THE EASTERN DIMENSION
OF THE UNITED EUROPE

Political and economical aspects of the Eastern politics of the European Union

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FOREWORD

The next volume from the series called *Region and Regionalism* was dedicated to the political and spatial results of an Eastern enlargement of the European Union with a group of 12 countries from the Central and Southern Europe. The fast growing intensity of economic, social and cultural phenomena as well as deep changes in transport, communal and environmental infrastructure of this area indicate the new development stimuli and wide-raging overvaluation of the given economic and political networks. Areas that had previously been functioning in one geopolitical area after accession to European Union became a part of new political and spatial structures (Commonwealth of Independent States, Commonwealth of Belarus and Russia, Schengen Agreement Members etc.) and in the joining zones of them new spheres of influences and economic, social and political networks appeared.

Although there are still the national borders between the EU countries, their traditional importance from the economic and social point of view is being reduced. The economic integration and political cooperation that have been started a couple of decades ago results in growing role of regions that became the territory entities with economic and spatial significance in the given countries and the whole European Union. It is quite often that local societies cross the country's borders and within the frame of transboundary initiatives and emerging euroregions start to joining solutions of the problems. That may lead to a situation when the European community although having principal differences is a group functioning as a system of a variety of regional and subregional networks. The source of those networks is the progressive globalization of economic and political structures that are conditioned by the results of scientific--technical progress and information revolution.

The articles and studies that have been used in the monograph dealing with political geography dedicated to the new spatial processes in the Central and Eastern Europe was divided into three parts – the political aspects of the East-

ward European Union enlargement, economic problems connected with the functioning of the countries and regions in the new conditions and the issues regarding the trans boundary cooperation and changing connections in the border zones.

The first part (*Political aspects of the Eastern politics of the EU*) is composed of four articles from which the first – *The EU's predominant concept of inside/outside dimensions, the stop of enlargements, and the Eastern European deadlock* (Alessandro Vitale) deals with the notion of the further enlargement of the European economic structure both in the politics and social-cultural and the factors weakening this process.

In the second Roman Szul – *The West (the EU and NATO) and its Eastern neighbours: fading interests, weakening ties?* indicates the issue of EU enlargement pointing at a variety of different political interests of EU member countries and the East European countries located outside the EU. Two further texts regards the slightly more detailed issues related with the EU Eastern enlargement – the situation of the Polish minority in Lithuania after Polish and Lithuanian accession to EU (Katarzyna Leśniewska, *The socio-political situation of Poles in Vilnius after the accession of Lithuania to the European Union*) and the perspective and eventual internal and external results of Serbia's accession to European Union (Sandra Violante – *Candidate to normalcy: Serbia between Yugoslav heritage and EU future*).

The second part of the Volume focuses on the economic issues resulting from the EU Eastern enlargement (*Economical aspects of the Eastern politics of the EU*). Marie-France Gaunard-Anderson presents an example of significant regional benefits, resulting from the intensification of the business relations between the regions of the 'old' and 'new' European Union that cooperate thanks to the European support (*Partnership between French and East European regions: Success of a decentralized co-operation supported by the European Union*). The following three articles indicate the economic influences of the European Union enlargement in the neighbouring Ukraine. Maksym Voichuk (*Integration component of environmental management: geo-economics aspect*) presents new examples of environmental management, Serhii Fedoniuk (*E-participation as a factor of Europeanization in the context of European integration prospects of Ukraine*) focuses on the pace of development, the scope of advancement and the popularity of the usage of the modern information techniques. However, Nataliia Pavlikha and Iryna Kytsyuk – point at the growing significance of the competitiveness factors of the regions in economies of the neighbouring countries of the European Union, especially Ukraine (*Importance of regional competitiveness in transition economy*).

Finally, in the third part that is very close to the old volumes of the Region *and Regionalism* series, the authors again discuss the fast developing in the European Union structures problems with the borders and borderlands and analyze the new aspects of transborder economic and politically-cultural cooperation (*Borders and borderlands issues and the transborder co-operation*). Milan Bufon (*The Slovenian borderlands: between integration and marginality*) characterizes the difficulties with the integration process that appear in the Slovenian border zone. Sokol Axhemi (*The features of the socio-geographic area of Shkodër (Albania) and Ulcinj (Montenegro)*) presents the potential development possibilities of the Albanian-Montenegro borderlands in the situation of European aspirations of both countries. Marek Sobczyński and Marek Barwiński, however (*Geopolitical location and territorial transformations of Ukrainian territory and the complexity of their internal structures in the twentieth century*) analyze the territorial evolution of the area of modern Ukrainian territory and its geopolitical significance as well as the internal structural territorial coherence of Ukraine. The issue of border formation and functioning of the borderland that are connected to them are marked by Nataliia Kotsan (*Political and geographical features of the new state border of Ukraine*). She implies that in many parts of Ukraine the border formation process and the land borders were not finished.

The problem of diminishing role of the areas connected to the border lines is being discussed by Gintarė Pociūtė and Vidmantas Daugirdas (*The border's influence for peripherality: Case study of Lithuanian-Belorusian border region*), discussing the example of Lithuanian-Belarusian borderland. Similarly, Donatas Burneika, Vidmantas Daugirdas, Edikas Kriaučiūnas, Gintaras Ribokas i Rūta Ubarevičiene (*Socio-economical aspects of depopulation in Eastern EU border region – case of Eastern Lithuania*) indicate in their study regarding the Eastern part of Lithuania, that the external peripheral areas are being characterized by strong negative results of the economic integration, that require intense countermeasures. Halina Powęska (*Spatial extent of cross-border trade in the Polish-Ukrainian border area*) and Sylwia Dołzbłasz (*Transborder co-operation on the external EU's borders, illustrated by the eastern border of Poland*) also notice in their articles the significance of the local and regional activities influencing the transborder commerce and cooperation in the external borders of European Union. Article of Alexandru Ilieş, Jan Wendt, Dorina Ilieş i Vasile Grama (*Internal/external level of connection of administrative divisions at the external border of EU in Polish and Slovak sectors*) present the meaning of established by the countries administrative divisions for intensification of cooperation processes and liaison in the borderland and border areas. The

authors analyze and compare the example of external EU border in Poland and Slovakia. The last attached to this part text by Marian Wójcik has a more theoretical character and regards the evolution of conception of peripheral areas from the geographical point of view; however, the area of analysis is the level of diversity of the Poland regional structure (*Peripheral areas in geographical concepts and the context of Poland's regional diversity*).

The European Union Eastern and Southern enlargement included to its economic and political-functional system a group of a few countries from the Central and Southern Europe, moved also the external borders of the structure and connected with those problems on totally new areas. Numerous countries from that part of Europe became not only the neighbouring countries of European Union but also the candidates to the future enlargement of the EU structure. The articles proposed in that Volume are supposed to refer to some of the aspects of the complicated geopolitical and spatial situation.

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Section I

POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE EASTERN POLITICS OF THE EU

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THE EU'S PREDOMINANT CONCEPT OF INSIDE/OUTSIDE DIMENSIONS, THE STOP OF ENLARGEMENTS, AND THE EASTERN EUROPEAN DEADLOCK

1. INTRODUCTION

The EU's Eastern dimension is without any doubt one of the main problems and challenges facing our continent. This problem largely depends on the fact that the European Union's predominant conception of inside/outside dimensions reveals an evident modern territorial character, due to the fact that the spatial assumptions of the 'architects' of the Europe of Maastricht and Brussels (Emerson 1998, p. 227) (especially the ideas of both territorial cohesion and territorial continuity) contribute to an evident emergence of a modern and sharpened territorial construction of the new European space. In fact the European spatial development policy discourse is based on a strong notion of territoriality and accepts the instrument of hard and closed border, and of a sharp inside/outside dichotomy. As a consequence, the EU's Eastern border has created a new divide in Europe, related to many problems, aporias, contradictions, and consequences.

At the beginning of this process, the intricate interplay between the internal and external facets of European integration has meant that the Union's enlargement to Eastern Europe was seen as one of its most effective foreign policy tools towards the East of Europe. It acted as an instrument through which the Union wanted to enhance stability in its immediate neighbourhood, having a stake in preserving stability on its doorstep. But during the last decade, the danger of an 'institutional overstretching' stimulated EU's politicians to stop *de facto* enlargements to the East, and this old foreign policy tool became inefficient, because the previous open 'European project' of inclusion is increasingly

perceived, especially by the EU's Eastern neighbours, as an evident form of final exclusion, and of political, economical, and social marginalisation.

As a consequence, by relinquishing enlargement, the EU is in danger of losing its capacity for effectively stabilising its nearest neighbours. The acknowledgement of the indivisibility of security in Europe became much clearer than in the past: the EU cannot feel secure and promote prosperity if the rest of the continent is in a downward spiral towards increased insecurity and poverty. But choosing something between 'inside' and 'outside', expressed by the *European Neighbourhood Policy* and the *Eastern European Partnership* – two attempts at devising new ways through which the EU tries to project stability in its neighbourhood – seems not enough to solve the contradictions contained in the same concept of territoriality, and of inside/outside dimensions of international relations. This is especially the case of the EU's borders, created and expanded towards the East of Europe after the breakdown of Soviet Union. As a matter of fact, they are directly involved in complicated and decisive problems such as the global food crisis – due also to the European customs duties, governmental subsidies, and agricultural protectionism – the permanently difficult co-operation, as well as the obstacles to the globalisation in Europe.

Before 1989, the rhetoric of the European Community (EEC) explained that the continent was suffering from an artificial and politically tragic division. When the Berlin wall was torn down, the right to free movement of people was celebrated everywhere. Nevertheless, after 1993, EU's Eastern border automatically created a new divide in Europe, exactly at the moment when Europe spontaneously found new forms of relatively open borders. Basically, the removal of internal borders within the EU and the opening of a common market were accompanied by a continuous strengthening and by an increasing importance of external borders. The creation of a common market with economic and social cohesion was followed by acts and policies to demarcate, border and protect the common European space (Geddes 2001, Zielonka 2006). The Maastricht Treaty that entered into force in 1993 clearly established an increasing importance of the EU's territorial basis of its boundaries. As a result, the enlargement automatically produced a new cleavage between two 'Europes': Eastern (former Soviet western republics and Caucasus) and the enlarged Western one. Cold War ended, but the institutionalised East-West partition of Europe largely reproduced itself. The new EU's eastern border created not only new symbolic boundaries, but also new forms of permanent inclusion and exclusion. In fact, the EU's concept of political integration, based on this rigorous division, defined by full membership status and fortified external borders, became an instrument of an old conception of territoriality.

2. PROBLEMS AND CONTRADICTIONS
OF THE EU'S PREDOMINANT CONCEPT
OF INSIDE/OUTSIDE DIMENSIONS

The EU's system is characterised, much more than in the past, by a territorially fixed political community, despite the absence of clear political unity, and of a shared foreign policy. After the revolution of 1989 the 'institutional Europe' needed deep changes of her *Raumstruktur* (spatial structure), based on different spatial criteria. In fact, however, it kept a 'protective' conception of the border (of bipolar kind), that could be at the highest degree shifted (enlargement), but not changed in its nature. Even if, after five decades of non-stop theorising about European integration, scholars are still concerned with the question of what exactly the EU is and what it may resemble in the future (Sidaway 2006, p. 4), Commission officials clearly said that the dismantling of Europe's internal borders made it necessary to make sure that the controls at the external borders of their shared territory were reliable (Islam 1994, p. 40).

Nowadays the conformation of the EU's borders[1] is characterised by rigid border law enforcement, border controls (Andreas 2003, p. 78) and obstacles to the cross-border mobility. The policy of closed boundaries hinders everyday the full and free movement of peoples, ideas and goods. Several developments in the European Union, such as the creation of the Schengen area[2], the Lisbon Treaty[3], and the Frontex agency, show that the territorial concept, in a modern geographical sense, is still important, influent and seems to evolve towards a polity with a certain type of 'Westphalian' characteristics. The EU is now evolving towards a reproduction of the territorial model of modern state by presenting itself as being one single space and by bordering, disciplining and normalising itself with practices very similar to those of nation-states (Boedeltje and van Houtum 2008, pp. 362–363). Most of the member states still want to move the EU towards a closer economic and political union. Economic and social cohesion became one of the pillar of the Community structure (Fitzgerald and Michie 1997, p. 20). Due to the concept of territoriality related to a clear inside/

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[1] About the permanence of this border, see D. Newman and A. Paasi (1998, p. 199) and P. Andreas (2003).

[2] The new focus on the controlling of the EU's external borders was also triggered by the Schengen Treaties (Albrecht 2002, p. 1).

[3] The contemporary tendency towards an Europe with a Constitution, President, Minister of Foreign Affairs and above all a clearly demarcated territory with a sharp inside/outside dichotomy, borders as barriers, is going on. It represents a project of a very restricted and closed EU (cf. Boedeltje and van Houtum 2008, p. 361).

outside division, especially on the East, the European project seems to evolve more towards a replication of the modern state structure than towards a form of empire, as argued by many scholars such as Schmitter, Zielonka, Wallace and others.

Europe has an intrinsic historical openness and cannot be understood with a definite beginning or end; it has never been a clearly demarcated continent or a fixed bordered entity, and it has always been characterized by shifting spatialities. For example, the Mediterranean once was a bridge of civilisations between Europe, Africa and Asia. Only recently it became a European periphery and a boundary. The EU's eastern border is quite recent and it resembles the iron curtain, even if is located on a more eastern, new line.

What still separates the 'two Europes' maintains the aspect of a 'modern state border'. Its 'exclusive' and 'expulsive' character, impermeability, its function of rigid delimitation of space and the evidence of its character of 'perimetral' **barrier**. Its superposing on existing state borders, often based on the 'right of conquest' (violence) and generated by wars and expulsion of populations (Strassoldo and Delli Zotti 1982, p. 259), demonstrate its nature, quite clearly not 'post-modern'. Even though some scholars claim EU's external borders as 'undefined external boundaries' (e.g.: Wallace 1999, p. 519), these borders have a clear function of a **barrier**.

This macro-regional boundary seems neither the **limes** of Rome, nor the medieval **marche** of frontier, generated by the complex tissue of historic Europe and created by the 'trans-territoriality' that distinguished it.[4] It is at the same time totally different from the weak and permeable frontier of the Holy Roman Empire. The 'linear border' is a recent historical reality, characteristic of rigid territorial systems, and does not serve the function of a 'filter' but that of an 'enclosure'[5]. The completely modern characteristics of new EU's external border appear by the attempt to separate between internal 'law and order' of the *Innenraum* (internal space) and the dimension of outside, to which to expel all the 'disorder' unable to assimilate. The project of reinforcement of internal cohesion of the EU, typical of an obsessive conception of political unity (insofar as only continuously pursued), reflects the logic of the modern State: the production of order inside the territory delimited by the borders and the expulsion of the 'disorder' outside. The EU's borders are still characterized by

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[4] 'The archetype of nonexclusive territorial rule is Medieval Europe'. J.G. Ruggie (1993, p. 149).

[5] R. Jackson (1994, p. 9). See D. Newman and A. Paasi (1998, p. 197): 'Boundaries and territoriality are contextual'.

a 'Westphalian memory' in the way they use the territory. New and exclusionary territorial borders support political unity (Badie 1995, Reut 2000) and correspond to the modern idea of 'political territorial exclusivity' (sovereignty)[6]. The EU mirrors the first principle of the modern Westphalian international system: reciprocal exclusion. It is a sovereignty regime 'by integration'. This conception is also based on 'territorial obsessions' as demonstrated by the discussion about the necessity of 'territorial continuity' for the EU. Over the years, this territorial conception caused an 'involution' of the border[7] and rendered the borders 'impermeable', letting institutionalised Europe fall into the phenomenon called a 'territorial trap' by political geographers (Agnew 1994, Dell'Agnese 2003, p. 77). It was the same conception of the creation (already existent in the Cold War period) of a big self-sufficient, autarchic economic area, closed by a customary and boundary belt – somehow correspondent to the ideal of the 'Fichtean' *geschlossene Handelsstaat*[8] (a territorial, political closed and mercantilist area) – that caused this result. Instead of developing the spontaneous process of rebirth of a porous border, as a contact and trade zone with the East and towards the Balkans, that appeared not only possible, but necessary in the early 1990s (Layard et al. 1992), during the last 15 years there were attempts to oppose a long, artificial process of tightening that produced this 'involution' of the border, which became at the beginning of this decade a military reinforcement, entrusted to special units, financed by Brussels, made rigid and sealed by a system of visas, further reinforced by the 'Schengen curtain'. The perceived 'security deficit' has in-creased the impermeability of the external EU's boundary. This border has been further strengthened and even militarised since 2004, but the restrictive border policy may at the same time undermine the headline goals of European foreign policy: the continent-wide stability, co-operation, and widespread European economic integration.

3. THE CONCRETE CONSEQUENCES OF THE EU'S EASTERN BORDER

The new Eastern border of the 'Europe of Brussels' has a lot of consequences, above all economic and political, but also involving future security risks for

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[6] 'The Westphalian model of international political life presumes a notion of hard borders' (Mostov 2008, p. 20).
[7] On this concept, see E. Sussi in AA.VV. (1973, p. 136).
[8] J.G. Fichte (1800).

Europe. The most evident problems are those determined by the fracture, created by the border, of regional areas that are complementary in historical, ethnographic, geographic, political and economic sense. Because of the huge destruction of the movement of goods, services, information and people across the borders – in a word, the destruction of spontaneous transborder co-operation – nowadays we have to face the consequent degradation of the whole regional context.

The European 'new protectionism' in agriculture, fishing etc., customs duties and governmental subsidies are sources of deep problems for people remaining beyond the border and contribute to breaking historical ties and spontaneous contacts, socioeconomic and sociocultural interdependencies in borderlands (that are becoming 'contact zones'), and in cross-border regions. All this is contrary to the border definition as construed by International Law, where it appears as a factor of security and normalisation.[9] With its enlargement, the EU recreated the eastern border, conditioned by reinforced border controls, that at the beginning of 1990s was relatively soft and easy to cross. Basically, the erection of tariff walls has the same effect as the erection of real, physical walls. It is significant that the protectionists habitually use the language of warfare. They talk of 'repelling an invasion' of foreign products. And the means they suggest in the fiscal field are like those of the battlefield. The tariff barriers that are put up to repel this invasion are like the tank traps, trenches, and barbed-wire entanglements created to repel or slow down attempted 'invasion' by a foreign army. And, just as the foreign army is compelled to employ more expensive means to surmount those obstacles, bigger tanks, mine detectors, engineers corps to cut wires, ford streams, and bridges, more expensive and efficient means of transport must be developed to surmount tariff obstacles. On the one hand, we try to reduce the cost of transport by developing faster and more efficient ships, better road bridges, better locomotives and motor trucks. On the other hand, we offset this investment in efficient transport by a tariff that makes it commercially even more difficult to transport goods than it was before. All the chief tariff fallacies stem from the central fallacy of protectionism. They are the result of looking only at the immediate effects of a single tariff rate on one group of producers and forgetting the long-term effects both on consumers as a whole and on all other producers.

Moreover, the political consequences of the border are very evident. The countries excluded by the enlargement experience serious problems of moderni-

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[9] Significantly, the same conception is evident in the old Fichte's theory (Fichte 1800).

sation, high degree of disorder and political instability, populist and authoritarian regimes, dictatorial tendencies (Beichelt 2004, pp. 113–132). The cases of Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova are quite evident. These political systems are permanently affected by bureaucratic exploitation, by social disintegration, organised crime and state-owned land. Institutions and politicians are locked in a bitter internal struggle for power. Especially in the belt of the Western former Soviet republics, old oligarchies and obsolete structures flourish on economic stagnation (despite the EU's financing programs), on the relapse into bounds of the old Stalinist 'interdependence', on deep underdevelopment, which seems difficult to escape. The EU's external border contributes to a volatile political system and to deep political cleavages in the region. The existence of barriers, of filters continually renewed by 'strategists of border control' (Andreas 2003), raises the sense of segregation of excluded populations, the perception of being a part of different reality[10], and the potential revolt against 'included' European countries. Not surprisingly, the frustration is rising in the region beyond the border. The inhabitants of these countries largely depend on travelling westwards for survival. At the beginning of the 1990s, the area of Eastern European countries was suspended between a virtuous circle of economic reforms and the end of these changes into a spiral of political and economic depression. The failed building of a free-trade area that could avoid deep political and economic consequences produced what today is completely evident. Moreover, using the border European protectionism damages not only its internal consumers but also the agricultural economies of Eastern European regions beyond the border. The situation of agriculture in Ukraine, Belarus or Moldova 20 years after the break-up of the Soviet Union is totally unacceptable. The new EU's barriers stop foreign investment and export of economic resources that are always necessary for the rising of developing countries. Especially smaller countries that have seen the reduction of their internal market need to open outwards, otherwise they can fall into stagnation and decline (Pavliuk 1997, Batt and Wolczuk 2002), because of the high cost of autarchy. The economic justification of these barriers does not hold: it is not clear why only 'internal' openness of the Union (that is confined to EU's borders) can produce economic advantages, while disadvantages exist beyond these borders, in the case of a permeable border. In a global economy, the idea of agricultural autarchy doesn't make sense and is quite dangerous, to say the least. Moreover, the EU's agricultural subsidies entail destructive consequences all over the world. The reality is that the border depends only on political justification, based on the principle of 'exclusivity'. In

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[10] See D.-J.F. Kamann in: R. Ratti and S. Reichman (1993, p. 92).

fact, the border is thought as an effective tool to control the relations between the 'internal' and 'external' markets, impeding the escape from political control.

4. THE STOP OF ENLARGEMENTS, AND THE EASTERN EUROPEAN DEADLOCK

After 2007, as a response and reaction to the proliferation of transnational threats, the EU put a growing emphasis on securing its external borders. As a result, EU's members called for Union's eastward enlargement to stop, following at the same time some desiderata from Moscow. The policy of securitisation of EU eastern borders seeks to strengthen effective border management and control and secure the borderlands. Public policies and state interests implied the escalation of immigration and border controls, stricter visa policies and extended policing in the border areas. In fact, the border created a *cordon sanitaire* between the member states and the near abroad. The hardening of borders in the name of security acts to reinforce the division between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' and could create difficulties in the relation-ships between the EU and its neighbours. The state-centric, exclusionary ap-proach of erecting and strengthening walls became quite evident. EU politics of internal security was reconfigured in the Amsterdam Treaty (1999). The 2007 Lisbon Treaty confirmed the cardinal objective of the Union in the area of security. The emergence and subsequent extension of the so-called Schengen area resulted in the transformation of external borders into dense networks of surveillance and control taking advantage of new advanced technologies of personal identity management, early warning and threat prevention.

But barriers risk to feed a spiral of insecurity and to freeze deep disparities in Europe. The borders, being at the same time zones of uncertainty and security (Sibley 1995, p. 183), can provoke polarisation and instability when they are too strong and impermeable. In fact, the EU's Eastern border maintains a destabili-zing effect within states left outside the EU, by exacerbating centrifugal tensions and pressures. Moreover, considering that their prospects for EU membership are receding, the Western former Soviet republics may not have sufficient motivation to go on with long-term reform efforts. As a result, the transforma-tion process may become impeded and, in the longer perspective, the situation in the entire region may be destabilised. Trying to expel 'disorder', EU's border could stimulate it. Schengen can hardly be seen as a 'security and stability factor' for Eastern Europe; rather, it induces new tensions between neighbouring countries. The intensification and facilitation of cross-border co-operation be-

tween Ukraine and the EU is still a kind of propaganda. Nowadays, there prevails an isolated territorial conception of 'Europe', instead of new forms of regional development strategies combining local potentialities with global orientations. It's no accident that Rijpma and Cremona described this approach as 'extra-territorialisation' (Rijpma and Cremona 2007, p. 10). The stop of enlargements means a reaffirmation of the already existing boundaries, with all the associated notions of 'here' and 'there', 'outside' and 'inside', 'home' and 'away', 'them' and 'us'. The 'enlargement fatigue', which has been observed in the last few years and which is primarily caused by a negative social response in the West to the consequences of Romania and Bulgaria joining the EU in 2007, has evolved into an unwillingness to sustain the idea of an 'open' European Union. Procedures that were formal and technical in nature, such as submitting the accession application from the Council of the European Union to the European Commission or granting candidate status after European Commission's positive assessment, are now being blocked, and have become politicised on the member states' domestic arenas. Moreover, when the Western former Soviet republics meet all the criteria needed to finalise their respective stages of integration, the EU states try to introduce additional control mechanisms or further conditions. This means a deadlock for Eastern European Countries. Decreasing foreign investments and the economic slowdown have revealed the shortcomings of the regions' economies. The economic crisis has also brought a decline in living standards, which in turn translated into public unwillingness to implement reforms. It cannot be ruled out that the slowdown of the integration process will boost the popularity of nationalist parties, and generate ethnic tensions, which will pose threats to stability in the region. There is a growing xenophobia among European citizens and politicians, who perceive immigrants as a threat to the social and economic order and their 'way of life'.

'Securitisation' remains first of all 'A political technique with a capacity to integrate a society politically by staging a credible existential threat in the form of an enemy' (Huysmans 1998, p. 557). Eastern European borders still are most of all lines of forward defence, with borderlands serving as their buffer zones. This is the basic reason underpinning the technologisation and militarisation of EU's Eastern borders. While restrictive border policies may appear to protect against the perceived threats, in the long run they may prove counterproductive for the development of cross-border co-operation, and the stability of Europe as a whole (Ibryamova 2004). Securitisation of EU's external borders has re-established traditional territorially-based and mentally-grounded divisions across Europe.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The expansion of the EU has involved a redrawing of the boundaries and relationships between the EU and its Eastern neighbours. But nowadays, a necessity is growing in Eastern Europe of a deeper co-operation, including a visa--free regime, a free trade zone for services and agricultural products, an increasing level of interpersonal contacts, as well as closer co-operation in transport infrastructures. The increasing transnational flows of capital, goods, services, labour and information have generated a growing need for border-crossing mechanisms (Anderson and O'Dowd 1999, pp. 596, 602).

The post-enlargement policies of rigid border law enforcement and border control, breaking the cross-border mobility, contribute instead to deepening the problem of the EU's border impermeability, devastating the coexistence in Europe. The rising of pressures towards the development of continuous spontaneous cross-border contacts confirms the existence of a push toward the recovery of optimal dimensions of co-operation, above all on the economic level that does not coincide anymore with that dictated by harshly territorial political aggregations. The contemporary main question is: how to transform the securitisation of the EU's Eastern dimension from the wall of 'Schengenisation' into a bridge?

At least a radical rethinking of political borders and territoriality is needed (Anderson 1996, Mostov 2008). The old conception of territoriality can nowadays only provoke hard problems and deep contrasts. Reducing and solving (or partly solving) the contradictions generally require opening the gateways and reducing the 'barrier functions' of the border. People with relatives in the neighbouring countries should be given long-term Schengen visas, not a few days, one-entry types as is presently the case. The same should happen for students, and small trade border conventions should be signed by all parties without delay in order to compensate border inhabitants for the tremendous economic loss they have suffered by the European enlargement.

It is definitely possible to find a new kind of 'European home' and agreements on a space open for the movement of people, for investment trade and scientific research. Many different types of co-operation are possible, taking into account the realities of human and historical geography. For example, Switzerland is not a member of the EU, but this country is deeply integrated in Europe in major ways: investments, people and labour force movement, shared values and the like. A different way to organise a historical Europe is possible.

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THE WEST (THE EU AND NATO) AND ITS EASTERN NEIGHBOURS: FADING INTERESTS, WEAKENING TIES?

1. AIM AND SCOPE OF THE PAPER

The aim of this paper is to present the changing relationships between the West (understood as the European Union, NATO and their member states) and its eastern neighbours (above all Ukraine, Belarus and Moldavia) over the last two decades after the end of the cold war. For the sake of this paper, the three above mentioned countries are referred to as 'Eastern Europe' (EE) which, however, does not mean that Russia is excluded from Europe – a more adequate but awkward term would be 'Non-Russian Eastern Europe'. Direct or indirect western neighbours of EE countries are countries that can be termed as 'Eastern Central Europe' (ECE) or 'eastern part of Central Europe', formed by former members of the Soviet block and now independent states, members of the EU and NATO. Of special importance for their connections with the EE countries are the three Baltic states, Poland and Romania. These two groups of countries form a large geographical and historical (geopolitical) space that can be called 'East-Central and Eastern Europe' (EC and EE). This area was once called (mainly by German politicians and scholars) 'Mitteleuropa', or Mid-Europe, meaning 'in-between Europe', a kind of 'nobody's land' between Germany and Russia. Given that some initiatives of the West are addressed not only to the EE but also to three former Soviet republics in the Caucasus – Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, these countries are also taken into consideration, as elements of 'Eastern neighbours' (together with EE countries) of the West.

The aim of this paper is to outline problems and tendencies, not to give an exhaustive review of literature on the subject.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In order to understand the present relationship between the West and its eastern neighbours, it is necessary to outline the historical background, especially that of the East Central and Eastern Europe, as historical developments have both created physical structures and shaped mental ideas influencing present perceptions and behaviours of the actors involved in political games.

The area of EC and EE is a kind of inner-European borderland in which West European and East European elements meet, overlap and compete. The West European elements include, first of all, the cultural and civilisational influences rooted in Western Christianity (Catholicism and Protestantism), with their political, artistic, mental, etc. ingredients, as well as the political expansion of empires having their core areas in Western (or West Central) Europe, namely Germany and Austria (since the 18th century until World War I). (Of some importance was also the Napoleonic episode for its differentiating impact on attitudes of local political elites). The East European elements are, in turn, the cultural and civilisational influences of Eastern Christianity (Orthodox Church) and the legacy of political expansion of Moscow/Russia/the USSR. Of course, the situation of the area was also influenced by the Tatar-Mongol invasion of Eastern Europe and their two-hundred-year-long domination over Moscow (Tatar-Mongol influence on Russian culture and politics), by the Ottoman invasion and domination in the Balkans, which defeated the states of Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary-Croatia and seriously weakened Poland (the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), as well as by other developments which contributed to the political and economic decline of EC and EE countries.

Of special importance was the period since the 18th century until World War I. In that time, known as the 'concert of powers', the area of EC and EE was divided by the four empires (Russian, Prussian/German, Habsburg/Austrian and Ottoman). Poland formally ceased to exist at the end of the 18th century but, in practice, it lost independence at the beginning of that century; in the late 19th century, some states started to emerge from the ruins of the Ottoman empire in the Balkans, but they were politically dependent on Western powers or Russia.

This situation was the source of the opinion held in the West (as well as in Russia) of that area as the periphery, a kind of vacuum, a playground of European powers (including Russia). The perception of marginality of this area was also strengthened by its relative economic weakness in relation to the wealthier West European societies. For Western politicians, scholars and other public opinion makers, this area was not an independent, autonomous, subject of

interest[1]. It was interesting as an element of the relationships between Russia and the West. For instance, liberal revolutionary forces (such as Marx), which condemned Russian despotism, sympathised with Polish anti-Russian fight for independence while those who preferred stability in Europe used to welcome Russian domination in their part of the area as legitimate and advantageous for the co-operation between European empires in keeping the status quo in the region[2]. When the political game at the beginning of the 20th century pitched Germany and Austria against Russia, both sides discovered the existence of this area and its peoples in attempt to gain allies (Russia calling for solidarity of Slavic peoples against the Teutonic West, Germany and Austria calling for solidarity of the civilized West against the barbarian East).

It should be stressed that in that time the Russian empire stretched far beyond its cultural Eastern reach. A part of culturally defined Western Europe was under Eastern political domination. It hindered cultural and emotional integration of this (Western) area with the Russian (Eastern) empire. It is especially true for the part of Poland which became part of the Russian empire. The unsuccessful attempts by the Polish national movement to defend or regain independence from Russia (war for independence in the 1790s, alliance with Napoleon, two anti-Russian uprisings in the 19th century) and the persecution of this movement by Russian authorities created a rift between the Polish national movement and Russia, as well as fear and suspicion of Russia among Polish society.

It should also be remembered that, despite the lack of statehood, the peoples of the area had preserved their ethno-cultural specificity based on the retained (or regained) memory of their statehood before the 18th century, as well as on language, culture, etc. It gave birth to national movements throughout the area in the 19th century and their rejection of integration (assimilation) even with empires representing the same cultural type (e.g. the Czech national movement in the Austrian empire, Polish national movement under Prussian/German and

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[1] For a more detailed discussion of the attitudes of the 'West' towards this part of Europe see N. Davies (2007).

[2] One can mention Ortega y Gasset's lecture in Berlin in 1946 as symptomatic for this kind of reasoning. In it, he appraised Prussia for 'ceding a part of its territory to Russia at Vienna 1815 congress which secured one hundred years of peace and co-operation between Europe and Russia'. It should be noted that this 'part of Prussian territory' was Warsaw and its region occupied by Prussia after the last partitioning of Poland in 1795 and then lost by Prussia during Napoleonic wars (where the Duchy of Warsaw was established, a quasi-Poland under Napoleon's protection). Ortega y Gasset does not mention Poland, he probably did not know about its existence or did not consider Poland worth mentioning. On Ortega y Gasset's speech see: J. Ortega y Gasset (2006).

Austrian domination, Ukrainian national movement both in Austria and Russia, etc.).

The pre-World War I situation was somehow recreated during the cold war. Practically, the whole area of EC and EE found itself (willy-nilly) on the eastern side of the iron curtain. From the Western point of view, it was a restoration of the Russian domination in the area. The Western interest in the area was in function of West-Soviet relations. Western leaders and public opinion hardly distinguished elements (countries, peoples) of this area considering all state formations (formally independent states like Poland or Hungary, and Soviet republics, like Ukraine or the Baltic republics) as copies of the same model. The area attracted attention in times of troubles (Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, Poland in 1980/81, the whole area in 1989, Ukraine and other Soviet Republics during the collapse of the USSR).

The situation during the cold war was, however, much different from that in the 19th century. From the point of view of this paper, the main difference was the existence of the aforementioned state formations. There were two kinds of such state formations: formally independent states and federal republics of the USSR (two of them – Ukraine and Belarus were even members of the UN as parts of the Soviet delegation) plus federal republics of Czechoslovakia (since 1968) and Yugoslavia (which was, however, outside the Soviet block since 1948). Although international independence of the first group was limited and the statehood of the latter was dubious, their status as state formations became of extraordinary relevance during the collapse of the Soviet (communist) block and the Soviet Union itself. The disappearance of the Soviet block set free the first group of states enabling them to make independent choices in the international arena. The collapse of the USSR transformed the Soviet republics into internationally recognised states and forced or enabled their leaders to find a place for their states in international politics.

3. EMERGENCE OF THE EC AND EE COUNTRIES IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND THE WEST

The disappearance of the binding force (collapse of the USSR and the crisis of the communist/socialist ideology) released the countries of the East Central and Eastern Europe. They had to make their geopolitical choices and international actors, first of all the Western countries (including the US), as well as Russia, had to react to these choices.

The first choice was made in 1989 by the society (and the then leaders) of the

German Democratic Republic, who decided to stop the existence of this state and to merge it with the Federal Republic of Germany. This choice was welcomed by the F.R. of Germany and accepted by the four powers (the US, the still existing USSR, UK and France) and the international community in general. The incorporation of the territory of the former GDR to the F.R. of Germany was completed in autumn 1990, accompanied by the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Choices made by other countries and their fulfilment were much slower. Their decisions were determined by the relative strength of attraction of the West (the EU and NATO) and of Russia (as the main counterpart to the West), by culturally and historically shaped attitudes towards the two sides, by their geopolitical status as internationally recognised states or Soviet republics, by the tradition (or absence thereof) of independence before World War II that should be regained and defended (from Russia, regarded as the main threat) and by the strong and united national identity, enabling governments to take the decision to join Western institutions. All former allies of the USSR (internationally recognised states) and the three Western (in cultural sense) former Soviet republics (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) chose integration with the West. It can be said that the decisions were made in the early 1990s. It should be added that, in Estonia and Latvia, only a part of their inhabitants was granted citizenship and thus possibility to participate in the political life. These were citizens of pre-World War II Estonia or Latvia, their direct descendants and people fluently speaking local languages. This excluded numerous immigrants from other Soviet republics and made the two countries united in their pro-Western orientation.

Determinants of decision to join the West or remain in the East, and classification of individual countries of the former Soviet block in this respect are presented by figure 1 and table 2.

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1. Prevalent type of civilisation: western (Western Christianity) (w), eastern (Eastern Christianity) (e)
2. International political status before the collapse of the block: states (internationally recognized states, full members of the UN)(w), Soviet republics (e)
3. Tradition of national (state) independence before World War II: present (w), absent (e)
4. National identity: strong and uniform (w), weak or conflicting (e) (with identification with the Russian empire and the Soviet Union)

Fig. 1. Determinants of geopolitical evolution of states of the former Soviet block after the collapse of the block and disintegration of the Soviet Union (after 1989–1991): joining the West (w) or remaining outside it (in the East) (e)
Source: author's own elaboration

Table 2. Classification of states of Central and Eastern Europe according
to determinants of their geopolitical evolution after 1989–1991

State	Prevalent type of civilisation	International political status before the collapse of the block	Tradition of national (state) independence before World War II	National identity	Total
Estonia	w	e	w	w	3w 1e
Latvia	w	e	w	w	3w 1e
Lithuania	w	e	w	w	3w 1e
Belarus	e	e	e	e	4e
Ukraine	e	e	e	e weak, conflict.	4e
Moldova	e	e	e	e weak, conflict.	4e
Poland	w	w	w	w	4w
Czecho-Slovakia	w	w	w	w	4w
Hungary	w	w	w	w	4w
Romania	e	w	w	w	3w 1e
Bulgaria	e	w	w	w	3w 1e
GDR	w	w	absent	Weak GDR, strong German	---

Source: own study.

Reaction of the West to these choices was influenced by the perception of the post Soviet and post communist East at the time as a zone of instability and a threat to stability and prosperity in the West. Many in the West feared the uncontrolled inflow of immigrants and refugees pushed out by poverty, ethnic conflicts and wars, as well as of criminals and mafia and other calamities from the East. In such a situation, 'Eastern enlargement' of the EU and NATO was perceived by Western leaders as enlargement of the 'zone of stability and prosperity' in Europe or, in other words, as pushing away the zone of instability and threat from eastern borders of the West. The main force driving for 'Eastern enlargement' was Germany, which was most interested in pushing the threat of instability away from its eastern borders. This way of reasoning also prevailed in the USA, despite doubts and hesitations, and despite the negative reaction in

Russia. The economic and political weakness of Russia at the time limited its ability to prevent integration of the East-Central European countries with NATO (Russia practically ignored their aspirations to join the EU).

As a result, the ECE countries joint the EU (eight of them in 2004, followed by another two in 2007) and NATO (in 1999 and 2004). It should be noted, however, that their membership in NATO is to some extent incomplete (absence of military installations serving the whole NATO, in accordance with an informal agreement of NATO with Russia) making them a buffer zone between 'proper' NATO and Russia rather than an integral part of the Western alliance.

As can be noted, three countries of the EC and EE – Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova, were left outside the West.

4. EASTERN EUROPE (BELARUS, UKRAINE, MOLDAVIA) AND THE WEST

The three East European countries made, or were forced to make, a different choice than their East Central European counterparts. Unlike the ECE countries, the EE countries did not join the West and remained somewhere in between the West and Russia, still closer to Russia and further from the West. All three countries share some characteristics which turned out to be decisive for such a development. First, the eastern cultural (Orthodox) element prevails there over the western one, which results, among other things, in a distrust towards the West. Second, they are highly 'Sovietised' which means that from the Soviet times they have inherited a distrust or fear of NATO and the USA, and a 'Soviet nostalgia' implying distrust to free market, democracy and other Western values. Third, they had a long history of belonging to the Russian empire, treating it as their homeland rather than as a 'jail of nations' and, consequently, they did not treat contemporary Russia with suspicion. Fourth, until the outbreak of the Soviet Union, they were never independent states (even nominally), so the independence in 1991 was to them (i.e. to the majorities of their societies) an unexpected and often dangerous surprise. This attitude can be called the 'orphan syndrome'. Fifth, national identity (national awareness) in these countries is rather weak and problematic, combined with relatively weak position of their national languages in relation to Russian (more in everyday life than officially), which means that social groups identifying with their states and wanting to defend their independence from Russia are rather weak. Sixth, they are economically highly dependent on Russia, as a source of raw materials (especially energy), a market for their products and, recently, as a labour market for their workers and a source of remittances.

Apart from the above common factors hindering these countries from integration with the West and pushing them towards Russia, there have also been some country-specific factors.

In the case of Belarus, these were ambitions of the present (since 1994) leader Alexander Lukashenka to become the leader (president) of a future united Russian – Byelorussian state in times when highly unpopular Boris Yeltsin was the president of Russia. Possibility for Lukashenka to become president of the united Russia-Belarus disappeared, however, after 2000 when the highly popular Vladimir Putin became the leader of Russia.

In Ukraine, such a factor has been the Russian Black Sea fleet stationing in Sevastopol, in Crimea, a nominally belonging to Ukraine but strongly pro--Russian province. A possible adherence of Ukraine to Western institutions, especially to NATO, would cause serious problems in mutual relations with Russia and aggravate internal political conflicts, including the secession of Crimea and other regions.

In Moldova, such a factor was the identification of the Western option with the unification of Moldova with (or incorporation by) Romania and a strong opposition to it among ethnic minorities (accounting for more than 1/3 of the population) supported by the Soviet (now Russian) army stationing there. In fact, a part of former Soviet Moldavia called Transdnistria or Transnistria (officially: Pridniestrovian Moldavian Republic), populated mostly by ethnic Russians and Ukrainians, otherwise the most industrialized area, after a short military conflict at the beginning of the 1990s and supported by the Russian army, declared secession from Moldova. Moldova still hopes for reunification of the country and the reintegration of Transdnistria. Such a reintegration is impossible without the consent of the Transdnistrian population and of the Russian army, and finally, without the consent of Russia. This situation reduces any leeway of Moldova in its relations with Romania and the West.

The above analysis of the EE countries does not suggest that there are no pro--Western forces there and that everybody seeks to unite their countries with Russia.

Pro-Western forces are mainly liberal-democratic circles, proponents of free market and democracy (recruited mostly among urban intelligentsia) as well as anti-Russian nationalists. In Ukraine and Belarus, the latter strive for retaining independence of their countries from Russia and for strengthening the position of their languages and national cultures in their respective countries; in Moldova, they tend to politically, linguistically and culturally unify Moldova with Romania. Those who feel themselves Moldova desire to defend Moldova independence and identity from Romania rather than from Russia.

The leaders, as well as the political and economic elites of the EE countries from time to time find it advantageous to keep relations with the West as an argument in their bargaining with Russia (e.g. for the prices of gas and oil, Russian payments for using military or industrial infrastructure in these countries, etc.). Besides, they have realised that it is better for them to be presidents, prime ministers, etc. of independent states rather than governors of Russian provinces, appointed and dismissed by Kremlin, even more so because Kremlin would probably choose someone other than them.

It should be stressed that pro-Western forces formed by liberal democrats and nationalists have serious weaknesses. For many inhabitants of these countries, as well as of Russia and other post-socialist countries, free market and democracy are often associated with economic hardships, corruption and enormous social inequalities of the post-socialist transition. In EC European countries, these problems were much milder, and they were compensated for by the satisfaction of regained full national independence. In Ukraine and Belarus, present nationalists are often associated with Ukrainian and Byelorussian nationalists, highly unpopular among majority of the population for collaborating with Nazis during World War II. In Moldova, pro-Romanian nationalists evoke the memory of the occupation of Moldavia (Bessarabia) by fascist Romania in 1941–1944. Consequently, political influence of anti-Russian nationalists is socially and geographically limited to the western regions of all the three countries.

With all similarities, the three EE countries considerably differ as regards their attitudes towards the West and Russia, and as regards the strength of national identity. In these respects, Ukraine is a special case given its relatively strong pro-Western, Anti-Russian attitudes and patriotic (nationalistic) sentiments. This is reflected, among other things, in the reluctance of consecutive Ukrainian governments to fully integrate with Russia-centred integration initiatives, in officially declared long term aim of joining the European Union and in instances of military co-operation with the West (notably with the USA – e.g. by sending troops to Iraq after the USA invasion of this country in 2003).

5. THE WEST AND EASTERN EUROPE (BELARUS, UKRAINE, MOLDOVA)

The attitude of the broadly conceived West (the EU, NATO, and their member states) towards the EE countries consists, generally speaking, in wait-and-see tactics. There are considerable differences among components of the West, depending on their location, historical experiences, and, especially, on

their relations with, and perception of, Russia. This attitude is also changing, reflecting the changing international situation and internal power relation in individual countries. A common element of all approaches towards the EE countries is a mildly expressed support for democracy, and using democracy as a yardstick to assess them. Several groups of countries should be distinguished in the West, playing a role in defining the relationships between the West and the EE countries. These are: 1) the US as the leader of NATO and a leading Western nation, 2) big European countries: Germany, France, Italy, having strong economic and political ties with Russia, 3) ECE countries strongly interested in the developments in the EE countries: Poland, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, 4) other countries less interested in the situation of the EE countries (including Slovakia and Hungary bordering with Ukraine).

For the US, the end of the cold war, the stabilisation of the international and internal situation in the EC and EE countries, the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Ukraine (inherited from the USSR) meant that the whole region of EC and EE lost much of its significance. The following shift of geopolitical interests of the US under Obama's administration towards Central Asia (Afghanistan), East Asia and the Pacific further diminished the role of this region. Nevertheless, during G. W. Bush's administration, the United States saw its role as a global promoter of democracy and therefore supported democratic institutions and forces in the region, especially in Ukraine, where the civil society was relatively best-developed and pro-Western (pro-American) sympathies were the strongest. This policy was by no means aimed against Russia but it irritated Moscow considering 'support for democracy' in its 'near abroad' as synonymous for 'anti-Russian subversion'.

For the big West European countries, especially for Germany, the eastward enlargement of the EU and NATO have solved the problem of their security and they don't see any need for a further shift of the buffer zone called 'zone of stability and prosperity' eastwards to include the EE countries, as well as Georgia, in NATO and/or the EU. On the contrary, their desire to co-operate with Russia, especially in energy (cf. Nord Stream and South Stream pipelines from Russia to Western Europe bypassing EC and EE countries), makes them very sensitive to Russian opinions in international politics[3]. Given the Russian

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[3] As typical for opinions of big German (and also for French and Italian) business on co-operation with Russia can serve an interview of Bernhard Reutersberg, head of EON-Ruhrgas, a firm co-operating with Gazprom in Nord Stream and other projects, in which he states that Russia is a reliable partner never using energy as a political weapon, that all problems with supply of Russian gas to the EU countries are due exclusively to others – to the transit countries, mainly to Ukraine, that the EU should resign from Nabucco

opposition to integration of the EE countries and Georgia with the West, Germany, France, Italy and some others play the role of representatives of Russian interests in NATO and the EU, undermining any serious attempt to bind EE with the West. In such a situation, they are ready to engage in initiatives directed at EE and other post-Soviet areas, provided that there is no risk of being disapproved by Russia. A seeming exception to this rule was the French and German diplomatic action to stop the Russian – Georgian war of 2008. In fact, this action helped both them and Russia settle the conflict between Russia and Georgia, avoiding deterioration of relations between Russia and the West and thus to retain mutually beneficial relations between these countries and Russia.

Despite being classified as one group interested in the EE situation, the above mentioned ECE countries differ as regards their attitude and activity towards their eastern neighbours.

Romania seems to be predominantly interested in the situation in Moldova. Both countries share a lot of common history (one part of historical Moldavia is now a Romanian region), culture and language, many Romanians deny the existence of Moldavian as a separate ethnic nation. The main way in which Romania influences the situation in Moldavia is the indirect strengthening of Romanian identity of Moldova (mostly via TV, scientific institutions, etc.), which otherwise encounters opposition of those in Moldova who claim that Romanians and Moldavians are separate nations and reject the idea of reunifi-cation. One illustration of the relations between the two countries is the wide--spread granting of Romanian citizenship to Moldavians. By having Romanian passports, they become a sort of EU citizens, which is probably the main aim of Moldavians applying for Romanian citizenship.

The three tiny Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are vitally interested in existence of the EE countries as independent states and in their democratic evolution. On the other hand, though, they try to avoid conflicts with Russia even more, considering there is already some tension between them (especially Estonia and Latvia) and Russia over the situation of Russian-speaking population in these countries. In such a situation, they are ready to participate in Western initiatives towards EE only if they are undertaken and supported by the biggest international players. However, the role of this countries is not negligible: they (or, more aptly, their territories) serve as shelter for various independent institutions such as publishers, scientific institutes and

project because its is harmful for Russia and thus for the fruitful co-operation between Russia and Europe, that all who are against building of Nord Stream, such as Poland, should be ignored in the EU, etc. See: *Russland ist...* (2008).

other institutes of civil society from Belarus[4]. Besides, these countries (media, intellectuals) watch events in EE countries and in the whole post-Soviet area.[5]

In this context, a rather delicate and complicated relations between Lithuania and Belarus should be mentioned. Both countries share a lot of common history reflected, among other things, in similarity of their national emblems, resulting from belonging to the Great Duchy of Lithuania from the 14th to the end of the 18th century. A part of Belarusians claim that in fact Belarus, and not the present Lithuania, is the true hereditary of this Duchy (together with its heroes like the mighty Duke of Lithuania Witold/Vytautas the Great, 14/15th century) and that Vilnius should belong to Belarus. This opinion is presented mainly by Belarusian nationalists, whose main representative is the Belarusian National Front (BNF), once, at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, quite an influential political group. (Its leader Zyanon Paznyak came from the Vilnius area). The present Belarusian government rejects the tradition and legacy of the Great Duchy as a source of contemporary Belarusian identity. Consequently, Lithuania is interested in supporting democratic forces in Belarus as long as they do not share nationalistic ideas of the BNF.

By far the most active and influential among ECE countries in its policy towards EE is Poland. Therefore Poland's policy deserves special analysis.

6. POLAND AND EASTERN EUROPE

Polish policy towards Eastern Europe is determined by several coinciding and conflicting needs of changing importance. These are: 1) to avoid being a frontier country bordering with hostile neighbours, and thus to co-operate with all neighbours, including Russia, 2) to prevent the resurgence of Russian imperialism, 3) to promote democracy in EE, 4) to promote integration and co-operation of EE with Western institutions, 5) to protect Polish presence (Polish minority and monuments related to Polish history) in the EE countries, 6) to react to anti-Polish nationalism in the EE countries, especially in Ukraine. For Poland, Ukraine is the most important among the EE countries, because of its

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[4] For instance, in March 2012 in Riga (Latvia) an independent Belarusian Institute of History and Culture was opened whose aim is 'to promote knowledge of the history and culture of the Belarusian nation (and) to form the national identity of the citizens of Belarus'. See: A new Institute of Belarusian Studies (2012).

[5] In this respect Lithuanian tri-lingual (Lithuanian, Russian and English) magazine *Geopolitika* is especially valuable. See its webpage: www.geopolitika.lt .

location, potential and for its responsiveness (real or seeming) to Polish initiatives.

The above needs translated into practical policy for a great part of the post-1989 period meant four directions in Polish policy towards the EE countries: 1) independence (supporting independence of Ukraine and Belarus), 2) reconciliation, especially with Ukraine, 3) democracy (promoting democracy), 4) integration (promoting integration and/or co-operation of the EE and other post-Soviet countries with the EU and NATO). Consequently, Poland was the first country to recognize the independence of Ukraine in 1991 (it was an act of extraordinary importance in international politics). Poland also kept reminding the Western institutions of the existence of Ukraine and promoted the idea of Ukraine's and Georgia's integration with the UE and NATO. Poland also defended Ukrainian interests in its conflicts with Russia (e.g. Poland rejected Russian proposal of gas pipeline Yamal 2 which would bypass Ukraine[6]), supported democracy in Ukraine, as well as the democracy and national identity of Belarus (support for civil society organisations in these countries, bachelorship for students from these countries, co-operation of scientific institutions, the establishment and financing of an independent radio station ['Radyo Ratsiya'] and a TV station ['TV Byelsat'] for Belarus in Belarusian broadcast from Poland, etc.), and initiated symbolic acts of reconciliation with Ukraine (common commemorations by Polish and Ukrainian presidents and other personalities of the victims of Polish – Ukrainian conflicts in the past).

The apogee of Polish engagement in Eastern Europe came with the participation of Polish diplomacy and other personalities and organisations in solving internal political conflict in Ukraine during the so called 'orange revolution' (2004/05, the protests against flawed presidential elections which led to a serious political crisis). Personal mediation of Polish president Aleksander Kwaśniewski, together with EU special envoy Javier Solana, helped settle the conflict between the two presidential candidates: Viktor Yushchenko and Viktor Yanukovych, as well as the two camps called 'orange' and 'blue', to annul results of the election and to repeat the voting. The new election gave victory to Yushchenko and his 'orange' camp. Kwaśniewski and Solana acted as neutral negotiators, defenders of democracy and peace in Ukraine, but other Polish participants in this conflict acted overtly in favour of the 'oranges'. The conflict between the two candidates and two camps had, or seemed to have, geopolitical significance, as the 'oranges' were considered to be pro-democratic, pro-Western and pro-independence (from Russia), while the 'blues' were, or were

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[6] For more details on this issue see R. Szul (2011).

accused of being, anti-democratic, pro-Russian and, therefore, anti-independence. Russia and the West, especially Poland, did not hide their sympathies: the former for Yanukovich and the 'blues' and the latter for Yushchenko and the 'oranges'.

Another significant Polish action in its policy towards EE was the joint Polish-Swedish initiative launched in 2009 within the EU called 'Eastern Partnership', aimed at helping the six post-Soviet states (three EE countries and three trans-Caucasian ones: Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) build democracy, improve the economic situation and attract them to the European Union.

Poland's policy towards the post-Soviet states, especially Ukraine, had its price. The first was the deterioration of relations with Russia, with its diplomatic, symbolic and economic dimensions, the second was the necessity to turn a blind eye to what is considered as anti-Polish Ukrainian nationalism present among the would-be pro-democratic and pro-western forces in the name of reconciliation with Ukraine and attracting it to the West. This anti-Polish nationalism has been the glorification in Western Ukraine of what is regarded in Poland as anti-Polish and fascist organisations and personalities from the interwar and World War II, such as UPA – Ukrainian Insurgent Army, and its founder and leader Stepan Bandera, accused of anti-Polish terrorism in the interwar period and cruel pogroms of Polish inhabitants during World War II, especially in Volynia. Quite paradoxically, Polish opinion on UPA, Bandera and Ukrainian nationalism is identical with that of east Ukrainian supporters of Yanukovich, and Russians.

The time when the 'Oranges' were in power (2005 – February 2010) was a big disappointment for Poland and the West. Incessant scandalous quarrels within the governing 'orange camp' exceeding the limits of democratic debate, especially between president Yushchenko and prime minister Tymoshenko, the inability and/or unwillingness of the government to introduce reforms and standards that would bring Ukraine closer to the European Union and the West, continuing glorification of UPA and Bandera in Western Ukraine (the stronghold of the 'Oranges'), a kind of isolation of Poland in the EU and NATO in defending Ukrainian interests together with what was perceived by Polish government and experts as undervaluation of Polish efforts by the Ukrainian side, all gave birth to what can be called as 'Ukrainian fatigue'[7]. Polish

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[7] As a summary of this feeling can serve an article by B. Berdychowska (2012) which, in fact, is a long list of Polish grievances towards both Ukrainian governments and intellectual elite, and a sign of deep disappointment and frustration. It is worth underlining that Berdychowska is one of the most outstanding representatives of pro-

government and public opinion started to doubt in European choice of the ruling elite in Ukraine and the suspicion grew that for Ukraine, the relations with the West serve only to strengthen its position in bargaining with Russia. The final act of the 'Ukrainian fatigue' was the official recognition by president Yushchenko of Stepan Bandera as 'national hero of Ukraine'. Consequently, the consecutive defeats of the 'oranges' in parliamentary and presidential elections and the shift of power towards the 'blues' and Yanukovych (2010) were received in Poland without any sorrow, if not with relief.

The parallel change of power in Poland, namely the overtaking of government in 2007 and of the office of President of Poland in 2010 by the pragmatic Civic Platform and its allies also contributed to a change of policy towards Ukraine. Unconditional support of Ukraine's European aspirations ceased to be the priority of Polish foreign policy. Polish government declares support for Ukraine in its relations with the West 'if Ukraine wishes so'. It means that Poland would not undertake initiatives in this matter unless Ukraine requests them. One can say that such an initiative was the European football championship in Poland and Ukraine in 2012, a Ukrainian initiative to which Ukraine invited Poland.

Accidentally or not, Poland and Russia started to improve their relations. This improvement was somehow frozen by the air catastrophe of March 2010 in Smolensk in Russia in which Polish president L. Kaczyński and many officials died, and the following disagreements between Poland and Russia as to the causes, Russian investigation and other issues related to this incident.

As regards Polish policy towards Belarus, it is twofold: towards the Belarusian society and towards the Belarusian government. The policy towards the society, as noted earlier, consists in supporting democratic and pro-independence forces as well as the Polish minority. In contacts with the government (i.e. Lukashenka), Poland offers its contribution to improvement of relations of Belarus with the EU, provided the liberalisation of the regime. Such a proposal (fair presidential elections in exchange for better relations with the EU) was presented to president Lukashenka by Polish foreign minister R. Sikorski and German minister G. Westerwelle in 2010. (German minister was invited to make this offer a European and not exclusively a Polish initiative). The way in which Lukashenka's regime behaves after the election (persecution of independent

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Ukrainian intellectuals and politicians in Poland. A. Michnik, an influential Polish intellectual, in turn, analyzing the situation in Ukraine and commenting Berdychowska's article likens supporting a fraction in Ukraine to choosing between the pest and cholera (Michnik 2012)

candidates, probable election flaws) was in fact a blatant rejection of this offer which further isolated Belarus from the West.

As regards Polish policy towards Moldova, Poland refrains from specific actions exceeding promotion of democracy and co-operation with the EU within the Eastern Partnership.

7. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS – 'NORMALISATION' OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE WEST AND EASTERN EUROPE

Over the recent few years, some events took place in Eastern Europe, the West and globally that lead to a kind of 'normalisation' of relations between the West and Eastern Europe. These events in the EE are: the political and electoral defeat of the would-be pro-Western forces in Ukraine and the behaviour of the new authorities, especially the imprisonment and prosecution of former prime minister Tymoshenko, condemned by the West, all leading to further isolation of Ukraine from the EU and the West in general[8] (which found its expression in the suspension by the EU of signing a treaty on co-operation with Ukraine by the end of 2011), as well as the wave of violations of human rights and persecution of democratic opposition by the 'last dictator in Europe' (Lukashenka) after the 2010 presidential election in Belarus, and the recent September 2012 'election'[9] to the Belarusian parliament, which also lead to further isolation of this country from the West (one of expressions of it being the refusal to accredit Lukashenka as president of Belarusian Olympic Committee by the organisers of Olympic Games in London 2012). The condemnation, boycott, deride and isolation of Ukraine and Belarus, as well as the ignoring attitude towards Moldavia, by the West is very easy, especially for Western Europe: it does not cost anything (politically or economically), it gives Western politicians an opportunity to present themselves as fighters for democracy, human rights etc., which is absent in their relations with such states as Russia or China. The fact that such Western

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[8] As *The Economist* puts it: *The 20-year-old project of pulling Ukraine closer to Europe is in deep trouble* (Ukraine... 2012, p. 32).
[9] There is a general consent in Europe that this election was far from democratic and that Belarus is an authoritarian state, incompatible for integration and co-operation with the EU. As an example of this opinion a comment by Schuman foundation, a think tank specialized in European issues, can serve. The title of the article suffice for commentary: *En Biélorussie, la farce électorale s'est déroulée comme prévu* (In Belarus the electoral farce happened as was foreseen) See C. Deloy (2012).

policy diminishes chances of integration of EE with the West and pushes EE towards Russia is surely not a problem for them.

In the European Union, the economic crisis, the euro-crisis, the so called 'enlargement fatigue', the 'Arab spring' in 2011/12, which shifted its attention to the south, the 'identity crisis' of the EU, etc. further reduce the political will and economic ability to attract Eastern Europe and to draw it out from the Russian 'near abroad' or zone of influence. In the US, the 'reset' with Russia, reduction of interests towards Europe and the growing role of East Asia also lead to the marginalisation of EE and to the abandonment of the ambition to promote democracy there.

In such situation, the West either ignores Eastern Europe or treats the fact that countries in this region remain outside Western organisations (the EU, NATO) and outside Western (European) values as something normal and permanent, and not as something that should and could be changed[10].

In such circumstances, there is no space for ambitious far-reaching actions changing the geopolitical setting of Europe, but a scope for pragmatic international and cross-border initiatives like the European Football Championship organised by Poland and Ukraine, for mutual help in third countries (in 2012, some Polish citizens were evacuated from Syria by Ukrainian planes), for local cross-border co-operation, for liberalisation of visa and border-crossing regimes, etc.

8. FINAL REMARKS

The post-cold war geopolitical transformation of Europe brought about a shift of the eastern border of the West eastwards, to include a part of the former 'eastern (or Soviet) block', while diminishing the relevance of this border. This border no longer separates hostile political and military blocks. However, being an external border of the European Union, it still matters: crossing it requires overcoming some difficulties (having passports, sometimes visas, passing customs control, wasting time in queues, etc.) and, more importantly, it separates countries with different economic systems and political cultures, with tendencies

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[10] Summarizing attitude of the West towards Eastern Europe (Belarus and Ukraine) Polish export on international politics and leader of DemosEurope, a think tank, Paweł Świeboda aptly calls Eastern Europe 'zone of oblivion'. See his analysis of the recent state of relations between the West, including Poland, and Ukraine and Belarus: P. Świeboda (2012).

towards integration with different economic and political spaces (the European Union vs. Russia-cantered Eurasian Union). Some expected, hoped or feared that the shape of the border was only temporary, that there would be another shift eastwards to include all or some of the three East European countries (Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova). Nowadays, it seems that the West has finally lost its wish and ability to attract and absorb new members from EE, and the EE countries (their ruling elites) either don't express a desire to join the West or are not able to meet necessary conditions to do so. The question then remains whether the eastern border of the West is going to be a barrier or an easily permeable line, whether economic, social, political and mental differences are going to grow to make the two sides mutually incompatible, or cross-border contacts and co-operation would be intense enough to divert such a tendency.

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THE SOCIO-POLITICAL SITUATION OF POLES IN VILNIUS AFTER THE ACCESSION OF LITHUANIA TO THE EU[1]

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the many changes in political affiliations during the last ten centuries, today's Vilnius is inhabited by many different nations, such as: Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Jewish etc. In 2001, Vilnius had 544,206 inhabitants and was the most populous city in Lithuania, which could be caused by the metropolitan functions and the appeal of the capital city. In the administrative boundaries of Vilnius, the Polish population was 104,446 people, i.e. 18,7% of the overall population in the city (Tab. 1). Nowadays, Poles are the largest ethnic minority in Lithuania.

The largest Polish population centers are the neighborhoods of Naujoji Vilnia (11,212), Naujininkai (8612), Žirmūnai (6836), Šeškinė (6759), Fabijoniškės (6659) and Justiniškės (6330). The areas where Poles constitute a high percentage of the population are: Ponary (36.7% of the residents of the district), Naujoji Vilnia (34.2%), Rasos (27.9%), Naujininkai (25.7%), Grigiškės (25.1%) and Justiniškės (20.4%) (Leśniewska 2009).

Table 1. Ethnic composition of Vilnius districts in 2001

Specification	Total	Lithua-nians	Poles	Russians	Bela-russians	Ukra-inians	Jews	Tatars	Lat-vians	Arme-nians	Others	Not indicated
Total	553,904	318,510	104,446	77,698	22,555	7,159	2 785	1 060	467	493	3,237	15,494
Antakalnis	396,97	28,103	5,057	3,880	860	390	206	51	22	33	224	871
Fabijoniškės	36,644	22,606	6,659	4,198	1,490	376	139	62	31	26	149	908
Grigiškės	11,617	5,086	2,920	1,848	1,071	147	16	108	8	9	60	344
Justiniškės	30,958	17,481	6,330	4,165	1,244	439	205	59	21	17	138	859
Karoliniškės	31,175	17,905	5,288	5,144	1,188	485	174	75	27	43	147	699
Lazdynai	32,164	19,730	4,892	4,671	1,106	429	254	55	29	43	163	792
Naujamiestis	27,892	17,238	3,090	4,663	934	478	304	27	36	38	242	842
Naujininkai	33,457	14,748	8,612	5,987	1,887	494	79	80	35	25	555	955
Naujoji Vilnia	32,775	9,676	11,212	6,494	2,945	494	54	72	26	24	161	1,617
Paneriai	8,909	3,861	3,273	1,057	332	100	14	25	10	0	35	202
Pašilaičiai	25,674	15,958	4,762	2,988	872	261	99	42	19	15	95	563
Pilaitė	15,996	10,756	2,701	1,378	486	109	37	19	15	22	40	433
Rasos	13,054	6,534	3,638	1,704	551	133	17	13	10	5	111	338
Senamiestis	21,022	12,826	3,379	2,830	710	274	133	25	7	26	159	653
Šeškinė	36,604	21,128	6,759	5,388	1,398	526	194	65	38	22	128	958
Šnipiškės	19,321	11,391	3,314	2,921	650	247	105	20	20	18	160	475
Verkiai	30,856	20,770	5,418	2,559	963	215	67	41	24	24	126	649
Vilkpėdė	24,749	14,054	4,847	3,547	1,061	351	123	43	19	21	131	552
Viršuliškės	16,250	9,353	3,205	2,367	621	215	55	31	7	15	67	314
Žirmūnai	47,410	28,047	6836	7,979	1,778	790	389	110	53	50	213	1,165
Žvėrynas	12,188	8,742	1469	1,210	238	107	54	26	7	5	78	252
Not indicated	5,492	2517	785	720	170	99	67	11	3	12	55	1,053

Source: National Population Census in 2001.

2. MAIN POLISH ORGANISATIONS IN VILNIUS

The biggest and most important Polish organisation, which has its head-quarters in Vilnius is the Association of Poles in Lithuania (*Związek Polaków na Litwie* – ZPL), established in 1989. The main purpose for establishing this organisation was to take care of the Polish national revival in the region and defend the interests of the Polish minority (Trusewicz 2005). ZPL replaced the Social and Cultural Association of Poles in Lithuania (*Stowarzyszenie Społeczno-Kulturalne Polaków na Litwie – SSKPL*), created in 1988. The main objectives of the association were the promotion of Polish culture and propagation of Polish language in education (Masłowski 2005). In 2000–2005, the organisation grew to nearly 15,000 members. ZPL headquarters is located in the House of Polish Culture in Vilnius (Jackiewicz 2007).

To the main objectives of the Association of Poles in Lithuania are:
– the preservation of the national identity of Polish minority in Lithuania,
– ensuring the free development of Polish culture,
– ensuring decent living conditions of the population in Vilnius region,
– attempting to gather the Polish population in a single, historically shaped, unit of local government (Masłowski 2005).

In its nearly 25-year-old history, ZPL has greatly influenced not only the development of Polish culture, but also the spreading of Polish language, for example the Registrar's Office started conducting weddings in Polish. The association's activities are mainly focused on answering the current needs of Polish community in Lithuania. With ZPL, an amateur folk movement developed, many Polish clubs and associations opened, and Polish libraries were created. The Association of Poles in Lithuania main focus is the free participation of minorities in the political and economic life of the Republic of Lithuania (Bobryk 2006).

The creation of the Social and Cultural Association of Poles in Lithuania, then transformed into the Association of Poles in Lithuania, gave rise to all kinds of association initiatives of Polish population in other, more specialised organisations. In 1989, the Scientists' Association of Poles in Lithuania (*Stowarzyszenie Naukowców Polaków Litwy, SNPL*) (Masłowski 2005). Nowadays, the organisation has 62 members, including 8 professors. The association's operations consists mainly of organising conferences, lectures and discussions concerning the situation of national minorities in Lithuania[2]. SNPL also conduct

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[2] http://snpl.lt/.

research focused on the problems of Polish minority in Lithuania. The Association helps talented young people in preparing for education and research. In addition, it works with organisations supporting research activities[3]. SNPL only admits scientists, citizens of the Republic of Lithuania, who are active in science or art. Prospective members must submit a list of their publications, and their application is subjected to a confidential voting process (Masłowski 2005).

In 1994, the Lithuanian parliament adopted a law on social organisations which ordered them to precisely specify the character of their activities. This led to a situation, in which an organisation cannot serve both social and political functions, and its representatives do not have the right to take part in the elections. This forced ZPL to become a social organisation. However, a new political party emerged from ZPL, namely the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania (*Akcja Wyborcza Polaków na Litwie* – AWPL) (Masłowski 2005, Trusewicz 2005, Bobryk 2006). Currently the party has more than 1100 members (Godek 2005).

The basic objectives of the party, as defined in the statute, include:
– consolidation of democracy in Lithuania,
– defense of human rights,
– ensuring social justice and economic prosperity,
– ensuring the cultural development of all the nations in Lithuania.

AWPL pursues these objectives through:
– participation in elections at all levels,
– defending their interests by legal and political means,
– cooperation with other parties,
– improving their program[4].

AWPL's program is divided into nine areas, the priority being the reform of local government in order to gain more power, the economic development of the country, especially the Vilnius Region, and ensuring equal rights to all citizens regardless of their nationality. Since its formation, AWPL have repeatedly defended the interests of Polish minority in Lithuania. Gradually, AWPL also implements its election promises and has contributed to the development of the technical infrastructure and equipment of Polish schools (Godek 2005).

The most important promises concerning the national minorities in Lithuania are:
– the promotion of education of national minorities in schools,

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[3] Statut Stowarzyszenia Naukowców Polaków Litwy uchwalony 9 maja 2008 roku.
[4] Statut Akcji Wyborczej Polaków na Litwie uchwalony na Zjeździe Założycielskim w Wilnie 28 sierpnia 1994 roku.

   – the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages,

   – changing the Citizenship Act – to ensure that the representatives of national minorities can possesss dual citizenships,

   – in the administrative units where national minorities represent more than 10%, the introduction of a minority language in offices[5].

The most important Polish cultural organisation in Vilnius is the House of Polish Culture (*Dom Kultury Polskiej* – DKP), created in 2001 on the initiative of ZPL and the 'Polish Community' Association. The institution organises concerts, theatre performances, competitions, exhibitions of contemporary art, Polish film screenings and other educational and promotional events (Jackiewicz 2007). DKP works with many community organisations by letting them use their premises as offices (currently about 30). The priorities of the House of Polish Culture in Vilnius include the broadly defined cultural education by promoting Polish art and literature among the inhabitants of the city. DKP also supports all local arts movements[6].

3. POLISH EDUCATION AND CHURCHES IN VILNIUS

Polish education in Lithuania has a very important position and played a significant role in preserving Polish national identity in the interwar period. After 1945, the USSR authorities did not even attempt to eliminate Polish schools. This was caused by the juxtaposition of two strong nationalisms – Polish and Lithuanian (Osipowicz 2001).

In the 1950s, there were 270 Polish schools in Lithuania. However, a second repatriation took place, as a result of which Polish intelligentsia (mainly teachers) left the Lithuanian SSR. It led to the elimination of many Polish schools (there were 92 in the 1980s, 47 of which were mixed Polish-Russian, Polish--Lithuanian or Polish, Russian and Lithuanian ones). Polish students had great difficulties in continuing education in technical colleges, where the entrance exams could be taken in Polish, but further education was conducted in Lithuanian or Russian. It should be noted that the decreasing number of Polish schools was also affected by the slow but progressive Lithuanisation of the Polish population (Bobryk 2006).

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[5] http://www.awpl.lt/.
[6] http://www.polskidom.lt/.

After Lithuania regained its independence, the number of Polish schools increased to 130 in the school year 1992/93. Such a significant increase in the number of students in Polish schools was mainly caused by the the ability to continue learning Polish at the universities in Poland, as well as by the possibility of obtaining a grant from Polish government. Since 1993, however, the number of Polish students in Polish schools has been gradually decreasing. It is caused by the demographic decline and a significant effect of the Lithuanian authorities' policy, encouraging parents to send their children to Lithuanian schools because only education in Lithuanian schools can allow them to find their place in the society (Osipowicz 2001).

The biggest problem of Polish education in Vilnius is the funding coming from the Lithuanian Senate. Schools with Polish as the language of instruction receive less money than Lithuanian schools. This situation leads to faster and more complete assimilation of Polish population with Lithuanias. Polish young people are brought up in a foreign cultural environment, without cultivating Polish traditions and language (Trusewicz 2005).

Currently, Lithuania has 121 schools with Polish language, with 22 thousands students. In January 2012, the Lithuanian Ministry of Education approved the minority education foundation. According to the document, textbooks for the last two grades (11–12) in minority schools will not be translated from Lithuanian, because of the lack of funds[7].

Since the early 1990s, the Social and Cultural Association of Poles in Lithuania have tried to open a Polish university in Vilnius. In 1991, Polish University in Vilnius was finally opened. In the first year, 150 students began their education in 4 faculties. The available majors were: German philology, English philology, history, pedagogy, economics and management, law and administration, physical education, biology, design and information technologies. The problem was that the university has not received official registration. In this situation, after many negotiations with the Lithuanian side in 1998, based on the law of public institutions, the university was registered under the name of Universitas Studiorum Polona Vilnensis, but did not receive permission to award degrees. After three years of study, students were sent to universities in Poland (Kurcz 2005, Bobryk 2006).

SNPL became the initiator of the creation of a branch of University of Białystok in Vilnius, in the academic year 2007/2008. The biggest obstacle in its creation was the collection of appropriate funding and documentation for Polish and Lithuanian institutions (Olędzki 2006). In May 2007, the University Re-

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[7] http://placieniszki.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=40.

search Centre for Quality of Studies has not given the permission for the creation of the branch because of the differences in the duration of under-graduate studies (3 years in Poland, 4 in Lithuania), University of Bialystok's rank (the university in not considered prestigious in Poland), no rationale for conducting classes in Polish, and the expected insufficient quality of education due to the lack of staff permanently residing in Vilnius (Olędzki and Wołkonowski 2007). The creation of a branch of University of Białystok in Vilnius was supported many Polish organisations, including ZPL, AWPL or Schools Mothercountry. In June 2007, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted a resolution authorising the creation of the branch. The students were able to choose between courses economy or information technologies (Grynia and Wołkonowski 2008).

In 1990, numerous small-scale educational organisations were replaced by the Association of Teachers of Polish Schools in Lithuania 'Schools Mothercountry' (Bobryk 2006).

The basic objectives of the Schools Mothercountry are:
- to create a system of Polish schools in Lithuania,
- to create the right conditions for teaching the youth in Polish schools,
- to raise the level of education,
- to organise extra classes for talented youth (Masłowski 2005).
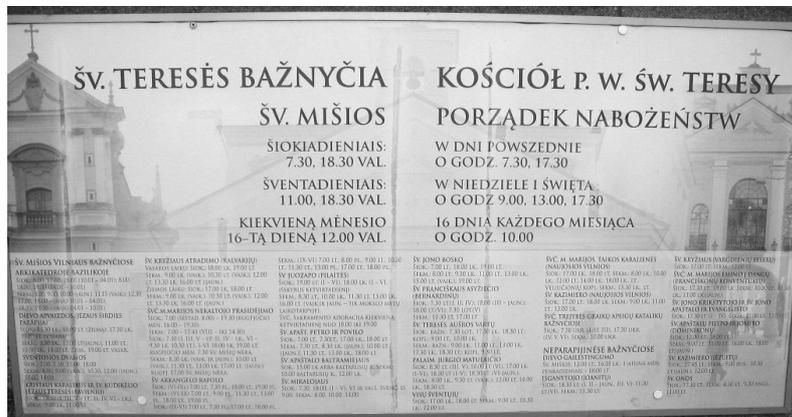
Fig. 1. Information board in Polish and Lithuanian in Saint Theresa church in Vilnius
Source: K. Leśniewska (2009)

The Schools Mothercountry takes care of 19 schools in Vilnius and 121 schools in the whole country. The organisation has over 1500 members in 146 locations and is headquartered is in the House of Polish Culture in Vilnius (Zirkowiec 2003). At the beginning, the institution sent young people to Polish universities, organised trips for Polish children and donated teaching equipment

to Polish schools. Then the Schools Mothercountry started to organise various courses to improve the professional qualifications of Polish teachers. Now the association organises numerous contests about Polish history, culture, language and literature. In 1996, the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science issued a regulation that prohibits printing textbooks in Polish. After the Association protested, it quickly withdrew its decision (Bobryk 2006, Jackiewicz 2007).

Apart from education, the Polish Church in Vilnius plays a very important role. In 2003, there were 17 churches in Vilnius alone, in which the liturgy was in Polish (Leśniewska 2009).

Since the independence of Lithuania, the parishes where Poles dominated began various forms of pastoral activity. They started creating church choirs and theatres, collecting donations to charity etc. With time, the Religious Songs and Poetry Festival and the Religious Knowledge Contest became a fixture in the annual schedule. This attitude of the Church caused a significant increase of interest in religious life, and Polish priests began to seek new ways of working with the believers. They began organising pilgrimages, both domestic and foreign (Bobryk 2006).

4. POLISH MASS MEDIA IN VILNIUS

Polish mass media also have an established position in Lithuania. Polish press has been published continuously since 1953. A communist party was published, initially under the name *Czerwony Sztandar* (*Red Banner*). Its main task was to promote the resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania (Jackiewicz 2007).

The Soviet authorities considered that it was up to the press in Polish to make the population more susceptible to communist propaganda. Thanks to the press, Vilnius has grown to become the largest Polish center to the east of Bug River. Polish journalists managed to smuggle the information about Poles in Ukraine, Belarus and Latvia. In 1990, the newspaper changed into a socio-political daily, its name was changed to *Kurier Wileński* (*The Vilnius Herald*), but it retained the post-war numbers[8].

Today it is a modern newspaper, publishing articles on various subjects. It focuses on issues relating to the Vilnius Region but also published information from the country and the world. Kurier Wileński sells 3 thousand copies (Jackiewicz 2007). This low number is associated with financial problems of the

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[8] http://www.kurierwilenski.lt/.

newspaper, which has been trying unsuccessfully for several years to appeal to both Polish and Lithuanian readers. In addition, the editors work on gaining new readers by fine-tuning the quality of published information[9].

Another Polish medium was established in 1992. It was a 24-hour Polish radio station called 'Radio Znad Wilii' ('Radio on Neris River'). Its programming discusses current topics in the world, but primarily focuses on the problems of Polish population in Vilnius and Lithuania. The station also organises a number of events including Polish Culture Days in Vilnius, Polish Song Contests, as well as numerous concerts, events and exhibitions. The station has a significant impact on the shaping of consciousness, even by forcing listeners to think in Polish (Jackiewicz 2007).

Other Polish papers published in Vilnius are: *Magazyn Wileński* (*Vilnius Magazine*) – independent socio-political, cultural and literary monthly published since 1990, *Tygodnik Wileńszczyzny* (*Vilnius Region Weekly*) – ZPL's weekly paper, *Znad Wilii* (*On the Neris*) – quarterly magazine on Polish culture, and *Spotkania* (*Encounters*) – a Catholic daily (Leśniewska 2009).

5. PROBLEMS OF POLSES IN LITHUANIA

Nowadays, many historical facts are interpreted in completely different ways by Poles and Lithuanians. For Poles, the union of Poland and Lithuania was a great historic event, but Lithuanians perceive it as an occupation. In Lithuania, people still remember and cannot accept the rebellion of general Żeligowski, whose operation caused the annexation of Vilnius Region to Poland in the interwar period (Kurcz 2005, Leśniewska and Barwiński 2011).

The Polish community living in the Vilnius Region is not homogeneous. M. Jagiełło divided them into the community of Poles in Vilnius and the group surrounding the town called the 'Polish ring'. Poles living in the city are open to integration and learning Lithuanian is treated as the acknowledgement of the independence of Lithuania. Poles from the 'Polish ring' are characterised by the opposite attitude, with hostility towards the Lithuanians. One saying states that 'optimists learn English, pessimists learn German, realists learn Russian, and fools learn Lithuanian' (Jagiełło 2000, Mituła-Grzesiak 2010).

Poles have been recognised as an ethnic minority in Lithuania since 2004, when Lithuania became a member of the European Union. This fact meant that Lithuania had to ratify numerous international laws to protect ethnic minorities.

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[9] http://www.wspolnota-polska.org.pl/.

This should improve the situation of ethnic minorities in the western part of the Vilnius Region. Currently the biggest problems of Polish minority in Vilnius Region are: the spelling of Polish names that still have to be spelled in Lithuanian without Polish diacritics, the recovery of land which is almost impossible because of Lithuanian bureaucracy, the naming of streets and places in Polish, and the education in Polish schools (Leśniewska 2009).

In 2011, a new Education Act was adopted in Lithuania, which made the situation of Polish minority even worse. The new law increases the number of Lithuanian classes in Polish schools. Thus, the Lithuanian side broke the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which includes a stipulation that new legislation may not worsen the situation of minorities. In the beginning of September 2011, there were massive protests of Poles in Vilnius. Other difficulties for young Poles include the new matriculation exam (also in Lithuanian) and more obligatory Lithuanian literature. The new law adopted in March 2011 requires students graduating from ethnic minorities' schools where Polish or Russian are used to study Lithuanian history and geography in Lithuanian and to pass a uniform final state Lithuanian language exam, starting in 2013. Until now, ethnic minorities in Lithuania could study almost any subject in their mother tongue. Poles living in Lithuania believe that the law is discriminatory, against equal rights and that it is a beginning of the end of Polish schools in Lithuania[10]. The only excuse for Lithuanian authorities is the fact that Poles are a large and strong group in small Lithuania (about 235 thousands out of 3 millions). For example, the Lithuanian minority in Poland have the right to use bilingual names, speak Lithuanian in public offices, run Lithuanian schools and have their names spelled in Lithuanian on their ID Cards. But the Lithuanian minority is not as large in Poland (about 5.8 thousand people out of 38 millions) (Rykała 2008, Barwiński 2009, Leśniewska and Barwiński 2011).

A considerable controversy between the Poles and Lithuanians occurred after the adoption by Polish Government of the Polish Charter Act in September 2007. The Polish Charter is a document confirming 'belonging to the Polish nation' but not granting Polish citizenship (Fig. 2).

The rights of the holder of the Polish Charter include:
– an exemption from the obligation to have a work permit,
– an ability study, achieve a PhD and participate in the other forms of education,
– an ability to use health care services,

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[10] http://www.tvn24.pl/0,1716025,0,1,tusk-jedzie-na-litwe-po-protestach-polakow,wiadomosc.html – 09.09.2011.

- discounts for using public transport,
- free admission to national museums (Leśniewska 2009).
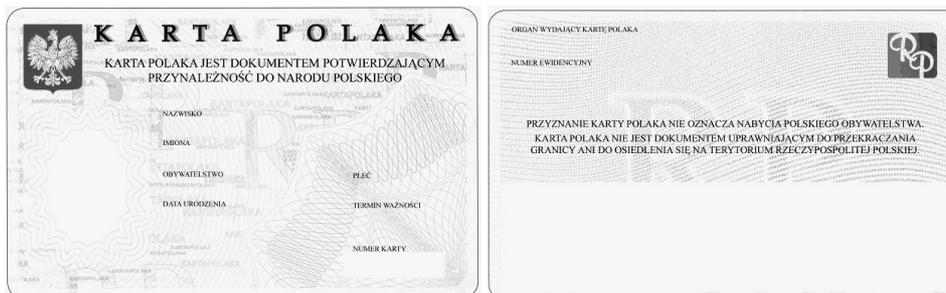
Fig. 2. A sample Polish Charter
Source: http://www.msz.gov.pl/

The Lithuanian law allows dual citizenship, but only for ethnic Lithuanians. This means that the representatives of Polish minority are discriminated against and were excluded from this privilege (Trusewicz 2005). In 2008, two representatives of AWPL – Michał Mackiewicz and Waldemar Tomaszewski were elected to the Lithuanian parliament. Both of them are holders of the Polish Charter. The Lithuanian side recognise the documents and the legal obligations towards another state, which prevents them from exercising their parliamentary functions in Lithuania.

Another problem of Polish minority is their inability to spell their names in Polish. The introduction of Polish spelling of names in Lithuania and vice versa, with their respective diacritics, is provided for by the Polish-Lithuanian Treaty of 1994, whose stipulations are still not followed (Leśniewska 2009).

6. CONCLUSION

This paper focused on the analysis of the situation of the Polish community in Vilnius. When discussing this issue, it should be noted that its position in the Lithuanian society is quite strong. However, looking forward, we can suppose that a constant struggle for the rights of minorities could lead to the increase in nationalist sentiments among the Poles in Vilnius.

The situation of Polish minority in Lithuania has a huge influence on the relations between both countries. Unfortunately, this influence is currently negative.

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CANDIDATE TO NORMALCY: SERBIA BETWEEN YUGOSLAV HERITAGE AND EU FUTURE

1. OPENING THE DOOR TOWARDS EUROPE

On March 2nd 2012 Serbia officially became a candidate for membership in the European Union. Seventeen years after the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia collapsed, the country which once was its power core finally appears to be turning towards a different and perhaps better future. It has been a long awaited announcement, and the road to it has been quite full of obstacles and dramatic difficulties: from the ill-matched union with Montenegro that ceased to exist in 2006, to the *de facto* loss of Kosovo and internationally wanted war criminals to extradite, it has also been a difficult and emotional trial for its population.

The status of candidate is a technicality, a political and social 'limbo' that can last for five years, or in extreme cases (such as Turkey) for twenty-five: however, the echo of this news has awakened the collective feeling in the country that Serbia is indeed on the 'right path' and can be considered a potential equal in terms of democracy, common shared European values, and that the campaign for a better international image has given good results. Although this consideration could appear naïf, it is sufficient to remember the fact that the Balkans, whose main symbol during the recent years has been Serbia, also because of the constant conflicts with almost every neigh-

Fig. 1. President Von Rompuy welcomes the then president of Serbia, Boris Tadić

bour country, are often seen as the synonym for everything that is primitive and/or barbarian (Todorova 1997, p. 3), opposing the civilized western world and its lack of extreme nationalism. This strong stereotyping, certainly not helped by the openly expressed nationalistic and ethnical points of view which have mainly lead to shocking conflicts, is radicated inside the minds of Serbian citizens; such a feeling of consequent inadequacy and *shame* brought by the marginalisation has produced a mass retreat into 'old' values and heritage, which can be reassumed into the following theory (Čolović 2002, p. 64): 'national identity is the basic, stable, easily recognisable and self-evident character trait of the member of a nation, which is expressed as a clear, specific difference between national mentalities and cultures and which is, in addition, the «natural» foundation of the political sovereignty of the ethno-nation. National identity is constant, not subject to change, it resists all pressures and foreign influences. It is so deeply rooted in every Serb that it is unchanged regardless of the circumstances and places in which Serbs live.'

2. THE 'BIG SERBIA' IS DEAD, LONG LIVE SERBIA

Fig. 2. The Serbian flag, with a cross surrounded by the four 'S' composing the slogan

As widely acknowledged, the 'Big Serbia' dream has lost ground while Serbia was losing territory and/or allies: yet the one thing that never lost force was and is the ensemble of those myths which give a sort of a mental peace to the average Serbian citizen, being a *reliable* constant in times of uncertainty: it is the unity, the feeling of sameness and sharing the same roots, past, present and future of brothers, that produced the saying *Samo Sloga Srbina Spašava*, translated into 'Only the Union (can) Save the Serbs'. This catchy slogan is explicited in the Serbian coat of arms, as well in its flag (Fig. 2).

Therefore, in a country where the nationalism is perceived as something unseparable from the very fact of being Serbs, it is obvious that there is a close bond between nationalistic-inspired emotional waves and the country's politics. Recently, there has been a change in its government: Serbia's newest president is Tomislav Nikolić, a former long-time member of the Serbian Radical Party (whose notorious leader was Vojislav Šešelj, currently imprisoned in Hague by the ICTY) and today the leader of the Serbian Progressive Party. The latter is

a right-wing conservative movement, often accused of exploiting nationalistic sentimentalism in order to gain votes. Nikolić's win does not come as a surprise, as the ex president Tadić's defeat has been deemed as a *fait accompli* for a long time: in fact, considering the results and the lack of voters who actually went out to express their vote, we could almost say that the Serbs have voted more *against Tadić* than in favour of Nikolić[1].

The new Serbian president has conducted a strong campaign based on typical electoral values: family, heritage, the importance of being Serbian, but it has been noted that, despite his heavily nationalistic heritage, he has introduced 'Europeistic' views. This comes as a logical consequence of his abandon of the Radical Party in 2008, when it was clear that the mere nationalism was not going to work anymore and that the times had changed. It is interesting to notice how his rival Boris Tadić has dedicated an extensive amount of time during his campaign, highlighting the sudden 'enlightening' change in Nikolić, something that appears to have heavily backfired given the results.

The first declaration of the newly elected president was: 'Serbia will not stray from its European path but shall not forget its people in Kosovo either.' (Zanoni 2012c). It is indeed an appealing point of view that was guaranteed to bring votes from those who were disappointed by the abandon of Belgrade after the recognition of Kosovo: while in Serbia's mainland the voters grew tired, in Kosovo Nikolić's victory did not come much as a surprise. In fact, in Northern Kosovo – where the remaining Serbs could vote supervised by foreigners – the new president was certain to win, and he did – with 58% of the votes. While Nikolić does not seem openly to contrast the new Serbian European road, this kind of data shows that his *true origins* as a member of the Radical Party still have some weight with the Kosovo's Serbs, who felt *abandoned* by the previous government, almost *exchanged* for the European candidacy.

This ambiguous, Europe-friendly attitude with a nationalistic edge, concentrating on highlighting the failings of Tadić in the economical and social areas, gives us the image of a new type of traditional yet European conservative currents in Serbia.

However the prevailing feeling between the younger population is of going back instead of running forward, despite the 'European' intentions displayed by the new government. The lack of voters during the elections is also a significant sign of the fact that Serbia's population has grew tired and perhaps even saturated with the country's political élite and its incapability of maintaining some of Serbia's main national symbols, such as Kosovo.

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[1] Published on May 21st 2012 at www.politika.rs.

Fig. 3. *The president of the citizens, not of a political party*. Could this be interpreted as 'I will be the president of all the Serbs, do not identify me (only) with my political past'?

Considering the fact that Nikolić won with 49,7% of votes against 47% that Tadić obtained[2], his election had double reactions. On one hand, it came as a surprise to many as up to the day before the voting almost 60% of the interviewed Serbs was certain of Tadić's victory. Being isolated for many years by the visa regime which prevented Serbia's youth from seeing the world outside their own home, it is perfectly comprehensible how maintaining the old nationalistic ideas and post-Yugoslav war heritage could be the population's safety boat in a stagnating situation.

3. THE EU IS (ALMOST) HERE, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE EMOTIONAL BAGGAGE?

The author has followed closely the reaction of the average Serbian to the European news through interviews conducted by journalists on the streets of Belgrade. Serbian citizens main reaction could have been described as: 'Lovely, but what now?' They could be put in three categories:

1) Some reactions were full of hope: EU is perceived as the cure for all that is wrong in Serbia (mainly women, housewives), but some noticed how, because of the current economical crisis, the EU might not be the same once Serbia joins it, considering that the status of candidate has just been acquired. In fact, there is a current joke among the young generation in Serbia that says: *Serbia will join EU when Turkey's turn to presidency comes*.

2) Another type of reaction was dignifying, noticing how the EU candidacy might be Serbia's final chance to return to democracy and to face its future: this opinion was given mainly by middle aged modern working class, both man and women.

3) And finally, the key reaction: *The EU candidacy is just a pitiful conces-*

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[2] The results of the voting published on the news portal B92, found here: http://www.b92.net/info/izbori2012/rezultati-glasanja-drugi-krug.php.

sion, granted just so that Serbia might renounce its sacred land of Kosovo. This was the point of view given mainly by the older generations, which in Serbia's case are the real voting pool.

While the first two reactions are easily guessed and also easily dismissed as simplifying a really complex situation, the third is particularly interesting in the light of the past elections, as well as of the Serbian struggle to somehow unite their historical and mythical heritage to the world of the 'Others'. While the Balkans have been perceived in history as a dark, almost medievally primitive place inside the 'evolved' Europe, a real black hole, Serbia now emerges as a possible equal partner in the modern EU world. How can, and can they, the terms of citizenship, ethnicity, sovereignty, heritage and identity coexist with the modern Western cultural, political and economical practices? There is also the matter of confusion about where does Serbia actually belong: the West or the East? (Volcic 2011, p. 53). During the Yugoslav years, the West has been much stereotyped, something that has grown into demonizing the EU in times of crisis such as the latest Balkan wars, and especially the 1999 NATO bombing. The latter is evident in the words of a newspaper journalist in Novi Sad (Volcic 2011, p. 54): 'NATO… the West… promises life and democracy but brings death. […] It promises well-being but brings destruction and further poverty. It promises freedom but actually brings occupation… Their war machine is at its top and is ready to destroy everything in its way. That is, as the USA president said, their policy for the twenty-first century. They call it a policy, and not destruction of people and countries. Their intention is to continue in the same manner expanding further to the East… from Russia… to China… They say they are humane, and they fight for human rights and against the Balkan barbarism… how ironic, how hypocritical…'.

It appears that not only the West is considered to be hypocritical, and therefore a lying, deceiving entity, fundamentally implying evil, but also is presented as an occupying force, almost a new, modern mean of colonisation. It is easily deduced how integrating into something that negative is perceived as 'betrayal' to Serbia's uniqueness. But there is more: during the years, the Western world has mainly been embodied in the American lifestyle, with its freedom and absolute superiority in almost every field over the rest of the world. It is exactly that type of superiority that is being completely transformed into a negative characteristic: the 'rotten' West with its empty, traditionless and fast--living ways is actually culturally inferior and thus not a model to emulate (Volcic 2011, p. 68). It is the ultimate transformation of modernity into a potential Ground Zero for every single tradition that Serbia is trying to defend in times of crisis. That is where the nationalism comes in and takes advantage of

people's deeply rooted fears of losing their identity, considering that realistically there is not much left to lose other than that.

It would be wrong to claim that the previous Serbian government had lost the elections because of its 100% European orientation and the lack of *defense of the country's roots* (and the term defense is used on purpose). The country showed signs of loss of patience towards Tadić's ever-growing power long before the elections. However, we could say that Nikolić, despite his nationalistic and EU--hating roots, managed to appeal both to those aiming to put the nationalism behind (being also tired of the weight of the history, effectively keeping Serbia behind other countries) and to his old supporters, by not openly denying either EU or Kosovo (where the latter is taken into example as the latest and definitely the biggest Serbian regret). Was that ambiguous? Yes. Was it smart? Yes, indeed. Yet the key notion is this: this new kind of ambiguous yet clear nationalism acts as an avoidance mechanism that post-pones indefinitely a crucial reckoning with the socialist past and the role it played in all the tensions during the Yugoslav wars, and that remained vivid until today. It can be described as 'dancing' around the problem without ever wanting to stop and think about reality.

4. THE 'KIND' NATIONALISM, DENIAL
AND THE PRECARIOUS BALANCE

The politics and the politicians in Serbia, the champions of Serbian identity, have not been eliminated: they are merely transformed in order to fit the new world's context of globalisation and its new political order. Yet while the rest of the world, at least inside the European Union, is trying to transcend nationalism and to globalise as much as possible all the while maintaining vivid local identities (let us think about the regions and their autonomies), Serbia is in denial: the nationalism is not considered a significant social problem. On the contrary: 'ethnicity is mainly a myth propagated and exploited by ambitious and unscrupulous political entrepreneurs to build political followings for themselves and help them to attain and secure political power'(Esman 2004, p. 32).

Are there consequences to such obviously dangerous denial? Of course. For once, denial enables the ignoring or worse, trivializing everyday discriminatory practices. In fact, in this Serbian heritage, there is almost no place at all for small minorities, which find themselves marginalized from the ideal image of ethnic citizenship. The nation-state that is represented to itself as the site of unity, is a place where differences are perceived as problematic, and something that

needs to be either assimilated or destroyed. This could explain why Nikolić's past has not damaged him in the eyes of those trying to avoid nationalism: if his nationalism appears democratic, and perpetuates the denial – there is no nationalism, but there is only its EU friendly façade. This could therefore be called 'kind nationalism'(Volcic 2011, p. 135). Considering the fact that the Balkans, and especially Serbia, are still fertile grounds for conflict, it is easily understood that the balance between this 'hidden' nationalism and the danger of its return to open nationalism, is very precarious. A good example of what is to come is Serbia's prime minister Ivica Dačić, and his announcement after the confirmation of his government: 'My government will be looking towards the future, not looking back into the past' (Zanoni 2012a).

Yet it is not possible to put an end to that heavy heritage as long as the past lives in the present, under the form of objective issues, such as Kosovo. This apparently unsolvable problem is the perfect example of something so intrinsically connected with Serbia's incapability to find other support than in 'sacred tales' (Čolović 2002, p. 10). Talking about Kosovo *today* means per-petuating a myth about an ancient myth, validating the whole nation's existence through historical but also allegedly divine, God-sent facts, that play to the nation's feelings and allow them to get some virtual satisfaction, but also puts them in denial about the 'plot' involving Serbia and the 'wicked West'. The myth has been created around the 19th century but was continuously adapted to the needs of various currents through the years: by making Kosovo sacred (including elements of Holy, which obviously cannot be discussed and are therefore useful in acting upon the ever-present fear of God in the Orthodoxy) this not only provides perfect material for every party, every leader who needs to manage it and use it to his advantage, but also provides an eternal ethnic incentive to Serbia, to unite and to defend the 'crib of the nation', which is another synonym for Serbia, but also for the Orthodoxy as opposed to 'the others'. In simple words: when everything else fails (because of the circum-stances, because of wars and/or being ostracized by the EU), appealing to the ethnic collective as the only sacred horizon to keep, is the simplest and the most effective tactics.

Therefore, such adamant wiping of the past proudly proclaimed by Dačić is potentially extremely dangerous because that past is intensely alive: it is sufficient to consider the amount of votes Nikolić got in Kosovo, and to interpret them as the absolute impossibility of forgetting anything at all. Finally, the question as to how collective identity can arise out of a past so traumatic that it needs to be forgotten yet so important that it demands a place in history: or even better, can that be achieved at all? The answer appears to be logical and simple:

the little opening of the EU door that is the candidacy needs to be taken as the opportunity to preserve both Serbia's roots, but also to overcome its borders, finding new spaces and possibilities within a larger area. Naturally, there needs to be acceptance from the EU side, and less forceful pushing of an already sensible state. A new life for Serbia within Europe, where it rightfully belongs both culturally and geographically, is very possible.

Yet without the recognition of past behavior and the destruction of the denial, Serbia's new multicultural form will suffer constant attacks from a reborn and modified nationalism that feeds on social insecurity and fear: 'the Others' are to be perceived as opportunities, and not hidden or less hidden enemies. So, is there any 'acceptable' nationalism that could actually help the country's goals without destroying their heritage (or at least what is believed to be heritage)? Perhaps the USA model could offer some inspiration: its constitution offers equal rights to everyone born or naturalized USA citizen, regardless of race and religion. The so-called 'civic nationalism' that defines a nation as an ensemble of all people that live in it regardless of their ethnical background, and gives them laws, protection but also duties (Esman 2004). In other words, instead of validating Serbia's existence as the union of pure Serbs only, and also considering its multi-cultural population (the globalization works on that level too, despite the conflicts and the difficulties), the shortest way to more stability would be to elaborate once again the past to suit the present: cultivating a new Serbian identity that could gradually coexist (and perhaps outlive too) the ethnic-only bases currently present. Making Serbia the new myth, unifying its components for a greater good, not only preserves its identity but also justifies with much dignity the possibility of adapting to today's circumstances.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The new political forces that have won the elections in Belgrade is perceived as the latest adaptation to today's global situation: while not entirely nationalistic or EU-oriented, they cleverly exploit every possibility, keeping them all open and being careful not to shut any doors. It is a careful but also, as per tradition, impertinent attitude: now that Serbia is a candidate, its status validates its 'worthiness' and gives it some credit and actual worth in negotiations regarding its future. The EU is now perceived as an entity that 'keeps giving lessons'[3], an

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[3] Serbia's president Ivica Dačić, during a visit from Jelko Kacin to Belgrade, highlighted that 'He was allergic to the fact that there seemed to be always someone coming to Belgrade to teach us a lesson'. In L. Zanoni (2012b).

attitude that certainly does not help Serbia's cause – also as its possible gravitating towards Moscow, an eternal and God-given ally[4]. Through the common Orthodox heritage, various and important commercial interests but also the fact that Russia is the one validating Serbia's myths (mentioned before), it is easily seen how the difficult relationship with the EU (based on constant highlighting of Serbia's erroneous ways) produces this populism-based Russian affiliation. Yet considering Russia's own difficulties and various not-so--European shortcomings, this easy return to nationalistic myths embodied in the 'great Mother Russia' could without doubt transform into a boomerang for Serbia. The evident shortcomings of almost every single political party and its leaders in Serbia produce a mass effect of regretting the socialism era, when basic needs such as a job, decent salaries and good, dignifying living were guaranteed, which also includes taking refuge in comfortable myths of the past, which are once again being re-managed to suit today's needs.

Yet the newest Serbian president shows evident signs of acceptance of the EU terms and propositions: does that put him and his political forces at risk of alienating his own electors? The answer is no: despite giving their best European-oriented image to the EU, the nationalistic political forces cleverly perpetuate the myths, just strongly enough, because they are perfectly conscious that there is no easy and quick way of modifying the electors' mentality. The precarious balance between perpetuating myths and opening Serbia's doors to the future – and to the European integration – is what put the nationalists in power, and is also what keeps them there. It is obvious that long negotiations (even while trying to avoid, the sceptics' minds always go to the Turkey case) could furthermore endanger Serbia's fragile balance, by disillusioning the Euro--enthusiasts and giving credit to the 'anti-Serbian plot'. The requests and the norms of the EU regarding the eventuality of an admission as full member are something that will test really hard Serbia's limits, because the definition and realisation of reforms necessary to that goal are contrasting directly with the type of populist politics perpetuated today not only in Serbia, but more generally, in the Balkans. The biggest and the most complicated issue of Kosovo is currently stalling (almost being avoided): yet it is not possible to change the outcome, which is already set – but it is ironic that the duty of confronting the issue has fallen on the shoulders of the very same nationalists who, years ago, were full of certainties and sacred fervour in the project of keeping Kosovo at all costs.

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[4] The author remembers distinctively a saying from her childhood, frequently re-peated even today: '*Nas i Rusa, trista miliona*', meaning 'We and the Russians, 300 millions'.

There is also the fact that the EU is changing: while years ago it was the example of luxurious, dignifying living, unreachable to the Balkan populations, now that image is a crumbling surface, letting everyone see the undeniable difficulties of an economical crisis. In other words, the EU integration has lost its appeal and it is not possible to foresee what will the Union be by the time Serbia is added as a full member.

Therefore, two things emerge as clear. One is that Serbia's nationalistic myths are no longer that easy to perpetuate in the light of having to face the reality of a difficult situation: corruption, the lack of economical progress, constant difficult relationships with its neighbours, all unified by the same principles that constantly exclude and almost demonise 'the others'. The second is that the EU is changing too, because of the global world situation, and it is no longer realistic to keep candidate countries in a precarious limbo where it is way too easy to lose the balance. It is the author's firm conviction that the only possible way of stabilizing Serbia (and therefore the region, considering its undeniable authority and influence) would be to actively help its integration, by shortening the waiting for the admission: in fact, it is easily understood that having to realise goals before a certain and definite deadline is always more challenging than not knowing when and if the admission is ever going to happen. Encouraging the possibility of a greater identity (therefore not merely ethnical) that could bring better life quality and more international credibility is the only way of truly helping Serbia and the Balkans to overcome the burdens of their past.

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Section II

ECONOMICAL ASPECTS OF THE EASTERN POLITICS OF THE EU

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PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN FRENCH AND EASTERN EUROPEAN REGIONS: SUCCESS OF A DECENTRALISED CO-OPERATION SUPPORTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. INTRODUCTION

The study will focus on the regional level to see how important the role of the European Union in the development of relationships between French and east European regions could be. This co-operation is allowed thanks to the European regional policy and, above all, to the 'European territorial co-operation' called 'objective 3' which encourages interregional co-operation through Europe. But are these relations due only to the European Union policy?

Before the creation of the European regional policy, French regions had already developed several partnerships with regions across the world, as well as with other European regions, even before the decentralisation process started in 1982–1983. French regions cooperate in a large range of fields with lots of other regions.

Through this study, we will try to answer several questions using the example of French regions, by asking questions like: What is the role of European Union in these territorial co-operations? Is there more co-operation now than before the European regional policy for interregional co-operations between Western and Eastern regions? What are the tools and the financial means implemented to improve co-operation and achieve the aim of this territorial policy: which is a better European integration, a higher competitiveness for the EU through strengthening the economic situation of the regions and improving the regional development policies?

Several projects will be mentioned to illustrate the co-operation between French and eastern regions. The study will focus on interregional co-operation

between Lorraine and its East European partners because, compared to other French regions, Lorraine has a higher number of interregional co-operation projects involving Eastern European regions.

2. DECENTRALISED CO-OPERATION BETWEEN FRENCH AND EASTERN EUROPEAN REGIONS

French regions have been developing partnerships with European regions for a long time now, since way before the European regional policy was set up. Decentralised policies started in France in 1982. Several laws allowed French regions to cooperate with other regional and local units during the 1990s; since the law of February 6th, 1992, the regions are entitled to decentralised co-operation. French territorial collectives lead many international actions all over the world and, above all, in Europe (see table 1).

Table 1. Decentralised co-operation between French regions
and other European regions from 1957 to 2012

Regions	Number of projects in Europe	Number of partner regions	Eastern European regions inside EU (country) (number of projects)	Eastern European regions outside EU (country) (number of projects)	Other European regions (country) (number of projects)
Alsace	29	11	Dolny Ślask (Poland) (6) Radauti (Romania) (1) West region (Romania) (2) Total projects: 9	Mozyr (Belarus) (1) Moscow reg. (R) (1) Russia regions (4) Ukraine regions (4) Total: 10	Bade-Wűrttemberg(G) (7) Rheinland-Pfalz (G) (1) NW Switzerland (1) Upper-Austria (1) Total projects: 10
Aquitaine	14	10	Galati (Romania) (4) Wielkopolska/Great Poland (Poland) (1) Total projects: 5	Total projects: 0	Euskadii, Navarre, Aragon, Catalonia, Andorra, Rioja, Guipuzcoa prov. (Spain) (5) Hessen (Germany) (4) Total projects: 9
Auvergne	12	2	Total projects: 0	Central Bosnia (BH) (7) Total projects: 7	Norte Region (Portugal) (5) Total projects: 5
Bourgogne	12	3	Opole (Poland) (4) Central Bohemia (Czech Republic) (3) Total projects: 7	Total projects: 0	Rheinland-Pfalz (Germany) (5) Total projects: 5

Brittany	22	3	Wielkopolska/Great Poland (Poland) (7) Total projects: 7	Total projects: 0	Wales (England) (9) Saxe (Germany) (6) Total projects: 15
Centre	11	3	Małopolska/Little Poland (Poland) (3) Pardubice region (Czech Republic) (2) Total projects: 5	Total projects: 0	Saxe-Anhalt (Germany) (6) Total projects: 6
Champagne--Ardenne	39	5	Vysocina (Czech Rep.) (11) Nitra region (Slovakia) (10) Alfold regional development agency (H) (10) Total projects: 31	Orel Oblast (Russia)(4) Total projects: 4	Walloon region (Belgium) (4) Total projects: 4
Corsica	4	4	Total projects: 0	Vlora district (Albania) (1) Total projects: 1	Sardinia, Sicilia, Toscana (I) (2) Baleares (Spain) (1) Total projects: 3
Franche--Comte	3	2	Plzen region (Czech Rep.) (1) Total projects: 1	Altai Region (Ru) (1) Total projects: 2	Total projects: 0
Ile-de--France	7	3	Mazovia Voivodeship (P) (1) Budapest (Hungary) (1) Total projects: 2	Total projects: 0	Brandenburg (Germany)(5) Total projects: 5
Languedoc--Roussillon	3	3	Total projects: 0	Crime (Ukraine) (1) Total projects: 1	Region House in London(UK) (1) Region in Brussels (B) (1) Total projects: 2
Limousin	22	6	Bacau (Romania) (6) Pomerania (Poland) (3) Total projects: 9	Kaluga region (Russia) (3) Total projects: 3	Bayern (3), Mittlere Franken Bezirk (G) (3) Ravenna Province (I) (4) Total projects: 10
Lorraine	74	10	Lublin Voivodeship (Poland) (13) North Hungary Regional Development Agency (Hungary) (13) Moravia-Silesia region (Czech Republic) (13) Total projects: 39	Russia (8) Total projects: 8	Saarland, Rheinland-Pfalz (Germany) (14) Luxembourg (Luxembourg) (3) Norbotten, Västerbotten (Sweden) (8) Häme Region (Finland) (2) Total projects: 27
Midi--Pyrenees	0	0	Total projects: 0	Total projects: 0	Total projects: 0

Nord-Pas--de-Calais	11	5	Silesia Voivodeship (Poland) (2) Total projects: 2	Total projects: 0	Brighton and Hove (UK) (1) Kent county (UK) (1) Nordrhein-Westfalz (Germany) (2) Walloon (Belgium) (5) Total projects: 9
Normandy (Lower)	12	5	Total projects: 0	Republic of Macedonia (3) Total projects: 3	Hordaland (Norway) (6) Toscana (Italy) (1) Hampshire (UK) (1) Brighton and Hove (UK) (1) Total projects: 9
Normandy (Upper)	5	3	Pomerania Voivodeship (Poland) (1) Total projects: 1	Total projects: 0	Basse Saxe (Gemany) (3) South-east Britain counties (UK) (1) Total projects: 4
Pays de la Loire	8	3	Balaton (Hungary) (3) Total projects: 3	Total projects: 0	Schleswig-Holstein (G) (4) Emilia--Romana (Italy) (1) Total projects: 5
Picardy	11	3	Trencin region (Slovakia) (4) Total projects: 4	Total projects: 0	Thuringen Germany) (6) Arc Channel col-lectivities network (1) Total projects: 7
Poitou--Charentes	0	0	Total projects: 0	Total projects: 0	Total projects: 0
Provence-Alpes-Azur Coast	15	3	Total projects: 0	Lori province (Armenia) (9) Izmir (Turkey) (5) Total: 14	Campania (Italy) (1) Total projects: 1
Rhone--Alpes	27	14	Małopolska/Little Poland/ Wielko-polska/Great Poland (Poland) (2) South Transdanubia Regional development Agency (Hungary) (1) Total projects: 3	Association of Armenian communes, Gyumri (Armenia) (2) Moscow (Russia) (1) Istanbul (Turkey) (1) Total projects: 4	Geneva (Switzer-land) (5) Vaud (Switzerland) (1) Bade-Wurttemberg (G) (5) Turin (Italy) (2) Lombardy (Italy) (2) Aoste valley (Italy) (1) Liguria (Italy) (1) Piemonte (Italy) (1) Cataluña, Barcelona (S) (2) Total projects: 20
Total	341	101	128 projects	57 projects	156 projects

Source: data from the *Atlas français de la coopération décentralisée, French Atlas of decentralised Co-operation, Délégation pour l'action extérieure des collectivités locales*, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et Européennes" www.diplomatie.gouv.fr.

According to this study, using the data from the French Atlas of decentralised Co-operation, French regions can be classified into four sections (see Fig. 1):

– regions with a high degree of co-operation (more than 20 projects): Alsace, Brittany, Champagne-Ardenne, Limousin, Lorraine, Rhone-Alpes;

– regions with a medium degree of co-operation (between 10 and 19): Aquitaine, Auvergne, Bourgogne, Centre, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Lower Normandy, Picardy, Provence-Alpes-Azur Coast;

– regions with low degree of co-operation (less than 10): Corsica, Franche-Comte, Ile-de-France, Languedoc-Roussillon, Upper-Normandy, Pays de la Loire;

– regions with no co-operation in Europe (0): Midi-Pyrenees[1], Poitou-Charente.
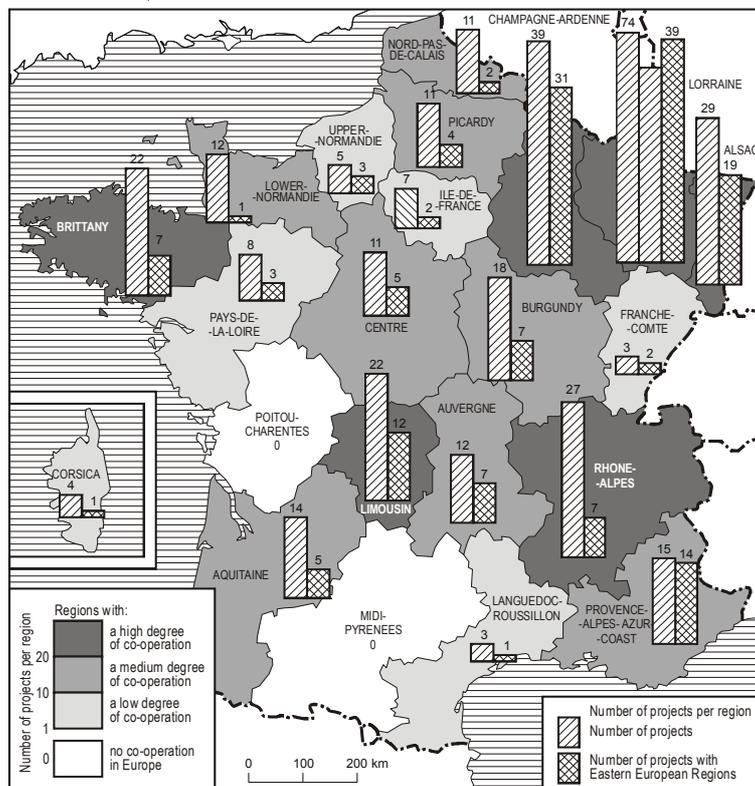
Fig. 1. Decentralised co-operation between French and European Regions
Source: author's own elaboration

[1] Even though there is no reference to interregional co-operation with East European region in the French Atlas of decentralised co-operation, Midi Pyrenees has set up a project ADEP (2004–2007) in which there are two Polish voivodeships (Podkarpackie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie).

The main partners of French regions are traditionally located in Western Europe (mostly in German Lander – 74 projects), but they are also in co-operation with Italian, Spanish, English and other regions. In Eastern Europe, French regions cooperate mostly with Polish voivodeships; eleven French regions have set up interregional co-operation with eight Polish regions and are involved in 43 projects. French regions also co-operate with regions in four other East European countries: Czech Republic (30 projects), Hungary (28) Slovakia (14) and Romania (13). No interregional co-operation with Bulgaria or small countries like Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia is mentioned because they can either involve departments on the French side or the national or local levels in the case of small countries. The partners in Eastern Europe are sometimes hard to find at the regional level because there is no regional level if the country is too small or if it is not decentralised. Interregional co-operation allows all the administrative levels to cooperate with each other, so it can become very complicated to read a map of interregional co-operation in Europe.
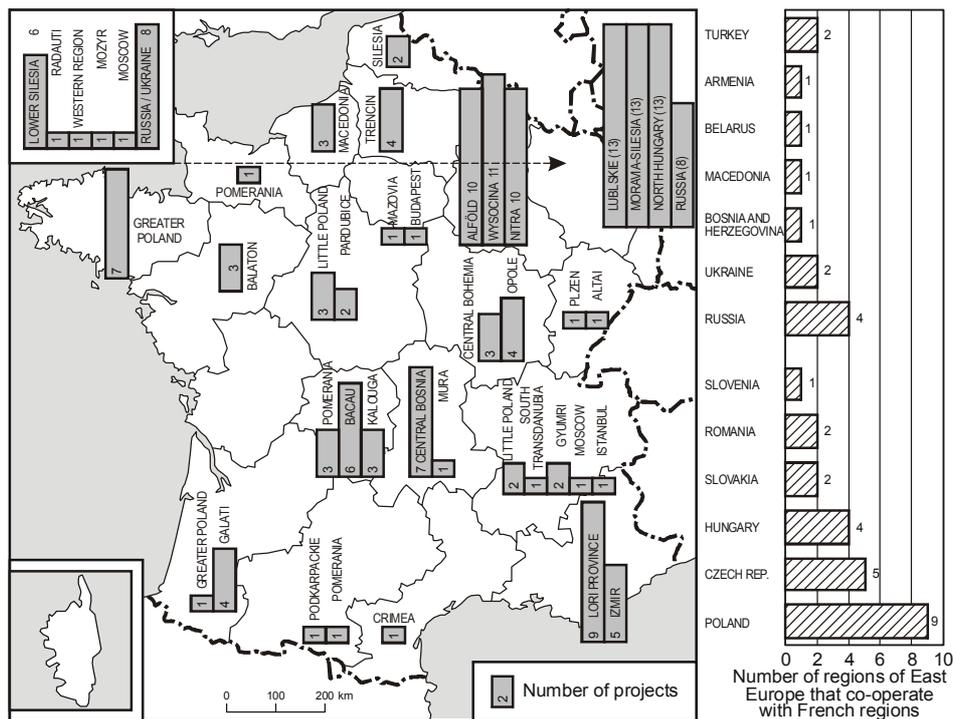

Fig. 2. Interregional co-operation between French and East European regions
Source: author's own elaboration

We can also observe (see Fig. 2) that French regions cooperating with Eastern European regions are mostly located in the eastern part of France: Lorraine, Champagne-Ardenne and Alsace. The capital region Ile de France co-operates with other capital regions like Mazovia in Poland and Budapest in Hungary.

The French Atlas gathers all kind of co-operations and it is a good tool to analyse decentralised co-operation but, unfortunately, it is not exhaustive. Some examples of co-operation could be missing, such as, for example, between Midi--Pyrenees and Podkarpackie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeships (ADEP project) or the one between the Auvergne region and Mura Regional Development ment Agency (FUToURISM project). When studying interregional co-operation, collecting data from very diverse kinds of sources may be a challenge. This kind of co-operation is very complex, because it can have very different aspects: it may involve isolated actions or be a part European programs. The interregional co-operations supported by the EU are easier to find. The role of the EU is important in the development of interregional co-operation and will probably become more important in the next years.

3. THE ROLE OF EUROPEAN UNION IN INTERREGIONAL CO-OPERATION: THE INTERREGC PROGRAM

The European Union has set up different tools to encourage interregional partnership. The most famous program concerned with cross-border co-operation is the INTERREG I, II, III and IV A. Actually, INTERREG has 3 strands: A for cross-border co-operation; B for transnational co-operation and C for interregional co-operation. The one that provides French regions with an opportunity to co-operate with Eastern European regions inside the EU is the third one. INTERREG concerns region in the EU. There were other European programs like PHARE for Eastern European countries before they joined the EU and TACIS (Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States) before the implementation of the neighbourhood policy.

After 2004 and the enlargement of the EU, most of the regions were eligible for INTERREG IIIC (2002–2006). This program was financed by the European Regional Development Fund and co-financed by public authorities. It co-financed up to 75% of projects in regions eligible for Objective 1. An assessment of INTERREG IIIC[2] shows the number of INTERREGIIIC projects co-financed per country: Italy (361), Spain (292), Germany (245), France (184), UK (174),

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[2] www.powershow.com: 'Enseignements de INTERREGIIIC 2002–2006'.

Greece (159), Poland (126), Hungary (101), Lithuania (48), Czech Republic (48), Slovenia (39), Estonia (39), Latvia (35), Slovakia (26), etc. French regions (19 regions) were involved in 96 projects (half of the total number of projects). The main fields of co-operation were: 'environment, risk prevention, energy and natural resources (development of new energy)' in 22% of the projects; regional planning, territorial regeneration, urban and rural development in 22% of the projects; tourism, culture and heritage (17%); economic development (16%); education, research, technology and innovation (10%), etc.

Among different programs in which French regions were involved, we can mention four examples:

– ADEP (2004–2007) between Midi-Pyrenees and two Polish voivodeships in order to define a European model of 'Training and Development' to improve 'regional governance',

– CENTURIO (2004–2007) for 'exchanging experiences, fostering inter-regional co-operation and strengthening regional self-development' between five French regions and several local and regional authorities in East Europe (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Albany, Georgia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Romania),

– FUToURISM (2006–2008) for exchanging experiences in tourism and encourage a sustainable development in touristic regions, between Auvergne region and, in Eastern Europe, the Mura Regional Development Agency (Slovenia),

– RURAL INNOVA (2005–2007) formed a network for exchanging experience in order to define an innovative rural development policy; it gathered 15 rural regions, among them the Limousin region.

According to INTERREG IVC (2007–2013), the interregional co-operation's goal is to encourage regional and local authorities to 'exchange and transfer their experiences and jointly develop approaches and instruments that improve the effectiveness of the regional development policies and contribute to economic modernisation'[3]. The program contributes to the European Commission Initiative 'Regions for economic Change' (RFEC) by encouraging economic and social growth. For 2007–2013, two thematic priorities were set up: 'innovation and the knowledge economy' and 'environment and risk prevention'. The first priority focuses on themes like 'innovation, research and technology deve-

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[3] European Union, European Regional Development Fund 2007-2013, Objective 3: European Territorial Co-operation, Interregional Co-operation Programme INTERREG IV C, Contributing to the European Commission Initiative 'Regions for Economic Change', operational programme, 26 July 2007, 92 p.

lopment, entrepreneurship, employment, education' according to the Lisbon Agenda and the second one on 'natural and technological risks, water management, waste prevention, biodiversity, energy, sustainable development, landscape' according to Gothenburg Agenda.

The INTERREG IVC program is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), it amounts to 321 million euros for 2007–2013; the whole INTERREG program represents 9 billion, above all for cross-border co--operation. 55% will go to innovation and knowledge economy, 35% to sustainable development, risk prevention… and 6% to technical assistance. It supports regional initiative projects, networks all over EU (plus Norway) with a help of 75% to partners of former EU15, 85% to new partners EU12 and 50% to Norway.

4. THE CASE OF LORRAINE REGION AND ITS EASTERN EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIPS: MORAVIA-SILESIA IN CZECH REPUBLIC, LUBLIN IN POLAND AND NORTHERN REGION (NORDA) IN HUNGARY

The analysis of interregional co-operation that involves Lorraine and different regions in Europe is interesting to study; it can highlight the reasons for interregional co-operation, its benefits and limits. The Lorraine region has a very high number of interregional co-operation projects compared to other French regions. How can this be explained? It is due to a long tradition of co-operation, as Lorraine is located near the border and has been setting up cross-border co--operation for a long time with its three neighbours, Germany, Luxembourg and Belgium, even before the decentralisation process started. Lorraine has a long experience and knowledge of EU policy and the use of Structural Funds for CBC programs. The region was encouraged by different actors to develop interregional co-operation as well. It is interesting to note that it was a top down process at the beginning. It was a way to find new possibilities of development for regions and to reinforce French influence in other parts of Europe. Regions are like small 'windows' of the French State, they can promote its economy, entrepreneurship, its way of living; they are able to develop what is called 'paradiplomacy'. The national level thus takes an interest in 'pushing' its regions to co-operate with Eastern European regions.

Lorraine is a region with a long tradition in industry. Due to large coal and iron ore mining areas, it has attracted migrants from different countries and, among them, lots of Poles, especially between the two World Wars and after

World War II. Thus, Lorraine has a long experience of multiculturalism, being an area for immigration and a border region with a 'moving border' that entangled, rather than separated, the different communities. Today, in the context of open borders, the interdependence is even stronger. The future of Lorraine is inside the Greater Region Saar-Lor-Lux and in its capacity to develop links with other regions and to reinforce its attractiveness.

Several partnerships[4] have been signed with Eastern European regions to allow interregional co-operation. The different protocols had been signed before territorial reforms occurred in Eastern European countries: with Ostrava in Czech Republic in 1996, with three voivodeships in Poland in 1997 and with the North Eastern Region in Hungary in 1997. The interregional co-operation had to adapt to new partners after the introduction of territorial reforms in these countries (Czech Republic in 2000, Poland in 1999, Hungary in 1999 and 2011).

The first co-operation with Poland involved three voivodeships (Lublin, Chełm, and Zamość) which later became one Lublin voivodeship with new territorial limits and competences. A new agreement was signed in 2002 between the two partners, Lorraine and Lublin.

The same change in territorial administration happened in Czech Republic, so a new agreement was signed in 2001. Lorraine co-operates with Moravia-Silesia region and the protocol was first signed in 1996 with the city of Ostrava, i.e. before the creation of administrative regions that were set up in 2000.

In Hungary, the situation is still complex. Lorraine signed a protocol in 1997 but several measures have been taken by the Hungarian government since then. The interregional co-operation started with the North Eastern Region, which was divided into two parts in 1999. Lorraine still co-operates with the Northern region, while the other part set up an institutionalised co-operation with Champagne-Ardenne region in France. Another reform took place in 2011 and concerned above all the local level, but also the regional one. The Hungarian regions are now called 'Regional Forums for development and territorial planning'; they succeeded to the 'regional councils of development' set up in 1999. They still include three counties; so for Lorraine, they are Borsod, Abauj and Zemplen. They were chosen due to their industrial characters and their border location similar to Lorraine.

But the Hungarian regions are still weak considering their competences, which has an impact on the efficiency of interregional co-operation. The regions

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[4] Lorraine Region, 'Partenariat de la Région Lorraine – voïvodie de Lublin – région de Hongrie du Nord-Région de Moravie Silésie' (Partnership of Lorraine Region, Lublin voivodeship, Northern Hungarian region, Moravia-Silesia region), October 2012.

need to have comparable powers of decision in the fields in which they have decided to co-operate. But what are these fields of co-operation? What can interest regions that are so far from each other?

There are several advantages in developing this kind of co-operation for the regions, for the States and for the European Union. One of the first official aims was to help Eastern European States to join the EU by exchanging experiences in different fields. Eastern European States evolved slowly towards decentralised countries and giving more power to regional and local levels. Western European regions can help them in the implementation and management of European programs and structural funds.

The regions that co-operate have the same kind of economy (former industrial regions with problem of reconversion); they are also border regions and develop cross-border co-operation. They have to face similar challenges.

Three committees have been set up between Lorraine and its partners: one with Moravia-Silesia, another one with Lublin and a third one with NORDA. They gather regional authorities in order to define common actions and the fields of co-operation. The main topics for co-operation are:

– education/research: exchange of experiences between Ostrava and Lorraine University, Marie-Curie Skłodowska in Lublin, exchange of students to train bi-cultural engineers, etc.

– culture: exchange of experiences in cultural practices, mobility of theatre groups, cultural meetings in each region (exhibitions of pictures, concerts, shows, etc.)

– economic development: exchange of experience about industrial reconversion

– environment: research on water quality, groundwater management, sustainable use and protection of resources, implementation of regional environment policy

– territorial planning: exchange of experience in the implementation of an EGTC (European Group for Territorial Co-operation) for better cross-border governance.

Some of these actions have financial supports from regional or local authorities or from associations. It is important to note that they are not all supported by the EU and do not benefit from Structural Funds. Actually, few projects can be mentioned in European programs: REGVIS (1996–1997 for local development planning), RESCKO (1997–1998 – transfer of knowledge concerning coal and steel industry), TEMPUS (2000–2001 – to train Czech local Authorities before the EU Enlargement), RADA (2000–2002 – agro-tourism), TACIS-CBC--ENACT small project facility (2002–2004 – for the management of a cross-

border river, the Bug) (Gaunard-Anderson 2005), ICN (2003–2005 – sustainable regional development and social cohesion between European regions that have to face industrial changes), FOREST (2010–2012 – LEONARDO program – safety and forestry training), CREATOR (2010–2013 – mini-programme INTERREG IVC) to study the impact of ageing societies and implement new regional economic development policy.

These examples, which involve the Lorraine region, show different aspects of interregional co-operation. They are not all supported by European programs. It is one of the major aims for future projects, to be in European programs. What can be the future development for interregional co-operation between French regions like Lorraine and regions located in Eastern Europe?

5. PERSPECTIVES FOR INTERREGIONAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN FRENCH AND EASTERN EUROPEAN REGIONS

The interregional co-operation takes place in an enlarged European Union, in which local and regional levels are very diverse. There are so many regional and local units that the opportunities for interregional co-operation are huge. At the same time, due to all these different administrative levels, it is not always easy to identify the partners for interregional co-operation. Elections of local and regional authorities can lead to changes in the priorities of interregional co--operation. What can also slow down the co-operation is the fact that the decentralisation process is not achieved. The countries are evolving in the decentralisation process. In France, Act III of decentralisation will reinforce the role of regions. Policies in Eastern European countries are following the same way but at different rhythms, even if some countries, like the smallest ones, will remain centralised.

If regions could become more powerful due to more competences, their budget could still be very weak. French regional budgets are very weak compare dto other regions like the German Lander. Actually, most of the regions in Eastern European countries have less financial means than regions in Western Europe and that is why they are provided with a higher percentage (85%) of financing by the EU.

For the period 2014–2020, the EU will still be a major actor for the develop-ment of regions. It will encourage interregional co-operation with more funds. The scheduled budget for INTERREG VC is 700 Million euros (+ 120% compared to the previous period 2007–2013 – 321 million euros). Interregional co-operation will not be as important as cross-border co-operation, but regions

will be able to benefit from other European programs for mobility, for education, etc. apart from the program for territorial co-operations,.

The search for financial means is one of the main challenges for regions, along with finding the different partners for co-operation. We can mention the complexity of the process that needs many partners; it is a condition to be able to benefit of European Funds. Interregional co-operations are set up between regions in Western and Eastern Europe but also with Northern and Southern Europe, so they are located far from each other. At the same time, it is beneficial to the population and transfer different experiences and knowledge. Many lessons can be learned from all of this co-operation. But it is also important to perpetuate a network of regions that took time to set up and can simply 'vanish' when the project stops. To pursue inter-regional co-operations, it will be interesting to set up European Groupings of Territorial Co-operation (EGTC) which are 'legal tools for developing and implementing a territorial cohesion policy at cross-border, transnational and interregional level'[5].

Another observation can be made about the topics of co-operation; there has been an evolution from the beginning until today. The projects were above all meant to help Eastern European countries to join the EU and, slowly, the interregional co-operation has become more diverse and, according to several French regions, it is a 'win-win' process; this co-operation will be of benefit to each partner. They could be much more important in the future because they allow innovative ways of development for European regions.

6. CONCLUSION

Interregional co-operation between Western and Eastern European regions started in the mid-1990s, was, above all, encouraged by the European Union through its territorial cohesion policy. The role of the EU is important and will still influence the future of interregional co-operation due to the implementation of several tools like INTERREG V C (2014–2020) and other European programs for financial support and the European Grouping of Territorial Co-operation (EGTC) as a new governance structure.

Interregional co-operation is very complex because of so many projects supported (or not) by different European programs. In the future, regions would like to have all small projects supported by the EU.

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[5] www.Interact-eu.net.

The partnerships between French and Eastern European regions can be seen as a success of a decentralised co-operation supported by the European Union, but it can of course be improved by promoting this policy. The decentralisation process in East European countries is on-going and has already involved new opportunities for interregional co-operation. It could be an innovative way of development for regions, taking advantages of the different experiences in regional policy. The last question to ask is: what will be the impact of the economic crisis and austerity policies that we can observe at different levels in the interregional co-operation and how will this affect the solidarity between the Western and Eastern European regions?

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INTEGRATION COMPONENT
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GEO-ECONOMIC ASPECT

The influence of internationalisation processes gives rise to the third millennium of global economic discourse characterised by the penetration of research results of other science spheres without their interaction with economics itself. They should also take into account environmental science.

These environmental problems and their transition from the regional to global level dictate new priorities and conditions of development of industrial complex of individual entities in the world of economy, creation and consolidation of new directions of the economic thought as a part of the overall paradigm.

Numerous changes were introduced into the way of management and also into the way of public consciousness. It all led to the formation and development of new concepts in economic thought. One impulse that started the process of strengthening the natural resources management and environmental issues that were globally discussed were the downfall of the Soviet Union and the development of scientific areas, the definition of harmful influence of industrial production on the general environmental situation in the world, the signing of the Kyoto protocol and other documents of national and regional scale.

Analysis of the latest studies and publications has shown that questions of development of nature management are well discussed in the works of national scientists such as M.A. Khvesyk, V.I. Pavlov, V.A. Holyan, P.I. Moroz, S.K. Kharichkov, V.V. Burkinskij, V.S. Kravciv, Ye.V. Khlobystov, Ye.V. Mishenin, I.M. Synyakevych, L.B. Shostak, H.I. Yaremchuk, who embrace nation-wide problems and highlight certain questions on the development of economics of nature management in Ukraine. Some theoretical questions on the role of rational usage of natural resources were included in the works of V.Y. Novyc'kyj. In order to develop and renew economic processes, deepen the integration pro-

cesses and develop trans-boundary co-operation of Ukraine, it is necessary to conduct the research that will reflect new conditions and strategic priorities of development of trans-boundary regions in the sphere of nature management and environmental safety.

The aim of this work is to define the place and role of nature management within trans-boundary co-operation. In order to achieve this aim, the following tasks must be performed:

– characterise modern tendencies in nature management and their influence on the development of economic subjects,

– define the role of trans-boundary co-operation in providing regional environmental security,

– analyse possible courses of research in questions of environmental security co-operation within the co-operation between Ukraine and the EU.

The genesis and development of natural resources management as a component of economic thought is both a natural and a forced phenomenon. This science is relatively young, but it is developing quite rapidly. The development of this branch mostly activates in pre-crisis times. The exhaustibility of some resources remained on subconscious level in people's consciousness for quite a long time. The awareness that natural resources can run out became a huge impulse for that. One important document in this sphere, 'European Regional/ Spatial Planning Charter', was adopted by the European Council in 1983. It is predetermined by the fact that these territories need the introduction of a policy to activate co-operation between countries, open their borders, and jointly use their infrastructure (Pavlikha 2006, pp. 68–70).

The international character of environmental problems stimulated the review of the whole system of international relations. Of primary importance was the problem of rational usage of nature resources that can be perceived as giving competitive advantage to national economic systems and as an element of undivided global ecological system. There is a need to formulate international standards and a general system of environmental regulations and environmental defense.

The necessity of international co-operation on environmental issues is predetermined by a whole range of factors, such as the global character of environmental problems; the problem of trans-border pollution; international obligations of countries concerning environmental protection; advantages received from international exchange of experience and technologies; an opportunity to attract international investments.

Similarly to other former Soviet Republics, Ukraine uses extensive methods in some spheres of economy. The transition to intensive methods of management

is happening slowly. This weakens national economy's competitiveness in the world market. The development of a nationwide strategy of rational usage of natural resources and environmental safety should reduce man-made burden and strengthen its position in the global market.

The formation of integration unions and Ukraine's participation in regional integration processes have a direct impact on natural resources management. The integration component of natural resources management should be considered on two complementary levels.

The first component of this concept is the ability to use theoretical knowledge of more economically developed countries. This involves the adaptation of national norms, standards, as well as practical implementation of terms and concepts that determine the geo-economic aspect of integration processes. In other words, joining the formation of effective strategy of geo-economic and environmental plan and system of natural resources management is preconditioned by common geographical location and by similar conditions of formation and development of regional management complex (Pavlikha 2006, pp. 286–287).

The use and adaptation of environmental standards, joining to formation of effective strategy of geo-economic ecological program of actions and system of environmental management is predetermined by common geographical location and similarity of conditions for formation and development of economical complex of regions.

Another facet of this issue is the use of the same natural resources, and mutual influence on the environment in the case existing common borders. Taking a look at the cross-border 'Euroregion Bug' we may talk about the necessity to form a common concept of rational exploitation, recreation and protection of natural resources potential and an environmentally safe development of national spatial units.

So, for example, considering the cross-border union 'Euroregion Bug' we can talk about the necessity to form a concept concerning the rational exploitation, recreation and protection of the natural-resources potential, eco-safety development of national regional units. Industrial facilities in a country, whose activity has direct impact on a common ecosystem can serve as a basis for the formation of co-operation that has direct impact on the environmental situation, as well as on the quality or availability of natural resources in another country.

There is also a threat of trans-border pollution that may be defined as any pollution in a country, whose source is fully or partially located within the political boundaries of another country. Trans-border pollution is one of the phenomena of environmental interdependence, which makes international co-operation in this sphere so vital.

In general, the international activity of Ukraine concerning the use and protection of environment is regulated by the "Main directions of international co-operation" that discuss interregional multilateral and bilateral forms of co-operation. Apart from that, Ukraine is a member of about 100 international bi- and multilateral agreements concerning environmental protection and rational usage of natural resources.

The basis for international co-operation in this sphere is the existence of signi-ficant international legal base consisting of different co-operation agreements. Some of them are the *Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution* (1979), *Convention on the transboundary effects of industrial accidents* (1992), *Convention on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and inter-national lakes* (1992), *Convention on environmental impact assessment in a trans-boundary context* (1991).

The international regulations concerning transboundary pollution, both public and private, necessitate the development of national-level regulations of that issue.

In today's system of international co-operation in the sphere of environmental protection and natural resources strategies, international financial institutions have a huge role. Such international financial institutions as International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) or World Bank (WB) consider environmental protection one of their main tasks. International Bank for Re-construction and Development became the first international financial institution that included the following priorities in their statute:

– assisting countries in the formation of environmental policies, including the development of effective laws and normative documents and the creation of organisational conditions and preparation of staff for monitoring the standards;

– assistance in application of market methods in development of national environmental programmes;

– stimulating the development of operations on ecological market of goods and services, investments in projects focused on preserving and improving the state of environment;

– organisation and support of special studies and programs on environ-mental education of population;

– environmental rating, planning, management, auditing and monitoring procedures in bank's operations and projects (Danylyshyn et al. 2009, p. 418).

Today, the co-operation between European countries on natural resources management involves the development of the system of target monitoring methods, prevention and elimination of potential environmental hazards and rational usage of natural resources. A special place in this co-operation is given

to global and regional financial institutions that are sponsoring such projects (IBRD, EBRD, etc.).

The co-operation of countries within integration associations and their functional elements, i.e. the Euroregions, concerning natural resources management must follow these guidelines:

– unification of ecological standards. Formation of a single standard system within two national systems will allow for easy formation of a regulatory and legal framework for both countries and for reaching a consensus while developing common action plans;

– bilateral and multilateral contracts between countries about environmental co-operation are of great importance. This kind of contract should define all directions of co-operation and lay foundations for coordination between national management authorities, as well as the establishment of controlling units in both countries;

– co-operation should become common, where problems exist within a transboundary ecosystem. For example, during the development of an industrial complex on the territory of one country, its effect on the transboundary ecosystem in all countries should be taken into account;

– Ukraine should join European Union's programmes concerning natural resources management and environmental security. Based on this co-operation with European countries, a similar system of co-operation with other neighbouring countries should be developed, especially with those that pose any environmental hazard.

Natural resources management and the development of clean manufacturing technologies by all market participants is a priority in modern global economic development. Integration of natural resources management provides an opportunity of exchanging theoretical knowledge between different entities within one ecosystem. Practical execution of integrated natural resources management stems from the need to coordinate and jointly solve shared environmental problems by neighbouring countries.

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E-PARTICIPATION AS A FACTOR OF EUROPEANIZATION IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROSPECTS OF UKRAINE

With the widespread implementation of effective information and communication technologies based on interconnection communication (Internet), new level of citizen participation in the system of open democracy becomes possible. The concept of e-participation is understood as the participation of 'individual and legal persons (and groups of them) in political and administrative decision-making processes through information and communication technologies (ICT)'[1]. The other meaning of electronic participation (e-participation) refers to 'the use of information and communication technologies in order to broaden and deepen political participation by providing citizens with opportunities to communicate with each other and with representatives elected by them' (Macintosh 2006, p. 364–369). This definition of the concept of e-participation includes all stakeholders in the democratic decision-making processes, not just citizens in the context of the government's initiatives. Thus, e-participation can be seen as a part of e-democracy – the use of ICT by governments, elected officials, the media, political parties and interest groups, civil society organisations, international non-governmental organisations or citizens (voters) as part of any political process undertook countries/regions, both at local and global levels (Clift 2003).

The e-participation as a form of participatory democracy (i.e. – 'participation' - a classic interpretation S. Arnsteyn (1969, pp. 216–224), J. Creighton (2005), N. Beger (2004), A. Macintosh (2004) and etc. is, in fact, a tool of direct electronic democracy. It does not undermine the foundations of representative democracy and is not focused on its restructuring. Instead, e-participation can

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[1] E-Partizipation – Elektronische Beteiligung... (2008).

and should be seen as a complementary part of representative democracy. At the same time, as in traditional models of public participation, there are electronic tools of civil disobedience and protest, such as 'hacktivism' (Jordan and Taylor 2004) and 'direct online protest'(Turnšek 2010, pp. 201–216). However, e-participation is a promising direction in the development of democracy during the dynamic advancement of information communication instruments (O'Donnell et al. 2007).

Topics of e-participation in Europe have mostly been studied in the context of national systems of relations and public administration, but the vast majority of these studies were partial and indirect. In reality, there are no studies concerning the interaction of citizens with political issues within EU institutions.

As a result of targeted searches in scientometric databases such as ISI-Web, Scopus and ACM Portal using key phrases: 'multilevel decision-making in the EU', 'representative democracy in the EU', 'participation of citizens in the EU institutions work', 'public participation and European governance', we have singled out 25 articles devoted to the theoretical development of concepts of European governance and democracy in the EU as well as the application of information technology in the development of democracy in Europe, mainly at the level of the EU member countries. Some works are devoted to the analysis of the legal framework of direct democracy in the EU.

The authors of these studies are: S. Smith, E. Dalakiouridou, E. Panopoulou, K. Tarabanis, E. Tamburis (Smith and Dalakiouridou 2009, Dalakiouridou et al., 2008, Panopoulou et al. 2009), S. Albrecht, H. Kohlrausch, G. Kubitsek, B. Lippe, O. Morker, M. Trenel, V. Forverk and K. Vidvald (Albrecht et al. 2008), T. Auberger and K. Iszkowski (2007), A. Beasley (2006), D. Dunkerley and S. Fudge (2004), M. Forcella (2006), E. Grande (1996), J. Greenwood (2007), S. Kurpas et al. (2006), E. Kalampokis et al. (2008), J. Millard, M. Nielsen, A. McIntosh (Millard et al. 2008).

The same subjects in Ukrainian context are not represented in the sources at all. The concept of participatory democracy in new forms of interaction between the public and the authorities has been implemented in the practice of European governance over the past years and now it requires a systematic understanding. The latest model of interaction with the public based on electronic communication technologies still needs scientific development, especially in terms of open models of e-participation. Today, the issue of finding ways to enhance cooperation and rapprochement with the EU in all aspects of political life is very much current in Ukraine. The purpose of this article is to analyse e-participation in the current models of e-democracy in some foreign countries and the European Union as an example for the Europeanisation of Ukraine.

The main reason for the increasing interest in public participation in the management of the EU is the decrease of public support for the policies of the European Union, especially in view of its latest expansion and skepticism about the public's role in forming EU policies, embodied in the disappointment in EU policy as a whole[2] which, in turn, is associated with the phenomenon of 'democratic deficit of the EU' (Follesdal and Hix 2005).

The problem of 'democratic deficit' is caused by the inaccessibility of EU institutions to ordinary citizens and reflects the difficulties associated with an attempt to promote democracy at the supranational level outside the traditional national state. As a result, there is a gap between the EU political elites' consensus on the expedience of integration development and the general population's skepticism about European institutions, which is a serious obstacle to further evolution of the European Union (Moravcsik 2002, pp. 603–624).

The loss of interest in the European Parliamentary elections, along with the results of several opinion polls conducted in the past decade, have demonstrated that the EU may lose touch with their citizens.

One way out would be to expand the scope of participatory democracy, in particular on the basis of interactive information and communication technologies.

Information and communication technologies have increased citizen's expectations concerning their governments. They can now count on direct participation in designing government programs and services. At various stages of the political process, from elections to planning and implementation of policies, citizens are becoming more actively involved through different tools such as focus groups, practical testing and participation using electronic instruments. E-participation is an instrument that allows governments to engage in dialogues with their citizens. By increasing the ability of the state to request, receive and use feedback from voters, political activities may be better adapted to the needs and priorities of citizens.

The experience of Estonia may be used as a good example – a country which is one of the biggest Internet users in the world, where the government website 'On the agenda today' is open allows anyone to report their ideas about policies[3]. Some of the proposals become Estonian law. This site has 6,630 regular users and each month 80 thousands of visitors are registering on the website. In North

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[2] 'EU Communication and the citizens decision makers', Eurobarometer analytical report, 189b, 2006, European Commission, Brussels. 'White paper on a European Communication Policy', 2006, COM 35, European Commission, Brussels.

[3] https://www.eesti.ee/tom/.

Jutland County (Denmark), the local community website[4] invites citizens to participate in decision-making at many stages, but especially in the process of developing management issues, discussions, preparing plans and determining methods of further social development. The project merges the Internet and other media in order to solve problems.

Notably, these successful examples of practical e-democracy appear in countries that, according to the UNO, hev the highest indicators of the population's participation in political life. According to the index of political participation (e-participation) associated with the provision of electronic information (e-information), consultations through government websites (e-consultation) and the inclusion of citizens in decision-making (e-decision-making), the leading states are: the U.S. with the index of 1.0000, Republic of Korea (0.9773), Denmark (0.9318), France (0.9318) and Australia (0.8864). Notably, Estonia occupied the highest (8th) position among former Soviet Republics (0.7273), while Ukraine (0.5682) improved its position by 14 points (places)[5].

As a result of estimating the quality and relevance of e-participation in some countries, the same countries are distinguished. Ukraine ranks 12th overall in terms of electronic information with 53,33% (Australia – 100%); consultation through government sites at 61.11% (USA – 100%), citizens' participation in political decision-making – 37.5% and the overall level – 51.02% (the U.S. leads the list with 89.8%).

The electronic participation must be considered the highest form of inclusion of citizens in the e-government system. The stages of development of the e--government reflect the strengthening of the role of e-participation (according to the sources (Enoksen 2007).

In the first stage, the sites of various ministries and agencies that provide information about their mission and activities are created. Websites of government bodies are usually not supported centrally and are not combined into a single portal. E-participation at this stage is not provided.

In the second stage (the current situation in Ukraine), the first elements of interactivity appear (e.g. sending questions by citizens and receiving answers via e-mail); it is possible to obtain samples of some information and forms. The news concerning the activities of public authorities are published regularly, some elements of e-information are formed.

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[4] http://www.rn.dk.
[5] UN Global E-government Readiness Report 2008. From e-Government to Connected Governance, 2004, N.Y., p. 58.

The third stage is characterised by the appearance of full interactivity, i.e. a possibility to make transactions (use services), such as paying a fine, applying for a passport or renewing some licenses and patents online. Such services, that are used to do things rather than inform, require the government to create special websites to provide them. In fact, interactive technologies allow to realize the principles of e-consultation, the foundation for the development of decision support systems.

The fourth stage, the creation of integrated portals of various departments and services that allow the population to make any kind of transaction that previously required to a direct application to the state agency. Regional portals allow enterprise registration, registration of financial documents, legalisation of foreign documents, etc. There are regional portals that combine a full range of government services and private sector services, a merger of e-commerce systems and Internet banking.

The fifth stage is the creation of e-government systems based on common standards, as well as a governmental portal as a single point of access to all services for both citizens and businesses. Most experts believe that the highest degree of e-democracy development is the introduction of electronic voting systems. This stage signifies the development of a full-scale e-participation.

Current means of public communication through modern information technologies are traditionally ttributed to electronic government (e-government). Periodic UN reports concerning the readiness of e-governments (UN Global E-government Readiness Report) are giving indexes, calculated for individual countries.

The overall index (e-government Readiness Index), which reflects the level of commitment to the e-government, consists of three source indexes: the development of government websites (Web Measure Index), telecommunications infrastructure (Telecommunication Infrastructure Index) and human capital (Human Capital Index). Actually, only the Web Measure Index applies to e-government. Government websites were analysed according to six resources: the government site and the sites of five ministries or agencies: health, education, social security, labor and employment, finance agencies.

The other two indexes are constructed on the basis of official statistics from the telecommunications sector (according to the International Telecommunication Union) and educational sector (UNDP and UNESCO). In 2008, another index (E-government Readiness Report 2008[6]) was published based on 2007

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[6] UN Global E-government Readiness Report 2008. From e-Government to Connected Governance, 2004, N.Y.

data. Leaders in this index were, traditionally, the U.S. (the first place in the indexes for 2004–2005. In 2008, the U.S. moved down to the fourth place), Denmark (the second place in the last three indexes), Sweden (the first place in the 2008 index, third in 2005 and fourth in 2004). Ukraine was 41st.

Only 11 percent of countries demonstrate the implementation of e-participation in the decision-making process. This figure clearly indicates that most governments are not ready for direct participation of citizens in decision making.

The constitution of Ukraine guarantees 'the right to freely elect, keep, use and disseminate information orally, in writing or in any other way' (p. 34) to all citizens. According to Art. 10 of the Ukrainian 'Information Act', the right to information institutes the 'duty of public authorities, as well as local and regional authorities to inform about their activities and decisions', while, according to Art. 21 of this Act, the information from state agencies, as well as local and regional authorities should be provided to the interested parties by direct communication (orally, in writing or in any other way).

According to the Decree of the President of Ukraine from July 31, 2000 no. 928 (928/2000) 'On measures for the national component of the global information network Internet and providing wide access to the Internet in Ukraine', and from May 17, 2001 no. 325 (325/2001) 'On the preparation of proposals to ensure transparency and openness of public authorities', as well as in compliance with the requirements of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated January 4, 2002 No. 3 'On the Procedure of promulgation of the information about the activities of the executive power on the Internet', there are 26 kinds of information which have to be posted on the websites of the regional state administrations and 20 kinds that have to be posted on the sites of central executive bodies. From January 2002, ministries, other central executive bodies, the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Kyiv, Sevastopol and other city state administrations have to provide accommodation and constant updating of information on their own websites in order to 'improve the conditions for democracy development, the citizens' execution of constitutional right to participate in public affairs and to provide free access to information about the activities of the executive power, as well as to ensure transparency and openness in their activities'. Consequently, institutional authorities' websites are purely informational in function, providing mostly one--sided communication in an advertisement format. Moreover, the level of information efficiency is limited. According to the results of analysis conducted by civic network OPORA, the average level of openness of information on the regional government administrations' websites in 2006 was 58.7% (*Analiz informacijnoyi...* 2006).

According to the results of monitoring the openness of Ukrainian government's informational sites, it can be concluded that the authorities have mastered new information technologies and demonstrated the ability to use their websites to inform citizens about administrative services and to provide consultation services. However, the requirement of providing full and timely information about its activities is not fully realised, nor tailored to the needs of the citizens (Lacyba 2007, p. 48).

In essence, Ukrainian official websites are the tool for one-way communication, a kind of 'advertisement boards' that provide the simplest form of information service.

In order to strengthen the guarantees of citizens' constitutional right to participate in public affairs, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted a decree on November 5, 2008 No. 976 'On the approval of the promotion of the public examination of executive power's activities', and on November 3, 2010 no. 996 'On public participation in the formulation and implementation of public policies'. These acts include mandatory public consultations on the formulation and implementation of public policies, contain a provision on community advisory bodies (local councils), as well as identify the need to promote public examination of executive power.

They provide for public consultations held on a regular basis on issues relating to socio-economic development, the promotion and protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens, as well as meeting their political, economic, social, cultural and other interests. The results of public consultations have to be taken into account by the executive authority in their final decision or in their further work.

The governmental site 'Civil Society and Government' have been operating since 2008. It was intended as a communication platform for interaction between authorities and representatives of civil society. The site introduced electronic public consultations about draft decisions of the central authorities.

These government initiatives are created to ensure openness and transparency of government policies and to simplify the conditions for participation of citizens in public affairs.

It is worth noting the adoption, on January 9, 2007, of the Law of Ukraine No. 537-V 'On the Basic Information about Society Development in Ukraine 2007–2015' which determines the need for wide use of modern information and communication technologies for development of information and knowledge, goods and services manufacturing, the realisation of personal potential, improving the quality of life and sustainable development based on the purposes and principles embodied in the United Nations Declaration of Principles and Action

Plan, elaborated at the World Summits on the Information Society (Geneva, December 2003, Tunisia, November 2005).

On January 13, 2011, the Law of Ukraine No. 2939-VI 'On access to public information' was adopted, which laid the foundation for the effective e-government and new standards of open government creation in Ukraine, as it defines the procedure of implementation and ensures that everyone has access to information owned by government agencies and other administrators of public information. This law establishes European standards of openness and is another real step in the European integration process of the state.

The decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated April 5, 2012 No. 220 approved and, by the decree of July 18, 2012 No. 514-p introduced a plan of implementaing the 'Open Government Partnership' (OGP) – a multilateral initiative, formally introduced on September 20, 2011. The goals of the initiative are to ensure the governments' compliance with specific commitments, to promote transparency in public administration and the involvement in the governance process, to fight against corruption, as well as use new technologies to improve governance. The plan states that 'to ensure open government, it is neccessary to implement new information and communication technologies, including a dialogue between the authorities and the public with the help of interactive methods of communication and the opportunities provided by social networks, to modernise the management system in the country, to increase government transparency and improve access to information'.

In fact, the plan adopted several measures, including the development of participatory democracy.

As part of the OGP Ukraine has to:

– enhance the role of civil society in the formulation and implementation of public policy processes;

– improve the legal and methodical physical access for legal persons and associations without legal personality status to information about the activities of state and local governments and their officials and employees;

– improve the legal participation of citizens and their associations in the formulation and implementation of public policy issues of local importance;

– cooperate with the civil society on developing common principles and approaches to establishing effective interaction;

– increase the quantity and improve the efficiency of public consultations (public hearings, round tables, expert discussions) on important public policy issues;

– improve the efficiency of government bodies with public councils during the formation and implementation of public policies;

– expand Internet use, especially improving the government website 'Civil Society and Government' and the use of social networks for communications between executive bodies and the public.

More than a third of the citizens of Ukraine are Internet users, increasingly involved in new forms of communications such as 'social networks'. Thus, a massive Internet audience is rapidly forming.

In 2011, Ukrainian officials and other leaders joined the large community of users of social networks, especially Facebook, and on July 4, 2012 the Law no 10705 concerning the Amendments to the Supreme Council of Ukraine was introduced to ensure the dissemination of information on the website of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, its own webpages and in social networks about the activity of deputies of the Supreme Council of Ukraine and the structural units of its staff.

To support the need for change, it is argued that today more than 30% of citizens of Ukraine have Internet access and more than 2 million people use social networks like Facebook, Twitter, 'Classmates', 'Offline', etc.

The bill proposes to create 'the official page of the Supreme Council of Ukraine in social networks used by at least 1 million citizens of Ukraine'.

Thus, it can be argued that the process of implementation of the regulatory framework and tools for e-participation of civil society in political life in Ukraine fully meets the latest European trends in the formation of participatory democracy.

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IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS IN TRANSITION ECONOMY

Globalisation is the main feature of the twentieth century. The concept includes social, economic, political and environmental issues. Globalisation has had an important effect on economies in many countries of the world.

In recent decades, globalisation has been identified as a key trend in global economic development. This trend has come to include the exchange of goods, services, capital and labour. It goes beyond state borders and has led to the continuous intertwining of national economies (Vasyl'chenko 2003).

Globalisation can help in developing complex solutions for social, economic and environmental problems in systems on different levels (regional, national, continental, global). The process of globalisation has also had a vast effect on all components of the different regional systems in Ukraine, causing various consequences.

Today, the global community develops an important global resource by using a model of sustainable, special development. This project continuously expands the relevant mechanisms and technologies that were declared in the Urban Charter of the Commonwealth of Independent States (Geneva, 1997), 'European Spatial Development Perspective' (Potsdam, 1999) and 'Guidelines for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent' (Hanover, 2000).

Sustainable spatial development presents the dynamic process of providing effective hierarchical co-operation, as well as a change in concentration of the functions of social, economic, environmental, innovative and informative elements (subsystems) of space, that are of vital importance for the complete and widely accessible satisfaction of various necessities of all strata of the population within a certain format of space.

The studies of historical aspects of evolution of the theory of sustainable spatial development shows its interdisciplinary character. The dynamism of the

process becomes one of the most prominent characteristics of sustainable spatial development.

The principle 'think globally and act locally' more precisely describes spatial maintenance of sustainable development – co-operation and coexistence of different order spaces within the limits of unique whole.

Ukraine has a unique strategic position in Europe and its achievement of sustainable spatial development is vital to its national interests. The successful implementation of development serves as a prerequisite for improving people's lives. This is the main priority of national interests. If Ukraine wants to continue to use an innovative model of economic growth, there is a need for scientific justification of the strategy to raise regional competitiveness in order to provide a higher quality of living, create opportunities to use existing national spatial potential and determine its role on a global level.

The aim of this research is to theoretically and methodologically justify regional competitiveness in the conditions of transformation economy.

Available domestic and foreign experience concerning the theoretical principles of the formation of competitive national economy in the context of transformation processes is discussed in general terms in the article. It focuses on the study of regional competitiveness as a necessary precondition for the development of competitiveness of the whole country.

During the recent years, competitiveness has become more than a fashionable concept. Alongside the international opening of developed economies and the globalisation of economic relations that followed, there is hardly any government that has not assigned the improvement of competitiveness as one of the main goals of its economic policy (Val'ter 2004, p. 95).

During Ukraine's transition from a centralized to an open market economy, globalisation processes have been a crucial factor in regional development and national progress. This is especially true because, according to I. Busygina (2005), 'The regions are in fact «entry points» into the globalisation of the national economy'. Italian researcher I. Begg (1999) correctly noted that pro-ductivity and employment are the indicators of regional competitiveness, but that quality of life is its main characteristic. Quality of life refers to a complex description of the general degree of satisfaction among the population in terms of their material and spiritual needs. It refers to the prevailing conditions of life and the free development of both individuals and society as a whole. It defines the demographic, socio-economic, infrastructural, natural and environmental parameters that researchers use in the process of comparative analysis of life quality in different regions of Ukraine (Pavlikha 2006).

The results of such comparative analysis revealed significant regional

differentiation regarding quality of life in Ukraine. Regions were marked according to the following scale: the best, relatively high, high, medium, low and limited quality of life. These categories characterise the existing conditions for the prospect of sustainable development. These categories are not based on European standards, but on the existing conditions in Ukraine. It is important to pay attention to the lack of ideology of sustainable spatial development activities. Due to this, there are notable inter-regional disparities.

The future of the human race is the main imperative for modern global development. However, the problem lies in identifying how and to what extent each region is able to adapt to the changes that have arisen due to global factors and their corresponding results (Tarasov 2004, p. 243).

The fundamental strategic course of our state is to achieve integration with the external economic, political and legal space, which will in turn bring us closer to the highest world standards of life quality, complete realisation of opportunities for valuable development, providing rights and freedoms for citizens of Ukraine. The development of human potential must become not only the goal and index of public and economic progress in the country but also the unifying element of subsequent collaboration between Ukraine and European Union.

Besides, gradual integration of the state with the wider community and the problem of saving our own national and regional spatial advantages require the modernisation of the system of spatial organisation of the country and its regions.

The main priority of Ukrainian national interests is to raise the quality of life in order to introduce European standards into all spheres of society. Therefore, the most prominent feature of current regional policies must be ensuring the international competitiveness of the national economy and all of its components. This means creating and strengthening the single economic and social space, as well as ensuring dynamic, balanced development. This would involve eliminating the main regional imbalances and maximising the use of regional resources and potential, as well as the implementation of common programs designed to ensure environmental security, etc.

The issue of regional competitiveness in a globalised world increases in importance and acquires new meaning in light of the global financial crisis. Although the crisis has complicated consequences, it can also be regarded a major impetus for further development. The financial crisis has made it necessary for Ukraine to discuss seriously and thoroughly the issue of development and implementation of strategies for increasing international regional competitiveness.

Ukraine has passed the initial stage of market self-regulation and received the status of market economy. However, the transformational stage of economic development and social progress of our country results in a number of important socio-economic problems caused by social and political instability, significant problems in the demographic, social and environmental areas, while the existing structural, sectoral and regional disparities were even more aggravated because of global financial crisis and economic downturn. These objectives should highlight the need of formation model of competitive national economy, which will complete the transition from planned economy to free market and successful integration into the world economic space.

Today, due to the complexity and its multi-faceted nature, the index of competitiveness is used to describe the development level of the economic system, which is especially important for the transformational national economies.

In a market system, the category of economic competitiveness is the most important one, as it is focused on economic, technological, industrial, organisational, managerial, marketing opportunities of separate business entities, the economy and the region (Semiv 2007, p. 147).

Competitiveness emerges as a social ideology, aimed at achieving competitive advantages at all levels of management, as well as enhancing the role of regional factors in the system of world economic relations, while providing the regions with their own independent entities in the global market.

The process of involvement of various regions in competitive relations in a common market exacerbated the need to form their own competitiveness, which in turn led to the need to review existing policies to stimulate regional development and provide relevant competitive advantages (Tkachuk et al. 2011).

Nowadays, the regions cannot be passive players subjected to decisions of a national centre or the fluctuations of the global economy. Instead, they have to become active players who concentrate on their own economic and social future.

A region is a complex spatial system, an integral spatial connection of components, characterised by a certain combination of territorial, natural, geographic, geopolitical, demographic, social, historical, cultural, resort, industrial, economic, environmental, administrative and political signs.

The regional environment is characterised by (Sjepik 2004, p. 10):

– *know-how*, defined as a capacity to master the production process in all components, i.e. technical, organisational and marketing. This capacity is crucial in order to cope with the technical changes and market evolution.

– culture and values, which define the behaviour of actors and the relation between them. For example, it can be based on a principle of confidence and

reciprocity or lack of trust and strict individualism, on co-operation or undermining attitudes, solidarity and mutual aid or each-for-his-own attitudes.

    – social capital measured by the knowledge each of the actors have on one another. This issue is essential when it comes to the setting up of networks.

    – degree of openness to the outside world characterised by the knowledge and understanding of markets and technologies.

    – the existing set of regional actors such as big enterprises, SMEs, financing structures, administration, local decision-makers, public interfaces, professional associations, education and research institutions, etc.

Paraphrasing the statements from N. Tarnawska and Makarova (2010), we note the need of a new paradigm of management development that takes into account the transformation of the region's nature and the nature of competition, innovation and expansion globally in conjunction with the concept of innovation.

First, we should understand, master, apply and use key terms of competitiveness, its performance assessment in the management of the regions, choose directions for increasing the competitive position in the regions, know and take into consideration the trends in regional competition, as well as find opportunities for co-operation with them.

The new international game of competitiveness is played and won at the regional level. The determinants of global competition are not only the products themselves but also the environment provided at the regional level. The role of the state has changed: it has shifted from its traditional role in the development of industrial policy towards the role of facilitator for developing production systems at the local level (Sjepik 2004, p. 11).

Nevertheless, one should not forget that the pre-determinants for regional competitiveness are established at the national level. Regional development requires favourable conditions such as a macro-economic environment leading to growth, employment, and stability, as well a tax and regulatory system encouraging business and job creation (Sjepik 2004, p. 15).

Thus, considering the regional competition as the presence of competitive advantages and a manifestation of the competitive position of individual regions, it is clear that the differentiation which appears and increases in levels of development is just a consequence of the manifestations of regional competitiveness. The important point to ensure regional competitiveness and its management is the formation and maintenance of the factors and parameters of the regional economic system at a level that maintains and multiplies the performance already achieved. In this case, it is about the stability, integrity, complexity and vitality of the region as an economic system in space-time conditions change (Vasilenko 2008, p. 15).

Therefore, we propose to treat the concept of 'competitiveness of the region' as the ability of a region to find opportunities for its development and transform them into sources of economic growth; it means the most efficient use of existing socio-economic, scientific, technical and human resources to identify (or create) the strengthening and effective utilisation of its competitive advantages in order to intensify the progressive movement in the region, enhancing the level of the national economy as a whole. And the resulting feature, in our opinion, is the quality of life of residents in the region.

Nowadays, the successful involvement of Ukraine in the global economic space in terms of further market-oriented transformation of the national economic system, acquiring the characteristics of the global knowledge economy, makes competitiveness the key to its sustainable economic development. And, since the structural changes in the economy are shown mostly at the regional level, which is first 'react' to any reform, the deepening of the process of market reforms in Ukraine makes it necessary to change the stereotypes of management, planning methods and principles of management at the regional level.

Thus, Ukraine's lack of effective regional governance, capable of ensuring the competitiveness of the region in a further transformation of the national economy, identifies the need to study the conceptual foundations of the competitiveness of the region.

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Section III

BORDERS AND BORDERLANDS ISSUES AND THE TRANSBORDER CO-OPERATION

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THE SLOVENIAN BORDERLANDS: BETWEEN INTEGRATION AND MARGINALITY

1. INTRODUCTION: SLOVENIA AS A BORDERLAND

The present status of Slovenia as an EU borderland is clear from the ratio between the surface of the country and the total length of its political borders (1160 km). Based on these two numbers, we can calculate that there is 5,7 km of borders per 100 km^2. A higher proportion of borders to land is present only in Luxembourg (nearly 9 km per 100 km^2). The 'border-character' of Slovenia can also be understood by calculating the ratio between the border municipalities, i.e. the municipalities, which are located within 25 km from the border, and other municipalities of Slovenia. According to this measurement, 61% of the Slovenian municipalities are border municipalities. Even if we limit the border belt to a width of only 10 km, the percentage of border municipalities still account for more than 50%. The 'border character' of Slovenia is furthermore made evident by the fact that the nation-state's capital Ljubljana is located just 54 km away by road from the Austrian border, 81 km from the Italian border, and 82 km from the Croatian border. The most distant border is the one with Hungary, about 193 km away (Bufon 2002a).

The cross-border traffic is also coherent with the Slovenia's borderland status. The number of people crossing the Slovenian border by car increased between 1992 and 2002 from about 140 million to 180 million. On average, half a million people are crossing the borders daily. If we consider that 30% of them are Slovenian citizens, who make about 50 million border crossings a year, we find that about 140 thousand Slovenian citizens, or 7% of the resident population, transit the border daily. This information is also an important feature in measuring the 'border character' of Slovenia. It enables us to calculate that each

Slovenian citizen (including children and elderly people) visits a foreign country once a fortnight on average. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 22% of all foreigners who have crossed the Slovenian border in 2002 were residents of Croatia, followed by Italy (21%), Austria (13%) and Germany (12%). In total, the inhabitants of other former Yugoslav republics made about 2.5 million border crossings. The above disposition shows us that the structure of border crossing is a combination of dominant local or inter-state, as well as international transitional traffic, which is more frequent in summer. Table 1 shows the structure of border crossings between the years 1992 and 2002.

Table 1. Slovenia – structure of border crossings
per sector, 1992–2002

Specification	Year					
	1992	1995	2002	1992	1995	2002
	(millions of passengers)			(in %)		
SLO/I	51.4	74.5	64.9	36.0	41.3	36.3
SLO/A	39.4	50.7	48.6	27.6	28.1	27.1
SLO/H	1.9	4.8	4.1	1.3	2.7	2.3
SLO/CRO	50.2	50.3	61.3	35.1	27.9	34.3
Total	142.9	180.3	178.9	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

A 45% increase in cross-border traffic on the Slovenian-Italian border occurred in the 1990s: from 51 to 74 millions. The flow has since stabilized at about 65 million border crossings. This was the consequence of the introduction of fuel cards in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, which enabled Italian residents of the province to purchase fuel in Italy at a price equal to Slovenian. The traffic across the Austrian-Slovenian border increased in the same period by one fourth, and has stabilized at about 50 million border crossings a year. The biggest increase of cross-border traffic has occurred on the Slovenian-Hungarian border. This border used to be virtually closed before the 1990s. After that, the cross-border traffic increased by 150% and has since stabilized at about 4 million border crossings a year. Such an intense increase is the result of the democratisation and liberalisation of the Hungarian society and economy, as well as the modification of the Hungarian borderland and its adjustment to its function as a cross-border gateway. Some changes could also be noticed on the Slovenian-Croatian. There,

the maximum was reached in 1994 with 66 millions border crossings, a 33% increase in comparison to the year 1992. The next year, however, the intensity of cross-border traffic dropped, but has improved recently and is in a constant rise due to Croatia's improved position in world tourism. In 2005, 35% of the total cross-border passenger traffic in Slovenia could be attributed to the Italian-Slovenian border area, about 34% to the Croatian-Slovenian border area and about 27% to the Austro-Slovenian border area. The traffic on the Hungarian-Slovenian border is in a constant rise and is at present close to 4%.

Table 2. Selected characteristics of borders
of the Republic of Slovenia, 2002

Specification	1	2	3	4	5
SLO/I	17.4	35	38.5	17.3	38.0
SLO/A	27.9	24	26.3	7.4	27.6
SLO/H	7.6	6	6.6	6.8	2.2
SLO/CRO	47.1	26	28.6	4.8	32.2
Total	100.0	91	100.0	7.8	100.0

1 – The total border length (in %)
2 – Number of border posts in accordance with the relevant cross-border traffic
3 – Border posts in relation to border length (in %)
4 – Number of border posts per 100 km
5 – The total cross-border traffic (in %)
Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

Table 2 clearly shows that the most intense cross-border traffic was and still is on the Italian-Slovenian border. The Italian-Slovenian borderline is just 17% of the entire nation's border length, but it handles as much as 38% of the overall cross-border traffic. The traffic across the Austrian-Slovenian border is more proportional with length, whereas it is disproportional on the borders with Croatia and Hungary. The Italian-Slovenian border is also the most permeable, as close to 40% of all border posts are located there. On average, the Italian-Slovenian border has 17 border-posts per 100 km, while in the southern part of the border, in the section between Trieste and Gorizia, the density is even greater and amounts to about 25 border-posts per 100 km, or one per every 4 km of the border length. The average for the nation's border is 8 border posts per 100 km. The Croatian-Slovenian border has the lowest number of border posts – just 5 per 100 km of the border.

2. CROSS-BORDER RELATIONS AFTER SLOVENIA
JOINED THE EU AND THE SCHENGEN AREA

Unlike other new EU Member States, Slovenia was far less centralised prior to its independence, mainly because it followed the model of polycentric development introduced in the 1970s. However, this model did not contributed to the creation of new regional centres, but was merely used to spread the central political power to those municipal centres which at the time also excercised some co-decision competences according to the new 'self-government' socialist system.

Therefore, in the 1980s, a system of 12 functional regions as areas of inter-municipal co-operation was set up. In the mid-1990s, after Slovenia's independence, these regions were renamed 'statistical regions'. They also function as NUTS 3 units and constitute a territorial basis for the implementation of regional development plans. The current administrative system of Slovenia is thus incomparable with its neighbouring countries, mainly due to the absence of intermediate administrative levels. This fact also inhibits the **institutional** cross-border co-operation, whilst the **functional** cross-border co-operation and the related activities are fairly well-developed (Bufon 2008a).

Nevertheless, there is at present no material obstacle for institutional cross-border co-operation between Slovenian and Italian, Austrian, Hungarian or Croatian municipalities. Neither the Constitution, nor domestic legislation governing local government imposes any limitations on such form of co-operation. Real problems in establishing co-operative relations appear in practice, where certain legislations, such as the one concerning financial flow and others, not directly concerning cross-border co-operation may, in fact, represent a serious obstacle for its implementation. Other problems derive from the fact that Slovenia is forced to act as a regional entity in developing several multilateral agreements, such as those that have established the *Alpe-Adria* 'working group' or other regional associations in the Alps-Adriatic-Pannonian macroregion. The aim of such agreements is to exchange opinions, organise study travels and joint consultations, prepare declarations of intent concerning the introduction of co--operation programmes, as well as draw up legally binding agreements. The broad and complex array of activities implies the tendency towards a more institutionalised form of co-operation through establishing Euroregions and stable structures.

Yet, in the territory of Slovenia and its neighbouring countries, there is currently only one Euroregion fully comparable to other such groupings in Europe, namely the EGTC established in 2012 and not yet formally completed,

connecting the Italian and the Slovenian sides of the former historical region of Gorica/Gorizia. Here, various advisory bodies of border municipalities have already been set in operation on the basis of the Protocol on Cross-Border Co--operation in the Gorizia Area signed in 2004. The Euroregion will function as an association governed by private law, with its own Assembly representing border municipalities and civil society organisations, a Management Board and a Secretariat. Coming closest to such an example is the *Euroregion Austrian Styria-Slovenia* established in 2001 as a union founded on the basis of a private economic contract concluded between the societies *Euregio-Steiermark* and *Evroregija* in Slovenia. This union primarily deals with the preparation and implementation of Interreg projects for the purposes of cross-border co-operation and development, operating through the *Bilateral Euroregion Forum.* Similar objectives are pursued by the association *Crossborder – regional partnership Karavanke.*

With the entrance of Slovenia into the Schengen Area in December 2007, border controls on the new internal EU borders with Italy, Austria and Hungary have been eliminated, whilst controls on the new external EU border with Croatia have been reinforced, both at border posts and along the border line. The external border of Slovenia and the EU with Croatia represents the longest Slovenian border (670 km), currently equipped with 54 border posts, 10 of which are devoted to only bilateral traffic. Actually, the Croatian-Slovenian agreement has prospected a higher figure of local cross-border posts (22) to avoid the possible negative effects of the establishment of the Schengen border regime, but the difficult inter-state relations caused by border disputes in the Gulf of Piran and other border sections have created severe obstacles to the full implementation of a more open bilateral border regime (Bufon 2002b). Of course, many new development opportunities for this 'outer' border section will be provided after July 2013, when Croatia is expected to join the EU.

A recent analysis of cross-border functional interdependence at Slovenian borderlands (Bufon 2008a) reveals small functional differences, as well as more pronounced psychological differences between attitudes of dwellers at 'internal' and 'external' border areas. The highest intensity of cross-border visits could be found at the Italian-Slovenian border, where almost 20% of border dwellers cross the border either every day or at least once per week, whilst in other border areas this percentage ranges from 4.5 to 8.2 only. About 30% of border dwellers usually cross the border at least once per month, except at the Croatian--Slovenian border where this percentage is lower (20.2%). Occasional cross--border visits (several times per year) are more typical for border areas with Hungary and Croatia where they account for about 51–57%. The percentage of

border dwellers who never visit the neighbouring countries amounts to about 16–20%, and is significantly lower only at the border with Italy (7%).

As far as motivations for cross-border traffic are concerned, '**work**' is more often quoted in the border areas with Italy (5.6%) and Croatia (3.6%); '**shopping**' is the most often cited motivation in all border areas, ranging from 45% to 48%, except at the border with Croatia where this motivation is much lower (less than 9%). '**Visits to relatives and friends**' are generally cited as a motivation for cross-border visits by about 15% of respondents; only at the border with Hungary, it is considered less important and cited by only 9% of respondents. Finally, '**recreation**' is considered as a major motivation for cross--border traffic by about 14% of respondents at the borders with Italy and Austria, by about 25% of respondents at the border with Hungary, and by as much as 48% of respondents at the border with Croatia.

We repeated the survey in 2010 and found out that the 'Europeanisation' of Slovenian borders clearly provided ground for an intensification of cross-border relations. Frequent cross-border visits (at least once per week) increased on the Italian-Slovenian border from 19% to 36%, on the Austrian-Slovenian border from 8% to 12%, on the Hungarian-Slovenian border from 4% to 8% and even on the Croatian-Slovenian border from 5% to 7%. Meanwhile, the percentage of the respondents that declared they never visit the neighbouring areas dropped from 7% to 4% on the border with Italy, from nearly 20% to only 7% on the border with Austria, from 16% to 11% on the border with Hungary and even from 18% to 10% on the border with Croatia. As far as the motivation of cross-border visits is concerned, we found out that shopping is still the main reason, but the percentage of respondents who declared that this is their motivation for crossing the border fell considerably between 2007 and 2010: from 48% to 34% on the border with Italy, and from about 45–48% to about 41% on the borders with Austria and Hungary, whilst in all these border sections tourism as motivation for cross-border visits almost doubled (from 14% to about 25% on the borders with Italy and Austria and from 25% to 33% on the border with Hungary). A reverse trend was observed on the border with Croatia, where shopping as indicated motivation increased from 9% to 14%. What is also interesting is the fact that the frequency of visits to relatives and friends remained unchanged in all border areas except that with Croatia where the percentage of respondents in question increased from around 16% to around 24%, which is a testament to the gradual normalisation of local cross-border social communication as a result of better relations between the two states. The work motive gained in importance along the border with Austria, reaching the level characteristic of the border area with Italy where, as early as in 2007,

around 6% respondents stated that they themselves or one of their family members worked in the neighbouring country. A considerable increase was observed in the percentage of people attending cultural events along the border with Italy and Croatia (from around 4% to around 14% and from around 2% to around 9%, respectively), which shows that the 'open border' resulted in strengthening the cross-border cultural ties with the Slovenian minority in Italy (thus realising the vision of a common Slovenian cultural area), as well as that, despite the erection of border posts along the border with Croatia, transitional local social ties between the two countries have been re-established and maintained. Such a trend will most probably grow stronger after 2013. One should also mention education, accounting for 2% of visits to neighbouring places in Italy and 1% to neighbouring places in other border areas. Along the border with Italy, more than 2% of respondents stated that their reason for entering Italy was transit, mostly from Kras, but also from other parts of Primorska to the Slovenian coast, since the route via Trieste was shorter both in terms of distance and time. Transit also accounted for 1% of responses along the border with Austria and Croatia. These two areas also witnessed cross-border visits (1% in each case) resulting from the need to purchase medicines and the decision to participate in sporting activities, with the latter also being an important motive along the border with Hungary (accounting for around 2% of responses).

Future expectations in consideration of the enlargement of the Schengen Area to Slovenia, reveal that better cross-border relations were expected in 2007 by the majority of border dwellers at the border with both Italy and Austria (about 48–49%), even though those expectations in 2010 dropped to 43% and 33% respectively. Instead, at the more peripheral border with Hungary in 2007, the majority of the respondents (about 51%) expected that these relations would remain at the same level as before, whilst the same percentage of respondents in 2010 expected an improvement in future cross-border relations. It is also important to note how the majority of the respondents at the border with Croatia (about 52%) in 2007 expected that cross-border relations will get worse, whilst these negative expectations are now voiced by just 39% of the respondents.

The support of socio-cultural cross-border links and a cultural affinity of the population on both sides of the border are crucial for a successful and prosperous arrangement of/in border regions. The Slovenian minority in Italy, for instance, was actually used to maintain a large part of the 'institutional' cross-border links in regard to sport, culture, economy, information, and municipality co-operation As the border became open in the 1960s, it also represented a kind of 'gateway into Europe' for Yugoslavia, as a substantial part of Yugoslavia's transactions with Italy and Europe passed through the banks owned by the Slovenian

minority in Trieste. Since Slovenian independence in 1991, more formal and institutionalized types of cross-border integration between border municipalities and institutions began (Bufon 2003). Some forms of co-operation are now similar to those existing in several European 'Euroregions' (Perkmann 2002, Bufon 2006a), while others are innovative and often go beyond the limited bilateral interests, in particular within the so called Alps-Adriatic context (including the border regions of Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Hungary), where we can find initiatives such as broadcasting co-operation or common development of EU's Interreg projects. The bid to organize Winter Olympic Games in the Three Border Area of Slovenia, Austria and Italy in 2006 was another such step.

Table 3. Selected characteristics of cross-border relations at Slovenian borderlands

Specification	1	2	3	4	5
SLO/I	81.3	24.7	72.1	70.3	19.2
SLO/A	68.0	19.9	52.3	54.4	8.2
SLO/H	73.9	21.7	36.3	28.8	4.4
SLO/CRO	77.8	13.9	92.1	70.3	5.2

1 – Percentage of respondents that have acquaintances/friends across the border
2 – Percentage of respondents that have a family member working across the border
3 – Percentage of respondents that actively speak the bordering language
4 – Percentage of respondents that regularly follow the bordering TV
5 – Percentage of respondents that visit the bordering places at least weekly
Source: own research results – M. Bufon (2008a)

Since the inclusion of Slovenia into the EU in 2004, the south-western part of Slovenia, including Istria, is re-directing its interest and potential towards the Adriatic, opening up the question of inter-port co-operation between Trieste and Koper, which could contribute to the development of a new cross-border urban conurbation in the Upper Adriatic. One expected consequence of the cross-border integration will be that Trieste and its broader hinterland will again become more multicultural and play an important function in the communication between Slovenian and Italian cultural spaces. Another increasing development 'line' is related to the Graz-Maribor cross-border area where the border created after World War I has divided the previously multicultural Austrian region of Styria. We can say, however, that an increase of socio-economic cross-border relations will support the 'Europeanisation' of all Slovenian 'internal' border areas, seeking a pragmatic and peaceful relationship, and thus a 'normalisation' of inter-community and inter-ethnic relations as well (Bufon 2006b).

In respect of the above discussed forms of cross-border co-operation, we should also mention that in former federal Yugoslavia, these forms of co-operation were of major importance for the erstwhile republic of Slovenia to establish its international legitimacy and additional opportunities for economic development. Co-operation with Austrian Carinthia and Styria, Friuli-Venezia Giulia and other 'Western' regions was also crucial for the Slovenian geo-political re-orientation from the Balkans to Central Europe, with which Slovenia had strongly identified itself already in the 1980s. Paradoxically, being an independent state, Slovenia shows a notable tendency towards the decrease in such forms of co-operation. This tendency may be the result of its statehood, due to which Slovenia cannot act as an equal partner to Italian and Austrian regions. But the very need to develop more balanced institutional solutions for cross--border co-operation should direct the government to perform a more active and innovative role in this co-operation and to support local communities in developing better and closer relations with their neighbours.

Table 4. Attitudes towards cross-border co-operation
in the Slovenian border sectors

Specification	SLO/I	SLO/A	SLO/H	SLO/CRO
Index of cross-border expectation	51.2	54.9	52.1	36.2
Index of potential interdependence	62.3	52.9	58.5	55.7
Index of socio-cultural affinity	59.3	41.6	28.6	64.4
Index of functional interdepend.	20.3	14.4	14.7	14.0
General index of interdependence	48.3	41.0	38.5	42.6

Source: own research results – M. Bufon (2008a).

Of course, we should first point out that the basic social and spatial changes in Slovenia following its accession to the EU were deeply affected by political reorganisation, privatisation, economic globalisation and increased multi-culturalism. These changes enhanced the mobility of the population and increased the functional and strategic significance of Slovenian border areas, especially those marked by a considerable level of urbanisation and cross-border communication, whilst other areas, due to their lower development and innovative potentials, are facing a trend of marginalisation. The most vulnerable among these areas are those along the Slovenian-Croatian border and the Prekmurje region on the border with Hungary. The former are experiencing the negative effects deriving from the territorial disputes between the neighbouring countries and the transformation of the border status from an almost non-existing

administrative line to a well-controlled outer border of the EU, but is maintaining a very high potential level of socio-cultural cross-border integration. The latter, instead, emerged from an 'iron-curtain' experience, but represents perhaps the only Slovenian border area with a potentially notable regional impact extending to the neighbouring border areas in Austria, Hungary and Croatia. Recent studies using a standardised methodology (Bufon 2008a) have confirmed the complex border situation in Slovenia and shown that the highest *expectations* for a more intense cross-border co-operation could be found at the border with Austria, whilst the lowest are present at the border with Croatia; the highest *potentials* for cross-border co-operation have been detected at the border with Italy and the lowest at the border with Austria; the highest **socio-cultural affinity** is present at the border with Croatia, the lowest at the border with Hungary; finally, a higher **functional interdependence** could be noted at the border with Italy, whilst it is lower in other border sectors.

3. CONCLUSIONS: FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES IN REGIONAL CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION AND THE SLOVENIAN 'MODEL'

Following its accession to the EU, Slovenia has not only been facing various structural aspects of harmonisation with the European reality, but also its new geopolitical situation and a new potential role of a bridging area between the EU and the South-Eastern Europe, as well as between the Mediterranean and Continental Europe (Bufon 2005). Aside from that, Slovenia will also have to examine its position on the edge of Schengen Area and on the cross-roads of different cross-border socio-economic and socio-cultural flows and interests (Bufon 2008b). The surveys carried out in Slovenia so far show that, beside the combination of international factors such as the increase of economic exchange, tourist fluxes and transitory traffic, and regional factors that are prevalently linked to the movement of people, goods, and communication within the border area, a generally more complete development occurs involving not only the traffic corridors and the border centres, but also the wider border areas.

Thus different areas along the Slovenian borders have already turned into fairly interdependent border regions, thanks to spontaneous cross-border links that involve smaller territories, although they have not developed yet the institutional bases, typical of Euroregions. Local cross-border functional interdependence at the Slovenian borders derives from long-lasting common territorial bonds and not from momentary international political and economic demands.

This feature is present especially in historical and multicultural regions, and this is a normal condition, rather than an exception, for many other European border areas. These are, however, only starting points that have to be pushed further: the territorial behaviour of local and regional communities along the borders, as well as their cultural and spatial identity have to be studied more thoroughly; not only the functionally more linked areas have to be studied, but also the reasons for a lower level of integration have to be determined.

Nevertheless, all this shows a number of new aspects that have become more important for the process of European integration, eliminating the traditionally exclusive functions of the political border and improving mutual respect in such a culturally diverse area as Europe (Bufon 2008c). So far, Slovenia, considering its dimension and surveying themes, seems to be a handy 'laboratory' for studying border phenomena, border relationships, and cross-border interdependence in both marginal and multicultural regions, as well as convergence and divergence drivers and their spatial influences on the European 'new' and 'old' border areas. Acting out of the Slovenian experience, co-operation and integration perspectives in today's Europe may be discussed on two different but inter-related levels: 1) the first regards what could be called 'regional globalisation', namely the integration of an increasing number of Central European countries in a wider trans-continental dimension; 2) the second concerns local aspects of cross-border co-operation. A direct consequence of this process will be the elimination of the (negative) mental and historical legacies in the region. Good cross-border relations are crucial in this regard (Bufon and Gosar 2007).

The case of Slovenia's borders also provides an interesting illustration of an apparently paradoxical process within borderlands: the greater the conflicts created by the political partition of a previous homogeneous administrative, cultural and economic region (like on many sections of the border with Italy, Austria and Hungary), the greater – in the longer run – are the opportunities for such a divided area to develop into an integrated cross-border region. Reflecting on the border landscape concept on the basis of Slovenia's border areas, it becomes clear that the political or economic 'macro' approach in studying cross-border regions is limited. The true nature and qualities of these regions may only be established when local cultural and social elements of cross-border relations are also taken into account. The great variety of micro-transactions at the local level, supported by the border population, is the result of its spatial mobility in satisfying daily needs in regard to such basic functions as work, leisure/recreation, supply, and education. These functions are also the result of the activity of the border population in maintaining the many traditional cultural links that are rooted in the relatively stable period preceding political partition.

Nevertheless, the study of border regions undoubtedly brings additional aspects to bear on the standard theory of the centre-periphery relations, while opening up a range of new problems, which are becoming increasingly more topical in today's world, as we try to enhance mutual understanding in the culturally rich and diverse European space (Berezin and Schain 2003). The geography of border landscapes in its social and cultural dimensions is thus definitely assuming an important role in the 'humanisation' of the traditional geographical approach to borders and border conflict resolution. Three major factors which contribute to the positive evaluation of cross-border co-operation could be detected (Bufon 2006a): 1) by orchestrating a functional, intense cross--border mobility, existing relations determine a generally positive evaluation of co-operation; 2) by stimulating cultural/ethnic affinity between the resident populations on both sides of the border, cross-border activities become natural, more intense, definitely impacting the evaluation of the relationship in the long run; 3) by stressing how cross-border co-operation is greater in areas where differences in the socio-cultural and socio-economic structure of border land-scapes on both sides of the border are small and/or compatible with a modern society. All three areas should be taken into account in the process of engine-ering borders and management of cross-border co-operation and integration, as they represent the pre-conditions for a true re-integration of the European continent (Calhoun 2003), and can not be treated just as 'side-effects' of the Schengen regime and the EU's bureaucratic attempt to consolidate the 'European fortress'.

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THE FEATURES OF THE SOCIO-GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF SHKODËR (ALBANIA) AND ULCINJ (MONTENEGRO)

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of the socio-geographic area as a whole is presented today as one of the more complex subjects in the field of science. Many authors, geographers and non-geographers, are trying to perceive the socio-geographic area under the influence of various natural and human factors. Attention is increasingly on how these factors have influenced the evolution of different socio-geographic areas.

In our paper, we have analysed an interesting socio-geographic area, that of Shkodër in Albania and Ulcinj in Montenegro. This space is quite complex from the point of view of its individualism and its analytical study. This is closely linked with the identification of a number of factors that have influenced it so far. In particular, the role of historical and political factors should be assessed, which have determined the various developments shown in this geographic space. The role of other factors, such as natural features, as well as the human, social, economic, demographic, ones etc. is already more clear.

Based on the influence of the above factors, different authors have distinguished two socio-geographic areas. On one hand, they evaluate the presence of the socio-geographic area of Shkodër in Albania, while also acknowledging the presence of the socio-geographic area of Ulcinj in Montenegro. In this paper, we have tried to introduce them as a single socio-geographic area with interesting features and peculiarities in common, but nto forgetting about what distinctions they have. Bearing in mind the increasing knowledge on these socio-geographic areas, a detailed analysis should be conducted for future reference. We recognise that, in defining the notion of the socio-geographic area as such, the author has his limitations related to the terminology and the space of Shkodër under

consideration, as it is included in the territory of the city of Shkodër, and Ulcinj is considered as a territory of the city of Ulcinj.

2. SOCIO-GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF SHKODËR (ALBANIA)

The socio-geographic area of Shkodër represents one of the most important areas in Albania. It is located in the north-western part od the country and plays an important role in the entire social-economic life of the northern part of it. This is closely linked to the historical evolution and population of this socio--geographic area. Nowadays, Shkodër is one of the major cities in Albania, with a population of about 120 thousand. The population of the city of Shkodër has increasingly been growing. Key factors that have influenced this growth are the natural growth of the population until the beginning of 1990s, as well as later population growth mainly attributed to migration. Internal migration, mostly oriented to rural areas of Shkodër, Great Highland and Puka, had a significant influence.

In terms of socio-economic development, the socio-geographic area of Shkodër represents one of the most important resource sources and is highly beneficial to various branches of the economy. The area is rich in natural resources, mainly hydrographical ones. The presence of the hydrographical node Drin river, Buna river and Skadar Lake has played an important role in terms of economic development opportunities in hydropower, tourism, fishing, etc. Two of the main hydroelectric power plants in the country are located in the area, Vau i Dejës and Koman, which have transformed this geographic space in one of the main centres of the power industry development.

The flat and hilly-mountainous landscape of the area, especially along its borders, has significantly influenced its suburban territories, which favour the development of agriculture. This geographical area is abundant with high quality soils, which produce many agricultural crops, significantly affecting the welfare of the population. It should be mentioned that this part of the socio-geographic area of Shkodër is also influenced by high external migration, which also had some impact of its economic development. Many of the residents in this area are immigrants from such destinations as Greece, Italy, Germany, UK and their impact on our study area is seen not only in terms of remittances, but also in investments in agriculture. This applies mainly to such surrounding territories as Berdica, Ana e Malit, Dajçi, Velipoja, Rrethinat, Shtoj, Grudë, Bushat, etc.

These natural resources and potentials have significantly contributed towards the development of various branches of the economy. However, the economic

development of Shkodër can be divided into to stages. The first stage lasted until the beginning of the transition period in 1990s, which is notable for a complex economic development of some branches of industry. In the second phase, following the transition of the 1990s, we see a change in the economic structure of this socio-geographic area. Nowadays, it is mainly focussed on clothing, footwear, light and food industries. A sudden increase in the number of small and medium businesses has been noted, represented mainly by small family companies in the service sector.

We appreciate the fact that the area's natural resources, the existence of many rivers and Skadar Lake, alpine territories on its outskirts in such places as Boga, Razma, Thethi, etc., as well as numerous museums, cultural and historical sites, have contributed significantly to the possibilities of tourism development in Shkodër. It has been a well-known tourist centre in the Balkans and beyond, famous for its natural and historical assets. It is worth pointing out, that the tourism industry has been growing and developing in recent years, which is closely connected to the emergence and expansion of the private sector. This is indicated not only by the increasing influx of tourists, but also by the development of social housing, exchange and entertainment, such as bars, restaurants, hotels, etc. Greater attention is paid to increasing investments from local and central government bodies, who have conducted visible interventions in the infrastructure of this socio-geographic area. All the above-mentioned elements have fostered the influx of local and foreign tourists visiting the Shkodër region.

The social space of Shkodër is also quite interesting. Its evolution, the diversity of social elements, especially after 1990s, during the transition period, is demonstrated by the presence of a new social dimension. This is clearly evident not only in the existence of new social housing, manufacturing, exchange, entertainment, but also in the emergence and development of many other new social groups, the improvement of social functions, as well as the appearance of social planning. The impact of these issues on the social themes in the socio-geographic area of Shkodër is associated with the emergence and development of many social problems, which are diverse in terms of their geographical distribution.

The social groups found in the socio-geographic area of Shkodër have gone through significant changes due to the socio-economic and demographic factors during the transition period. One of the interesting groups that is clearly identified in this area are 'migrants'. Their behaviours, locations and concentration in the geographical area of Shkodër, as well as their lifestyles and activities, make them more active in social groups with diverse features and characteristics. Somehow, this social group is located at the outskirts of the

socio-geographic area of Shkodër, where they have built their social facilities, mainly housing and manufacturing. Their main activities are in the services sector. The development of social groups in the region of Shkodër is closely related to the fact that different professions are coming out in this socio--geographic area. As a result of the development of the free market economy and migration processes, the transition period brought a revival of new businesses and the invention of new professions. It is particularly worth mentioning such new professions car services, pizza shops, beauty salons, etc.

We can see an on-going improvement of social functions. This is especially affected by the change in social life in Albania during the transition period, the effects of which are also present in the socio-geographic area of Shkodër. It is especially evident in the improvement of mutual relations in social housing function, production, exchange and entertainment. Different social groups already display interesting features and characteristics in the context of relations and connections they build with each other. This thing is quite obvious in the context of their social life. Nowadays, strict traditional bonds and relations in terms of family relations between men and women, children and parents, relatives and neighbours are fading away. The changes or the evolution in the relations and connections in the social function of production is significantly influenced by the emergence and development of private property.

The social elements mentioned above have also caused the emergence of many other social problems in the socio-geographic area of Shkodër. The systemic change, the transition from a planned economy to a market economy and private property, was accompanied by the closure of many production facilities, that were an integral part of industry in the Shkodër area.

The closure of many factories, plants, enterprises and different workshops brought about the issue unemployment, which directly affected the population of Shkodër. In the context of the overall unemployment, the number of unemployed people in the socio-geographic area of Shkodër differs from other socio-geo-graphic area in Albania. Poverty is another social problem faced by the region.

Segmented elements of the population of Shkodër are part of the social security scheme drafted by the local authorities. They get an unemployment benefit, which is quite low and does not provide even the minimum living conditions. Another social problem, more widespread in Shkodër than in other geographical areas of the country, is the blood feud phenomenon. This social problem has negatively influenced the social and economic activities of many families living in this socio-geographic area. Obviously, it is necessary to undertake and harmonise the social security schemes and the specific social and economic policies in the context of social planning, to allow the prevention of

social problems that have affected the socio-geographic area of Shkodër since the transition period of the 1990s.

3. SOCIO-GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF ULCINJ (MONTENEGRO)

The socio-geographic area of Ulcinj in Montenegro is a very important object of study. This is closely linked to its historical evolution, as well as other historical, political and economic factors which have influenced the area. The historical factor in particular have played a significant role in the human development of Ulcinj, especially in the last two centuries.

The geographical region of Ulcinj is significantly influenced by the special role of hydrography and landscape. The hydrographical element is an orientation in the human development of the whole area. The interesting features of Adriatic Sea, with its variety of climate and microclimate formations, as well as Buna River within this area, make up a wonderful offer for the establishment of the population and settlements, as well as for the development of their economic activity. This has a huge impact on the development of fishing, shipbuilding, tourism, economy, agriculture, fruticulture, etc., as well as traditional sea transport, as an integral part of the Adriatic Sea.

On the other hand, another factor shaping the variety of the area is the flat and hilly landscape, especially in urban areas of Ulcinj and its surroundings. Due to the coastal landscape, the port of Ulcinj has also contributed to the economic offer of this territory. Ulcinj is becoming one of the main curative tourism centres in the region, with about 13 km of sandy beaches. In other parts of Ulcinj, the flat landscape has served mostly agriculture and livestock.

The main economic activities of this socio-geographic area are related to tourism and agriculture, mainly the cultivation of citrus, olive groves and vineyards. Ulcinj and its surroundings are known for the production of citrus fruit, especially the mandarin oranges. Also, the olive oil production is well known for its values and qualities in Montenegro and beyond.

Ulcinj has been historically known for the development of various business activities in tourism, serving as a recreational destination for the population of former Yugoslavia. Similarly, in the second half of the twentieth century, until the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, Ulcinj was one of the favourite destinations for European tourism, especially for the Germans and French. This provides us with interesting statistics concerning migration. There was a huge migratory movement in the 1970s, mainly to Germany and France.

The population of Ulcinj is about 25 thousand. Generally, the population growth is low, due to migration, mainly external. It should be mentioned, that during the tourist season, i.e. between June and August, the population of Ulcinj triples in size, due to mass tourism. Ulcinj is known as one of the most important tourist destinations in Montenegro.

The social space of Ulcinj is quite diverse, in two aspects, both in terms of locations and functions. In the context of social locations, we clearly identify the elements of social housing, production, exchange, entertainment and power. Particularly, the social places of production, exchange and entertainment are substantially developing due to the key role of tourism in Ulcinj. Regarding these social places, we are taking into account two different points of view. Firstly, there are still traditional social places in the city of Ulcinj, which have preserved their architecture style with very slight changes. On the other hand, the secondary sector of Ulcinj, located along the long beach, has been affected by rapid growth of development. It is clearly visible that new social housing, production, exchange, and entertainment areas are located along the beach, up to the Buna River. The main feature of these social places is their mixture of architectural styles.

We can, however, notice the improvement of social functions. The changes have allowed the development and promotion of the main activities of the population of Ulcinj over the years. At the present time, in addition to fishing, navigation, agriculture and handicrafts, we can see the emergence of more and more activities such as hosts, receptionists, tour-guides or other service-oriented activities in the tourism industry. This has lead to the emergence of new social classes, the revival of social groups and social categories, thereby affecting the growth of the social space of Ulcinj.

Our findings allow us to surmise that the social life of Ulcinj is becoming more dynamic. The significant role of different associations which foster the revitalisation of social, scientific and cultural life of Ulcinj is also worth mentioning. Specifically, this is seen in the organisation of many scientific and cultural events in Ulcinj.

There are also many social problems appearing in Ulcinj's social space. Particularly, the main trends are closely linked to the unemployment of young people and the lack of quality education in this socio-geographic area, mostly due to the low level of qualification of teachers, as well as the trend of youth migrating to the U.S. and European countries.

4. FUTURE TRENDS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR THE SOCIO-
-GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF SHKODËR (ALBANIA)
AND ULCINJ (MONTENEGRO)

There are some common features in both parts of the socio-geographic area. Historically they were developing without distinctions for a long time, until the last decades of the nineteenth century. Their geographic space has experienced similar development in terms of architecture, ethnography, social locations and their evolution. At the same time, the human activity also has had many things in common, which is closely linked to the development of economic activities in Shkodër-Ulcinj space (handicrafts, fishing, navigation, agriculture, etc.).

The geographical area of Shkodër (Albania) and Ulcinj (Montenegro) is quite diverse in their natural resources. Due to the abundance of land, hydrographical resources and their notable landscape, all these advantages contribute to growth in general and, in particular, the development of water transport, navigation and other major traditional and economic activities such as fishing and fish processing. On the other hand, natural resources have lead to a significant development in the cultivation of different crops, which are very important for the people of the area and their activity. All these important natural assets are some of the basic influencing elements that contribute to the concentration of population in this geographical area, due to the favourable living conditions.

The geographical area of Shkodër and Ulcinj has influenced the development of certain towns further from the centre and their spreading to suburban zones. In this way, the population of Shkodër and Ulcinj living in the central parts is moving out to the outskirts, thus reducing the density of population. The social areas of housing, production, exchange, entertainment and power have undergone significant changes over the years, influenced by historical, political, economic and other factors. Gradually, these areas show more and more progress, and their development is closely associated with the rates of population growth and human economic activity.

The social space between Shkodër and Ulcinj is quite dynamic in its own development. It is distinguished for its diversity, both in terms of the improvement and enlargement of social functions and its social groups, their dynamics, and many other social problems that have arisen. The social space is closely related to social groups and their main activities, such as production, exchange, entertainment and power. This can also be seen in many traditions and customs associated with work, leisure, commercial exchanges, etc., which take place within this social space. Even today, many of these elements in this socio-geographic area, are preserved almost uniformly.

However, the growing number of daily activities of the population has significantly influenced the improvement of basic social functions. The development of economic and human activities of the population of Shkodër and Ulcinj has also had a great impact on this trend. This effect can mostly be seen since after the 1990s, i.e. the advent of democracy in Albania, which brought an end to the isolation and broken relations and affiliations between Shkodër in Albania and Ulcinj in Montenegro, that lasted nearly 50 years.

The paper clearly shows that the development of the socio-geographic area of Shkodër (Albania) and Ulcinj (Montenegro) should become even more dynamic in the future. We can predict positive developments, particularly the on-going improvement of social places and social-related functions. As a matter of fact, this is closely linked to the cultural and touristic regional development of this socio-geographic area. More and more joint projects are being implemented in the field of tourism, economy, culture and education between Shkodër and Ulcinj.

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GEOPOLITICAL LOCATION AND TERRITORIAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF UKRAINIAN TERRITORY AND THE COMPLEXITY OF THEIR INTERNAL STRUCTURES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

1. INTRODUCTION

The imperialist 19th-century division of Ukraine had a significant impact on the geopolitical and internal situation of Ukraine in the 20th century. The irreconcilable prejudices, as well as the Polish and Ukrainian national aspiration in Galicia turned into an open struggle, which destabilised the situation in Ukraine many times multiple times throughout the 20th century.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the tsarist authorities excluded the Chełm Governorate from the Congress Poland and annexed it directly into Russia (Ślusarczyk 1992, p. 52). This act became the argument for fixing the western boundary of the Ukrainian statehood in 1917.

The outbreak of World War I started the internationalisation of Ukraine. Ukrainians fought in the armies of the invaders, often against their brothers and relatives. About 4 million Ukrainians served in different armies. Ukrainians in Russia remained mostly faithful to their oppressors and bet their faith on their victory. Some Ukrainians in the Austro-Hungarian Empire also saw their future in uniting the whole Ukraine under the Habsburg rule, in an empire of several equal countries, one of them being Ukraine.

The war was also fought in Ukraine. On 21 August 1914, the Russian army conquered Lviv and approached Przemyśl and Chernivtsi. In 1915, the Austrians started their counteroffensive, regaining Przemysl, Lviv, and then almost all of Galicia and Bukovina, winning even part of Volhynia. In the summer of 1916, Russia once again regained some lost areas – Lutsk, Brody and Bukovina (Serczyk 2001, p. 245).

Initially, the war situation had a negative impact on the potential Ukrainian statehood but, towards the end of the war, the Ukrainians saw an opportunity to seize control of the land perceived by them as their homeland. In addition, this was favoured by the fact, that the statehood of the invader who occupied most of the Ukrainian territory fell apart as a result of the revolution of February 1917, but the forces occupying the western part of Ukraine did not fall apart until Fall of 1918.

2. TERRITORIAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE UKRAINIAN TERRITORY AFTER WORLD WAR I AND THE FORMATION OF THE UKRAINIAN STATEHOOD

Therefore, Ukrainian statehood emerged full 20 months earlier than Polish and was met with the political vacuum after the falling Russian Empire. Just two days after the formation of the Provisional Government in Russia, on 17 March 1917, the Central Council of Ukraine was formed in Kyiv to represent Ukrainian national interests (Darski 1993, p. 18). The new authorities had all the area inhabited by the Ukrainian ethnic group east of the front line, to The Volga and Kuban rivers. Of the territories previously under Austro-Hungarian occupation, only small fragments (Bukovina and part of Podolia) remained east of the border. Thus, the area of operation for the Central Council of Ukraine could include the whole territory under Russian rule, extended to the east with the lands than were never a part of the Republic (Wild Fields, Kuban, Crimea, Southern Bessarabia) (*Ukraine. Istoricznij atłas* 2005, pp. 2–3). However, the developments in Russia meant that the Ukrainian statehood experienced opponents in both the Russian republican forces and the Ukrainian military formation of the tsarist army that lived off the Ukrainian land but, above all, among the new political force – the Bolsheviks.

The initial claims of the Ukrainian authorities were limited to the autonomy of the Ukrainian lands (in their very broad meaning) within the future democratic Russian federation. The Russian Provisional Government initially accepted the request, but later began to withdraw from it (Serczyk 2001, p. 255). The Central Council has therefore undertaken unilateral actions by proclaiming, on 23 June 1917, the First Universal establishing the autonomy of Ukraine within Russia. These events coincided with a further shift of the western front line to Zbruch and Siret rivers, which meant the loss of all the territory under Austro-Hungarian rule (Galicia). Despite the fact that Ukraine, as Lenin argued, was one of the least Bolshevik Russian regions (there were no more than 3

thousand activists here), the wartime disasters spurred this political option on Ukrainian lands. In the countryside the peasants supported rich landowners. In just a few factories, the Bolshevik ideas had any more followers (Arsena plant in Kyiv, some mines and foundries in the Donetsk and Kryvorizkyi regions). The wartime disasters and the economic crisis fostered the increasing influence of the Bolsheviks, so after a few months, over 3% of the workers supported them. This has allowed for the forming of a Bolshevik terrorist group (under the name Red Guards), an armed formation planning to take over the country by force. The Ukrainian government facilitated the situation for the Bolsheviks, since it delayed the appointment of its own army, hoping for the creation of democratic Russia.

In the face of the Bolshevik threat, a deal was struck on 13 July 1917, in which the Russian Provisional Government recognized Ukraine's autonomy (Serczyk 2001, p. 256, Olszański 1994, p. 41). The Ukrainian parliament – the Central Council – included representatives of national minorities (including 20 Poles).

The Bolshevik coup of 7 November 1917 that overthrew the legal authority of the Provisional Government and established the Soviet government was a turning point in the history of Russia and Ukraine. The Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, published concurrently by Lenin, seemingly acknowledged the right of all nations to self-determination. Taking this as a signal of co-operation, the forces subordinate to the Central Council, along with the Red Guards, drove the forces loyal to the Russian democratic authorities from Kyiv on 10–13 November (Serczyk 2001, p. 260). Soon, Ukrainians managed to push the foreign Guards troops out of the capital. The authority of the Central Council included a large part of the ethnic Ukrainian lands, except for the Crimea, where the White Guards troops stayed, and the territories beyond the front line.

In these circumstances, on 20 November 1917, the Central Council proclaimed the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) in a federal relationship with Russia. The situation of the new state was very difficult, various armed formations moved through the country without control, there was anarchy in the provinces, the industry and agriculture were ruined. Even though Ukraine gained the support of the Entente, the formation of the government and the army proceeded very slowly, sabotaged by the Bolsheviks and the Russian reaction. Russia was not going to allow the disintegration of the empire. Both the Bolsheviks and the monarchists were equally opposed to Ukrainian independence (Wandycz 2000, p. 450). The first success of the new republic was the suppression of the Bolshevik coup in Kyiv on 13 December, 1917, and the

purification of the capital of the Red Guards and Russian troops (Olszański 1994, p. 44).

The authorities of the Bolshevik Russia formally recognized the UNR, but it was a tactical move. This was done to achieve Ukraine's consent to the march of the Cossacks returning from the front line, who were needed on the Don river to contain the anti-Bolshevik uprising.

The UNR's military position became difficult. Since the beginning of war, pro-independence aspirations have been appearing in the Crimea, and on 16 December 1917, the Muslim Congress declared independence of Crimea (Agadžanov and Sacharov 1988, p. 87). In late December 1917, the Bolsheviks took up arms against the government of Ukraine. The Red Guards troops set out from Bilhorod and Bryansk in Russia and from Gomel in Belarus, that had already been taken over by the Bolsheviks. Around 30 thousand guards attacked the Ukrainian People's Republic, which had just 16 thousand soldiers at the time. The Bolsheviks conquered Kharkiv on 26 December 1917, and proclaimed the Ukrainian People's Republic of Soviets on the following day, suggesting that it will be a separate communist country independent of Russia (Olszański 1994, p. 45). Soviet Russia immediately recognized this creation and promised comprehensive assistance. After entering Ukraine, the Russian Bolshevik forces took more cities like Yekaterinoslav, Poltava, Odessa and were going to Kyiv.

It was only then that the Central Council decided to ultimately break their relations with Soviet Russia and on 22 January 1918, by the power of the 4th Universal, proclaimed full independence of Ukraine, the second fully autonomous Ukrainian state and the first state of the Ukrainian nation (Konaševič 1990, pp. 13–16). In response, the Bolsheviks started further uprising in Kyiv on 25 January, while defeating Ukrainians in several battles and taking the capital with virtually no fighting (Olszański 1994, p. 46). The remaining Ukrainian troops took refuge in Volhynia, where they had to defend in a siege, as the troops in this part of the front line were also taken over by the Bolsheviks.

Without any help from the allies, on 9 February 1918, in Brest, the Ukrainian People's Republic started peace negotiations with the central states (Serczyk 2001, p. 266; Subtel'nij 1991, p. 307; Polons'ka-Vasilenko 1992, p. 480). As a result, apart from food aid, the UNR also received the territories of Chełm Governorate and Podlasie along the line of Tarnogród – Biłgoraj – Szczebrzeszyn – Krasnystaw – Radzyń Podlaski – Międzyrzecz – Sarnaki – Mielnik – Kamyanyets Litewski and Pruzhany, i.e. the areas reaching far into the territory of today's Poland. In addition, Austria promised in a secret agreement to divide Galicia into two separate countries and institute Ukrainian autonomy in Eastern Galicia, but withdrew from the agreement when it was made public (Serczyk

2001, p. 266). Although the Brest agreement clearly violated the national interest of Poles, no one consulted this with them and the lack Polish state meant there was no one to stand up for the Polish raison d'etat. By signing the Brest agreement, Ukraine broke with the Entente, which withdrew its recognition of the state. German troops invaded Ukraine on 19 February, and the Austro--Hungarian followed on 27 February 1918, providing support against the Bolsheviks. Over the next nine months, the two countries had actual authority over the occupied territories (Olszański 1994, p. 49). The Central Council, despite its formal termination by the German occupation authorities, announced on 29 April the constitution of the UNR, a land reform and elected a president. The same day, the Germans forced the Ukrainian officers to stage a military coup. The government and the Central Council were overthrown, and a dictator-ship called the hetmanate was instituted. General P. Skoropadsky was chosen to be the dictator (Hetman) (Podraza, Pankowicz 2001, p. 261). The Ukrainian army, which in January regained Zhytomyr, the temporary capital, from the Bolsheviks, was disarmed. The Germans also took the Crimea and the Black Sea fleet. The authorities of the Ukrainian People's Republic of Soviets took refuge in Taganrog and were not bothered by the Germans, as they did not hold any real power (Serczyk 2001, p. 267). There, the Bolsheviks held a conference to set up a separate Ukrainian Bolshevik Party, which meant accepting the idea of Ukrai-nian independence. Moscow was not going to tolerate such a policy of Ukrainian communists. In response, at the Assembly of the Communist Organisations of Ukraine in Moscow in July 1918, it formed a Ukrainian section of the Russian Bolshevik party and disbanded the government of Soviet Ukraine. A Volga--region German Emanuel Kviring, opposed to national independence, was appointed as a leader of the party (Olszański 1994, p. 51).

The Hetmanate became the Ukrainian State. The Hetman surrounded himself with Russians, and they formed the armed forces ready to fight the Ukrainian nation (Subtel'nij 1991, pp. 310–311). The promised territories in Poland were not gained either, even though the Ukrainian administration started to form here. Germany also failed to transfer Kuban to Ukraine. It was there that the National Cossack Council formed in October 1917, proclaiming the Kuban Republic in federation with Russia, and fully independent after the Bolshevik coup (Olszański 1994, p. 52). The Hetmanate time also had its benefits, as it brought relative calm and allowed for rebuilding Ukrainian statehood. However, the issue of building their own strong army was neglected again. The peasants turned against the State of Ukraine and uprising broke out. Insurgent leaders had strong armies; some, like Nestor Macho in the Azov Steppes, even formed actual independent states (Serczyk 2001, p. 275, Olszański 1994, p. 58).

In order to save his weakened political position, the Hetman made a suicidal step and on 14 November 1918 announced federation with Russia (Darski 1993, p. 20, Subtel'nij 1991, p. 313). In response, the Directorate of the People's Republic of Ukraine was formed, whose members, headed by Symon Petliura, went to the seat of the 3.5-thousand-strong troop of Sich Riflemen in Bila Tserkva, where they called for an uprising against the Germans and the Hetmanate. The rebels defeated the Hetman's forces on 18 November 1918 at Motovidlovka and on 24 November began the siege of Kyiv (Olszański 1994, p. 55, Polons'ka-Vasilenko 1992, p. 505). This coincided with the outbreak of the revolution in Germany and the occupation authorities, without directives from Berlin, preferred to remain neutral in this conflict. The Hetman was forced to flee the country, and the Republican forces captured Kyiv on 14 December (Serczyk 2001, p. 270).

The Germans turned out to be not fully neutral, as they struck a deal with the Bolsheviks, giving them their weapons and control of the eastern Ukraine with Kharkiv in exchange for the right of transit through the Bolshevik territory of Belarus to East Prussia. There were numbers of Bolshevik troops still standing at the northern Ukrainian border, while the White Guards stayed on the lower Dnieper river (Olszański 1994, p. 55). The coast was occupied by the Entente troops, Romanians were on the over shore of the Dnieper, and from the west the Polish front line was approaching, manned in the southern part by the Ukrainian Galician Army. In this situation, Soviet Russia withdrew on 13 November 1918, from the Treaty of Brest and issued a directive to seize the previously occupied territories of Russia with Ukraine, Belarus, Baltic countries, Poland and Finland, even though it formally recognised the independence of these countries. The Bolshevik forces invaded Ukraine and on 3 January 1919 took Kharkiv, where the government of Soviet Ukraine was moved, and on 6 January proclaimed the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, formally an independent country, which was in fact fully dependent of Moscow (Serczyk 2001, p. 270). The Directorate made a political mistake, accepting the Soviet Russia's agency in this conflict, which turned it into a civil war in Ukraine. In the meantime, the intervening land and sea troops of France, Greece and the US seized southern Ukraine – Sevastopol, Odessa, Mykolaiv and Kherson – cutting it off from the sea and helping the Bolshevik forces, but also the forces of the anti-Ukrainian general Denikin (Darski 1993, p. 20).

The issue of statehood had a completely different course in western Ukraine, under Austro-Hungarian occupation. Ukrainian actions in the area, inhabited by the Polish and Jewish population (in cities), and the Ukrainian and Polish population (in rural areas), preceded the emergence of the Polish state structures by just a week. In eastern Galicia, owing to the support of the Austrian autho-

rities, the Ukrainians managed, on 1 November 1918, to take Lviv and proclaim the Ukrainian State, converted on 13 November into the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR) (Subtel'nij 1991, pp. 321–322; Serczyk 2001, p. 285; Polons'ka-Vasilenko 1992, p. 510). The state included lands between the San and Zbruch rivers with an area of 44 thousand km^2, but it was intended to stretch it to the whole Ukrainian ethnographic territory, which was met with opposition from Poles and Romanians.

In Lviv, Polish youth, supported by a few Polish Military Organisation (POW) troops, fiercely fought the Ukrainians until the relief came from Polish troops on 21 November. The government of ZUNR moved to Stanislaviv and Romania seized the opportunity and annexed Bukovina on 28 November. Even sooner, on 9 April 1918, Romania managed to take Bessarabia, where only 28% of the population was Ukrainian (Polons'ka-Vasilenko 1992, p. 511).

Faced with such a hard situations, both Ukrainian states decided to unite, which was confirmed by the UNR Directorate on 22 January 1919 in a universal (Subtel'nij 1991, p. 323). Unfortunately, the Bolshevik offensive launched on 6 January resulted in the loss of Kyiv, and soon the rest of the territory of the UNR in Volhynia and Podolia. The Polish army moved from the west and encountered the Bolshevik troops after a couple of days. In the face of the threat of Bolshevik aggression in Europe, the Entente allowed Poland to take Eastern Galicia to Zbruch River, thus occupying the whole ZUNR (Serczyk 2001, p. 286). A diplomatic struggle for the recognition of this fact lasted for a few years (Podraza and Pankowicz 2001, p. 261).

In May 1919, UNR decided to establish relations with Poland and on 21 April 1920 signed a treaty to fight against the Bolsheviks together. In return, Ukraine gave up the western part of the country to Poland (Olszański 1994, p. 71, Subtel'nij 1991, p. 327). These plans were implemented in the form of an offensive by the troops of Marshal Jozef Pilsudski along with the Ukrainian army of Ataman Symon Petliura which started on 25 April 1920 and resulted in both armies seizing Kyiv (Darski 1993, p. 23). Unfortunately, on 5 June, the counter-offensive of Budyonny's Bolshevik cavalry broke the front, on 12 June Bolsheviks took Kyiv, and then the whole western Ukraine, where they proclaimed Soviet rule. Soviet troops advanced towards Warsaw, but on 15–16 August 1920 suffered a famous defeat, which decided the fate of the war (Serczyk 2001, p. 283). The Riga Treaty of 18 March 1921 between Poland and the Soviet authorities of Russia and Ukraine gave Western Ukraine to Poland. However, the full rights of the Republic to Eastern Galicia were not recognised by the ally Council of Ambassadors until 15 March 1923, requiring Poland to give it autonomy, which was only partially met by Poland in July of 1924. Even

earlier, on 3 March 1919, Czechoslovakia received Carpathian Ukraine (Carpathian Ruthenia) (Olszański 1994, p. 81, Serczyk 2001, p. 287).

After World War I, Poland regained the entire Galicia, and the eastern border ran along the river Zbruch, the same as the border between Austria and Russia since the end of the eighteenth century, for more than 120 years. In consequence of this territorial division, Poland included the part of the Ukrainian nation most aware of their identity and ethnic-religious uniqueness.

For Ukrainian territories, the five-year period of 1917–1922 was especially eventful politically and abounded in numerous state-forming acts of various political origins, more or less ephemeral, that are really scarcely documented in Polish literature (Tab. 1, Fig. 1).

Table 1. Territorial transformations of the Ukrainian lands
in the period of 1917–1922

Date	State-forming event and territorial annexation
23.06.1917	Ukraine proclaimed within the federal Russian stare, capital in Kyiv
13.07.1917	Russia gives Ukraine limited autonomy without defining its territory
17.08.1917	Russia defines the territory of autonomous Ukraine as governorates: Kyiv, Podolsk, Poltava and part Volhynia, Chernihiv, and limits the scope of its autonomy
14.09.1917	After the proclamation of a republic in Russia, Ukraine is declared to be an autonomous part of the Russian Republic
3.11.1917	In Chisinau, the congress of Bessarabian troops proclaims the political and cultural autonomy of Bessarabia within the future Russian federation state. National Council is created (Sfatul Ţării)
7.11.1917	Soviet rule is proclaimed in the Russian Republic by a coup
10.11.1917	The formal proclamation of the socialist system in Russia – the Russian Soviet Republic
13.11.1917	The autonomous authorities keep most of the Ukrainian territory. Soviet rule was proclaimed only in the Donetsk region (Luhansk, Makeyevka, Gorlovka, Szczerbinowka, Lisichansk, Kramatorsk)
20.11.1917	Proclamation of the Ukrainian People's Republic in federation with future federal democratic Russian Republic. The extension of the territory of Ukraine to include the Kherson, Kharkiv, Yekaterinoslav and northern Tauride governorates (without Crimea), area of 560.5 thousand km², capital in Kyiv
25.11.1917	Soviet rule proclaimed in part of Kharkiv
28.11.1917	Proclamation by the Crimean Tatar Kurultai of the independence of the Democratic Republic of Crimea (also known as the People's Republic of Crimea), capital in Bakhchysarai

20.12.1917	The troops of the Russian Soviet Republic enter the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, taking Kharkiv (26.12)
23.12.1917	Proclamation of the Democratic Republic of Moldova in Bessarabia (also known as the Moldovan People's Republic), area of 44 thousand km^2, capital in Chisinau. The authorities of the republic appealed to the Entente for recognition of the fact of its separation from Russia
27.12.1917	In the territory of eastern Ukraine occupied by Soviet Russia, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR) is proclaimed as an autonomous part of the future federation Russian Soviet Republic, capital in Kharkiv
9.01.1918	The army of Soviet Russia takes further cities of the Ukrainian SSR – Yekaterinoslav, Poltava, Odessa (on 20.01) and Konotop (26.01)
14.01.1918	In Chisinau, the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed within the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, capital in Chisinau
18.01.1918	Moldova is invaded by the troops of the Ukrainian People's Republic and, on 19.01 also the Romanian troops. Soviet rule is removed by 02.1918
22.01.1918	Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) proclaims total independence from Russia, without ruling out some future form of federation, capital in Kyiv
22.01.1918	In Sevastopol (Crimea), the Soviet authority was proclaimed, making it a governorate within Soviet Russia, removing (on 19.02) the independence of the Democratic Republic of Crimea
25.01.1918	Soviet Russia officially adopted the name the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (abbreviated RSFSR)
25.01.1918	Proclamation of Soviet power in part of Kyiv. Russian troops continue to push further into Ukrainian People's Republic, taking Bakhmach (27.01) and Kyiv (8.02)
25.01.1918	The proclamation of Donetsk-Krivoy Rog (Federal) Soviet Republic within the Russian SSR, in the eastern-Ukrainian governorates of: Yekaterynoslav, Kharkov, Kherson and parts of the Russian Rostov and Kamien districts, capital in Kharkiv
31.01.1918	Proclamation in the governorates of Kherson and Bessarabia of the Odessa Soviet Republic, capital in Odessa
6.02.1918	Under military occupation by Romania, the National Council proclaims in Chisinau the sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of Moldova
8.02.1918	The capital of the Ukrainian SSR moved to Kyiv. UNR authorities move temporarily to Zhitomir
9.02.1918	By the power of the Treaty of Brest, the Ukrainian People's Republic takes from the Vistula Land (the Kingdom of Poland) the Chełm

	Province and Podlasie up to the line of Tarnogród–Biłgoraj–Szczebrze-szyn–Krasnystaw–Puchaczów–Radzyń Podlaski–Międzyrzecz Podla-ski–Sarnaki–Mielnik–Kamyanyets–Pruzhany–Vygonov Lake. Ukrainian People's Republic – area of 620.9 thousand km². Due to the Bolshevik attack on Zhitormir, the UNR authorities move to Sarny
9.02.1918	The National Council of the Moldavian Democratic Republic announces their will to join Romania
16.02.1918	UNR asks Germany and Austro-Hungary for help to fight against the Bolshevik Russia's aggression
17.02.1918	UNR agrees to submit the issue of the border with Austro-Hungary in Galicia to a special arbitration commission
18.02.1918	German troops launch an offensive against Soviet Russian army in the eastern front, between Lutsk and Dubno, by 20.02 taking the railway line Rowne–Sarny–Luniets, attacking through Berdychiv and Koziatyn towards Kyiv. Germany also drove the Czech troops out of Zhitomir
18.02.1918	The People's Republic of Moldova proclaims their independence as the Republic of Moldova in the area under Romanian military administration, capital in Chisinau
19.02.1918	Austro-Hungarian troops take offensive, supporting the German offensive along the whole front line. Armed Forces of both countries take further areas of Ukraine and by 3.03 reach the line of Dnieper–Cherkasy, and go further westward into Zhmerynka and Kamianets-Podilskyi. Under the Treaty of Brest, the Germans occupy the Ukrainian People's Republic and, from 27.02, it is also occupied by Austria-Hungary
19.02.1918	Liquidation of independence of the Democratic Republic of Crimea by Russia's Bolshevik troops
19.02.1918	The capital of the Ukrainian People's Republic is temporarily moved to Zhitomir
02.1918	Proclamation of the Hutsul Republic, with capital in Yasinia
1.03.1918	The capital of the Ukrainian People's Republic is moved again to Kyiv, which remains under German occupation
3.03.1918	By the power of the Brest Peace Treaty, the Russian-German border is drawn from the Baltic Sea to Ukraine. Large part of Ukraine remains under German occupation. The area occupied by Germany is increased by 150 thousand km^2. The Treaty provides for the dissolution of the federation of the Soviet republics of Russia and Ukraine (ratified by Russia)
8.03.1918	The agreement between Germany and Austro-Hungary concerning the delimitation of the areas controlled by the armies of both allies in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. The border was established along the Boh river, from Olhopil to its mouth

9.03.1918	Under the Treaty of Jassy between Romania on one side and Soviet Russia and the Odessa Soviet Republic on the other, Romania declares to withdraw their troops from Moldova (Bessarabia) within two months
13.03.1918	German troops take the centre of Odessa, eliminating the Odessa Soviet Republic. Romanian troops enter the Moldovan part of this republic, by 15.03 eliminating the Soviet rule
14.03.1918	The Austro-Hungarian troops drive out the last units of Soviet Russian troops from Odessa. German-Austrian conflict for control of the Odessa port
18.03.1918	Proclamation of the Free Republic (or the Free City) of Odessa in the Odessa, Tiraspol and Ananyev counties
22.03.1918	Proclamation of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Taurida in Crimea, including Simferopol, Feodosiya, Yalta, Yevpatoria and Perekop counties
22.03.1918	The Don District (the District of Don Troops) proclaims that it joins the Ukrainian People's Republic
04.1918	Germany and Austria-Hungary occupy the entire territory of Ukraine and Crimea to the line of Rostov–Millerovo–Rovnyenki–Belgorod. The capital of the Ukrainian SSR is moved to Taganrog, occupied by the German troops. Extending the USSR autonomy within the Russian SFSR
9.04.1918	The Democratic Republic of Moldova joins Romania
28.04.1918	The Ukrainian People's Republic, remaining under German and Austro-Hungarian occupation, is transformed into a Hetmanate – the Ukrainian State
30.04.1919	Removal of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Tauride in Crimea, taken by the UNR troops
5.05.1918	In Odessa, the authorities of Bolshevik Russia form a Provisional Workers' & Peasants' Government of Bessarabia and the Bessarabian Red Army, which moves towards Moldova
14.05.1918	The formation of the demilitarised zone in RSFSR between Klintsy and Rovyenki – a Neutral Territory, i.e. a belt of 20–30 km along the demarcation line with the Germany-occupied Ukraine
06.1918	In Crimea, occupied by Germany, the independence of the Tartar Crimean Khanate is proclaimed
07.1918	Significant reduction in the autonomy of the Ukrainian SSR in the RSFSR
07.1918	Romania occupies Bessarabia. Local atamans Hryhoriv (near Cherson), Zelenny (near Trypillia) and Makhno (south Ukraine), as well as the Russian general Denikin form their own quasi-state organisations.
07.1918	By the power of the German power arbitrage between the independent

	Almighty Don Host and the Ukrainian State, the old border on Yuzovka River (Kalmius) was restored
31.07.1918	According to the provisions of the of the peace treaty of Brest, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic formally proclaimed independence from the Russian SFSR, declaring, however, the actual maintenance of federal bonds
09.1918	In Ukraine the Bolshevik Provisional Government of the Worker-Peasant Bessarabia, which fled Moldova, dissolves
18.10.1918	Proclamation, in connection with Austria-Hungary, of the West Ukrainian People's Republic (abbreviated ZUNR), with capital in Lviv
10.1918	Russian troops invade the Crimean Khanate and eliminate its independence
1.11.1918	The troops of the West Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR) take eastern Lviv, driving the Austro-Hungarian troops from the city. Polish self-defence troops start fighting. By 5.11, the front line dividing Lviv into the Polish and Ukrainian parts is set. The West-Ukrainian troops take Przemysl (4.11), Sambor (5.11), Boryslav (9.11), Sanok and Zagórz
3.11.1918	The Ukrainian People's Viche (Council) of Bukovina proclaims the annexation of the northern part of the country to join the West Ukrainian People's Republic
6.11.1918	The Ukrainian People's Viche transforms into the government of Northern Bukovina, taking power from a representative of the Austro-Hungarian administration. Romanian Council of Bukovina takes power in Southern Bukovina
7.11.1918	Agreement between the two councils of Bukovina concerning the division of the country into the northern – Ukrainian, and southern – Romanian parts
9.11.1918	Carpathian Ruthenia receives autonomy within the Kingdom of Hungary as the Ruthenian State, with capital in Uzhhorod (Hungarian-Ungvär)
11.11.1918	Romanian troops take Northern Bukovina with Chernivtsi, eliminating the autonomy of the country
11.11.1918	Polish troops regain Przemysl, the route to Lviv (20.11) and the whole city (22.11), which remained under siege from the ZUNR troops until 05. 1919
13.11.1918	Restitution of the Ukrainian People's Republic, from 15.11. temporary capital in Bila Tserkva
14.11.1918	The Hetman Ukrainian State proclaim a federation with the Russian Republic, capital in Kyiv
22.11.1918	After the Polish army takes Lviv, the capital of the West Ukrainian People's Republic is moved to Stanyslaviv. ZUNR troops try to take Carpathian Ruthenia

23.11.1918	Southern Ukraine with Crimea is occupied by French and Greek troops and Ukrainian ports are occupied by French, British and American troops, also taking Sevastopol, which is occupied by Russian army
24.11.1918	The UNR army besiege the capital of the Ukrainian State – Kyiv, which is still occupied by German troops
1.12.1918	Bukovina proclaims that it joins the Kingdom of Romania
10.12.1918	The Republic of Moldova proclaims that it joins Romania
14.12.1918	The troops of the Ukrainian People's Republic take Kyiv, restoring the capital city there. Liquidation of the Ukrainian State (16.12). The occupying German and Austro-Hungarian forces begin their evacuation from Ukraine (finished by 01.1919)
29.12.1918	Romanian Parliament ratifies the act of incorporation of Moldova and Bukovina
12.1918	The ZUNR drive the Polish army to Bug River (by 01.1919)
3.01.1919	RSFSR troops enter the territory of Ukrainian People's Republic and take Kharkiv
3.01.1918	The proclamation of the union between the Ukrainian People's Republic and the West Ukrainian People's Republic, which retains its considerable autonomy as the Western District
5.01.1919	The occupying German troops leave eastern Ukraine with Kharkiv, giving it to the RSFSR occupying forces. Elimination of the demilitarised zone along the demarcation line between the Germany-occupied Ukraine and RSFSR, where the Bolsheviks formed the armed forces of the Ukrainian SSR and the government of this republic
5.01.1919	Under RSFSR troops' occupation, the independence of the Ukrainian SSR is proclaimed with capital in Kharkiv
12.01.1919	Czechoslovakian troops take a part of the Uzhhorod County
24.01.1919	Proclamation in Khushcha of the annexation of Carpathian Ruthenia to the West Ukrainian People's Republic (the Western District of the Ukrainian People's Republic), whose army takes Kukacheve and Sighet. Romanian troops soon recover Sighet
31.01.1919	The French-Greek troops occupying southern Ukraine take Kherson and (by 2.02) Mykolaiv, reaching the Tiraspol–Berezovka–Kherson–Perekop–Kerch line. The Russian army is also stationed in the occupied territory
01.1919	The Khotyn Raion of Northern Bessarabia, occupied by Romania, is annexed by the Ukrainian People's Republic
02.1919	The anarchist quasi-state of Ataman Makhno in southern Ukraine achieves its greatest range from the Sea of Azov to Yekaterinoslav and Lozova, capital in Huliaipole
5.02.1919	The Army of the Russian SFSR and the Ukrainian SSR take Kyiv and

	drive the French-Greek troops, who leave Sevastopol by 29.04 from southern Ukraine. Quasi-state organisations of Atamans Makhno and Hrihoriev join the Ukrainian SSR
02.1919	Polish army drives the ZUNR troops to the Hrubieszów–Volodymyr-Volynskyi–Stochid–Manevychi line, setting, on 25.02, the demarcation line east of Lviv
4.03.1919	Under the directives from the Versaille conference, Carpathian Ruthenia is annexed by Czechoslovakia
21.03.1919	The proclamation of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, which also includes Carpathian Ruthenia
6.04.1919	The troops of Hryhoriev's quasi-state take Odessa
04.1919	Soviet rule is re-established in Crimea by the proclamation of the Crimean SSR within the Russian SFSR. Russian republican authority is restored after 06.1919
7.04.1919	A national district called the Ruthenian State is formed in Carpathian Ruthenia within the Hungarian Soviet Republic
14.04.1919	In the Drohobych region of West Ukrainian People's Republic Soviet rule was proclaimed (until 15.04)
16.04.1919	Romanian troops enter the territory of Hungarian Soviet Republic, taking part of Carpathian Ruthenia
05.1919	Russian Bolshevik army offensive on Moldova. The proclamation of the Bessarabian Socialist Soviet Republic within the RSFSR
1.05.1919	Proclamation of the federation between Russian SFSR and Ukrainian SSR
16.05.1919	Proclamation in Uzhhorod of the accession of Carpathian Ruthenia into Czechoslovakia with autonomy
25.05.1919	Romanian troops occupy Pokuttya to the Dniester and outskirts of Stanislaviv. Polish troops take Stanislaviv and the whole Podolia, up to Zbruch and Dniester. The territory of the West Ukrainian People's Republic is limited by the bifurcation of Dniester and Zbruch rivers
1.06.1919	The unification military and natural resources of the Soviet republics of: Russian SFSR, Ukrainian SSR, Latvian SSR and Lithuanian-Byelorussian SSR
06.1919	Hryhoriev appoints himself the Ataman of Ukraine from Mikolayev to Cherkasy, Yekaterinoslav and Kremenchuk. After three weeks, the Soviet Russian-Ukrainian forces defeat him and take the territory, by 08.1919 eliminating Makhno's quasi-state
7.06.1919	ZUNR army offensive pushes Polish troops to the Hnyla Lypa–Peremyshliany–Krasna–Brody
19.06.1919	Autonomy is given, within the Hungarian Soviet Republic, to the national district in Carpathian Ruthenia called Ruska Kraina

25.06.1919	Russian troops of general Denikin take east Ukraine with Kharkiv and Crimea, where they eliminate the independence of the Crimean Khanate
28.06.1919	Czechoslovak troops drive the forces of the Hungarian Soviet Republic out of Carpathian Ruthenia, and the Romanian troops eliminate the Hutsul Republic
30.07.1919	ZUNR troops take Kyiv and on 31.07 push the Russian troops, that already managed to take the whole Ukrainian coast, out of the city
07.1919	Polish army push the forces of the West Ukrainian People's Republic beyond Zbruch, actually eliminating this state (formally still remaining in union with the Ukrainian People's Republic, occupied in large part by the Russian SFSR and the Ukrainian SSR)
08.1919	Romanian troops evacuate from Pokuttia and give it to Poland
09.1919	Russian military offensive against the Ukrainian People's Republic
10.09.1919	Under the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye – Bukovina is merged with Romania. Czechoslovakia was granted the Carpathian Ruthenia with broad autonomy
16.09.1919	In southern part of Ukraine, taken by the Russian republican forces, the autonomous Bashtanka Guerrilla Republic is proclaimed, within the RSFSR, which includes the area with the villages Bashtanka and Balitskoie, taken by the Bolshevik guerrillas
2.10.1919	The Government of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic is dissolved, transferring the control over the Ukrainian SSR directly to the Russian SFSR
11.1919	Russian republican troops reach Bershad–Skvyra line. The capital od the Ukrainian People's Republic and the West Ukrainian People's Republic is moved to Vinnytsya
18.11.1919	Elimination of the Bolshevik Bashtanka Guerrilla Republic in south Ukraine by the republican Russian forces
19.11.1919	The army of the West Ukrainian People's Republic side with the democratic republican Russia
25.11.1919	By the decision of the Council of Ambassadors, Poland receives, for 25 years, the mandate over Eastern Galicia as an autonomous unit, area of 48.0 thousand km² , capital in Lviv
11.1919	Polish troops occupying Ukraine move to the Ushytsya–Proskuriv–Shepetivka–Olevs'k. On 8.12, they take Kamianets-Podilskyi
11.12.1919	The troops of Russian SFSR in Ukraine take Kharkov and Kyiv (16.12)
7.02.1920	The troops of Russian SFSR take Odessa
04.1920	The Cossack Council from Kuban withdraws from the Crimea, controlled by Russian troops. Makhno rebuilds his quasi-state near Huliai-pole

22.04.1920	The delineation of the Polish border with Ukrainian People's Republic on Zbruch and further through Vyshhorodok, east of Ostroh and along the eastern border of the Rivne District and the western border of the Minsk Governorate to Prypiat and Dnieper
25.04.1920	Polish and UNR troops take Mohyliv-Podilskyi and the Mikashevichy–Novohrad-Volynskyi–Novyi Mirpol–Ostropol–Letychiv–Mohyliv line
26.04.1920	Polish and UNR troops liberate Zhitomir from the occupation of Russian SFSR
26.04.1920	Czechoslovakia specifies the extent of autonomy of the Carpathian Ruthenia, without actually realising it
7.05.1920	Polish and UNR troops take Kyiv, reaching by 15.05 the Dnieper–Trypillia–Bila Tserkva–Samhorodok–Haisyn–Yampil line
17.05.1920	The capital of the Ukrainian People's Republic is moved to Kyiv again
06.1920	An offensive of the republican troops is launched from Crimea, reaching the Dnieper line from Cherson to Yekaterinoslav
5.06.1920	Russian SFSR's army offensive near Samhorodok, that takes Kyiv (11.06) and by the end 06.1920 set the front line between Yampil, Starokostiantyniv and Novohrad-Volynskyi
15.07.1920	The proclamation Galician Soviet Republic, with a capital in Ternopil
08.1920	The Russian SFSR troops set the front line of Dniester–Zhydachiv–suburbs of Lviv–Rava-Ruska–Stryi
28.08.1920	The occupying forces of the Russian SFSR reach Zamość
10.1920	Polish and UNR army offensive stopped on the line of: suburbs of Zhmerynka–Novyi Mirpol–Korosten–Milashevichy. An offensive of the Russian republican forces is launched in southern Ukraine
12.10.1920	By the power of the truce, the Polish and Ukrainian People's Republic's troops retreat to the demarcation line (later border), giving the conquered territories to the administration of the Ukrainian SSR
20.10.1920	Romania, France, Great Britain, Japan and Italy sign the Bessarabian protocol in Paris, recognising the eastern border of Romania on the Dniester and the annexation of Moldova. This agreement was not ratified by the time Romania lost these territories in 1940
8.11.1920	The army of the Russian SFSR push the republican Russian forces south, taking Perekop and, by 16.11, the whole Crimea
10.11.1920	The armies of the Russian SFSR and the Ukrainian SSR launch an offensive against the Ukrainian People's Republic on the Zbruch river, by 20.11 taking all of its territory (actual elimination of the Ukrainian People's Republic, whose government evacuates to Tarnów)
25.11.1920	The final liquidation Makhno's quasi-state, now part of the USSR, by the Russian SFSR and Ukrainian SSR forces

| 28.12.1920	Closer union of the Russian SFSR and the Ukrainian SSR
18.03.1921	Setting the borders in Eastern Europe by the Peace of Riga. Ukrainian SSR – area of 459.8 thousand km², capital in Kharkiv
4.10.1921	Operating from Poland, the troops of the Ukrainian People's Republic take the territories of the Ukrainian SSR: Kotosten up to Bazar, the areas around Ploskirow, Latoszow, Radomysl and Maliny (by 29.11), while the troops operating from Romania take Tiraspol (11.1921)
18.10.1921	The creation, within the Russian SFSR, of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, area of 25.98 thousand km², capital in Simferopol
30.12.1922	Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian SSR, Russian SFSR and Transcaucasian SFSR form a federation – the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (abbreviated USSR). The south-eastern regions of Shahta and Taganrog were detached from the Ukrainian SSR and annexed to the RSFSR, compensating this with small fragments in the north given to Ukraine

Source: own study based on numerous chronological sources.
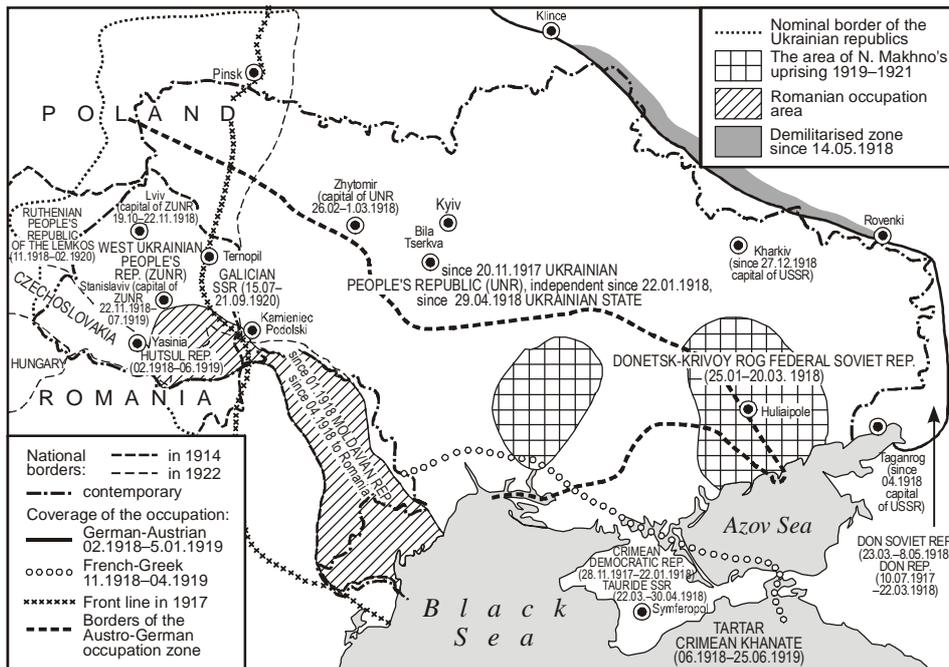
Fig. 1. Political and territorial transformations in Ukrainian lands
between 1917 and 1920
Source: authors' own elaboration

3. UKRAINIAN LANDS WITHIN THE USSR

Although the Ukrainian SSR was formally a separate state, it was actually fully dependent on Soviet Russia since its inception. Almost immediately after the Ukrainian SSR was formed, it entered into arrangements with the Russian SFSR, renouncing its own economic and financial policies. In 1920, Ukraine also relinquished control over the army, fleet, internal communication, foreign trade, post and labour matters, ceding all of them to the authorities of the Soviet Russia. The Ukrainian government lost its remaining rights after the agreement to form the USSR was signed in 1922 (Serczyk 2001, p. 291). The capital of the Ukrainian SSR, remained until 1934 in Kharkiv, a city inhabited by a large number of Russians. The Ukrainian authorities included many leading activists of Bolshevik Russia, Russian chauvinists (Podraza and Pankowicz 2001, p. 262). Several Polish communists, who gained high positions in the Ukrainian SSR also played some disgraceful parts (e.g. Stanisław Kosior and Feliks Kon).

Under the Soviet administration, the territorial shape of Ukraine changed. Crimea was detached in 1921 and transformed in to the Crimean Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic within the Russian SFSR (Agadžanov and Sacharov 1988, p. 68). When the Soviet Union was being formed in 1922, the districts of Shahty and Taganrog were torn from Ukraine in the east, as compensation for Russia for some small border corrections in the north. The detached areas were part of the industrialised Donets Basin, while the areas gained by Ukraine in the north were forests and agricultural lands. Polesie, Starodubie, Belgorod and Voronezh – Ukrainian ethnic lands remained outside (*Ukraina. Istoricznij atlas* 2005, pp. 12–13). In 1924, as part of the Ukrainian SSR, the Moldavian ASSR was formed, thus opening a conflict that still has not ended (Serczyk 2001, p. 299). It is a fragment of today's Moldova, which was not owned by Romania. In this area, in 1990, Russians formed the Dnestr Republic, which wanted to break away from the independent Republic of Moldova.

By the power of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, the Soviet Union had liberty to conduct aggressive policies in Eastern Europe. When Poland was invaded on 17 September 1939, the territory reaching Narew, Bug and San was taken, and its southern part was annexed in November by the Ukrainian SSR as the so called West Ukraine (Subtel'nij 1991, p. 393, Serczyk 2001, pp. 330–331). In August 1940, a similar invasion of Romania allowed the Ukrainian SSR to annex North Bukovina and the southern part of Bessarabia. The rest of the lands confiscated from Romania were passed to the Moldavian ASSR, excluded from the Ukrainian SSR and raised to the status of union republic as Moldavian SSR

(Serczyk 2001, p. 332). This fact also has geopolitical consequences lasting to this day. The disintegration of the Soviet Union took place at the union republics' level. Had Moldova not reached this level of Soviet autonomy in 1940, it would probably be part of Ukraine today. After 1940, of the ethnically Ukrainian territories, only the Carpathian Ruthenia, taken by Hungary after the fall of Czechoslovakia, remained beyond the reach of Soviet power.

For the Ukrainian nation, the invasion of USSR by Germany could seem like salvation, especially since the fascists suggested support for Ukraine's independence. Unfortunately, the hopes for their own state, even under the protection of Germany, proved to be illusory. They vanished after the occupation of Lviv, where on 30 June 1941, at the initiative of the fraction of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) led by Stepan Bandera, the independence of Ukraine was resumed Jaroslav Stetsko formed a government (Subtel'nij 1991, p. 401, Sergijčuk 2001, p. 6). In October 1941, the leader of another faction of OUN, Andriy Melnyk, tried to form an Ukrainian government in Kyiv, but Germans did not approve of this and arrested the leaders. The fight for independence was spearheaded by OUN and their armed forces formed in 1943 – the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) (Serczyk 2001, p. 342). They fought all enemies of Ukraine – Germans, Soviets, as well as the Polish resistance. German occupying forces also formed Ukrainian armed formations, used to control other conquered territories, e.g. to suppress the Warsaw Uprising. In the course of the war, all ethnic Ukrainian territories ended up under German, Hungarian and Romanian occupation.

The war resulted in huge loss for Ukraine of 5.3 million killed, 28 thousand villages burned, and destroyed 16 thousand manufacturing plants destroyed (Serczyk 2001, p. 357). The first damage was done by the Red Army, retreating under German pressure.

As a result of the war, the political situation in Ukraine did not change. On the contrary, all Ukrainian lands were under the control of USSR or its allies. In 1945–1947, the Soviet authorities wanted to relocate the Ukrainian settlements in Poland and Czechoslovakia, where the OUN's fight for independence lasted the longest, to the USSR. Additionally, the 'Vistula Operation', a military pacification of Ukrainian population was conducted in south-eastern Poland, though this population was not relocated to the USSR, but the northern and western parts of Poland (Olszański 1994, p. 239, Serczyk 2001, p. 349). However, the Soviet (Russian) concern for the unification of Ukrainians in one country was purely propagandist, since the Ukrainians had been taken from their homeland for hundreds of years for penal servitude, forcibly moved to Siberia as labour at the flagship construction sites of Communism. The migration of Ukrainians that

enhanced the Slavic ethnos in non-Slavic USSR republics was also supported (Serczyk 2001, p. 360).

The only positive outcome of the war for Ukraine was the amendment of the USSR constitution (1 February 1944), granting the union republics seeming national sovereignty, in order to enter the Byelorussian SSR and Ukrainian SSR into the UN, regardless of the whole country (25 June 1945) (Subtel'nij 1991, p. 423). Although the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR did not have any political liberty in the UN and only executed the directives from the USSR's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it still got selected for various commissions, including the UN Security Council, which surely served to perpetuate the notion of Ukrainian independence from Russia in the international community. After the proclamation of sovereignty, only Russia (formal successor of the USSR), Belarus and Ukraine did not have to apply for membership in the UN, which took some war-torn post-Soviet states several years (e.g. Georgia).

The last changes shaping the Ukrainian territory under Soviet rule took place in the post-war period. A slight change was made on 2 April 1946 at the Ukrainian-Czechoslovak border and involved one village (Lekárovce), which was returned to Czechoslovakia. The second of these changes involved the exchange of territories on the Polish-Soviet border and in its nature resembled an earlier operation of this kind on the Ukrainian-Russian border. On 15 February 1951, in exchange for an area of 480 km^2 in the bend of Bug River near Sokal, given by Poland to the Ukrainian SSR, we received the same area in Bieszczady mountains near Ustrzyki Dolne and Krościenko (Ślusarczyk 1992, p. 83). The formal reason for the change was the desire to keep the whole Rava-Ruska–Volodymyr-Volynskyi railway, which ran along the western bank of Bug between Bełz and Sokal, in the USSR. In fact, it was about the USSR gaining access to shallow coal deposits near Lviv. In exchange for this economically valuable area, Poland received a mountainous, forested borderland area, neglecting the fact that Poland could have also gained the section of the Przemysl–Zagórz railway that ran through the Ukrainian SSR. The population of these territories has been displaced, so only the infrastructure was transferred.

The third major territorial changes which, as it now turns out, was carried out in a non-legal way, was the return of the Crimean district, stripped of its autonomy just after World War II (30 June 1945) to the Ukrainian SSR. This was done by Nikita Khrushchev, the former first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, later the head of the Soviet state (Darski 1993, p. 82). This act is still challenged by modern Russia, demanding from Ukraine a proof of its legality.

4. THE REVIVAL OF THE UKRAINIAN STATEHOOD IN
THE LAST DECADE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Political changes started in the fall of 1989 in Poland quickly spread to the whole system of the so called people's republics, leading to the overthrow of communism and the rebirth of the states that this system was forcibly imposed on from 1917 to 1949. The end result of this process was the collapse of the first communist empire in history – the USSR in December 1991. The emergence of 15 new states as a result of the disintegration of our eastern neighbour was one of the largest political changes in the 20th century (Rościszewski 2003, p. 171).

The beginning of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the gradual transition to independence of the union republics was started by the death of the CPSU's First Secretary Leonid Brezhnev in 1998. His two consecutive successors at this position, Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko, did not manage to maintain his imperial politics. The fate of the 'evil empire' was significantly influenced by the fact that Mikhail Gorbachev took power in March 1985 and announced his policy of reforms (Perestroika), which further expanded the autonomy of the republics, as well as the tragic incident in Ukraine, namely the disaster in the Chernobyl nuclear power plant on 26 April 1986. (Serczyk 2001, p. 368). In Ukraine, the independence movement was reborn and glasnost (freedom of speech) was spreading.

The progress of democratisation was further strengthened by grassroots citizens' movement, whose climactic moment happened on 21 January 1990, on the 71st anniversary of the unification of the Ukrainian states (in 1919), when a living chain of people holding hands from Lviv to Kyiv was formed. The local parliamentary elections in March 1990 were more liberal than in the past and resulted in choosing numerous real representatives of the society. More parties and political movements emerged, breaking the communist monopoly. A seemingly insignificant fact, setting the new time zone for Ukraine, an hour apart from the Moscow time, by the new parliament, was perceived as an act of sovereignty.

Key acts leading to independence were the declaration of the Supreme Council of Ukraine of 19 July 1990, proclaiming the sovereignty of the republic (as part of the new post-Soviet federation) and, on the other hand, the referendum concerning the preservation of the USSR of 17 March 1991, in which as much as 70% Ukrainian citizens supported the project, while 80% opted for changing the federation into a more democratic entity.

But the putsch of reactionary and anti-democratic forces that took place on 19 August 1991 in Moscow accelerated the decision of gaining full sovereignty of most union republics, including Ukraine. The independent state of Ukraine was

proclaimed on 24 August 1991, and Poland was the first country in the world to recognise its statehood (Podraza, Pankiewicz 2001, p. 265). The independence of the country was confirmed by the referendum of 1 December 1991. With a very high turnout of 84.2%, 90.3% of the voters were in favour of independence. This act showed the inner complexity of the state, as over 96% of the citizens voted in favour of independence in Galicia, while only approx. 83% voted in favour in such eastern district as Lugansk and Donetsk, just 57% in Sevastopol, and as low as 54% in the rest of Crimea. The referendum also selected the first president of reborn Ukraine, the current First Secretary of CPU Leonid Kravchuk. He was supported by almost all districts in the country, with only three districts in Galicia (Lviv, Tarnopol and Ivano-Frankivsk) voting for the democratic opposition candidate Viacheslav Chornovil (Serczyk 2001, p. 375).

At a meeting in a hunting centre in Wiskule in the Białowieza Forest on 8 December 1991, three leaders of the new states L. Kravchuk of Ukraine and Stanislav Shushkevich of Belarus, and Boris Yeltsin of Russia signed the act dissolving the USSR. At the same time, an interstate political organisation called the Commonwealth of Independent States was formed, joined gradually by more former republics, with the exception of Baltic states.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union in accordance with its federal division demonstrates the importance of the status of autonomy of the individual parts of the Soviet state for the future of the region. Such past decisions as the transferring of Crimea to the Ukrainian SSR, raising Moldavian autonomy to the level of a union republic and the degradation of Abkhazia and Karelia gained a new dimension.

Under the constitution introduced of 28 June 1996, the Ukrainian state adopted the popular name of Ukraine as the official name (*Konstytucja...* 1996). This was due to the fact that the republic included Crimea, formerly an autonomous (as an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic), which lost the Republican status and became a regular district after it was annexed by Ukraine. Ukrainian population in the peninsula is in the minority (24%), with a Russian majority of 60% similar to the eastern part of the country. Additionally, there was a tradition of historical Tartar statehood (khanate) in the Crimea, and the Tartar population, even though it was marginalised (10%) also became more active during Perestroika. Since 1987, there also was an ongoing process of Tartar families exiled after World War II to Central Asia returning. On 20 January 1991, a referendum was held in Crimea concerning its future district status (the first of its kind in the USSR), in which 93% voted in favour of regaining autonomy. The Supreme Council of the USSR decided on 12 February 1992 to recognise this demand and proclaimed the Crimean ASSR within the

Ukrainian SSR. However, the actual aim of the Crimean population (Russians and Tartars) was not autonomy, but the complete detachment of the peninsula from Ukraine and returning it to the Russian SFSR (for Russians) or full independence (for Tartars).

These aspirations materialised in the form of the announcement of 2 August 1992 of a referendum concerning the detachment of Crimea from Ukraine, which was blocked by the Ukrainian authorities (Serczyk 2001, s. 379). The final status of the peninsula has been established by art. 10 of the Constitution of Ukraine, which identified it as the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, with its own constitution, parliament (Supreme Council of the Crimean AR) and government, remaining 'an integral part of the Ukraine' (*Konstytucja...* 1996). The official language of the Crimea is Russian, while Ukrainian and Tartar are defined as state languages. Determining the status of Crimea did not solve the problem of the Crimean city and the Soviet war naval base in Sevastopol. Until the collapse of the USSR, no one questioned that the city belonged to the Crimea and Ukraine, in which it was included in 1954.

However, after Ukraine proclaimed its independence, the citizens of the city, 72% Russian, questioned this fact, arguing that the base was directly subordinate to the central USSR authorities (along with the whole surrounding as a 'closed city'), and not local administration. Thus, it could not have been given to the Ukrainian SSR back in 1954 and remains part of the Russian territory. On 10 July 1993, the Russian Duma announced that Sevastopol is a Russian federal city. In April 1993, Crimean authorities were preparing to choose a local president and Russia proposed the adoption of the Crimea to the CIS as a separate entity. The Local Russian Council of Sevastopol called for a military coup in the city and the overthrow of Ukrainian authorities.

This important international conflict was ultimately alleviated by the treaty of friendship, co-operation and partnership between Ukraine and Russia of 28 May 1997, which leased the facilities in a part of the naval port of Sevastopol for the Russian Black Sea fleet for 20 years, for 98 million dollars per year (Felgenhauer 1999). This means that the city of Sevastopol, with an area of 863.5 km^2 has a special status, is not part of the Crimean AR, and the mayor reports directly to the President of Ukraine.

There was also a border conflict between Ukraine and Russia in the Strait of Kerch over the Tuzla Spit. This island, in the form of elongated sandbank, has been separated during a storm in 1925 from the Taman Peninsula in Russia. In 1954, it was transferred to Ukraine along with the Crimea. The area of 35 ha is inhabited by just 100 people (Gorbachew 2000). In 2003, Russia began constructing a causeway connecting the island with its territory, which caused

tension between the two countries. In December 2003, construction was halted, and Russia recognised the former course of the border, with the agreement that the Sea of Azov is an internal Russian-Ukrainian reservoir.

The conflict between Ukraine and Romania concerning the Snake Island (Ukr. Zmijnyj, Rum. Şerpilor), a 17-ha island in the Black Sea, that continued since 2004, was solved by the arbitration of the International Justice Tribunal in the Hague in a sentence of February 2009. The island itself remained under Ukrainian rule and neither of the countries can use it in any claims concerning the continental shelf, even though its division was very unfortunate for Ukraine, who was given just 20.66% of the disputed sea area. This is important due to the potential oil production in this part of the shelf.

5. THE COMPLEXITY OF THE INTERNAL STRUCTURES OF MODERN UKRAINE

A. Kuczabski (1999, pp. 51–53), using the method of geosotsyors[1], proved that it is possible to distinguish 14 genetically different spatial units in the territory of modern Ukraine (Tab. 2, Fig. 2).
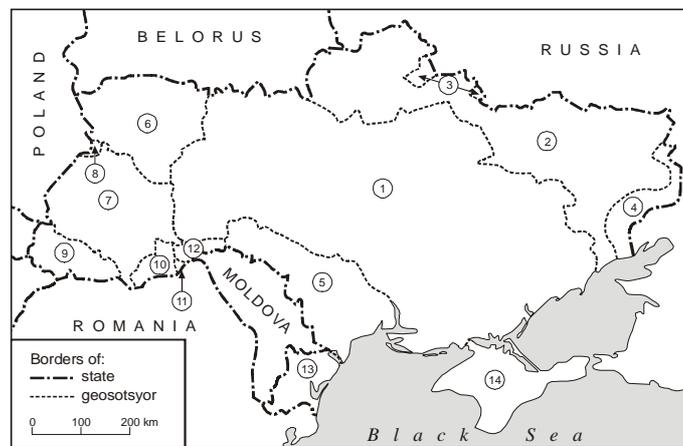
Legend: 1 – Central Ukraine; 2 – Eastern Ukraine; 3 – North-Eastern Ukraine; 4 – Eastern Donetsk region; 5– South-Western Ukraine; 6 – Volhynia; 7 – Eastern Galicia; 8 – Transbugia; 9 – Transcarpathia; 10 – Northern Bukovina; 11 – Hertsa region; 12 – Northern Bessarabia; 13 – Southern Bessarabia; 14 – Crimea

Fig. 2. The internal division of Ukrainian lands using the geosotsyor method
Source: A. Kuczabski (1999, p. 61)

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[1] The term geosotsyor (*geosocjor*) was coined by J.J. Siemionow in 1966 to signify the smallest territories divided by diverse borders, characterised by homogenous history of political and administrative affiliation.

Table 2. Internal division of Ukraine using the geosotsyor method in 1900–2009

Period	Political and administrative affiliation
1. Central Ukraine, main city: Kyiv	
until 1917	part of the Russian Empire
1918–1919	part of independent Ukraine
1920–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR (since 1922 in the USSR)
1941–1944	part of Reichskomisariat Ukraine, German occupation
from 1944	part of the Ukrainian SSR (till 1991 in the USSR, later independent Ukraine)
2. Eastern Ukraine, main cities: Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk	
until 1917	part of the Russian Empire
1918–1919	part of independent Ukraine
1920–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR (since 1922 in the USSR)
1941–1943	under German occupation
from 1943	part of the Ukrainian SSR (till 1991 in the USSR, later independent Ukraine)
3. North-Eastern Ukraine, main city: Putivl	
until 1926	part of the Russian Empire (since 1918, the Russian SFSR)
1920–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR in the USSR
1941–1943	under German occupation
from 1943	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
4. Eastern Donietsk region, main city: Dmitrivsk	
until 1918	part of the Russian Empire (since 1917, the Russian Republic)
1919–1942	part of the Ukrainian SSR (since 1922 in the USSR)
1942–1943	under German occupation
from 1943	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
5. South-Western Ukraine, main city: Odessa	
until 1917	part of the Russian Empire
1918–1919	part of independent Ukraine
1920–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR (since 1922 in the USSR)
1941–1944	under Romanian occupation
from 1944	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
6. Volhynia, major cities: Rivne, Lutsk	
until 1917	part of the Russian Empire
1918–1919	part of independent Ukraine

1919–1939	part of Poland
1939–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR in the USSR
1941–1944	part of Reichskomisariat Ukraine, German occupation
from 1944	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
7. Galicia, main city: Lviv	
until 1918	part of Austria as the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria and in the Austro-Hungarian Empire
1918–1939	part of Poland
1939–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR in the USSR
1941–1944	part of the General Government of the Reich, German occupation
from 1944	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
8. Zaburze, main city: Chervonograd (Krystynopol)	
until 1918	part of Austria as the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria and in the Austro-Hungarian Empire
1918–1939	part of Poland
1939–1945	part of the General Government of the Reich, German occupation
1945–1951	part of Poland
from 1951	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
9. Transcarpathia (Carpathian Ruthenia), main city: Uzhgorod	
until 1918	part of the Kingdom of Hungary in the Austro-Hungarian Empire
1919–1938	part of Czechoslovakia (from 1938 the autonomous Carpathian Ruthenia)
1939–1944	part of Hungary
from 1945	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
10. Northern Bukovina, main city: Chernivtsi	
until 1918	part of Austria as the Duchy of Bukovina in the Austro-Hungarian Empire
1918–1940	part of Romania
1940–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR in the USSR
1941–1944	part of Romania
from 1944	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
11. Hertza region, main city Hertza (Gierca, Herța)	
until 1940	part of Romania
1940–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR in the USSR
1941–1944	part of Romania
from 1944	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)

12. Northern Bessarabia, main city: Khotyn	
until 1917	part of the Russian Empire
1918–1940	part of Romania
1940–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR in the USSR
1941–1944	part of Romania
from 1944	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
13. Southern Bessarabia, main city: Izmail	
until 1917	part of the Russian Empire
1918–1940	part of Romania
1940–1941	part of the Ukrainian SSR in the USSR
1941–1944	part of Romania
from 1944	part of Ukraine (until 1991 Ukrainian SSR in the USSR)
14. Crimea, main cities: Simferopol, Sevastopol	
until 1941	part of the Russian Empire (since 1920 in the Russian SFSR, since 1921 the Crimean ASSR)
1941–1943	under German occupation
1943–1954	part of the Russian SFSR, since 1945 the Crimean district
from 1954	part of Ukraine (until 1991 in the Ukrainian SSR in the USSR, in 1991 as the Crimean ASSR, from 1992 as Crimean AR

Source: own study based on A. Kuczabski (1999, pp. 51–53, 61).

Today, we can add one more (15th) geosotsyor to the division proposed by A. Kuczabski – Sevastopol, i.e. the part of the naval port and its infrastructure leased for 20 yeas by the Russian Federation as the Black Sea fleet base under the agreement of 1997.

Internal territorial divisions continue to exist, becoming a tangible expression of the diverse history of the country. Above all, there is still a threat of the break-up of Ukraine into two or more geo-political entities, few of whom would be able to maintain sovereignty. It is paradoxical that the Galician part of Ukraine, historically most strongly associated with Poland, is the bastion of the extreme nationalist organisations, while the areas dominated by the Russian minority are far less affiliated with Ukrainian statehood and culture. There is no unanimity concerning the strategy of geopolitical choices in the highest authorities of Ukraine. On one hand, they declare the will to join NATO and the EU and return to the western civilisation. On the other, though, more political and economic arrangements with Russia are made, and the eastern of western direction of Ukrainian foreign policies became a hostage in elections (Rościsze-wski 2000, p. 31, Kłoczowski 2002, p. 64).

The complexity of the internal structures of Ukraine seriously affects the diversity of the election space in the country. As I. Kavetskyy stated (2010, pp. 181–184), this space has a number of dimensions. The first one reveals itself in an opposition between the traditionalist western regions and the cosmopolitan east. The maximum concentration of supporters of right-wing organisations can be seen in elections in the historical eastern Galicia (Lviv, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk). The cosmopolitan pole is much more blurred, but it generally includes the Donets Basin (Donetsk, Luhansk). This division was shown even more explicitly during the presidential election of 1994 (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Division of the Ukrainian election space during the 1994 presidential election
Source: http://www.electoralgeography.com/new/en/countries/u/ukraine/ukraine-presidential-election-1994.html

In subsequent elections, the traditionalist option was gradually spreading eastward, reaching its apogee during the Orange Revolution of 2004. Traditionalism not only took the whole centre of the country, including the capital, but it also found strongholds in such districts as Sumy, the birthplace of president Viktor Yushchenko (Fig. 4).

6. GEOPOLITICAL CONDITIONS OF UKRAINIAN FOREIGN POLICY

The growing occidental tendency in Ukrainian foreign policies was proven by the unfavourable, from the western option's point of view, solution of the Odessa-Brody pipeline built in 1996–2001, which was supposed to be used for transporting crude oil from Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, sent from Black Sea ports (Euroasian Oil Corridor) to Poland and further west. In 2008, an extension of the Gdańsk-Płock-Brody was approved to connect the western and Ukrainian transfer systems. However, Ukraine did not decide whether it still wants to use the pipeline after Russia stopped using it to send crude oil to Ukraine in 2010 and Belarus stopped using it to import Azer oil in March 2012. Without a doubt, the actions of two neighbours of Ukraine are not unrelated with its pro-west plans concerning this route.

Fig. 4. Division of the Ukrainian election space during the 2004 presidential election
Source: http://gondwanaland.com/mlog/2004/11

Another proof of the east-facing course of Ukraine is the Ukrainian-Russian agreement concerning the rules for stationing Russian Black Sea fleet in Kharkiv, concluded on 27 April 2010, which extends the lease on the naval base

in Sevastopol by further 25 years (till 2042). for USD 100 million per year in exchange for a reduction in the price of Russian natural gas by 30%.

The meanders of Ukraine's foreign policy are also reflected in its relation to the issue of regional integration. Ukraine seeks to be admitted to NATO (since February 1994, it has been a member of the Partnership for Peace, and since November 2002, it has had an individual membership negotiations plan, which gained momentum in April 2005). It also tries to join the European Union (since 1 March 1998 – partnership and co-operation agreement, since June 2004 – included in the European Neighbourhood Policy, since January 2005 – UE recognition of Ukraine's strive for membership, since 5 March 2007 – negotiations over the new EU-Ukraine agreement without the association status).

At the same time, as a founding member of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Ukraine currently only has the status of an observer (*de facto* participates fully in this organization), it did not join the military agreement between members of the CIS and does not participate in the United Command of the Armed Forces (Kuspyś 2009). Ukraine is also just an observer in the Eurasian Economic Community founded in 2000.

Since 1997, Ukraine, along with a number of countries with anti-Russian sentiments created a forum for international co-operation GUUAM, transformed in 2008 into the GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development.

All of this points to a dichotomy in the Ukrainian politics concerning the core issue of its geopolitical location.

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POLITICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES
OF THE NEW STATE BORDER OF UKRAINE

The main problem which has appeared and remains relevant since the proclamation of the independence of Ukraine is the development of its state border, the need to secure it and the development of the border structures. In fact, the boundary of the state is one of the major political and legal institutions of any state, and the provisions of its reliable guard affects the maintenance of the state territorial integrity, the development of the country's economy and the living conditions of the population. The state border, which determines the limits of the state territory, is one of the basic signs of a nation state. The border of Ukraine has not been fully formed yet, and that is why the study of the political and geographical features of its forming is relevant and necessary for the future development of Ukraine as an independent state and an active subject of the international relations, including marine relations.

The issues of the formation and functioning of Ukrainian state border have been analysed in the works of such scholars as O.A. D'yakov (2007), V.A. Kolossov (2001), N.N. Kotsan (2005), M.S. Kulyk (2004), O.Ya. Manachyns'kyj (2005), O. Parfenov (2005), V.P. Gorbylin (2006), M.O. Tryukhan (2004) and others. In their studies, they examine the problems faced by the Ukrainian its borders are forming, as well as emphasise the importance of overcoming these problems as part of the modern state foreign-policy strategy.

In this scientific approach, the works of such authors as V.A. Kolossov and N.S. Mironenko (2001) deserve special attention. In their book *Геополитика и политическая география* (*Geopolitics and Political Geography*), they discuss the theoretical bases of such concepts as 'border', 'state boundary', analyse the basic types of borders and theoretical approaches used when studying borders.

The special attention must be paid to the scientifically-informative collection *Стратегія і тактика, стан національної безпеки України* (*Strategy and*

tactics, the state of the national security of Ukraine). The question of the determination of the Ukrainian as one of the factors which influence the national security are examined in it. Basic issues between Ukraine and Russia in their partnership are also discussed.

The works of such scholars as A. D'yakov (2007), M.S. Kulyk (2004), O.Ya. Manachyns'kyj (2005), O. Parfenov (2005) are among scientific publications that tackle the legal aspects of the Ukrainian border and the history of its formation. In their works, these researchers present a short historical study that shows how the Ukrainian border was shaped, as well as characterise the state of its legality.

Another important aspect of research involves the question of the delimitation and demarcation of Ukraine's border and the description of the basic problems which related to this question. The works of M.O. Tryukhan, a member and expert of the Ukrainian commission of the state boundary delimitation and demarcation since 1993, professionally examine the question of contractual legal registration of the state boundary, including its marine sections, from the positions of an expert cartographer. He pays the special attention to the problems of exact parameters determining the marine border in the Azov-Black Sea region and the problems in drawing marine borders in the Azov Sea and the Kerch channel (Tryukhan 2004).

In the scientific publication *Шляхи інтенсифікації вирішення проблем делімітації морських просторів України в північно-західній частині Чорного моря* (*Solving the problems of the delimitation of Ukraine's marine border in the north-western Black Sea region*), the specialist in naval law M.S. Kulyk (2004) pays more attention to the practical aspects of border delimitation than to the theory. O.A. D'yakov (2007) investigates the question of the continental shelf and the delimitation of exceptional economic zones between Ukraine and Romania. He concentrates his attention on the theoretical aspects, particularly the legal status of Snake Island and its influence on the process of delimitation and the development of the Ukrainian-Romanian relations.

The work *Територіальна організація митної діяльності України* (*Territorial organisation of the customs in Ukraine*) by N.N. Kotsan (2005) is devoted to the organisation and functioning of the main points of admission on the state border. It discusses the state of the existing border crossings and the problems of their organisation and functioning.

Despite of the importance of the Ukrainian border formation and functioning, there is currently a lack of any complex research on the subject. There are some scientific works which discuss some aspects of the state border, but many questions concerning its legal determination and functioning remain open.

The problem of the delimitation of Ukrainian-Russian marine border remains unresolved. It is important to emphasise that this subject is mainly discussed in the news, on the pages of periodicals, which shows the necessity of providing a generalised, deeper analysis of the complex problems related to the state boundary of Ukraine, including its marine sections.

The aim of the article is to provide a political and geographical study of the forming state boundary of Ukraine.

Basic tasks undertook in the research process include the investigation of the political and geographical aspects of the forming state boundary of Ukraine, the study of the essence of a state border, its functions and establishment, the analysis of the features of the formation and establishment of the state boundary of Ukraine, highlighting the main crossings on the state border of Ukraine, the reflection on the basic problems of the formation of the state border of Ukraine and the ways to overcome them.

A state border is a line which runs on the terrain (land or water) and the imaginary vertical plane which passes through it in air space and underground, which is meant to determine the limits of a state's territory, separating it from any other states or open areas (Kolossov and Mironenko 2001).

The study of a state border uses a number of scientific approaches of different disciplines and it is based on such principles as: 1) the right of nations for self-determination, 2) state-territorial differentiation based on national basis, 3) inviolability of the state boundary, 4) peaceful coexistence of the states and peaceful resolutions of territorial disputes, 5) historical method, 6) objectivity. The Ukrainian act on the state boundary of Ukraine states that the boundary is the line which determines the limits of state territory and separates contiguous territories of the states from one another (Gorbylin 2006).

The boundaries are especially valuable because their proper delimitation determines the limits of the state's territory and confirms such state's right to this territory. The state border is set as a result of an agreement signed between neighbouring states. At the same time, they can be set as a result of a domestic act.

Scientists also say that borders can serve the functions of a barrier, a bridge or a filter. A state border is an insuperable barrier and a zone of active economic co-operation, while also serving as a filter which lets through any communication that is useful for the national economy while stopping the negative and harmful elements. The communication function of the border is also important. Implementing this function ensures good cross-border co-operation (Kolossov and Mironenko 2001).

There are two successive stages, delimitation and demarcation, in the process of the establishment of a state border. What comes first, though, is allocation.

Allocation means a verbal arrangement between two parties about the course of a state border. After this comes the delimitation, i.e. the contractual determination of the general direction of the state border and its drawing on maps and charts. Demarcation is the execution of state border locally, using such border markings as pyramids, posts, buoys, lighthouses and others. The re-demarcation is conducted in case the border between neighbouring states has to be clarified. The re-demarcation is the renewal of the material signs of demarcation. It is done by verifying the previously demarcated border and renewing, repairing or replacing the current border markings (Gorbylin 2006).

In the natural and geographical meaning, the borders are divided into land, water (river, lacustrine, maritime) and air. A land border is a line that separates the land territory of one state from another. Such borders are set between the states based on a bilateral agreement. River and lake borders are also set the same way. On navigable rivers, the border is usually drawn in the middle of the main waterway or on the line of the deepest course. On non-navigable rivers and brooks, the borders are drawn midstream, or in the middle of the main waterway. On border lakes and reservoirs, the border is set by straight lines which connect the border on both banks (Kolossov and Mironenko 2001). Maritime borders are mainly state borders, although they can also be interstate. The country's marine territory is a belt of specified width, which is proportional to the overall length of the marine border. The maritime border does not mean the coastline, but a strip of territorial waters or territorial sea, that comprises the off-shore territory of a state, where it has the right to pursue its own interests, secure against immigration, pollution and other threats.

According to the stance expressed at the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the intergovernmental marine border must separate the territorial waters from open sea. Territorial waters are strips of water between a coastline and a state's maritime border.

The 1982 UN Convention states that the width of the territorial waters cannot exceed 12 nautical miles. Most countries in the world, including Ukraine, adhere to this standard (Parfenov 2005). The state's sovereignty and all the resulting rights spread over the territorial waters. All the bodies of water and resources belong to this state, as does the air space above territorial waters, which is regulated exclusively by state laws.

With the proclamation of Ukraine's independence, the question of the formation and functioning of its state boundaries gained significance. Today, Ukraine borders with seven countries: Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Moldova, Russia and Belarus. The overall length of the Ukrainian border is 6,992,982 km, 5,637,982 km on land (Kolossov and Mironenko 2001). The southern border of

Ukraine passes the external limit of the Ukrainian territorial waters. Ukraine shares maritime borders with Romania and Russia. The neighbourly position of Ukraine in relation to Russia, Belarus and Moldova is also very important. These countries are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), that was created after the disintegration of the USSR.

Historical factors influencing this position are: the past political and economic development, historical Ukrainian lands now owned by neighbouring countries, Ukrainians living in these countries, the existence of large Russian and Moldavian ethnic minorities in Ukraine, etc.

Ukraine also shares the longest borders with these states, comprising 3/4 of the overall border. These borders are new, as these countries were previously parts of a single state (the Soviet Union), and borders between them did not exist. However, these borders are also the least secure. There are problems with their demarcation, they are the most vulnerable to contraband goods and illegal migrants. Besides, eastern Moldova is a potential hotbed of political and military tension related to the proclamation of Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic, a territory not recognised by any country in the world. Ukraine shares several hundred kilometres of border with this self-proclaimed republic. The process of establishing the state boundary with Moldova was not simple. This border stretches over 1,222 kilometres (Manachyns'kyj 2005). When the USSR disintegrated, the border between Ukraine and Moldova was not fully developed. Moldova argued that as a result of the natural processes since 1940, the river-bed of the Prut river changed, which is why a part of the Danube in the district of Giurgiuleşti should now belong to Moldova. The country did not sign any Agreement or stop occupying the area, as the plan to build an oil port made the dispute even more important. Access to the Danube shore is a high-profile case for Moldova.

Ukraine agreed to exchange an important area of road connection on Moldovan land in the Palanca village in Odessa region for a 430-meter section of Danube coast in the joint Ukrainian-Romanian-Moldavian border. An exchange was executed as part of the first agreement about delimitation of borders in the history of Ukraine, and it was signed by presidents Leonid Kuchma and Petro Lychinskij. A contract between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova concerning the state boundary was concluded on August 18, 1999, and ratified on April 6, 2000. Thus, delimitation of state boundary between Ukraine and Republic of Moldova was completed and Ukraine and Republic of Moldova signed the Agreement about the state boundary (The agreement was ratified by the Law no. 1633-III of 06.04.2000). On January 30, 2003, on the 'Malalyha--Criva' border crossing, the first border crossing was inaugurated and the demarcation between Ukraine and Republic of Moldova was signed.

On April 4, 2003, the President of Ukraine signed the Decree concerning 'the plan of further arrangement of the state boundary between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova'. According to this plan the State Committee on the Landed Resources of Ukraine was incumbent to provide land under a 5-meter boundary. 65 state acts have been executed so far, and the rights for the permanent use of land in the borderland area are being issued. 35 state acts are still under development. On December 19, 2006 in Kiev, Ukrainian-Moldovan interdepartmental groups met for consultations concerning the questions of Dniester Hydroelectric power plant and Ukraine's right to own the buffer hydro-electric station of Dniester Hydroelectric power plant. The demarcation of the Ukrainian-Moldavian state boundary and the organisation of customs control in border crossings were also discussed. Thus, all questions have been gradually resolved. The delay of Ukrainian-Moldavian state boundary demarcation is also influenced by insufficient funding. Only 2.5 million UAH from the state budget are allocated for the arrangement of border demarcation, which accounts for only 6.1 per cent of the amount needed.

Today, the issues of the demarcation of the central part of the Ukrainian-Moldavian boundary (the Transnistrian section), as well as the sections in the Giurgiuleşti district (delimitation points nos. 712–713), the buffer district of the Dniester hydro-electric station no. 2, and the state boundary line along 3 delimitation points remain unresolved. Work was completed on the north section of the border, and demarcation is still underway on the south of Ukrainian-Moldavian state boundary area. 764 kilometres of Ukrainian-Moldavian state boundary have been demarcated by January 2009, with 458 kilometres not demarcated yet (a central area of 452 kilometres is located in the Transnistrian section, with the southern section of only 7 kilometres) (Manachyns'kyj 2005).

The border with the Pridnestrovian Republic remains a disputed area of the Ukrainian-Moldavian border. This border area, accounting for 45% of detained contraband goods, is the greatest problem for the border guards, customs officials and law enforcement authorities.

After the Transnistrian conflict of 1992, considerable arsenals of small-arms were left here, sparking illegal arms trading, which is also a problem. The worsening relations between Tiraspol and Kishinev and the freezing of the negotiations only strengthen the tension on the Ukrainian-Moldavian border.

The process of the establishment of the state boundary between Ukraine and Belarus is also difficult. The northern border of Ukraine with Belarus spans 1,084 kilometres (Parfenov 2005). It had been agreed upon in 1924 and then continued westward after the invasion of Poland (according to the agreement between the USSR and Germany on the eve of World War II).

The Agreement between Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus about the state boundary was signed on May 12, 1997, completing the delimitation of the Ukrainian-Belarussian state border. This Agreement was ratified by the Supreme Soviet on July 18, 1997 (The law of Ukraine No. 491/97 of July 18, 1997). However, to this time the Agreement on the border has not been ratified by the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus, which prevents the final demarcation. Thus, the border between Ukraine and Belarus remains not demarcated, which is a huge issue for Ukraine.

The Ukrainian-Polish border is the second longest external border of all EU member states in the East, spanning 542.39 kilometres (Gorbylin 2006). Ukrainian-Polish relations concerning the border have strong foundation. The Agreement between Ukraine and the Republic of Poland concerning neighbourly relations and collaboration of 1992, as well as the Agreement between Ukraine and Republic of Poland concerning the Ukrainian-Polish state boundary, collaboration and mutual help in matters concerning the border signed in Kyiv on January 12, 1993, are just two of them.

It is extraordinarily important that the border between two countries is clearly delineated and demarcated, and there are no territorial claims. These are the positive aspects that provide an opportunity to develop effective activities and collaboration between the governments of Ukraine and Poland, which in turn ensures that the border between neighbouring countries functions properly.

In 2002, the verification of the Ukrainian-Polish state boundary was completed. On April 14, 2005 a trilateral meeting of the Border Commission delegations of Ukraine, Poland and Slovakia took place in Cisna. As a result, a Protocol concerning the frontier sign of 'Kremenets' was signed, that was set on the joint state boundaries of Ukraine, Poland and Slovakia. This Protocol has been ratified by the governments of the countries. On April 22–27, 2007, the 13th meeting of Ukrainian-Polish Border Commission took place. Its main goals included the general review of the Ukrainian-Polish state boundary and the discussion of the issues related to the works conducted on the state border. On June 17–19, 2008, the general technical working group of Ukrainian-Polish Border Commission gathered for a working meeting in Jagodun.

There are still problems and big obstacles for those crossing the Ukrainian--Polish border for personal or tourist reasons or for meeting with business partners. The insufficient number of border crossings is the biggest issue. Out of 12 border crossings operating along the Polish-Ukrainian border, only six allow car traffic. Therefore, the agreement about new crossings on the border with Poland has already been signed. An agreement concerning simplified border control for citizens who live in borderland settlements has also been drawn.

The state boundary between Ukraine and Slovakia was set by the Agreement signed by the Prime Ministers of Ukraine and Slovakia in Bratislava on October 14, 1993. The border with this country stretches for 98.5 kilometres (Gorbylin 2006). The verification of the Ukrainian-Slovakian state boundary area was completed, and the resulting documents were ratified by the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1606 of October 26, 2000. In 2006, the second verification of the Ukrainian-Slovakian state boundary was completed. The resulting documents concerning the second verification were signed in Kiev on December 6, 2006. On April 22–25, 2008 in Uzhhorod, the 13th meeting of the General Ukrainian-Slovakia border commission took place, and the new documents were ratified by the governments of both countries. Thus, the state boundary between Ukraine and Poland, as well as between Ukraine and Slovakia have been fully executed according to international laws.

In July 1994, expert groups from Ukraine and Hungary began working on an Agreement concerning Ukrainian-Hungarian state boundary. The state border was set by the Agreement between Ukraine and Hungary concerning the Ukrainian-Hungarian state border, collaboration and mutual help on border issues of May 15, 1995. The general agreements regulate simplified state border traffic for the citizens of border areas, border crossings along the state border and the general border traffic.

In 2003, the verification of the Ukrainian-Hungarian state border was completed. The resulting documents were ratified by the Law of Ukraine from of November 26, 2003 no. 1336-IV. On June 3–6, 2008 in Mukachevo, the 12th meeting of the Ukrainian-Hungarian Border Commission took place, during which the fourth general selective review of the state border and border signs was conducted (Parfenov 2005).

The border with Russian Federation is one of the most troublesome. In accordance with article 5 of the Law 'About the legal continuity of Ukraine' of September 12, 1991 the 'State boundary of the USSR that marks the territory of Ukraine from other states, the border between Ukrainian SSR and Belarussian SSR, RSFSR and Republic of Moldova, as of July 16, 1990, becomes the state border of Ukraine'. The Ukrainian-Russian border is the former administrative border between USSR and RSFSR, and the question of its location and its normative and legal arrangement was supposed to be 'a clean slate'. The Ukrainian position that is still held by the government, is that all Ukrainian borders have equal legal status.

The Russian vision of the problem about the borderland settlements after the collapse of the USSR was different. The high officials of the Federal Border Guard of the Russian Federation claimed that the Russian borders can be divided

into 3 groups according to the differences in their legal status. Firstly, the former borders of the USSR, secondly the borders between the Russian Federation and the countries that did not enter the CIS and, thirdly, the borders with the members of the CIS. As far as the last group is concerned, delimitation alone is considered sufficient (Gorbylin 2006).

Since 1991, Ukraine and Russia have been trying to agree on the location, functioning and status of the border between the states. The practical execution of the tasks related to the Ukrainian-Russian border began instantly once Ukraine became independent based on the positions defined in the Law of Ukraine 'On the state boundary of Ukraine' of November 4, 1991, and the Decree of the President of Ukraine from December 16, 1993, concerning the 'plan for the development of state boundary of Ukraine' and regulating the delimitation of the state border between Ukraine and Russia.

A wide-range political Agreement 'On friendship and collaboration between Ukraine and Russian Federation' signed on May 31, 1997 became the next stage of contractual process between Ukraine and Russia in accordance with which Russia acknowledged the inviolability of the territory and state border of Ukraine. This agreement was ratified by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on January 14, 1998, and by the state Duma of Russia on December 25, 1998. However, the delimitation and demarcation of the Ukrainian borders had to be set by separate agreements.

The problem with the delimitation of the maritime section of the Ukrainian--Russian border remains unresolved, which is caused by the Russian side. In accordance with their own economical and geopolitical interests, Russian Federation is not interested in compromise concerning the Azov and Black Seas, nor the Kerch channel, which creates unforeseen geopolitical, military, legal, economic, ecological and other results. On May 17, 2010, the agreement between Russian Federation and Ukraine about of the demarcation of the Ukrainian-Russian land border was signed, however the consent about the delimitation of the maritime border between Ukraine and Russia delimitation was not reached. This problem still remains unresolved (Tryukhan 2004).

The establishment of the Ukrainian-Romanian maritime border, which spans 613,8 km, was also problematic. The problem of the formation of the Ukrainian-Romanian maritime border was settled by the decision made on February 3, 2009 by the International Court in Hague, which followed a dispute between Ukraine and Romania over the division of the Black Sea shelf.

As a result of this decision, the location of the Ukrainian border in the Black Sea was determined; the status of the Snake Island was also confirmed. It was recognised as an island, but its influence was not taken into account when

shaping the border, as it was too far from mainland territory; the Snake Island was given to Ukraine and the existence of the territorial waters belonging to Ukraine (12 nautical miles) around it was acknowledged. The decision of the International Court of Justice in Hague settled the questions and positively influenced the bilateral relations between the neighbouring states, including their maritime borders (Kulyk 2004).

Proper functioning of the state border of Ukraine was ensured by new border crossings. Under the intergovernmental agreement on border traffic, 29 crossings were planned, all of them temporary. The transfer of people, loads and vehicles through the Ukrainian-Belarusian border is ensured by 12 road crossings, 5 of which are international and seven are intergovernmental. 8 road crossings operate on the border with Poland. All of them are permanent. 7 road crossings operate on the borders with Slovakia and Hungary. On the border with Romania, there are 14 crossings. They link Ukraine and the CIS with the Balkans, Turkey and the Middle East. These crossings include 2 international and 11 local ones. 30 road crossings, including 2 international crossings operate on a Ukrainian-Moldavian border.

Apart from the above-mentioned border crossings, there are 36 airports in Ukraine, 17 of which are international, and 19 are local. At present, 36 border crossings are opened in the maritime and river ports, 8 of them in international ports and 28 in local ones. At the same time, the process of further development of the state border enhances the security of state territory and strengthens the state's position on the international scene.

The question of the defence of state borders is important for the safety of a country. As a young state, Ukraine faced this problem when it regained its independence in 1991. Rapid and effective delimitation and demarcation of the borders were a necessary and important element of the state policies. However, there were several disputes between Ukraine and its neighbours.

Currently, only the borders with Poland, Slovakia and Hungary have been fully demarcated, while the demarcation of the Ukrainian-Moldavian border is still unresolved. As the result of the unsettled relations between Moldova and the self-proclaimed Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic, the demarcation of the Transnistrian section is still impossible. The delimitation of the Ukrainian-Belarusian border has not yet been completed either.

The Ukrainian-Romanian maritime border was determined and set by the International Court of Justice in Hague on February 3, 2009, following a dispute between Ukraine and Romania about the division of the Black Sea shelf. The problem of Ukrainian-Russian maritime border remains unresolved, which negatively influences the naval position of Ukraine. On the whole, the incom-

pleteness of the contractual legal registration of the state border of Ukraine negatively influences the country's international perception, which means that final decisions should be made soon.

Further research should focus on the questions of the determination of the Ukrainian-Russian maritime border, which influences the geopolitical, economic and environmental character of the Azov-Kerch what is pre-condition of providing the strategic tasks of geopolitical, economic and ecological character in the Azov-Kerch basin.

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THE BORDER'S INFLUENCE ON PERIPHERALITY: CASE STUDY OF THE LITHUANIAN-BELARUSIAN BORDER REGION

1. INTRODUCTION

As the recent years have shown, the growth of the metropolitan areas and especially capital cities in the post-Soviet countries is usually accompanied by continuous decline of weak areas outside of the large agglomerations. The portrait of the post-Soviet countries is highly polarised. Constantly increasing economic, demographic and social disparities at the regional level have exacerbated the anxiety about further spatial polarisation and the peripheralisation of non-metropolitan regions.

Thus, what factors influence the appearance of such polarisation? Why do the peripheries appear? In general, how should the periphery as a phenomenon be understood and determined? These are the questions that usually involve scientists in deep discussions, as there is no single solution (Schmidt 1998, Krugman and Venables 1995, Knox and Marston 2001, Marada and Chromy et al. 2006).

Usually, the answers depend on the scientists' specialisation and their field of interest. While the researches with economic and sociologic way of thinking (Friedmann 1966, Naustdalslid 1983, Eskelinen and Snickars 1995, Schmidt 1998, Bürkner 2005, Linder 2006) declare the economic regions' potential and social capital as the main reasons for their territorial polarisation, demographers (Chromy and Janu 2003, Morgan 2003, Hollbach-Groming and Trapp 2006) stress the importance of human capital and argue that emigration, negative natural growth and low birth rate are the indicators underlying peripherality. Researches with a political approach (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Ward 2002, Zarycki 2002, Petrulis 2009) measure peripherality according to election results,

whereas geographers (Schmidt 1998, Baubinas et al. 2003, Lang et al. 2005, Daugirdas and Burneika 2006, Nagy 2005, 2006, Jerabek 2006, Marada and Chromy et al. 2006, *Problem regions...* 2008, Pociūtė 2010–2011, 2012, Lang 2011) seek to combine indicators from different fields while determining peripherality in order to have a broader and more complex view of the territory. Therefore, taking into account the already existing definitions proposed by different researchers and this article authors' ideas, '**peripheral region** might be defined as the territorial unit, located outside the boundary of the centre, and dependent on that centre, characterised by the lagging behind from the average and lowest geographic, socio-economic, demographic, cultural, and political indicators'. However, the research in this article excludes some of the aspects proposed in this definition and takes into account an analysis of several socio-economic and demographic indicators.

However, almost the scientists, whether geographers, economists or socio-logists, stress the importance of the distance indicator (Haggett 1965, Christaller 1966, Webber 1972, Smith 1981, Gregory and Gertler 1994, Daugirdas and Burneika 2006). The dislocation aspect is especially emphasised when the discussing the border regions, as they are usually considered peripheral (Baranyi et al. 1999). The border regions attract researchers' (Farago 1999, Houtum 2000, Momsen et al. 2005) attention, as the situation there differs from the rest of the country. There have already been some research carried out concerning the Lithuanian border regions (*Lietuvos pasienio...* 1998, Baubinas and Stanaitis 2001, 2002, Stanaitis and Baubinas 2002) with the purpose of discussing the situation of these regions.

Nevertheless, the border regions' peripherality is not only described by their distance. The decline and shrinkage of the human and economic capital shows the border regions' peripherality as well. Moreover, it should be noted that the peripherality of the border region depends on the border regime. The conclu-sions of the surveys carried out in Lithuania at the beginning of this millennium (Baubinas and Stanaitis 2001, 2002) showed, that strict border control (such as the case with Belarus and Karaliaučius (Kaliningrad)) influence negative demographic and socio-economic situation. Within European Union, state borders are usually integrative, while the borders between EU members and non--EU member states are defined as separating borders with strictly determined residents' and freight flows. Accordingly, strict and separating state borders raise difficulties. Quite often, strict border regime interrupts the cultural, social, economic and demographic relations between the countries and residential areas across the border. As a result, the separating borders lead directly to the region's peripherality.

Thus, this study seeks to find out if (or how strongly) the border influences the development of the area near the border between an EU member and a non-EU member state. The case study is based on the analysis of several demographic and socioeconomic indicators underlying the situation on the Lithuanian side of the Lithuanian-Belarusian (LT-BY) borderland. In order to compare this border region's situation with the rest of Lithuania, the tables and figures provide Lithuanian average statistic information. Besides, due to the intention to emphasise the peripherality, the statistic data for the centre (Vilnius) was also included in the analysis. The research involves not only the question of border regions' peripherality but also gives a broader view of peripheralisation, while analysing the indicators' variability in the last fifteen years.

In order to estimate the peripherality of LT-BY border region, certain indicators were chosen. From a large group of various indicators which underline peripherality such socioeconomic and demographic indicators were chosen as population density, rural population density, birth rate, ageing index, net migration, unemployment rate, social support beneficiaries, relative differences of added value *per capita* created by employees and foreign direct investment *per capita*. These indicators are used to assess the peripherality of Ignalina, Švenčioniai, Vilnius, Šalčininkai, Varėna, Lazdijai, Druskininkai, Visaginas and Vilnius city municipalities, which are located alongside the Lithuanian-Belausian border. The full list of peripherality measuring indicators has already been published elsewhere (Pociūtė 2010–2011).

Most of the statistic information provided in the tables and figures have been taken from the Lithuanian Statistics Department databases[1]. Therefore, the sources under figures and tables are given only where data were not taken from these statistic databases.

2. PERIPHERALITY: THE GENERAL VIEW OF THE LITHUANIAN-BELARUSIAN BORDER REGION

The Lithuanian-Belarusian border spans 678 km. In June 2008, border demarcation underlying eastern external border of the EU was officially finished. The Lithuanian-Belarusian border has a strictly determinative regime due to different political situations. This border's municipalities occupy an area of 11,199 km² and, according to the statistics for 2011, it was inhabited by

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[1] http://www.stat.gov.lt/en/.

835,277 people, which is 26% of all Lithuanian population (17% of them live in the Vilnius city municipality).

This border region is described as multicultural, Lithuanians live along with Poles, Belarusians, Russians and other minorities. Lithuanian-Belarusian border region is suffering from depopulation and increasing social and economic problems. This border region's municipalities are considered the weakest in all of Lithuania and this region is still directly moving towards peripherality (Tab. 1). In 2007, five out of nine municipalities analysed in this article have been included by the government in the list of problematic territories and still remain there (*Probleminės teritorijos* 2012). Therefore, it also shows the relevance of an analysis of the border region.

The first table presents statistical data for 2011 and 2010 (Tab. 1). In this context, the table gives the overview of the situation in the Lithuanian--Belarusian border region. The first column is dedicated to the overall average data for Lithuania, which serves as a comparison for the data for individual municipalities. The last column are grey as they represent town municipalities. The placing of municipalities in this table (Tab. 1) and other tables in this article follow the pattern: the first ones are the weakest (or most peripheral) municipalities in LT-BY border region (Ignalina, Lazdijai, Varėna, etc.), while the last columns represent the strongest (centres) municipalities according to almost all indicators.

Ignalina district municipality is placed first as the worst of all LT-BY border region municipalities according to all indicators. This municipality's peripherality is well established in terms of demographic indicators. The natural increase in Ignalina is -15.9 per thousand inhabitants, which means that the indictor is more than seven times higher than the Lithuanian average. Ageing index in more than 1.5 times higher than LT average and is the highest in all Lithuania. This means that this municipality's residents are the oldest in the country. The net migration indicator, however, is one of the best in this border region, despite the fact that it is negative (-6.6 for 1000 inhabitants) and almost twice higher than LT average (-11.8). The main reason for such number is the fact that the municipality is inhabited by elderly residents, which means that there is not a lot of residents left that would be able or more interested in emigration, as the younger generation has already left the municipality.

Ignalina district municipality may also be considered peripheral in terms of socioeconomic indicators. This municipality stands in the first place in all Lithuania for its highest unemployment rate of 19.1% while LT average is 1,6 times lower (11.7%). Besides that, Ignalina district municipality receives few foreign direct investments *per capita*.

Table 1. Socioeconomic and demographic statistical information concerning
the Lithuanian-Belarusian border region municipalities, in 2011

Indicators	Lithuanian average	Ignalina d. mun.	Lazdijai d. mun.	Varėna d. mun.	Švenčionys d. mun.	Šalčininkai d. mun.	Vilnius d. mun.	Druskininkai mun.	Visaginas mun.	Vilnius c. mun.
Population density, people/km²	49,7	13.1	18.1	12.0	17.3	24.4	45.1	51.3	467.5	1381.7
Rural population density, people/km²	16.4	8.4	13.4	7.6	7.0	17.1	42.4	17.1	-	-
Natural increase, per 1000 inhabitants	-2.1	-15.9	-8.7	-8.7	-9.8	-4.5	-0.2	-3.4	1.6	2.8
Ageing index[1]	144	234	177	193	186	117	110	187	111	132
Net migration, per 1000 inhabitants	-11.8	-6.6	-9.1	-11.5	-7.7	-8.6	4.3	-11.3	-28.3	-6.6
Rural population, %	33.1	64.3	73.9	63.5	40.3	70.0	94.0	33.3	-	-
Unemployment rate, %	11.7	19.0	16.2	12.9	12.4	14.9	16.2	14.3	10.9	10.0
Employed residents/ social assistance beneficiaries, %	16.1	44.1	40.2	36.7	21.8	33.5	20.9	20.5	12.9	6.0
Added value *per capita*[2], % of LT average	100	50.7	62.2	50.8	71.5	53.1	83.7	81.4	118.6	145.1
Foreign direct investment (FDI), LT/1 person (2010)	10,958	474	32	363	2630	45	4295	1112	594	37,831
Residents employed in agriculture[3], % (2010)	11.1	3.9	36.5	22.9	25.7	26.7	17.3	7.1	-	-
Average farm size[3], ha (2010)	13.8	14.7	7.4	10.6	8.2	9.8	5.2	5.3	-	-

[1]Ageing index: the number of elderly people (aged 60 and over) per 100 children under 15 (The electronic vocabulary, 2012).

[2]The relative differences of added value per capita created by employees in 2011 (as % from Lithuanian average).

[3] *Agricultural census, 2010.*

Source: Agricultural census, 2010.

In 2011 it was 474 Lt *per capita*, almost 23 times less than LT average. Other indicators in this municipality are also quite low. Taking into account up-to-date data, the tendencies in this municipality are grim.

On the other pole is the Vilnius city municipality, where almost all the indicators are at the highest level. Vilnius city municipality is home to around 17% (according to official data provided by the Lithuanian Statistics Department) of all Lithuanians. This number is relatively high, as Vilnius city municipality composes only around 0.6% of Lithuanian territory. In comparison, in other municipalities analysed in this article, residents in each of them are less than 1% (except Vilnius district municipality which is 3%) of the overall population, and the sum of all inhabitants in eight (excluding Vilnius city municipality) LT-BY borderland municipalities is 8.6 % of LT population. Vilnius city municipality also has a positive natural increase (2.8 per 1000 inhabitants), while Lithuanian average is negative -2.1 per 1000 inhabitants. This number is influenced by the relatively young age structure in the city. Vilnius city attracts the biggest amount of foreign direct investment *per capita*. The investment value is around thousand times bigger in comparison with the analysed regions' municipalities with the lowest investments, which are considered peripheral (Lazdijai and Šalčininkai district municipalities).

The impact zone of Vilnius city is the biggest in Lithuania. This city affects quite remote peripheral areas with its economic, social and political gravity (Ubarevičienė, Burneika and Kriaučiūnas 2010–2011). The existence of Vilnius city has both advantages and disadvantages for the analysed border region. First of all, Vilnius city municipality has a great impact on the surrounding districts' municipalities, as it produces workplaces, goods and services. Vilnius is also the main source of income for the budgets of nearby municipalities (Burneika and Ubarevičienė 2010–2011). On the other hand, there is a negative side of Vilnius city for this border region. Firstly, the city works as a magnet for the younger generation, in search of a better job, higher education or better living conditions. Thus, people move from the remote peripheral regions towards the centre. These tendencies can be seen in the table above (Tab. 1). Free and relatively cheap housing stock also starts to appear, mostly due to emigration and ageing population in peripheral areas. Such supply generates a flow of socially disadvantaged groups (like alcoholics and the unemployed), which creates various problems for local population and government (Burneika and Ubarevičienė 2010–2011).

One can say that there is a interdependency between Vilnius city and the peripherality in LT-BY border region. The strongest impact of the city is felt in Vilnius district municipality, as illustrated by the data in table 1. Further down

the list are Šalčininkai and Švenčionys district municipalities, which still feel the city's positive impact (Tab. 1). The worst data represents municipalities considered most peripheral according to statistical data and located furthest from Vilnius city: Ignalina, Lazdijai, Varėna (Tab. 1). Despite the fact that Druskininkai and Visaginas municipalities are quite far from Vilnius, the statistical data shows that the situation is relatively better, due to other reasons: Druskininkai municipality is a famous resort in Lithuania and Visaginas municipality used to be strong due to the Ignalina nuclear power plant. However, a look at table 1 shows that in 2011 Visaginas municipality was the one with the worst net migration rate (Tab. 1). Such situation appears because this municipality used to have the youngest population, so after the nuclear power plant was closed, people started emigrating and seeking a better life in the centres or abroad.
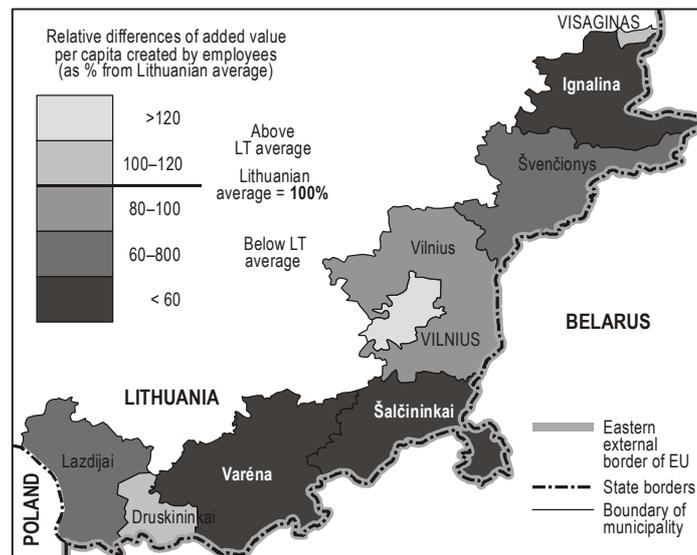

Fig. 1. The relative differences of added value *per capita* created by employees
in 2011 (as % from Lithuanian average)
Source: authors' own elaboration

One can say that Ignalina, Varėna and Šalčininkai municipalities are the most peripheral ones according to added value *per capita* created by employees (Fig. 1). These municipalities fall below LT average and generate only around 50% of Lithuanian average value. The added value *per capita* they generate is three times lower than in Vilnius city. We can assume that such low values of this indicator show that the municipalities do not have strong and big enterprises and the labour productivity is quite low.

In this analysis of border region's peripherality measurement, Vilnius district municipality also deserves some attention. Because of the existence on the LT--BY border region, it should be considered a peripheral region on the Lithuanian scale, but the presence of Vilnius city nearby improves the situation and, according to some indicators (Tab. 1), this municipality's situation is even better than that of Vilnius city (centre) municipality. However, other indicators still show a high peripherality level. This ambiguous situation is caused by the intense suburbanisation of Vilnius city. In the last years, Vilnius district has turned into a residential area for newcomers from Vilnius city. A number of new settlements were built and most of them are inhabited by wealthy and young residents, which declare their place of residence in the district. Natural increase and ageing index are good enough comparing with other municipalities and the Lithuanian average. Net migration in this municipality is positive while it is negative in the remaining part of Lithuania. This immigration also causes an increase in rural population (94%), which is around three times higher than the Lithuanian average (Fig. 2).
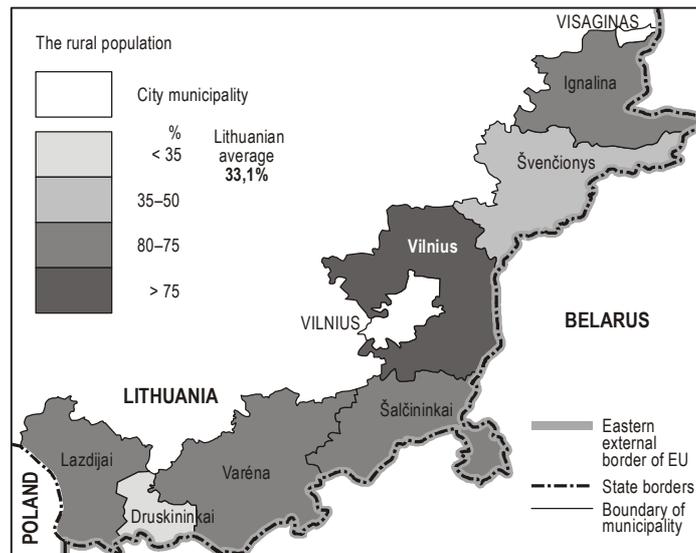

Fig. 2. Rural population in 2011
Source: authors' own elaboration

According to these numbers, it seems that most people in Vilnius district municipality engage in farming. However, this view is false, as a lot of inhabitants keep tight relations with Vilnius city (jobs, schools, kindergartens, shopping malls, services, etc.) and still consider themselves city residents. The

legislation limiting land acquisition for residential purposes also adds to the peripherality and in itself creates a pretty interesting situation. One of the most common ways to purchase land is to attend an official courses, become a farmer and receive permission to build a house in a purchased plot of land. As a consequence, the official statistical data becomes irrelevant: the number of farmers in Vilnius district municipality is growing, while agriculture is not (Burneika and Ubarevičienė 2010–2011).

Peripherality is also measured by the rural population indicator (Fig. 2). The highest peripherality level usually appears in the most rural areas. But, due to the above-mentioned reasons, the LT-BY border region includes an exceptional case – the Vilnius district municipality with 94% rural population. The municipalities of Ignalina, Lazdijai, Šalčininkai, Varėna also have a high percentage of rural population. Rural population in these municipalities consists more than 60% of the overall population, which is twice the Lithuanian average.

3. PERIPHERALISATION PHENOMENON: THE CHANGE OF THE SITUATION IN THE LT-BY BORDER REGION

The current situation is the aftermath of the processes that took place over the previous years. To study the peripheralisation process, we need to look over the data for different years. This chapter seeks to clarify the changes in the LT-BY border region, taking into account the period of the last fifteen years (until 2011).

Table 1 pointed out the negative numbers of net migration, natural increase – the indicators that affect general population directly. Figures 1 and 2 stress the loss of inhabitants.

During the last ten years, Lithuania's population density decreased from 53.4 to 49.7 people/km² (Fig. 3). Still, there is one municipality in which density increased. The density of Vilnius district municipality grew because of immigration from the city that has already been discussed.

The biggest change can be seen in Visaginas municipality (Fig. 3). However, this situation is due to the change of municipality boundaries. Still, despite the fact that the border region is losing residents, the situation in this region is relatively good compared with other parts of Lithuania and the loss does not exceed the Lithuanian average. The municipalities in the north-eastern part of Lithuania (Ignalina, Švenčionys) bordering with BY lost more inhabitants before 2001 (Fig. 3–5). Thus, the change in the last decade does not seem great. Nowadays, the biggest changes can be seen in the central part of Lithuania.

As far as depopulation is concerned, the peripheralisation process is most evident in Ignalina district municipality. Over the last fifteen years, the municipality lost more than five thousand or 23% of its inhabitants (Fig. 3). Varėna, Lazdijai, Druskininkai and Švenčionys municipalities lost around 16% of their populations. Vilnius city municipality lost approximately 3.6% inhabitants (or twenty thousands of all previous population) in fifteen years. However, positive changes might be seen in Vilnius district municipality, whose population increased 12.8 % (or eleven thousands). In general, Lithuania lost 10% or 357 thousands of inhabitants.
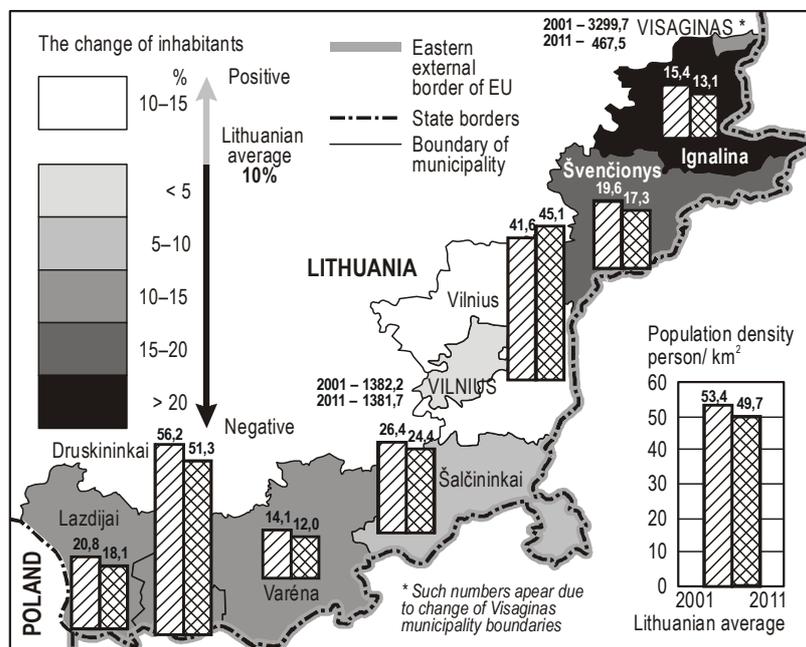
Fig. 3. The change of inhabitants since 1995 till 2011
Source: authors' own elaboration

This high depopulation is closely connected with relatively high emigration and low natural increase (Fig. 5). Taking into account the period since 1996 till 2011, we can see that the biggest loss of population was caused by emigration. Visaginas municipality comes in the first place in migration. Despite the fact that natural increase in this municipality is positive, the emigration rate is high. Such situation is closely connected with growing unemployment rate due to the closure of Ignalina nuclear power plant.

The data in Ignalina district and Visaginas municipalities' in 2002 are exceptionally interesting. The data are based on the change of the municipality

boundaries: in 2002, the Visaginas city municipality was renamed into Visaginas municipality and merged with some surrounding territories taken from Ignalina district municipality.

Considering net migration as one of the peripherality indicators' over time, Visaginas, Druskininkai, Varėna municipalities were the most severely affected by peripheralisation in the last fifteen years (Fig. 4). Emigration in these municipalities was relatively high, with a net migration of 10 in 1000 inhabitants over the period from 1996 to 2011.
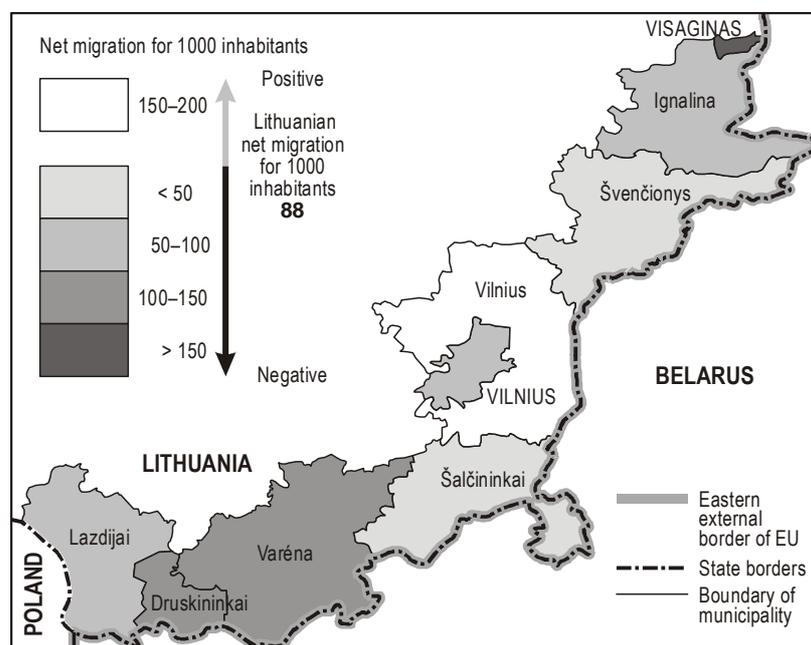
Fig. 4. The change of net migration
(in total, since 1996 till 2011)
Source: authors' own elaboration

The peripheralisation process as measured by natural increase indicator is the highest in Ignalina, Lazdijai and Varėna district municipalities. In these municipalities, the net migration indicator was several times lower in almost all years of the period (Fig. 5). In 2011, the indicator for Ignalina district munici-pality (-15.9 per 1000 inhabitants) was over seven times higher than the Lithua-nian average (-2.1 per 1000 inhabitants) (Fig. 5).

Natural increase indicator is directly linked to the ageing index (Fig. 6). Due to the high emigration rate and negative natural increase, the population in Lithuanian-Belarusian border region is ageing. This ageing tendency is visible in

all Lithuania, but in Ignalina district municipality the situation becomes threatening. In 2011, for 100 children under 15 there were 234 residents aged 60 and more (Fig. 6). Similarly negative situation can be seen in other analysed border region's municipalities, excluding the capital and its surrounding.

Natural increase for 1000 inhabitants

Net migration for 1000 inhabitants
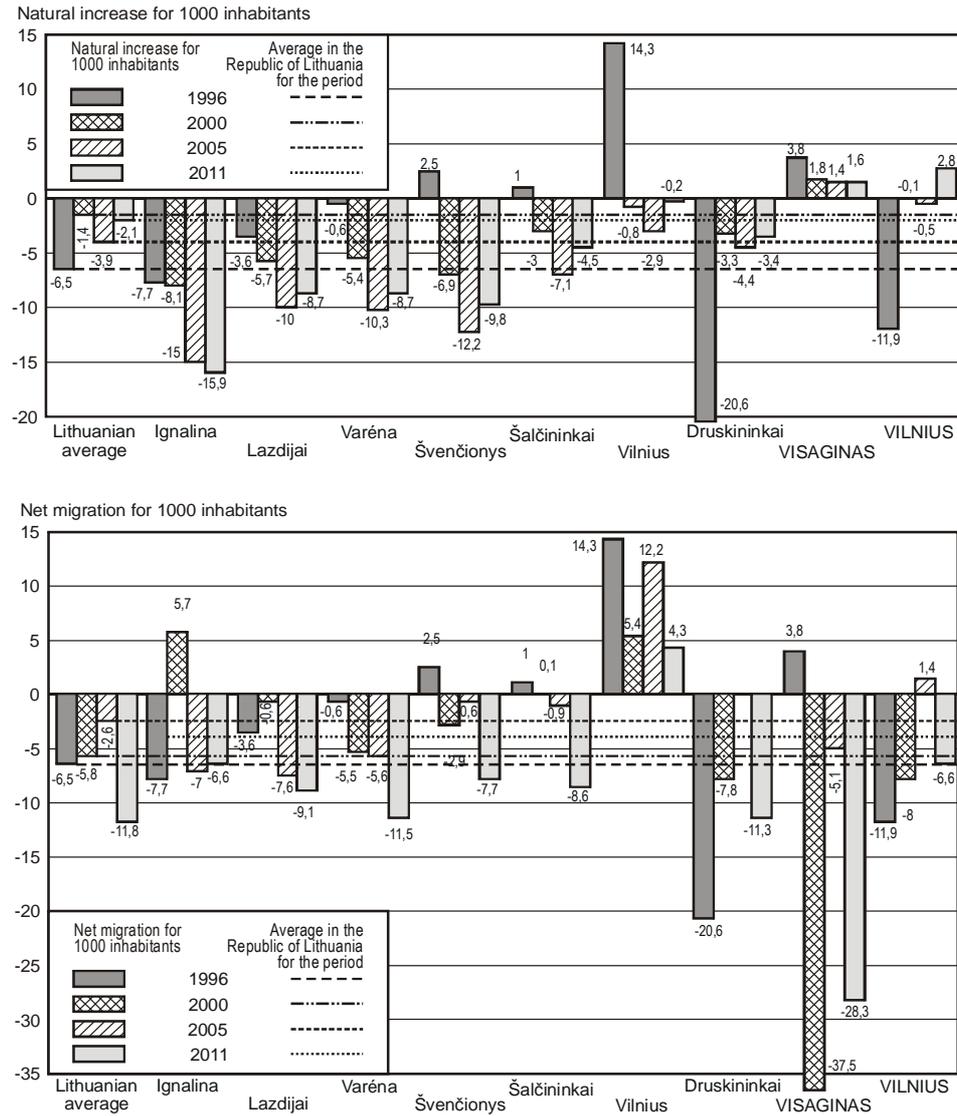
Fig. 5. Natural increase and net migration in the Lithuanian-
-Belarusian border region 1996–2011
Source: authors' own elaboration
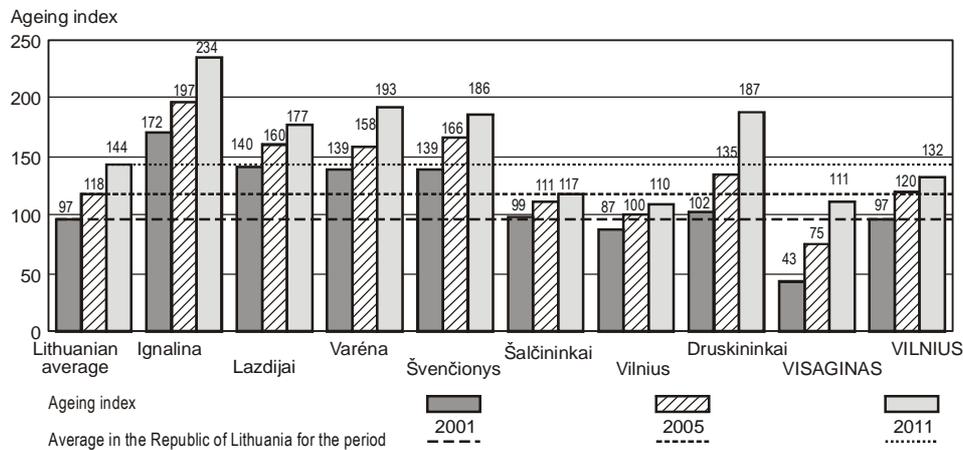
Fig. 6. Ageing index in the period 2001–2011
Source: authors' own elaboration

The peripheralisation of LT-BY border region might be also analysed using the change of unemployment rate indicator (Fig. 7). Comparing 1997 and 2011, the biggest negative change in unemployment rate appeared in Varėna district and Druskinikai municipalities. In these municipalities, unemployment grew more than 7 percentage units. The survey ('Lithuanian sparsely populated territories and their residents') that is carried out at the moment shows that the real situation in these municipalities is not so critical. In the summer of 2012, municipality authorities have who pointed out that a lot of residents register as unemployed in order to receive social assistance benefits, while performing unregistered jobs. These jobs are especially profitable in the summer time. For example, Varėna, Druskininkai, Lazdijai municipalities are well known for their berries and mushrooms, so residents work unofficially gathering them, receiving approximately 200 Lt (55 euro) per day, whole at the same time receiving social assistance benefits from the government. The authorities stress that residents live relatively well and they simply do not want to work officially as it is not worth their effort.

The situation in Švenčioniai district municipality is relatively stable. We can assume that the relatively good employment situation in this municipality is mostly due to the fact that part of the municipality's population works in Vilnius city, while remaining the residents of Švenčioniai municipality. Visaginas municipality has experienced the lowest change in their unemployment rates, as a lot of inhabitants have left the municipality after failing to find jobs.
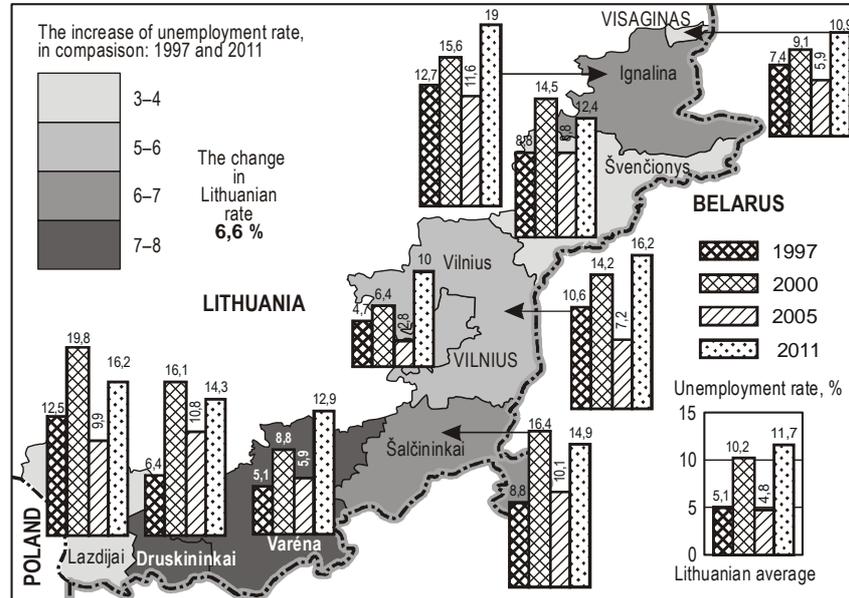
Fig. 7. The change of unemployment rate
Source: authors' own elaboration

Table 2. Foreign direct investment *per capita*
in the period 1997–2010, Lt

Specification	1997	2000	2005	2010
Lithuanian average	**1,168**	**2,678**	**7,022**	**10,958**
Ignalina d. mun.	-	4	275	474
Lazijai d. mun.	-	1	110	32
Varėna d. mun.	373	248	318	363
Švenčionys d. mun.	255	607	1,939	2,630
Šalčininkai d. mun.	27	69	26	45
Vilnius d. mun.	555	1,528	1,125	4,295
Druskininkai mun.	16	10	78	1,112
Visaginas mun.	-	173	52	594
Vilnius c. mun	3,808	10,465	24,064	37,831

Source: authors' own elaboration.

The main flow of foreign direct investment is directed towards Vilnius city municipality, which is the strongest economic centre in the country and provides a relatively large selection of workforce. Vilnius city municipality in 2010

received around 60% of all foreign direct investment in Lithuania, and the amount of investments keeps growing (Tab. 2). As can be seen in their incomes, Vilnius district and Švenčionys district municipalities are also becoming interesting for the investors. This might be influenced by their location relatively close to Vilnius city, which also serves to strengthen their bonds with the city.

Lazdijai and Šalčininkai district municipalities are the least interesting for foreign investors. In 2010, they received more than 250 times less than the Lithuanian average and more than 900 times less than Vilnius city (Tab. 2). Lazdijai district municipality is located quite far from the capital and might be more attractive as a recreational zone. However, foreign investors are usually more interested in economic profit.

In the last years, Druskininkai municipality has become more interesting to foreign investors, as this municipality's popularity as a tourist destination (both summer and winter) is increasing.

4. THE ESTIMATION OF LT-BY BORDER REGION'S PERIPHERALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF LITHUANIA

The situation at the LT-BY border is relatively inferior, except for the capital municipality and its surroundings. High emigration rates, low natural increase, big elderly population, low investments and other factors determine the poor social and economic situation of this border region.

Previous chapters gave an analytical overview of the situation and its variability in the municipalities within the LY-BY border region. Therefore, this chapter seeks to determine the position of the municipalities of the analysed border region in a broader Lithuanian context. Several indicators were chosen for the survey, which was supposed to determine peripherality (in 2011). The chosen indicators were: population density, rural population density, natural increase, ageing index, net migration, unemployment rate, relative differences of added value *per capita* created by employees, and foreign direct investment *per capita*. The survey involved all 60 Lithuanian municipalities, but focused on just 15 of them, i.e. the ones with the lowest values of chosen indicators. Special emphasis was put on the LT-BY border region, as the purpose of the survey was to determine how many LT-BY border region municipalities appear in the "bottom fifteen" (most peripheral). Thus, the occurrences of LT-BY border municipalities in the list were counted. The maximum number was eight, as that is how many indicators were chosen (Fig. 8). Such summary enabled us to show the peripherality level of the LT-BY border region in Lithuanian scale.
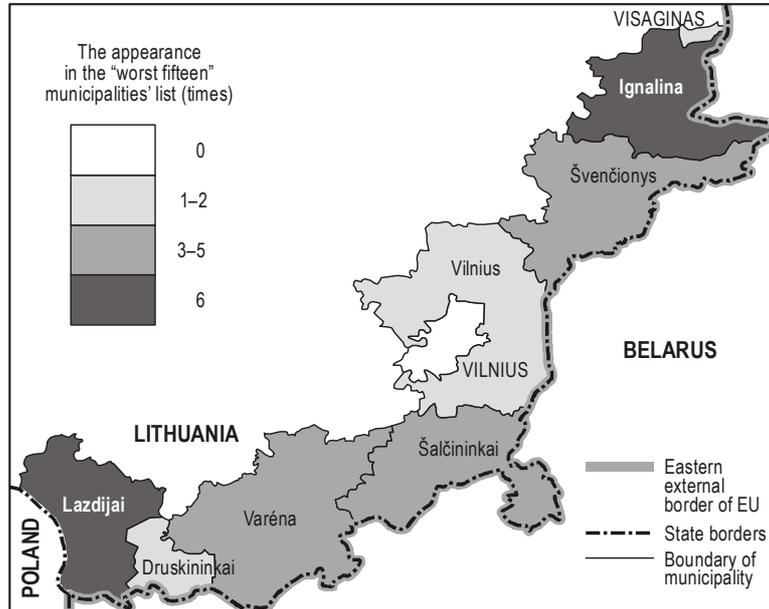
Fig. 8. LT-BY border region's peripherality measurement
Source: authors' own elaboration

The survey showed, that the Ignalina and Lazdijai district municipalities were found to be among the most peripheral not only with the border region, but in Lithuania as a whole (Fig. 8). They lead the 'bottom fifteen' list in such indicators as density, natural increase, ageing index, unemployment rate, added value *per capita* created by employees and foreign direct investment. From the eight chosen indicators, Ignalina and Lazdijai district municipalities appear in six 'bottom fifteen' lists.

Varėna district municipality appears in five out of eight 'bottom fifteen' lists (Fig. 8). The municipality is sparsely populated, inhabited by ageing population, with low natural increase rate, poor foreign investments and low added value *per capita* created by employees.

Other municipalities appear in the 'bottom fifteens' lists less often. Švenčioniai district appeared in 4, Šalčininkai district in 3, Druskininkai in 2, Visaginas and Vilnius district in 1.

Again, we should remember that this survey shows certain peculiarities – the municipalities located closer to the capital display better results of indicators, while those located further from the centre and restricted by the existence of strict border regime ranked lower in survey and can be considered more peripheral.

5. CONCLUSION

1. Nine municipalities are located along the external EU border, on the Lithuanian – Belarusian border line. They differ among themselves in the degree of peripherality. Ignalina, Varena and Lazdijai municipalities are the weakest and the most peripheral in this border region, as well as in Lithuania as a whole.

2. The Lithuanian – Belarusian border regime, which restricts the movement of residents, goods and services, has a negative effect on the border region, as a result encouraging residents, entrepreneurs and foreign investors to look for a more convenient place for their activities. Having analysed the changes in the last fifteen years, it can be claimed that this region is becoming more peripheral.

3. A peculiarity of this Lithuanian – Belarusian border region is becoming clear: the capital serves as a centre and the degree of peripherality increases the farther we move from Vilnius. However, Vilnius' stabilising role is noticeable only at the municipalities closest to the city.

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SOCIO-ECONOMICAL ASPECTS OF DEPOPULATION IN EASTERN EU BORDER REGION – CASE OF EASTERN LITHUANIA

1. INTRODUCTION

Depopulation of peripheral areas is a widespread phenomenon in EU's eastern border countries. It has been causing certain negative socio-economic consequences for several decades. Even though this phenomenon is mostly related to urbanisation of the society, the pace and causes of depopulation, as well as the resulting problems are different in different places, even within one country. Such areas could be found in eastern Lithuania, south-eastern Latvia, north-eastern Poland and even outside the EU, in western Belarus, Russia or Ukraine. This big, international, sparsely populated region is undergoing certain transformation. The main aim of this paper is to discuss these processes, their reasons as well as their main socio-economic consequences. The study is based on the case of Eastern Lithuania, where these trends are most obvious.

The socio-economic backwardness of Eastern Lithuania is a consequence of several factors, among which its peripheral geographical location and the resulting complicated history play an important role. It is an area which for a long period was being affected by peripherisation processes. As a rule, most demographic, social and economic indicators here are among the worst in Lithuania. The same situation is common in other states of the region. Territories located near the EU border experience quite similar problems. The uniqueness of Lithuanian situation is related to the position of its capital. The most prosperous Lithuanian city Vilnius is located in the middle of such region. Such situation has a strong impact on development of this lagging region. Obviously, this has both positive and negative influence on the socio-economic situation in the region.

The paper will analyse trends of changes of various indicators of socio-economic development in municipalities of Eastern Lithuania. We will try to study the main spatial differences of depopulation and correlated negative phenomena in East Lithuania, as well as some reasons of such processes. Such indicators as population, density, general trends of economy, employment, social services, and land use patterns are among the main concerns of the research. The role of the capital city of Vilnius in all those processes will be discussed as well. The situation in Eastern Lithuania (Alytus, Utena, Vilnius counties and their 19 municipalities in particular) is to be analysed at this stage of the research, while trends on the other side of the EU border (in Latvia, Poland and Belarus) are to be revealed in the future.

The analysis is mostly based on secondary data sources such as the website of Lithuanian Department of Statistics under the Government of Lithuanian Republic[1], its electronic database[2], a register of farmers[3], the website of the Lithuanian State Tax inspection[4], data from the Censuses of agriculture of 2003 and 2010[5]. Some findings and conclusions were based on field research carried out in the region in 2012.

This paper is a continuation of authors' previous researches, devoted to investigations of development of East Lithuania and the border region in particular (Baubinas and Stanaitis 2001, 2002, Stanaitis and Baubinas 2002, Daugirdas and Burneika 2006, Baubinas, Burneika and Daugirdas 2008). Other research topics related to the theme of the paper would include sparsely populated areas of Lithuania (Daugirdas 2002a, 2002b, Daugirdas, Baubinas and Marcinkenaite 2003, Daugirdas and Baubinas 2007, 2008, Kriaučiūnas 2010); land use transformations in Eastern Lithuania (Ribokas and Rukas 2006, Ribokas and Milius 2007, Milius and Ribokas 2008, Ribokas and Zlatkute 2009, Ribokas 2010, 2011); and influence of Vilnius on the development of the region (Burneika 2008, 2009, Burneika, Kriaučiūnas and Ubareviciene 2010, Burneika and Ubareviciene 2011).

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[1] http://www.stat.gov.lt
[2] http://db1.stat.gov.lt
[3] http://www.vic.lt
[4] http://www.vmi.lt
[5] http://www.stat.gov.lt

2. MAIN FEATURES AND TRENDS OF DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT

Lithuania inherited a uniform settlement system, which was artificially developed in planned economy during the Soviet period according to modified ideas of central place theory. The development of big cities was limited, middle size cities were promoted around the country, a system of 'kolchoz' central settlement was created, and a network of farmsteads was annihilated. Many of the present transformations in the settlement system of Lithuania are a direct result of such a modification, when the system is trying to reach its 'spatial equilibrium'. Excessive proportion of population living in rural areas and middle size cities, as well as a relatively too small capital city are the main basic reasons of ongoing spatial processes in Lithuania. This results in a decrease of population in rural areas, shrinking middle size cities and a relative growth of the capital city. However, there exist various local factors of development which are causing substantial differences in these processes. This section will analyse the main trends in the changes to the population numbers in the region.

Population was increasing in Lithuania until the collapse of Soviet Union, mainly due to the growth of the cities, though the proportion of population in rural areas remained high due to the Soviet efforts to sustain labour force for ineffective agriculture. The number of residents of Lithuania started to decrease in 1992, though it was still growing in rural areas until 1994–1995.

Eastern Lithuanian manufacturing centres Alytus and Utená grew mostly due to migration from surrounding regions in the Soviet era, while limited possibilities to reside in capital city to some extent hindered the growth of the main economic and cultural centre of Vilnius. Eventually, at the end of the Soviet era, population in the region reached 1.32 million (Vilnius with 586 thousand, Alytus with 74 thousand and Utená with 35 thousand inhabitants were the main centres). This number dropped to 1.12 million in 2011. Therefore the region lost some 200 thousand, or about 15% of its population (104 thousand during the last decade, so the negative trends were gaining pace).

The highest decrease is evident in peripheral rural areas, which have suffered from depopulation for several decades. The lowest density of rural population can be found in Anykščiai, Ignalina, Zarasai, Švenčionys and Varéna municipalities, where it dropped below 10 residents per sq km. All these municipalities are located nearby Lithuanian-Belarusian or Eastern EU border. The density of rural population in Moletai, Utena and Ukmerge municipalities does not reach 12.5 residents per sq km, so they also could be defined as sparsely populated; 8 of 13 most sparsely populated municipalities of Lithuania are located in Eastern

Lithuania. Lazdijai, Širvintos and Trakai municipalities also have a rural popu-
lation density below 13.5 residents per sq km.
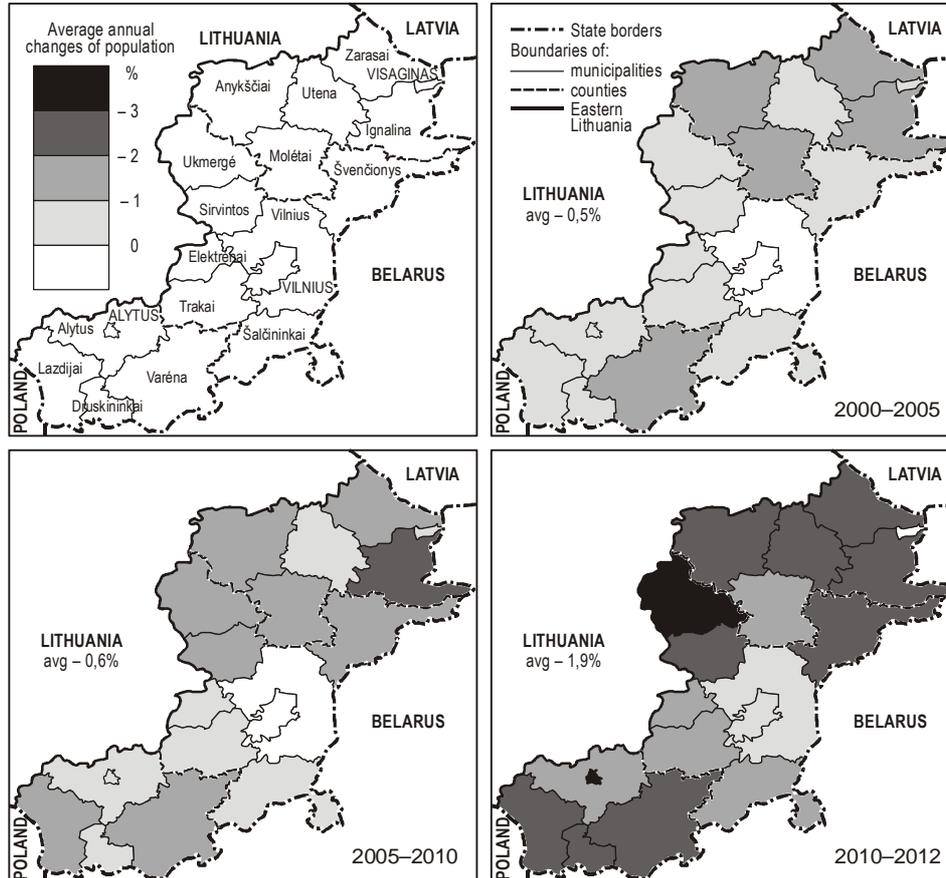
Fig. 1. Average annual change of population in municipalities
of East Lithuania in 2001–2012
Source: based on data of Department of Statistics
of Lithuania (http://www.stat.gov.lt)

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate depopulation trends in various municipalities of
Eastern Lithuania during the last decade. The only exception in the period
between 2001 and 2005 is visible in the Vilnius district, where intensive sub-
urbanization resulted in a growing number of residents. However, the intensity
of depopulation was not exceptional, as the majority of municipalities were
losing up to 1% of their residents per year[6]. The most intensive depopulation

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[6] http://www.stat.gov.lt

was noted in the municipalities of Utená County and Varéna district. These processes grew more intense between 2005 and 2010. Ignalina municipality was losing more than 2% of its population per year. Only Vilnius city and Vilnius district municipalities were growing. However, the number of residents decreased in all municipalities in the last two years (2010–2012). The most negative trends were evident in middle-sized cities of Alytus and Visaginas, as well as in the Ukmerge district, which were losing more than 3% of their residents annually.

The 8.5% decrease of population in Eastern Lithuania in 2001–2011 was lower than Lithuanian average (12.3%), primarily because of the growth of Vilnius urban region. The pace of this decrease in peripheral parts of the region was the highest in the state (15–20% and more) (Fig. 2).
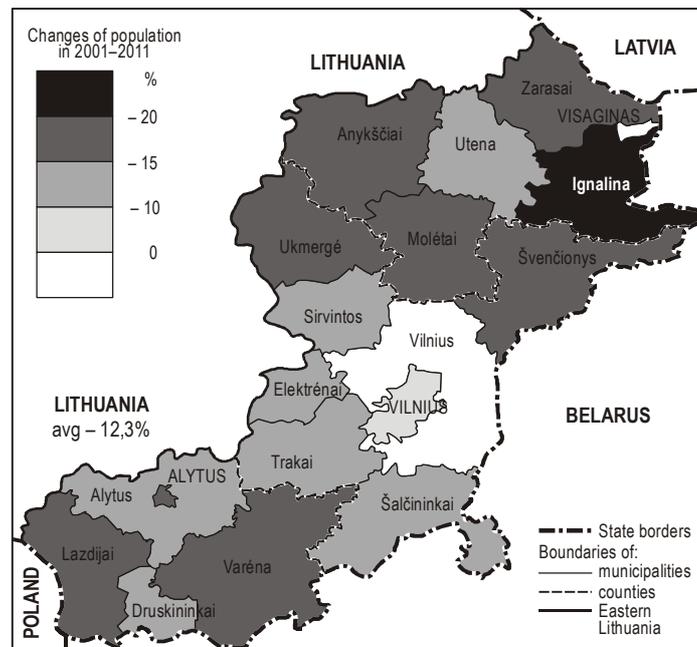
Fig. 2. Average annual change of population
in municipalities of East Lithuania in 2001–2011
Source: based on census data (http://www.stat.gov.lt).

Emigration and negative birth rate are the main factors of negative demographic trends in the whole Lithuania, but substantial regional differences exist. The decrease of population is determined largely by emigration in middle and western Lithuania, as well as in the biggest cities. The importance of birth rate is several times smaller here, while in Eastern Lithuania both factors play equal

roles, as a rule. In Ignalina municipality, the negative birth rate caused 70% of all decrease of the population. Eastern Lithuania has been experiencing a long--lasting depopulation trend related to aging population, therefore the proportion of potential emigrants is very small. In some settlements, pensioners constitute more than half of population.

One of the decisive geographical factors which is causing major regional differences in the discussed phenomena is the location of an area in relation to Vilnius. The more distant an area, the deeper periphery, the more negative trends prevail. Direct impact of suburbanisation is not widely spread – it mostly involves the Vilnius municipality, where the number of residents statistically increased by 6%. LAU 2 regions nearby Vilnius city in some cases more than doubled their population. Such processes are also evident in Trakai and, to much lesser extent, in Salcininkai municipalities. However, the impact on labour market and consequently on jobs, migrations and etc. is much wider. The scale and character of this impact will be discussed in more detail in the last chapter of the paper.

3. THE INCREASE OF SPATIAL EXCLUSION

The depopulation increases both social and spatial exclusion of residents of the region. This reduces opportunities for sustainable economic, social and cultural development. The whole region apart from Vilnius and its surroundings is becoming a deeper and deeper periphery. Therefore, the areas located farther from the capital city, especially rural ones near the border, are gaining features of not only social, but also spatial exclusion. The melting network of education facilities illustrates these processes most evidently (Fig. 3).

School was and still is one of the most important institutions guaranteeing liveability in communities in sparsely populated rural areas in East Lithuania. However, one of direct consequences of decreasing number of population and pupils is the annihilation of the rural school network. The scale of this process has become massive during last decade. Other necessary facilities like cultural centres, libraries, medical points, post offices, banks and public transport are disappearing from the rural landscape of East Lithuania as well. Public bus connections are available only once a day or even once a week in many rural settlements here. School closure is usually an additional factor for further reduction of these services, because it usually considerably reduces the demand for them. All this further diminishes the possibilities for improvement of the social and economic situation. The identification with the country (place identity)

is disappearing among younger population, emigration increases. The identity of older people is changing and impressions of being residents of deep forgotten periphery start to appear. All this results in certain stigmatisation when overcoming such situation is almost impossible. Such measures like renovation of schools or establishment of other public institutions (like public cultural centres) help to improve perception of life and strengthen the community, but cannot change natural trends. The improving road infrastructure does not have adequate effect, as incomes of population aren't high, while fuel prices constantly increase.
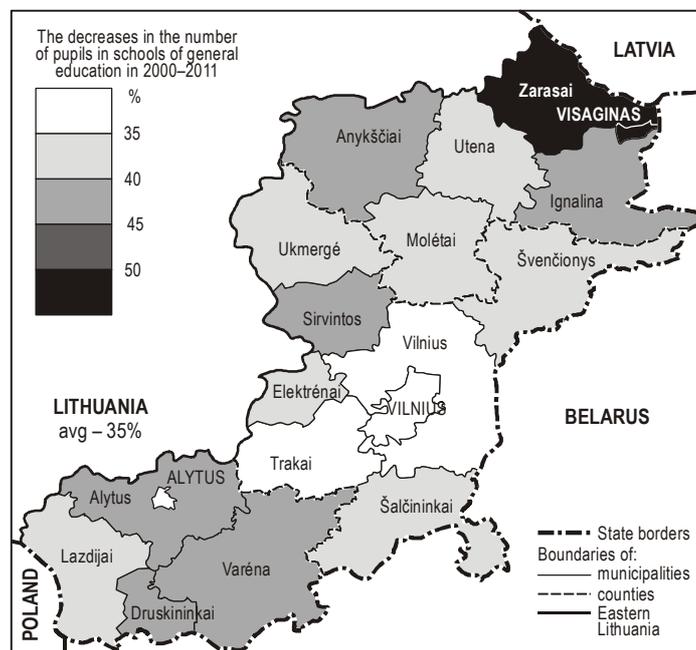
Fig. 3. Change of number of pupils in schools of general education in 2001–2011
Source: based on data of Department of Statistics of Lithuania (http://www.stat.gov.lt)

The diminishing number of schools and pupils mentioned above was especially evident in East Lithuania, and it gained terrifying pace since entering the EU, when emigration increased substantially. The number of children attending schools has dropped by some 35% in the period of 2001–2011. Number of pupils is dropping by 20–25 thousand or 5–6% per year in Lithuania, which is the result of certain changes of demographic processes in mid 1990s. The decrease is even faster in some municipalities of East Lithuania. Such factors mentioned above as exclusion, location near the border, faster and long-lasting depopulation, unfavourable demographic structure, emigration and other correla-

tive phenomena are among the main reasons for such trend. Alytus, Ignalina and Zarasai districts, as well as Druskininkai municipality were losing 43–47%, while Visaginas municipality lost as much as 64% of their schoolchildren during this period. Such a decline in the latter municipality could be explained by specific demographic structure of a new city and the closure of Ignalina nuclear power plant, which was a requirement for entering the EU. Not surprisingly, the best situation is in Vilnius (27% decrease) and its surrounding (Trakai and Vilnius districts lost 30% of their pupils).

It is only natural that, in such circumstances, the network of secondary schools is shrinking. 1045 schools (or 44% of all) were closed during the last decade and another 300 will be closed within the next few years (Fig. 5). A vast majority of closed schools were located in small settlements. This process is exceptionally fast in most of municipalities of East Lithuania (Fig. 4). Anykščiai and Ignalina districts lost some 75%, Alytus and Lazdijai almost 70% of their schools, therefore some municipalities has got only one or two secondary or lower-secondary schools left. The decrease is slower in city municipalities. Only in Vilnius, the number of schools is growing (10%).
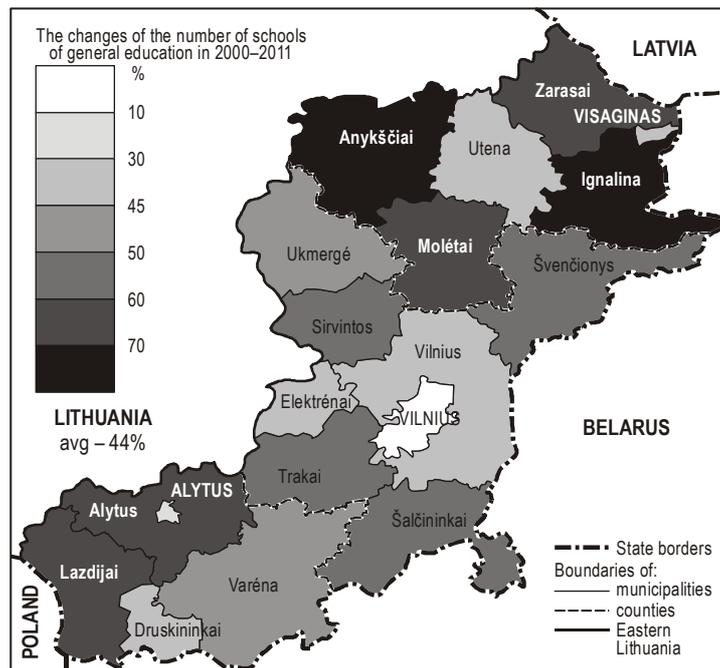
Fig. 4. Change of the number of school of general education in 2001 – 2011
Source: based on data of Department of Statistics of Lithuania
(http://www.stat.gov.lt)

Number of pupils in pre-school establishments in thousands

Number of pupils in general schools in thousands

Number of schools of general education

Number of libraries
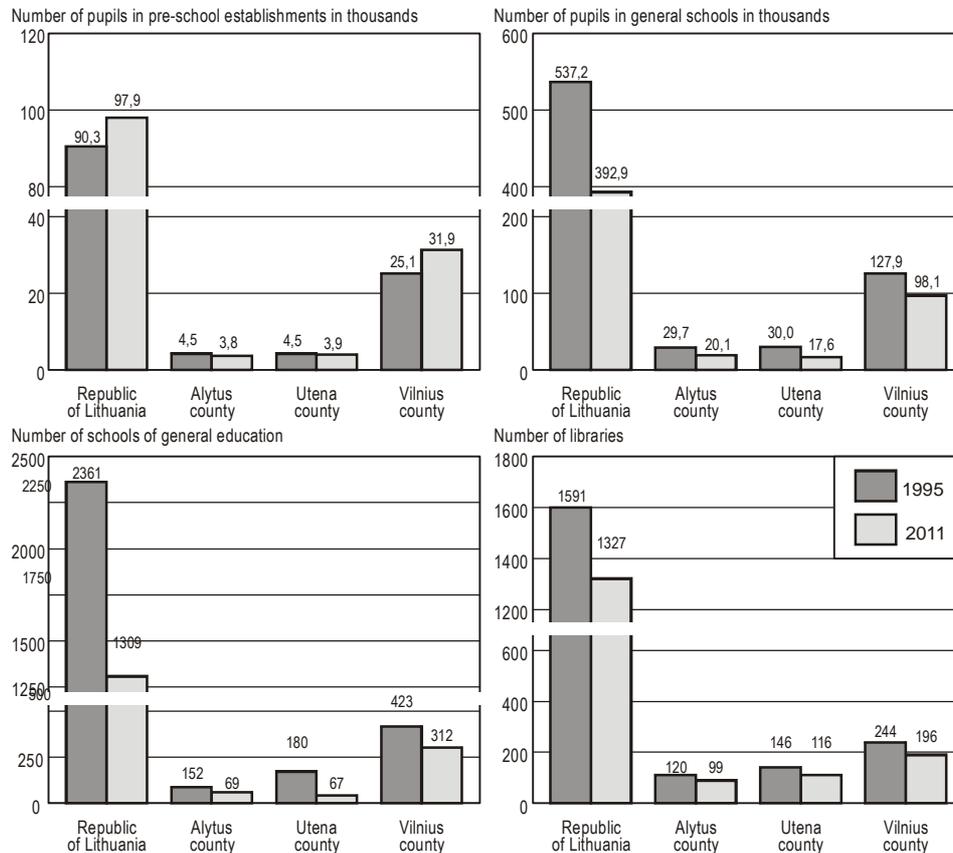
Fig. 5. Changes in density of education system in East Lithuania
Source: based on data of the Department of Statistics of Lithuania
(http://www.stat.gov.lt)

Situation in pre-schools is also complicated in many areas (Fig. 5). Though the number of children in such institutions increased in whole Lithuania by 8% since 2005, the situation in the border region of East Lithuania is critical. The number dropped in Lazdijai by 43%, in Zarasai by 29%, in Varéna and Širvintos by 25%. The baby boom of 2005–2006 apparently did not reach these areas substantially, due to the long-lasting aging of the population there. The number of children in such establishments substantially increased in Vilnius city, Vilnius district and Šalčininkai district municipalities (37%, 24% and 28%, respectively). However, the number of such institutions is decreasing both in Lithuania in general and in rural districts of East Lithuania. Some municipalities have lost almost all networks of pre-school establishments. Ignalina and Zarasai lost 80%, Molètai 75% and Širvintos 67% of such facilities. There are only one or two

kindergartens in a whole municipality. A few kindergartens were established in Vilnius and Vilnius district; the number did not change in Visaginas and Elektrenai.

The networks of other important social institutions such as cultural centres, libraries, medical stations and post offices are also shrinking (Fig. 5). Though statistical data is not reliable in many cases due to formal reorganisation and merging of former cultural institutions, the diminishing trends here are obvious. The same situation can be seen in the field of medical services. The lowest level of such institutions, including mostly local medical stations, is disappearing. Only 4 out of 23 such stations are left in Lazdijai district, 7 out of 20 in Vilnius district, and 4 out of 11 in Trakai. According to the Department of Statistics, all 23 stations disappeared in Moletai district. Services are being delegated to higher level institutions, which, as a rule, are located farther from local residents, in the municipal centres. The network of such institutions is shrinking as well. Some positive trends are related to the development of private medical establishments.

The situation in commercial services sector is quite similar. The number of shops has been decreasing in the whole region, except the cities of Vilnius and Alytus. The decrease in small towns would have been even bigger if the region weren't a popular tourist destination. Field research revealed that local shops in many places survive just because of high summer demand. Clear trend of concentration is evident in all kinds of services and it is obviously the main feature of development of service (both commercial and non-commercial) economy of the region.

4. LAND USE CONDITIONS IN EAST LITHUANIA

While analysing the development of rural territories, one should pay attention to the situation in agriculture, as it is traditionally the main supplier of jobs and the main source of income for the local residents. Obviously, trends of social development should derive from conditions for this kind of activity. Farmers of East Lithuania face a lot of obstacles, which complicate the development of profitable agriculture. The suitability of a territory for agriculture depends on various physical (soil quality, relief, etc.), infrastructural (size of land use structure, melioration and irrigation systems, roads, etc.) and socio-economic (age structure of population, education, density of population, incomes, un-employment, local market size, etc.) factors. Legally, the land's unfitness for

agriculture is determined by local administrative units (seniunija) according to 5 basic criteria (Dėl žemės... 2004):

1. The proportion of low productivity lands is higher than the Lithuanian average by 20 %.

2. The fertility of grain cultures is up to 80 % of country average.

3. The density of rural population is more than two times lower than country average.

4. The average annual decrease of population is higher than 0,5%.

5. The proportion of working-age population employed in agriculture and forestry is higher than 15%.

Such lands compose 42% of all agricultural lands of Lithuania (1.467 million ha). Figure 6 illustrates that almost all rural LAU 2 regions of East Lithuania belong to this category. Only Vilnius and Alytus districts have a few local administrative units suitable for agriculture. One can say, that the whole region is not suitable for agriculture. One of the main criteria ranking well below the requirements is related to the demographic structure of the unit.

Fig. 6. The classification of lands unsuitable for farming
Source: Dėl žemės… (2004)

Another disadvantageous aspect for land use in the region is related to the high degree of fragmentation of land use units. The average farm size in Lithuania in 2012 was 9,7 ha (www.vic.lt), while in East Lithuania, it is only 8,8 ha. Exceptionally small units in Vilnius district (4,1 ha) are a result of chaotic suburbanisation, i.e. people formally gaining farmer status in order to build houses in agricultural land.

The post-soviet reforms caused serious decline of agriculture, which also resulted in actual reduction of the area of agricultural lands. Eastern Lithuania was impacted especially severely because of unfavourable conditions. The total area of unutilised lands increased from 1% to 24% of all territory in East Lithuania between 1990 and 2007. In the middle of the first decade of the new millennium, average proportion of arable lands in Lithuania reached 78%, while in East Lithuania it reached approximately 60% of former agricultural lands. (Aleknavicius and Aleknavicius 2007).

The proportion of unutilised lands has decreased in Lithuania in the last few years. This process strongly depends on EU's agricultural policy and direct payments for arable lands. Increasing prices of agricultural products make positive impact as well. However, it is quite difficult to make long lasting forecasts in this field.

The decrease in proportion of unutilised land is especially evident in East Lithuania, as it is highest here. Owing to the direct payments from the EU, land use is profitable even without the agricultural product itself. Therefore, previously unused lands are being cultivated again, though the most popular method involves declaring the land as pasture. The proportion of unutilised lands decreased more than two-fold in Trakai, Vilnius and Varéna district municipalities (Tab. 1). Similar trends have been evident in the last two years. 24% of land owners state that EU support and other subsidies make up half of their income; some 60% stated that it composes up to 1/3 of their income. Without the support, only 40 % of owners would continue their agricultural activity (Ribokas and Zlatkute 2009). We can claim that, without the EU support, the rural areas of East Lithuania would lose their most traditional function as agricultural lands.

The demographic structure of the population is unfavourable as well. The majority of land owners are older than 60 and 40% only have primary education. Just 30% of the owners declare that agriculture is their main source of income. 30% did not use their land at all in 2005. The pensions and allowances are the main sources of income for half of the land owners. Only 30% of land owners were sure that their farm would survive after they retire (Ribokas and Rukas 2006).

Table 1. Unutilised lands in operating farms
in East Lithuania

Rural municipalities	Unutilised agricultural land (ha)		Proportion of unutilised agricultural land in operating farms (% out of total agricultural lands)	
	2003	2010	2003	2010
Vilnius county				
Elektrénai	787	494	5,8	3,6
Šalčininkai	1436	527	3,4	1,3
Širvintos	1568	412	5,6	1,5
Svenčionys	1049	884	3,9	3,3
Trakai	1597	732	7,7	3,5
Ukmergè	1047	506	2,1	1,0
Vilnius	3048	1576	7,2	3,7
Utena county				
Anykščiai	2021	540	3,5	0,9
Ignalina	559	317	2,0	1,1
Molètai	1232	1197	3,2	3,1
Utena	1138	988	3,0	2,6
Zarasai	1037	407	3,4	1,3
Alytus county				
Alytus	1071	1049	1,7	1,6
Druskininkai	750	164	11,3	2,4
Lazdijai	1908	764	4,9	2,0
Varéna	1635	361	6,0	1,3

Source: based on census data for agriculture of 2005 and 2011.

The peripheral location near the EU border has some negative impact on agriculture, reducing potential market for production and increasing distances to available market. However, it is difficult to estimate this influence, because the impact of the land quality is a decisive factor.

5. IMPACT OF THE GROWING VILNIUS URBAN REGION ON EAST LITHUANIA

When analysing the development of the problems in East Lithuania, one should pay attention to the Vilnius urban region. The most prosperous Lithuanian city develops in the middle of this problem region. This situation has a very strong, sometimes even decisive impact. The existence, functioning and growth of the city are among the main factor for the development of the region. It creates areas with different development tendencies from their surrounding. Its influence is the main reason for the development of a considerable part of the studied areas, as shown in the previous sections.

The territory of Vilnius city has been growing both administratively and physically for the last few decades. Such growth was mostly caused by rapid suburbanization and resulted in the city spreading into the region, which involves urban and non-urban areas, communities, economies, perceptions, etc. One of the main aims of this research is the study of the scale and type of economic impact of Vilnius city on the surrounding East Lithuanian region, which has traditionally been perceived as the least developed part of Lithuania. The development of the city, which is the most prosperous and the fastest-developing social system in the country, could and should have considerable impact on the processes in most of, if not all of the analysed area. This study attempts to list such impacts.

Earlier studies (Burneika and Ubareviciene 2011) revealed the shape and structure of the evolving Vilnius city, which resulted in the formation of Vilnius urban region (Fig. 7). It is an area which has already transformed into an urban one, at least to some extent. A wider area, named Vilnius city functional region (or Vilnius metropolitan region), was also defined as a space which is being influenced by the city. In this case, the most important part of the cities' hinterland involves the zone of everyday commuter flow. In other words, it is the zone with the most intense impact on the economy of the region. This zone is of particular interest in this case, because it is almost completely located in East Lithuania region. The defined zones almost accurately illustrate the areas of different impact of the city. Those areas evolve differently from the rest of East Lithuania and most socio-demographic indicators differ substantially here. Obviously, not only economy but the whole social system, should feel some impact of the city, as the previous sections of the paper confirm.

The growth of the city in the context of economic, political, social and cultural transformations of the society inevitably results not just in the expansion of its urban space, but also in its segregation and fragmentation. The redistri-

bution of population between different parts of the region is still a significant process. Field research carried out by the authors of this article revealed that the spread of the city has an impact on the segregation of population in the metropolitan region even in areas which are not directly affected by the city sprawl. This is an example of the direct impact that the city has on the socio--economic conditions in the surrounding region. The middle and peripheral zones of the urban region (Fig. 7) are a destination for the flow of quite affluent residents from Vilnius, which means the inflow of economic well-being. An area almost right next to it serves as a kind of social 'trashcan' for the city. Mostly due to the aging population and emigration, some abundance of free and cheap housing appears in many villages and towns in Vilnius city region. Such supply generates a flow of socially disadvantaged groups from the city to the country (e.g. the unemployed, alcoholic residents, often with young children). Those newcomers start to cause various problems both to local population and the government. This in turn has some negative economic impact on areas close to Vilnius urban region.
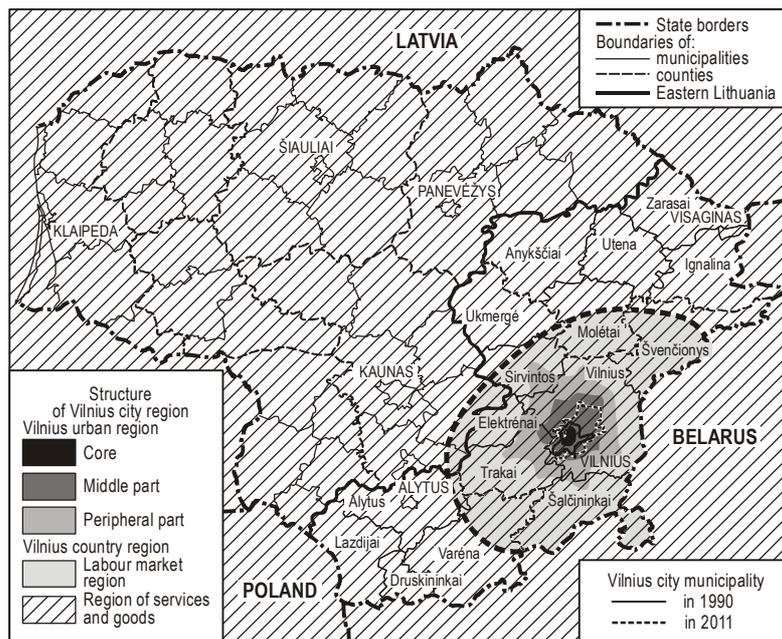

Fig. 7. Simplified structure of Vilnius city functional region
Source: R. Ubareviciene and D. Burneika (2011)

The whole studied area is affected by the immigration of younger population to the city. Though the phenomenon is common in more distant or even remote

places as well, the population of East Lithuania has almost no other migration destinations in Lithuania apart from Vilnius. Obviously, the spreading metropolitan region has some negative impact on the social structure of more distant surrounding areas. It lures young and active population and exports mostly those that cannot take care of themselves. Such a negative trend, however, is diminishing, because the resources of 'young and active' population are almost exhausted in many parts of the region. On the other hand, the supply of local jobs is low and such migrations help solve unemployment problems and decreases spending of municipal budgets on social care. New trends of de-urbanisation ('going back to the countryside') is evident, and a small number of former urban residents find their homes in the country. Therefore, it is hard to estimate if migrations to and from the city are making sufficient negative or positive impact on the development of the region at present. On the other hand, the demand for summer houses in the picturesque East Lithuanian lake region makes a positive impact on the development. It also helps to preserve local cultural heritage and creates a demand for services, at least in summer time (in many places local shops exist just because of such demand and would be closed otherwise).

Moreover, Vilnius is the main driver of the growth in the central part of East Lithuania, as it generates considerable, if not the most significant, part of income of the residents of surrounding areas. Vilnius is also the main source of income for the budgets of municipalities in the region (Fig. 8). Consequently, the biggest amounts for the Vilnius municipality are earned in Vilnius. Quite similar situation is evident in the Trakai municipality. The impact on more distant municipalities is not so enormous, though it is also quite substantial. The field research revealed some reasons for the flow of tax money there. Firstly, many families which left for Vilnius didn't declare their new place of residence (in many cases because they rent flats illegally or simply see no point in this). Some declare they place of residence in a region in order to receive a Belarusian visa as residents of a borderland zone. Some, though very few, are behaving so on purpose, in order to support their native town.

The studies carried out earlier (Burneika and Kriaučiūnas 2005) revealed that the development of Vilnius city has had positive impact on development of municipalities located nearby since the beginning of this century. As a consequence, those municipalities were not among the least developed ones at the beginning of the new century. The processes described above were influenced the development of the area, and East Lithuania, especially its central part, was growing faster even than the Vilnius city in some periods.
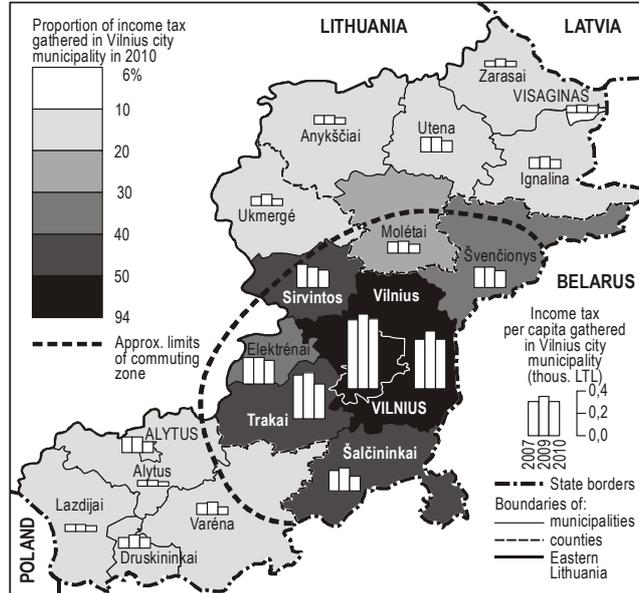
Fig. 8. Incomes of Eastern Lithuania's municipal budgets from
residents' income tax, gathered in Vilnius municipality in 2010
Source: based on data of State Tax Inspection, www.vmi.lt
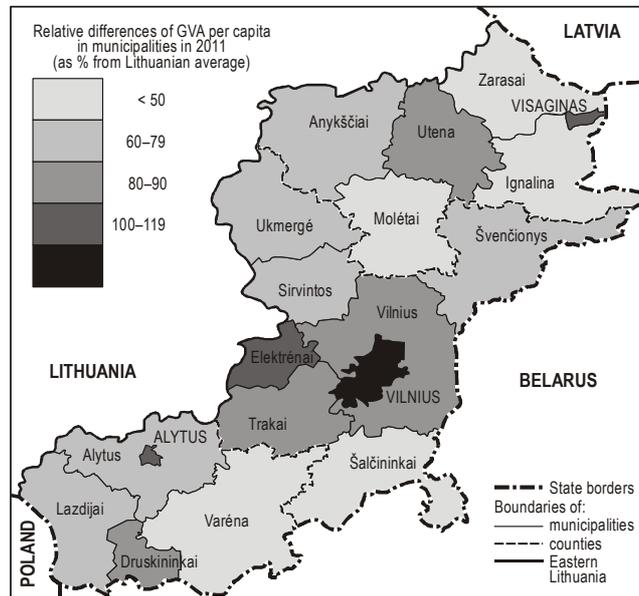
Fig. 9. Relative differences of added value *per capita* created by
employees in Lithuanian municipalities in 2011
Source: based on data of Department of Statistics of Lithuania (http://db1.stat.gov.lt/)

Figure 10 illustrates relative differences of GVA (gross value added) *per capita* created by employees in municipalities, which reached 300% in 2011. Actual differences of GVA between Vilnius city and the remaining region are even higher, because the scheme does not evaluate profit differences.
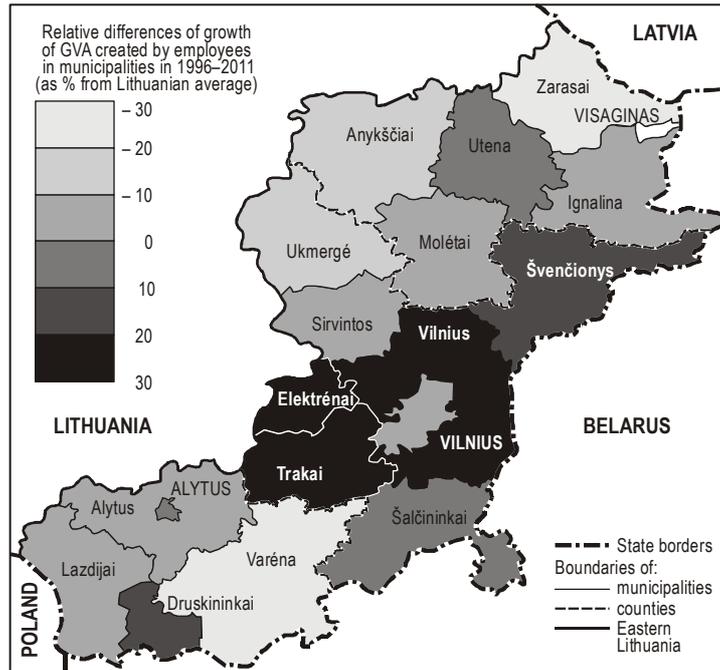
Fig. 10. Relative differences in growth of added value *per capita* created
by employees in Lithuanian municipalities in 1996–2011
Source: based on data of Department of Statistics of Lithuania (http://db1.stat.gov.lt/)

The main differences between Vilnius city and the remaining region appeared right after the market reforms, when the capital city was developing much faster than the rest of the country. The city has not been experiencing exceptionally fast development in the new millennium. On the contrary, its influence has started to have positive impact on the surrounding region (Fig. 10).

6. CONCLUSIONS

1. The pace of depopulation has been increasing since 2000 in whole East Lithuania. In more peripheral municipalities, it increased three- to four-fold. The only exception is the Vilnius urban region, which was strongly influenced by

intensive suburbanisation. The main location factor with noticeable influence on the trends of depopulation is the distance of municipalities from the capital city.

2. Depopulation is followed by the break in all other social and economic service networks. Clear trends of concentration of social and economic infrastructure are visible in East Lithuania. The depopulation process is one of the main drivers of such trends, but shrinking service networks fuel depopulation as well. All those processes increase the social and territorial exclusion. Such trends became especially evident after entering the EU. East Lithuania has become a sparsely populated area with specific problems of depopulation and shrinking networks of various commercial and non-commercial services.

3. The consolidation of land is slow in East Lithuania mostly due to low profitability of agriculture. Though the proportion of unutilised lands due to EU agricultural policy is clearly shrinking, agriculture is losing its position of the dominant function of rural areas in East Lithuania. Tourism, recreation nature preservation, forestry, fishery will become more important, but they cannot guarantee a sufficient supply of jobs.

4. Natural processes of depopulation of rural areas related to the continually delayed urbanisation will persist in Lithuania and in surrounding countries. It will have negative impact on the local population, mostly by damaging their expectations and hopes, but not their incomes or living standards.

5. The development of Vilnius and the spreading of its urban area will persist, and the city will become more and more important to the development of the region. The consequences of this spread will depend on the successful coordination of such processes between the city and other municipalities, as well as on wise regional planning. However, almost no co-operation and joint planning or regulating of processes of suburbanisation exist at present, and there are no signs for this becoming the case in the nearest future.

6. The pace and consequences of depopulation will be different in different parts but shrinking social and economic service networks will be evident everywhere. The state policy in such new sparsely populated areas should concentrate not on the preservation of population numbers or existing service networks but on the creation of new ones. Strengthening of local communities and local self-governing, improvements of communication networks, simplification of land use conversion procedures, dissemination of objective information concerning ongoing processes and other similar actions would have much more effective influence on the prosperity and life satisfaction of local population.

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SPATIAL EXTENT OF CROSS-BORDER TRADE IN THE POLISH-UKRAINIAN BORDER AREA

1. INTRODUCTION

The major reason for unregistered foreign purchases made by the residents of a given country in the neighbouring country are differences in prices and income levels of the population. The phenomenon has been developing in the border regions of the neighbouring countries which have introduced the free movement of people across national borders without political, infrastructural or environmental restrictions (Wang 2004). Cross-border trade has intensified in Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries during the period of transformation of the political and economic system. In Poland, the phenomenon reached its peak in the years 1995–1999, when the volume of purchases made by foreign citizens totalled from several billion to several dozen billion U.S. dollars per year. After 2004, cross-border trade intensity in the western and southern border regions decreased, whereas cross-border shopping activity on Poland's north-eastern border still remained fairly high. Among four border sections (Polish-Russian, Polish-Lithuanian, Polish-Belarusian and Polish-Ukrainian), the highest intensity of cross-border trade activities has been observed in recent years in the Ukrainian border zone, where cross-border shopping was the most important reason for cross-border movement of persons. In 2010, for almost 90 percent of the total number of Polish citizens crossing the Polish-Ukrainian border and for eighty percent of the citizens of Ukraine shopping was the main purpose of their trips to the neighbouring country. The aim of this study is to show the changes in the intensity of cross-border trade depending on its spatial extent, and to define the commodity structure of the phenomenon for the years 2001 and 2010.

2. DATA SOURCES AND METHODS OF RESEARCH

The information used for the analysis of cross-border trade in 2001 come from the data obtained through questionnaire surveys conducted by the officers of the Main Customs Office of Poland in June and July 2001 at the border crossing points in Poland, including border crossings in the Polish-Ukrainian border region (Powęska 2012). The questionnaire covered travellers selected randomly on each day of the week, and the number of questionnaires designed for the given crossing point on a daily basis were circulated successively for a full 24-hour period while keeping the proportions resulting from daily oscillations in the intensity of the movement of persons (Powęska 2008). Data sources for the year 2010 were the results obtained by the Centre for Transborder Areas Surveys and Statistics for Euroregions of the Statistical Office in Rzeszów in collaboration with the Statistical Office in Lublin and the Border Guard and Customs Service, as well as with local authorities (*Ruch graniczny...* 2011).

An analysis of the spatial extent of cross-border trade for the year 2001 was made by breaking down the territories of both Poland and Ukraine into spatial zones. The identification of these zones was based on the units of administrative division: voivodeships in Poland and oblasts in Ukraine. Three zones were identified in Poland. The first one covers the voivodeships directly adjoining the border: Podkarpackie Voivodeship and Lublin Voivodeship. The second zone includes Podlaskie, Mazowieckie, Świętokrzyskie and Małopolskie (Little Poland) Voivodeships. The third zone encompasses: Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Pomorskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Wielkopolskie, Lubuskie, Śląskie, Opolskie and Dolnośląskie Voivodeships. In Ukraine, due to the territorial extent of the country, four zones were identified. The first zone includes Lviv Oblast and Volyn Oblast. The second zone comprises: Zakarpattia Oblast, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Ternopil Oblast and Rivne Oblast. The third zone includes: Chernivtsi Oblast, Khmelnytskyi Oblast, Zhytomyr Oblast, Vinnytsia Oblast, Kyiv Oblast, and the city of Kyiv. The fourth zone encompasses: Cherkasy Oblast, Poltava Oblast, Chernihiv Oblast, Kirovohrad Oblast, Odesa Oblast, Mykolaiv Oblast, Sumy Oblast, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Kherson Oblast, Zaporizhia Oblast, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Donetsk Oblast, Kharkiv Oblast and Luhansk Oblast.

Spatial zones were identified for the year 2010 on the basis of distances from the border. The first zone includes the areas located up to 30 kilometres from the border. The second zone comprises the areas situated at a distance of 31–50 kilometres from the border. The third zone encompasses the areas located at a dis-

tance of 51–100 kilometres from the border. The analysis was conducted using descriptive and tabular methods.

3. SPATIAL EXTENT OF CROSS-BORDER TRADE IN THE POLISH-UKRAINIAN BORDER AREA IN 2001

In 2001, at the border crossings between Poland and Ukraine, Ukrainian citizens were a dominant group of travellers, Polish residents constituted a sizeable group, while the citizens of other countries crossed the Polish-Ukrainian border occasionally. This was reflected in the nationality breakdown of the respondents. Among 2,166 people who were interviewed, 77.89% (1,687 persons) were Ukrainian citizens, 20.31% (440 persons) were Polish citizens, and only 1.80% (39 persons) were travellers from other countries. Irrespective of nationalities, goods that were carried most frequently across the Polish-Ukrainian border in 2001 were alcohol products and cigarettes.

Table 1. Goods carried across the border by the citizens of Ukraine involved in cross-border shopping by their place of residence in 2001

Goods	The citizens of Ukraine carried goods across the border by their place of residence:					
	Total	Lviv Oblast	Volyn Oblast	II zone	III zone	IV zone
	Numer of person					
Tobacco products	739	405	170	67	74	23
Spirit	81	31	42	5	3	
Wine	18	10	2	1	5	
Vodka and other alcoholic drinks (above 38%)	708	360	163	76	80	29
Food products	19	10	1	4	3	
Non-food products	41	18	1	17	6	0

II zone: Zakarpattia Oblast, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Ternopil Oblast, Rivne Oblast; III zone: Chernivtsi Oblast, Khmelnytskyi Oblast, Zhytomyr Oblast, Vinnytsia Oblast, Kyiv Oblast, Kyiv; IV zone: Cherkasy Oblast, Poltava Oblast, Chernihiv Oblast, Kirovohrad Oblast, Odesa Oblast, Mykolaiv Oblast, Sumy Oblast, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Kherson Oblast, Zaporizhia Oblast, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Donetsk Oblast, Kharkiv Oblast, Luhansk Oblast.

Source: author's own elaboration.

Table 2. Goods carried across the border by the citizens of Poland involved
in cross-border shopping by their place of residence in 2001

Goods	The citizens of Poland carried goods across the border by their place of residence:				
	Total	Podkarpackie Voivodeship	Lublin Voivodeship	II zone	III zone
	Numer of person				
Tobacco products	151	56	64	19	12
Spirit	12	1	11		
Wine	12	1	4	5	2
Vodka and other alcoholic drinks (above 38%)	213	59	102	33	19
Food products	8	3	5		
Non-food products	7	4		3	

II zone: Masovian Voivodeship, Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship, Podlaskie Voivodeship, Małopolska/Little Poland Voivodeship; III zone: Warmińsko-MazurskieVoivodship, Pomeranian Voivodeship, West Pomeranian Voivodeship, The Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, Wielkopolska/Great Poland Voivodeship, Lubuskie Voivodeship, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Lower Silesian Voivodeship.

Source: author's own elaboration.

The analysis of the results obtained from questionnaires related to the place of residence of the Ukrainian respondents showed that in 2001 cross-border shoppers were most frequently persons who lived in Lviv Oblast; cross-border Ukrainian shoppers from the Volyn Oblast travelled to Poland somewhat less frequently. Residents of Ukraine's areas situated farther inland carried goods across the Polish-Ukrainian border on their way to achieving other goals (Tab. 1).

As regards the citizens of Poland, they too were most often people living in the voivodeships bordering with Ukraine who were involved in cross-border shopping in 2001: Podkarpackie and Lublin Voivodeships (Tab. 2). Persons travelling from other voivodeships brought a wider range of products from Ukraine, but this phenomenon, in the case of zones II and III, like in the case of Ukraine, must be viewed as incidental. Irrespective of their place of residence, Polish citizens most often brought cigarettes and alcohol from Ukraine. Thus, we can say that people's involvement in cross-border shopping exhibited spatial relationships, whereas commodity structure was not differentiated in this field. The highest intensity of cross-border trade was reported in 2001 in the border areas between the Podkarpackie Voivodeship and the Kyiv Oblast. On the basis of the analysis of spatial extent of cross-border trade at particular crossing

points, one may say that this was a local phenomenon, and natural persons taking part in cross-border shopping activities chose the crossing points which were nearest to their place of residence.

Table 3. Goods carried by cross-border shoppers passing through the border
crossing point in Medyka by respondents' place of residence in 2001

The area of residence of the people involved in cross-border shopping	Goods							
	Other goods		Tobacco products		Spirit		Vodka and other alcoholic drinks (above 38%)	
	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%
Lviv Oblast	13	-	169	70.12	25	83.33	144	63.72
Volyn Oblast	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00
II zone of Ukraine	3	-	19	7.88	2	6.67	23	10.18
III zone of Ukraine	3	-	10	4.15	1	3.33	13	5.75
IV zone of Ukraine	-	-	3	1.24	0	0.00	5	2.21
Podkarpackie Voivodeship	5	-	37	15.35	1	3.33	33	14.60
Lublin Voivodeship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00
II zone of Poland	1	-	3	1.24	0	-	4	1.77
III zone of Poland	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1.77
Total	23	100	241	100.00	30	100.00	226	100.00

II zone of Ukraine: Zakarpattia Oblast, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Ternopil Oblast, Rivne Oblast; III zone of Ukraine: Chernivtsi Oblast, Khmelnytskyi Oblast, Zhytomyr Oblast, Vinnytsia Oblast, Kyiv Oblast, Kyiv; IV zone of Ukraine: Cherkasy Oblast, Poltava Oblast, Chernihiv Oblast, Kirovohrad Oblast, Odesa Oblast, Mykolaiv Oblast, Sumy Oblast, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Kherson Oblast, Zaporizhia Oblast, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Donetsk Oblast, Kharkiv Oblast, Luhansk Oblast.

II zone of Poland: Masovian Voivodeship, Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship, Podlaskie Voivodeship, Małopolska/Little Poland Voivodeship; III zone of Poland: Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, Pomeranian Voivodeship, West Pomeranian Voivodeship, The Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, Wielkopolska/Great Poland Voivodeship, Lubuskie Voivodeship, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Lower Silesian Voivodeship.

Source: author's own elaboration.

Table 4. Goods carried by cross-border shoppers passing through the border
crossing point in Hrebenne by respondents' place of residence in 2001

The area of residence of the people involved in cross--border shopping	Goods					
	Other goods		Tobacco products		Vodka and other alcoholic drinks (above 38%)	
	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%
Lviv Oblast	4	26.67	134	68.72	129	62.32
Volyn Oblast	-	0.00	-	0.00	-	0.00
II zone of Ukraine	5	26.67	15	7.69	14	6.76
III zone of Ukraine	0	0.00	8	4.10	7	3.38
IV zone of Ukraine	0	0.00	3	1.54	4	1.93
Podkarpackie Voivodeship	1	0.00	27	13.85	40	19.32
Lublin Voivodeship	1	6.67	3	1.54	4	1.93
II zone of Poland	1	6.67	3	1.54	7	3.38
III zone of Poland	0	0.00	2	1.03	2	0.97
Total	16	100.00	195	100.00	207	100.00

II zone of Ukraine: Zakarpattia Oblast, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Ternopil Oblast, Rivne Oblast;
III zone of Ukraine: Chernivtsi Oblast, Khmelnytskyi Oblast, Zhytomyr Oblast, Vinnytsia Oblast,
Kyiv Oblast, Kyiv; IV zone of Ukraine: Cherkasy Oblast, Poltava Oblast, Chernihiv Oblast,
Kirovohrad Oblast, Odesa Oblast, Mykolaiv Oblast, Sumy Oblast, the Autonomous Republic of
Crimea, Kherson Oblast, Zaporizhia Oblast, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Donetsk Oblast, Kharkiv
Oblast, Luhansk Oblast.

II zone of Poland: Masovian Voivodeship, Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship, Podlaskie Voivode-
ship, Małopolska/Little Poland Voivodeship; III zone of Poland: Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivo-
deship, Pomeranian Voivodeship, West Pomeranian Voivodeship, The Kuyavian-Pomeranian
Voivodeship, Wielkopolska/Great Poland Voivodeship, Lubuskie Voivodeship, Silesian Voivode-
ship, Opole Voivodeship, Lower Silesian Voivodeship.

Source: author's own elaboration.

In Medyka (Tab. 3) and in Hrebenne (Tab. 4), the majority of people parti-
cipating in cross-border shopping in 2001 were citizens living within the admini-
strative units where crossing points were located, that is to say in the Lviv Oblast
on the Ukrainian side and in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship on the Polish side.
The share of cross-border shoppers from the Lublin Voivodeship and from the
Volyn Oblast at the crossing points in Medyka and Hrebenne was equal to 0.
Commodity structure did not exhibit spatial relationships and all those
interviewed carried mainly cigarettes and alcohol products. It is worth noting
that in Medyka, as compared to the remaining crossing points, the was a greater

quantity of items from other commodity groups, including confectionery products or manufactured goods.

Table 5. Goods carried across the border by cross-border shoppers passing through the border crossing point in Dorohusk by respondents' place of residence in 2001

The area of residence of the people involved in cross-border shopping	Goods							
	Tobacco products		Other goods		Spirit		Vodka and other alcoholic drinks (above 38%)	
	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%
Lviv Oblast	2	1.03	-	-	-	-	1	0.47
Volyn Oblast	105	54.12	1	25.00	41	73.21	93	43.66
II zone of Ukraine	11	5.67	-	-	2	3.57	10	4.69
III zone of Ukraine	30	15.46	-	-	2	3.57	32	15.03
IV zone of Ukraine	14	7.22	-	-	-	-	18	8.45
Podkarpackie Voivodeship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00
Lublin Voivodeship	28	14.43	1	25.00	11	19.65	50	23.47
II zone of Poland	3	1.55	2	50.00	-	-	5	2.35
III zone of Poland	1	0.52	-	-	-	-	2	0.94
Other cuontries	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	0.94
Total	194	100.00	4	-	56	100.00	213	100.00

II zone of Ukraine: Zakarpattia Oblast, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Ternopil Oblast, Rivne Oblast; III zone of Ukraine: Chernivtsi Oblast, Khmelnytskyi Oblast, Zhytomyr Oblast, Vinnytsia Oblast, Kyiv Oblast, Kyiv; IV zone of Ukraine: Cherkasy Oblast, Poltava Oblast, Chernihiv Oblast, Kirovohrad Oblast, Odesa Oblast, Mykolaiv Oblast, Sumy Oblast, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Kherson Oblast, Zaporizhia Oblast, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Donetsk Oblast, Kharkiv Oblast, Luhansk Oblast.

II zone of Poland: Masovian Voivodeship, Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship, Podlaskie Voivodeship, Małopolska/Little Poland Voivodeship; III zone of Poland: Warminsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, Pomeranian Voivodeship, West Pomeranian Voivodeship, The Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, Wielkopolska/Great Poland Voivodeship, Lubusz Voivodeship, Silesian Voivodeship, Opole Voivodeship, Lower Silesian Voivodeship.

Source: author's own elaboration.

Table 6. Goods carried across the border by cross-border shoppers passing through
the border crossing point in Zosin by respondents' place of residence in 2001

The area of residence of the people involved in cross-border shopping	Other goods		Tobacco products		Spirit		Vodka and other alcoholic drinks (above 38%)	
	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%
Lwowski	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00
Wołyński	3	30.00	65	73.03	1	100.00	70	69.31
II U	3	30.00	6	6.74	-	-	11	10.89
III U	1	10.00	7	7.87	-	-	7	6.93
IV U	-	-	-		-	-	-	0.00
Lubelskie	3	30.00	9	10.11	-	-	11	10.89
Podkarpackie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00
II P	-	-	1	1.12	-	-	2	1.98
III P	-	-	1	1.12	-	-	-	0.00
Total	10	100.00	89	100.00	1	100.00	101	100.00

II zone of Ukraine: Zakarpattia Oblast, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Ternopil Oblast, Rivne Oblast;
III zone of Ukraine: Chernivtsi Oblast, Khmelnytskyi Oblast, Zhytomyr Oblast, Vinnytsia Oblast,
Kyiv Oblast, Kyiv; IV zone of Ukraine: Cherkasy Oblast, Poltava Oblast, Chernihiv Oblast,
Kirovohrad Oblast, Odesa Oblast, Mykolaiv Oblast, Sumy Oblast, the Autonomous Republic of
Crimea, Kherson Oblast, Zaporizhia Oblast, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Donetsk Oblast, Kharkiv
Oblast, Luhansk Oblast

II zone of Poland: Masovian Voivodeship, Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship, Podlaskie Voivo-
deship, Małopolska/Little Poland Voivodeship; III zone of Poland: Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivo-
deship, Pomeranian Voivodeship, West Pomeranian Voivodeship, The Kuyavian-Pomeranian
Voivodeship, Wielkopolska/Great Poland Voivodeship, Lubuskie Voivodeship, Silesian Voivode-
ship, Opole Voivodeship, Lower Silesian Voivodeship

Source: author's own elaboration.

On the other hand, at the border crossing points in Dorohusk (Tab. 5) and in
Zosin (Tab. 6), the overwhelming majority of people involved in cross-border
shopping came from the Lublin Voivodeship and from the Volyn Oblast, that is
to say from their respective territorial-administrative units. No residents of the
Lviv Oblast and Podkarpackie Voivodeship were reported at the border crossing
point in Zosin, and the citizens of the above-mentioned administrative units
crossed the border in Dorohusk only occasionally. Again, the commodity
structure of cross-border shopping at these crossing points exhibit spatial
relationships, and the main purchases made by cross-border shoppers included
cigarettes and alcohol products. In 2001, the extent of cross-border trade was of

local significance. The people involved in this trade chose a border crossing point located in the nearest vicinity of their place of residence, and the commodity structure of trade was dominated by the products which recorded the biggest price differences.

4. SPATIAL EXTENT OF CROSS-BORDER TRADE IN THE POLISH-UKRAINIAN BORDER AREA IN 2010

Following Poland's accession to the European Union, there was an increase in the share of foreign customers in the shopping centres located in the local self--government units in Poland bordering with Ukraine (Powęska 2012). The value of goods purchased by the Ukrainian citizens in the shopping centres in Poland in the years 2009–2010 was many times higher than the value of goods purchased by Poles in Ukrainian shops. That is why for border areas in Poland, cross-border trade has become an important factor of local development. In 2010, in the border zone up to 30 kilometres from the boundary, the value of goods purchased by foreign customers in Poland totalled almost PLN 1.4 billion, which constituted over 60 percent of all the purchases made within the framework of cross-border trade in Poland in the Polish-Ukrainian border region (Tab. 7).

Table 7. Expenditures of foreign customers in Poland by distance from the border and type of commodities in the Polish-Ukrainian border region in 2010

Distance from the border	Purchase of goods	Food products	Non-food products
	in thousands PLN		
Up to 30 km	1,376,012.7	210,330.4	1,165,682.3
31–50 km	337,456.0	25,864.7	311,591.3
51–100 km	298,672.0	36,211.6	262,460.4
Above 100 km	238,603.1	14,538.1	224,064.9
Total	2,250,743.8	286,944.8	1,963,799.0

Source: author's own elaboration based on: *Ruch graniczny...* (2011).

As the distance from the border increased, the value of purchases decreased; thus, within 30–50 kilometres from the border, this value amounted to PLN 0.33 billion, in the zone of 51–100 kilometres it totalled PLN 0.3 billion, while foreigners travelling to Poland at farther distances purchased goods worth PLN 0.24 billion in Poland. It is worth noting, that foreign citizens bought mainly

non-food products and they spent more than 80% of their total expenditures on them.

The analysis of the values of goods carried across the Polish-Ukrainian border by one foreign customer (Tab. 8) shows that the total value of goods carried by an average foreigner from Poland to Ukraine increased with the distance of the shopping place from the border. Similar tendencies could be observed in the cross-border trade in food products. Slightly different relation-ships were noted as regards non-food products. An average foreigner spent larger amounts of money as the distance of the shopping place from the border increased. The highest values of grocery purchases per foreign customer were reported in the zone of 50-100 kilometres and they totalled more than PLN 80 per person. A statistical foreigner in the Polish-Ukrainian border region spent nearly PLN 70 on groceries in the zone of up to 50 kilometres from the border, and the smallest amounts of groceries were purchased in the zone of over 100 kilometres from the border. As regards the purchases of non-food products, statistically, one foreign customer spent almost PLN 850 in the shopping centres located at distances exceeding 100 kilometres from the border, in the zone of 50–100 kilometres this amount averaged PLN 600, and in the direct vicinity of the border the value of these purchases totalled approximately PLN 400.

Table 8. The average spending on purchases per foreigner in Poland
in the Polish-Ukrainian border region in 2010

Distance from the border	Purchase of goods	Food products	Non-food products
	in PLN		
Up to 30 km	455.66	69.65	386.01
31–50 km	493.72	68.06	425.66
51–100 km	688.54	83.48	605.06
Above 100 km	898.58	54.75	843.83
Total	539.77	68.81	470.95

Source: author's own elaboration based on: *Ruch graniczny...* (2011).

The analysis of the percentage share of purchases by spatial zone with regard to the border crossing points (Tab. 9) shows that, in 2010, foreigners who passed through the border crossing point in Medyka (more than 80%) made purchases in the nearest vicinity of the border, which may be explained by the proximity of the town of Przemyśl as a shopping centre. In Korczowa, Zosin, Hrebenne and Dorohusk approximately 65–75% of foreign residents purchased goods in the zone adjoining the border, while in Krościenko the area where purchases are

made most frequently is the zone of 31–51 kilometres. This is undoubtedly connected with the distance from Ustrzyki Dolne as the nearest town.

Table 9. Foreigners by distance of the shopping place from the border in 2010 in the Polish-Ukrainian border region by border crossing point (%)

Border crossing point	Distance from the border in km				
	up to 30	31–50	51–100	above 100	Total
Dorohusk	67.8	4.0	16.5	11.7	100
Zosin	76.0	4.7	15.2	4.1	100
Hrebenne	75.6	1.6	16.2	6.5	100
Korczowa	66.5	23.4	6.1	4.0	100
Medyka	83.7	8.0	3.2	5.1	100
Krościenko	37.4	48.3	12.0	2.2	100
The Polish-Ukrainian border	72.4	10.8	10.4	6.4	100

Source: author's own elaboration based on: *Ruch graniczny...* (2011).

In 2010, Polish cross-border shoppers purchased goods in Ukraine for an amount exceeding 320 thousand zlotys, and the share of purchases made in the zone of up to 30 kilometres from the border constituted more than 80% (Tab. 10). The dominant role of the direct vicinity of the border manifested itself in all categories of the goods purchased: groceries, alcohol, tobacco and non-food products. The volumes of purchases made in the remaining zones were relatively small. Polish citizens mainly bought non-food products in Ukraine, and for the most part, as it was directly observed at the border crossing points, it was fuel. It is worth noting that Poles were bringing foodstuffs from Ukraine more and more frequently.

Table 10. Expenditures of Poles abroad by distance from the border and type of commodities in the Polish-Ukrainian border region in 2010

Distance from the border	Purchase of goods	Food products	Alcoholic drinks	Tobacco products	Non-food products
	in thousands PLN				
Up to 30 km	304,242.3	44,245.7	41,039.4	11,280.6	207,676.6
31–50 km	3,300.6	493.5	426.1	97.2	2,283.8
51–100 km	8,980.2	1,326.0	1,331.8	264.4	6,058.1
Above 100 km	7,207.2	1,216.7	839.4	250.5	4,900.6
Total	323,730.3	47,281.8	43,636.7	11,892.7	220,919.0

Source: author's own elaboration based on: *Ruch graniczny...* (2011).

Table 11. Average expenditures incurred by an average Polish citizen abroad by distance from the border and type of commodities in the Polish-Ukrainian border region in 2010

Distance from the border	Purchase of goods	Food products	Alcoholic drinks	Tobacco products	Non-food products
	in PLN				
Up to 30 km	155.72	22.65	21.00	5.77	106.29
31–50 km	155.68	22.65	20.99	5.76	106.29
51–100 km	124.65	18.40	18.49	3.67	84.09
Above 100 km	135.27	22.84	15.76	4.70	91.98
Total	154.10	22.51	20.77	5.66	105.16

Source: author's own elaboration based on: *Ruch graniczny...* (2011).

Table 12. Poles by distance of the place of their shopping from the border in the Polish-Ukrainian border region in 2010 by border crossing point (%)

Border crossing	Distance from the border in km				
	up to 30	31 – 50	51 – 100	above 100	Total
Dorohusk	90.0	1.5	2.7	5.8	100
Zosin	95.9	0.8	1.7	1.6	100
Hrebenne	94.5	1.0	3.6	0.9	100
Korczowa	88.0	1.0	5.4	5.6	100
Medyka	91.1	0.9	5.4	2.7	100
Krościenko	97.0	1.2	1.4	0.5	100
The Polish-Ukrainian border	93.0	1.0	3.4	2.5	100

Source: author's own elaboration based on: *Ruch graniczny...* (2011).

The highest value of purchases made in Ukraine by a statistical Polish cross-border shopper was recorded in the zone directly adjoining the border and it decreased with the growing distance from the border, exclusive of the zone of 51–-100 kilometres, where a Polish citizen bought, on average, the smaller amount of goods (Tab. 11). These tendencies were observed in the case of aggregate purchases of goods, purchases of groceries, tobacco products and non-food products. However, in the case of cross-border purchases of alcohol products, the decrease was proportional to the growing distance from the border. An analysis of the percentage share of cross-border purchases by spatial zone with regard to the border crossing points in the Polish-Ukrainian border area (Tab. 12) shows that more than 90% of Polish citizens, regardless of the border crossing point, concentrated on purchasing goods within the zone of up to 30 kilometres

from the border. Polish citizens made their purchases most frequently in Krościenko (97%), Zosin (95.9%) and Hrebenne (94.5%), as well as at other border crossing points of the Polish-Ukrainian border: in Medyka (91%) and in Korczowa (88%).

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis conducted in this study allowed us to draw the following conclusions:

1) cross-border trade, both in 2001 and 2010, exhibited clear-cut spatial relationships. It was most intensive in the direct vicinity of the border (up to 30 kilometres from the border), and its intensity was decreasing with the increasing distance from the boundary line;

2) the extent of cross-border trade was of local significance, and cross-border shoppers going to purchase goods in the neighbouring country chose a border crossing point in the nearest vicinity of their place of residence;

3) commodity structure of cross-border trade did not exhibit spatial relationships, but it was determined by economic factors, including the dominant role of differences in prices of goods on the Polish and Ukrainian sides of the border.

It is likely that the phenomenon of cross-border trade will still be observed in the Polish-Ukrainian border area in the future. This is indicated by factors such as differences in prices of goods intended for similar purposes in Poland and Ukraine, different rates of socio-economic development in the above-mentioned countries, economic problems in peripheral regions, absence of other driving forces of socio-economic development in the vicinity of the border, as well as a widespread acceptance of the phenomenon among the communities in the border area and the existence of close cultural contacts between Polish and Ukrainian populations.

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TRANSBORDER CO-OPERATION ON THE EXTERNAL EU'S BORDERS, ILLUSTRATED BY THE EASTERN BORDER OF POLAND

1. INTRODUCTION

The question of shaping cross-border co-operation seems particularly important since, with Poland's accession to the EU, part of its borders became the external border of the European Union. Moreover, border areas neighbouring non-EU members constitute one of the least economically developed regions of the Community. Cross-border co-operation programmes as well as the development of international links may be a significant factor in social and economic activation. On the other hand, the realisation of the idea of co-operation across external borders of the EU is more difficult due to the significant role of formal barriers, since we are handling less advanced regions of centralised countries having different social orders and pursuing a rather closed foreign policy.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the range and character of co-operation in the Polish-Ukrainian-Belarusian borderland and to identify the basic characteristics of relations between Polish, Ukrainian and Belarusian beneficiaries of transborder co-operation programme. The study was based on a preliminary assessment of practical realisation of cross-border co-operation under the Cross--border Co-operation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007–2013. The analysis covered type structure of the projects as well as the institutional structure of the programme's beneficiaries. The relationships between the participants of the realised projects have also been investigated. The research was carried out in the area of eastern Poland and western Ukraine and Belarus covered by the Cross--border Co-operation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine.

The research comprises the data concerning the projects realised under the Cross-border Co-operation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007–2013 as

of July 1ˢᵗ, 2012, obtained from The Joint Technical Secretariat. To this date, after the first round of tenders, 22 projects have been approved for realisation (1/3 of funds have been allocated). The projects of Technical Assistance have been omitted since they are not directly connected with cross-border co-operation.

2. CO-OPERATION DETERMINANTS

The main funding supporting cross-border co-operation in the Poland-Belarus--Ukraine borderland currently comes from The Cross-border Co-operation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007–2013 within the framework of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). This initiative of the European Commission is aiming at developing the co-operation between the European Union and the partner countries by ensuring integrated and sustainable regional development[1]. The Cross-border Co-operation Programme Poland--Belarus-Ukraine 2007–2013 was approved by the European Commission on November 6ᵗʰ 2008 with total budget of EUR 202.9 million (including EUR 186.2 million of EU co-financing). The core objective of the programme is the support for cross-border development processes, realised through non-commercial projects implemented within the following priorities: increasing competitiveness of the border area, improving the quality of life, and networking and people-to-people co-operation. Programme implementation period dates from November 2008 till the end of 2016, but all activities within a project must be completed till the end of 2015 (Joint Technical Secretariat). It needs to be stressed that the analysed programme provides a lot more funds than the previous programming period, so more intense co-operation between project partners is expected.

Over the years, the most important EU initiative for the border regions has been INTERREG, launched in 1990 by The Commission of the European Community. The main objective of the initiative was the elimination of the peripheral character of the border regions, their integration into the single market and the development of the economy, along with environmental protection. The final objective was to create well-functioning neighbourhood co-operation among the border regions and to minimise the role of border as a barrier. The

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[1] The legal basis of the Programme is Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (OJ.310 on 9.11.2006).

Commission placed a special emphasis on the promotion of co-operation with third states.

Fig. 1. Spatial scope of the Cross-border Co-operation
Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007–2013
Source: Joint Technical Secretariat

The Cross-border Co-operation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007–2013 continues and broadens the co-operation in the border zone areas of the three countries, which was previously developed by the Neighbourhood Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine INTERREG III A/Tacis CBC 2004–2006. The Neighbourhood Programme was co-financed by two budgets: on the Polish side from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and on the Belarusian and Ukrainian sides from the TACIS CBC funds[2]. Between 2004 and 2006, the Polish side allotted EUR 37.8 million of ERDF funds to the Neighbourhood Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine. The total allocation amount of TACIS CBC for Belarus and Ukraine at the time totalled EUR 8 million (Dołzbłasz and Raczyk 2010a).

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[2] As the Interreg Initiatives were only available to the member countries, special programmes supporting cooperation were created for the border regions of the non--member countries. Belarus and Ukraine were covered by the TACIS CBC programme between 2004–2006 (the Community support programme for the former Soviet republics and Mongolia except Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia).

The Neighbourhood Programme supported joint activities in numerous fields under three priorities: competitiveness of the border area through the modernization and development of the cross-border infrastructure, human capital and institutional cross-border co-operation including security at the European Union's borders, and technical assistance. The ERDF projects were covered with the 75% funding of eligible costs, whereas the Tacis CBC projects could be co-financed up to 90% of the eligible costs (with EUR 1 million maximum funding). Only Polish applicants could apply for the ERDF co-financing, while the Tacis CBC Programme was available for Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian beneficiaries. All activities realised within the Tacis CBC projects had to be implemented in Belarus or Ukraine. The financial support was given only to non-commercial activities in the eligible area. Unfortunately, due to the limited financing of the Programme, it was impossible to give the financial support to all of the applicants recommended by experts (about 380) and in total, 158 projects were fully implemented. Most of them were co-financed under the EFRD (139 projects). There were also 13 projects implemented under the Tacis CBC Programme and 6 shared projects (co-financed under both EFRD and Tacis CBC). The largest group of beneficiaries consisted of local authorities. Cultural centres, schools, headquarters of state fire services, research centres, state forests' and national roads' holdings and non-governmental organisations were also among the Programme beneficiaries (Joint Technical Secretariat).

The majority of projects was realised within the scope of transport, social and environmental infrastructure, as well as cultural co-operation and tourism. This was basically caused by excessive focus on infrastructural investments on the part of local and regional self-governments. The pronounced asymmetry in the accessibility of funds on both sides of the border was definitely an impediment in the creation of true links and realisation of projects which are transborder in nature. Such a situation caused co-operation programmes on both sides of the border to be realised largely 'autonomously', despite their common institutional system. Thus, their effectiveness as a tool of integration and coherence proved to be smaller than expected. It was also the effect of the formal and legal differences between Poland as an EU member and its eastern neighbours, especially Belarus (Dołzbłasz and Raczyk 2010a).

Previously, before Poland's accession to the EU, and since 1998, the Phare programme was used for the eastern border (e.g. Eastern Programme 1996, Integrated Polish Eastern Border 1997, Management and Infrastructure of the Polish Eastern Border 1998, Integrated Polish Eastern Border 2000). However, the sums allocated under this programme were significantly lower (between 1996–2003 a total of EUR 91.6 million). Co-operation on the eastern border is

actually being shaped almost from scratch. The institutional system of co-operation existing in the pre-accession period was poorly developed. Euroregions, which at the time were the main subjects shaping this co-operation were, above all, the effect of top-down initiatives and not the actual needs of local self-governments. They were also deprived of any significant financial support. Until 2004, only a handful of projects managed by Euroregions on the eastern border were conducted. Poland's accession to the EU and its inclusion in special programmes for the external EU's borders initiated the shaping of a new institutional system of cross-border co-operation. These programmes, aiming at development of border areas adjacent to the external border of the EU are a potential for boosting activity of true transborder character (Dołzbłasz and Raczyk 2010a).

It needs to be taken into consideration that true co-operation on the eastern border is largely dependent on political arrangements (Miszczuk 2008, p. 677–678) and differences in territorial units' competences (Miszczuk 2008, p. 676), especially on the Polish-Belarusian border (Proniewski and Proniewski 2008, p. 766). Moreover, Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Belarusian border, as the EU and Schengen Zone external border, is a barrier primarily hindering free movement of inhabitants, the establishment of economic, cultural, travel links etc. Its strongly formal structure makes the establishment of co-operation on lower level far more difficult than co-operation carried out by supralocal institutions. All problems connected with border functions are easier to surpass in the case of central institutions or regional self-governments than in the case of local associations or particular local leaders. It is linked to the problem of the centralisation of the administrative system in Belarus and Ukraine (Krok and Smętkowski 2006, p. 182, Kawałko 2008, p. 640, Miszczuk 2008, p. 676).

One of the important factors determining co-operation is the fact that the cultural barrier (including the language barrier) on the eastern border is relatively low. It stems from, among others things, the following factors: the presence of national minorities, common history, the knowledge of the language as well as family bonds. The mental (social) distance seems to be bigger between Poles and their eastern neighbours (comparing to the social distance between Poles and German which is considerably bigger.

The presence of national minorities should encourage co-operation. In the case of Poland, it particularly concerns the quite numerous Belarusian minority – nearly 50,000 people, concentrated mainly in the Podlaskie Voivodeship. To a slightly lesser degree, it also applies to the Ukrainian minority – around 30,000 people inhabiting largely the Podkarpackie Voivodeship (Adamczuk and Łodziński 2006). Moreover, in Ukraine and Belarus there exists a relatively numerous

group of inhabitants declaring themselves to be Polish or being of Polish origin. It helps eliminate cultural barriers and should, at the same time, enhance the need for co-operation. This issue concerns mainly the elderly, often having family links and maintaining contact with inhabitants on the other side of the border. Moreover, Polish inhabitants of the border regions can speak Russian, which facilitates co-operation, as this language is widely known both in Belarus and Ukraine. However, knowledge of the language is most prevalent among people who had completed their education before 1989.

As far as the language barrier is concerned, the opposite situation can be observed on the western border. The knowledge of German (or English) is more often found in younger age groups. Therefore, the barrier is decreasing. On the eastern border, the universal knowledge of Russian is disappearing. In the future, it may prove to be a hindrance in establishing mutual contacts, especially at the local level.

However, what hampers co-operation is historical experiences, especially in the context of the common history of Poland and Ukraine. It is connected with negative stereotypes shadowing mutual perception of one's neighbours. It needs to be stressed, however, that the way Poles, Ukrainians and Belarusians see each other is improving.

3. PROJECTS CHARACTERISTICS

The first round of tenders was hindered by many institutional obstacles that caused delays in The Cross-border Co-operation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007–2013 commencement. This in turn led to the situation, where over half of funds available is still not allocated. Contracting period has to be completed till the end of 2013, and the fact that only 1/3 of the funds was used by July 1st, 2012 indicates existing problems with programme implementation.

In analysed programme, only non-profit organisation are eligible, which includes regional and local authorities, central bodies providing public services commissioned by regional and local authorities, NGOs, organisations providing services in the fields of culture, research or science, regional divisions of Border Guard and customs authorities, and Euroregions. In projects currently being realised, the most important role is played by local and regional authorities and central administration units. Together, they account for about 60% of all beneficiaries of transborder projects. In this group central, bodies providing public services commissioned by regional and local authorities have the highest share of approx. 25% in the beneficiaries' structure of the programme. It seems that the

reason is that all problems connected with border functions (strong formalisation of border) are easier to surpass in the case of central institutions or regional self-governments than in the case of local associations or particular local leaders.

In relations between the actors of the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-border co-operation programme, there is clear dominance of bilateral connection. Only one project is trilateral, realised by Polish, Ukrainian and Belarusian partners (Fig. 2). Moreover, in spite of the fact that the programme emphasises networking projects (joining numerous partners), projects with only two partners involved dominate. One of the reasons for this situation is that cross-border co-operation on the eastern border of Poland is in initial phase of development and network projects involving many partners from different countries are often connected with more intensified co-operation of experienced actors.


Fig. 2. Relation between partners of cross-border projects within the Poland-
-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-border co-operation programme 2007–2013
Source: own elaboration based on data of Joint Technical Secretariat

Taking into consideration the similarity between types actors in particular projects, characteristic features can be noticed. Central administration units, as well as local and regional authorities, almost always co-operate with the same type of partners from neighbouring countries. Certainly, this is due to the constraints of the organisational structure and administrative requirements connected with local and regional authorities, as well as the functioning of central administration units. On the other hand, such entities as cultural institutions, NGOs, business environment institutions are realising joint projects with different types of partners, as they tend to be more open as regards their selection of partners. Thus, the diversity of projects by type is also greater than in the case of projects implemented by administrative units.

In the situation of a lack of similarity between the types of actors on both sides of the border, their co-operation may have a spontaneous character, which means that in some cases it will be short-lived. This stems from the fact that in such cases, what links different units and institutions is mainly the realisation of particular, defined tasks (task approach). It can, however, result in the improvement of overall project quality. If the types of actors are similar on both sides

of the border, the mutual relationships may take the form of more formal connections, which are usually more long-lasting. In these cases, they are mostly based on similarity of purposes as well as similarity of institutions and therein resulting formal and legal co-operation conditions (Dołzbłasz and Raczyk, 2010b).

For each project, a lead partner was appointed by all partners among themselves before submitting the project application. The lead partner is a body which submits the project application, signs a grant contract with the Joint Managing Authority and assumes full legal and financial responsibility for project implementation. The lead partner stipulates the arrangements for its relations with the partners participating in the project in the partnership agreement, which includes provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the project, including the arrangements for recovering unduly paid amounts. In the Cross-border Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine (at its first stage), Polish institutions are prevailing among the beneficiaries. It is especially visible when the actors' role in project consortium is taken into consideration, as Polish beneficiaries accounted for almost 80% lead partners. Polish institutions are more experienced in international co-operation (including cross-border one) and have better capacities, both organisational and financial, for conducting transborder projects. Moreover, the functioning of self-governance system on local and regional level involves far higher level of social capital (especially compared to Belarus), which are also important factors influencing activity of Polish actors.
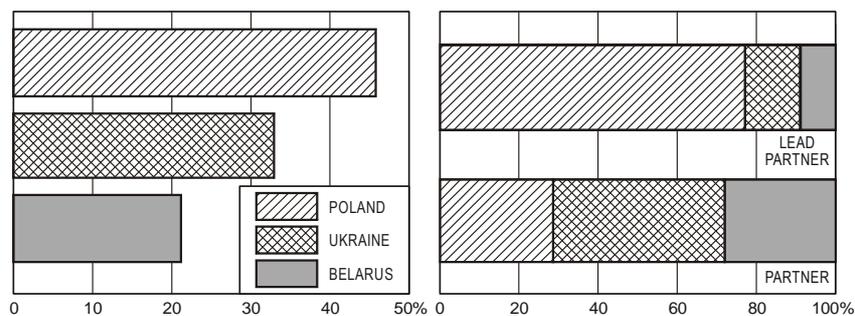
Fig. 3. Structure of beneficiaries by country and role in the project within the Poland-
-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-border co-operation programme 2007–2013
Source: own elaboration based on data of Joint Technical Secretariat

As regards beneficiaries' structure by partner's country of origin, characteristic features can be seen (Fig. 4). There were no local authorities from Belarus involved in transborder projects. It is a direct result of political conditions in

Belarus. In the situation of lack of this type of actors, central administration units and scientific institutions account for high shares (respectively, 40% and 30%). Surprisingly, comparing the structure of Polish and Ukrainian beneficiaries, central administration institutions are more frequently involved on the Polish side, while local authorities participate more often on the Ukrainian side.
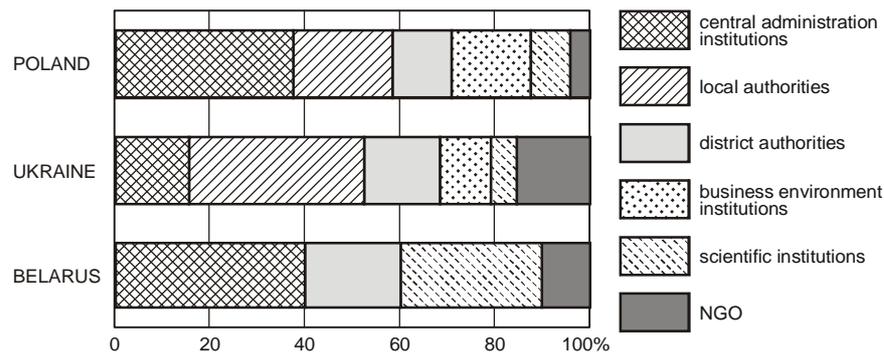

Fig. 4. Structure of beneficiaries by type and country within the Poland-
-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-border co-operation programme 2007–2013
Source: own elaboration based on data of Joint Technical Secretariat

As regards distribution of cross-border projects within Poland-Belarus-
-Ukraine Co-operation Programme, there is concentration of projects in the biggest cities within the borderland (e.g. Lublin, Rzeszów, Białystok, Lwów, Grodno) and in units around them. It must be stressed, however, that cross-
-border projects are realised also by institutions located further from the border e.g. in Ivano-Frankivsk.

Taking into consideration the structure of projects in the Poland-Belarus-
-Ukraine Programme by intervention category (projects after 1st call), the study revealed the dominance of infrastructural activities (Fig. 5). One negative feature is the lack of projects in the areas of research, technological development and innovation, labour market policy and educational and vocational training. It seems that prevalence of infrastructural undertakings is the result of the fact that this kind of projects are realised mainly by the public administration units and this are the institutions that are better prepared to conduct transborder projects, compared to such entities as NGOs. Moreover, as it was mentioned earlier, it is linked to the problem of the centralisation of the administrative system in Bela-
rus and Ukraine and the strong formalisation of the Schengen border. All pro-
blems deriving from this are easier to surpass in the case of central institutions or regional self-governments than in the case of local associations or cultural institution.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION BY CATEGORY:
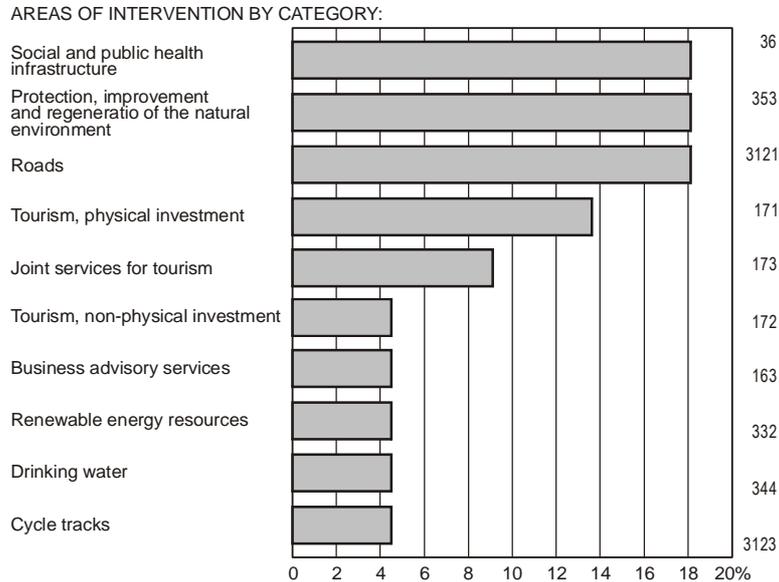
Fig. 5. Type structure of projects by intervention category within the Poland-
-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-border co-operation programme 2007–2013
Source: own elaboration based on data of Joint Technical Secretariat

Relatively high share of projects in the field of environment protection seems to be a positive feature (since the analysed programme covers many areas of great value from the point of view of nature conservation). It has to be stressed, that the share of projects from the field of tourism is relatively high, not only infrastructural projects, but also so called 'soft' projects as well as projects connected with transborder services in tourism sector. The dominance of infrastructural projects also results from the existing immense investment needs, especially in the field of road infrastructure and environment infrastructure in studied border regions. It is also a consequence of the excessive focus on infrastructural investments on the part of local and regional self-governments. Although the utilisation of funds was substantial and many important projects have been implemented, transborder effects, especially long-term, are still a problem in both cases. Therefore, special measures aimed at strengthening long-
-lasting transborder effects should be developed.

4. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the conducted analysis, it can be stated that cross-border co-
-operation on the eastern border of Poland realised within the framework of the

cross-border co-operation programmes seems to be in a preliminary stage of development, mainly as far as infrastructure extension is concerned. It is a general tendency observed in Poland, as co-operation is mainly focused on realising current, particular needs of Poland and its neighbours, not on development of trans-border regions. Therefore, it seems advisable to change the structure of the projects via the limitation of infrastructural undertakings in favour of projects aimed at creating social capital, as well as social and economic integration. As regards beneficiaries structure, compared to the co-operation on the western and southern Polish border, more central administration institutions, but also scientific institutions, are involved in the transborder projects. It results from the fact that these types of actors find the problem of crossing the Schengen border easier to surpass. Thus, it seems necessary to support co-operation among cultural and educational institutions, as well as between NGOs.

Taking into account the co-operation determinants, it needs to be stressed that similarities on both sides of the border support more intensified transborder relations. As regards relations between actors in the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-border co-operation programme, one characteristic feature is that, in spite of the fact that the programme itself is trilateral, there is a lack of projects involving all partners from Poland, Ukraine and Belarus. The dominance of Polish actors among beneficiaries is very clear. On the one hand, this is due to the fact that Polish institutions are more experienced in the implementation of international projects. On the other hand, the funds available for beneficiaries in Poland are higher. It confirms that the cross-border co-operation on the eastern border of Poland is still in its preliminary phase. Significant difficulties to be overcome are connected with political factors on national level. One of the most important challenges will also be in the thinking of citizens, i.e. the consolidation of awareness of a joint cross-border region, the shaping of which should be considered a partnership.

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INTERNAL/EXTERNAL LEVEL OF CONNECTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS AT THE EXTERNAL BORDER OF EU IN POLISH AND SLOVAK SECTORS

1. INTRODUCTION

After the fall of the Soviet socialist system, and in particular the EU and NATO expansion to Central and Eastern Europe, the new realities imposed the prospection, reassessment and reconsideration of the interstate relations, especially the role and functions of the state border. Due to the new conditions, the political environment, seen as a support for the development of a spatial order (Forster 2000, p. 11), has radically reviewed and diversified the conditions and prospects of cross-border co-operation. In this context of continuous changes of the role and functions of the border states of the two members of EU, NATO and Schengen Space (Poland and Slovakia), as well as three members of the non EU area adjacent to the external border and located 'outside' of it (Belarus, Ukraine and Russia by European exclave Kaliningrad), the identification of a stable territorial structure and common features are key to our approach, as well as to the relations that generate useful tools and features for cross-border co-operation strategies and the definition of the cross-border systems.

When identifying natural morphological features that support the state border, they have a major effect on the process of increasing the differentiation / smoothing of the gaps between neighbouring territorial systems and the increasing inter and intra-systemic connections across the border. In these circumstances, border areas are looking for models and strategies applicable to cross--border territorial systems transforming them into systems with higher degree of functionality (Ilieş et al., 2010, 2012). Apart from the basic theoretical and practical concepts and principles, an important role in the development of the

cross-border strategies and inter-regional cross-border co-operation is provided by the typology of administrative-territorial organisation of the neighbouring states and the practical potential of cross-border connection. The main objective is to define the contiguous cross-border subsystems juxtaposed with a cross--border system with higher degree of total connections and functionality. Thus, our scientific approach corresponds to a complex space generated by munici-palities close to 4 interstate border sectors: Polish-Russian, Polish-Belarusian, Polish-Ukrainian and Slovak-Ukrainian (Fig. 1). Throughout this study, we pro-pose an instrument for analysis (Index of internal/external connection) based on local realities, which reflects objectively the real interconnectivity potential of different administrative-territorial structure levels, their locations and the inward extension of the generated cross-border systems.
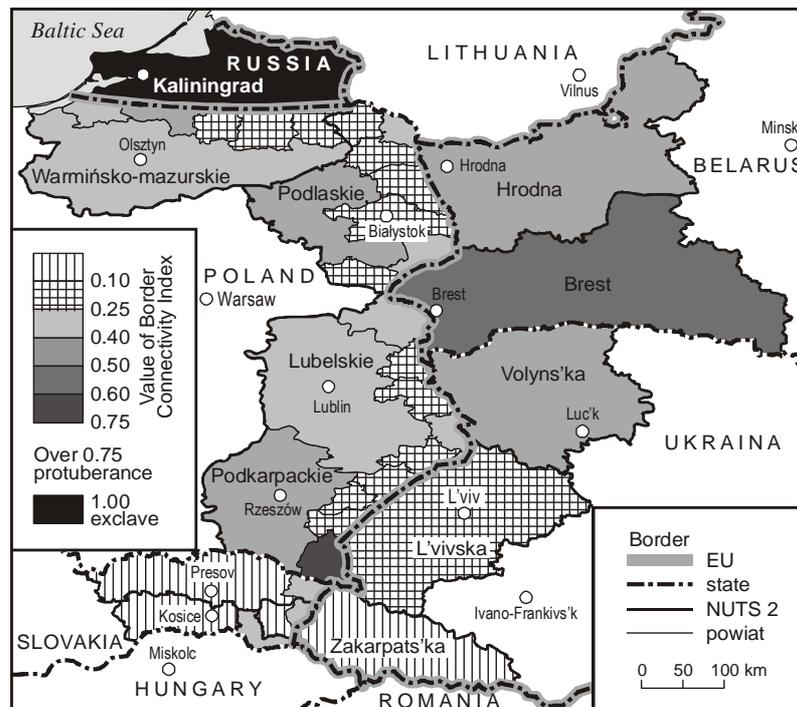
Fig. 1. Values of Internal/External Connection Index at NUTS 2 and 4 levels
contiguous with external border of EU in Polish and Slovak sectors
Source: authors' own elaboration

An important issue for a complex geographical study is the need to analyse natural and administrative frameworks jointly, and never separately. The analysis of the administrative aspects without natural support, and especially the

morphological features, may generate erroneous conclusions in terms of the real potential for interconnection between two contiguous territorial systems (Ilies et al. 2011, 2012). Landscape morphology, superficial morphological features of lake beds, rivers and streams, the special features of transverse and longitudinal profiles (Ilieş and Grama 2010a, 2010b), the landscape diversity, the demography, the economy and political features are the most important elements specific to a geographical study that relates to this objective. In a mountainous area, the presence of depressions and valley corridors results in landscape variety whose value is enhanced by the diversity and richness of the elements that compose them.

Administratively, the equivalent administrative units from the five states along a sinuous border of 1,284 km are considered main actors. The NUTS 2 and 4 presents a typological diversity embodied by incompatibilities between the two EU members and the neighbouring three non-EU states. The differences are caused by their areas, number of inhabitants and decision-making bodies from each territorial system they belong to. Specific tools and methods can be used to decipher the complex mechanism that generates cross-border territorial systems such as the scientific approach with marked geographical openness to inter-disciplinarity. Based on the tools and methods from the scientific literature and the management, location and morphography of administrative territorial units, as well as their border connections, we propose a typology of borderlands, considered as a useful step in developing strategies and inter-regional cross--border co-operation.

2. METHODOLOGY

By defining the features of the local administrative units (ATU), their morphometric, morphographical and morphofunctional features, we identify the key to this kind of scientific approach that will underpin the modelling of a territorial border system with a higher/lower degree of internal/external connection, resulting in the creation of cross-border territorial functionality of such systems. Meanwhile, the obtained rank values define the border position and the cross-border connection degree of administrative units contiguous to or in proximity of the border.

To achieve these goals, an important role is played by the use of diverse, official and complex databases that are to be interpreted correctly. In this study, we focus on administrative units whose boundary coincides with the boundary of the state sector (the border) in terms of accessibility to existing and potential

centres that can provide connections between contiguous border territorial systems. The elements taken into account in determining the types and hierarchy of 'border accessibility' and 'cross-border connection' are based on: the (geographical) absolute position and the relative position (the location of the unit in a territorial structure of higher rank and size) of the administrative-territorial unit and its location, its distance to the border, lengths of internal and external border/limits, type of border sectors: internal EU, inter-state, inter-regional (intra-state), the border's morphometric features (Ilieş and Grama 2010a, 2010b, Grama 2012), etc.

In terms of 'importance' of local actors, we can add to these elements the human and economic potential, the role of and the unity rank in national, regional and local hierarchy. By combining these elements, we are given a series of indicators that can help in ranking administrative units of the same role (NUTS 2-5), the real border position and accessibility. These indicators can play a major role in the development of strategies and the definition of key cross--border interconnection poles. On the other hand, the method can be applied when developing strategies for inter-county or inter-communal co-operation. If a border with such a role and function is the complex external border of the EU and NATO, the cross-border interconnection strategies require the creation of a methodology to identify and prioritize local and regional actors in terms of cross-border accessibility. Also, in defining the typology of border areas adjoining the administrative criteria we also take into account their inwards extension up to 25–30 km in width (Lichtenberger 2000, Bufon 2002, Ilieş et al. 2009).

3. BORDER TERRITORIAL SYSTEMS AND SUBSYSTEMS: AN ANALYSIS

In structuring a territorial system, the natural and anthropic environment are interrelated and overlapped with respect to the definition of relation systems underlying its functionality. Using the principles, methods and tools tested in literature (Foucher 1988, Martinez 1994, Ianoş 2000, Sobczyński 2000, Suli--Zakar 2000, Ilieş 2003, Wendt 2003, Ianoş et al. 2011, Johnson et al. 2011, Ilieş et al. 2009, 2011, 2012, Wendt 2012, etc.), our approach is based on scientific methods that seek answers to the questions of 'where?', 'why?' and 'how?'. The administrative-territorial organisation and human resources, in terms of quantity and quality, combined with a system of communication and efficient transport routes are pillars in shaping systems whose functionality derives directly from efficiently applied geographical management (Ilieş et al. 2009, p. 168, Grama

2012), and whose purpose is identified by the idea that 'a territorial system is essential to define a certain type of territorial development, which aims to achieve a socio-economic and cultural goal' (Cunha 1988, pp. 181–198, Ianoş 2000, p. 21). The typology of cross-border systems correlated with the 'state border' status in relation to the external border of the EU also plays an important role in defining the functionality of the determined border areas (Ilieş and Grama 2010a).

3.1. Delimitation and design of border areas according to the level of internal/external connection of border's administrative territorial units (NUTS 2-3 level or equivalent)

The determination of cross-border territorial systems with high functionality derives on one hand from the historical and geographical features of the area and, on the other, from the freedom of movement of people and goods that ease the penetration of state border barriers. In order to identify the degree of functionality of a borderland, the first step is 'to decipher its internal structure by identifying the main components and their role in defining its status' (Ianoş 2000, p. 21), all of which contribute to delimiting the area of polarisation and its limits. The border can be defined 'inward' based on several criteria such as: the extension of border counties; a strip parallel to the border at a distance of 25–30 km (Lichtenberger 2000, Ilieş and Grama 2010a, Ilieş et al. 2011); the rings that consist of contiguous territorial administrative units of local rank (cities, towns and villages, equivalent to NUTS 5) (Ilieş and al. 2012), etc. The typology of borderlands and cross-border systems (Sobczyński 2006, Topaloglou et al. 2005) in relation to the external EU border also play an important role in defining the functionality of border areas. To exemplify this, we analyse different scenarios of the Eastern sector of the external border.

3.2. Borderland design according with ATU (NUTS 2)

The borderland in question is a part of the EU's eastern periphery and is located along the Polish and Slovak eastern external borders in the administrative-territorial units of each country: Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Podlaskie, Lubelskie and Podkarpackie Voievodeships, with a total area of 86,050 square km (27.55% of Poland) and an EU's external border of 924.44 km in length, composed of two sectors: one with Russian exclave of Kaliningrad and the second with Belarus and Ukraine; Prešov and Košice regions in Slovakia with 15,583 square km (31.8% of Slovakia) and 90.5 km of EU's external border. On

the other hand, the contiguous area of the non-EU periphery is composed of the border subsystems of Belarus: Brest and Hrodna regions/oblasts with an area of approximately 57,138.34 square km and 346.2 km of EU's external border; the Ukrainian side extends to 3 regions/oblasts: Volynska, Lvivska and Zakarpatska with an area of 54,206 km and 732.2 km of EU's external border (including the sections shared with Hungary and Romania) (Tab. 1 and Fig. 1). By its status, the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad border is entirely part of the EU's external border with Poland, Lithuania, with a maritime section. All EU members along the 1.283 kilometres of EU external's border were added during the 2004 expansion.

To highlight the compatibility degree of the contiguous cross-border administrative systems, we focused on the calculation and interpretation of the Internal/External Connection Index (Ilieş and Grama 2010a, Ilieş et al. 2011, 2012).

Table 1. Administrative Territorial Units (ATU) at NUTS 2 and NUTS 4 levels corresponding to Polish and Slovak external terrestrial EU border (2012) and external/internal Connection Index

Country/ ATU (NUTS 2)	ATU NUTS 4	ATU External EU border (km)	ATU Internal EU border (km) / Inter-state border non EU	ATU National/ Internal limit of ATU	Total perimeter of ATU	Ic (only EU sectors) of ATU	Ic (total border sectors) of ATU
POLAND							
Warminsko-Mazurskie		*238.0*	*0*	*560.0*	*798.0*	*0.30*	*0.30*
1	Braniewo	43.6		145.4		0.30	0.30
2	Bartoszyce	59.1		146.3		0.40	0.40
3	Kętrzyn	23.6		140.9		0.17	0.17
4	Giżycko	38.6		179.5		0.21	0.21
5	Olecko	41.6		163.8	205.4	0.20	0.20
Podlaskie		*222.4*	*93.5*	*440.8*	*756.7*	*0.29*	***0.42***
6	Suwałki I		38.2	144.6	182.8	0.21	0.21
7	Sejny	6.0	39.0	85.0	130.0	0.34	0.34
8	Augustów	24.0		191.0	215.0	0.11	0.11
9	Sokółka	61.7		183.7	245.4	0.25	0.25
10	Białystok I	34.8		322.1	356.9	0.10	0.10
11	Hajnówka	78.1		135.0	213.1	0.37	0.37
12	Siemiatycze	19.2		184.2	203.4	0.09	0.09
Lubelskie		*329.0*	*0*	*552.5*	*881.5*	*0.37*	*0.37*
13	Biała Podlaska I	80.3		198.6	278.9	0.29	0.29
14	Włodawa	43.9		137.5	181.4	0.24	0.24

15	Chełm I	48.5		216.0	264.5	0.18	0.18
16	Hrubieszow	93.1		143.7	236.8	0.39	0.39
17	Tomaszów Lubelski	40.0		205.5	245.5	0.16	0.16
Podkarpackie		*221,2*	*118.2*	*470.2*	*809.6*	*0.27*	***0.42***
18	Lubaczów	43.4		150.0	193.4	0.22	0.22
19	Jarosław	8.7		183.2	191.9	0.04	0.04
20	Przemyśl	49.3		145.4	194.7	0.25	0.25
21	Ustrzyki Dolne	115.3	32.2	92.0	239.5	0.48	**0.61**
SLOVAKIA							
Presov		*34.0*	*320.1*	*289.2*	*643.3*	*0.05*	***0.50***
22	Snina	31.7	31.8	77.1	140.6	0.13	0,45
Kosice		*63.5*	*168.6*	*310.21*	*542.3*	*0.12*	***0.55***
23	Trebišov	5.5	72.6	120.7	198.8	0.03	**0,39**
24	Michalovce	14.7		168.6	183.3	0.08	0.08
25	Sobrance	41.3		70.1	111.4	0.37	0.37
UKRAINA							
Zakarpathia		*248.7*	*0*	*443.0*	*691.7*	*0.56*	***0.56***
Lvivska		*146.9*	*0*	*539.6*	*686.5*	*0.21*	*0.21*
Volynska		*141.7*	*191.8*	*453.9*	*787.4*	*0.18*	*0.42*
BELARUS							
Brest		*148.0*	*354.6*	*226.7*	*729.3*	*0.20*	***0.69***
Hrodna		*501.3*	*0*	*586.6*	*1087.9*	*0.46*	*0.46*
RUSSIA							
Kalinigrad		*530.0*	*0*	*0*	*530.0*	***1.0***	***1.0***

Source: Polish, Slovak, Belarusian and Ukrainian National Statistic Institutes; ESRI 2010: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/nuts/home_regions_en.html).

Internal/External Connection Index (Ic) – in the case of a sinuous border and natural or anthropogenic barriers, we may determine the administrative-territorial unit connected to the national territory or to the upper regional level. The value of this indicator results from the ratio between the state border length (L_{SB}) and the total length of the administrative unit boundary (perimeter) (P). The formula is: Ic = L_{FT}/P. Depending on the values we obtain, we may have the following situations:
- 0 – no border connections/ total internal connection;
- under 0.10 – the ATU has a dominant internal connection;
- from 0.11 to 0.30 – the ATU has a normal internal connection;
- from 0.31 to 0.40 – the ATU has a regressive internal connection;
- from 0.41 to 0.49 – the ATU has a low internal connection;
- 0.50 – equal internal and external connections;

–   from 0.51 to 0.60 – the ATU has a low external connection;
–   from 0.61 to 0.74 – the ATU has a dominant external connection;
–   over 0.75 – the ATU has a tendency of protuberance;
–   1.0 – the ATU is an exclave / enclave.

This indicator can be used when developing cross-border spatial planning strategies and it reflects the relative position of each ATU in relation to the political system to which it belongs. A value above 0.51 means that the ATU has 'external' connection to the dominant political system it belongs to and its 'internal'[1] contiguity is inferior to the 'external' contiguity[2]. This indicator may be used in developing cross-border spatial planning strategies and it reflects the intensity of how each ATU is involved in the management of the border area and the organic link between the ATU and the country it belongs to.

In the analysed external border sector of the EU, i.e. the Polish and Slovak NUTS 2 or equivalent structures as seen in figure 1 and table 1, linked only to the external EU border, their contiguous administrative units are as follows: those with a high degree of connection are Hrodna (0.46) in Belarus region/ oblast and the Polish voivodeships, with values between 0.27 and 0.37; the Slovak regions, defined by special morphography and perpendicular disposal to a short sector of EU external border fall among those with strong internal connection; the only territorial unit with a value of more than 0.5 is the Ukrainian region/oblast of Transcarpathia (Zakarpatsha) with a low external connection (0.56), also due to the parallel border position of this ATU.

If we analyse the border as a whole, including inter-state sectors inside and outside the EU, we will notice some significant differences at the level of the administrative-territorial units that include such border sectors. Moreover, we can demarcate the border administrative units into two categories: 'indoor' ATUs, whose only connection is that with the external border of the EU: Lubelskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie in Poland and Lvivska in Ukraine, and the remaining 'corner' ATUs that also include border sectors other than those with the external border of the EU. We thus notice that the smaller the ATU, the more likely it is to be an 'indoor' unit, which is obvious in the case of lower-level administrative units.

If we look at the values in table 1 as compared with the total border sectors included within the analysed administrative units, we notice that a number of members of the EU and Schengen area have reduced the state border functions

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[1] The ATU perimeter with one or more neighbouring ATU from the same system (country, region, county).

[2] The sector from the ATU perimeter which serves as a state border.

and the connectivity degree. These are the cases of the Slovak regions with values of 0.50 (Prešov) and 0.54 (Kosice), which places them in the category of low external connection by assigning them the role of an external border of the EU and the Schengen area. These regions have reduced the I_C to 0.05 and 0.12, changing their status and thus transforming them into ATUs with a strong 'internal' EU connection (not national). This also applied to the Polish voivode-ships of Podlaskie from 0.42 to 0.29 and Podkarpackie from 0.42 to 0.27.

We may also observe a different situation for Belarusian and Ukrainian regions. When compared to the interstate and EU border, one can find 'external' connection ATUs like Brest (0.69) and Volynska (0.42).

With regard to the low level administrative structures, in the case of 21 Polish poviats (NUTS 4) and 4 Slovak *krajs*, the situation is reflected in the figure 1 and table 1: the two contiguous structures on the Slovak-Polish border and one on the Slovak-Hungarian border that includes the external border with Ukraine have the most complex situations. Thus, considering the total length of the state border, all three structures have an I_C over 0.39, exceeding 0.60 in Ustrzyki Dolne, with a pronounced external connection character. By reducing the role and functions of the EU's internal border, the connection index of the three structures related to the external EU border is reduced in Trebisov from 0.39 to 0.03 and Snina from 0.45 to 0.13 (both with strong internal EU connectivity). If this Polish unit went from 0.61 to 0.48 it means that it passed from a dominant external connection with protuberance tendencies to a moderate degree of internal connection. The other 22 poviats are grouped as follows (Fig. 1 and Tab. 1): 4 with regressive degree of connection (0.31 to 0.40), 14 with strong internal connection (0.11 to 0.30) and 4 with strong connection (below 0.1).

4. CONCLUSIONS

These indicators are useful tools in developing strategies and plans for territorial management, since their values truly reflect the territorial reality and prevent possible errors caused by superficial interpretation and a the lack of comprehensive cartographic material (relief, hydrography, settlements' distance from the border, road access, road network configuration, etc.), as it happened in most cases of defining the status of border administrative units.

The EU's external border in Poland (including Russia, the Kaliningrad exclave) and the Slovakian state border spanning over one thousand kilometres highlight the importance of morphography, morphology and position of the administrative units with regard to border management and border structures that

can generate functional cross-border territorial systems. The analyses conducted on the contiguous 12 NUTS 2 administrative units inside and outside the EU, as well as on 25 NUTS 4 administrative units of the EU periphery were based on a more accurate interpretation of the local realities linked to the border position. When applying the internal connection index, the main objective was to increase the range of tools used in planning strategies and policies at regional, borderland and cross-border level.

Thus, borderlands and cross-border systems play an important role in terms of social and economic integration and in the process of eliminating the traditional functions of a political border that generate juxtaposed territorial structures.

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PERIPHERAL AREAS IN GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPTS AND THE CONTEXT OF POLAND'S REGIONAL DIVERSITY

1. INTRODUCTION

Nothing in the social and scientific debate about peripheral areas inspires such interest as metropolitan areas. In the transition period, dynamic and effective transformation of large cities and their immediate surroundings (e.g. suburbia) is more interesting. In contrast to the post-socialist countries undergoing transformation, geographical interpretation of peripheries in the Anglo-American literature is a lot more 'gracious' in the assessment of their cultural significance, seeing a lot of non-economic values in them (see Bunce 1994).

The gradual change in thinking about peripheries is not merely a result of changes to their nature (e.g. functional, physiognomic). To a large extent, the methodological approach changed as a result of the 'cultural turn' in human geography. Z. Rykiel (2011, p. 55) indicates that the differences between various interpretations of peripheries are not only factual but also methodological. Traditionally, human geography has focused on the objects, while sociology did on states.

The socialisation of human geography, which has been going on in recent years, is evoking a greater interest in mental states. In sociology, more and more often the territorial aspect of the functioning of the society is taken into account. **The aim of this paper** is therefore to attempt to compare ways of presenting peripheries in traditional (functional and structural) and new (cultural) concepts of geographical research. This analysis is supplemented with the examples of representations of differences in the core–periphery in geographical literature and related sciences, especially spatial planning.

2. PERIPHERIES IN THE FUNCTIONAL CONCEPTS

Functionalism assumes the objectivity of structures, i.e. it prefers static, systematising and synchronous interpretations (Suliborski 2001). In the functional interpretations, the way of thinking about the research problem is primarily utilitarian in character, i.e. the main elements of the research are the methods and interpretations of the measurement results based on statistical information from databases or first-hand directories (empirical scientism).

One of the most important effects of geographical studies according to this model are distribution (range) maps of population and economic phenomena (classification and regionalisation methods). Most of the work based on functional research program interprets the changes in the concentration of specific goods or resources (mainly economic) on the basis of the allocation of space for development areas (cores) and those stagnating or lagging behind in terms of these processes (peripheries). Space is usually portrayed in the 'Euclidean' dimensions (maps, spatial models).

One of the most important concepts in the history of geographical thought explaining the variation in the distribution of human activity is the **central place theory**. The basic assumptions of the central place theory can be applied to the process of formation of the cores and peripheries in economic development. In this theory, settlement units are divided into those that play central functions, i.e. central places, and those that do not play such functions.

Centrality or the lack of it creates the division of areas of economic domination – cores, and their subordinate zones – peripheries. The specificity of the central functions of the settlement unit is to offer goods to the people living in the periphery. The movement of people in the economic space to meet the demand for certain goods requires a larger organisational effort from the residents of peripheries because of the time and cost of commuting to the central facilities. The functional diversity of settlement units is largely reflected in the administrative structure of states and their regions.

Case 1. Historical heritage as the reason for peripheralisation of Poland's space

Thesis: The reasons for the differences in the level of development of various regions of Poland are historical factors, including the crucial role played by the former political divisions.

A key role is attributed to the partitions of Poland (1795–1918), and thus the fact that its different regions belonged to the countries with different levels of social and economic development. In the spatial structure models, developed after World War II,

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the differences between investment level in the western and eastern regions are exposed, and are an expression of a civilizational gap ('between Russia and Germany'). **According to this approach, the peripheries include Poland's eastern regions**, less industrialised, less urbanised and less infrastructure-invested. These areas are often referred to as 'Poland B' or 'eastern wall', which has a pejorative connotation.

1) the capital city,
2) the largest cities,
3) main transport routes,
4) the main axes of industrial development,
5) the economic investments zones
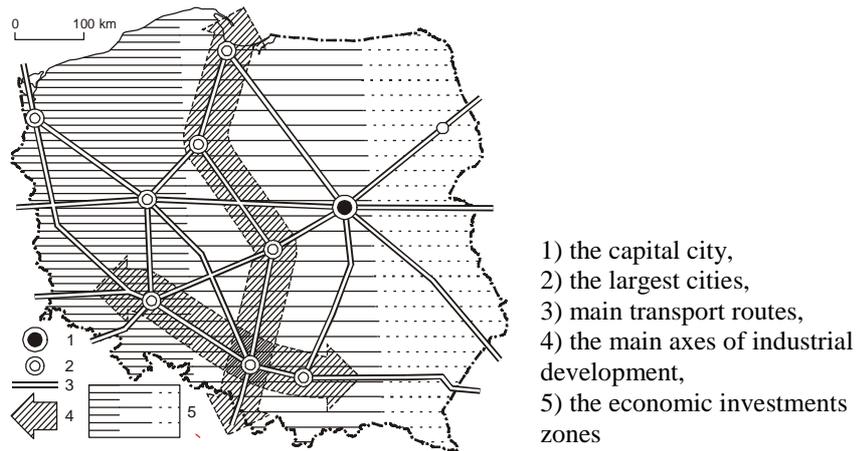
Fig. 1. Model of spatial structure of Poland in 1950
Source: after K. Dziewoński and B. Malisz (1978, p. 26)

Another example of the functional theory is the **economic base theory**, which focuses on the mechanism of economic growth. Its basic idea is the division of the activities performed by the population of settlement units into two groups, i.e. exogenous (answering the external demand) and endogenous (answering the internal demand). Exogenous features form the economic base – activities which are a source of income for the territories (cf. Suliborski 2010). The concept of economic base sees the reasons for the increase of the settlement units in the export, which also leads to the integration of regional and national settlement systems (specialisation of settlements).

The economic base theory was developed primarily for the urban areas, and its interpretations and empirical verifications were carried out in the analysis of urban settlement systems. The economic base theory (developed in the mature form in the 1940s) refers to the specificity of social and territorial division of labour of the industrial era, and at the same time the classification of towns and villages by their functional criteria (agricultural functions in villages and non-agricultural functions in cities).

Peripheries used to be primarily identified with the agricultural hinterland of regions, while the cores were mostly large industrialised cities. The exchange of

goods between the peripheries (mainly rural areas) and the cores (urban areas) leads to urban centres getting wealthier at the expense of the peripheries. The main reason is the nature of the goods produced in both areas. Urban areas offer goods that are highly processed (capital-intensive), and thus of a higher value, while the peripheral areas compete by offering their agricultural produce with a relatively low degree of processing (time-consuming).

In the long run, the exchange of goods between the core and periphery leads to income differences (standard of living) and all other consequences (rural-urban migration, rural depopulation, impoverishment, economic and cultural degradation). This process determines the peripherality of the areas located away from large, cities as well as their functional and political subordination.

Case 2. Industry as the reason for peripheralisation of Poland's space

Thesis. The reason for the differences in the level of development of the various regions of Poland are factors related to the location of industrial investment.

A key role in social and economic changes was played by a shift of resources from agriculture (non-socialised) to the state-managed industry. This change was ideological in its nature and was associated with the political objectives of the socialist state. In the centrally planned economy, industrialisation was considered a factor of economic growth and increasing living standards, and thus it was considered social modernisation in accordance with the guidelines of the central government (to control the society shaped by the Soviet model – 'homo sovieticus'). **In this approach, the peripheries are areas outside the so-called triangle of industrialisation and high population density, i.e. the regions of the north-eastern, eastern and north-western Poland.**

1) the capital city,
2) the largest cities,
3) medium-sized cities,
4) main transport routes,
5) the southern industrial region,
6) new industrial regions,
7) more industrialised areas,
8) area within a radius of 300 km from Katowice
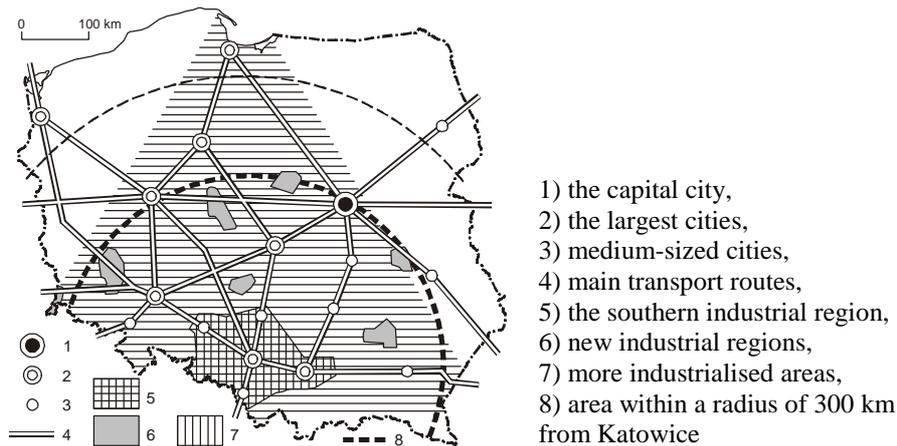
Fig. 2. Model of spatial structure of the country in 1970
Source: after K. Dziewoński and B. Malisz (1978, p. 32)

# 3. PERIPHERIES IN THE CONCEPTS OF SPATIAL POLARISATION

In social sciences, including human geography, one of the most important theories explaining the diversity of spatial structure is the concept of the polarised development or the nodal regions. The basic assumptions of the geographical concept of the core–periphery are based on observation of changes in the spatial structures of countries and regions in the period of industrialisation, and largely related to the economic characteristics of the variability of territorial systems (Rykiel 1991). When formulating the main theses of the core–periphery concept, J. Friedman (1968) pointed to the factors associated with early industrialisation, which in his opinion determined the occurrence of innovation centres and the maintenance of their competitive advantage, as well as the ensuing economic dominance over the rest of the area, i.e. the peripheries (Grzeszczak 1999, Grosse 2002). The core–periphery concept is one of the most widely used models of socio-economic development in the description of the spatial diversity of positions of power and subordination, not only economic, but also political and cultural.

The core–periphery concept explained the differences in social and economic development of the territories of the industrial age. Looking at the geographical location of the development process, especially in big cities, and based on the dominant (leading) industries at a given stage of economic transformation, places the periphery as areas dominated by urban centres – sources of diffusion of innovation and development incentives.

Case 3. Urbanisation as the reason for peripheralisation of Poland's space

Thesis. The reasons for the differences in the level of development of the various regions of Poland are the factors associated with the development of urban centres.

The most important factor of social and economic change is the growth of urban areas and the diffusion of urban forms of spatial planning along the main routes of road and railway infrastructure. This concept is based on paying particular attention to the urbanisation process, which is a source of social diversity – from agrarian to urban society. Urbanisation is regarded a specific kind of social modernisation, the source of which is the urban lifestyle. **In this approach, the periphery means the further surroundings of agglomerations, whose main function is to provide rest and recreation for the city dwellers.**

Figure 3. Polycentric settlement system; moderate concentration
Source: after B. Malisz (ed.) (1978, annex 10)

1) developed urban agglomerations,
2) national development urban centres,
3) links of technical infrastructure,
4) leisure and tourist areas
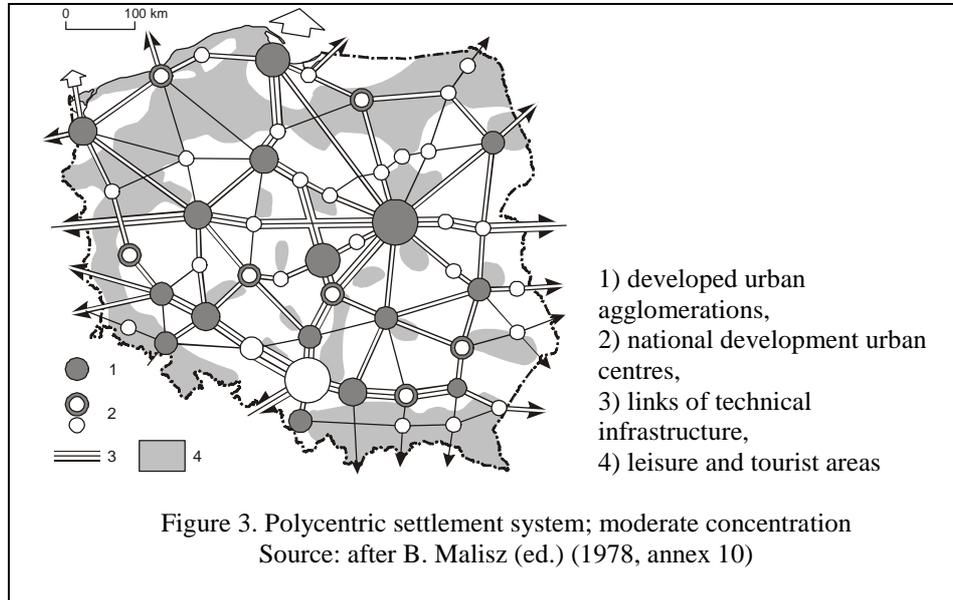
4. PERIPHERIES IN THE URBANISATION CONCEPT

The urbanisation concept is one of the most frequently used to explain the variability of social and economic spatial structures at the national and regional levels. Urbanisation was most often considered in connection with the industrialisation processes taking place in cities (Rakowski 1980). In urban studies, peripheries were presented as an area that is subject to certain structural changes according to an urban pattern (demographic, economic, cultural, spatial).

Urbanisation of the peripheries, as an expression of an idea of social progress, was based on the valuation of changes characteristic of the core and the periphery. The interpretation of urban phenomena served for presenting the periphery as underdeveloped areas, lagging behind the social and economic changes taking place in mass society. In this concept, the city is a model for the development of the peripheries. Urbanisation is in this sense a version of the modernisation theory, which assumes the transfer and diffusion of socio-economic patterns of development, for some reason considered desirable.

5. PERIPHERIES IN THE SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL CONCEPTS

Contemporary theories of human geography have lots of connections with social sciences. The emergence of social geography and, most of all, cultural geography, which interpret the space as more than just economic value, was the basis to challenge the research model of objective reality, and thus move away from purely physical (geometric) way of presenting space in favour of its relational side (Gregory 1994).

Social geography is not only interested in the formation of marginal zones and the mechanisms of growth of social disparities, but is also engaged in critical assessment of the processes leading to the formation of inequalities (e.g. Harvey 1989, Soja 1996). This approach no longer evaluates space in terms of the 'cores = growth' and 'peripheries = stagnation'. An alternative look at the division of core–peripheries emphasises the concept of 'peripherality' as the state of social identity and the values that are associated with it.

Peripherality is a feature of the social community, and regionalism and localism mean cultural separateness shaped over a long period of time. Periphery is a 'long-term' structure, a repository and a source of conservative ideas. Cultural concepts interpret the peripheries as a specific lifestyle and a type of social identity. Periphery cannot be interpreted in terms of economic backwardness, the problem area or the area of cultural degradation.

Peripherality primarily means cultural potential, social and territorial roots, a set of traditional values derived from a sense of local and/or regional community (Wójcik 2009, Zarycki 2007). Periphery is a part of the national and regional identity, which, although located on the sidelines of the main currents of economic change and mass culture, carries a strong message based on a specific vision of social development (tradition), and more and more often longing expressed by part of the society for a 'local' way of life (Phillips 2005, Grzeszczak 2010).

Case 4. Globalisation as the reason for peripheralisation of Poland's space

Thesis: The reason for the differences in the level of development of the various regions of Poland are the factors associated with the globalisation process – the integration of certain areas in the global circulation of people, goods, capital and information.

The main reason for the peripheralisation of some of Poland's space is the poor integration of some of Poland's regions in the processes of globalisation. The most important source of variability in the Poland's space are the processes of EU

integration and the associated processes of metropolisation, i.e. the development of functions concentrated primarily in large cities, which provide connectivity to Europe's space (European Union) and the world.

Important factors determining the divisions in Poland's space include the availability of fast transport infrastructure (highways, airports) and wireless communication (the Internet). **Periphery, in this case, is more difficult to determine in the spatial sense. Territorial development has a mosaic character** and defies the rules of division into cores=large cities and peripheries=countryside, especially since the former mono-functional industrial centres, including large post-industrial cities, undergo peripheralisation.

The processes of centralisation and peripheralisation depend largely on social activity, creativity of local and regional authorities (social capital) and political factors, which include, for example, decisions about the direction of the flow of funds from the EU programs. An example of a special program concerned with the peripheral areas is the Operational Program for the Development of Eastern Poland (see www.polskawschodnia.gov.pl). This program is designed to accelerate levelling of standard of living for the population of eastern Poland.


1) the capital metropolises,
2) European centers of polarisation (europoles),
3–6) centres of sustained development (hierarchical system),
7–8) European belts of growing economic activity,
9) national belts of growing economic activity,
10) zones of overcoming recession,
11) zones of growing activity^a,
12–15) zones of growing development (12) sustained metropolisation,
13) overcoming the crisis in economic base,
14) active restructuring,
15) marine resources,
16) zone of stimulated economic development under the influence of the European Union and globalization

^{a} Regions influenced by the Operational Program for the Development of Eastern Poland (2007–2013).

Fig. 4. The concept of spatial development Policy of the country.
Sustainable development model
Source: J. Kołodziejski (1997, p. 73)

6. CONCLUSION

The overview of key traditional and new research concepts in the context of peripheral areas presents a wide variety of ways to explain the structures and processes that shape their character. In its practical dimension, the analysis of research approaches is to draw attention to the prevailing presentation of the peripheries in the Polish specialist literature, i.e. the functional model. The new research approaches 'liberate' the peripheries of a stereotypical way in which they are described as backward areas, lagging behind the changes taking place in the centre, degraded economically and culturally. These concepts highlight the multi-dimensionality of space and, above all, pay attention to the existence of the hidden structures (mental structures) and non-economic forms of capital (especially cultural capital).

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