02
'metropolitan character'	-0.16	-0.11	<b>0.20</b>	-0.07	-0.07	0.13	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.20</b>	-0.02

Source: Author's elaboration.

\* Significant correlations in bold and shadowed boxes are described in detail below.

There were also observable links between the regions' 'attractiveness' and the number of INTERREG projects per capita and also (though not as marked) in relation to the regional product. On the other hand, the 'attractive' regions were less interested in pursuing cooperation as part of twinning-cities cooperation. This could mean that tourist regions show more interest in territorial cooperation funded from external sources, a situation which could be explained for example by their wish to transfer knowledge and experience via INTERREG B and C programmes. At the same time, in the case of those regions, twinning cities' cooperation is effected over larger distances within the ESPON area, with a discernibly higher share of linkages reaching beyond this area.

On the other hand, in case of 'problem' regions, there was a weak, though statistically significant, negative correlation between the degree of their 'problem character' and the number of twinning cities per one territorial government involved in such cooperation. This also applied (though not as strongly) to the number of twinning cities per regional income, which suggests in turn that the main obstacle hindering such cooperation was the poor financial standing of the local governments or that they gave preference to other types of expenditure, associated for example with specific social problems .

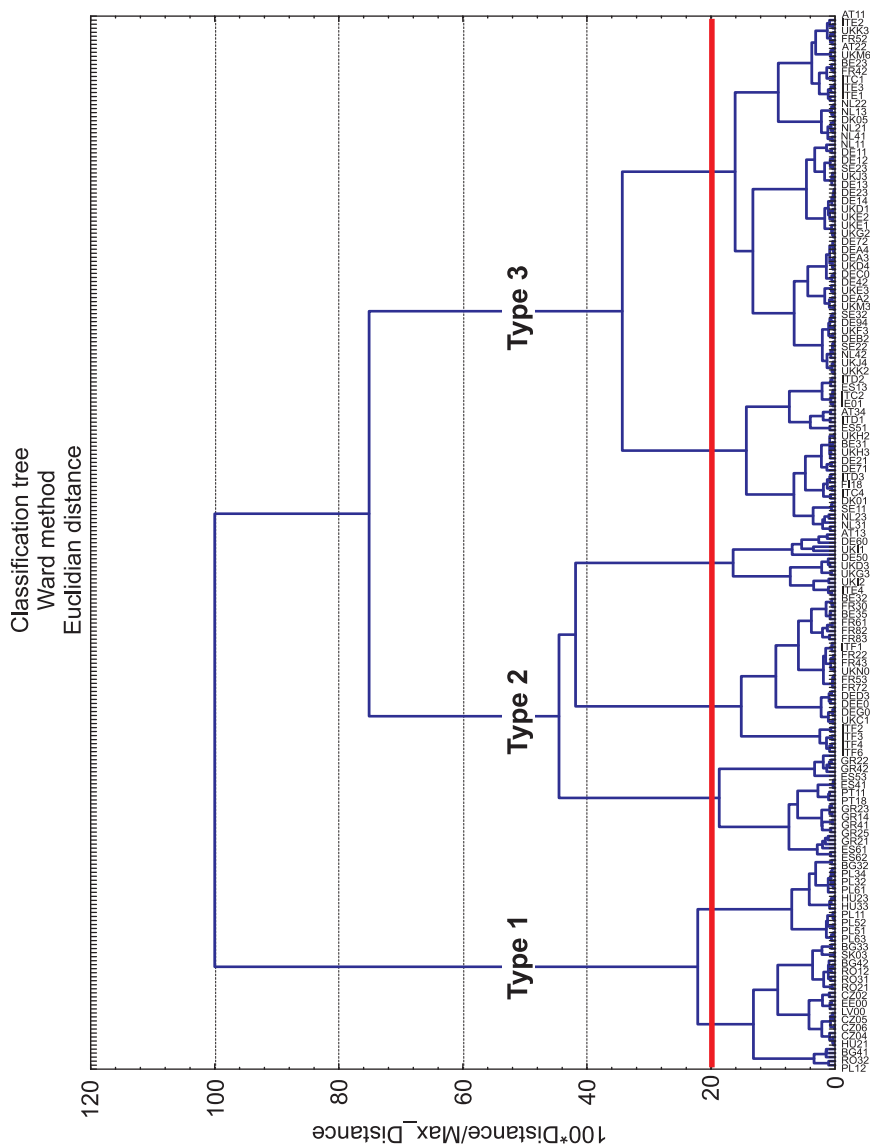
The last component of the spatial differences was the least (i.e. on the verge of being statistically significant) correlated with the intensity of territorial cooperation understood as the percentage of municipalities maintaining partner relations, and with the total number of such relations per one unit of territorial government. This could mean that the relatively high development level provided sufficient funding for such cooperation, with the facilitating factor in the form of good accessibility by air transport.

### **Types of Regions Based on Principal Components of Regional Differentiation**

As the next step, the identified principal components of the differences of European space were used for the classification of regions. To do this, a hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's method was carried out. In effect, a classification tree was produced (see Figure 9), which shows several distinct clusters of components having a similar structure in relation to the analysed indicators.

Based on the analysis of the average indicator values (see Table 8), these clusters were named accordingly. As a result, three main types consisting of seven subtypes were identified.

The first type could be denoted as 'economic periphery & low attractiveness' regions and included practically all of the Central and Eastern



**Figure 9** Classification tree of regions based on the principal components of differences in European space in terms of transnational territorial cooperation

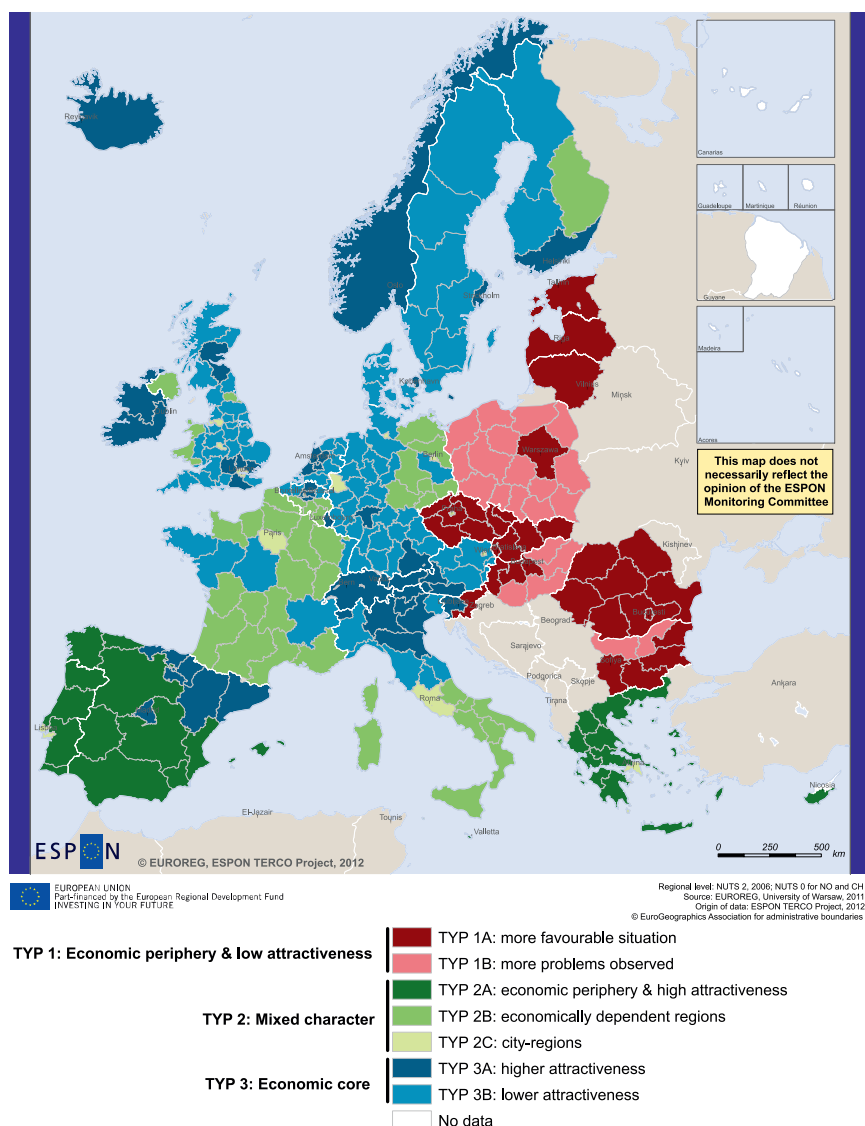


Table 8 Principal components values by identified types of regions

Type	'core character'	'attractiveness'	'problem character'	'metropolitan character'
<b>Economic periphery &amp; low attractiveness (Type 1)</b>				
more favourable situation	-1.2	-0.7	-1.0	0.0
more problems observed	-1.0	-0.5	-1.5	-0.1
	-1.7	-1.0	-0.2	0.1
<b>Mixed types (Type 2)</b>				
economic periphery – high attractiveness	-0.4	0.5	0.8	0.4
economically dependent regions	-1.1	1.8	0.2	-0.3
city-regions	-0.2	0.0	1.4	-0.2
	0.0	-0.1	0.4	2.9
<b>Economic core (Type 3)</b>				
higher attractiveness	0.8	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2
lower attractiveness	0.9	0.7	-0.5	0.1
	0.7	-0.4	0.1	-0.4

Source: Author's elaboration.

European regions (with the exception of western Slovenia and the city of Prague) (see Figure 10). However, the subtypes that were identified for this type did not yield easily to interpretation, but could be differentiated anyhow in the following way: Type 1A – more favourable situation; and Type 1B – more problems observed.



**Figure 10** Types of regions from the perspective of the determinants of territorial cooperation

Source: Author's elaboration.

**Table 9** Territorial cooperation indicators (average values) by types of regions

Type	Twin cities per 100, 000 population	Twin cities per € million GDP	Twin cities per local government	INTERREG projects per 100, 000 population	INTERREG projects per € million GDP	INTERREG projects per local government	Percentage of municipalities with twin cities	Average number of twin cities	Share of linkages beyond the ESPON area	Average distance between twin cities
Twinning-city oriented	4.4	5.7	4.6	3.5	3.7	0.5	11.1	4.1	23.9	993.5
INTERREG-oriented	2.3	1.2	1.5	9.5	5.1	0.7	5.9	2.8	31.8	1308.0
Low range and intensity	4.0	1.7	1.8	3.9	1.8	0.2	7.2	2.4	17.2	978.0
Hubs of cooperation	1.6	0.5	79.6	4.5	1.3	37.9	43.3	10.2	36.4	1160.2
Medium range and intensity	3.5	1.1	3.6	5.6	1.8	0.7	13.6	2.6	19.3	992.8

Source: Author's elaboration.

The second type was strongly differentiated internally, and for this reason the analysis for the entire type could be misleading. Nevertheless, some conclusions can be drawn for the specific subtypes. The first such subtype could be named 'economic periphery – high attractiveness' and includes regions of the following countries: Greece, Portugal and the majority of the Spanish regions excluding Madrid, Catalonia, Navarra and the Basque Country. Another subtype, 'economically dependent regions', comprised eastern Germany and southern Italy on the one hand, and the majority of the French and Walloon regions of Belgium and certain regions in the United Kingdom on the other hand. The third subtype, which could be termed 'city-regions' as it mainly comprised regions which, due to the respective administrative divisions, were encapsulated within the boundaries of large cities, quite distinctly differed from the former two subtypes.

The third type could be summarised as 'economic core'. It included, on the one hand, a subtype of the 'direct core' regions, comprising the metropolitan regions of Germany, capital city regions of the Nordic countries, northern Italy, western Austria, Spanish regions not included in the 'peripheral' subtype referred to above, Ireland, south-eastern England and the metropolitan regions of Scotland. The second subtype was made up of the remaining regions of the best-developed countries, with the exception of regions classified as 'economically dependent' regions.

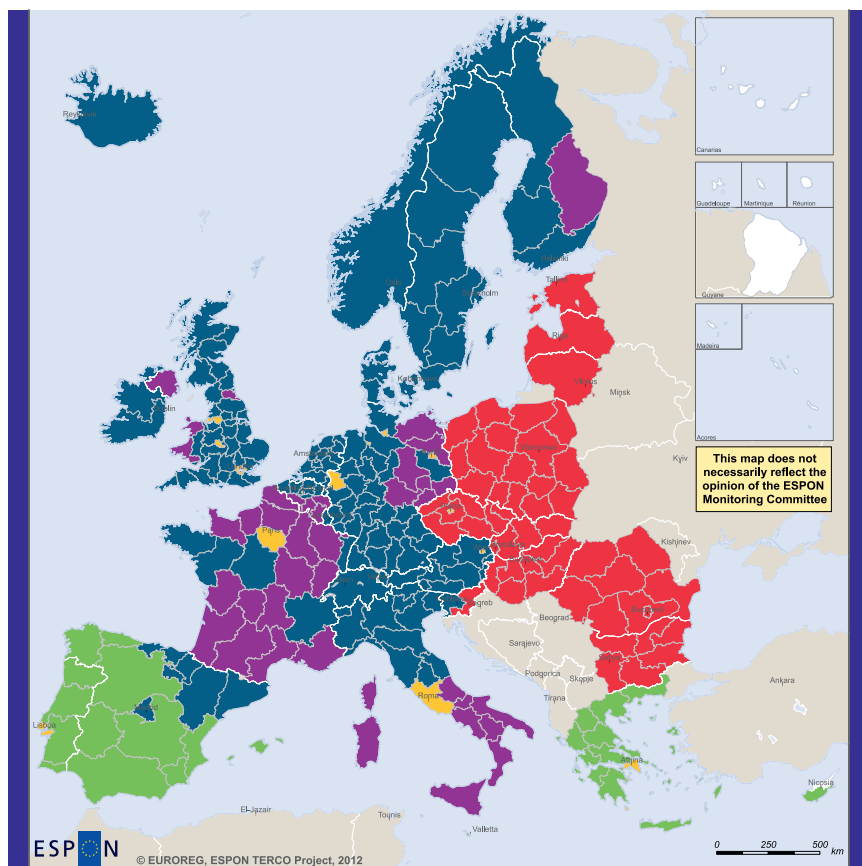
Based on the characteristic of each subtype from the perspective of territorial cooperation indicators (average values), the following general types of territories (see Table 9) could be distinguished (see Figure 11):<sup>4</sup>

- **Twinning-city oriented territorial cooperation.** In this type, twinning-city cooperation per the number of the population, the regional income and number of municipalities was the strongest.
- **INTERREG-oriented with high cooperation beyond the ESPON area.** This type was characterised by the largest average distance between the twinning cities within the ESPON area and a very high share of linkages reaching beyond this area. On the other hand, cooperation per inhabitant, regional income, and the number of territorial governments were rather poorly developed.
- **Relatively low range and intensity of territorial cooperation.** In regions of this type, territorial cooperation was well developed in terms of the demographic and economic potential, but remained one of the weakest if compared to the number of municipalities. Likewise, the spatial extent of this cooperation was rather modest both within and beyond the ESPON area.

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<sup>4</sup> The subtypes of Type 1 and Type 3 regions were omitted, as they were very similar in terms of territorial cooperation indicators.

- **Hubs of territorial cooperation** (resulting from administrative divisions). Territorial cooperation per territorial government was the most extensively developed in this particular type. This was a result of the specific administrative divisions in selected countries, because these regions were encapsulated within the boundaries of large cities.
- **Medium range and intensity of territorial cooperation** (constituting ESPON average). In regions belonging to this type, both the intensity



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Regional level: NUTS 2, 2006; NUTS 0 for NO and CH  
Source: EUROREG, University of Warsaw, 2011  
Origin of data: ESPON TERCO Project, 2012  
© EuroGeographics Association for administrative boundaries

#### Territorial cooperation in different types of regions

- Type 1: Twinning city-oriented territorial co-operation
- Type 2: INTERREG-oriented with high cooperation beyond the ESPON area
- Type 3: Relatively low range and intensity of territorial cooperation
- Type 4: Hubs of territorial cooperation (resulting from specific administrative divisions)
- Type 5: Medium range and intensity of territorial cooperation (constituting the ESPON area average)
- No data

**Figure 11** Territorial cooperation in different types of regions

Source: Author's elaboration.

and the range of territorial cooperation were similar to the ESPON area average.

## CONCLUSIONS

It should be noted in the first place that the conclusions drawn from the quantitative research were, for the most part, based on relatively weak albeit statistically significant correlations. It should also be emphasised that the regional level of analysis was somewhat artificial in certain aspects, since local governments were the key players in territorial cooperation, whilst the intensity of such cooperation relied above all on the size of a given municipality measured by the number of the population.

Irrespective of these reservations, an approximate picture of the situation can be formulated regarding territorial cooperation pursued by territorial governments in the countries situated within the ESPON area.

The intensity of territorial cooperation was largely dependent on the potential of local governments in a given country. This potential was on the one hand determined by the population of a given municipality (and with its average size at the regional level), and on the other hand by the financial independence of local governments, understood as a high share of income from taxes.

By contrast, the range of territorial cooperation depends considerably on location within the ESPON area. A more peripheral location, as a rule, facilitated establishing cooperation with partners from outside the ESPON area, particularly those located in the direct vicinity; it also made the spatial range of cooperation within the ESPON area potentially the largest.

It should also be pointed out that a low level of economic development is not a factor that discourages local governments from becoming involved in territorial cooperation. This paradox, caused by the substantial development gap between the EU15 regions and those of the new Member States, can probably be explained by a greater interest from the latter in the transfer of experience from the more affluent cities and regions. It also shows that the affluence of territorial governments is not the main driver of territorial cooperation.

The major dimensions of differences in European space relating to the determinants of territorial cooperation were associated with the specific aspects of this cooperation. Firstly, in view of the modest economic potential, territorial cooperation was well developed in the 'peripheral' regions, particularly in Central and Eastern European countries but also in the regions of southern Europe, which could be explained by the willingness to transfer knowledge from the core regions. Secondly, the 'attractive' regions were more engaged in cooperation as part of the

INTERREG programme, as this could be manifested in the tourism sector, an important element of their economic base. Thirdly, the 'economically dependent' regions were less engaged in cooperation, which could suggest their potential lack of funds or point to other priorities being chosen by the local governments. Fourthly, in the case of the 'metropolitan' regions, a high percentage of municipalities forming these regions were involved in cooperation, which could be facilitated by their good transport accessibility owing to the presence of a major international airport.

At the same time, the regions situated in the main types/macro-regions of European space assumed different forms of territorial cooperation. The regions classified as 'economic core' ones largely determined the average and did not deviate from it in any significant way. On the other hand, the Central and Eastern European regions were more deeply involved in twinning-city cooperation, particularly given their relatively small economic potential. Conversely, the regions of the peripheral countries of southern Europe were more involved in cooperation reaching beyond the ESPON area and in cooperation funded as part of the INTERREG programme, whereas the economically dependent regions were not significantly involved in such cooperation, which was not pursued on any intensive scale and in relative terms had the smallest spatial coverage.



**Annex 1** Selected variables of TC determinants

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Source of data</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Population change 2000-2008 (%)	NUTS2	Eurostat	Own calculation
Population density 2008	NUTS2	Eurostat	Own calculation
Population growth annual rate 2004-2008	NUTS2	Eurostat Yearbook 2010	
Natural change annual rate 2004-2008	NUTS2	Eurostat Yearbook 2010	
Net migration annual rate 2004-2008	NUTS2	Eurostat Yearbook 2010	
Old age dependency ratio 2009	NUTS2	Eurostat Yearbook 2010	
GDP per capita 2008	NUTS2	Eurostat	
GDP 2008 per capita (country=100)	NUTS2	Eurostat	Own calculation
Real GDP change 2000-2008	NUTS2	Eurostat	Own calculation
GDP 2007 pps (EU average)	NUTS2	UEF	
GDP 2000 pps (EU average)	NUTS2	UEF	
Change GDP pps 2000-2007 pp	NUTS2	UEF	Own calculation
GVA agriculture 2006 (%)	NUTS2	ESPON FOCI	
GVA industry 2006 (%)	NUTS2	ESPON FOCI	
GVA construction 2006 (%)	NUTS2	ESPON FOCI	
GVA simple services 2006 (%)	NUTS2	ESPON FOCI	
GVA business services 2006 (%)	NUTS2	ESPON FOCI	
GVA non-market services 2006 (%)	NUTS2	ESPON FOCI	
Employment rate 2008	NUTS2	Eurostat Yearbook 2010	
Unemployment rate 2008	NUTS2	Eurostat Yearbook 2010	

Annex 1 continued

Variable	Unit	Source of data	Remarks
Percent of the population aged 25 to 64 having completed tertiary education 2008	NUTS2	Eurostat Yearbook 2010	
Share of non-resident nights spent in hotels and campsites 2008	NUTS2	Eurostat Yearbook 2010	
Nights per inhabitants (2008)	NUTS2	Eurostat Yearbook 2010	
Number of local authorities	NUTS2	Layers	Own calculation
Inhabitants per municipality	NUTS2		Own calculation
Share of LG in public revenues	NUTS0	Government Finance Statistics Yearbook, IMF	Own calculation
Share of taxes in LG revenues	NUTS0	Government Finance Statistics Yearbook, IMF	Own calculation
Share of general public services (administration) in LG outlays	NUTS0	Government Finance Statistics Yearbook, IMF	Own calculation
LG revenue EUR per capita	NUTS0	Government Finance Statistics Yearbook, IMF	Own calculation
LG taxes EUR per capita	NUTS0	Government Finance Statistics Yearbook, IMF	Own calculation
LG general public services EUR per capita	NUTS0	Government Finance Statistics Yearbook, IMF	Own calculation
Distance to the ESPON area centre	NUTS2	Layers	
Distance to the national capital	NUTS2	Layers	
Airport category	NUTS2	Wikipedia	
Teaching of 3 foreign languages at high schools	NUTS0	EAODEA, Eurostat, Key data on education in Europe	Own calculation
Declared knowledge of 5 foreign languages by adults	NUTS0	Eurostat, Statistics in Focus 49/2010	Own calculation

Source: Author's elaboration.

**Annex 2** Principal components of Regional differentiation from the perspective of TC determinants (Varimax rotation)

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Principal components*</b>			
	<b>'core character'</b>	<b>'attractiveness'</b>	<b>'problem character'</b>	<b>'metropolitan character'</b>
Eigenvalue	4.63	2.68	2.52	2.74
Variance (percent)	22	13	12	13
Population change 2000-2008 (%)	0.38	<b>0.68</b>	0.06	0.08
Population density 2008	0.11	-0.05	0.06	<b>0.83</b>
GDP per capita 2008	<b>0.79</b>	0.19	0.08	0.36
GDP 2008 per capita (country=100)	0.27	0.17	<b>-0.49</b>	<b>0.63</b>
Real GDP change 2000-2008	-0.34	0.13	<b>-0.66</b>	0.04
GVA agriculture 2006 (%)	<b>-0.69</b>	0.03	-0.11	-0.36
GVA industry 2006 (%)	-0.07	<b>-0.55</b>	<b>-0.41</b>	-0.35
GVA construction 2006 (%)	-0.29	<b>0.59</b>	0.03	-0.39
GVA non-market services 2006 (%)	0.13	0.06	<b>0.83</b>	-0.03
Employment rate 2008	<b>0.84</b>	-0.03	-0.25	-0.09
Unemployment rate 2008	<b>-0.55</b>	0.05	<b>0.59</b>	0.19
Percent of the population aged 25 to 64 having completed tertiary education 2008	<b>0.61</b>	0.06	0.07	0.30
Share of non-resident nights spent in hotels and campsites 2008	-0.03	<b>0.53</b>	-0.34	<b>0.48</b>
Nights per inhabitants (2008)	0.01	<b>0.63</b>	-0.22	0.16
Inhabitants per municipality	-0.04	-0.13	0.15	<b>0.58</b>

Annex 2 Continued

Variables	Principal components*			
	'core character'	'attractiveness'	'problem haracter'	'metropolitan character'
Share of general public services (administration) in LG outlays	-0.30	<b>0.66</b>	0.09	-0.07
LG general public services EUR per capita	<b>0.53</b>	0.32	<b>0.43</b>	-0.14
Distance to the centre	<b>-0.68</b>	0.38	-0.22	-0.11
Airport category	0.12	0.29	0.02	<b>0.59</b>
Declared knowledge of 5 foreign languages by adults	<b>0.76</b>	-0.10	0.33	0.05

Source: Author's elaboration.

\* Values over 0.4 marked in bold.

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ŁUKASZ WIDŁA-DOMARADZKI<sup>2</sup>*

## **2.3 STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL OF SUCCESSFUL TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

### **THEORETICAL MODEL OF SUCCESSFUL COOPERATION**

Based on the project's literature review, a conceptual model of territorial cooperation (called TERCO-SEM) was proposed (see Figure 1). Up until this point, there had been no concise model of this type, attempting to put into one framework all the factors shaping territorial cooperation (TC) and assessing their relative importance in terms of producing positive outcomes from cooperation. The model draws on key concepts and findings established by the literature review. For instance, it draws on Colomb's (2007) concept of the scope of cooperation, Barca's (2009) notion of the value added that TC can bring ('by dealing with relevant, over-the-border interdependencies and promoting cooperation networks and collaborative learning involving both public and private actors'), and the expected effectiveness of TC in 'facilitating worker mobility' (Manifesto, 2008), etc. The model was created as an effort to capture and conceptualise the determinants and outcomes of successful territorial cooperation.

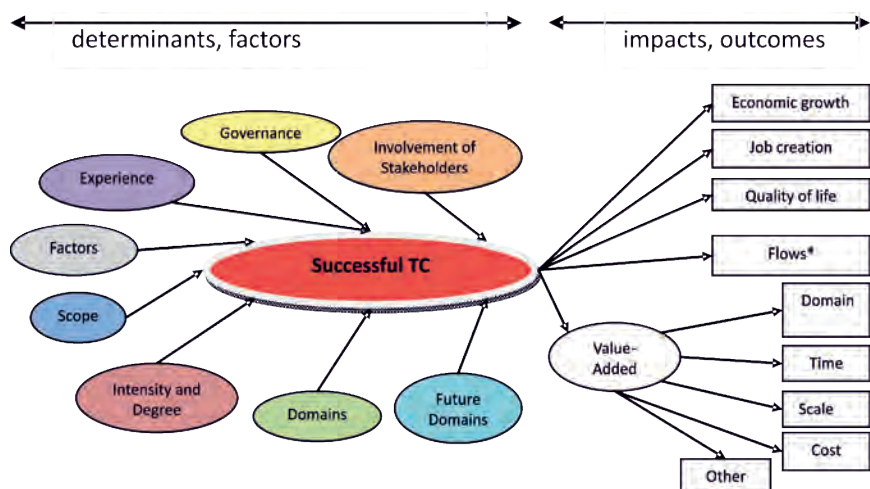
Successful territorial cooperation is defined here as bringing the highest joint socio-economic development to the cooperating territorial units. Development comprises economic growth, job creation and increasing quality of life. This definition is consistent with the name of TERCO project (European Territorial Cooperation as a Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life). In addition to this definition, two other elements were added: transnational flows and value added. With regard to the Conceptual Model, the left-hand side sets out factors influencing territorial cooperation, and the right-hand side sets out indicators that identify successful co-

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operation. Causality is depicted by arrows. Hence logically, all the factors/determinants on the left-hand side, such as governance, experience, drivers, scope, etc. have arrows directed towards ‘successful TC’, as they determine whether it takes place. The opposite is the case with constructs such as economic growth, quality of life, jobs, value added, etc.



**Determinants, factors:**

- Involvement of Stakeholders – various actors involved in TC (five variables: e.g. NGOs, business, local residents, etc.)
- Governance – various stakeholders initiating TC (ten variables: e.g. EU bodies, local government, etc.)
- Experience – length of experience in TC (i.e. when TC was started)
- Factors – facilitators and hindrances of TC (17 variables: e.g. historical links, language, level of development, etc.)
- Scope – extended to six steps in Colomb's (2007) scale of cooperation (e.g. exchange of experience, common actions)
- Intensity and Degree – number of projects and partners, engagement of resources
- Domains – thematic domains of current TC (eight domains: e.g. economy, natural environment, tourism, etc.)
- Future Domains – domains that are most important for future development (eight domains: as above)

**Impact, outcomes:**

\* Flows: International trade, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), commuting to work, tourism, social commuting (e.g. visits to friends, shopping, etc), educational exchange (students, pupils), migration, etc.

**Figure 1** Theoretical model of successful territorial cooperation

Source: Authors' elaboration based on literature review.

This model was developed for two purposes. First, as a comprehensive framework that would visualise expected causalities between TCs and socio-economic development, the model was a base on which the TERCO-CAWI questionnaire was designed. Secondly, the conceptual

model provided the initial form for the Structural Equation Model that was verified empirically.

## **STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING – FROM THEORY OF COOPERATION TO PRACTICE**

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is a powerful statistical technique for testing and estimating causal relations between latent (not-directly observable) variables or ‘constructs’. SEM allows most of all confirmatory, but also exploratory, modelling, meaning it is suited to both theory testing and theory development. A hypothesised model (see Figure 1) is tested using the obtained data to determine how well a model fits the data. The causal assumptions embedded in the model often have ‘falsifiable’ implications, which can be tested against the data. Technically, SEM estimates a series of separate, but interdependent, multiple regression equations as specified in the structural model. SEM is distinguished by two characteristics: (i) the scope to estimate multiple and interrelated dependent relationships, and (ii) the ability to represent unobserved concepts in these relationships and account for measurement error in the estimation process (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, Black, 1998). SEM also allows for a graphical presentation of complex models, which makes an analysis more transparent. The arrows show the causal links, which have been specified based on theoretical grounds. On the basis of the existing data, the estimation of model parameters can show which of the assumed causalities are in fact significant and which are not. The statistical information that is compiled during the process of structural model verification allows a researcher to improve the model – to modify the causality structure and to test the hypotheses repeatedly, as long as a satisfactory explanatory power of the model is achieved. The verification of existing theories is a good starting point for constructing a SEM, as the model is improved by ‘falsifying’ some relations and replacing them with new ones, thus improving overall model fit.

### **TERCO-SEM MODEL**

In the TERCO project, SEM analysis was based on the TERCO-SEM conceptual model described in the previous section.

The main reason for using SEM is to deal with important driving forces that, potentially, determine the success of TC but are not directly observable. The TERCO-SEM conceptual model is a theoretical model, that needs to be verified by using SEM analysis. The main assumption underlying the model is the main TERCO hypothesis (transnational



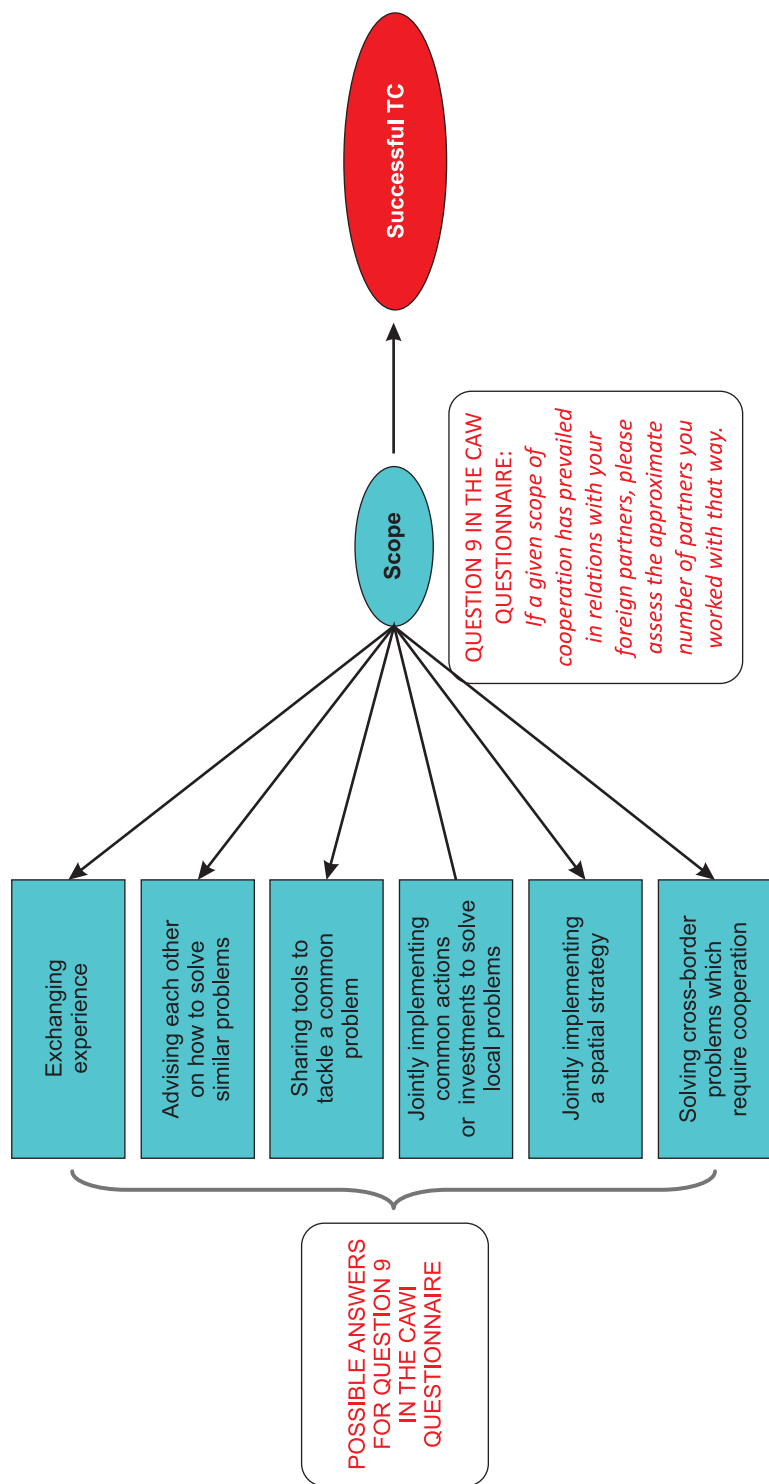
territorial cooperation is one of the factors underpinning the socio-economic development of territorial units). The SEM analysis enabled the empirical verification of the hypothesis and addressed research questions in a robust and consistent way: based on reliable data from the same source (CAWI). Therefore, the SEM results enabled: verification of the main TERCO hypothesis on whether the cooperation has any influence on socio-economic development in terms of (i) economic growth, (ii) jobs, and (iii) quality of life; identification of which determinants listed in the literature are the most important for successful cooperation; and development of a consistent story (theory) addressing the driving forces of TC that are not directly observable.

## DATA FOR SEM – CAWI AND DATA MAPPING

The most appropriate type of data for SEM modelling are survey data. Thus, the CAWI questionnaire was designed in a way that allows for the collection of data useful for verification of specific hypotheses. By assigning data from CAWI to the theoretical model, the model could be applied and verified on a step-by-step basis. Each of the seven factors (coloured ellipses on Figure 1) was described by one or more questions in the TERCO-CAWI questionnaire. For example, one driving force is the scope of cooperation, measured by the modified, six-step Colomb's scale (see Figure 2).

However, it has to be remembered that the ability to test the model empirically depends primarily on the quality of data. The following conditions have to be satisfied in order to make the model work:

- Large and homogenous sample. SEM requires a large number of observations to start running and they have to be homogenous, which means that the set of data for each type of TC must be large. In practice, there is no exact threshold under which the software (AMOS®) cannot be applied. However, a general rule is that the size of a sample should be 20 times larger than the number of measured variables in the model. For the purposes of this project, the data needed to be gathered for each TC type.
- Normal distribution of variables. In order to have appropriate estimations of relations between the variables and to test hypothesis, a normal distribution of the answers is required, because all the estimators and statistics are asymptotically unbiased.
- No missing data points. The model is sensitive to missing observations. This means that the questionnaires with blanks under some questions have to be deleted from the sample or some special statistical procedures, aimed at handling the missing data, must be applied. These conditions are very



**Figure 2** Data mapping in the TERCO-SEM model

Source: Authors' elaboration.

strict and demanding. However, the number of questionnaires obtained during the research was not very high, and for this reason some statistical procedures had to be applied to improve the quality of the model.

## STEPS IN MODELLING

SEM modelling was developed in five main stages:

### a. Data collection

As already mentioned, data for SEM modelling were provided by the CAWI questionnaires (in electronic and paper versions), completed by respondents in 19 countries<sup>3</sup>. The questionnaire was sent to all municipalities in the TERCO case study areas. After using many different methods aimed at increasing the rate of return (multiple e-mail requests, phone calls, personal visits etc.), 459 completed questionnaires, usable for the SEM analysis, were obtained.

### b. Database preparation and transposition

Of the 459 questionnaires, only 291 were filled in by beneficiaries of territorial cooperation programmes (i.e. persons who actually participated in TC). Those 291 respondents related to five types of cooperation (Twinning Cities, INTERREG A, INTERREG B, INTERREG C, Trans-continental). In SEM, the unit of analysis is a relation (a respondent's opinion on each type of TC is a separate relation), and each respondent had on average 1.72 cooperation relations, hence the final SEM worked on 500 unique records.

Because SEM modelling is very sensitive to missing data points, and because the sample was still relatively small, missing data were supplemented with the arithmetic mean of the values for a particular country or, if this was not possible, of the values for the whole sample. In the TERCO CAWI questionnaire, there were two types of questions – with dichotomous and interval scale answers. To ensure that both types of questions entered the model with the same probability, all the variables were standardised.

### c. Preliminary modelling

Preliminary modelling was based on the already described theoretical conceptual TERCO-SEM model (Figure 1). After this first step of modelling,

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<sup>3</sup> Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), Czech Republic (CZ), Germany (DE), Spain (ES), Finland (FI), France (FR), Greece (GR), Uruguay (UY), Argentina (AR), Morocco (MO), Norway (NO), Poland (PL), Russia (RU), Sweden (SE), Slovakia (SK), Turkey (TR), Ukraine (UA), United Kingdom (UK)

it was obvious that some factors (determinants, colored ellipses) were not consistent. Accordingly, to improve the quality of the model, some factors had to be modified. Firstly, variables with the lowest factor loadings were excluded from the model. These variables were usually related to answers of 'Other, please specify' in the CAWI questionnaires. Secondly, if a particular factor contained more variables with low factor loadings, exploratory factor analysis was conducted. All exploratory factor analyses were conducted using SPSS® instead of AMOS®. Hereby the factor was divided into smaller, more consistent factors. Thirdly, some factors were combined with each other. This procedure was applied, for example, to the factors 'Domains' and 'Future Domains'. Finally, despite the described statistical procedures, some variables had to be excluded from the model. For example, all the variables related to the 'value-added' factor (on the right hand side of the model) had to be excluded due to the very high rate of missing data.

#### **d. Modifications of the model based on its fits**

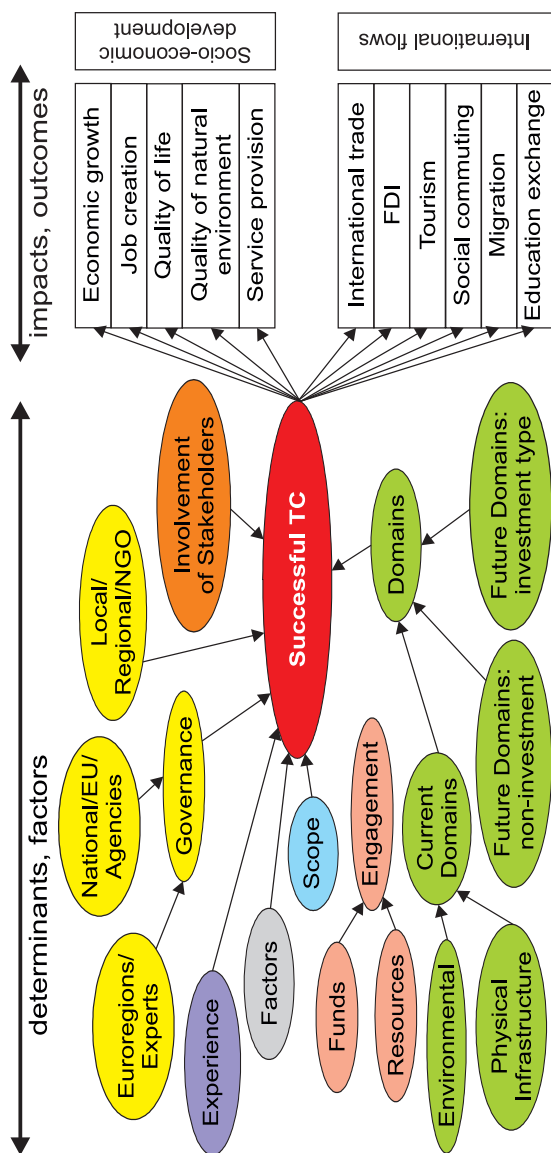
The aim of this stage of modelling was to improve the model's fit rates. The AMOS® software enables wide diagnosis of these rates, and it helps to identify which variables are the weakest and how to improve the quality of the model. Almost all the factors from the preliminary model had to be modified (i.e. the set of variables that build up the different factors had to be changed). During the modification procedure, variables were grouped into factors on the basis of the statistical procedures of factor analysis. Variables of the same factor are strongly correlated to each other and significantly affect the factor. Apart from changes on the left-hand side of the model (factors/determinants of Successful TC), the right-hand part also had to be modified. At the beginning, it was assumed that Successful TC (unobservable, latent variable) consisted of six elements (variables that form Successful TC on the basis of factor analysis). During the modelling process, however, it turned out that all the variables of Successful TC are strongly correlated with each other. This means that respondents described the impact of TC on all elements of socio-economic development and flows similarly – similarly low or similarly high. Consequently, each variable builds Successful TC with a similar factor loading, and differences between the influence of Successful TC on each area (economic growth, quality of life, job creation etc.) are relatively small. This situation leads to the conclusion that the impact of Successful TC on different areas is probably indistinguishable to the respondents. Territorial cooperation influences many areas and its impact is rather comprehensive. Respondents most likely did not see many direct and clear results of TC, but rather an overall small or large influence of TC on the general situation in a specific area.

All these procedures and statistical techniques improved the quality of the model. As a result, the fit rates achieved a satisfactory level. In TERCO-SEM, two basic rates of the model's fitness were chosen: CFI (Comparative Fit Index) and RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation). These rates describe fitness of a singular model. According to the literature (e.g. Byrne, 2010) the value of the CFI rate should be  $\geq 0.9$  and the value of the RMSEA rate  $\leq 0.1$ . In the TERCO-SEM model, the value of the CFI rate is 0.775 and the RMSEA rate is 0.078. The low value of the CFI rate is a result of small sample size and relatively low differentiation of data (respondents' answers). However, taking into account the small number of questionnaires, the fit rates are relatively high. It should be stressed that a higher number of questionnaires would not necessarily improve the quality of the model. During the collection of the questionnaires, it was very visible that the share of positive questionnaires (from respondents that had any experience in TC), which were the basis of the SEM analysis, was decreasing very rapidly after the first one or two rounds of collection. It can be assumed that respondents that had any experience in TC were also the ones that filled in the questionnaires at the beginning of the survey.

#### **e. Final model**

The final TERCO-SEM model, after the modifications described above, is shown in Figure 3 and described in detail in Table 1. It can be seen that the modifications to the model led not only to the exclusion of some elements, but also to renaming some factors and distinguishing subfactors. Only two factors in the final model are built exactly the same (with the same variables, i.e. the same CAWI questions) as in the preliminary, conceptual TERCO-SEM model: Involvement of stakeholders (level of involvement of key actors in TC projects) and Scope (measured with extended Colomb's scale). Factors (factors that facilitate or hinder TC) was modified only a little bit by removing the variable related to the CAWI answer 'Other, please specify'.

The factor that was changed to the greatest extent was Domains (thematic domains of TC projects) – it was actually combined with another factor – Future Domains (preferred future thematic domains of TC projects which are the most important for future development of the area), and then modified once again. As a result, the model has one large factor Domains and three smaller subfactors: two related to future domains ('soft', which contains variables related to preferred thematic domains of future TC projects: tourism, cultural events, educational exchange; and 'hard': economy, natural environment, physical infrastructure) and Current Domains (from all the variables of the primary factor Domains). In the last factor (Current Domain), two subfactors were distinguished:



- Local/Regional/NGO – stakeholders initiating TC are NGOs, local and regional governments
- Governance: National/EU/Agencies – stakeholders initiating TC are national government, EU bodies, development agencies and chambers of commerce
- Governance: Euroregions/Experts – stakeholders initiating TC are Euroregions and other cross-border institutions, consultants, external experts
- Experience – length of experience in TC and changeability of TC partners
- Engagement: Funds – source of funding (five types of sources)
- Engagement: Resources – availability of funds and staff resources
- Future Domains: 'soft' – tourism, cultural events, educational exchange
- Future Domains: 'hard' – economy, natural environment, physical infrastructure
- Current Domains – economy, cultural events, educational exchange, social infrastructure, tourism, joint spatial (physical) planning
- Current Domains: Environmental – natural environment and risk prevention
- Current Domains: Physical infrastructure – roads and other physical infrastructure

**Figure 3** Empirical model of successful cooperation

Source: Authors' elaboration based on literature review and data from TERCO case studies.

Environmental (containing variables related to thematic domains of TC projects: natural environment and risk prevention) and Physical infrastructure (containing variables related to thematic domains of TC projects: roads and other physical infrastructure). Other current domains did not form consistent separate factors and were included directly in the factor Current Domains (economy, cultural events, educational exchange, social infrastructure, tourism, joint spatial planning).

These modifications were made on the basis of the results of the statistical analysis of the first version of the model. As already mentioned, factors and subfactors were distinguished and built on the basis of factor analysis. Variables in the same factor are strongly correlated to each other and significantly affect the factor. This means that if some variables build the factor or subfactor (e.g. Environmental) the answers related to these variables were relatively frequently chosen by the same CAWI respondents.

The described modifications to the factors Domains and Future Domains may lead to the conclusion that the current domains of TC projects are strongly related to the preferable future thematic areas of cooperation that are seen as the most important for the future development of a specific area. This might be a result of two situations: current domains of cooperation are also seen as those that are the most important because they really are very important, or respondents find those domains in which they have some experience in TC to be important. At the same time, it should be remembered that in some cases, especially in new Member States or non-EU countries, involvement in a TC project is a matter of chance, e.g. invitation to the project by a more experienced partner. In these situations, the thematic domain of the project is not always an answer to the real needs and problems of a specific area. Another conclusion from the above-mentioned modifications to the factor Domains is that some domains often coincide with each other (in respondents' answers) and thus form subfactors (Future Domains 'soft': tourism, cultural events, educational exchange; Future Domains 'hard': economy, natural environment, physical infrastructure; Current Domains 'Environmental': natural environment and risk prevention; Current Domains 'Physical infrastructure': roads and other physical infrastructure). This may lead to the conclusion that if current domains of TC projects are taken into consideration, there is a rather clear preference for two thematic areas (natural environment and physical infrastructure), while other domains do not coincide in any meaningful pattern.

On the other hand, with regard to preferred future domains of TC projects (the most important for future development of the area), two types of preferences can be distinguished: one is focused more on culture,

**Table 1** Factors and variables of the empirical model of successful cooperation

Factor (question in CAWI questionnaire)	Variable (answers available)
<b>Involvement of stakeholders</b> ( <i>If any of the following actors/stakeholders are involved in the TC in your area please assess its level of involvement</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authorities</li> <li>• Regional authorities</li> <li>• Local residents</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Business</li> </ul>
<b>Scope</b> ( <i>If a given scope of cooperation has prevailed in relations with your foreign partners please assess the approximate number of partners you worked with that way</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanging experience</li> <li>• Advising each other on how to solve similar problems</li> <li>• Sharing tools to tackle a common problem</li> <li>• Jointly implementing common actions or investments to solve local problems</li> <li>• Jointly implementing a spatial strategy</li> <li>• Solving cross-border (transnational or transcontinental) problems which require cooperation</li> </ul>
<b>Factors</b> ( <i>Please indicate to what extent each of the following factors hindered your organisation/authority from participating in TC</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of growth (development)</li> <li>• Presence of minority groups</li> <li>• Physical geography between the regions</li> <li>• Level of infrastructure</li> <li>• Historical relations</li> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• Language</li> <li>• Cultural background</li> <li>• Previous involvement in TC projects</li> <li>• Availability of funding</li> <li>• Geopolitical position of the regions</li> <li>• Institutional background</li> <li>• Civil society</li> </ul>



Table 1 Continued

Factor (question in CAWI questionnaire)	Variable (answers available)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared environmental concerns</li> <li>• Business community</li> <li>• EU membership</li> <li>• Political will</li> </ul>
<b>Governance</b> (Please indicate 3 key stakeholders initiating TC in your area)	
<b>Euroregions/ Experts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National government</li> <li>• EU bodies</li> <li>• Development agencies</li> <li>• Chambers of commerce</li> </ul>
<b>National/EU/ Agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Euroregions and other cross-border institutions</li> <li>• Consultants, external experts</li> </ul>
<b>Local/Regional/NGO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local government</li> <li>• Regional government</li> <li>• NGOs</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b> (Please indicate to what extent your cooperating partners have changed since 2000) (When did your organisation/authority first become involved in TC?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the same partners</li> <li>• Mostly the same partners</li> <li>• Similar number of previous and new partners</li> <li>• Mostly new partners</li> <li>• All new partners</li> </ul>

Table 1 Continued

Factor (question in CAWI questionnaire)	Variable (answers available)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• before 1994</li> <li>• 1994-1999</li> <li>• 2000-2006</li> <li>• since 2007</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b> (Please assess the extent to which the following resources are available in your organisation/ institution for participation in TC projects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds</li> <li>• Staff</li> </ul>
<b>Domains</b>	
<b>Future Domains</b> (please indicate 3 domains which are the most important for future development of your area)	
<b>Future Domains: hard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economy</li> <li>• Natural environment</li> <li>• Physical infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Future Domains: soft</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural events</li> <li>• Educational exchange</li> <li>• Tourism</li> </ul>
<b>Current Domains</b> (Please indicate the types of cooperation with which your organisation/authority has been involved)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economy</li> <li>• Cultural events</li> <li>• Educational exchange</li> <li>• Social infrastructure</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Joint spatial (physical) planning</li> </ul>

Table 1 Continued

Factor (question in CAWI questionnaire)	Variable (answers available)
<b>Environmental</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural environment</li> <li>• Risk prevention</li> </ul>
<b>Physical infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roads</li> <li>• Other physical infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Successful TC</b> (If there is an impact of TC on your area, please indicate in which theme and at what level) (In relation to the following flows/exchanges, please indicate how you perceive the impact of TC on your area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic growth</li> <li>• Job creation</li> <li>• Quality of life</li> <li>• Quality of natural environment</li> <li>• Service provision</li> <li>• International trade</li> <li>• Foreign direct investment</li> <li>• Commuting for work</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Social commuting</li> <li>• Migration</li> <li>• Educational exchange</li> </ul>

Source: Authors' elaboration.

education and tourism, and the other is geared more towards economy, natural environment and physical infrastructure.

Quite distinctive modifications were also made in the factor Experience. In this case, the variable related to the length of experience is strongly correlated with the variable related to the diversification of partners (in the preliminary model, it was a variable of the factor 'Intensity and degree'). This means that the longer the experience, the more stable the set of TC partners. It leads to the conclusion that, as time passes, patterns of co-operation (with regard to choosing partners) are more and more stable and closed. In the final model, the factor Experience consists of only the two mentioned variables. The factor Intensity and degree was also strongly modified, rebuilt and renamed. Variables that remained within that factor (now named Engagement) were grouped into two subfactors: Resources (the extent to which resources of staff and funds are available) and Funds (sources of funding for TC projects: own, public-private, from foreign partners, EU funds, public other than own).

The last factor to be modified was Governance, which described key stakeholders initiating TC. In this case, variables indicating the key stakeholders of local and regional authorities and NGOs were so distinctive from all the others, that they created a separate factor (called Local/Regional/NGO), which can be described as a locally-driven model of TC. In this situation, the factor Governance consists of two distinctive subfactors: National/EU/Agencies and Euroregions/Experts. Distinguishing these three factors indicates, in a very general way, three types of TC in regard to key stakeholders initiating territorial cooperation. The most distinctive is a model with the strong involvement of local and regional governments, supported by NGOs. The distinguishing factor Euroregions/Experts indicates that Euroregions and other cross-border institutions, as well as consultants and external experts, are strongly involved in TC in these areas where public authorities (local, regional and national, as well as EU bodies) and professional organisations (such as NGOs, development agencies and chambers of commerce) are not so active. At the same time, in areas where national government and EU bodies are strongly involved in TC, professional organisations (such as development agencies or chambers of commerce) are also important actors initiating TC. It should be emphasised that from all three types of Governance (described above), only Local/Regional/NGO is consistent enough to be a significant (from statistical point of view) factor of Successful TC. The two other types of governance are also internally consistent, but their factor loadings are much smaller than for those Local/Regional/NGO factor (due to the small number of questionnaires with those answers). In fact, removing them

from the model would be statistically justified, but a decision was taken to leave them in because of their merit and theoretical importance.

## DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Based on the TERCO-SEM model, the hypothesis that territorial co-operation underpins socio-economic development was positively verified. This verification was based on the following reasoning. In the theoretical (conceptual) model it was assumed that successful TC is one of the factors that underpins the joint socio-economic development of cooperating territorial units. This assumption was reflected in the structure of the conceptual model where on the right-hand side of the model were placed various indicators of socio-economic development (economic growth, job creation, quality of life) as well as various flows (FDI, migration etc.) and value added. Hence the right hand side indicators were the indicators of potential impact of successful cooperation. On the left hand side the potential determinants and factory of territorial cooperation were depicted – determinants and factors that may lead to success. After modifications and analyses, the final, empirical and statistically significant version of the model was obtained. This model, due to statistically significant relations between Successful TC and elements of socio-economic development positively verifies the main TERCO hypothesis.

Apart from the conclusions mentioned in point 5 (Steps in modelling), SEM allows other, more general conclusions to be drawn. First, the results of the SEM analysis provide information about the role of particular ‘determinants and factors’ in achieving successful TC measured by several ‘impact’ indicators. Second, it is possible to access the extent to which particular ‘determinants and factors’ contributed to the Successful TC as a whole and its particular ‘impacts’.

The empirical TERCO-SEM model showed 12 significant impact variables. Each variable is characterised by its weight, which describes the power with which a variable explains Successful TC (see Table 2). Although the weights of all variables are relatively similar, some differences can be seen: the factors that are manifested to the greatest extent in Successful TC are economic growth, quality of life, quality of natural environment and service provision, while much less are job creation and flows. Thus, it seems that success in TC translates more into overall socio-economic development rather than cross-border flows and functional integration of cooperating areas. In this respect, TC can be seen as an instrument that so far is more oriented on achieving the socio-economic development of cooperating territories rather than a way to reduce the role of barriers related to borders by intensifying various flows. And this is true not only

within the EU and Schengen area, but also for cooperation with non-EU countries.

**Table 2** Variables measuring impact of Successful TC

Name of the impact variable	Weight
Impact: Economic growth	9.1%
Impact: Job creation	8.5%
Impact: Quality of life	9.0%
Impact: Quality of natural environment	8.9%
Impact: Service provision	8.9%
Flows: International trade	7.9%
Flows: Foreign direct investment	8.1%
Flows: Tourism	7.7%
Flows: Social commuting	8.4%
Flows: Migration	8.2%
Flows: Educational exchange	7.8%
Flows: Other	7.5%

Source: Authors' elaboration.

With regard to the impact of particular determinants and factors, built by variables (on the left-hand side of the model), on Successful TC, three groups of factors can be distinguished at different level of importance (see Table 3).

The first group consists of *very important determinants and factors of successful TC*, since their weights (Standardised Total Effects) are the highest (> 8.5 percent). This group includes factors related to key stakeholders initiating TC (Local/Regional/NGO and Euroregions/Experts) and Engagement, especially the financial one. This means that for TC, the involvement of organisations and experts and local and regional authorities, as well as the availability of funds, are key determinants of success. Also important, but less so, are factors from the second group – *important determinants and factors of successful TC*. They correspond to Domains (both current and future domains) especially related to hard investments (building border crossings, cross-border transportation connections, etc.) and projects devoted to economy, natural environment and physical infrastructure. *Determinants and factory of moderate importance* can be considered as Engagement of various resources (financial resources and staff), Scope of TC (measured with the Colomb scale), Experience in TC projects, and some current and future domains – related to hard projects (building physical infrastructure) and soft, cultural, educational

and tourism projects. Surprisingly, *the least important determinants and factors* are those related to the stakeholders involved in TC (whereas factors related to the stakeholders that initiate TC play the most important role in determining TC success). Here belong also variables describing factors that hinder and facilitate TC. The main conclusion from this part of the analysis is that, for successful TC, the most important factors are those that initiate cooperation (both people – stakeholders – and resources), while factors that might affect ongoing cooperation (such as stakeholders involved, facilitators of TC, etc.) are less important.

**Table 3** Factors determining Successful TC and their importance

Factor	Weight (Standardised Total Effects)	Determinants and Factors
Local/Regional/NGO	9.1%	Very important
Engagement: Funds	8.7%	
Engagement	8.6%	
Governance: Euroregions/Experts	8.6%	
Future Domains: hard	8.2%	Important
Current Domains: Environmental	8.0%	
Current Domains	8.0%	
Engagement: Resources	7.9%	Moderately important
Scope	7.9%	
Experience	7.7%	
Current Domains: Physical Infrastructure	7.5%	
Future Domains: soft	7.3%	
Involvement of stakeholders	1.3%	Of little importance
Factors	1.2%	
Domains	–	Not important
Governance	–	

Source: Authors' elaboration.

The results of the SEM modelling assess the impact not only of all the determinants and factors, but also of particular variables building the factor (see Table 4). For each of the above-mentioned factors, the most important variables can be distinguished. These variables describe types of domains, sources of funding, the scope of TC, etc. that have the greatest positive influence on successful TC (contribute to the successful TC in the greatest extent). Hence:

- In the factor Current Domains, these variables comprise: cultural events, tourism, economy, natural environment and infrastructure;
- In Scope: exchanging experience, sharing tools to tackle a common problem and advising each other on how to solve on similar problems;
- in Funds (sources of funding): own or EU funds;
- in Governance (stakeholders initiating TC): local and regional government.

To this group of the most important variables in creating successful TC, others that should be added include long experience in TC projects, stability of partners, sufficient availability of resources (staff and funds). Analysis of the results at the level of individual variables confirms that the least important for successful TC are those related to the level of involvement of actors and factors that facilitate or hinder ongoing cooperation.

The results of the SEM modelling also allow assessment of the impact of individual variables on particular categories of Successful TC (see Table 4). For economic growth, the most vital determinants leading to success of cooperation are: political will, EU membership (i.e. economic growth is achieved less likely in cooperation with non-EU partners) and the role of the business community, two domains of TC (joint spatial planning and cultural events), and initiating role of regional government, as well as involvement of NGOs and business. Surprisingly, the role of current or future projects in the thematic domain ‘economy’ is minimal. Thus, it seems that the most important factors for TC-driven economic growth are those related to the overall conditions of economic activity and the active role of local and regional actors.

## CONCLUSIONS

For job creation, the key determinants seem to be preferred future domains of TC – cultural events, initiating role of local government, Euroregions and cross-border institutions and involvement of local residents in ongoing TC projects. In this area, the involvement of local actors seems to be the most important. Successful TC in terms of quality of life is related mainly to three types of domains – joint spatial planning, risk prevention and economy, and the active role of national government as an initiator of TC. For successful TC in the area of the quality of natural environment, the key factors are the TC domains: natural environment, educational exchange and cultural events. Thus, in this area, it seems that perspective thinking plays a key role not only with regard to environmental investments, but also for ecological education and the promotion of ecological behaviour. When successful TC is considered in terms of service provision, the most important determinants are the involvement of NGOs, EU membership as



**Table 4** The most important determinants/factors for the individual impact indicators of successful TC

Economic growth is most likely to be achieved via TC under the following conditions:	Job creation is most likely to be achieved via TC under the following conditions:	Quality of life is most likely to be achieved via TC under the following conditions:	Quality of natural environment is most likely to be achieved via TC under the following conditions:	Service provision is most likely to be achieved via TC under the following conditions:	Economic flows are most likely to be achieved via TC under the following conditions:	People flows are most likely to be achieved via TC under the following conditions:
Good political will, EU membership, active business community	Preferred future domain: cultural events	Current domain: joint spatial planning, risk prevention, economy	Preferred future domains: natural environment, educational exchange, cultural events	Stakeholders involved in on-going TC: NGOs	Stakeholders involved in on-going TC: NGOs	Scope: Solving cross-border problems which require cooperation
Scope of TC is spatial planning and theme are cultural exchanges	Stakeholders initiating TC: Euroregions and other cross-border institutions, local government	Preferred future domain: economy		Preferred future domain: cultural events, tourism	Experience in TC projects	Preferred future domain: cultural events
Stakeholders initiating TC are regional and governmental actors	Stakeholders involved in on-going TC: local residents	Stakeholders initiating TC: national government		Factors* of TC: EU membership	Scope: Solving cross-border problems which require cooperation	Current domain: cultural events  Stakeholders involved in on-going TC: NGOs

\* Factors facilitating or hindering TC.

Source: Authors' elaboration.

a factor influencing TC, and 2 domains of TC projects – cultural events and tourism. For successful TC in terms of flows, few variables seem to have a crucial role. In creating successful TC in international trade, there is a substantial impact from cooperation based on solving cross-border problems, as well as experience in TC projects and the involvement of NGOs. The two last factors are also very important when successful TC is described as FDI. Successful cooperation in terms of intensive commuting to work is related mainly to the TC domain: cultural events, while successful TC in terms of tourism relates to the domains of tourism and cultural events. The same factors are important for successful TC in terms of social commuting, and, additionally, the involvement of local residents in TC projects. TC based on solving cross-border problems is a key determinant of successful TC in terms of migration, while educational exchange projects are the key to success in terms of educational exchange flows.

## **2.4 TERRITORIAL COOPERATION GOVERNANCE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Territorial cooperation arrangements vary substantially in terms of their scope, scale, objectives, and operations. Related to the diversity of territorial cooperation arrangements is the range of differing approaches to management and delivery that have developed in response to the distinct institutional, political and geographical contexts in which they operate. Cooperation can range from sporadic consultation involving limited resources, such as city-twinning arrangements, to wide-ranging and well-resourced programmes with accompanying institutional frameworks, such as the EU's INTERREG programme. Beyond establishing frameworks for cooperation, territorial cooperation must be put into practice and 'operationalised', i.e. the organisations involved must drive, manage and implement the cooperation. Thus, the governance of the cooperation is instrumental in maximising its benefits, impact and sustainability.

Territorial cooperation arrangements are the focus of increasing attention at EU, national, regional and local levels, and territorial cooperation is now one of the three main pillars of Cohesion policy. New forms of co-operation have been introduced, most notably macro-regional strategies and the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). National government authorities have expressed their support for territorial co-operation, e.g. in their responses to the Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion and to the Fifth Cohesion Report (CEC, 2010e). For regional and local authorities, territorial cooperation can be an important source of investment and international links.

Territorial cooperation programmes are also under increasing pressure to deliver and demonstrate tangible results, which implies the need for effective and efficient governance structures and processes focused on

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varies, linked to different development paths, contexts and needs (Faludi, 2007; Perkmann, 2007; ESPON 2.3.2, 2006). When differentiating between forms of territorial cooperation governance structures and systems, the key variables include: the degree of administrative centralisation or decentralisation; the levels of formality/institutionalisation; the degree of 'openness' and intensity of partner involvement; the extent to which joint or parallel structures are in place to support cooperation; and the extent to which the institutions involved take an active role in driving cooperation (see Figure 1).

The following sections consider how key actors view these variables and how they could affect or influence territorial cooperation, drawing on case study results and academic literature.

### **Top-down/Bottom-up Cooperation?**

Historically, cooperation across borders was an area of activity dominated by central government actors (Perkmann, 1999: 658). However, some of the earliest institutionalised forms of territorial cooperation in the EU are based on bottom-up initiatives involving border municipalities (Perkmann, 1999: 658; Dolez, 1996). Current territorial cooperation arrangements continue to be strongly based upon local and regional institutions and actors. Theoretical work on Europeanisation, multi-level governance and new regionalism highlight the increased role of sub-national actors in driving economic development and participating in external networking and cooperation activities (Hooghe and Marks, 1996; Keating and Hooghe, 1996; Brusis, 2002).

However, not all territories are equally well placed to independently engage in cooperation activities. Variations in the levels of decentralisation can affect the extent to which local and regional actors participate in territorial cooperation. In many cases, central government authorities retain a high profile in territorial cooperation due to a perceived or actual lack of capacity at sub-national level. As well as being shaped by domestic conditions, the availability of 'external' resources, such as EU funding, has contributed to the emergence of an increasingly top-down element to some territorial cooperation arrangements and a drive from central and supra-national levels (Engl, 2009: 10; Perkmann, 1999: 662).

Interview evidence suggests that a bottom-up approach, with strong regional and local involvement in cooperation governance, has several advantages: it ensures that projects have local relevance; it creates more innovative partnerships; it creates local buy-in; and it increases the number of project applications. However, decentralisation is not always experienced positively. In some areas of activity, regional-level authorities

may not have the relevant competencies or experience. Partners involved in territorial cooperation need a certain organisational structure in order to be able to develop or implement territorial cooperation projects. For example, in the case of cooperation between Uruguay and Spain, there is a desire to further engage civil society in territorial cooperation, yet many civil society organisations are insufficiently structured to cope with territorial cooperation projects. Furthermore, locally-driven territorial cooperation programmes can become subject to the aspirations of local politicians, emphasising local divisions.

Related to this, a top-down framework for cooperation can have advantages. Some actors expressed a preference for a top-down approach as it is commonly linked to having a clear legal and administrative framework, greater consistency and transparency, high-level institutions have more capacity and are therefore better able to implement projects. Top-down strategies can have a higher impact and can ensure a more strategic approach. However, in practice, a top-down approach also involves difficulties. For example, if partners involved in cooperation projects/initiatives have to commit large sums of their own money, they are less likely to be receptive to central programme bodies/central government telling them how to spend it.

### **Levels of Formality**

Territorial cooperation between EU countries and their neighbours has become increasingly formalised and institutionalised. It has moved from personalised forms of cooperation based on a small group of individuals to more formal arrangements such as INTERREG.

Personal ties are still widely perceived to be a key to the success of territorial cooperation. However, over the past two decades, structures have emerged in which sub-state actors can formally engage in territorial cooperation in a multi-level governance framework. As territorial cooperation arrangements have become more embedded, many have also become increasingly formalised and institutionalised. For example, INTERREG programmes operate according to set regulations and procedures. As a result, institutionalised horizontal and vertical networks of cooperation involving public administration from local, regional, central and EU levels have been established to meet these requirements. The introduction of EGTCs, which allow public entities from Member States to form new entities with full 'legal personality', is seen as a logical 'next step' in this process of increasing formalisation.

Institutionalisation and formalisation tend to help continuity of cooperation efforts. Furthermore, institutionalisation of existing territorial co-

operation efforts can also induce new cooperation activities in areas where territorial cooperation is not yet a matter of course. However, it is also important to recognise that a range of other forms of cooperation are also in place, many of which involve less formalised systems. City-twinning arrangements tend to lack dedicated institutional resources and systems and rely on less formal inter-organisational or interpersonal relations. The appropriate institutional frameworks to support the newly adopted macro-regional strategies are the subject of ongoing debate (Mirwaldt and McMaster, 2010). Additionally, even the ways in which territories have responded to the fixed requirements of INTERREG have differed, e.g. linked to the institutional infrastructures of the participating territories (Taylor *et al.*, 2004).

### **Openness, Partner Involvement and Intensity of Relations**

Depending on the scale and scope of the cooperation, a large number of institutions may be involved, e.g. in an INTERREG A cross-border programme or macro-region. Alternatively, many forms of territorial cooperation rely heavily on narrow groups of key institutions and actors, e.g. city-twinning. Such arrangements can be easier to manage and coordinate, and they involve strong inter-institutional and interpersonal relations that offer a solid basis for sustainable cooperation.

In the EU context, territorial cooperation arrangements within the Member States have tended to rely heavily upon the involvement of public authorities. The networks involved are generally policy networks with limited involvement of the private sector (Perkmann, 1999). Even in border regions with a strong tradition of cross-border territorial cooperation, such as North Belgium and Southern Netherlands and Greater Region, engaging the private sector in territorial cooperation initiatives has proved challenging (Van Houtum, 1997; Scott, 1999: 610). ESPON project 2.3.2 (2006) highlights similar concerns over the involvement of civil society organisations in territorial cooperation.

However, extending the reach and impact of territorial cooperation and ways to widen and deepen partner engagement and participation are receiving increased attention (Barca, 2009; CEC, 2010e). A number of territorial cooperation programmes are making explicit commitments to more actively engage with private business, for example through supporting projects based on 'triple helix' partnerships between higher education, private business and public authorities (McMaster, 2010).

In terms of the wider partnerships involved in territorial cooperation, broad partnerships are generally favoured, including representatives from national, regional and local public authorities as well as higher education,

non-profit organisations, chambers of commerce and private partners. However, involving such a range of partners can also be very complex and can lead to widely differing approaches and views. It can take time to establish relationships and create an atmosphere of trust. Institutional incompatibility is also more likely in large partnerships that can delay and complicate decision-making processes.

By contrast, narrow partnerships often include partners from similar institutional backgrounds, which can facilitate building relations. It also facilitates a greater thematic focus and, related to this, impact. Although such narrow partnerships can make it more difficult for certain new partners to become involved in territorial cooperation, they can also enhance the scope for innovation, e.g. through different sectors working together, leading to cross-fertilisation and knowledge exchange. For example, a healthcare project in the Flanders-Netherlands INTERREG IVA programme not only focused on healthcare provisions but also included innovative aspects targeting environmental protection and improvements. Without the broad partnership that INTERREG funding made possible, the most innovative elements of the project would not have been achieved.

### **Joint or Parallel Structures**

Based on factors such as funding regulations, maturity of the cooperation and the capacity of domestic organisations, a number of territorial cooperation arrangements involve fully cross-border/transnational or joint institutional arrangements, e.g. a single INTERREG secretariat covering a cross-border area. One of the most notable examples of joint structures is the EGTC initiative, which allows public entities from Member States to form a new entity with full 'legal personality'. Such joint administrative arrangements and joint working suggest a high level of cooperation, exchange and lesson learning, and even greater convergence in approach.

However, as Scott (1999) observed, despite the present proliferation of cross-border initiatives in many parts of the world, it seems doubtful that there will be a general convergence of institutional forms or cooperation modes. Rather, the arrangements are highly context-sensitive, conditioned by degrees of regional self-awareness, local identities, ideological discourses and the material cooperation incentives generated by inter-state integration processes (Scott, 1999). Even EGTC initiatives are facing considerable challenges in establishing their governance systems, linked to the difficulties involved in having a joint organisation in charge of cooperation.

More commonly, territorial cooperation involves complex horizontal cooperation between parallel organisations on either side of the border. Coordination between two or three, potentially very different, management



authorities can be difficult. More diversified managerial structures can involve higher administrative costs. Establishing multiple, new organisations and securing adequate operational and institutional resources can also be time-consuming, cause delays to the programme of cooperation, and could spread resources too thinly. Particular care needs to be taken that delegated management institutions are not duplicating the role of other institutions in their area. Maintaining good communication between the key institutions involved in programme management can be particularly demanding, and the cost of poor communication at managerial level can be high. However, for some areas of activity local/regionally distinct interventions are invaluable, and the regional distribution of staff ensures close contact with project developers and implementers. In particular, a delegated 'intermediary' level facilitates good communication flows between project sponsors and management bodies. Additionally, delegated region-specific implementation responsibilities can increase the efficiency and speed of decision-making.

### **Active Governance**

As has been discussed, the types of institutions involved in territorial co-operation can have a significant impact on the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of cooperation. However, the way that they operate is also critical. Just as territorial cooperation arrangements involve distinct administrative arrangements and approaches, the processes and systems used to mobilise and operationalise cooperation are equally diverse. Specifically, there are varying systems in place to ensure the strategic focus and initiation of cooperation, generate ideas/projects for cooperation, and deliver results and impact.

As has already been highlighted, territorial cooperation arrangements involve large numbers of actors and operate across different spatial levels, and strategic management of the cooperation can be complex. As well as striking a balance in terms of responsibilities, cooperation efforts must also strike a balance between focusing on a limited number of key themes in order to have maximum impact and ensuring that a large number of suitable partners can be attracted. As a result, many cooperation arrangements have forums in which national, regional and local representatives, as well as in some cases civil society actors and social and economic partners, make decisions regarding, for example, the strategic direction of cooperative efforts.

National and regional authorities, as well as the EU, are therefore key actors in initiating and driving territorial cooperation. The involvement of local authorities and social, economic and civil society partners is more

variable. However, there are cases that illustrate how different administrative actors can play an important role in the programme-initiation stages (see Box 1).

**Box 1** EU, national, regional and local involvement in initiating the Central Baltic Programme

- *Regional authorities in Finland:* The Regional Council of Southwest Finland, which was the MA for the Southern Finland-Estonia IIIA programme, and was also involved in the Skärgården IIIA programme, considered that the old programme structure was too fragmented and that the Skärgården IIIA programme did not have sufficient energy to continue in the future. Hence, they recommended a new type of programme structure.
- *National authorities in Sweden:* At the same time, the national authorities in Sweden were looking for appropriate INTERREG programmes to cover those areas that had previously not been eligible under INTERREG (in 2007-2013, the entire country became eligible). They recommended the extension of the Southern Finland-Estonia and Skärgården INTERREG A programmes. Initially, the involvement of Sweden was not met with enthusiasm by the Finnish regions (with the exception of the Regional Council of Southwest Finland). They were concerned that their existing programmes would be overshadowed in the new (larger) programme structure. The island of Åland was also not in full agreement unless it was given a key role in the governance of the programme and the island dimension was maintained.
- *The capital level (Helsinki):* The representatives of Helsinki were more interested in extending cooperation to St Petersburg and Tallinn (i.e. a triangle between Helsinki, St Petersburg and Tallinn). However, the Estonians' preference was to maintain the cooperation between Southern Finland and Estonia. Indeed, at the beginning of the programming period, the local-level actors were not as involved as the regional- and national-level authorities.
- *European Commission:* The representatives of the Commission were keen to introduce a new multi-lateral and larger INTERREG A programme, which would introduce new connections (e.g. between Latvia and Finland, or between Latvia and Sweden).

This type of engagement with a broad range of partners in the initiation and mobilisation stages of territorial cooperation has significant benefits. First, local actors, social-economic partners and civic partners (as well as private partners) can provide expert local knowledge and therefore improve the impact of territorial cooperation. Their local expertise can help to translate broad thematic aims into tangible projects. Second, early engagement with local actors fosters the creation of partnerships and builds a sense of ownership, which leads to further engagement in the future (e.g. project applications).

Another key feature of any governance framework is the project-generation process. The types of generation activities that are adopted depend on contextual factors. For example, in cooperation areas with close cultural ties, well-developed economies, and a range of potential partners,

it may not be necessary to incentivise project applications. In areas where partnerships are not well developed, more active project-generation approaches may be necessary. Additional support from programme authorities and targeted calls can be used to increase applications. However, other successful approaches include:

- a form of pre-qualification facilitated by the provision of seed capital to facilitate project generation, especially among smaller projects (e.g. IIIB Baltic Space). Other types of project capacity-building are funded through ‘micro-projects’ to encourage partner contact and ‘preparatory projects’ for partnership development. Preparatory projects can help to integrate new beneficiaries in project partnerships and allow them to gain experience;
- shortlisting methods, which are a variant on the open-calls approach and comprise two-stage application procedures whereby applicants submit an initial project outline, allowing a selection committee to shortlist the best proposals to go forward to the full application procedure. This reduces the ‘risk’ of partners being excluded at a late stage in the selection process. Such an approach can be particularly important for attracting SMEs and smaller organisations; and
- a dedicated programme funding stream to attract such partners, e.g. a small projects’ fund. In practice, these initiatives generally create a pool of EU and national co-financing for awards to small projects, with simplified application procedures, and are often administered via delegated arrangements.

## **Box 2** Active project generation examples

### **Seed funding**

- *Sweden-Norway* – A preliminary or initiating project fund (maximum SEK/NOK 40,000) is in place. A simplified application process is aimed at partners with limited financial capabilities who need time to establish contact with project partners.
- *Baltic Sea IIIB* – In 2000-2006, seed money was used as a complement to standard project generation mechanisms, with two objectives. First, it was aimed at partners with promising ideas that were well-suited to the programme priorities. Second, if the programme authorities recommended some changes in a project, seed money could be used as a means to compensate for the extra costs incurred in complying with the recommendations.
- *Northern Periphery IVB* – Preparatory projects are used to mobilise broader, well-balanced partnerships. They have also helped to develop more strategic projects. However, there are concerns in relation to the number of preparatory projects that become main applications, and the final results are not always tangible.

**Box 2** Continued**Shortlisting**

- *Flanders-Netherlands* – A two-stage selection process is utilised. Project ideas are pre-selected by the Steering Group before a full application is developed. Pre-selected projects are not guaranteed final approval.
- *Slovenia-Austria* – Project applicants receive feedback from regional bureaux in the first stage of the project application. The applicant is not obliged to revise the application after having received feedback.

**Special funds**

- *Sweden-Norway* – Small projects (<SEK/NOK 125,000) can apply all year round (outside the project calls). They have a simplified application procedure.
- *Austria-Czech Republic* – The development of a disposition fund in the IIIB period (the Small Project Fund – SPF) has shown that integrated (non-profit-oriented) 'small projects' are very helpful for various target groups. It is particularly aimed at local projects with a cross-border impact.

The type of project-generation process that a cooperation arrangement adopts also depends on the type of activities it supports. If innovation is a major theme, then open, inclusive, project-generation procedures may be appropriate. Alternatively, if large infrastructural programmes are considered to be of key strategic importance, a thematic closed call may be more suitable.

Maximising the impact of cooperation is another key concern. With this in mind, particular attention is given to developing robust project-selection and appraisal systems. For instance, some cooperation programmes have established regionally or sectorally specific project-selection (or advisory) committees in order to draw specialist input into the decision-making process, e.g. the INTERREG IVB Northern Periphery Programme.

Another mechanism to maximise the results of territorial cooperation is to develop synergies between projects, programmes and even other funding instruments. This can be achieved through a range of activities including basic instruments such as conferences, workshops and road shows. However, more innovative approaches such as project-clustering can also be considered (examples include the Alpine Space, North West Europe and North Sea Programmes – see Box 3). Clustering projects is particularly beneficial when a programme experiences a high quantity of projects relating to a specific theme (for example, climate change, energy, transport, or rural-urban relations). Furthermore, new forms of territorial cooperation such as macro-regional strategies and the EGTC also provide opportunities for increased synergies across forms of cooperation which, if well managed, could maximise their cumulative impacts.

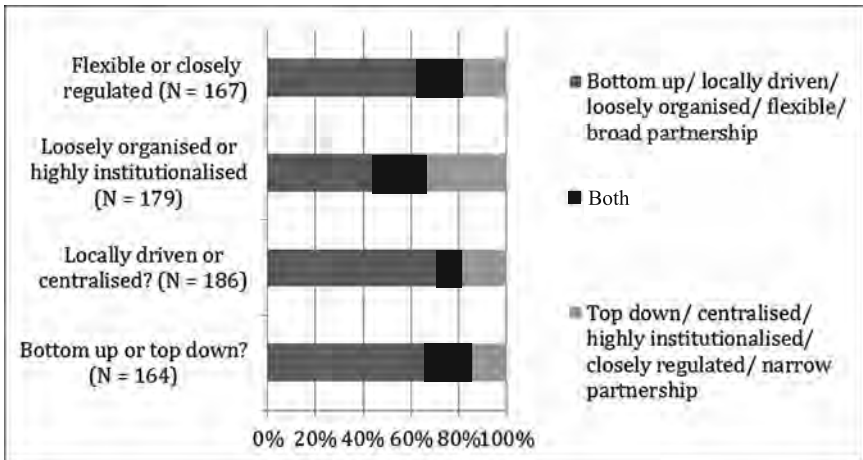
**Box 3** Best practice: project-clustering in the North Sea Programme

Project-clustering, used in the North Sea Programme (NSP), is a 'light touch' top-down approach to achieving the strategic goals of a programme. In the past, the NSP attempted a more top-down approach to achieving its strategic goals but found this unsatisfactory. Reserving a specific budget for strategic projects is considered undesirable and ineffective, as the overall budget is too small and it would either be too thinly spread or have a very limited focus.

Instead, the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) identifies and encourages partners who work in similar thematic fields to work together. They can apply for an extra grant, and additional workpackages are developed with the help of the JTS, which focuses on strategic goals. This creates synergies, but crucially it ensures that projects work together on certain elements and that the whole of the NSP area is taken into account.

**Making Cooperation Work**

Despite the wide variety in implementation frameworks and arrangements, the case studies revealed clear overall preferences across all forms of territorial cooperation with regard to governance dimensions. They are summarised in Figure 2, which highlights a clear preference for a bottom-up, locally-driven and flexible approach. Yet at the same time, a relatively high number of respondents also desire a high level of institutionalisation. This suggests a need for certainty, stability, transparency and consistency, within a framework with the flexibility to meet local requirements.



**Figure 2** Preference for governance dimensions

Source: Authors' elaboration; data from case studies WP2.5.

Crucially, across all of the approaches discussed, the keys to their success are active, engaged institutions that are prepared to steer the cooperation,

taking on a strategic management role and an active/supportive role with project partners and key stakeholders.

## CONCLUSION

Based on research undertaken as part of the ESPON TERCO project, the preceding discussion has considered the variety of approaches that can be taken to the governance of European Territorial Cooperation and how governance could exert positive influence on the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of territorial cooperation and its role in territorial integration. Institutional frameworks differ depending on the needs of the actors and systems in which they operate (Faludi, 2007; Perkmann, 2007; ESPON 2.3.2, 2006). The governance frameworks of territorial cooperation arrangements must take into account the types of borders that they cross and the territories that they involve. Related to this, the frameworks within which European territorial cooperation is operationalised show considerable variation, ranging from highly institutionalised EU-driven arrangements to less formal efforts. More specifically, arrangements can vary in their:

- degree of centralisation or decentralisation,
- level of formality/institutionalisation,
- level of regulation/flexibility, and
- extent of active governance.

Each of the above variables involves challenges and trade-offs. Thus, in practice, a mix of different approaches is progressively being used in the implementation and management of territorial cooperation. Overall, there is an increasingly mixed picture of dynamic ‘bottom-up’ territorial cooperation driven by municipal/local-level action and, at the same time, increasingly formalised and structured networks of higher regional/central-level authorities, primarily involved in INTERREG programmes. Additionally, governance/administrative frameworks have to accommodate the varying environments in which they operate and ensure that territorial cooperation can be adapted to local needs and that local actors are able to shape projects. Yet, lack of direction and strategic focus can lead to lack of impact. Thus, a degree of central/strategic steering of cooperation is also required. Related to this, this chapter has also highlighted a number of ways in which ‘active governance’ and governance processes can be used to maximise the benefits of European Territorial Cooperation and its impact on territorial integration, e.g. through innovative/flexible approaches to project generation, and developing synergies across projects and programmes.

VALÉRIE BIOT<sup>1</sup>

## **2.5 THE EUROPEAN GROUPING FOR TERRITORIAL COOPERATION (EGTC): AN ASSET FOR TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE TOWARDS TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION?**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Governance has long been a real challenge for the European Union (White Paper on European Governance – CEC, 2001). With the addition of territorial cohesion to the EU Treaty (Lisbon Treaty, 2009), territorial governance in particular was acknowledged as a major issue at stake (Barca, 2009). In this context, territorial governance was understood as the governance of territories, but also as the territorial dimension of governance. It is referring to a wider understanding of governance, and how (and whether) this larger perspective integrates the territorial dimension (ESPON TANGO, 2012).

Against this background, this chapter focuses on the new European regulatory tool to organise territorial cooperation – the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EC1082/2006) – and in particular on the potential that this instrument provides for territorial governance and how it could support territorial integration.

### **EGTC: A NEW EUROPEAN LEGAL INSTRUMENT FOR MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE AND TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

#### **The Need for a European Regulation**

The European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) was established on 5 July 2006, by Regulation (EC) 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and it came into force on 1 August 2006. In

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contrast to the usual international character governing territorial cooperation between two different States, the EGTC is governed by a European Regulation complemented by national provisions. It allows public entities of different Member States to work together under a new entity with full legal European personality. Members of an EGTC can include Member States (MS), regional or local authorities, and any other bodies governed by public law. Members are required to unanimously agree a convention (name, territory, objectives and tasks) and adopt statutes on the basis of this convention. An EGTC can implement tasks with or without European co-funding, as long as the overall objective is territorial cooperation.

The EGTC is the result of a long-standing desire on the part of local and regional authorities, as well as EU institutions, to develop a more efficient instrument for territorial cooperation. The Committee of the Regions (CoR) has strongly supported and commented on the creation of the regulation, as articulated through numerous opinions and reports on the subject. For example:

It is desirable, in terms of the future of European integration, and especially enlargement, to present a comprehensive strategy on cross-border, inter-territorial and transnational cooperation, that takes into account the growing need for the regional and local authorities to enter new, broad, structured forms of cooperation, with enlargement in mind (CoR, 2002).

The regulation was also strongly promoted by the EU Commission Directorate-General in charge of the INTERREG programme, which wanted to implement it as a tailor-made instrument to organise INTERREG programme management and implementation.

Nevertheless, despite this strong support, the implementation of the EGTC has so far been rare and uneven.

### **Uneven Implementation**

By October 2011, 24 EGTCs had been established in 15 countries, with different patterns of implementation. One year later, in October 2012, 31 EGTCs had been established, reinforcing the same trends and by the end of 2012 already 32 EGTCs were established.

The highest concentration of EGTC implementation relates to cross-border cooperation (CBC) between France and Belgium, North Portugal and Spain, and Hungary and Slovakia. Other countries that have established CBC EGTCs include Germany, Romania, Luxembourg, Italy and more recently Austria, Netherlands and Slovenia. Italy, Greece and Cyprus are involved in 'network' (no geographical proximity) EGTCs. No EGTCs



exist between EU Member States and neighbouring countries, with the exception of the Banat EGTC (Hungary, Romania and Serbia, 2011), and only one EGTC exists between an old and a new MS (Italy and Slovenia, 2011). No EGTCs exist in North Europe or between the UK and Ireland (even though the UK was one of the first to adopt the regulation). This scarcity and uneven character of EGTC implementation can be explained by several challenges that this regulation is facing, as follows.

*National provision: diversity of speed and implementation*

EU regulations are intended to be directly applicable in all EU Member States, and they are legally binding without Member States having to enact domestic legislation. However, a level of uncertainty and ambiguity has surrounded the arrangements for EGTC regulation, due to the fact that EGTC arrangements must be ‘complemented by national provisions’ and that several aspects are kept open for decisions by Member States. The ease and speed with which EGTC Regulation 1082/2006 has been accommodated at national level (and regional level, when required) has varied across the Member States. In addition, this flexibility for ‘national provision’ has created a different pattern of EGTC Regulation implementation in EU countries, introducing differences in status where this instrument had the objective of harmonising implementation procedures. Furthermore, in practice, EGTC initiatives have to be approved by national governments.

*Regulation adopted too late for 2007-2013 programming period, and/or efficient existing framework for territorial cooperation*

Another issue for the low number of EGTCs concerns the role of an EGTC as Managing Authority (MA) for the INTERREG programme or other EU-funded programmes. Even though the EGTC Regulation was adopted specifically to address the subsequent cooperation efforts, it was too late to be of real use for the 2007-2013 programming period. Therefore, so far EGTC implemented are for ‘other specific actions’, as an EGTC may carry out any actions, with or without a financial contribution from the EU, as long as it has the objective of territorial cooperation (Art. 7 EGTC Regulation). The only exception is the Greater Region EGTC. Furthermore, it could be argued that some countries have already developed relevant and effective tools for territorial cooperation, and they do not want EGTC as a new tool. This seems to apply particularly to Scandinavian countries, which have a long tradition of well-functioning territorial cooperation structures.

*Political and technical issues*

Several political, administrative or technical problematic issues have been highlighted in relation to the creation and functioning of EGTCs. These issues are listed in the Commission report on ‘the application of the Regulation on a EGTC’ (COM (2011) 462 final) and can be synthesised as follows. The EGTC Regulation does not solve all the problems of territorial cooperation, and it even introduces some new ones; furthermore, it is not yet fully acknowledged by EU institutions. Several issues related to EGTC creation include: complex procedures; the novelty of the instrument; insufficient awareness and acknowledgement from national authorities and Commission services other than DG REGIO; differing national implementation of the EGTC Regulation; the impossibility of creating a bilateral EGTC with a non-EU MS; potential confusion between what should be included in the Convention and in the Statutes; membership being limited to public authorities (with some exceptions);<sup>2</sup> and delays in the publication process. Operational problems mainly relate to staff contracts.

**Revision Process**

Several positive steps have been taken to further develop EGTC provisions and to address some of the issues identified above. According to Article 17 of Regulation 1082/2006, the Commission was to present an evaluation of EGTCs to the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers by August 2011, and to propose a revision of the regulation. In this regard, important work on a revision of the EGTC Regulation was undertaken in 2010 and 2011, and the new proposal (COM(2011)610 final) was welcomed by the CoR. However, even though it presents improvements (also it should facilitate bilateral EGTCs between Member States and non-Member States, it still maintains ‘national provisions’, and the CoR is concerned about future divergences, following its identification of ‘79 authorities, designated by the 27 Member States), which are entitled to receive and process requests to set up EGTCs’ (CoR, 2012c).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Private entities already have an EU instrument for collaboration, the European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG).

<sup>3</sup> On 11 July 2012, the European Parliament REGI commission adopted all amendments to the proposal for the revision of the EGTC Regulation (amendments previously adopted by the CoR in February 2012).

## **EGTCs: DIVERSITY OF GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND ADDED VALUE FOR TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION**

### **Diversity of Governance Arrangements**

A large diversity of governance arrangements already exists, which can be interpreted as a positive aspect of the EGTC instrument, linked to its flexibility and adaptability. EGTC implementation is used in different type of cooperation (mainly cross-border, but also ‘network’) at different stages in their evolution. The Regulation allows considerable freedom in the organisation of the EGTC: it only requires an EGTC to appoint an assembly, made up of representatives of the EGTC members, which fulfils key tasks such as establishing an annual budget, and a director representing the EGTC and acting on its behalf (Article 10). EGTC members may also decide to set up additional institutions (e.g. a consultative assembly of non-public authorities). In addition, the ways in which multilevel governance approaches are applied vary, and in practice only a small amount of EGTCs are really using a multilevel governance structure. Most include partners from the same level of authority on both sides of the border. One of the consequences of this approach is that the membership can become quite large (to date, the maximum comprises 170 municipalities in one EGTC).

A problematic issue, as discussed above, is that the EGTC Regulation has been implemented by Member States at different rates and in different forms, sometimes with quite substantial divergences, due to the inclusion of ‘national provisions’ such as opportunities for non-EU ‘third countries’ to participate, the potential scope of the cooperation (limited, unlimited), the potential involvement of Central State authorities, and the application of public or private law. These differences between Member States are an obstacle to harmonisation, contradicting the fact that this was an objective that the EGTC Regulation was initially intended to achieve.

### *Existing EGTCs: identification of governance arrangements*

Based on desk research analysis of this new form of territorial cooperation, it is apparent that specific arrangements for EGTCs differ on several governance issues, and distinctions can be made between different EGTC arrangements (see Table 1).

**Table 1** Governance arrangements

Type of cooperation	All established EGTCs are for cross-border cooperation, even though some cover quite large areas around borders. There are two exceptions: EGTC Archimède (Islands) and Amphictyony (urban municipalities), which are cooperation networks with no geographic proximity.
Authorities involved	The only States involved in EGTC as members are Belgium, France and Luxembourg. The main members of EGTC are sub-national authorities, usually from the same level on each side of the border (municipalities with municipalities, regional level with regional level, etc.). Only six EGTCs have a real multilevel governance structure, involving different levels of public authorities on both sides of the border. Only one EGTC includes a non-EU Member State (Serbia). Only one CBC EGTC has been established between 'old' and 'new' Member States (Italy / Slovenia).
Actors involved	Public authorities. Some private sector and civil society actors are involved through established forums in some EGTCs, but only in very few cases. Furthermore, it is difficult to estimate the intensity of the involvement of those actors or the impact they may have.
Competences/ objectives	In the majority of cases, EGTCs have a large range of objectives, but they never have delegated competences. EGTCs are mainly in charge of undertaking 'missions' and supporting and implementing projects. Two EGTCs are targeted on one specific project (a cross-border hospital and a cross-border nature reserve).
Law	Among the 15 countries with established EGTCs, two have chosen to implement the regulation under private law (GR, SK).
Joint structure	Two have clearly identified joint structures, with specifically appointed staff (EGTC LIKOTO and Greater Region), but several utilise joint working organisations, with a director and some staff working in a part-time capacity in national (local) structures.
Languages	Two languages are mostly used (sometimes three).

Sources: CoR Platform, Metis 2010.

*Case studies: divergence and convergence in relation to governance issues*

The diversity of EGTCs implementation and governance arrangements is also illustrated through three more in-depth investigations of specific case studies:<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The research was carried out by experts of the territories involved: IGEAT, University of Brussels, for the Eurometropole LIKOTO, VATI institute (Budapest) for the Danube

- Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai, 'LIKOTO', BE-FR border, one of the best examples so far of real multilevel governance implementation, with a strong strategy process to build a Eurometropole;
- ISTER GRANUM and potential Ulm-Vienna-Budapest, Danube area, illustrating potential links between the EGTC and macro-regional strategies; and
- Greater Region, Lux-FR-BE border, so far the unique EGTC that functions as the Managing Authority of an INTERREG programme.

Concentrating on the major issues for governance (see TERCO Main Report (2012), chapter 2.4 *Territorial Cooperation Governance*), the key points illustrated by the case studies are that the initiating, mobilising and driving forces are convergent and rely on political will at different levels. They are also closely linked to the opportunity structures in the EU framework and the funds that are provided. A legal framework and the evolution towards a Europe with no internal borders are also important drivers.

Considerable divergence in objectives can be noted between EGTCs. Some focus on a European macro-regional strategy, whereas others are more locally oriented, and/or link to the functional needs of a territory. Partnerships are very diverse, from an exhaustive multilevel governance (from national to local level, both sides of the border) to limited local-member partnerships, or multilevel governance that excludes the local level.

The motivations for the further formalisation of territorial cooperation efforts through an EGTC are also varied. They include attempts to reduce multilevel governance mismatches in relation to territorial cooperation and implementing specific territorial cooperation programmes. However, in terms of motivation for formalisation, all EGTCs converge on the visibility aspects of the region, mainly towards EU and national level.

The joint structures that are being implemented are also very diverse in nature, some with truly joint structures and extended missions and others with implementation responsibilities. Diversity is also present in the way the cooperation is driven, from local to national, or an interaction of both.

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area, and the University of Luxembourg (LP ESPON project Metroborder) for the Greater Region, under the supervision of IGEAT. The research is based partly on desk research into existing documents and includes a detailed documentary analysis (juridical agreements, operational programme, literature on the EGTC – see TERCO Scientific Report, Part II, annexes and bibliography). It is also based on in-depth, mainly face-to-face, interviews with key actors and stakeholders of the EGTCs.

## **Added Value for Territorial Governance and Territorial Integration**

As a new feature, EGTC arrangements have important implications for the governance of territorial cooperation and as a potential instrument for territorial integration.

Considering territorial governance, the diversity and convergence trends identified above can be regarded as positive. They show permanent and shared added-values of EGTC (convergence), and they prove that the EGTC is suitable for a large variety of territorial cooperation activities (diversity). In political terms, it constitutes a new opportunity to bring all partners into a consultation process, and to decide on a common strategy and action plan for cooperation. The agreement forms a binding framework, reducing the uncertainties of the cross-border context, which should help to reduce so-called multilevel mismatches and to organise vertical and horizontal multilevel governance. In legal terms, it provides, for the first time – at least in theory – a European juridical frame for territorial cooperation. The EGTC structure supports institutional stability and sustainability, and it helps to increase the visibility of the territory of cooperation towards the European Union, other cross-border areas, and local/regional and national decision-makers.

With regard to territorial integration, the CoR states that ‘by giving forms of territorial cooperation between institutional actors at different levels from two or more Member States a Community legal structure, the EGTC can trigger a process of horizontal European integration in which the principles of subsidiarity and proximity are applied’ (CoR, 2008).

Territorial integration is supported by the requirement for EGTC members to agree on a common shared strategy and objectives (Convention) within a structure that has a long-term perspective (Statutes). In this respect, the fact that several EGTCs were settled in new Member States with no tradition of cooperation – at least at sub-national level – illustrates the need and the relevance of this ‘ready-made’ instrument in providing a stable framework for new cooperation, an instrument that is flexible enough to be used at different stages in the maturation of cooperation.

## **CHALLENGES AHEAD IN RELATION TO TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION**

### **Governance of Territorial Cooperation**

With regard to the main challenges facing territorial cooperation (see TERCO Scientific Report (2012), part II), the EGTC instrument is not a miracle solution, but it can help in several ways. Concerning administrative complexity, the EGTC Regulation was created to address

the problem, but it has not been very successful on this issue until now, due to the existence of the 'national provision', amongst other factors. In terms of financial resources, even if the EGTC does not provide additional resources, it allows the possibility of establishing a common budget to implement a common strategy and projects, and it should represent added value when EU funding is allocated. With regard to the difficult issue of agreeing on a focus and objective, and overcoming tensions, the EGTC is a powerful instrument, as it requests an initial commitment through a common convention, provides a stable structure with a routine of exchange and meeting to maintain a dialogue and, when the context is favourable, it supports the building process of a common strategy. Considering the problems of visibility and territorial promotion, the EGTC provides an EU label and legal identity for cooperation. This can also help to highlight concrete impacts, but this feature relies primarily on the implementation of the common projects and strategy.

In relation to territorial governance in particular, EGTCs formalise relations between different levels of government across borders. Accordingly, such structures are especially valuable in relation to achieving synergies on different scales. An EGTC provides a European legal framework for the organisation of multilevel governance structures. Another challenge in this respect is the changing political and institutional context. However, the current proposal from the Commission on the organisation of different EU funding (COM(2011) 611 final), as well as the proposal for revision of the EGTC tool for cooperation (see above), should help to establish a more stable framework, with common 'rules of the game'. Nevertheless, the restrictive interpretation of the EU 2020 strategy as providing the main criteria for territorial cooperation, and the constraining 'thematic concentration' imposed by the EU Commission, could prove to be counterproductive, particularly for territorial cooperation initiatives within an established EGTC that are involved in a sustainable process of elaborating a strategy and identifying territorial priorities.

### **Towards Territorial Integration?**

It is important to underline here that the organisation of territorial governance varies depending upon the stage of development: maturation time is required when moving from informal towards institutionalised territorial cooperation. At a certain point, it is important to make the transition from an informal process to a more structured, more visible and more stable framework; however, it should not become too constraining or rigid, or centrally driven. Instead, it should always remain open and flexible: cooperation depends on willing participation and the agreement



of partners, and its scope to evolve should be retained. In addition, the range and type of actors involved can also expand through this maturation, adapting to different objectives, e.g. involving associated *ad hoc* partners. Furthermore, the relevant territory for cooperation remains a key question. Each cooperation initiative should have the scope to utilise *géographie variable*, and an agreed balance must be found between functional and political aspects, as well as opportunities for adaptation.

An ideal territorial cooperation implementation process, with the objective of enhancing territorial integration, should therefore establish territorial governance capable of tackling the challenges encountered at different geographic scales (multi-scalar), with different public authorities (multi-level), and with different types of actors (multi-channel). It should also provide scope to evolve within and/or adapt to those various features, as well as adjusting the organisation of territorial governance to a specific timescale and in relation to objectives (or an 'issue-related' approach, as proposed in Böhme *et al.*, 2011). The EGTC instrument allows this balance of stability and flexibility, and it is therefore a useful tool for territorial cooperation, territorial governance and the territorial integration process. Nevertheless, the main issues for cooperation and integration within the European territory will remain political will and citizens' needs, as highlighted in the case studies (Part III of this book).

Consequently, there is no 'ideal' organisation with a specific instrument, an issue shared with political studies on governance. Current cross-border territorial cooperation must at least find a balance between the need for flexibility and adaption and the need for stability and accepted common rules. In addition, the process of 'stabilisation' of territorial cooperation should occur at an appropriate time in the evolutionary phase, to avoid undermining the first steps in the necessary maturation. However, this does not mean that the flexibility in governance should evolve towards an absolute 'à la carte' system, and the need to make better adaptations to specific situations should not lead to rigid localism. The diversity and flexibility of different territorial governance patterns should be taken as an asset in territorial integration, but this does not mean supporting localism and relativism. On the contrary, as all interviewees from the local level in public authorities asked for a common European frame that would harmonise 'the rules of the game', and provide security and stability. In this respect, the EGTC instrument, with its European framework, its basis for stability and its large scope for adaptation, could and should be of great assistance.



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## **2.6 TRANSCONTINENTAL TERRITORIAL COOPERATION WITH NORTH AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the process of European Territorial Cooperation with non-EU regions during the last 20 years. In order to achieve this objective, three case studies are presented: co-operation processes between Andalusia and North Morocco, Spain and the Department of Canelones (Uruguay), and Spain and the City of Rosario (Argentina) (see maps in Annex). Twinning cities, and bilateral cooperation agreements and networks, have structured participation in projects with varying degrees of impact on economic, social, urban and environmental conditions.

The initiatives have always been local and based on a bottom-up approach. Working in a decentralised manner, the management capacity of key organisations, together with their background in local development governance, has facilitated the implementation of local initiatives.

Territorial cooperation (TC) has been possible because there is a trajectory of many years of work invested by local actors, participants who have become the architects of TC through the cities or regions involved. Transcontinental cooperation as studied by the European Union TERCO project provides important lessons for understanding TC.

The projects with the best results are those that are carried out jointly and adapt to partners' needs in agreement with the previously-defined territorial development strategy. Special institutional and cultural mechanisms of developing on both shores have been very helpful. However, institutional weaknesses and complexities of the decision-making mechanisms in

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Europe and overseas territories can make relations difficult and therefore weaken territorial cooperation.

Territorial cooperation needs to be flexible enough to respond to changes in the socio-economic environment. The case studies show that local economic development (e.g. technological innovation or international trade) is important. These issues are usually approached through public-private coordination organisations, such as development agencies. As shown by some other case studies in the TERCO project, the results from the participation of such agencies are still modest. Special attention should be given to TC with Morocco due to its geostrategic relations with Spain and Europe.

The case studies were chosen as good examples of three stereotypes of territories: a large city such as Rosario, a department such as Canelones, and a region in the case of Tangier-Tetouan. Each case has very strong cultural and historic ties with Spanish regions.

Attention is focused especially on results related to the four main targets of the research: physical areas of territorial cooperation; driving forces and domains of cooperation; territorial structures and specific border cooperation; and governance structures and implementation of cooperation.

Transcontinental cooperation has a moderate impact on the local development process. However, some topics such as international trade, tourism or educational exchanges have been encouraged. Accordingly, from a European point of view, territorial cooperation is important, since, in the case of Morocco, for instance, it has been estimated that for every \$10,000 added to the Gross Domestic Product, European exports to Morocco are increased by \$1,300. Furthermore, the European contribution to Moroccan development has a significant impact on the reduction of immigration pressures on the south coast.

After a brief description of the differences between cooperation and integration, this chapter presents the main topics carried out in the research: areas and domains of territorial cooperation, strengths and weaknesses of current cooperation, and differences between case study areas. The chapter ends with some conclusions and recommendations.

## FROM COOPERATION TO INTEGRATION

Opportunities for territorial cooperation exist between various territories, even when they are geographically located on different continents, in what is known as transcontinental cooperation. As illustrated below, the driving force behind cooperation must be found in the individual actors, whether they are administrative or political, or working for public or private-sector organisations. These actors consistently seek out partners to work with

in multiple endeavours for mutual benefit. Consequently, cooperation is, first of all, a bottom-up approach engaging two partners from different administrative bodies located in different territorial areas or countries, or even in different continents. The reason to cooperate relates to the need to improve the status quo in the chosen areas and domains. Thus, the motives, actors and incentives for cooperation have been identified.

The actor's motivation for cooperation is rooted in a natural willingness to help and to interact. A natural proclivity to detect and try to solve problems is the force behind cooperation, particularly when the actions will make a tangible contribution to the welfare of other people. The incentives for being involved in cooperation relate to the satisfaction obtained from solving common basic problems found in other places that may have already been solved some time ago in one's own location. The usefulness of cooperation is greater than the cost of actually carrying it out.

To cooperate, all that is needed are two cooperating agents, one on each side of the border, regardless of whether the territorial border is nearby or very distant. However, if territorial cooperation is to be sustained over time, it must be transformed into something else; in practice, it often paves the way towards territorial integration. The two concepts, cooperation and integration, are obviously related but not clearly defined.

Territorial cooperation explains and studies the existing or future relationship between two or more agents situated in two or more territorial locations and, for the purpose of this work, located in different countries or continents, with a clear and common purpose. The relationship described in the concept of territorial cooperation may, or may not, survive to be present in future interactions, because that continuity is dependent either on the willingness of the actors or, more commonly, on the availability of the funding required to continue the relationship.

By contrast, territorial integration describes a situation within the territories involved that has progressed beyond the previous phase of cooperation and in which the actors are prepared take the relationship further. Territorial integration involves the process of becoming an administrative and political entity embedded within the institutional framework of the two territories. It entails sustained working relations among the actors involved with the backing of both administrative bodies within the territories, a legal agreement extending across the local and national political spectrum and, more importantly, clear and definitive results achieved in the past through a combination of completed and ongoing projects. Territorial integration, in brief, is the ultimate goal that territories located in different political and administrative states can achieve.

The above-mentioned characteristics mean that territorial integration favours territories close to each other, sharing the same border line, or

within the same geographical region; it would be very difficult to achieve integration if the territories are some distance apart or on different continents. The main reason for this is the vast difference in institutional and governance practices within those territories. Interestingly, this is a limitation that territorial cooperation does not have, due to the comparatively looser ties among the agents and actors involved. Cooperation has more flexibility but less continuity, while integration has more rigidity but less vulnerability.

AREAS AND DOMAINS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

Overall, territorial cooperation has a moderate impact on the general development process of transcontinental partners. About 45 percent of the interviewees considered that TC has no impact on flows and exchanges, socio-economic indicators or specific activities in their territories (see Tables 1, 2 and 3).

**Table 1** Impact of transcontinental cooperation on flows and exchanges (percentage of respondents)

	No impact	With impact				
		Minimal	Small	Moderate	Large	Very Substantial
International trade	40.7	40.6	15.6	28.1	9.4	6.3
FDI	46.3	44.8	20.7	24.2	10.3	0
Commuting for work	48.1	57.1	14.3	17.9	10.7	0
Tourism	38.9	33.3	15.2	21.2	27.3	3
Social commuting	44.4	43.3	16.7	26.7	13.3	0
Migration	48.1	42.9	25	25	7.1	0
Educational exchange	37	26.5	14.7	38.2	14.7	5.9

Source: TERCO Main Report (2012), authors' compilation.

Furthermore, taking into account only the respondents who considered that territorial cooperation had an impact, most of them recognised that it had minimal or little impact on the issues surveyed. Hence, only about 20 percent of the individuals consulted considered that TC had a moderate, large or very substantial impact on development.

However, a deeper insight is needed to understand the importance of territorial cooperation. Some of the analysed strands have such strategic

importance for development that it is worth examining them more closely. International trade, tourism and educational exchanges registered a notably high impact from TC, which is especially interesting to bear in mind.

Similarly, the results seem to be quite important for economic growth, quality of life and quality of natural environment (see Table 2), since more than respectively: 27 percent, 37 percent and 31 percent of the interviewees considered them to have had moderate impacts or higher.

**Table 2** Impact of transcontinental cooperation on socio-economic indicators (percentage of respondents)

	No impact	With impact				
		Minimal	Small	Moderate	Large	Very Substantial
Economic growth	46.3	27.6	20.7	44.8	3.4	3.4
Job creation	50	29.6	25.9	33.3	11.1	0
Quality of life	46.3	20.7	10.3	51.7	13.8	3.4
Quality of natural environment	46.3	27.6	17.2	44.8	10.3	0
Service provision	51.9	34.6	26.9	23.1	15.4	0

Source: TERCO Main Report (2012), authors' compilation.

**Table 3** Impact of transcontinental cooperation on specific activities (percentage of respondents)

	No impact	With impact				
		Minimal	Small	Moderate	Large	Very Substantial
International networking cooperation among firms	48.1	42.9	10.7	35.7	7.1	3.6
Networking among NGOs	50	14.8	22.2	33.3	22.2	7.4
Building mutual trust	40.7	9.4	9.4	18.8	50	12.5
Joint project preparation	38.9	15.2	15.2	27.3	33.3	9.1
Joint spatial planning	51.9	50	11.5	26.9	7.7	3.8

Source: TERCO Main Report (2012), authors' compilation.

Instead of the reduced impact observed in the areas of building mutual trust, joint project preparation and networking among NGOs are promising

areas for future cooperation. The impact of TC on these themes has increased considerably (see Table 3).

Considering the difficulties of transcontinental cooperation, the general results for the selected themes imply that there is significant scope to improve its impact in the near future. This is especially due to the mechanism already implemented, which has been able to create a space for cooperation, based on joint work, trust and networking.

**Strengths and Weaknesses of Current Cooperation**

The research on transcontinental cooperation shows that there are strengths on which the future strategy for territorial cooperation should be implemented. However, weaknesses have also been detected, and EU and transcontinental territories should be suitably prepared to overcome likely problems in order to take advantage of cooperation processes and improve the quality of living. Ten main strengths and weaknesses have been selected to illustrate the importance and limitations of territorial cooperation in non-EU regions in North Africa and Latin America (see Table 4).

**Table 4** Main Strengths and Weaknesses of Transcontinental Cooperation

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Strong cultural and historical ties.	1. Lack of funding.
2. Mutual trust.	2. Unilateral assistance.
3. Diversity of actors involved.	3. Deficit of skill in cooperation.
4. Learning process to solve common problems.	4. Excessive fragmentation.
5. Synergies between different projects.	5. Different interests on both shores.
6. Adaptation to the transcontinental region's needs.	6. Most of the effort on the European side.
7. Bottom-up cooperation.	7. Differences in governance structures.
8. Solid personal relationships.	8. Limitations of visa policy in Europe.
9. Securing stronger geostrategic platform.	9. Sporadic inter-nation problems.
10. Organisations to coordinate very diverse bottom-up contributions.	10. Cooperation under givers/receivers scheme.

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Territorial cooperation is easier when the regions involved maintain strong cultural and historical ties. The three cases analysed have

participated in diverse cooperation programmes on the basis of shared important common roots, rather than current differences, among which the cases of cities and regions in Spain stand out. However, it is important not to forget their past as colonies of Spain, because feelings of mistrust could arise between partners in a cooperation process under an aid-giver/receiver's scheme, impeding progress towards further cooperation.

In practice, sharing cooperation projects for so long (more than 20 years) has led regions to sustained informal bilateral relations, even during moments in which national diplomatic relations have been suspended. This occurs because a process of mutual trust has been built up through personal relations of workers and politicians involved in the cooperation projects. Solid relationships are important strengths in boosting territorial cooperation or, in the case of national disagreements, continuing progress despite unexpected difficulties.

The possibilities mentioned above are likely to be more useful with a greater diversity of involved actors: workers unions, universities, chambers of commerce, NGOs, city halls, provincial governments, entrepreneurial associations, regional administrations, local associations, development agencies, international organisations, foundations and so on. Hence, a bottom-up approach has become the best mechanism for transcontinental territorial cooperation to be successful. Moreover, the involvement of such a diverse range of actors and projects has opened broad opportunities for synergies among actions, giving rise to complementary interventions in social or cultural spheres initially outside the main project, such as infrastructure or local economic development projects.

Nevertheless, the number of actors is in direct relation to the funds available, and therefore the lack of funding is one of the most important obstacles to cooperation in the years ahead. Moreover, a better system of coordination is needed for the cooperation programmes to perform at their best. In this respect, it is advisable to avoid excessive fragmentation in some projects, which do not reach the expected results as a consequence of a lack of coordination. In the case of Andalusia cooperation projects, FAMSI<sup>2</sup> has carried out a gathering-up role in Spain, concentrating a considerable amount of local resources for cooperation in order to facilitate the implementation of projects where success was deemed unlikely because the funding would have been spread too thinly over the municipalities of Andalusia.

Territorial cooperation is diverse, and different interests can sometimes arise on both shores. This is one of the most significant weaknesses in cooperation, because one of the partners may not be willing to take part

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<sup>2</sup> FAMSI is an Andalusian Fund for International Solidarity.

in a project if there is no apparent benefit, as has happened with some European partners looking for Moroccan partners to participate in the INTERREG programme:<sup>3</sup> uneven opportunities to access funds reduce the capacity to cooperate.

In addition, most of the effort in territorial cooperation occurs on the European side, which is an important limitation on allocating a more relevant role to transcontinental territories in this process as well as on upgrading the task of non-EU partners from a receiver's perspective to a more strategic role. Unilateral assistance is not the way to create mutual benefit between members. On the contrary, it must be understood that learning must be bi-directional so that the capabilities of communities on both shores are strengthened.

Learning processes are very useful for solving common problems, as has been demonstrated in some development projects related to enterprise agreements, cultural events and environmental issues. But surely the most valuable contribution is to gain an understanding of how others solve issues that are of concern to everyone, or alternatively, if no solutions are available, in learning how to search for solutions together.

In any case, the projects with the best results are those that are carried out jointly and adapted to the needs of transcontinental territories in agreement with their territorial development strategy, especially when it has been defined in advance. Otherwise, the projects lose impact and usually disappear from sight soon afterwards. Therefore, adaptation to transcontinental needs is essential for territorial cooperation projects.

At any rate, it is only possible to teach and apply practices gained from previous experience. It is therefore understandable that the actions that have worked best are those in which Spain has contributed added value due to its own experience in development. These factors relate to the strength of the projects implemented, namely decentralisation in the areas of administration, health, rural development policy and agriculture. Accordingly, it is advisable to concentrate effort on areas where participants have a significant background.

However, European experts find barriers to cooperation even under the best circumstances. Overcoming these barriers – at times by cooperating with transcontinental partners and at other times by understanding that they operate within a different framework – is possible and the results are promising. On the one hand, the most important weaknesses in this area are possible differences in governance structures (particularly significant in North African territories), with special implications for the implementation

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<sup>3</sup> The INTERREG programme allows no more than 10 percent of the total budget to be invested in countries outside the European Union.



of projects and the resolution of problems. That is why it is essential to take into account the knowledge and work experience of organisations such as FAMSI (FAMSI, 2010). On the other hand, European partners are likely to manage projects in which transcontinental partners may have a deficit in territorial cooperation skills. There has already been a significant effort in training, but it should still be one of the main areas to improve cooperation processes, especially in strategic management and local development, where the cases analysed have progressed considerably.

Transcontinental cooperation may contribute to improved integration between regions, as in the case of the geostrategic platform of the Strait of Gibraltar, where the scope for integration has broadened in recent times due to the free trade agreements between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco (Kausch, 2010). Moreover, Andalusia and the Tangier-Tetouan regions could become a new space to compete, taking advantage of the inter-territorial division of labour to improve both regions' competitive capacities in a globalised context, despite visa policy in Europe for Moroccan citizens.

Finally, in any case, a process of evaluation of the actions of decentralised cooperation in each project should be implemented to verify the impact on socio-economic development. Furthermore, to gain better integration, mechanisms should be developed to maintain permanent Spanish structures in the case of projects in Morocco, utilising Moroccan funds in the framework of joint projects, and permanent Moroccan structures should be maintained in Spain through Spanish/European budgets. Moreover, whereas good practices are being transferred from Europe to transcontinental territories, it is hoped that there will be future transfers towards Europe, so that these actions should be based on mutual development and not only on the idea of solidarity.

## **DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CASE STUDY AREAS**

From a European territorial strategic perspective, Latin American and North African regions are very different. On the one hand, the geographical distance allows North African regions (as in the case of the Tangier-Tetouan region) to be considered as candidates for better territorial integration, as demonstrated by agreements on a wide variety of issues (European Commission, 2007). Moreover, the feasibility of cooperation between companies, citizens, products, and so on (Escribano, 2009) is greater with North Africa than with Latin America, which is thousands of kilometres away.

On the other hand, sharing a language is a strong instrument in co-operation, above all in cultural and social events. Both transcontinental

regions also have advantages and disadvantages for territorial cooperation with European regions, making a deeper insight of interest to identify possibilities for future territorial cooperation and integration initiatives.

Moroccan interviewees considered the impact of territorial cooperation on flows and exchanges to be lower than did the Latin-American interviewees. However, if those who stated that it had some impact are taken together, the figures are actually higher than in the Latin-American cases. In total, more than 70 percent described the impact on foreign direct investment, commuting for work, tourism, social commuting or educational exchange as moderate or large. With regard to migration, every respondent who identified an impact from territorial cooperation described it as a moderate or large impact on migration.

By contrast, the impact of territorial cooperation on socio-economic indicators is higher in Tangier-Tetouan than in the Latin-American cases. The results show that more than 65 percent of interviewees in Morocco consider that it had some impact. Economic growth was especially noteworthy: 63 percent of those who thought that territorial cooperation had some impact on economic growth considered that impact to be moderate, large or very substantial. Quality of life recorded a similar result, with 60 percent of respondents considering the impact as moderate or large. Job creation was considered to have been lower in impact, with 60 percent of the respondents valuing it as moderate.

The impact of territorial cooperation on specific activities is more similar in both continents. Fifty percent of respondents said that the activities of territorial cooperation had no impact on international networking cooperation among firms, networking among NGOs, building mutual trust, joint project preparation or joint spatial planning. Nevertheless, in the region of Tangier-Tetouan, the activities with impact received higher estimates; a major percentage of respondents assigned a moderate, large or very substantial impact to each theme.

To sum up, territorial cooperation can be considered to have a moderate impact on local development, jobs and quality of life in transcontinental regions, but for most categories the importance and influence of cooperation projects are higher and strategically more important in Morocco than in Latin America, especially if the impacts on exports and immigration processes are taken into account (Khader, 2010; Castejón, 2004).

## CONCLUSIONS

Territorial cooperation and territorial integration are different concepts, and consequently they should be treated differently. Territorial cooperation can be defined as a 'cross-border process to resolve problems existing on

both sides of the border through mutual cooperation', where the emphasis on problem-solving problems may or may not require a long-term relationship and a legal and administrative body to carry out the task. In comparison, territorial integration occurs when the territory in question has already been through the experience of territorial cooperation and has built or is ready to build some kind of infrastructure for (political and administrative) integration between both sides of the border. Following Böhme *et al.* (2011), territorial integration is 'the process of reshaping functional areas to make them evolve into a consistent geographical entity; this entails overcoming the various negative effects stemming from the presence of one or more administrative borders, which hamper harmonious territorial development'.

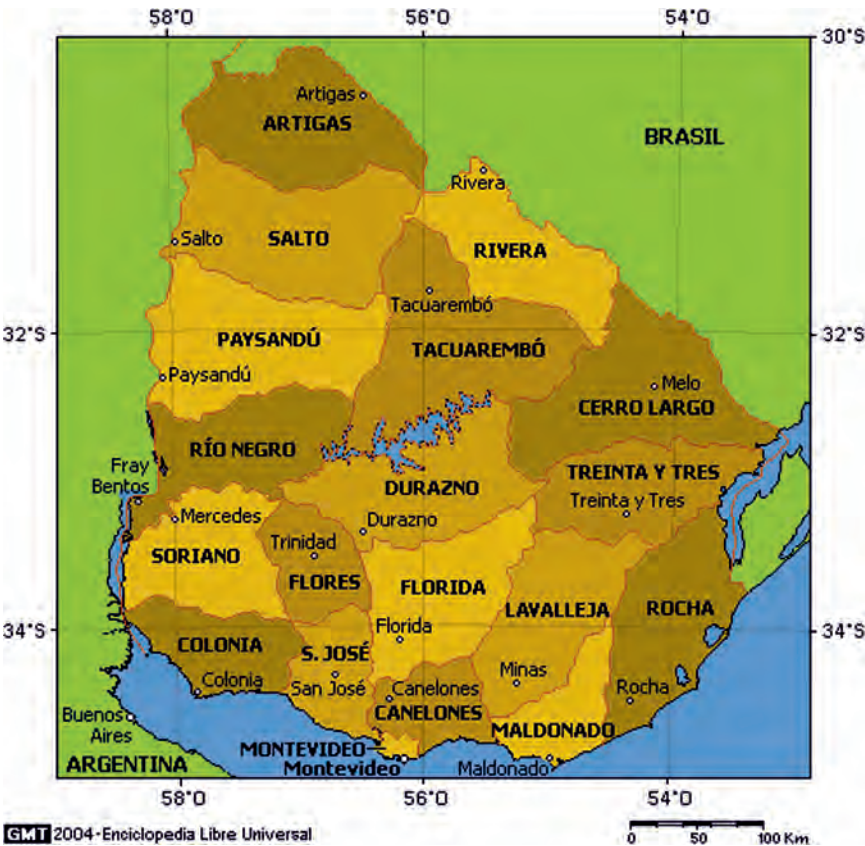
On the other hand, whether in Latin America or Morocco, the case studies identified clear cases of territorial cooperation, but not of territorial integration. Consequently, this chapter deals with territorial cooperation.

Territorial cooperation involves some significant difficulties that must be understood from a long-term perspective. The main pillars on which cooperation should be built are mutual trust and joint project preparation: both factors have been the basis for creating and sustaining decentralised projects for years, and they are a solid basis for the future. In this sense, transcontinental cooperation has played a relevant role.

A bottom-up approach rather than a top-down approach is better placed to involve local organisations in supporting long-term development processes. Nevertheless, as the number of actors increases, the work of organisations and actors could be hindered by a decentralised structure that requires better coordination from a central administrative body. Similarly, an adequate evaluation system must identify gaps and implement mechanisms to overcome them. To take advantage of accumulated experience and shared knowledge on the ground, a decentralised approach with better coordination among the actors involved would represent best practice for territorial cooperation.

Territorial cooperation must not be unilateral, but bi-directional, otherwise people in transcontinental territories may not regard European territories as partners but rather as old metropolises. In this sense, territorial cooperation could be used as a tool for establishing a broader mechanism to cooperate, such as triangular cooperation, which would allow new avenues of influence on strategic territories from a European perspective. However, the current lack of funding for cooperation projects could be an obstacle in the near future to developing important activities that build on cooperation efforts over the last 20 years.

ANNEX – MAPS



CANELONES (URUGUAY)

Source: <http://enciclopedia.us.es>



### ROSARIO (ARGENTINA)

Source: <http://enciclopedia.us.es>



MOROCCO

Source: <http://enciclopedia.us.es>

## PART III

### TERRITORIAL COOPERATION VS. TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION – EVIDENCE FROM CASE STUDIES





KATARZYNA ZAWALIŃSKA<sup>1</sup>

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION TO CASE STUDIES

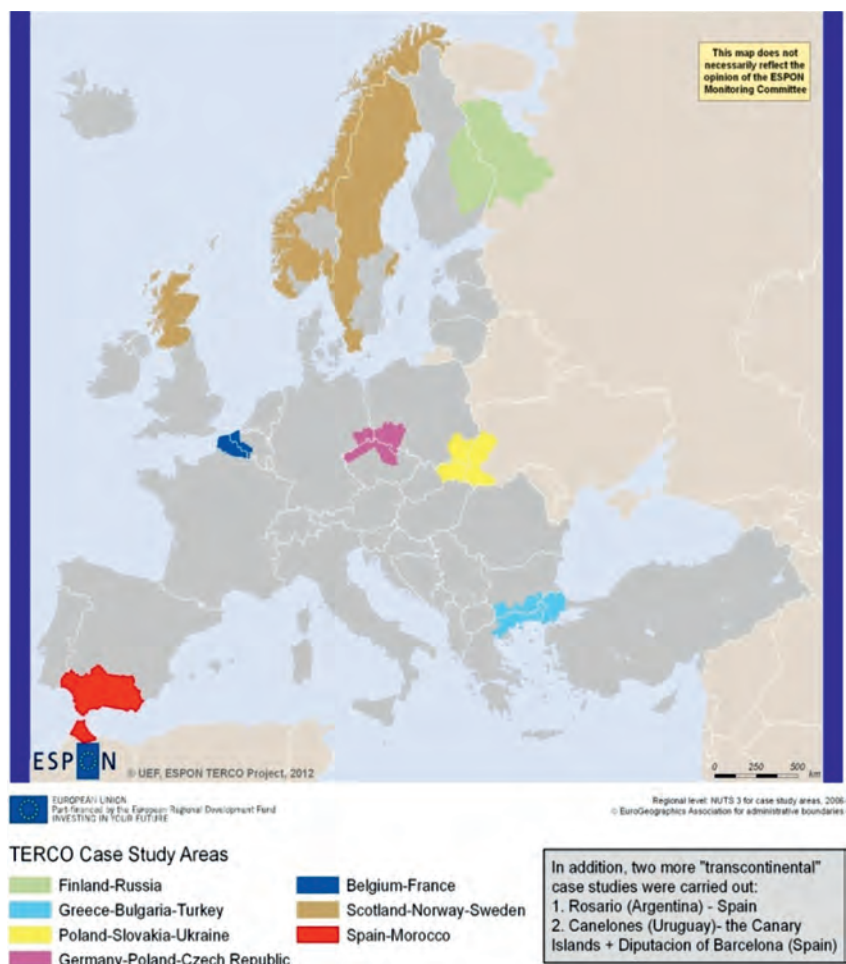
The TERCO project analysed 19 countries, grouped into nine case studies (CSs), and this book section presents six of them: Finland-Russia, Poland-Slovakia-Ukraine, Poland-Germany-Czech Republic, Belgium-France, Scotland-Norway-Sweden, Greece-Bulgaria-Turkey. The CS areas capture examples of all possible combinations of the old and new Member States as well as cooperation between the Member States and non-Member States (i.e. EU external neighbours). They also include cooperation over land and sea of the European and transcontinental borders (see Figure 1).

The case study analyses were based on three sources of information: local statistical data, standardised computer-assisted web electronic interviews (CAWI) and in-depth interviews (IDI). CAWI questionnaires and IDI scenarios were translated into 16 national languages and applied to all cases. The questions in the surveys referred simultaneously to five types of TC defined in the project but also asked about cooperation beyond European Territorial Cooperation. CAWI's blocks of questions were consistent with the TERCO-SEM model (see Chapter 2.3), and therefore included questions on: (i) domains prevailing for each TC, (ii) scope of cooperation by TC, (iii) determinants of TC, (iv) resources utilised in TC, (v) involvement of TC stakeholders, (vi) governance issues of stakeholders initiating TC, (vii) socio-economic impact of TC, (viii) value added from TC, and (ix) future domains of TC.

CAWI targeted local officials within CS municipalities or LAU2 areas involved in TC. CAWI also targeted institutions that had not participated in any territorial cooperation in order to investigate the reasons. Directed at the municipalities, CAWI was conducted in all of the NUTS2 regions affected by the case studies. This allowed for an estimation of the 'geographical penetration' of cross-border contacts as well as other types of TC within those areas. Overall, 549 CAWIs were collected and 269 interviews were carried out within the case studies.

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<sup>1</sup> EUROREG, University of Warsaw.



Border/ Member State	New-New	New-Old	Old-Old
INTERNAL	PL-CZ PL-SK	PL-DE CZ-DE BG-GR	UK-SE BE-FR
EXTERNAL	PL-UA SK-UA		GR-TR UK-NO FI-RU ES-LAT.A. ES-MA

**BE** – Belgium, **BG** – Bulgaria, **CZ** – Czech Republic, **DE** – Germany, **ES** – Spain, **FI** – Finland, **FR** – France, **GR** – Greece, **UY** – Uruguay, **AR** – Argentina, **MA** – Morocco, **NO** – Norway, **PL** – Poland, **RU** – Russia, **SE** – Sweden, **SK** – Slovakia, **TR** – Turkey, **UA** – Ukraine, **UK** – United Kingdom.

**Figure 1** TERCO case study areas

Source: Author's elaboration.

One of the goals of the case studies was to establish a contribution of territorial cooperation to territorial integration. The respondents – participants and stakeholders of the territorial policies – were asked whether through the cooperation they managed to ‘jointly solve cross-border problems on both sides of the border by means of cooperation’. The positive answers indicated that such cooperation potentially brings territorial integration.

The highest percentage of respondents indicated that territorial integration was achieved thanks to INTERREG A. In fact, this type of cooperation was the only one in which respondents from all case studies confirmed evidence of territorial integration (ca. 39 percent of respondents from the CS on Greece-Turkey-Bulgaria, ca. 28 percent from the CS on Finland-Russia, and ca. 26 percent from the CS on Poland-Czech Rep.-Germany – see Table 1). In the Belgium-France case study, it may seem quite surprising, initially, that territorial integration was indicated by only ca. 11 percent of respondents of INTERREG A and by 0 percent of the twinning-city type of cooperation. This is because the Belgian-French border is a special case, where a high extent of territorial integration has been achieved through previous programmes, due to a long tradition of cooperation among those regions. Hence, the new programmes do not contribute that much to territorial cooperation because the level of integration is already high. Examples of territorial integration on the Greek-Bulgarian border include initiation of cross-border health and social services provision, cooperation on flood mitigation and joint water-resource management; examples from the Finish-Russian border include an increase in border crossings and cross-border transportation (e.g. new railway lines); and on the Polish-Czech border, more tourist traffic was achieved through cross-border tourist routes in the Sudety Mountains.

Quite often, territorial integration was also recorded in twinning cities cooperation, especially in the cases of Greece-Turkey-Bulgaria, Poland-Czech Rep.-Germany, UK-Norway-Sweden, and Poland-Slovakia-Ukraine. In most case studies, 20-26 percent of respondents declared that territorial integration was achieved within this type of cooperation (see Table 2).

In the case of twinning cities, most respondents who experienced territorial integration from TC had only one cooperation partner, in contrast to INTERREG B, which mostly involved between two and five partners jointly solving cross-border problems (see Figure 1).

Examples of city networks contributing to territorial integration include the ‘Network of Cities of the Carpathian Euroregion’, which integrates cities by promoting the Carpathian Euroregion as a network of cities worth visiting in each country, and the ‘WHO European Healthy Cities Network’,

which integrates cities through the exchange of good practices, knowledge and internationalisation of their business.

**Table 1** Territorial integration declared by respondents in case studies

Case study	Jointly solving cross-border problems by cooperation				
	Twinning Cities	INTERREG A	INTERREG B	Share of respondents declaring joint solving cross-border problems	All respondents
CS1: Belgium-France	0.0	11.1	18.5	29.6	100.0
CS2: Finland-Russia	11.1	27.8	0.0	38.9	100.0
CS3: Poland-Slovakia-Ukraine	19.6	8.9	1.8	30.3	100.0
CS4: Poland-Czech Rep.-Germany	23.3	25.6	2.3	51.2	100.0
CS5: Greece-Turkey-Bulgaria	25.9	38.9	13.0	77.8	100.0
CS6: UK-Norway-Sweden	21.1	19.7	14.1	54.9	100.0

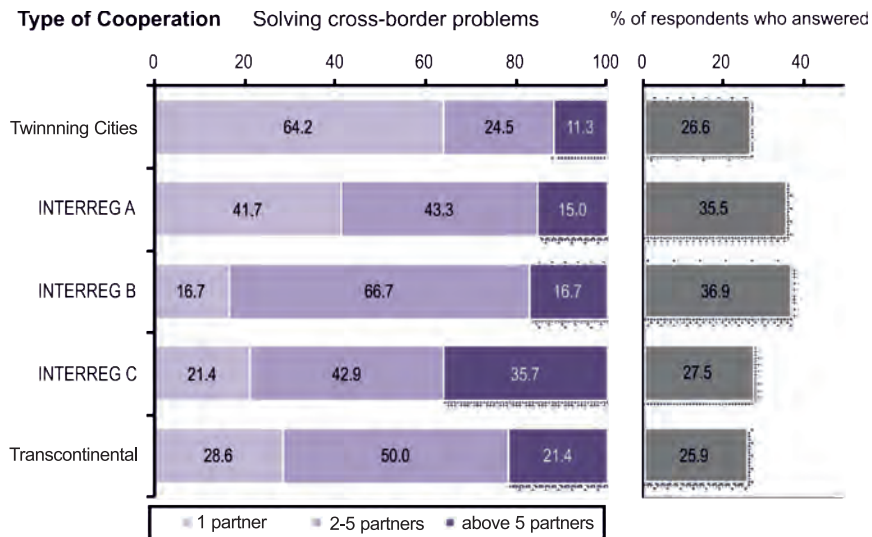
Source: Based on the TERCO electronic survey (CAWI).

Note: Relative column shares are indicated as high (red), medium (black) or low (blue).

Within INTERREG B, greatest experience in joint-solving cross-border problems was visible in the case study of Belgium-France cooperation, where ca. 18.5 percent of respondents experiencing territorial integration declared it was through INTERREG B. Evidence of territorial integration was also reported in the cooperation between UK-Norway-Sweden and Greece-Turkey-Bulgaria (see Table 1). The Northern Periphery Programme is an example of cooperation contributing to territorial integration, as it increased accessibility through providing advanced information and communication technologies and transport within the programme area. In addition, the programme integrated sparsely populated areas by providing services of general interest to remote and peripheral regions.

The case studies covered regions with different mutual potentials since, according to TA2020 (2011), different regions cooperate in different ways. In particular, 'territories with common potentials or challenges can collaborate in finding common solutions and utilise their territorial potential by sharing experience. Territories with complementary potentials, often

neighbouring, can join forces and explore their comparative advantages together, creating additional development potential' (TA2020, 2011: 4). The case studies presented in this book bring more insight into how this works in practice and some examples are given below.



**Figure 2** Number of partners who jointly solved cross-border problems within respondents

Source: Based on the TERCO electronic survey (CAWI).

## REGIONS WITH COMMON POTENTIALS (THE CASE OF POLAND AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC): TOURISM POTENTIAL OF THE SUDETY MOUNTAINS

The example of regions with common potentials comes from Poland and the Czech Republic case study – the two countries that border the mountainous region with a long tradition of tourism, particularly spa-type treatment in Łądek Zdrój/Landeck (from the 16<sup>th</sup> century). Over time, the Sudety Mountains became one of Europe's most popular tourist destinations in Central Europe, where natural assets (not only the Sudety) are a major strength. On that basis, high-class cultural tourism (concerts, festivals, etc.) and active sport tourism (skiing, biking, canoeing, etc.) have been developed. As the regions on both sides of the border have similar tourism potential, they started cooperation. Within the new tourism paradigm, the adjacent areas faced the same problem of the need to develop a rich and differentiated range of tourist services that would, first, fit the needs of a target group that was differentiated and expected high-quality products, and second, ensure provision of interesting activities and

events throughout the year. It was much easier to organise it at the scale of the whole border region, rather than separately, and so they cooperated to achieve synergy. They developed new (or modernised) tourism products and infrastructure which are interconnected and complement each other, thus widening the options for visitors (and increasing endowment). This is supported by a tourist information system, maps, brochures and other promotional materials prepared in at least two languages and made available on both sides of the border. Upgrading the transport infrastructure has also helped to improve accessibility. The IDIs show that the prevailing types of cooperation are *exchanging experience* and *jointly implementing common actions* addressing tourism.

### **REGIONS WITH COMMON CHALLENGES (THE CASE OF POLAND AND GERMANY): THE ODER RIVER CHALLENGE**

The Germany-Poland border area that was the subject of the case study is located along the upper Nysa/Neisse river and its tributaries. Due to the mountainous character of most of the area, where rainfall is high and the water level rises fast, and due to environmental pressures related to the existence of large-scale brown coal mines on the Polish side and a power station on the German side (deforestation), plus a high level of urbanisation along the river and main roads (including the A4 transport corridor), the whole area is exposed to flood risk. Over the last few years, serious floods hit the area two or three times each year. Despite large and differentiated flood prevention and anti-flood investments (infrastructure, monitoring and information systems, rescue system), floods pose a serious problem, in particular on the Polish side, where more investment is needed. Success in coping with the floods requires very close, formal and informal cooperation on both sides of the border (as well as in the Czech Republic, as some river-heads are located on the Czech side, but flow north, to Poland and Germany). From this point of view, cross-border cooperation helps to maintain direct, personal contacts that may be a key asset in emergencies. Improved information systems, whatever their objectives, prove vital in the face of unpredictable, stormy floods, and improved transport networks help to secure logistics/evacuation lines, if and when needed. This is one aspect of building functional areas based on interconnections, common planning in a growing number of spheres, and common action. Floods were extremely dangerous, but rescue operations, with support from German medicopters (fitted with night thermo-location vision systems), helped to save lives on the Polish side as well. And their assistance was triggered by one phone call. The interviewees from that CS area declared that the prevailing form of cooperation in those regions with common potential

is *sharing tools to tackle a common problem*, i.e. sharing equipment and know-how to deal with flood prevention.

### **REGIONS WITH COMPLEMENTARY POTENTIALS (THE CASE OF GREECE AND BULGARIA): HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION SERVICES**

In the framework of INTERREG A Greece-Bulgaria, a large number of projects were implemented as part of a joint solution for cross-border health problems associated with the mobility of people, goods, and animals (such as the creation of the Cross-border Centres for Public Health, Cross-border Veterinary Centre for Rare Diseases, etc.), as well as problems related to the pollution of water, air and soil (such as the creation of the Laboratory for Molecular Biology). There were several issues that concerned the health authorities on both the Greek and Bulgarian sides of the border. For example, the Bulgarian part was placing great emphasis on infectious diseases whose mortality rates were significantly higher in their part of the border in comparison with the other side. Also, for that part of Greece, the levels of Hepatitis B were detected as higher than the country's average. Furthermore, there was a need to jointly keep animal diseases under control, such as foot and mouth disease, sheep pox, swine and ruminants' bluetongue, etc. The two parts of the border worked in a complementary way in terms of know-how, human resources and activities implementation (e.g. collecting samples for analysis, conducting controls on hygiene standards, etc.). In this case study, the surveys revealed the highest share of cooperation as *jointly solving cross-border problems*.

More examples illustrating strengths and weakness of territorial co-operation, its contribution to territorial development and implications for future policy are presented within the next six chapters describing individual cases, while the seventh chapter draws conclusions from the results of all the case studies.



## **3.2 TERRITORIAL COOPERATION IN FINNISH-RUSSIAN BORDER REGION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This case study straddles the Finnish-Russian border, i.e. the external border of the European Union, and it includes the four Finnish NUTS 3 regions of Kainuu, Pohjois-Savo, Etelä-Savo and Pohjois-Karjala (forming the NUTS 2 region of Eastern Finland, FI 13) as well as the Republic of Karelia<sup>2</sup>, a federal subject of the Russian Federation with 18 local administrative regions (rayons). This is a vast geographical area with very low population densities, long distances between urban centres and poor accessibility. The four Finnish regions cover about 70,000 square kilometres and the Republic of Karelia stretches over 172,000 square kilometres, making the whole case study area comparable in size to the United Kingdom. The total population of the region is around 1.3 million with roughly equal shares on each side of the border. The largest cities in the area are small by European standards, Petrozavodsk in Russian Karelia being the largest, with 263,000 inhabitants, followed by Kuopio on the Finnish side, with 97,000 inhabitants.

The regions of this cross-border area can generally be regarded as peripheral not only in European terms but also in their respective national contexts. This is due to their relative remoteness from large economic and population centres: from the European ‘Pentagon’, and from Helsinki and St. Petersburg in their respective countries.

Beyond the well-known historical legacies of a closed border and seized territory, territorial development in general and territorial cooperation (TC) in this border area in particular have been conditioned by the sparsity and unevenness of population, long distances between the few urban centres

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<sup>1</sup> Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland.

<sup>2</sup> The Republic of Karelia is also referred to as ‘Russian Karelia’ in this study.



in the area, poor cross-border infrastructure, a harsh climate, and a mainly forest-resource-based economy.



**Figure 1** The Finnish-Russian case study area including its main cities and towns  
Source: Authors' elaboration.

A substantial difference in terms of living standards still persists across the border, as verified by the Human Development Index of UNDP: among 187 countries ranked, Finland is number 20 and Russia is number 66; and among the 80 Russian regions, the Republic of Karelia is number 51 (UNDP, 2011).

A defining feature of the area is its continued population decline during recent decades, as well as an ageing demographic structure. From 1990 to 2010, the Finnish part of the area lost 56,000 inhabitants (8 percent) due to outmigration and natural decrease, and Russian Karelia lost 107,500 (13 percent) inhabitants. In the four Finnish regions, migration from Russia compensated for a small part of the population loss; it was most prominent in Pohjois-Karjala and, at a local level, in municipalities close to the border-crossing points (Eskelinen and Alanen, 2011). The most intriguing condition is the position at an external border of the EU, but also at one that represents an interface of rising strategic interests in EU-Russian relations. This chapter systematically outlines these various factors and their implications for territorial cooperation with regard to strengths and weaknesses, and it concludes with a consideration of future perspectives.

Territorial cooperation along this mid-section of the Finnish-Russian border was investigated using primary and secondary information sources. Fieldwork (from June 2011 to February 2012) comprised 42 in-depth interviews (25 on the Finnish side, 17 on the Russian side) and an online survey. The analysis below relies primarily on the in-depth, structured interviews made with key TC actors from a variety of domains and sectors (e.g. regional and local administration, the education sector, businesses and NGOs, etc.). Secondary sources reviewed include academic and policy literature, project inventories, other databases and websites, and regional/local strategies.

## STRENGTHS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

The collapse of the Soviet Union and subsequent formation of the Russian Federation made the border more permeable, triggered an increase in border crossings and economic exchange, and even allowed for some strictly regulated migration from Russia to Finland. It also provided a basis for political and social interaction at the regional level. Despite the historical legacies and the existence of a long-closed border, as soon as the geopolitical situation became more favourable, actors from Eastern Finland and the Republic of Karelia started to engage in collaborative activities such as Neighbouring Area Cooperation (NAC).<sup>3</sup> These early

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<sup>3</sup> Before EU funding for TC became available in 1995 (with Finland's accession), the country had already established a bilateral agreement of Neighbouring Area Cooperation (NAC) with Russia in 1992, which then continued to complement EU programmes until 2012. The programme, coordinated and funded by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, concentrated particularly on economic cooperation, but also included the 'promotion of environmental protection and nuclear safety, combat of the spread of risks related to contagious diseases and drugs, and support of civil society development and administrative and legislative reforms' (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2011).

cooperation activities served as a good foundation for INTERREG A and TACIS, and also for the subsequent European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) programmes in the region.

More recently, within the ENPI framework for cross-border cooperation (CBC), a single application and selection process for both sides of the border has increased coherence and supports a truly cross-border coordination of projects. A new feature and an important strength of the ENPI programmes is that Russia contributes to their funding; moreover, the equal representation of the two countries in the decision-making is guaranteed through a Joint Monitoring Committee and a Joint Selection Committee. The fact that the ENPI programmes are regionally governed is generally seen as appropriate by the stakeholders in the area. The Karelia-Russia ENPI programme area also corresponds to the area of Euregio Karelia, an operational arrangement that was set up in 2000 in order to provide three Finnish regions and the Republic of Karelia with a regional institutional framework for cross-border cooperation (see Cronberg, 2003). Euregio Karelia has had a strategic and political role in guiding cross-border cooperation.

A great number of drivers and motivations exist for participating in territorial cooperation. Many of these motives are shared across the border, ranging from the mere prestige of being internationally active and the desire to learn, to the need to internationalise, raise competitiveness and efficiency, and to prepare and implement joint strategies. Considering the remoteness of these regions and the limited size of their own internal (and in the case of Finland, national) markets, bringing themselves out of isolation is a key driving factor in their engagement in TC.

Actors in Eastern Finland have engaged in diverse territorial cooperation funded by INTERREG and other sources. Active actors come especially from the public sector, but there are also important civil and private participants (cultural foundations, associations, local/regional development companies). In Eastern Finland, cross-border TC (now under ENPI, and formerly, INTERREG A/TACIS) has probably been the most influential type. In addition, educational institutions and cities are particularly active in networking in (interregional) TC projects; schools and universities in Eastern Finland are rich in international contacts from all over the world. Transnational TC (i.e. INTERREG B) projects are most relevant for higher-level actors such as regional councils.

In Russian Karelia, a few, mainly public actors (districts, municipalities) with considerable TC experience continue to participate. Here also, the dominant types of TC have been CBC (including projects funded by the Government of Finland under Neighbouring Area Cooperation) and city-twinning agreements. CBC frameworks have supported development in

social welfare, water treatment, education, small business development, tourism, forestry, agriculture, transport, and energy efficiency.

An important positive aspect of territorial cooperation is that, on the Finnish side, internal working relationships have intensified between different organisations in the same region as a result of their involvement in international TC. This can also be observed in the private sector: competition between companies in Finland is strong, but when ‘going to Russia’, they actually start cooperating. In addition, several intentional as well as ‘coincidental’ methods are emerging on how to increase synergies between different projects and domains of TC; the role of regional councils and the institutional framework of Euregio Karelia seem to be important in this.

In terms of impact, territorial cooperation has facilitated many important and acclaimed physical infrastructural investments, one of the most crucial being the development of border-crossings. Yet, TC has progressed fastest in those domains that require more modest financial resources but have less ‘tangible’ results, such as culture, education, social and health services, and tourism. The ‘softer’, human-capital-related activities are the least costly and are the easiest to launch at the beginning (especially considering the border regime), and at the same time, these activities are the ones best suited to opening minds, increasing intercultural competencies and overcoming psychological barriers, which are among the major obstacles to TC. This is increasingly valid when targeting strategically important socio-economic actors such as young people and entrepreneurs. Cultural TC is also the first obvious step in enhancing cooperation in the tourism sector, which, in turn, has a more direct impact on local and regional economies.

With regard to quality of life more generally, territorial cooperation is enhancing it by opening up new perspectives and opportunities to learn, creating new employment opportunities in the regions, and presenting a more varied cultural context for the population in the area. Last but not least, CBC projects as well as personal-level interactions have significantly contributed to more mutual understanding and interdependence. Relations between the two countries are felt to have improved over time.

## **WEAKNESSES OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

Low population densities and the resulting lack of population potential (sparsity) can pose significant challenges for territorial cooperation activities in the case study area. On average, Eastern Finland has about nine inhabitants per square kilometre. Extremely low population densities limit the scope of TC activities, especially in the immediate border regions and the north. In addition, the urban network in Russian Karelia is highly

monocentric (more than on the Finnish side): the city of Petrozavodsk is the largest centre by far, being eight times larger than Kondopoga, the second-largest city. Unlike the Finnish side, the rural areas in Russian Karelia are much less populated and the immediate border region of the Russian side is characterised by an almost complete lack of population apart from the towns of Sortavala (19,200 people) and Kostomuksha (28,400 people).



**Figure 2** The Finnish-Russian case study area including its main cities and towns  
 Source: Rajavartiolaitos (the Finnish Border Guard, <http://www.raja.fi>).

Sparsity and the insufficient number and uneven distribution of border-crossing points (see Figure 2) very much determine the territorial structures of cooperation. In fact, the only area with any potential to



become a 'European-style' corridor of development stretches along the southern coast of Finland from Helsinki to St Petersburg, which is south of the case study area.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, despite being motivated, actors are hindered in their territorial cooperation by a shortage of resources (staff and financial assets), which was often indicated on both sides of the border, although to a different extent. On the Russian side especially, many districts and municipalities remain inactive in TC, even though some of them are located even closer to the border than their active counterparts. There are more reasons for this than the shortage of money for co-funding projects: other 'obstacles' include the lack of information, coordination and adequate human capital; and, in reality, some of these areas are nearly uninhabited.

Another weakness of territorial cooperation in the case study area is that in Russia, instead of improved internal collaboration, more internal competition and 'protectionism' can be triggered by TC, which impedes participation and positive synergies. To date, no synergies have been possible between different TC activities and domains on the Russian side of the study area, mainly because of the lack of coordination and communication between parallel projects.

Bureaucracy is a general problem with territorial cooperation projects and programmes in the study area. However, in practice, it may not be such an insurmountable difficulty, and the real obstacle may be that people are afraid of their negative perception of bureaucracy. In any case, this is one of the reasons why private-sector involvement remains relatively weak.

Asymmetries across the border are probably most striking in governance approaches. Territorial cooperation governance in Russian Karelia is still largely dominated by the central administration (Moscow), despite the fact that ENPI Karelia, for instance, has a branch office of its Managing Authority in Petrozavodsk.<sup>5</sup> The more vertical, centralised power-relations on the Russian side, as well as the substantial gap between the two sets of national laws and regulations, especially hinder the Finnish organisations in their communication and collaboration with the Russian partners.

In addition, historically-induced tensions persist in Finnish-Russian relations. Volatile high-scale geopolitical and societal processes in Russia trickle down to influence the local level. Hence, uncertainty is still a setback in the planning of TC. The border also presents psychological barriers for

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<sup>4</sup> The busiest border-crossing points and the only international passenger railway connection between Finland and Russia can be found here; the Pan-European Transport Corridor IX also passes through here.

<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, there was a period during the 1990s when the Republic of Karelia had its own Ministry of Foreign Relations, which obviously showed great interest and played a supportive role in the promotion of TC with Finland and beyond.

both sides: dissimilar ways, negative prejudice, fears and reservations. High politics and major economic trends also have a significant impact on cross-border cooperation, and this is particularly true in the Finnish-Russian case. These processes cannot be influenced locally or with the help of EU territorial cooperation programmes.

## **FUTURE PERSPECTIVES FOR TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

Certain things have improved dramatically, whereas other aspects, both positive and negative, have not changed at all in the Finnish-Russian case study area. Accordingly, the best possible option seems to be to concentrate on the encouraging achievements in CBC/TC and build on the accumulated good experience. Certain constraints such as sparsity and high-level geopolitics cannot be overcome, but others can be addressed, also by way of targeted TC projects.

In view of the recently-gained WTO membership of the Russian Federation, and the potential for a visa-free regime in the foreseeable future,<sup>6</sup> it can be expected that interaction across the Finnish-Russian border will increase further and rapidly. The question is whether this growth will continue to be concentrated along the southern part of the border or whether it will also occur in the stretch between North Karelia – Kainuu and the Republic of Karelia. To encourage the latter, it is important, firstly, to promote and extend TC to involve a greater number of actors, especially in the Republic of Karelia, and secondly, to open more border-crossing points and to modernise the infrastructure at the existing ones on both sides.

Building on good foundations, future territorial cooperation will continue to expand to encompass more domains. Technology transfer, more innovative forestry-sector activities, social and health services and the promotion of business (e.g. in nature and cultural tourism, renewable energy technologies) are expected to have a greater share. However, for this to happen, Russian actors need to improve their exploitation of existing good practices in Finland for promoting and organising TC and to make use of networking and synergies. There are good multilevel governance practices in Eastern Finland that can make TC more efficient, inclusive, and more useful for the participating regions and localities. Projects that aim to facilitate this learning process should be encouraged more in TC (CBC)

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<sup>6</sup> The next major item on the agenda regarding the Finnish-Russian border regime is potential visa-free travel, which is currently being discussed between the European Union and Russia. Visa-free travel would make it easier for Finnish and Russian citizens to visit the neighbouring country, and – assuming that the capacity of the crossing points would be increased – result in further growth in border-crossing numbers. However, it would not remove the stringent border checks carried out at the border-crossing points.

programmes. Greater transparency and communication between different projects can help to reduce both the actual and the perceived burden of bureaucracy. Good practices need to increase mutual trust between the higher administration of projects and the TC actors.

Further investments into language education and intercultural knowledge development will create more openness towards internationalisation on both sides of the border. In addition, native Russians and young people living in Eastern Finland should be mobilised as an asset to intensify TC with the Republic of Karelia and Russia in general. Russian immigrants living in Finland are an important (and underutilised) asset for TC.

The competence and know-how of organisations involved in international cooperation cannot be overvalued. Training in foreign languages is not sufficient on its own: efforts to raise awareness of the benefits of TC and to increase TC skills and information can broaden participation in projects, encourage actors to initiate cooperation internationally, and make TC more effective and successful. This would be particularly needed on the Russian side, but also in Finland, amongst certain actor groups such as smaller-sized businesses. Moreover, such training would be useful because the bureaucracy entailed in the application and funding procedures is actually (and/or is believed to be) too challenging.

Ways to increase the scope for dialogue, and to enhance solidarity and the willingness to cooperate among organisations, particularly on the Russian side, must be part of the solution. The different actors in Russia need to internalise good examples of the value inherent in pooling resources instead of 'shielding' them, since this can improve their ability to cover co-funding costs and to access sufficient human resources. The more experienced participants could help the newcomers to TC.

Caution should be exercised when defining the share of hard infrastructure investments in territorial cooperation programme funding as well as in the selection of projects. An appropriate solution may be to ensure that 'softer' targets of investment, such as advancing human capital, socio-economic capacity-building, and community development, are actually complemented and supported by the creation of the 'hard' structures.

Finally, territorial structures that have emerged could frame territorial cooperation in future. Examples include the 'Green Belt of Fennoscandia', stretching along the Norwegian-Russian and Finnish-Russian borders, and a 'Northern Gateway to the East', conceptualised to promote infrastructural and logistic/economic links between Russia and the Nordic countries in the Barents region. They may provide suitable reference frameworks and can contribute to continuity and consistency, which must be supported as key factors in the efficiency of TC in the area. The promotion and financing of concrete problem-oriented, longer-term and high-budget projects are



one possible solution, i.e. those that can cover both the joint conceptual development of the solutions and their pilots, including actual investments (capitalisation). Other means to achieve continuity include establishing a stronger link between TC programme priorities and regional/local development strategies, by financing networks more continuously, and by providing opportunities for exchanges within and between ongoing projects and potential actors. In any case, to have a lasting impact, projects must address real regional needs.

### **3.3 TERRITORIAL COOPERATION IN POLAND-SLOVAKIA-UKRAINE BORDER REGIONS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The main objective of the Poland-Slovakia-Ukraine case study research was to assess the impact of territorial cooperation (TC) between local governments, NGOs and businesses on socio-economic development processes in this macro-region. The analysis was aimed at identifying the range and areas of territorial cooperation and at defining the factors affecting such cooperation and the modes of its practical implementation. On this basis, it was possible to identify the benefits of such cooperation for regions and localities in the area of the case study research.

The main findings of the report of Poland-Slovakia-Ukraine Case Study (CS) are presented below, from the perspective of policy development as well as recommendations. The objective was to make them as practical and instrumental as possible, and to provide responses relevant to the TERCO project research questions. The summary is structured around the four components of TC that were focus of the research: (i) physical areas of TC and territorial structures of cooperation; (ii) driving forces and domains of collaboration; (iii) governance structures and implementation of cooperation; and (iv) future prospects for territorial cooperation.

#### **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CASE STUDY AREAS**

The case study covers: one NUTS 2 region in Poland (Podkarpackie Voivodship), one in Slovakia (Eastern Slovakia), and two NUTS 2 regions in Ukraine (Lvivska oblast and Zakarpatska oblast) (see Figure 1). The whole case study area extends to 68,000 square kilometres: half

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<sup>1</sup> Private consultant.

<sup>2</sup> EUROREG, University of Warsaw.

of it is situated in Ukraine (34,000), while the Slovak and Polish parts are of approximately equal sizes (15,000 and 17,000 respectively). This is a mountainous terrain, especially the areas within the direct proximity of the border. Plains are situated mostly in the northern part of Podkarpackie Voivodship and Lvivska oblast, as well as in some southern areas around the Slovak-Ukrainian border. The case study area is mostly rural, with a few large cities, particularly Lviv (756,000), Košice (240,000) and Rzeszów (179,000).

The total population of the case study region is approximately 7.47 million. Most of the population live in the Ukrainian part (3.8 million), while the Slovak population is the smallest (1.58 million). The population density is highest in the Polish part of the case study (117.5 people/km<sup>2</sup>) and lowest in the Slovak part. Particularly low population densities can be found in the Prešov Region (89.9 people/km<sup>2</sup>) and Zakarpatska Oblast (97.3 people/km<sup>2</sup>), due to the predominance of mountain areas.

Administrative structures are quite differentiated across the case study region. Podkarpackie Voivodship is an administrative unit at the highest regional level governed by a council chosen in a general election. There are also some central government institutions at the voivodship (regional) level. Eastern Slovakia (NUTS 2) has no administrative functions; it is composed of the subregions of Košice and Prešov. At this level, the public administration has had a system of self-government and a system of state administration since 2002. The Ukrainian part of the case study consists of two regions (oblasts). Since Ukraine is a unitary state, all the oblasts have equal legal status and a similar administrative structure, which consists of an elected oblast council and an oblast state administration (OSA) that performs all the executive functions in the region.

The case study region is situated in the peripheral area of all three countries. The regions are located at a distance from the capital cities and main economic centres of Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine. GDP per capita in the Podkarpackie Voivodship and Eastern Slovakia as well as Ukrainian oblasts is much lower than the national average (approximately 70 percent). The situation in the Polish region has been quite stable in the recent years, but in Slovakia the gap between the case study area and the best-developed regions is increasing. The disparities are even wider in Ukraine, especially in the Zakarpatska oblast.

There are three significant cross-border cooperation programmes in the region, and they are largely aimed at the development of cross-border infrastructure, promoting social and economic development, and supporting local initiatives. The first is the Cross-border Cooperation (CBC) Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007-2013, which is implemented within European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument

(ENPI). The budget of this programme is €202.9 million for the 2007-2013 period, of which €186.2 million is contributed by the EU funds. The second one is the CBC Operational Programme Republic of Poland/ Republic of Slovakia 2007-2013, which is financed from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and co-funded by domestic partners and participants. The total budget allocation for the programme for 2007-2013 is €185.2 million, including the ERDF's contribution of €157.4 million. The third one is the ENPI Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine programme, which has a budget of €68.6 million for 2007-2013. Two other macro-regional programmes related to transnational territorial cooperation are also analysed in the case study: Central Europe (€298 million) and South East Europe (€245 million), which aim to strengthen territorial cohesion and internal integration.



**Figure 1** The Polish-Slovakia-Ukraine border region

Source: Authors' elaboration.

## RANGE AND PHYSICAL AREAS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

### Range of Territorial Cooperation

Territorial cooperation in the case study region is mostly focused on the areas lying near the border, which opens up opportunities for

applying for INTERREG A financing for Poland and Slovakia and ENPI CBC financing for Ukraine, including micro-projects. Common borders mean the presence of common problems, which is why projects aimed at addressing these problems are a priority. Physical barriers often play a positive and uniting role, as neighbours need to come together to work out joint solutions. However, there are also difficulties in identifying common interests and problems across the border, as partners often have conflicting needs that require careful balancing and the ability to reach compromise (this specifically refers to the use of natural resources and migration). In general, the greater common interests, the more intensive the collaboration with neighbouring regions. For example joint hosting of Euro-2012 (football tournament) by Poland and Ukraine provided a very strong stimulus for collaboration between Lviv region and neighbouring Polish regions. In addition, although the deficit of funding is a negative factor, in practice it stimulates authorities to find alternative means for implementing important initiatives and addressing local problems. However, those partners with greater experience in TC benefit much more from various initiatives. They are usually located in regional capitals and municipalities that are close to the border.

### **Factors Affecting the Range of Territorial Cooperation**

Territorial cooperation mainly focuses on the areas directly adjoining the border: seeking partners is strictly determined by the factor of distance. This is because of poor transport accessibility within the region (underdeveloped road infrastructure, inefficient rail networks, an airport of minor significance) and the costs associated with travelling and communicating over longer distances. Although the main roads and railways are generally of poor quality, they are adequate for local and regional demand (with the main exception of the PL-UA motorway, which is now under construction). Some activities have improved the connectivity of the border areas, such as the construction of border-crossing points, logistics centres, narrow-gauge railway, etc. However, it should be noted that the external sources of financing, at least partly, allow this barrier to be overcome.

Another barrier that hinders cooperation is the low language competency and lack of access to professional translation services. Without them, cooperation is restricted to immediate neighbours who speak related languages, allowing partners to communicate in their national languages.

Some influence on territorial cooperation in its local dimension is also exerted by the political relations (at the government level) between countries. Therefore, for instance, tensions between Warsaw and Minsk result in a certain reluctance on the part of local governments to establish

cooperation with their Belarussian partners within the PL-BY-UA cross-border cooperation programme.

Large and sparsely populated mountain areas of the Carpathians represent a significant natural barrier. The Carpathian Euroregion,<sup>3</sup> which was established to address the challenges of these specific areas, appeared to be too large and only a few common problems could be addressed and associated activities performed at this level, e.g. environment protection (biosphere reserves, rivers), forestry and to some extent tourism. It would be fair to say that only limited economic relations exist among the Euroregion partners at bilateral level.

However, the most important barrier is not physical – it is the external EU border (Poland and Slovakia vs. Ukraine), which through the strict border regime, overstretched border infrastructure, corruption, and low administrative capacity, etc. inhibits territorial cooperation. Currently, the border crossings work very ineffectively, considerably slowing down and hindering collaboration across the border, while the visa regime has created a severe imbalance in the relations between the Ukrainian and EU actors, making equal partnership almost impossible to achieve.

Furthermore, one should mention the lack of skills and knowledge among government officials/experts in preparing project proposals, the lack of mechanisms for preparing and administering projects, the lack of information, weak real collaboration (opposite to declarative one), and lack of experience which negatively affects TC, especially in Ukraine.

## **DRIVING FORCES AND DOMAINS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

### **Main Facilitators of Territorial Cooperation**

The three main driving forces of territorial cooperation in the case study areas are the following: (i) border location; (ii) eligibility of territories for funding in the INTERREG A/ENPI CBC framework; and (iii) culture/language similarities in the border region.

In addition, a range of other factors stimulate territorial cooperation for different countries. For Poland these are: a more advantageous system of project-financing in the framework of INTERREG A in comparison to Regional Operational Programme funded by the ERDF (lower co-financing level); and willingness to establish economic cooperation relations that

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<sup>3</sup> The Carpathian Euroregion is one of the oldest and the largest (around 150,000 sq km) of the Euroregions in the CEE region. It was established in 1993 as an association of local governments, 'Carpathian Euroregion', and it unites regional and local authorities from 19 regions of the five countries of Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania.

is driven by Polish FDI in Slovakia and Ukraine. For Slovakia, the role of the Hungarian minority is important, as is the willingness to enhance the tourist attractiveness of the border areas. For Ukraine, the equivalent factors are the significance of the ENPI CBC funds in relation to overall regional investments, opportunities to learn new models and experiences from elsewhere, and to enhance skills and knowledge. In general, highly motivated staff and strong leaders in all types of organisations involved in TC are essential for the success of TC initiatives, as well as knowledge, an implementation plan, and good relations with key stakeholders.

Implementation of territorial cooperation projects helps to satisfy needs related to infrastructure deficiencies, and it improves the quality of life of the local residents through the organisation of cultural and sports events and youth exchanges. Therefore, the cultural and social dimension of cooperation is emphasised, while the economic dimension remains marginal owing to the economic weakness of the region's businesses and most of their partners. In larger local governments, infrastructure and tourism projects can be important, perceived as an opportunity to overcome the peripheral location and foster the development of municipalities and regions.

However, the main impact of territorial cooperation is 'soft' in character: it is seen as a tool that can help to create a good climate and overcome prejudice and stereotyped opinions about the closest neighbours. This view is corroborated by the residents, who are predominantly in favour of cooperation even though they may not always be able to define its actual dimensions.

### **Main Barriers of Territorial Cooperation**

The three main barriers to establishing territorial cooperation in the case study area are the following: (i) the low level of development and peripheral location; (ii) the low attractiveness of the CS area for Western European partners; and (iii) the Schengen border regime with Ukraine. In the Slovakian part, weak local government is also a factor, as well as other funding opportunities (such as the Regional Operational Programme) being more advantageous than INTERREG. Furthermore, the lack of resources in local and regional budgets often prevents Ukrainian authorities from initiating formal collaborative projects. In most cases, they require co-funding which is unavailable due to the difficult financial situation in most Ukrainian regions and localities.

The results of the study illustrate that territorial cooperation in the case study areas currently does not foster economic development, nor does it improve the region's competitiveness in any significant way. Nevertheless, regional stakeholders have high expectations related to the development of

the tourism industry, but the real potential for this sector within the CS area is relatively low except for the city of Lviv and certain parts of Slovakia (Tatra Mountains).

The significance of micro-projects is also limited as a result of the different role of the Carpathian Euroregion in each case study area. Collaboration with twinning cities/regions is rather formal, it is not coherent, and it rarely follows a systemic approach in implementing a set of specific measures. That is why it has limited impact on the development of the regions and localities, even though it provides opportunities to open up the region to the world and to gain experience from other countries.

Very little information is available about projects implemented within EU-funded programmes, especially after completion, in the Ukrainian part of the CS area, which makes it difficult to disseminate and sustain their results. This is partially the fault of the grant providers, as they withhold information about the projects (i.e. budgets). However, regional/local governments are also guilty, as they are reluctant to release consistent information about achievements to date as it might limit their ability in future to apply for more TC projects through affiliated loyal NGOs.

## **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

### **Level of Decentralisation**

The level of decentralisation, including territorial cooperation, is highest in the Polish part of the case study area as a result of the administrative reform in 1998. The effect of the reform was to create strong horizontal and vertical cooperation between public-sector actors (and also the delegation of some TC competences to municipal entities, schools, etc.). The lowest level of decentralisation could be observed in Slovakia, where there are weak communes and regions. As a result, there is an excessive centralisation of the implementation processes, and decisions are often made without knowledge of the local conditions. In the Ukrainian part of the CS area, there is a highly centralised governance system, where local governments have minimal resources and few opportunities for independent strategies and actions. There is also a significant gap in legal and regulatory standards between Ukraine and the EU countries, while Ukrainian legislation is cumbersome and bureaucracy is overwhelming, adding to the factors that undermine joint initiatives.



## **Governance Structures**

The willingness of regional and local government leaders, NGOs, businesses and the wider public to participate in TC initiatives is a precondition for the success of cooperation. However, there is very limited involvement of the business sector, which is generally quite weak in the case study area, and there is only passive public engagement in TC. Furthermore, the need for pre-financing for TC projects/initiatives creates a considerable burden for NGOs. The most difficult situation is in Ukraine, where centralisation of power damages working contacts on the ground; and governance at the local level is characterised by very low independence and activity, something which however could be resolved with an 'order' from the higher government.

## **Implementation of Territorial Cooperation**

The assessment of territorial cooperation implementation varies in accordance with the form of cooperation and actors involved. Twinning-city cooperation is considered the easiest and most straightforward form, while INTERREG A and ENPI pose many more problems, especially lengthy and time-consuming procedures, which are reported by almost all actors involved in TC.

Good practices related to project management, which could be viewed as model ones and disseminated further, are particularly difficult to identify. Furthermore, in the Ukrainian part of the CS area, experts and officials are clearly concerned about evaluation and selection processes in the ENPI CBC programmes operating in their oblasts. The key weaknesses identified are a lack of transparency and favouritism towards applicants from EU neighbour countries, issues which cause considerable resentment among the Ukrainian partners. In addition, the work of Joint Secretariats and evaluation commissions were characterised as ineffective and undermined by elements of corruption.

## **FUTURE PROSPECTS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Range of Territorial Cooperation**

According to the interviewees, the current territorial range of cooperation is satisfactory. However, two issues should be underlined. Firstly, it is difficult to expand territorial cooperation, because actors in this CS area are not especially attractive for their counterparts in more distant countries (due to their limited accessibility, difficulty in establishing real

cooperation between economic actors and societies, and low potential to offer interesting solutions and practices). Secondly, Ukrainian partners are also interested in the transfer of knowledge and experience from Western European countries (Austria, Italy).

In the opinions of the interviewees, all the important institutional actors/partners are currently involved in territorial cooperation. However, the business sector is weak in all the areas investigated in the CS, and there is only passive involvement of the inhabitants. The number of INTERREG B and C projects is also relatively low in both Poland and Slovakia. Furthermore, with regard to Ukraine, village councils and smaller NGOs should be encouraged to take part in TC.

### **Driving Forces and Domains of Cooperation**

In general, territorial cooperation should have a positive impact on working relations among partners both within and between case study areas. The former relates to vertical and horizontal cooperation between actors at different levels of administration (for example, in Poland, poviats invite communes to engage in common cultural actions; in Slovakia, inter-communal partnerships must be established to implement larger infrastructural projects; and in Ukraine, collaboration between regional and municipal authorities is essential to obtain local co-funding). The latter relates both to twinning agreements and INTERREG A/ENPI CBC projects (however, sometimes such partnerships are strictly formal).

The balance between social and economic territorial cooperation initiatives should be shifted towards the economy, especially in the Ukrainian area. This will spur economic growth, which will contribute towards greater generation of budget revenues, which in turn will fund social programmes.

Territorial cooperation activities aimed at transferring international experience and knowledge are becoming less useful. Accordingly, future training and capacity-building activities should be designed in a more flexible and responsive way, so that they address the emerging needs of the particular area and are individually tailored for the challenges faced by the CS region counterparts.

There is a need to reduce the significant socio-economic and infrastructure disparities across the border (especially between the EU and Ukraine) that affect opportunities for coherent economic growth of the entire border area. For example, Ukraine has underdeveloped telecommunications infrastructure, and in order to match the EU level it requires additional funding from both TC and state budgets.

Furthermore, the number of border crossings should be increased, as this would facilitate opportunities for cooperation with non-EU regions/countries related to strengthening economic cooperation, the exchange or transfer of knowledge, and good relations with neighbours. However, whereas many respondents highlighted the need to increase the investment element of TC projects, some also called for a better balance between hard and soft projects, particularly that human capital development should not be neglected in favour of the great need to enhance infrastructure. Greater efforts should be made to enhance human potential in rural areas and to facilitate the exchange of experience and models.

It is possible to enhance the competitiveness of the territory through territorial cooperation activities, but for this there is a need for a strong political will combined with cooperation between the public and private sectors. Future investments should have a complex nature, and the Carpathian Euroregion should be supported as a coherent single ecosystem, rather than as a combination of various subregions.

### **Governance Structures and Implementation of Cooperation**

Regarding proper governance structures for facilitating territorial cooperation, no one size fits all, and therefore a flexible adaptation to local needs might be worth considering. For instance, local cooperation needs more decentralisation, while economic support might require more centralisation, but this depends on the project type and the form of TC.

Accountability and transparency of all CBC programmes should be enhanced. With regard to ENPI, a balance should be achieved between funds allocated to the Ukrainian and the EU partners, which currently discriminate towards the former. Furthermore, local partners should have a greater say in formulating the priorities of TC programmes.

It is anticipated that territorial cooperation in the future will remain largely 'utilitarian', and the regular contacts between partners will significantly diminish or cease to exist as soon as a specific project is completed.

### 3.4 TERRITORIAL COOPERATION IN POLAND-GERMANY-CZECH REPUBLIC BORDER REGIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the main results of research into the Czech-German-Polish neighbouring border regions. In addition to the border triangle formed by the analysed regions, this case study is quite complex with regard to the domains, structures and governance of territorial cooperation. Furthermore, the area's size and diversity contribute, *inter alia*, to different approaches to territorial cooperation (TC).

#### AREA IN BRIEF

The history of the Czech-German-Polish border area is quite turbulent and rich. In 1945, in accordance with the decision by the superpowers, the border between Poland and Germany was moved westward and the German population was replaced by Polish migrants originating from today's Western Belarus, Lithuania and the Ukraine. Similar processes occurred on the Czech side, where the borders were restored to the pre-1939 delineation and the German population was expelled by the Czech regulation. Needless to say, this is one of the sensitive cultural factors affecting territorial cooperation in this area. Eastern Germany (the former German Democratic Republic) joined the EU as a result of the German reunification in 1990, while the Czech Republic and Poland only joined the EU on 1 May 2004. However, territorial cooperation began long before the Polish and Czech EU accession. To a large extent, it was promoted by the Euroregions in the area (Neisse-Nisa-Nysa, Glacensis and Elbe-Labe), which were founded in the early 1990s. These three Euroregions are continuously involved in territorial cross-border cooperation. The

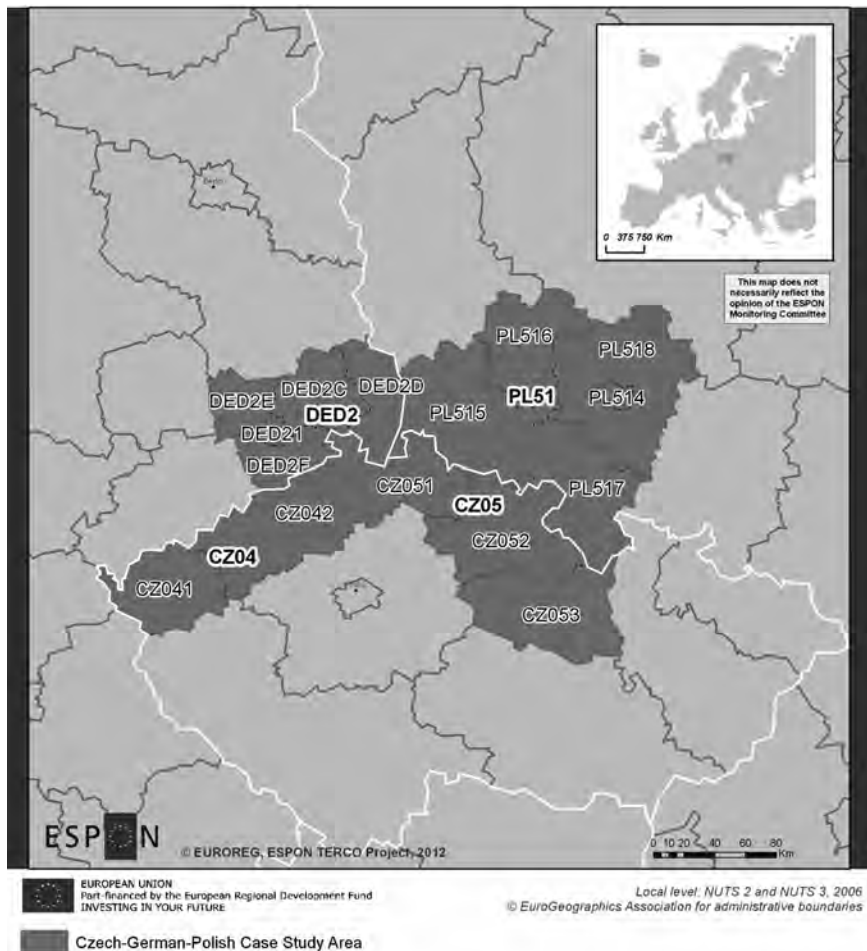
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<sup>1</sup> EUROREG, University of Warsaw.

<sup>2</sup> Spatial Foresight.

Neisse-Nisa-Nysa Euroregion is the only one that includes areas from all three involved countries, and it is completely covered by the case study.

The case study area (covering almost 50,000 square kilometres) consists of four neighbouring NUTS 2 units: the Polish Voivodship Dolnośląskie (PL 51), the German administrative region of Dresden (DED2) and two Czech regions Severozápad (CZ04) and Severovýchod (CZ05). Each of these regions neighbours at least two of the other NUTS 2 regions investigated in this case study (see Figure 1). These four NUTS 2 regions altogether include 15 NUTS 3 regions and nearly 2,000 municipalities, which indicates the variety and extent of potentially different actors involved in international territorial cooperation of this case study area.



**Figure 1** Area of cooperation (NUTS 2 regions) covered by the case study

Source: ESPON TERCO.

The central part of the area is dominated by high mountain ranges: the Riesengebirge/ Krkonoše/Karkonosze along the Polish-Czech border and the Erzgebirge/Krušné hory along the Czech-German border. These mountain ranges dominate most parts of the cooperation area and are thus crucial in the design of territorial cooperation in this border triangle.

The two largest cities in the case study area are Wrocław in Poland and Dresden in Germany, both with more than 0.5 million inhabitants. However, these cities are located at the outer edges of the area under investigation. The largest cities located in closer proximity to the borders have about 100,000 inhabitants, e.g. Hradec Králové and Liberec in the Czech Republic, and Jelenia Góra and Wałbrzych in the Polish part of the area.

Despite being centrally located in Europe, this border area is quite peripheral for all three countries, implying that GDP per capita in most parts is below the respective national average and unemployment rates tend to be above the national average (see Table 1). This has led to decreasing population in all four NUTS 2 regions, partly as a result of negative migration balances over the last decade. At the same time, productivity and income levels differ considerably, as indicated by the GDP per capita levels presented in Table 1; and all four regions in the case study area have undergone substantial industrial restructuring processes, which are most advanced in the German region.

**Table 1** GDP and unemployment rate in the area covered by case study (2010)

Indicator	Czech case study area		German case study area	Polish case study area
	Severozápad	Severovýchod		
GDP per capita (EUR)	11,200	11,700	22,400	11,200
GDP p.c. as percentage of national averages	78	82	76	113
Unemployment rate as percentage of national averages	177	91	164	128

Source: own elaboration based on data from the EUROSTAT and National Statistical Offices.

Transport infrastructure is well developed in part, but the quality of direct links in some parts of the area still requires improvement. Significant improvements have been realised during the past decade, but the level of quality differs in the three countries' regions of the case study area. Related shortcomings are observed especially in the Polish-Czech mountain ranges. The area under consideration is facing a number of common problems linked particularly to the common geography and recurring river floods.

Despite the formally similar differentiation of NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 regions in the case study area, there are considerable differences in competencies in the different countries involved. Territorial competencies are more decentralised in the German and Czech regions as compared to their Polish counterparts. The Polish regions, despite being part of a decentralised state, have relatively few competences with regard to cross-border cooperation, where the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plays a key role. This differing distribution of competences has a critical impact on governance processes and the organisation of territorial cooperation in the case study area.

## STRENGTHS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

Against the background described above, the strengths of territorial cooperation can be differentiated according to their driving forces, the domains (themes) of cooperation, and the results that TC has had on territorial and governance structures.<sup>3</sup>

A number of driving forces have enhanced territorial cooperation in the case study area, and each can thus be perceived as a strength for nurturing territorial cooperation. However, not all of them are unambiguous – some may also be partially perceived as a weakness. With some simplification, the following list defines the positive driving forces.

- **Similarity of problems.** As a result of the mountainous geography and common river beds, the whole cooperation area faces common problems. For instance, the flooding of rivers is perceived as a problem that needs to be solved by common cross-border activities. With regard to hard infrastructure, the common perception of problems occurs only in parts of the case study area – this tends to be an ongoing issue for the Czech and Polish parts of the border region, whereas on the German side it is increasingly focused on ‘soft’ developments, as the infrastructure is already highly developed. Overall, there is a broad understanding and awareness that the area faces numerous common problems that can best be solved by exchanging experience and developing common methods and instruments.
- **Geographical proximity.** Despite the fact that territorial cooperation became more vigorous after all the three countries joined the EU, the need and tradition of cooperation has existed for a considerable time, based on old and new ties. Even if there were periods of *de facto* isolation

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<sup>3</sup> These elaborations represent a joint assessment of the qualitative case study research conducted by the project team and the CAWI survey responses of actors in the case study area.



(the longest was the period of Solidarity in Poland, when borders with other 'socialist' countries were sealed), local cooperation continued (with many workers employed in neighbouring municipalities on the other side of the border). These local ties strengthened after 1989, particularly because of increasing financial opportunities available to Polish municipalities.

- **Historical ties.** The above-mentioned driving forces of geographical proximity are strongly linked to the historical ties of the area. Cultural links have been established over centuries and are still tangible, e.g. in architecture or in the bilingualism of the Sorb minority in the German part of the case study area.
- **Political will.** Local and regional actors have a strong political will to intensify international territorial cooperation in the area, especially in view of the common problems and historical ties.
- **Availability of external funding.** Particularly after 1 May 2004, when Poland and the Czech Republic joined the EU, it became easier to receive strong and diversified support for territorial cooperation through the Structural Funds.<sup>4</sup>
- **Human interest.** Lastly, territorial cooperation in this area is driven by human curiosity. Large numbers of the local population wish to acquaint themselves with neighbouring cultures, to visit tourist attractions in neighbouring regions, or to gain economic advantage from different products and prices by shopping across the border.

Although these motivations are of central importance for TC, they play different roles in different types of TC and within different cooperation domains. INTERREG A seems well prepared to help in solving most local problems shared by at least two sides of the border. Thus, the identification of common problems is a fundamental driver for cooperation within this strand of Structural Funds cooperation. However, the situation differs in the case of twinning cities, where soft motives (the exchange of experience, the willingness to get acquainted with another culture) are most important for becoming involved in territorial cooperation. For other types of TC, e.g. transnational and interregional cooperation, a combination of the above motives acts to enhance cooperation activities. The combinations vary, for example depending on the specific objectives of cooperation and the types of institutions involved.

The character and intensity of cooperation also depends on the specific domain within which the cooperation takes place. To date, cooperation

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<sup>4</sup> The situation is far from being perfect, but the territorial cooperation schemes created conditions for more intensive and effective collaboration than before. Further improvements were realised with the changes in the management system in 2007.



has been most intensive in financial terms in the domains of transport infrastructure, social and cultural infrastructure, environment and tourism. In other domains, such as education, cooperation is also intensive though with lower financial requirements. All these fields of cooperation are highly connected with the interest in solving common problems. 'Soft' projects are not restricted to cross-border cooperation, but are also developed in other forms of TC, including the important instrument for twinning activities. Cooperation between twinned cities is developing well in the case study area, where the most prominent example is Görlitz-Zgorzelec, located at the German-Polish border. Beyond this form of twin cities within geographical proximity, twinning is mostly limited to larger cities across Europe.

These activities in different domains and across different types of international territorial cooperation have already had a number of positive effects, as follows.

- **Intensification of relationships.** In most cases of successful cooperation, partners on the other side of the border helped to intensify the relationships both within the partner regions as well as across the border. The cooperation has helped to improve not only formal contacts but also informal and personal contacts. With a sound contact network, it has become possible to deliver fast and effective assistance across the border if the need arises, as in the case of the floods in 2011. This in turn has contributed to developing closer ties among the partners on the different sides of the border triangle.
- **Widening of cooperation scope.** The scope of cooperation has widened with the intensification of the relationships. Often starting from small projects, and rarely linked to cultural exchanges, cooperation has developed as a basis for accommodating other more complex themes and more complex forms of cooperation. As a consequence, the variety of themes tackled is broader than in the early years of cooperation. The number of institutions involved has increased, and the types of projects are increasing in variety as well as in terms of governance and implementation structures.

In general, physical barriers and similarities do not play a significant role: other factors are more important. However, more sophisticated forms of cooperation (innovation, high-level education, etc.) tend to concentrate in the largest cities in the area (Wrocław and Dresden, and to a lesser extent in Jelenia Góra and Liberec), where economic cooperation operates under conditions more favourable for institutional development and where there are no challenges from local competition.

## WEAKNESSES OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

In a similar fashion to the strengths, the weaknesses of territorial cooperation in the Czech-German-Polish border triangle are partly linked to the driving forces and domains of cooperation. And despite the progress made, there are still a number of weaknesses that have not yet been overcome in terms of territorial and governance structures. Difficulties in discussing weaknesses of territorial cooperation result from the partially different perceptions held on either side of the border, i.e. what is understood as a weakness by actors on one side of the border is not necessarily seen as a weakness by the actors in either of the other two countries within the case study area. Furthermore, as mentioned above, some of the drivers perceived as strengths are ambiguous and may include hindering characteristics.

- **Different institutional systems.** Partly as a result of the long period of isolation following World War II, the institutional systems of these neighbouring regions developed very differently. Despite achievements in intensifying territorial cooperation in the area, institutional barriers have limited the depth of cooperation. To date, no EGTC has been founded in the area.<sup>5</sup> These institutional differences also affect the different spatial planning systems and decision-making procedures.
- **Limited synergies and interests.** Although a number of common problems have been identified, for instance with regard to the environment or infrastructure development, common interests focus on a limited range of issues. Firstly, these limitations refer to different approaches favoured in addressing one common problem. With regard to infrastructure, for example, Polish and Czech actors are much more interested than the German actors in projects related to modernisation and construction of new technical infrastructure. The Germans place much more emphasis on the need for ‘soft’ projects (innovation, etc). This difference is linked to the different levels of hard infrastructure available in Germany, on the one hand, and in Poland and the Czech Republic on the other hand. Consequently, approaches to project selection differ: Czech and Polish stakeholders are often searching for infrastructure project partners, while the potential German partners prefer to implement ‘soft’, often quite complex, projects. This implies a partnership asymmetry that limits the room to manoeuvre. Secondly, these limitations affect the variety of the domains tackled. The actors in the region mostly show a weak interest in cooperating

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<sup>5</sup> However, interest in creating EGTCs has grown in the area, and the first attempts at founding EGTCs in the German-Polish border area are now under way. For example, see [www.ostbahn.eu](http://www.ostbahn.eu) or [www.egtc-neisse-nisa-nysa.eu](http://www.egtc-neisse-nisa-nysa.eu).

in the field of economic development, where competition still prevails over cooperation. More sophisticated forms of cooperation, aimed at innovation, tertiary education, etc., tend to concentrate in the largest cities of the case study area (especially in Wrocław and Dresden, less so in Jelenia Góra and Liberec), where the environment is more favourable for developing economic cooperation.

- **Socio-economic asymmetry.** The above issues of limited interests, as well as the description of the case study area in the first section of this paper, mirror the asymmetry of economic structures and infrastructure provision. This asymmetry ultimately affects the approaches to projects not only in terms of content but also with regard to project management. On the German side, external experts play a greater role in supporting local (mostly administrative) stakeholders than in the Czech and Polish parts of the cooperation area.
- **Limited funding.** EU accession has introduced the opportunity to use EU funds for territorial cooperation, especially the Structural Funds. However, the financing rules of the Structural Funds do not allow very small institutions or relatively poor municipalities to participate in the projects – and such institutions and municipalities are very common in the case study area. They either lack the necessary co-financing means in total or find it difficult to raise the funds for the necessary pre-financing. This is a particularly serious problem with regard to NGO involvement in territorial cooperation in the border triangle area.
- **Considering wider objectives of TC.** Another weakness relates to the relationship between cross-border activities and the wider objectives of other forms of TC (especially INTERREG B and C). In theory, they should be coordinated, but this does not happen in practice. Until now, the municipalities – the main beneficiaries of INTERREG A projects – have concentrated their activities on this type of cooperation rather than paying attention to other, more demanding (in terms of time, skills, knowledge and experience) forms of TC. Thus, the links that could create synergies between different forms of TC remain weak in the case study region. In addition, other sources for creating synergies, such as external expertise, are hampered by the territorial restrictions of the cooperation areas.

An example of lack of coordination between projects is presented by the infrastructure for preventing floods. Local investments in the upper parts of the river have side effects, in that they move the flood further downstream to neighbouring municipalities. In addition, some actors believe that the current asymmetry in flood protection infrastructure on both sides of the border river Oder (Odra) makes the floods heavier and less predictable.

- **Limited intercultural skills.** One of the reasons preventing the actors from moving forward to more integrated and more complex forms of cooperation is linked to the continuing deficit in terms of intercultural skills. This refers especially to a lack of language proficiency. Particularly on the German side of the cooperation area, very few people can speak the national languages of the neighbouring countries. Accordingly, translation continues to be an important element in developing and implementing TC projects.

To sum up, when discussing the weaknesses of TC in the Czech-German-Polish border triangle, it is important to notice that they have different characters and often require soft measures or solutions. Some weaknesses can possibly be solved by changes in management rules and project selection criteria, but other weaknesses are more difficult to remove as they refer to awareness-building (regarding contemporary development drivers, synergistic effects etc.) and will need additional time for further improvement. *De facto*, these two aspects are interrelated and as such should be reinforcing each other – but only cooperation experience can promote further integration. However, the differences in institutional systems still hamper more integrated and complex approaches. In the long run, if it is not tackled by future territorial cooperation activities, this factor may become a major problem.

## **FUTURE OPTIONS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION FOR INTEGRATION**

An overall comparison of strengths and weaknesses in international territorial cooperation in the Czech-German-Polish border triangle reveals that there are challenges that need to be tackled urgently. If territorial cooperation in this area progresses, especially in terms of qualitative improvements, it may release additional development potential. Nevertheless, TC activities alone cannot solve the development problems of the area in question. In some fields, TC is already relatively successful (e.g. tourism development), and in some fields the process of cooperation (e.g. flood protection, transport links) has recently become more intensive. However, in other fields TC has failed to make significant progress (especially in innovation, business development and industrial restructuring), because the regional development problems are simply too large and too complex to be solved within one programme and over a few years.

If TC is to contribute more significantly to European integration in this particular area, it will have to be designed in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. It will also have to be better coordinated with other European and national (regional) strategic development plans. It is not

sufficient to consider cross-border cooperation as being 'too specific to be coordinated with other programmes'. This assessment needs to be replaced by a territorially coordinated and integrated approach, which flexibly uses endogenous and exogenous resources for the benefit of the development of the area. Rather than an integration of management systems or different funds, this requires the coordination of objectives, common rules and timely coordination to benefit from potential synergies.

The main stakeholders and beneficiaries of TC are currently municipalities with clear-cut 'shopping lists'. As time passes, it can be anticipated that existing infrastructure gaps will be closed and the whole area can collectively move on to address other common problems, such as the management of environmental protection in the national parks of the area or some other complex projects. It will thus become more important to move to network projects, to projects aiming at goals with wider importance. Although the management structures imposed in 2007 were initially received by many as an administrative burden, the need to develop and justify cross-border projects has improved the portfolio of projects. They increasingly aim to build on the competitive strengths of the whole area rather than tackling individual municipalities. This trend needs to be strengthened.

Finally, there is the question of which themes should be covered by future TC. There is a widespread understanding among beneficiaries that hard infrastructure should become less important for TC projects, instead favouring cooperation in the field of economics, which was relatively highly rated. Nevertheless, cooperation in the fields of natural environment, cultural events, tourism and educational exchange still rank higher in the opinion of the municipalities. The Commission's EU Cohesion policy proposals for the 2014-2020 period suggest that cooperation in the fields of innovation and economic development must become more important. Nevertheless, in order to promote an integrated regional development policy, the structure of Cohesion policy support needs to be adjusted to the needs of the area in question, which will require more networking, deeper cooperation and the involvement of various experts. Last but not least, this approach envisages the involvement of more bilingual and possibly trilingual experts who can enhance direct cooperation. Thus, education will have to play a continuous role in developing important foundations for a deeper intercultural dialogue.

Despite these needs, the case study shows that rivers, mountains, etc. need not be barriers but can instead be perceived as offering potential for cooperation. Past experience of TC in the case study area shows the need for further integration. The central location in Europe, not too far from the metropolises of Berlin, Prague and Wrocław, may prove to be beneficial for such future development.

### 3.5 TERRITORIAL COOPERATION IN BELGIUM-FRANCE BORDER REGIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

The study area represents the most densely populated part of the Franco-Belgian cross-border area, even though it is currently experiencing weak demographic growth. It includes the French *départements* of Nord and Pas-de-Calais (two NUTS 3 units, respectively the first and the seventh French *départements* by the size of their population) and the two Belgian provinces of West-Vlaanderen and Hainaut (NUTS 2 level, divided respectively into eight and seven *arrondissements* at NUTS 3 level). In addition to its cross-border character, the case study area is further divided within its Belgian part between the Flemish Region (merged with the Dutch-speaking Community) and the French-speaking Walloon Region. From a Belgian institutional perspective, this constitutes a quasi-international context for many themes, for instance relating to territorial planning, regional economy, transport (with the exception of the railways), education, culture, etc., for which the federal government has no competence.

Even with a common past and some current common trends, this territory presents a heterogeneous internal environment, e.g. a metropolitan area around Lille, a low-density population area in the rural region of Picardie, the old coalfield basin around Valenciennes, and the coastal area around Dunkerke. This heterogeneity is also found in the economic development and social structure, which were to some extent common across borders in terms of industrial activities (textile industry, coal mining), but differentiated within national borders. Both sides of the border lack local entrepreneurship regarding the old coal mining basins and the associated heavy industry. The social structures are more differentiated in the textile regions, with a recent modernisation in West Vlaanderen leading to a very dynamic industrial district around Kortrijk and Roeselare. Reflecting

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<sup>1</sup> IGEAT, Université Libre de Bruxelles.

the consequences of its manufacturing and mining past, the study area appears quite deprived (in terms of GDP, unemployment, poverty), at least compared to the North Western European standard. The only exceptions are the areas of Lille and West Vlandereen, where the urban structure is very dense, Lille being the main pole.

Despite a small flow of commuters, mainly from France to Flanders, this cross-border area is not a functionally integrated one. Lille Functional Urban Area (FUA) includes only one city in Belgium (Comines), despite the contiguity with other Morphological Urban Areas (MUA), and there is no unique manpower resource base. Consequently, trans-border functional integration remains weaker than expected, especially regarding commuting, irrespective of the common past and the very open character of the border, with crossings that sometimes pass through local streets, and with people crossing the border daily to buy cigarettes or to dance on Saturday night in the Belgian seaside resort of La Panne, or with rich French people moving to the Tournai's surroundings to escape taxation.

## STRENGTHS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

The main motivation and drivers for territorial cooperation in the area were synthesised from the interviews<sup>2</sup> as follows:

- a strong political will, at local and regional level, to support national and EU positioning (eventually international);
- a concrete need for practical day-to-day cooperation within the cross-border territory related to citizens' needs in this territory, as well as environmental concerns (water management mainly, floods) – so these issues were not linked much to the 'functional' territory (e.g. characterised by employment flows), which exists only to a limited extent, as outlined in the introduction;
- a common feeling that border territories are positioned at the (forgotten) periphery of their respective country, and cooperation changes this position, creating a new centrality and focus; and
- eventually, the potential to gain a stronger position when dealing with external actors, including the EU.

In synthesis, the main drivers for cooperation on this territory range from shared (development) concerns and practical daily needs to larger strategic issues and the involvement of political actors.

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<sup>2</sup> Around 25 face-to-face interviews were conducted with main stakeholders and actors in cooperation in the area. Further information was collected through a combination of CAWI questionnaires sent to local administrations and desk research.



From the point of view of governance, Lille has the considerable advantage of being included in a *Communauté urbaine* (Lille Métropole Communauté urbaine, LMCU), which fits well with its FUA limits. The trans-border cooperation of the *Communauté urbaine* of Lille with both the Flemish and Walloon areas (respectively the Belgian *intercommunales de développement* Leiedal and the West-Vlaamse *Intercommunale* (WVI) for the *arrondissements* of Kortrijk, Ieper, Roeselare and Tielt and IEG and IDETA for the areas of Mouscron and Tournai-Ath) is developing and is well structured. These bodies (LMCU, IDETA, IEG, Leiedal, and WVI) created a *Eurométropole* (LIKOTO) in 2008, with the European statute of an EGTC (see chapter on EGTC), which is by far the most advanced trans-border cooperative structure in the region. It includes all the relevant levels of authorities in order to implement strategies and projects within the territory.

The members of EGTC LIKOTO are:

French side	Belgian side
1. French National State	5. IEG intercommunale
2. Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region	6. IDETA intercommunale
3. Nord Departement	7. Province Hainaut
4. Lille Metropole Communauté Urbaine	8. French Community of Belgium
	9. Walloon Government (Region)
	10. West-Vlaamse Intercommunale(WVI)
	11. Leiedal intercommunale
	12. Provincie West-Vlaanderen
	13. Flemish Government (Region and Community)
	14. The Belgian Federal State

Source: Author's elaboration.

This EGTC also implemented a forum for civil society (with representatives from the *Conseil de Développement* or similar bodies).<sup>3</sup>

Another EGTC has linked the coastal areas of Pas-de-Calais and Nord and the Belgian province of West Vlaanderen since 2009, more oriented towards cooperation between the coastal and seaside leisure sectors. Other attempts to initiate cooperation, but on a less structured and more occasional basis, are emerging between Mons and Valenciennes and between the French and the Belgian sides of the Sambre valley.

<sup>3</sup> See the Eurométropole Agency website and website for the Conseil de Développement FR, Wallonie Picarde, and Transforum.



The members of EGTC West-Vlaanderen/Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale are:

Belgian side	French side
1. Provincie West-Vlaanderen	6. Dunkerque Grand Littoral Communauté urbaine
2. West-Vlaamse Intercommunale (WVI)	7. Pays Moulins de Flandre
3. ERSV West-Vlaanderen vzw on behalf of RESOC Westhoek	8. Pays Cœur de Flandre
4. Flemish Government	9. Agence de développement et d'urbanisme de la région Flandre- Dunkerque (AGUR)
5. Belgian Federal State	10. Département du Nord
	11. Département du Pas-de-Calais
	12. Région Nord-Pas-de-Calais
	13. French National State

Source: Author's elaboration.

The possibility of involving the UK in the cross-border cooperation around the sea has also been raised.

Domains of cooperation in the area currently focus on economy, culture, tourism, mobility, public services, territorial strategy and environmental (water) management. All these themes were identified through a bottom-up process, emerging from an already long history of informal cooperation between actors in territorial development, as well as the involvement of business sector, to some extent. Furthermore, the new structure utilised in the framework of the EGTC LIKOTO, the civil society Forum of *Eurométropole*, has identified two major themes – medical/social and culture (including language) – that will be included in future strategy and project implementation.

**Table 1** Territorial cooperation drivers and facilitators – synthesis

Drivers	Facilitators
Political will, mainly at local and regional level	Availability of financial resources
A clear policy initiative to promote cooperation	A clear EU policy initiative to promote cooperation
Institutional commitment and resources at regional/local level	Institutional commitment and resources at national level
Shared development concerns	Shared cultural/historical links
Good interpersonal relations	Good interpersonal relations
Physical proximity	Men and women on the ground
Population needs	Language facilities

Source: Author's elaboration.

The main strengths of this territorial cooperation can be summarised as a strong political will to position this territory at national and EU level, accommodating citizens' daily needs, common environmental concerns and a long history of cooperation ranging from informal to more structured and formal organisation through the EGTC European regulatory tool, which includes a desire to involve civil society and the business sector.

## **WEAKNESSES OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

The difficulties this territory is facing relate to different socio-economic patterns, and sometimes contradictory or even conflicting interests, on both sides of the border, but also inside national borders, e.g. between the Flemish and Walloon members of the Belgian side, or between different levels of authorities on the French side. The lack of solidarity between partners of the cooperation can be a real hindrance, particularly when one partner takes decisions, without any consultation, that have important negative impacts on the other partners, or when one partner is able to manage more lobbying to secure a favourable decision for his part of the territory. There are often not enough 'shared development concerns', and the collective repartition and redistribution of investment and implementation resources remain a distant prospect. In addition, partners (and stakeholders) have different political agendas, due to different levels of authorities and election terms.

Another weakness relates to support in terms of political will. Currently, and for some decades previously, cooperation in this area has been strongly promoted by political will at local, regional and national levels (some politicians were involved at all three levels), and it has also been supported by local actors with a long-term holistic strategy. This scenario could change if no concrete (short-term) impact is seen in the near future and/or significant changes occur on the political scene. This is especially relevant, as this area of cooperation is not a functional one, and it does not have to accommodate heavy commuting activities.

Two missing actors were also identified: the EU, which should be more involved, and the population. As indicated above, there are tentative moves to involve organised civil society and the business sector, but on the whole it remains extremely difficult to involve non-public actors in territorial cooperation.

Lastly, 'organisational' barriers represent a common issue for all territorial cooperation: differing national legislations are extremely complicated to reconcile, and the EGTC instrument has not yet been successful in resolving such problems. It is also difficult to identify the relevant actors for the different themes under consideration, to bring together the appropriate

actors for technical competence and political decision-making, and to keep them involved after being identified (managing lack of motivation, change of persons in post, reorganisation of administration, etc.).

The main weaknesses in this territorial cooperation can be summarised as contradictory/conflicting interests amongst the partners or other actors playing a role in territorial development, potential disinterest and lack of motivation from major political actors, the absence of important actors (EU level and civil society), and specific organisational problems.

**Table 2** Territorial cooperation potential hindrances and obstacles – synthesis

Hindrances	Obstacles (can be overcome)
Lack of political interest/support (potential)	Lack of financial resources (not relevant here)
Lack of institutional resources (not relevant here)	Cultural/linguistic differences (also an asset, and an objective of the cooperation)
Organisational/institutional barriers	Organisational/institutional barriers
Lack of solidarity between partners	Difficult to identify the relevant actors
No shared development concerns (not relevant here)	Different political agenda (elections)
Administrative burden	Administrative burden

Source: Author's elaboration.

### FUTURE OPTIONS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION FOR INTEGRATION

All interviewees supported the relevance of, and need for, territorial cooperation. They also emphasised the importance of physical proximity (INTERREG A) for territorial cooperation due to several factors linked to needs, opportunities, quality of life and competitiveness. Territorial cooperation is needed as citizens cross the border every day, creating a daily need for cooperation and concrete actions on the ground (e.g. transport, cultural exchanges) and providing an opportunity to share physical infrastructure of major importance (hospitals, medical care, fire services), as several domains have an impact with no delimiting border (e.g. water pollution), as it facilitates reaching a critical mass, a superior threshold that can generate higher quality projects, more infrastructure development and sharing. It also presents an opportunity to move upward in terms of positioning within the EU network (from a national periphery city to an EU metropolis or EU polycentric region), and it provides scope to present the territory to international investors from a complementary

perspective (complementary assets, metropolitan size, so that factors unavailable on one side of the border may be found on the other side) and encompassing a larger scale.

Those elements form part of the evolution towards territorial integration, which is quite developed in political terms in the case study territory. It has a long history of exchange and cooperation, with several environmental concerns in common, and the potential for a long-term strategy around a European metropolis, as well as a fluvial and coastal strategy. Domains that would be most advantageously supported by territorial cooperation in this area include meeting citizens' needs (security–emergency services, health), environmental concerns (floods, biological corridors), fluvial/harbour strategy and metropolitan positioning. This territory is now largely covered by two EGTCs, which is an asset for stability and agreeing on common procedural rules, and towards more territorial integration, reflected by the current elaboration process of a common strategy for territorial development.

Nevertheless, the question of the area to be covered by the 'institutionalised' cooperation is a key issue. Each cooperation initiative should have the possibility to be *géographie variable*, and an agreed balance between functional and political aspects must be found. At this stage, both EGTCs are intended to face two challenges: (i) how to provide a better daily life for the inhabitants of the territory, with proximity objectives, and (ii) how to support a strategy with a larger perspective, over an extended territory. Therefore, as with multi-level governance, the cooperation needs to be 'multi-scalar' and have the potential to adapt depending on themes and objectives (or issue-related, see chapter on EGTC). As an example, if the objective is international competition, then even the *Eurométropole* does not always represent the appropriate territory: what is needed is cooperation with a high-level pole of excellence based at a territorially larger scale. If the objective relates to positioning a functional area (work and density of population), the *Bassin minier* in the south of Lille should be included in the LMCU. On the other hand, the importance of the local level and being in physical proximity is underlined for example for all issues related to daily life of citizens.

To conclude, the territory of the cooperation now in place, mainly institutionalised through EGTC instruments, is the result of a long history and maturation, as well as political negotiation and balance; it can still evolve, but efforts are currently concentrated on deepening the actual existing territorial cooperation. If a real constraint for operationalisation of cooperation were linked to the fact that several domains of interest are outside the field of competence of the actors involved in the cross-border cooperation, the implementation of a structure involving all the requested

competent authorities – as it is the case with the two EGTCs established on this territory – should help. This could prove to be an interesting and concrete implementation and evolution of the subsidiarity principle, which would promote territorial integration if decision by consensus could be reached. Another potential role for the EGTC is to become the Managing Authority for the INTERREG programme, but this does not seem to be envisaged at this stage.

### **3.6 TERRITORIAL COOPERATION IN SCOTLAND-NORWAY-SWEDEN BORDER REGIONS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides an overview of some key aspects of territorial cooperation (TC) and territorial integration in Scotland, Norway and Sweden. The first sections of the chapter focus on the strengths of territorial cooperation in the case study area, discussing the cultural and geographical conditions, the underlying motivations and domains in which TC takes place, and governance structures. In the subsequent sections, the weaknesses of territorial cooperation and territorial integration identified in the case study area are discussed. These include inaccessibility and peripherality, lack of impact, and lack of engagement with some groups of partners, particularly private sector partners.

The findings are based primarily on semi-structured interviews with 40 subjects in the case study area. The subjects included 12 interviewees from Norway, 12 from Sweden and 16 from Scotland. Care was taken in their selection to achieve a geographically representative range of participants. Subjects were selected according to the spatial levels they represented (national, regional and local), and staff from several TC programmes were interviewed (e.g. Managing Authorities, Joint Technical Secretariats, National Contact Points and Regional Contact Points). Beneficiaries of TC programmes were also interviewed (e.g. universities and colleges, regional groups, trusts). The interviews were conducted over the period 14 June 2011 to 10 November 2011. A number of documentary sources were also consulted, including regulations and draft regulations on territorial cooperation, and national and regional policy documents. Programme documentation (operational programmes, manuals, annual reports, evaluations etc.) was also consulted. European and national statistical data sources

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<sup>1</sup> EPRC, University of Strathclyde.

were used to provide the socio-demographical context of the case study area.

## CASE STUDY AREA

The case study area covers three territories that have different links with EU institutional frameworks. As part of the UK, Scotland is a member of the European Union but not part of the Eurozone or Schengen zone. Since 1999, Scotland has had a devolved parliament, which has no formal competencies in international (and European) affairs, but which has been a facilitator in raising Scotland's profile internationally and has given TC initiatives an increased Scottish dimension. Norway is not an EU Member State, but it is in the Schengen zone, and it has established close links with EU institutions. Sweden is an EU Member State and is within the Schengen area, but it is not a Eurozone member.

The case study area includes urban centres in the South of Norway and Sweden and the Central Belt in Scotland. However, it is mainly characterised by its peripherality and the relative remoteness of large parts of the area. The geography of the region includes some of the most remote and inaccessible areas in Europe (ESPON 1.1.1, 2005).

In terms of population, Scotland's population is around five million, Sweden has a population of around 9.4 million and Norway has around 4.6 million people. Unemployment in Norway is consistently low throughout the country when compared to Scotland and Sweden. Sweden and Norway have some of the highest GDP per capita figures in Europe (and the world), respectively ranking eighth and second in Europe in 2010 (Eurostat, 2010). Scotland's GDP per capita is lower than that of Sweden and Norway. All regions in Sweden and Norway have GDP figures higher than the European average, but the Scottish Region of Highlands and Islands has a lower-than-average GDP (Eurostat, 2008).

Sweden and Norway show high levels of political integration through institutions such as the Nordic and Arctic Councils. In terms of EU territorial cooperation, Scotland, Sweden and Norway are involved in several INTERREG programmes. Scotland is involved in four INTERREG B programmes and one INTERREG A programme; Norway participates in three INTERREG A and three INTERREG B programmes; and Sweden has the highest concentration with six INTERREG A programmes and three INTERREG B programmes.

## STRENGTHS

### Culture and Geography

There is a long history of territorial cooperation between the case study countries. Until 1905, Norway was under Swedish rule, and cultural links between the two countries have remained strong. Due to the cultural propinquity, or closeness, between these two countries, TC takes place on what can be described as a 'natural' basis. Sweden and throughout history Norway share long-standing maritime and trade links with Scotland, and peoples of Scandinavian origin have settled on the Scottish islands and mainland. Such links can form a natural basis for TC and are, for example, exploited in tourism and cultural projects.

The geographical barriers between the countries – the North Sea but also the Kjølén mountain range, which covers large parts of the Norwegian and Swedish border regions – are not regarded as a barrier to territorial integration but more as an opportunity for integration and cooperation. Territorial features such as maritime basins, transport corridors, mountainous areas, rural regions and urban regions are considered important for cooperation, as they provide common opportunities and challenges around which co-operation can be organised and become meaningful.

The similarity in geographical conditions in the three countries means that challenges and opportunities in many domains (economy, socio-demographic, environment, etc.) show a high level of congruence and provide an impetus for cooperation efforts. By pooling expertise at an international level, a critical mass can be achieved that not only allows for knowledge-sharing but also for piloting innovative approaches to development concerns that can be shared across the area. Furthermore, the vast variety of TC programmes in the case study area allows partners to cooperate on the basis of territorial structures/features and priorities that are relevant to them.

### Motivations and Domains

The motivations for actors to engage in territorial cooperation across the case study area are diverse. Actors commonly emphasise networking and knowledge-exchange as motivations for participation. Particularly in the case of Norway, INTERREG presents a valuable opportunity to engage directly with neighbouring countries in an EU framework. In addition to domestically-orientated motivations for cooperation, there are also motives that emphasise a need for territorial integration. Such motives are more in line with the definition used by Böhme *et al.* (2011), who described territorial cooperation as 'the territorial integration of functional areas to make them evolve into consistent geographical entitie[s]'. In these cases,



motivation for involvement is based on a requirement to find solutions to common challenges, develop transnational strategies, gain access to foreign markets, and develop local sectors.

Territorial cooperation programmes cover a range of domains, or areas of intervention. The domains in which TC is most developed are illustrated in Figure 1. It should be noted that in this study each domain was only coded once per interviewee (e.g. if a respondent mentioned culture several times, it is only counted once). Domains that were mentioned by only one respondent have been omitted.

The analysis found that, overall, territorial cooperation is deemed particularly well developed in the domains of culture, education and tourism. However, specific conditions in participating regions can also lead to intensive cooperation in more specialist areas, meaning that the domains in which TC are most developed are very much context-dependent. For example, in Aberdeen (Scotland) and Rogaland (Norway), the focus is on the energy sector and maritime projects, as both border the North Sea and have large oil-based industries. In other areas, cooperation activities tend to be focused on tourism and culture (Shetlands and the northern parts of Sweden and Norway).



**Figure 1** Domains in which TC is most developed  
Source: Author's elaboration.

Figure 2 illustrates the diversity, scope and range of domains that respondents believed would benefit from more territorial cooperation in the case study area. Many of the answers reflected the interviewees' personal interest or field of expertise. The number and range of domains

assessed as benefiting from TC perhaps illustrates one of the key tensions in TC programmes in recent years: on the one hand, there is a desire to focus TC efforts in order to generate impact; on the other hand, there has to be enough scope to attract partners and to make programmes relevant for the participating regions.



**Figure 2** Activities that would be most beneficially supported by TC

Source: Author's elaboration.

In general, the domains identified as being best placed to benefit from territorial cooperation support largely correspond with those that are already most developed in the case study area (Figure 1). However, there is also a focus on renewables and innovation, as well as employment, themes that are strongly linked to the Europe 2020 agenda of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The current European Commission proposals include a provision on thematic concentration and investment priorities. Such a provision could potentially clash with the perception that a wide range of domains are perceived to benefit from TC and with the Member States' desire to remain in control of budgetary allocation.

**Governance**

Institutional links in the Nordic countries are strong and predate many EU cooperation initiatives. Forums such as the Nordic Council, the Nordic Council of ministers and the Arctic Council (as well as the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Arvika and Kongsvinger, the Mid-Nordic Council and NSPA) are well established and facilitate political integration at regional and national levels. Territorial cooperation is initiated at different

levels depending on the type of cooperation undertaken. For example, INTERREG B programmes have a higher regional and central government involvement, whereas INTERREG A and twinning cooperation are more locally driven. It is also worth noting that higher education institutions are often an important mobiliser for TC due to their international contacts.

In all the countries in the case study area, there is a general preference for a bottom-up approach to the governance of territorial cooperation, (although opinions were more divided in Sweden). Bottom-up approaches are regarded as positive because they ensure local relevance, create more innovative partnerships, create local buy-in, and facilitate project generation. In Scotland and Sweden, there is some support for elements of centralisation, in order to ensure that programmes have a clear direction. In Norway there is particular support for locally-driven programmes. Yet, some level of institutionalisation is regarded as important, as this ensures consistency, durability and stability, although it should not stifle the TC efforts.

As well as broad support for bottom-up territorial cooperation, an open and flexible approach is also supported. Flexibility is regarded as necessary to achieve positive outcomes in ever-changing contextual circumstances. There is also a clear preference for broad partnerships. The advantages of broad partnerships are perceived to be that they can achieve innovative projects and the projects enjoy greater visibility.

## **WEAKNESSES**

### **Inaccessibility and Peripherality**

Geographically, large parts of the case study area are remote, sparsely populated and can be classified as ultra-peripheral (ESPON 1.1.1, 2005). Furthermore, links between cities in the northern part of the case study area are low (ESPON 2.1.1, 2004: 115). The physical geography, lack of transport links and dispersed settlements in large parts of the case study area limit accessibility. Many of the transport links in Norway and Sweden are oriented north-south, particularly in northern regions and there is a lack of east-west transport. For TC efforts in the area, this means that even basic travel arrangements can be complex, time-intensive and expensive, which can have a negative impact on the partnership.

Whereas Norway and Sweden are culturally and geographically very close, their cultural and geographical links with Scotland are less developed. The high intensity of TC efforts and high-level cooperation between Scandinavian countries have been well documented (McMaster, 2011), and this skews the balance in the case study area – in terms of

intense cooperation between Sweden and Norway and less intense efforts between Sweden, Norway and Scotland. The study highlighted that there are too few opportunities for people-to-people projects between Scotland and the two other countries. Such projects could form the basis for more advanced forms of cooperation and help to intensify efforts between the countries. Such suggestions are in line with theoretical discussions on the maturity of TC (Perkmann, 1999). Cooperation initially involves establishing relations, partnerships and trust. Thereafter, it moves to a consolidated phase, in which the partnerships implement projects that have a local impact. In a final stage, TC is embedded in the participating institutions, and a high level of territorial integration is achieved. At this stage, the TC efforts have a strategic impact.

### **Lack of Impact?**

For a number of reasons, it is particularly difficult to assess the economic impact of territorial cooperation in the case study area. In general, the budgets available for such projects are relatively low, and disaggregating their impact on macroeconomic (jobs, GDP, competitiveness, etc.) indicators is not possible. Instead, it is often the softer benefits of cooperation that are considered important, such as partnership-building, exchanging ideas and creating cultural understanding. However, in order to maximise the impact of TC in future, there are opportunities to improve the economic impact of TC programmes by linking them specifically to EU programmes that are known to address strategic issues at a macroeconomic scale (FP7, TEN-E and TEN-T, etc.).

It is also crucial for cooperation efforts to be coordinated more effectively, in order to avoid overlap, duplication or even contradictions in approaches, solutions and activities. Respondents highlight a lack of synergies between different programmes. There are very few opportunities to showcase projects and engage with partners from other programmes. Part of the problem is that such activities are regarded as low value by beneficiaries. Some INTERREG programmes facilitate intra-programme synergies by proactively identifying project clusters, which consist of projects covering similar themes that work together, gaining additional budget resources, and which can help to achieve a programme's strategic goals (examples include the North West Europe and North Sea programmes). Project clustering gives programmes an opportunity to create synergies and linkages that assist in attaining strategic goals.

Long-term evaluations are necessary to gain a full understanding of the impact of territorial cooperation projects. These reports can determine whether synergies have been created and assess where they are lacking.

In Norway, one such study found that 'INTERREG A projects represent a materialisation of long-lasting cooperation between Norway, Sweden and Finland on regional development in the various cross-border regions', whereas 'continuing collaborations with partners in INTERREG B and C projects lack the institutional structure of the A projects, but cooperation in projects is still often maintained through new projects and networks' (Iris, 2011).

Out of the five forms of territorial cooperation under investigation in this book, INTERREG A and B programmes have the highest impact, according to respondents. These programmes provide funding and have a clear framework for cooperation. INTERREG A and B programmes are also regarded as having a more immediate impact, whereas other forms of cooperation (city twinning, INTERREG C, etc.) are viewed as being more long term. These forms of cooperation have the potential to achieve impacts, but their impacts are considered less measurable than those of INTERREG A and B programmes. However, there are examples in which city-twinning arrangements had a high impact and led to a deepening of relationships. In the case of Rogaland in Norway and Thüringen in Germany, links were initially developed through twinning arrangements that led to several cultural and educational exchanges. Through these 'local-level' TC efforts, opportunities for more intense forms of cooperation were developed. The two regions established a partnership for an INTERREG IIIC mini-programme focused on innovation and private-sector cooperation. Following this project, TC efforts were further formalised, and in 2009 a communiqué between the two regions cemented their links. Hordaland is now directly connected to the EU Structural Funds programme in Thüringen and can participate in projects. This example demonstrates how different forms of cooperation can complement each other and lead to an intensification of cooperation efforts.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS**

Efforts have been made to further involve private-sector partners, (smaller) municipalities, NGOs and other small organisations in territorial cooperation. These organisations face particular difficulties in engaging with TC programmes, e.g. lack of capacity and know-how, lack of clarity in relation to state aid rules and procurement regulations, inability to comply with the complex administrative procedures of TC programmes (particularly INTERREG), lack of confidence, lack of credibility of programmes, and lack of communication.

The inclusion of private-sector partners is generally regarded as positive, but there are also some concerns. Private-sector partners can

lack commitment to long-term projects, can increase the administrative complexities for programme authorities due to EU regulations, and their inclusion can reduce knowledge-exchange efforts to a wider audiences.

Administrative complexity is considered to be a key barrier to the involvement of some partners in territorial cooperation. The process of applying for project funding can be complex and differs from programme to programme, which makes funding applications difficult for beneficiaries. Furthermore, the application procedures are lengthy, demanding on resources and time-consuming. The rules and regulations make TC programmes and activities too complex for many potential beneficiaries. This seems to be particularly relevant for private-sector partners and smaller organisations. Specifically, rules in relation to payment procedures, reporting requirements and audit rules can be experienced as weighty and disproportionate, and smaller organisations do not have the administrative capacities to implement them. However, some respondents state that the problem is not so much the reality of administrative complexity and high levels of bureaucracy but rather the perception of such tasks. TC efforts (including those that improve competitiveness) are greatly helped by experienced staff both in relation to implementation and animation. Thus, it is important to promote an environment in which people from different organisations and countries have similar views of the benefits of TC and who are aware of the opportunities.

The availability (or lack) of funding can form an obvious barrier for territorial cooperation. The financial crisis and the resulting pressure on budgets have aggravated the problem. In Sweden and Norway, this has been less of an issue, as the crisis has not led to major budget changes. However, public-sector budgets in Scotland have been cut and match funding is not always available. Such divergences can lead to imbalances in TC efforts between partners, with some still able to attract EU funds because match funding is available, while others no longer have this capacity. However, the financial crisis can also have a positive impact in terms of interest in TC. As domestic budgets diminish, TC budgets at a European level become a more valuable source of funding.

## **Future**

There are several opportunities for territorial cooperation programmes to further increase their impact and territorial integration in the case study area. New forms of TC are currently being explored. Within the case study area, there is already some experience in relation to macro-regional strategies. Sweden and, to a lesser extent, Norway are involved in the Baltic Sea Strategy. The practical experiences of the macro-regional strategy in

the Baltic area are important, as there is likely to be an increased focus on such strategies in the new programming period. Other strategies currently being explored, and which will impact on the actors in the case study area, include the Arctic, Atlantic and North Sea Strategies. These strategies may present an opportunity to create synergies across programmes and domains.

In order to overcome the physical barriers associated with territorial cooperation programmes, actions can be taken to mitigate their impact. These would include developing ICT systems that cross borders, having effective partner databases, and making seed funding available for partnerships during the preparatory stage of a project. Providing seed funding can also have a positive impact on the inclusion of smaller partners and private-sector partners. In relation to private-sector partners, a number of specific measures can be taken to improve participation. These include more flexibility in relation to private-partner participation, organised TC business forums that actively engage the business community and build confidence, and further engagement of National Contact Points with the business community. Including private-sector partners in TC in the initial stages of a programme is also an important factor to secure their engagement in the subsequent implementation phase.

Overall, there is a strong tradition of territorial cooperation in the case study area, cooperation has delivered results, and there is support for the continuation of TC programmes. Nevertheless, a range of issues could be improved, including the complex audit and administrative procedures, communication, coordination, payment procedures, partner inclusion, project-selection procedures and strategic direction. However, sweeping reforms are considered undesirable. In order for TC programmes to contribute to territorial integration, it should be accepted that programmes are a continuous learning process, and continuity, stability and maturity are crucial factors.



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### **3.7 TERRITORIAL COOPERATION IN GREECE-BULGARIA-TURKEY BORDER REGIONS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This case study of Greece-Bulgaria-Turkey includes seven Greek regional units (NUTS 3) from two NUTS 2 regions, four Bulgarian oblasti<sup>2</sup> (NUTS 3) from two NUTS 2 regions, and three Turkish iller<sup>3</sup> (NUTS 3) of one NUTS 2 region (as illustrated in Figure 1).

The area covers 58,933 square kilometres, 37 percent of which are on Greek territory, 31 percent on Bulgarian territory, and 32 percent on Turkish territory. These areas represent 16.5 percent, 16.6 percent, and 2.4 percent of their respective country's areas. The CS area is characterised by mountain ranges such as Rila, Pirin, Rhodope and Strandzha, is crossed by large rivers such as Nestos (Mesta), Strymon (Struma), Evros (Maritsa), Ardas (Arda) and Tundzha (the last two being tributaries of Evros), and it has a plethora of lakes and fragile ecosystems including Ramsar Wetlands, NATURA 2000 sites and forests of outstanding beauty (some of which are listed as natural monuments).

In terms of population, the CS area had 4,320,055 inhabitants in 2009, comprising Greeks (45 percent), Bulgarians (20 percent) and Turks (35 percent) (Eurostat figures). These proportions represented 17.3 percent, 11.4 percent and 2.1 percent respectively of each country's population. During the 2001-2009 period, the population of the CS area increased by 1.15 percent. Specifically, the population of the Turkish provinces of the CS

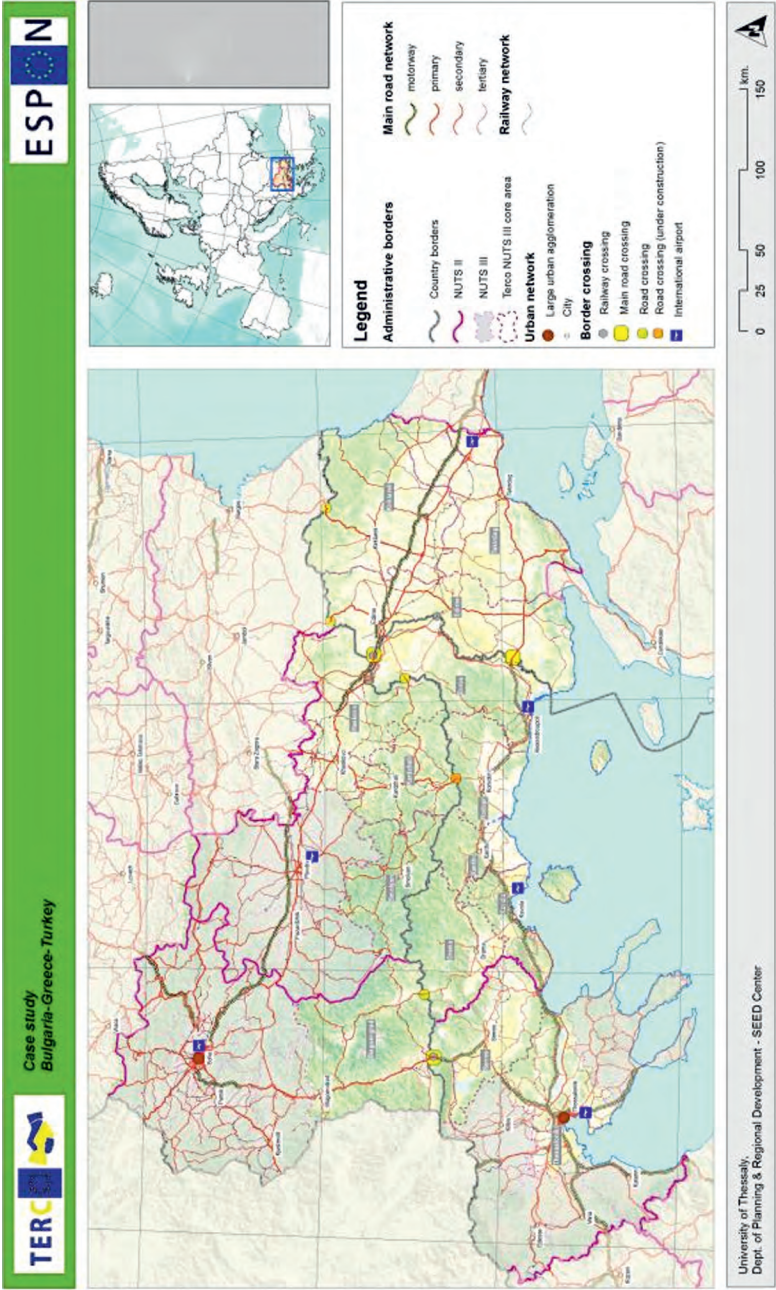
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<sup>1</sup> DPRD, University of Thessaly.

<sup>2</sup> Prefectures; oblasti.

<sup>3</sup> Prefectures; iller.





**Figure 1** The transport infrastructure of the CS area and the border checkpoints  
Source: Authors' elaboration.

area increased by 20.3 percent, the population of the Bulgarian provinces decreased by 12.5 percent, and the population of the Greek prefectures of the CS area remained more or less stable (+0.4 percent).

The GVA of all the goods and services produced in the CS area in 2008 amounted to approximately €45 billion (Eurostat). Of this total, 67.9 percent was produced in the Greek part of the CS area, 27.1 percent in the Turkish part, and 5 percent in the Bulgarian part. The GVA per capita in the CS area was €9,432 per inhabitant. The 2008 figures for the Greek, Bulgarian, and Turkish parts of the CS area were respectively €13,507, €3,864 and €3,356 per inhabitant. The total GVA in the CS area increased by 77 percent over the 2000-2008 period. In particular, in the Greek part it was increased by 72.1 percent, in the Bulgarian part by 140.3 percent and in the Turkish part<sup>4</sup> by 61.1 percent. Concerning the structural allocation of production in the CS area (2008), 10.7 percent was produced by the primary sector, 25.6 percent by the secondary sector, and 63.4 percent by the tertiary sector.

The transport infrastructure of the CS area is reasonably well developed with highways, three international airports plus one domestic, and four large maritime ports (see Figure 1). Accordingly, there are no physical barriers hindering territorial cooperation, a viewpoint shared by the stakeholders of the CS.

With regard to territorial cooperation, the stakeholders from the CS have cooperated in the following ERDF-funded programmes:

Greece and Bulgaria:	INTERREG IIA (1994-1999) Greece External Borders (Bulgaria), Greece-Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2000-2006, INTERREG IIIB CADSES 2000-2006, INTERREG IIIC 2000-2006, Greece-Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013, South-East Europe 2007-2012, INTERREG IV C, Black Sea Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013.
Bulgaria and Turkey:	Bulgaria-Turkey Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2004-2006, and Bulgaria-Turkey Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013.

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<sup>4</sup> The GVA of Turkey relates to the 2004-2008 period, as no data are available for the previous years.

Greek-Turkey cross-border cooperation was scheduled to commence in 2004, but the INTERREG III A programme was suspended ‘for political reasons’. Since then, there has been no further attempt to relaunch it.

Hence, the CS has three ‘players’ that interact more in a bilateral and selective mode, rather than trying to create triangles of cooperation.

## STRENGTHS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

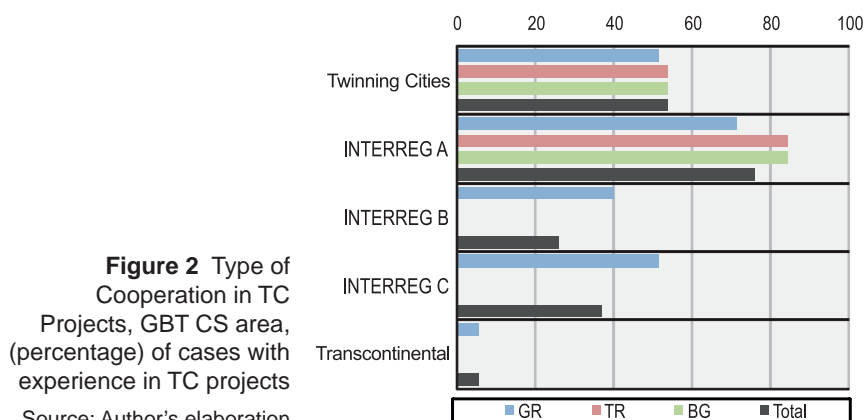
### Physical Areas of Territorial Cooperation

From the survey conducted within the TERCO project, it is evident that the majority of respondents from the Greece-Bulgaria-Turkey Case Study (GBT CS) have mainly been involved in the INTERREG A type of territorial cooperation (see Table 1 and Figure 2). Furthermore, the majority of municipalities in the CS area have been involved in more than two projects in the framework of INTERREG A and INTERREG C programmes, mostly with the same partners since 2007.

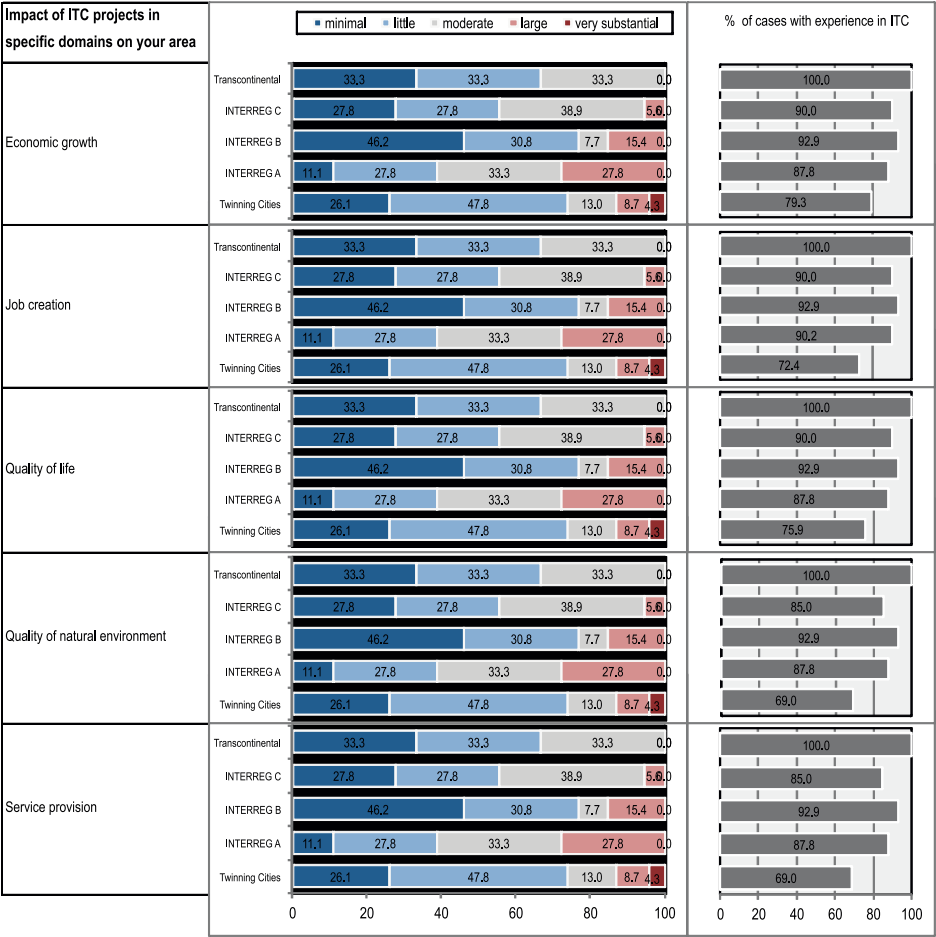
**Table 1** Type of Cooperation in TC Projects, GBT CS area, percentage of cases with experience in TC projects

Type of Cooperation	Country			
	GR	TR	BG	Total
Twinning Cities	51.4	53.8	66.7	53.7
INTERREG A	71.4	84.6	83.3	75.9
INTERREG B	40.0	0.0	0.0	25.9
INTERREG C	51.4	0.0	33.3	37.0
Transcontinental	5.7	0.0	16.7	5.6

Source: Authors' elaboration.



As can be seen in Figure 3, the respondents in this particular case study identified the greatest impact as on economic growth, job creation, quality of life, quality of natural environment and services provision to cross-border cooperation and less to the other types of territorial cooperation. In particular, 61.1 percent of the respondents stated that INTERREG A had a large-to-very-substantial impact on the above-mentioned domains; the impacts on these domains from other types of territorial cooperation are considerably less obvious.

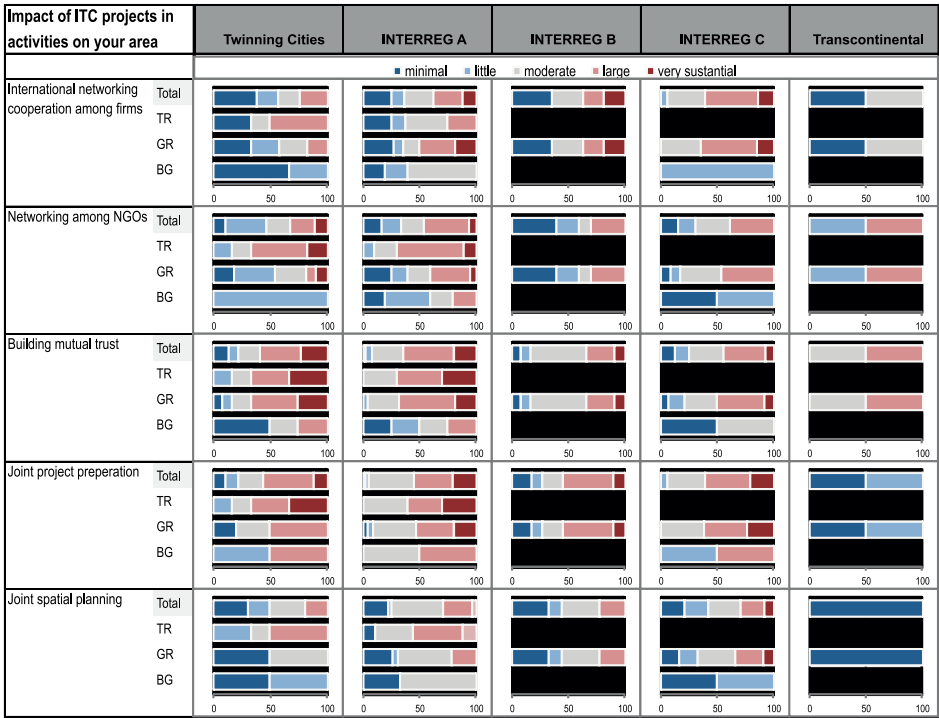


**Figure 3** Impact of TC on Specific Domains, GBT CS area  
Source: Authors' elaboration.

For the stakeholders in the case study area, the INTERREG A projects appear to have a greater impact in the actual area as they address common problems within a single territory, they produce more concrete results,

and the partnerships are smaller and thus more easily manageable. As a consequence, partners can dedicate more time to the implementation of actions. This type of project directly involves partners that have known each other for some time, have worked together on different issues (even outside of EU funding), and they know well what their area requires. In practical terms, this type of cooperation greatly facilitates the territorial integration of the area under investigation.

Moreover, partners in INTERREG A are closer in terms of geographical location and thus more easily accessible.



**Figure 4** Impact of TC Projects on Specific Activities, GBT CS area

Source: Authors' elaboration.

On the other hand, INTERREG C increases the competitiveness of the local stakeholders, because it offers a broader geographical area (more and different stakeholders throughout Europe) and the opportunity to gain experience from partners with a different outlook and different administrative structures. Within this type of TC, networking and knowledge-sharing actions have the greatest impact on the region's competitiveness. These actions increase the knowledge base of the stakeholders and promote an innovative approach to problem-solving precisely because they involve the exchange of experience.

Overall, territorial cooperation constitutes a good opportunity for the creation of various synergies and common strategies, which in turn facilitate the territorial integration of some areas.

A relatively high number of municipalities in the case study consider the impact of Twinning Cities and INTERREG A projects to be positive on building mutual trust and on joint project preparation, the impact of INTERREG B projects as positive on joint project preparation, and the impact of INTERREG C projects as positive for international networking cooperation among firms and joint project preparation (see Figure 4).

Territorial projects that involve a wide range of stakeholders active in one specific field of major importance, such as cross-border cooperation among neighbouring municipalities on water management, contribute to the improvement of the working relations between these actors.

In addition, regions and areas with particular characteristics in common can more easily increase their competitiveness. For instance, areas that have more or less the same landscape, produce similar agricultural products, and have developed the same industry, are usually able to share experience, knowledge and good practice. If they share their common experience in advance, they already have a common 'communication code'. Territorial cooperation makes the already existing good relations stronger among communities on the basis of the common interests and common problems requiring a solution. It also gives the participating organisations the opportunity to develop common methodologies in order to tackle common issues.

### **Driving Forces and Domains of Cooperation**

The demand for development and growth in the regions was indicated as the principal reason for participation in territorial cooperation; the peripheral location of some regions is another major driver; and there is a common perception that territorial cooperation generates improvements in the standard of living, the reduction of unemployment (especially among vulnerable groups) and the creation of incentives for local entrepreneurship.

It is worth noting that physical barriers do not constitute an obstacle for cross-border cooperation. On the contrary, they present good opportunities for further cooperation among actors in several fields related to this physical particularity, e.g. a joint management plan for fisheries in the broader river basins. The technological tools of the current era, such as email, Skype and the Internet eliminate all kinds of such obstacles.

A broad variety of domains have been developed in the actual area. However, environment, tourism and culture seem to be the most prevalent ones. Taking into account the actions implemented so far, it is apparent

that the main focus of the territorial cooperation is on pillars that will boost development and entrepreneurship in the broader area. At the same time, they should support the utilisation of its natural and cultural assets. Those pillars include the following, *inter alia*: business cooperation and innovation, water management, increasing tourism through the promotion of alternative forms, and the enhancement of common cultural heritage through the promotion of archaeological monuments. The success of each venture depends on the desire and determination of the participants to proceed towards more extroverted cooperation.

All the parties involved in the case study acknowledge the contribution of territorial cooperation to preserving the natural environment, enhancing local economies and improving the cultural and social aspects of the region. Some of them, particularly in the Bulgarian area, emphasise the impact of environmental and sports projects on other domains, e.g. the protection of forests or sporting activities can create attractive settings for tourism and leisure. On the other hand, environmental protection and poverty alleviation appear to be prevalent issues within the Turkish area.

The findings indicate that the social and cultural domains are better adapted to the local level, while the economic domains of entrepreneurship, competitiveness and innovation are better suited to the regional level.

It is commonly accepted that 'soft' projects, in general, do not seem to have a substantial or tangible impact on local societies. However, respondents in all the three areas of the case study pointed out that effective actions should take the form of soft interventions, rather than substantial infrastructure schemes. After all, the aim behind the TC programmes should be to boost territorial cooperation and develop synergies among actors in order to deal with common challenges. Therefore, the focus must be placed primarily on the development of networks and initiatives designed to establish know-how transfer mechanisms.

### **Territorial Structures and Specific Border Cooperation**

Within the CS area, four types of territorial structure can play a significant role in territorial integration:

- i. First, with regard to protected areas (NATURA 2000 or national parks), a series of joint initiatives could be developed in the environmental sphere in order to solve common problems in one of the most ecologically sensitive regions in the Mediterranean. The area under investigation is characterised by numerous mountain ranges, outstanding forests, and a range of fragile and unique ecosystems involving important birdlife areas and biogenetic reserves.



- ii. Second, river basins between both Greece-Bulgaria and Greece-Turkey could serve as a basis for undertaking joint sustainable management and preservation.
- iii. Third, sea basins (Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea) offer great opportunities for collaboration with countries located in the area.
- iv. Fourth, Euro-corridors of transport networks such as the Egnatia Motorway are perceived to play an integrative territorial role. In more detail, such territorial structures favour interactive spatial connections with regard to similarities, complementarities, homogeneity and discontinuities. These dynamics operate on a three-dimensional approach: flows, proximity and new spatial development patterns.

Based on these territorial structures, governance structures are already established (such as the Euroregions) and are generating and implementing TC projects for the territorial development and integration of the area.

### **Governance Structure and Implementation of Cooperation**

From the TERCO survey, it became obvious that the main stakeholders initiating territorial cooperation in the case study area are local governments and local development agencies (see Figure 5 in the Annex). These actors usually have the capacity to mobilise TC, either as an autonomous institution or through their involvement in *ad hoc* institutions on the condition that the partners have regular and active participation.

The second most important stakeholders initiating TC projects in the case study area are the Euroregions and other cross-border institutions. In contrast, other stakeholders (i.e. regional authorities, local residents, NGOs, and businesses) have a rather low level of participation. This high level of involvement of municipalities in TC projects can be explained by the fact that the programmes implemented in the CS area are mainly initiated by local governments.

The notable number of Euroregions established along the actual area reflects an already existing background that shapes a 'culture of cooperation' among players on every side of the CS area. These organisations emerged to meet the need for development and improvement of cross-border relations within the Greek-Bulgarian-Turkish triangle, under the auspices of local authorities and other institutions.

The activation and operation of these structures (Euroregions and EGTC) in the area were perceived by the majority of interviewees as a comparative advantage that facilitates TC initiatives.



## **WEAKNESSES OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

### **Physical Areas of Territorial Cooperation**

The greatest weakness of the Greece-Bulgaria-Turkey cooperation triangle is the fact that two sides of the triangle are not linked. That is, there has been official and funded territorial cooperation between Greece and Bulgaria since the late 1990s (through the former INTERREG IIA) and between Bulgaria and Turkey since 2004. However, there is still no funded, official territorial cooperation between Greece and Turkey because of the political disputes between these two countries.

Greece-Turkey cross-border cooperation was scheduled to start in 2004, but the INTERREG IIIA Greece-Turkey programme was suspended 'for political reasons', and there has been no attempt to restart it. Significantly, without the launch of an INTERREG A Greece-Turkey programme, this case study will remain incapacitated and this in turn will substantially delay the territorial integration of the area under investigation.

The funds available for such programmes are insufficient to expand the territorial cooperation geographically, since there are many interested partners and the competition is very high. Many of the TC projects were unable to activate a wide range of stakeholders at local level. By contrast, large-scale TC projects are usually difficult to manage. In addition, a great heterogeneity among competencies of local actors does not allow common issues to be effectively addressed.

An interesting finding was that the impacts of territorial cooperation on economic growth and job creation in the area were evaluated as moderate to low, while the impacts on the quality of life, quality of natural environment, and service provision were perceived as moderate to high.

## **DRIVING FORCES AND DOMAINS OF COOPERATION**

The main obstacles of participating in territorial cooperation primarily comprise the lack of knowledge regarding the scope of TC projects, potential partners, and the administrative procedures, as well as the complicated and highly demanding EU regulations and the lack of co-financing. Administrative procedures are not experienced as flexible, and there is no simplified and common legislative framework that could provide the participants with more motivation to submit joint project proposals. The evidence also suggests that there is fertile ground for TC on the basis of existing political will, very low physical, cultural and linguistic barriers, and a sense of high expectation.

The local authorities currently face limitations in the allocation of scarce resources (financial and social) for territorial cooperation due to the

economic crisis. The lack of experienced and skilled staff (in the Greek part of the CS area), visa restrictions (in the Turkish part) and language are considered to be obstacles to successful cooperation. Other parameters that inhibit the initiation and implementation of TC projects include, mentioned above, the lack of knowledge about the TC projects, and potential partners, etc.

Another weakness in the Turkish part of the case study area is the low decentralisation level, which represents a large indirect obstacle to the development of successful cross-border cooperation on behalf of the local authorities.

The 'soft' projects do not seem to have a substantial impact on local societies. Infrastructure is strongly associated with development, thus a large amount of long-term funding should be provided for this theme. However, it should be taken into consideration that tendering procedures for infrastructure are long-term procedures, whereas TC projects have a comparatively limited implementation timeframe. Moreover, and in practice, there are a number of legal obstacles.

### **Territorial Structures and Specific Border Cooperation**

Despite the fact that cooperation has been intensified, these territorial cooperation initiatives have not resulted in joint actions or common strategies. Territorial cooperation does not appear to have a clear impact on 'external' relations, because local governments are sceptical about cooperation with foreign authorities. Often, the external policy puts the implementation of a TC programme or the completion of a TC project at risk. The emphasis on 'national interests' by state agencies undermines the local actors' flexibility. Moreover, the development of influential 'external' relations is very limited, because most TC projects are designed and prepared by consultants with no in-depth involvement of local government staff. Nevertheless, the prevailing perception is that local actors are more effective in overcoming antagonistic interests and they function in a more pragmatic manner.

Despite the fact that the case study area has territorial structures that would facilitate the initiation of territorial cooperation projects for solving common cross-border problems, this potential is not exploited to the full. This cooperation is hindered by the different legal frameworks in the neighbouring countries, which function as a barrier to implementing TC projects.

In addition, when it comes to the territorial structures, it has been observed that the budgets to support such important interventions are limited.

Furthermore, a significant challenge is how initiatives developed in such territorial structures can have a permanent character. In other words, these initiatives cannot create stable synergies and networks with a long-term perspective, since the actions usually stop as soon as the project ends, with little subsequent value added and no further perspective.

### **Governance Structure and Implementation of Cooperation**

Bureaucracy, centralisation and complicated rules have proved to be the main obstacles to governance in territorial cooperation. Usually, the only legal instruments in place are the ones set by the Joint Technical Secretariats, and these instruments are often not efficiently adapted to local needs. The institutional framework might also create barriers to cooperation, since the relative provisions were not planned in accordance with the individual needs of the participating regions/countries.

The main institutional problem is the wide range of legal rules and principles that currently apply to Europe's various borders. A great number of small projects copy each other, with very low added value and little impact on development. The participating partners' competencies are seldom taken into consideration as central selection criteria during the selection process.

In terms of funds and human resources for the implementation of co-operation, most case study municipalities declared that they had enough funds available to participate in INTERREG A, INTERREG B and INTERREG C, but funding was scarcer for participation in Twinning Cities and Transcontinental programmes. With regard to staff resources for TC project participation, the respondents described the situation as slightly worse. In particular, only half of the respondents seemed to have enough staff for INTERREG A and INTERREG C. For participation in Twinning Cities and INTERREG B, the respondents needed more staff, whereas Transcontinental programmes had the lowest level of staff availability.

The capability of the representatives to transfer the results and outcomes to their organisations in a comprehensible manner is also of great importance. Occasionally, when the issue under consideration is multidimensional and requires the involvement of different actors, a broader partnership is considered necessary. The presence of both private and public sectors is important in this process as well.

## **FUTURE OPTIONS IN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION FOR INTEGRATION**

The critical question is how territorial cooperation initiatives can create stable synergies and networks with a long-term perspective. The recent economic crisis could work as an incentive for the local actors to expand their field of cooperation. Moving a step further, the case of Turkish accession to the EU and its reform of local administration (affording more autonomy and power) is expected to create an impetus for TC in the case study area. Further potential for cooperation with non-EU countries is identified in the framework of the INTERREG A programme with FYROM and Albania for Greece, and with Serbia and FYROM for Bulgaria. Additional potential exists through the involvement of new partners from the Mediterranean, Balkans, Middle East, African and Asian countries. The new partners can be from both the private and the public sectors, bringing specific success stories. The private partners can help in the improvement of entrepreneurship and quality management, while the public partners can assist with the implementation of socially-driven projects.

Infrastructure investment should be supported by territorial cooperation projects, since the problems (which are mostly environmental) spread across large areas, covering different countries and regions with common borders. Additionally, transport and communication infrastructure (telecommunications, roads, railways) promotes relationships between bordering areas, thus limiting the isolation.

On the other hand, it is commonly accepted that 'soft' projects, in general, do not seem to have a substantial or tangible impact on local societies. Nevertheless, respondents in all three parts of the case study area pointed out that any effective action should take the form of soft interventions, rather than large-scale infrastructure schemes. Accordingly, the focus must be placed primarily on the development of networks and initiatives aimed at establishing know-how transfer mechanisms.

Future territorial cooperation should be focused on a more strategic type of projects within the field of innovation. Environmental initiatives such as risk, disaster and waste management could also form a new focus point. Along the same line, the respondents and interviewees foresaw potential for the development of TC beyond the current domains, extending into education and research projects.

The procedures for participation and implementation of a territorial cooperation project should be simplified. Capacity-building actions for local institutions, government consultancy and an efficient top-down communication and dissemination strategy could increase the competitiveness of the cooperating regions. The main challenge for TC in

the future is to create common approaches for all the domains, adapted to the needs and characteristics of each area.

A more flexible institutional framework, adapted to the characteristics of each region along with the standardisation of regulations in different countries, could facilitate territorial cooperation in the future. This TC should involve new methods and strategies and should focus on projects aimed at narrowing the gap between the EU countries. Cooperation, strong partnerships, good planning and more funds are the keys to success.

The conditions that must be satisfied for territorial cooperation to increase the competitiveness of the participating areas are as follows: (i) real-life problems must be recognised and addressed; (ii) the widest possible participation of regions should be attained; (iii) the results of TC projects must be tangible and easy to evaluate; and (iv) these results must be easily transferable and applicable to different areas and at different scales.

Summing up, locally driven, loosely organised, open and flexible schemes operate better because the local actors are more aware of the local situation. Although solutions can be provided by scientific institutions or other governmental authorities, the implementation must be conducted by local authorities (potentially with general directions from other public and private bodies). Cooperation and more funds are the keys to success.

ANNEX

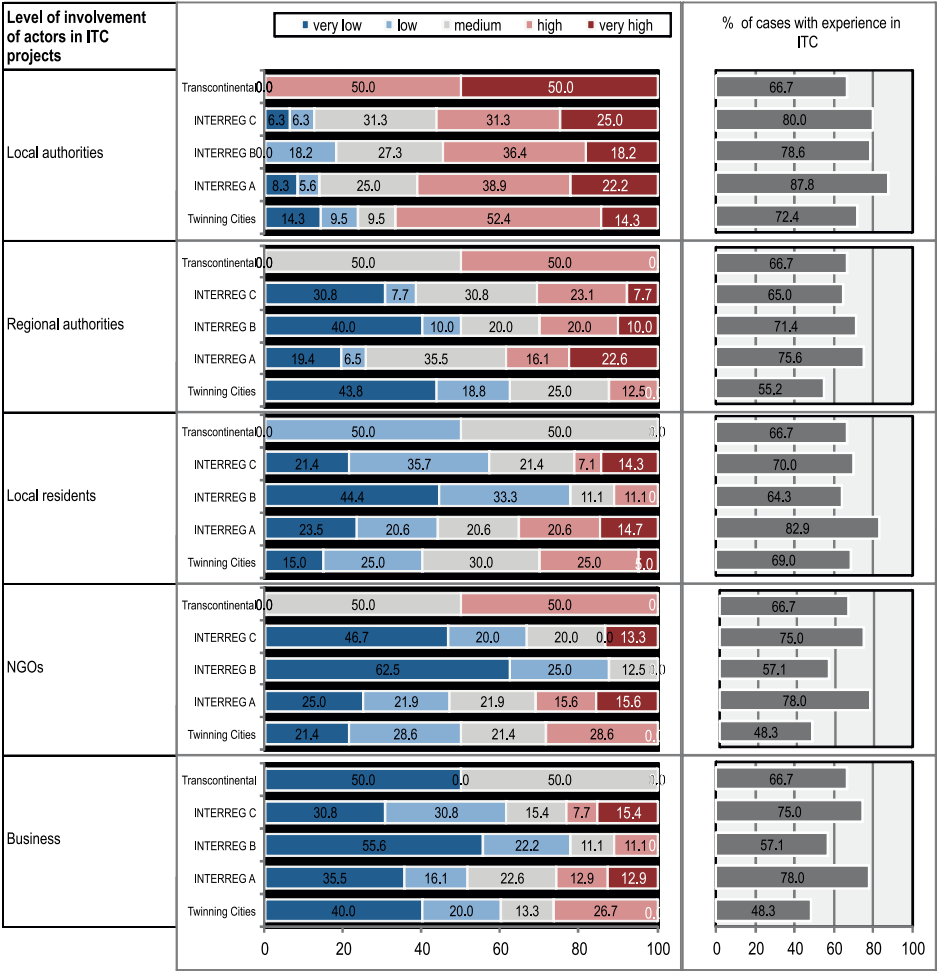
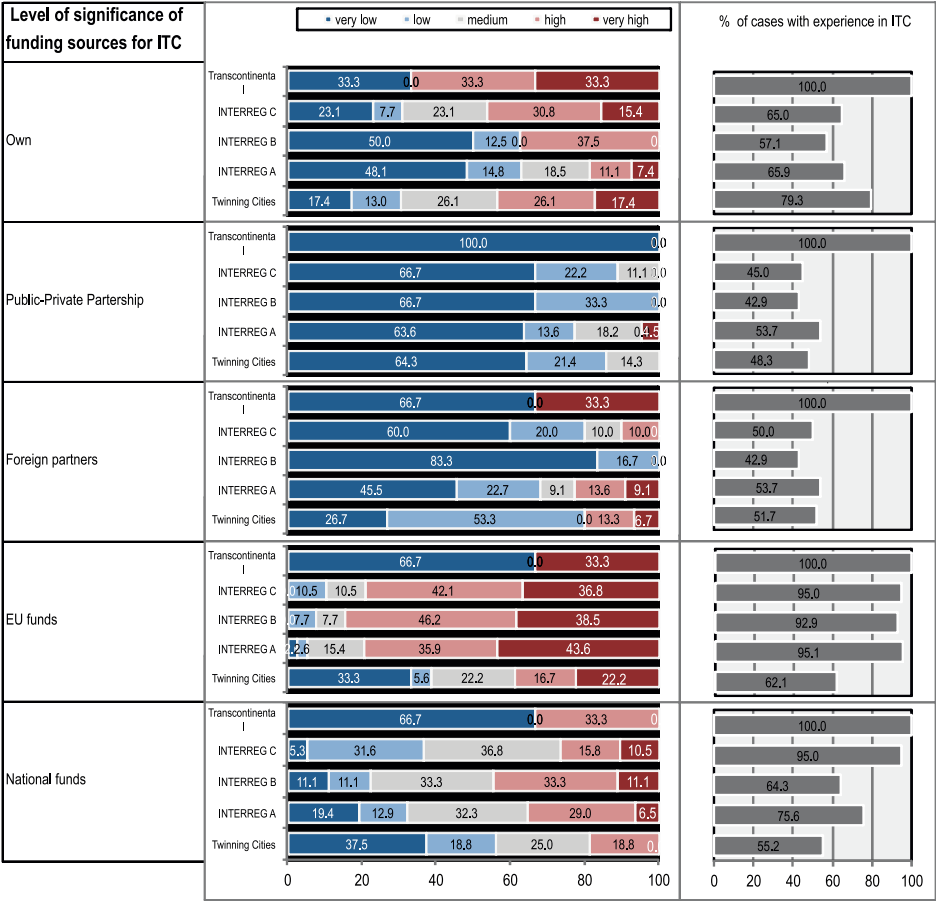


Figure 5 Level of Involvement of Actors in TC Projects, GBT CS area

Source: Authors' elaboration.



**Figure 6** Significance of Funding Sources for TC Projects, GBT CS area

Source: Authors' elaboration.

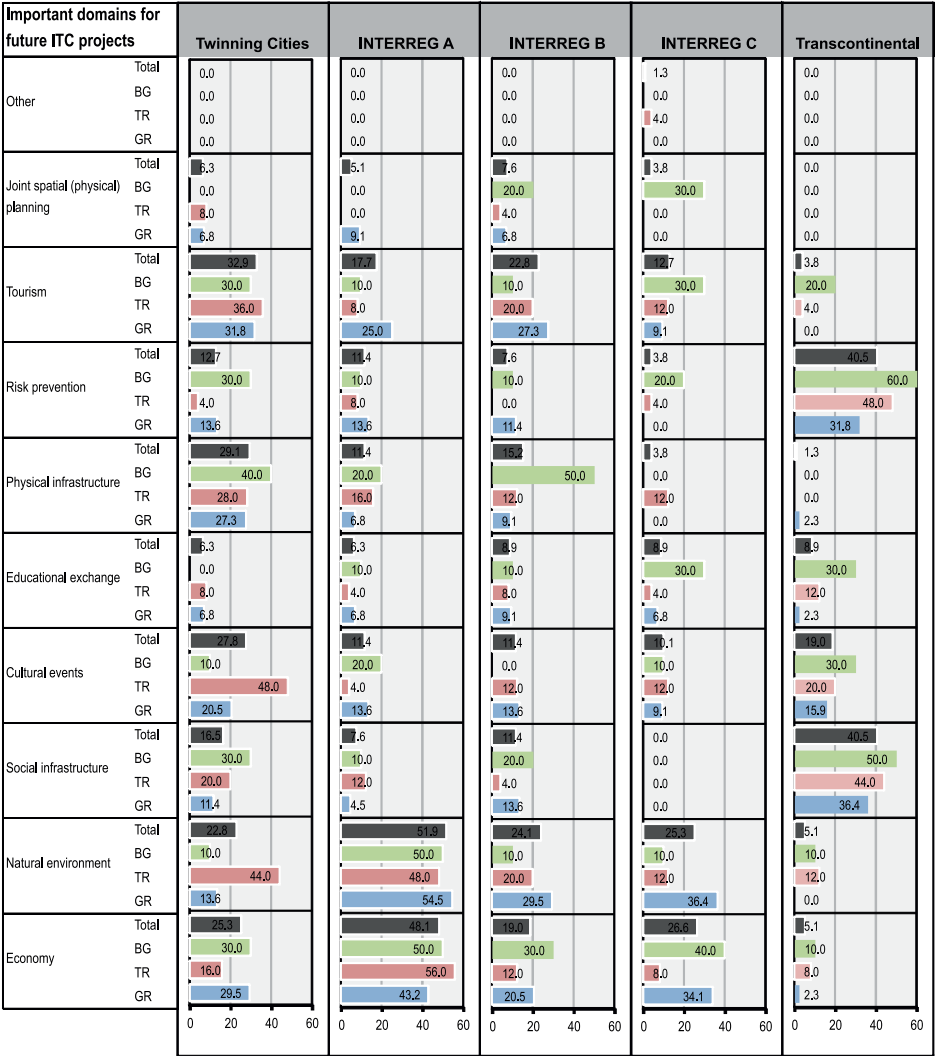


Figure 7 Important Domains for Future TC, GBT CS area  
Source: Authors' elaboration.



### **3.8 LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE CASE STUDIES ON TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

#### **STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

The case studies revealed strengths and weaknesses in territorial co-operation (TC) related either directly to the immediate outcomes of TC or to its wider socio-economic impact. Strengths included more economic opportunities for local residents in the border areas through border infrastructure and more varied cultural choice for the local population. This mostly occurred in the PL-SK-UA<sup>2</sup> case study, where projects were adapted to specific local needs, especially in the form of micro-projects. On the other hand, some infrastructural projects focused on local needs but neglected cross-border effects in favour of ‘near-border effects’. In such cases, there was little value added in terms of TC follow-up activities (CS on GR-TK-BG).

The issue of skills and knowledge gained during the realisation of TC projects has a positive outcome, as confirmed in many case studies, and the involvement of different types of stakeholders in TC represents another positive aspect. However, this feature is still much higher in old EU Member States (BE, FI, FR, SE, UK) than in new ones. It involves a public sector which initiates knowledge transfer, flexibility in a wide range of TC activities, innovative approaches, and long-term strategic reflection. Nevertheless, an insufficient involvement of the private sector, NGOs and other local stakeholders is still identifiable. In the PL-SK-UA cooperation, the restricted role of knowledge transfer was also an issue.

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<sup>1</sup> EUROREG, University of Warsaw.

<sup>2</sup> Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), Czech Republic (CZ), Germany (DE), Spain (ES), Finland (FI), France (FR), Greece (GR), Latin America (LAT.A), Morocco (MO), Norway (NO), Poland (PL), Russia (RU), Sweden (SE), Slovakia (SK), Turkey (TR), Ukraine (UA), United Kingdom (UK).

Among the more general strengths of TC, the most common was a shared cross-border cultural background. Major factors included the use of historical and cultural links (DE-PL), similarity of languages (PL-SK-UA), a long history of cooperation (BE-FR) and a long-established framework for TC and cultural propinquity (SE-NO). On the other hand, weaknesses in cultural background comprised the lack of experienced and skilled staff (including language skills), bureaucracy and administrative burdens (TR, UA, SK, PL, RU).

It should also be noted that social and attitudinal changes as well as procedural changes occur as a result of TC. Non-EU countries (RU, UA, TR) perceive cooperation as an asset and opportunity for transferring good experience. Similarities in problems/needs, strong motivation for internationalisation and mutual interest in cross-border cooperation (CBC), as well as political will, are also prevalent. The uneven/unfair distribution of funds for infrastructure between EU and non-EU partners still creates imbalances and undermines the overall effectiveness of CBC/TC initiatives.

In general, the physical areas of territorial cooperation (often defined by CBC programmes or Euroregions) are appropriate in the case study areas (CSAs). Common borders mean the presence of common problems, which is why projects aimed at addressing those problems are a priority. Physical barriers often play a positive and uniting role, as neighbours need to come together to work out joint solutions (PL-SK-UA). A variety of TC programmes with a different focus in terms of themes and beneficiaries was considered of benefit to regions, as this provides opportunities to develop relations at less intense levels, which can subsequently be followed up with more intense efforts (UK-NO-SE).

The main driving forces and domains of cooperation differ within case study areas. Less-developed regions prefer infrastructure projects that compensate for previous deficiencies as well as cultural and educational projects that do not require large funding. More-developed regions with more experience in TC are likely to choose more advanced, soft projects. The weakness of cooperation in this field is manifested mainly through insufficient funds in the less-developed regions. As a consequence, they are limited in cooperation to the closest-located partners. Moreover, they perceive themselves as uninteresting partners for more-developed regions. The primary driving forces include political will (BE-FR), availability of funds (PL, SK, non-EU countries), established personal contacts (PL-CZ-DE), and the opportunity to learn from others' experiences.

With regard to territorial structures and specific border cooperation, it is worth mentioning initiatives such as the 'Green Belt of Fennoscandia', which stretches along the Norwegian-Russian and Finnish-Russian

borders, and the ‘Northern Gateway to the East’, conceptualised to promote infrastructural and logistic/economic links between Russia and the Nordic countries in the Barents region. However, there are few examples in the CSAs of large-scale macro-regional cooperation projects. Common problems at the local/regional scale also generate specific border cooperation. An example from the PL-CZ-DE case study would be flood prevention and dealing with flood aftermath, where services from one side of the border may take action on the other side. However, such initiatives are rare, and TC actions often stop at the moment the project ends, with little follow-up value added and no future perspective (e.g. GR-TR-BG).

Governance structures and the implementation of cooperation have frequently been experienced from both positive and negative perspectives. Creating networks for the provision of new ideas, and the promotion of entrepreneurship and sustainable social and economic development, can produce good results (GR-TR-BG). Furthermore, the EGTC is perceived as an instrument designed to facilitate and promote TC. Bottom-up approaches are regarded as positive, because they ensure local relevance, create more innovative partnerships, create local buy-in, and facilitate project generation. Weaknesses in TC management systems identified in numerous CSAs include bureaucracy, centralisation, poor communication, complicated rules and a lack of strategic focus. The distance from the national centre, where key decisions are made, was also a major obstacle and reduces the influence of TC programme objectives (BE-FR, SK).

## **CONTRIBUTION OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION TO TERRITORIAL KEYS**

The cases studies revealed the relevance of territorial cooperation for implementation of the Europe 2020 goals. During the Polish presidency of the EU (second half of 2011), five major ‘territorial keys’ were formulated by Böhme *et al.* (2011) which increase the territorial dimension of Europe 2020. They included: accessibility, services of general interest, territorial capacities/endowments/assets, city networks, and functional regions. The keys aim to bridge the Europe 2020 and TA2020 priorities through different types of policies. Some evidence was found in the case studies on territorial cooperation that policy supports (or could support) those territorial keys.

### **Accessibility**

Accessibility is a major theme within the case study of Scotland, Norway and Sweden. Many regions are peripheral and have low multi-modal

accessibility scores. Several strategies such as the Northern Sparsely Populated Areas Strategy, Northern Dimension and the Arctic Strategy address these issues directly and give them a transnational focus. Many of the INTERREG programmes active within the area include accessibility issues as a key priority. For example, the Northern Periphery Programme's accessibility priority states its aim as 'to facilitate development by the use of advanced information and communication technologies and transport in the programme area'. Roadex is a 'best practice' example of a concrete project in this area. It aims to implement the road technologies developed by ROADEX on the partner road networks to improve operational efficiency and save money.

Low levels of accessibility (global, national and regional) are also a fundamental feature of the case study area (CSA) covering Eastern Finland and the Russian Republic of Karelia. On the one hand, vast distances and low population densities make physical exchanges within the CSA difficult. On the other hand, the limited number of crossing points in the external EU border (two in approximately 200 km) is a major obstacle, as well as the underdeveloped secondary road network on the Russian side. Additionally, from the European perspective, this north-eastern edge of the EU is distant and difficult to reach from major economic and population centres and markets. Therefore, physical infrastructural investments are seen as necessary for increased 'territorial cohesion' across the border. The improvement would be achieved by the modernisation of existing border crossings and the establishment of new ones in the region, the opening of passenger railway connections, and larger-scale development of the freight railway lines crossing the border here (from Western Europe to Russia). Among the developments supported by INTERREG/TACIS and non-EU-funded cross-border projects, border crossing points are seen as the most beneficial ones. The same issue exists in the case studies of PL-SK-UA and GR-BG-TK, where accessibility within the CSAs was increased by cross-border road and railway investments and by opening new local border crossings. This applies especially to the internal EU border.

Regarding e-connectivity, ICTs have considerably improved conditions for communication between actors in the Finland-Russia CSA and are still seen as an important part of future development. Cross-border communication skills (i.e. languages, e-skills and other aspects) are seen as vital for enhancement, and they have undergone some improvement through CBC projects.

## Services of General Economic Interest

The Northern Periphery Programme can serve as an example of an INTERREG programme that focuses on these issues in relation to sparsely populated areas. It aims to include 'private, public and voluntary sectors cooperation and networks to develop new and innovative service solutions for remote and peripheral regions'.<sup>3</sup> For example, in relation to improving health services in sparsely populated areas, the programme envisages projects that bring together private medical firms and medical research staff – to take advantage of potential economies of scale and to implement measures aimed at increasing efficiency of healthcare delivery to rural and peripheral regions. It advocates a 'triple helix' approach to improving these services.

Under the current ENPI Karelia programme, all six themes can be linked to 'services of general economic interest', especially objectives of social wellbeing (i.e. development and modernisation of social services, creation and improvement of regional models for welfare services, promotion of models to adjust social services to the harsh local conditions, and development of entrepreneurship in the welfare sector) and culture, which are seen as important in preparing human capital for cooperation in business and economic development. The local government system and administrative division in Finland are in flux due to demographic challenges to even basic service provision. Accordingly, healthcare and social services, also because of the challenge of an ageing and declining population in the CSA, were important targets of territorial cooperation in previous programmes and initiatives. The DART project (INTERREG IVC, 'Declining, Ageing, Regional Transformation'), in which two regional authorities from the Finnish side of the CSA took part, is a good example of exchanging knowledge and good practice among 13 European regions, exploring potential solutions to this widespread problem.

From the GR-BG cooperation, good examples include the creation of a network for the transfer of technology and innovation aiming to develop enterprise in the GR-BG cross-border area and implementation of advanced methods in computer sciences and the use of grids with applications in the physical sciences and engineering.

In PL-CZ cooperation, such provision mainly relates to flood prevention and dealing with flood aftermath (discussing and planning hard investment together; information, warning and evacuation systems). Environmental concerns (flood and water management) are also one of the major driving forces in the BE-FR CS.

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<sup>3</sup> Northern Periphery Programme.

The major impacts of Spanish influence in Latin America and in Canelones especially can be found in the provision of services and improvement in the standard of living and the environment. Significant positive impacts can also be identified in the area of economic growth and job creation. These issues are also important in the Spain-Morocco CSA, where work in social and cultural spheres has led to intervention in other areas such as infrastructure or local economic development linked to improved standards of living in general.

### **Use of Capacities / Endowments / Territorial Assets**

There is an increasing focus on Arctic issues, not least because of the vast wealth of natural resources the area possesses and which are being unlocked by climate change (fossil fuels, renewable energies, marine resources). To date, no comprehensive strategy exists for the Arctic, but on 20 January 2011 the European Parliament adopted a resolution that emphasises the need for a united, coordinated EU policy on the Arctic region, in which the EU priorities, the potential challenges and a strategy are clearly defined. Furthermore, there is an Arctic focus in the Northern Dimension framework. A coordinated transnational approach that includes non-EU States such as Norway, Greenland, Iceland, Canada, Russia and the United States is required in order to ensure that the resources the Arctic offers are managed in a sustainable manner.

There is considerable concentration by recent TC and CBC projects in the CSA on how to utilise the special resources of the North shared by the regions covered by the CSA to raise the competitive profile of the regions and to facilitate sustainable socio-economic development. The main natural asset, the vast area of boreal forests, is seen as a resource to be used in multiple ways for different innovative branches of the wood-processing industry, climate-friendly bio-energy, environmental protection and research (i.e. biodiversity), as well as high-quality nature tourism. Considerable knowledge exchange and innovation is expected from the utilisation of this natural resource, reflected by the high number of related TC projects and the separate theme defined within the current ENPI Karelia programme ('Forest-based cooperation'). The common 'Karelian' cultural-historical resources of the CSA are utilised by a range of CBC projects in culture, education and tourism development. In addition, the idea of being the 'northern gateway to the east' has been taken up by actors from Karelia in the CSA on occasions during the past two decades as a geographical-location asset to draw upon as well as an aspect of special know-how (familiarity, experience) related to Russia that may be capitalised upon.

In the GR-BG case, the evidence of TC based on territorial assets relates to the development and implementation of a common system for monitoring water quality and quantity and the situation of the Strymonas river between Greece and Bulgaria. Other examples include the creation of an integrated system for the monitoring and management of the cross-border river basin of the Nestos river, and a mobile centre for information on environmental awareness-raising for the Kerkini-Petritsi cross-border area of ecological interest.

In the PL-CZ-DE case study, the evidence of asset-based cooperation comprises investments into new and restructured recreational and tourism infrastructure and products such as: historic parks and mansions; a system of post-military pre-war bunkers; swimming pools, walking, skiing and biking trails; information and promotional activities (maps, brochures, websites, festivals etc); and popularisation and protection of the historic and natural heritage.

In the PL-SK-UA case study, use of territorial assets is significantly limited due to poor economic development and the proximity of the EU external border. Accordingly, examples are limited mainly to the Polish-Slovak border and are focused on the development of tourism potential. Furthermore, a project was carried out by NGOs from both countries to develop a strategic network of cooperation between the regional development actors in the area. It was aimed at making better use of territorial capacities.

### **City Networking**

On the Finnish side of the case study area, the regional centres have considerable experience in the networking type of TC. These are usually thematic networks, such as the 'WHO European Healthy Cities Network' of which Kuopio is an active member. These networks provide opportunities for the towns in this distant European periphery to be part of knowledge flows, exchange good practices and internationalise their business and non-profit sectors. Traditional partnerships between Eastern Finnish and Russian Karelian towns can also be mentioned in terms of CBC, which could be the beginnings of a wider network among Finnish and Russian towns in relative proximity to the border. However, they currently remain limited to bilateral relations, such as friendship towns and cooperation agreements in the fields of culture, education and, to a lesser extent, economic development.

In the area of Greek-Bulgarian cooperation, a structure has been established for the common recording and promotion of cultural elements in the cross-border area between Agistro in Serres (Greece) and Koulata



in Bulgaria. Other examples in this area are the creation of a network of cultural historic monuments in the southern Balkans and restoration of the 'Arsana' listed building.

With regard to networking cities fulfilling local needs and aspirations for closer and deeper cooperation, an initiative known as the 'Little Triangle' was established in 2001, comprising a Towns' Union linking the three adjacent towns of Zittau (DE), Bogatynia (PL) and Hradek nad Nisou (CZ).

In the Poland-Slovakia-Ukraine case study, city networking is mainly found in the form of developed bilateral relations and real interactions between the largest cities in the CSA, mainly as twinning-city agreements. However, other initiatives are also implemented in the framework of the cross-border cooperation programme between Poland and Slovakia. For example, in the 'Network of Cities of the Carpathian Euroregion' project, four Polish and three Slovakian cities created a formal platform for the systematic and coordinated collaboration of municipalities in the Eastern Carpathians in carrying out strategic objectives and multilateral projects to more effectively promote cities, facilitate the organisation of joint ventures and exploit potential by influencing the development of tourism, and increasing investment, innovation and the employment rate.

Linkages between Rosario and, for example, Spanish cities occurs via participation in numerous international networks linked to urban problems (URB-AL, CIDEU), emphasising its distinction as a city with international ties and projection.

## **FUTURE EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS TERRITORIAL COOPERATION FROM THE CASE STUDIES**

Based on experience from the particular case study reports, the following policy recommendations can be proposed for future European Territorial Cooperation. First, a change in the governance, management and administration of TC should be implemented. Case studies located on the external EU border and involving new Member States (FI-RU, PL-SK-UA, GR-TR-BG) indicate that decreasing administrative burdens could have a positive effect on the scope and intensity of cooperation. Weakening the visa regime, especially in CBC, and supporting small border traffic could enhance linkages across the border. Furthermore, a bottom-up and locally-driven approach (further decentralisation) in TC governance (FI-RU, PL), accompanied with open/flexible institutionalisation (FI-RU, PL-SK-UA) and taking the voice of local actors into consideration in defining the priorities of TC programmes (SK), should benefit cooperation in future. Taking into account the ENPI objectives, a more equal role should



be afforded to non-EU partners in TC project decision-making and funding allocation.

The UK-NO-SE and GR-TR-BG case studies indicate that involving different types of partners (widening the range of TC programmes, new groups of stakeholders) would strengthen cooperation. This could be achieved for example by the provision of seed/preparatory funds that give partners an opportunity to develop quality applications, encourage the participation of smaller (poorer) partners (lack of start-up funds is an insurmountable barrier to entry for some municipalities in PL-SK-UA), integrate an effective feedback mechanism, and facilitate project implementation particularly for large projects. The Northern Periphery Programme has positive experience of such financial mechanisms.

Another issue relates to the necessary improvement of the human resources involved in TC. There is a need to increase their capacity through introducing different types of skills and training. In addition to supporting enterprises as partners in TC projects (FI-RU, PL-SK-UA, DE), increased capacity would facilitate the implementation of more advanced models of governance (e.g. multi-level governance/MLG) for more advanced projects (PL-CZ-DE).

The experience of the case studies indicates that programmes and projects deliver numerous benefits when they are tailored to local conditions and their objectives relate to problems encountered in daily life. For example, in the FR-BE case, the stakeholders have an interest in issues related to meeting citizens needs (security/emergency services, health), environmental concerns (flood protection) and harbour strategy. Accordingly, clear objectives directly relevant to the specific territory and defined through negotiations and analysis of needs should precede the final approval of TC programmes.

Hitherto, territorial cooperation has not always been suited to the regional strategies. UK-NO-SE practices indicate that macro-regional strategies enable synergies between TC programmes and projects. This may be achieved by ensuring and supporting the longevity and continuity of existing programmes, transforming TC into State policy and matching the regional development strategies. Other possible actions could involve a more active utilisation of Euroregions (PL-SK-UA) and other territorial structures focused on cooperation. Supporting new and existing networks of cooperation should also be considered. In future, it should be seen as important to secure a wider dissemination of results, good practices and effective management models.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main contribution of EU-supported territorial cooperation (TC) to cohesion and socio-economic development lies in institutional capacity-building, the professionalisation of staff, the circulation of innovative management ideas, and enhancing education. Those elements are vital for development and territorial integration because they facilitate various flows (of people, goods, and capital such as FDI) which otherwise would not cross the borders. Hence, TC indirectly but significantly contributes to development. However, these elements require long-term processes, and therefore stability of funding for European Territorial Cooperation activities should be assured to realise its benefits.

A promising impact of TC on socio-economic development would be via territorial integration. However, the latter is still quite a rare phenomenon as a result of TC. In order to achieve more territorial integration via TC, it seems that the issue-based approach to TC and good governance practices need to be implemented. The former would focus the TC on particular problems to be solved on both sides of the border by means of cooperation, while the latter would provide solutions to implement that cooperation effectively.

Various types of TC complement each other quite well and also correspond to types of grassroots cooperation (such as twinning cities). However, TC efforts would benefit from increased inter-programme cooperation where programmes would not only engage in knowledge-exchange activities but would also work together on common themes and problems as well as combine resources and budgets. This would allow for a greater involvement of partners from outside a specific programme area if they would strengthen existing partnerships. However, such outside-partner involvement should only be sought when expertise cannot be found within a programme area.

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<sup>1</sup> EUROREG, University of Warsaw.

Rethinking the issues addressed by TC would be beneficial. The current proposal from the Commission (March 2012, CEC 2011d/final 2) as well as the previous one (October 2011) aims to concentrate ERDF funds (including those for TC) in four priorities. The objective of concentrating funds is generally supported. However, the requirement to choose up to four specific ‘thematic fields’ for cross-border cooperation, as well as for transnational cooperation, has encountered resistance. These fields may be counterproductive, as they do not always match the local needs, and hence there may be a lack of political will among the main stakeholders to support them. For example, the importance of the cultural domain was underlined by a high number of actors involved in TC. It is also part of the priorities of Territorial Agenda 2020. Nevertheless, in the current Commission proposal for territorial cooperation, this theme seems to have been left out (see CEC, 2011d/final 1 and 2).

If the issue-based approach is adopted for TC, then policy-makers could consider ‘Territorial Keys’ proposed by Böhme *et al.*, 2011 as possible thematic issues that TC could tackle. Note that these do not exclude infrastructure or cultural domains – so a broad list of domains could remain, while the number of issues could be narrowed to the following five:

*Accessibility:* large-scale investments in road and rail infrastructure are in many cases unlikely to materialise. However, accessibility in terms of improved border-crossing facilities and access roads, the development of broadband communications and targeted support to new modes of public transport via internet and phone services could be of great local benefit.

*Services of general economic interest:* new markets in social and public services such as health, education, elderly care, child care, vocational training, and cultural activities could be developed through targeted support according to the specific needs of the localities involved.

*Territorial capacities/endowments/assets:* this could involve programmes that directly facilitate institutional learning and capacity-building, since large heterogeneity among competencies of local actors does not allow common issues to be tackled effectively. Besides, further developing local assets, such as tourism potential, through greater management skills would also be beneficial.

*Urban networking:* in developing territorial capacities, results-oriented support programmes that create incentives for and routinise inter-local cooperation between different actor groups (including business and non-institutional actors) should be devised. To the extent that specific milieu can be identified that hold promise for job creation, bottom-up mechanisms of project development among different firms and organisations should be facilitated by EU, national and regional policies.

*Functional regions:* concentrated efforts at the national and local levels are needed to combine more top-down nationally-defined priorities with the flexible bottom-up definition of strategic actions in order to produce ‘tailor-made’ regional policies based on existing and potential functional relationships.

Consequently, infrastructure investments funded by TC programmes should not be a specific goal, but instead they should facilitate non-infrastructure investment targets such as advancing human capital, socio-economic capacity-building, and community development. In this respect, TC should focus on innovative, small-scale pilot projects and European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) projects dedicated to feasibility studies with the aim of supporting the scaling-up of successful pilot projects for financing under other EU funding streams and the European Investment Bank, which have larger budgets, as well as through domestic funding.

The interest in infrastructural projects (physical and social infrastructure) varies among different groups of countries – old Member States prefer the latter while new Member States prefer the former. However, investments in ICT and other forms of communication would benefit all.

From the experience of beneficiaries (at the project level), the probability of success in territorial cooperation (measured by socio-economic development) is highest when TC is initiated by NGOs, local or regional government, funding comes from own or EU sources, cooperation is based on simple forms of collaboration, and it relates to culture, economy, tourism, natural environment or physical infrastructure. Hence, strengthening the wider participation of actors in TC, assuring availability and sustainability of TC funding, allowing different forms of cooperation at different stages of cooperation (from easy to more advanced), and providing a wide range of domains for TC (within a restricted range of issues) would be appropriate actions to generate more effective ETC policy.

New TC support structures could promote collaborative forms of policy formulation and delivery. The evidence from the case studies shows that there is no ideal, generic framework for TC. However, it should be based on broad partnerships involving the State, the private sector and foundations as well as civil society at large. This is particularly important in more peripheral regions with limited prospects for short-term returns on social investment and where multiple support mechanisms are needed to nurture entrepreneurial activity.

Cooperation of sustainable partnerships, rather than mere projects, should be a target of multi-annual support. One possible strategy would be to develop international networks between public, private and non-profit sector actors that provide assistance to emerging and future private and social entrepreneurs through a variety of means, including: support in project

development, securing grants (including the provision of guarantees), assistance in the acquisition and provision of loans and investment capital, and training, advisory, logistical and informational support. At the same time, such support would not only reduce one-sided grant dependency but also establish greater rapport between civil society organisations and local governments.

Continuity and consistency of cooperation in TC must be supported as key factors of its efficiency. The promotion and financing of concrete problem-oriented, longer-term and high-budget projects are one possible solution, i.e. those that can cover both the joint conceptual development of solutions and their pilots, including actual investments (capitalisation). This can also be achieved by making businesses interested in the projects and obtaining the financial support of the private sector for the implementation phase. The utilisation of innovative financial engineering instruments provides an opportunity for permanency of TC activities. Other means to achieve continuity include establishing a stronger link between TC programme priorities and regional/local development strategies, by financing networks continuously, and by providing opportunities for exchanges between and among ongoing projects and potential actors. In any case, projects must come from place-based initiatives to have a lasting impact.

A change in focus within TC opportunity structures is needed in which civil society networks and local-regional cooperation are prioritised and eligible for more generous and specifically targeted support. It is evident that the major drawback to EU-funded programmes is their increasing complexity, despite all official attempts and pronouncements to the contrary. Major efforts could be undertaken to develop new, user-friendly delivery mechanisms.

In this light, it is important to take into account the different phases in which not only programmes but also partnerships and partners are situated; different governance structures and measurements of success apply to these phases. In practice, this means that increased flexibility in terms of operationalisation and implementation is required in the early phases, which can be further formalised in later phases. However, an element of flexibility remains important, especially to avoid TC activities operating within a closed group of actors. This reflects studies that find that a combination of governance dimensions is often necessary for success, for example in terms of bottom-up vs. top-down, centralised vs. locally driven, institutionalised vs. loosely organised, and regulated vs. flexible options.

The current development of the EGTC regulation is also providing opportunities for a user-friendly delivery mechanism. Several positive steps have been taken to further develop EGTC provisions and to address

some of the loopholes and issues identified above. A process of evaluation towards a revision of the regulation has been ongoing since 2011, and it now seems to be coming to its end, to the satisfaction of all actors consulted. Some major aspects deal with the inclusion of non-EU Member States, the scope for bilateral EGTCs, and clarifications of status and staff. Nevertheless, the difficulty relating to specific national provisions remains an issue.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AAP</b>	Atlantic Area Programme
<b>AECID</b>	Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development
<b>AGR</b>	Greater Rosario Metropolitan Area
<b>AGUR</b>	Agence d'urbanisme et de développement de la région Flandre-Dunkerque
<b>ANII</b>	National Agency for Research and Innovation
<b>AR</b>	Argentina
<b>ARKO</b>	Arvika and Kongsvinger
<b>AUCI</b>	Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation
<b>BE</b>	Belgium
<b>BE-FR</b>	Case study on Belgium-France
<b>BEAC</b>	Barents Euro Arctic Council
<b>BG</b>	Bulgaria
<b>BID</b>	Inter-American Development Bank
<b>BM</b>	World Bank
<b>BSP</b>	Baltic Sea Programme
<b>BSR</b>	Baltic Sea Region
<b>BSS</b>	Baltic Sea Strategy
<b>BY</b>	Belarus
<b>CADSES</b>	Central Adriatic Danubian South-Eastern European Space
<b>CAWI</b>	Computer Assisted Web Interviewing or 'online survey'
<b>CBC</b>	Cross-border cooperation
<b>CEDOCAM</b>	Documentation Center for the Canary Islands and America



<b>Ch</b>	Chapter
<b>CIDEU</b>	El Centro Iberoamericano de Desarrollo Estratégico Urbano
<b>COPIT</b>	Conférence Permanente Intercommunale Transfrontalière
<b>CoR</b>	Committee of the Regions
<b>CS</b>	Case Study
<b>CSA</b>	Case Study Area
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>CUD</b>	Communauté urbaine de Dunkerke
<b>CUTI</b>	Uruguayan Chamber of Information Technologies
<b>CY</b>	Cyprus
<b>CZ</b>	Czech Republic
<b>DCFTA</b>	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement
<b>DE</b>	Germany
<b>DG</b>	Directorate General
<b>EBRD</b>	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EE</b>	Estonia
<b>EEC</b>	European Economic Community
<b>EGTC</b>	European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation
<b>EL</b>	Greece
<b>EL-TR-BG</b>	Case study on Greece-Turkey-Bulgaria
<b>ENP</b>	European Neighbourhood Policy
<b>ENPI</b>	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
<b>EPH</b>	Permanent Home Survey
<b>ERDF</b>	European Regional Development Fund
<b>ERSV</b>	Erkend Regionaal Samenwerkingsverband
<b>ES-ARG</b>	Case study on Spain-Argentina
<b>ESDP</b>	European Spatial Development Perspective
<b>ES-MO</b>	Case study on Spain-Marocco
<b>ES-UY</b>	Case study on Spain-Uruguay

<b>ESPON</b>	European Spatial Planning Observation Network
<b>ETC</b>	European Territorial Cooperation
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>Euroregion</b>	A cross-border grouping of public authorities
<b>EU2020</b>	Europe 2020
<b>EUSBSR</b>	European Union Strategy for Baltic Sea Region
<b>ExS</b>	Executive Summary
<b>FAMSI</b>	Fondo Andaluz de Solidaridad Internacional (Andalusian Fund for International Solidarity)
<b>FEDER</b>	European Regional Development Fund
<b>FDI</b>	Foreign Direct Investment
<b>FI</b>	Finland
<b>FI-RU</b>	Case study on Finland-Russia
<b>FMI</b>	Fondo Monetario Internacional (Eng. International Monetary Fund)
<b>FP7</b>	Framework Programme 7
<b>FR</b>	France
<b>FR-BE</b>	France-Belgium
<b>FUA</b>	Functional Urban Area
<b>FYROM</b>	former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
<b>GB-NO-SE</b>	Case study on Scotland-Norway-Sweden
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GIZ</b>	German Agency for International Development
<b>GR</b>	Greece
<b>GRP</b>	Gross Regional Product
<b>GVA</b>	Gross Value Added
<b>HCP</b>	Haut Commissariat au Plan (High Planning Commission)
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Educational Institution
<b>HSR</b>	High-Speed Rail
<b>HU</b>	Hungary
<b>HU-SL-RO-UA</b>	ENPI CBC Programme Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine
<b>IDETA</b>	Agence Intercommunale de Développement
<b>IC</b>	International Cooperation

<b>IDE</b>	Inversión Directa Extranjera (Foreign Direct Investment)
<b>IDH</b>	Índice de Desarrollo Humano (Human Development Index)
<b>IDI</b>	In-depth Interview
<b>IEDT</b>	Instituto de Empleo y Desarrollo Socioeconómico y Tecnológico (Institute of Employment and Socio-economic and Technological Development)
<b>IEG</b>	Intercommunale d'Etude et de Gestion
<b>INDEC</b>	National Institute of Statistics and the Census
<b>INE</b>	National Institute of Statistics
<b>IPA</b>	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
<b>IPEC</b>	Provincial Institute of Statistics and the Census
<b>JTS</b>	Joint Technical Secretariat
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority
<b>LAU</b>	Local administrative units (LAU 1 – district; LAU 2 – municipality). Formerly called NUTS 4 and NUTS 5
<b>LDA</b>	Local Development Agency
<b>LG</b>	Local Government
<b>LIKOTO</b>	Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai
<b>LMCU</b>	Lille Métropole Communauté urbaine
<b>LT</b>	Lithuania
<b>LV</b>	Latvia
<b>MA</b>	Managing Authority
<b>MA</b>	Morocco
<b>MEDT</b>	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine
<b>MERCOSUR</b>	Common Southern Market
<b>MLG</b>	Multilevel Governance
<b>MOVTMA</b>	Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment
<b>MR</b>	Main Report
<b>MS</b>	Member States

<b>MT</b>	Malta
<b>MUA</b>	Morphological Urban Area
<b>NAC</b>	Neighbouring Area Cooperation (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland)
<b>NCP</b>	National Contact Point
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organisation
<b>NMC</b>	Northern Maritime Corridor
<b>NMS</b>	New Member States
<b>NO</b>	Norway
<b>NOK</b>	Norwegian Krone
<b>non-MS</b>	non-Member States
<b>NPP</b>	Northern Periphery Programme
<b>NSC</b>	North Sea Commission
<b>NSP</b>	North Sea Programme
<b>NSRP</b>	North Sea Region Programme
<b>NWE</b>	North-West Europe
<b>NWEP</b>	North West Europe Programme
<b>NUTS</b>	Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (three levels plus 2 local levels called LAU 1&2)
<b>ONGs</b>	Organizaciones No Gubernamentales (Non-governmental Organisations)
<b>OMS</b>	Old Member States
<b>ONU</b>	Organización de las Naciones Unidas (Organisation of the United Nations)
<b>OP</b>	Operational Programme
<b>OPP</b>	Planning and Budget Office (Presidency of the Republic)
<b>OSA</b>	Oblast State Administration
<b>OSC</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>PCA</b>	Principal Component Analysis
<b>PENCTI</b>	National Strategic Plan for Science and Technology and Innovation
<b>PHARE</b>	Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies

<b>PIB</b>	Producto Interior Bruto (Gross Domestic Product)
<b>PL</b>	Poland
<b>PL-SK-UA</b>	Case study on Poland-Slovakia-Ukraine
<b>PL-CZ-DE</b>	Case study on Poland-Germany-Czech Republic
<b>PL-UA-BL</b>	ENPI CBC Programme Poland-Ukraine-Belarus
<b>PL-SK</b>	CBC Programme Poland-Slovakia
<b>PNUD</b>	Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (United Nations Development Programme)
<b>POCTEFEX</b>	Programa de Cooperación Transfronteriza España-Fronteras Exteriores
<b>PPP</b>	Public-Private Partnership
<b>RCP</b>	Regional Contact Point
<b>RDA</b>	Regional Development Agency
<b>RESOC</b>	Regionaal Sociaaleconomisch Overlegcomité
<b>RGPH</b>	General Census of the Population and Housing
<b>ROP</b>	Regional Operational Programme
<b>RU</b>	Russian Federation
<b>ScR</b>	Scientific Report
<b>SE</b>	Sweden
<b>SEK</b>	Swedish Krona (currency)
<b>SEM</b>	Structural Equation Model
<b>SI</b>	Slovenia
<b>SK</b>	Slovak Republic
<b>SME</b>	Small and medium-size enterprise
<b>SN</b>	Saxony
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis
<b>TA</b>	Technical Assistance
<b>TA2020</b>	Territorial Agenda 2020
<b>TACIS</b>	Technical Assistance to the Community of Independent States
<b>TERCO-ESPON 2013</b>	project entitled: European Territorial Cooperation as Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life

<b>TC</b>	Territorial Cooperation
<b>TEU</b>	Treaty on European Union
<b>TI</b>	Territorial Integration
<b>TR</b>	Turkey
<b>TTC</b>	Transcontinental Territorial Cooperation
<b>UDELAR</b>	University of the Republic
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNR</b>	National University of Rosario
<b>URB-AL</b>	European Union Regional Cooperation Programme with Latin America
<b>URB-ALEU</b>	Regional Cooperation Programme for Latin America
<b>URBACT</b>	European sustainable urban development programme
<b>UA</b>	Ukraine
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UY</b>	Uruguay
<b>VAB</b>	Gross Value Added
<b>WVI</b>	West-Vlaamse Intercommunale
<b>WWI</b>	World War I

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From a historical perspective, the main objective of territorial cooperation was to overcome the negative effects of borders as barriers, maximize potential synergies, promote joint solutions to common problems and, as a result, encourage further harmonious and balanced integration of the EU territory, and enhance the citizens' quality of life. However, over time, the expectations towards European Territorial Cooperation programmes have expanded to encompass contributions to territorial integration, economic development and competitiveness, city networking, good neighbourhood relations, labour markets, and the unification of natural ecosystems divided by borders. The present book addresses the question whether cooperation truly leads to territorial integration, as expected by policy makers and citizens in general.

The publication summarizes selected findings from the TERCO project – European Territorial Cooperation as a Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life – which was completed as part of the ESPON 2013 Programme. It focused on several types of territorial cooperation: cross-border, transnational, inter-regional, and transcontinental, as well as twinning cities, and used several research methods – network analyses, structural equation modelling, factor and cluster analyses.

The ESPON 2013 Programme – the European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion – was adopted by the European Commission on 7 November 2007. It supports "reinforcement of regional policy with studies, data and observation of development trends". It was established under Objective 3 of Structural Funds 2007-2013, concerning "European Territorial Cooperation". The ESPON 2013 Programme is part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States – Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

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