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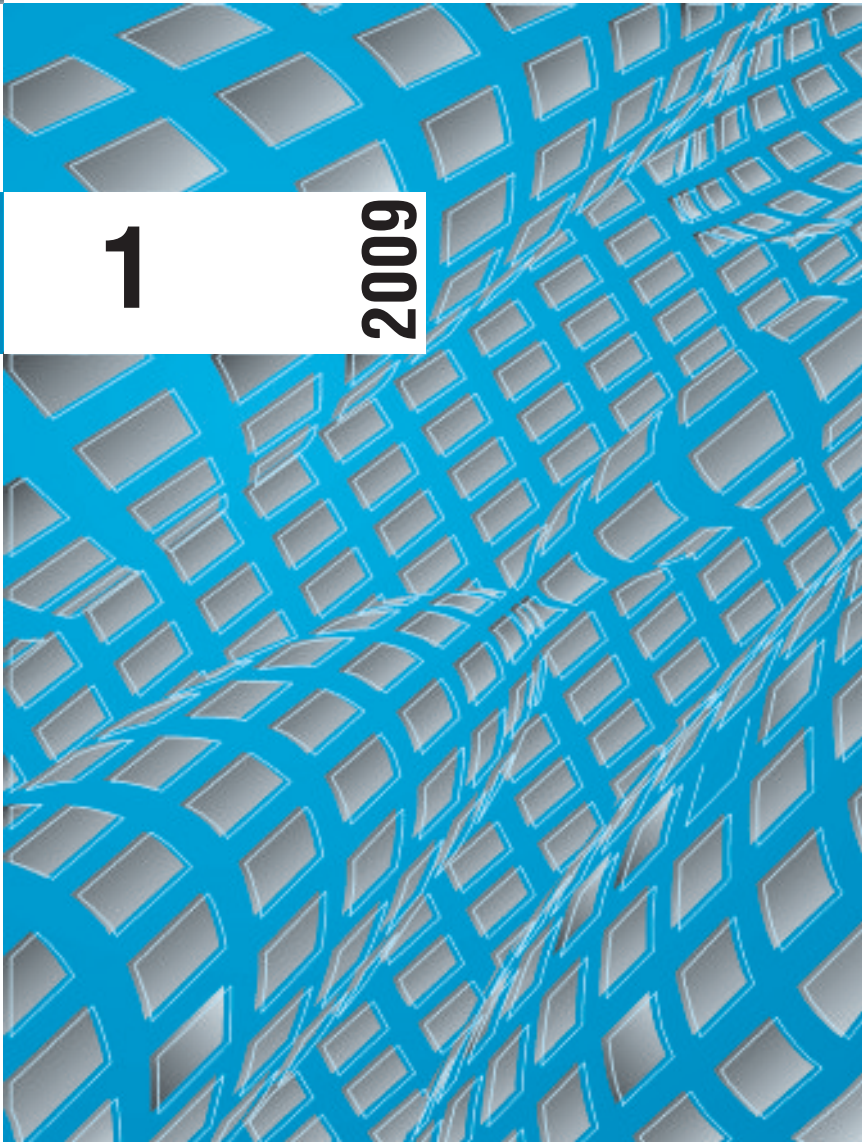
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The dynamics of spatial development in central European space is a big challenge for spatial planning practice, theory and education. New tasks and new frameworks for their solutions in the post-transformation period (in the new EU member states) and formation of knowledge based society require not only the implementation of new approaches, new methods and new instruments in the spatial development control. They require first of all new understanding of the role of planners in the society and new profile of the spatial planners.

Long history of the architectural education of spatial planners in Slovakia was connected with the names of outstanding professionals and pedagogues like Professor Emanuel Hruška and Professor Rudolf Štejs, heads of the Department of Urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava. Slovak territorial planning system belongs to very progressive representatives of the central European planning culture and close relations between and integration of spatial planning, urban design, architecture and landscape architecture in the education was big advantage for professional profile of the specialists dominant in the field of spatial development.

The trends to educate “universal” architects at this Faculty has been in the contradiction with the needs to educate the professionals prepared to face the challenges of current spatial development at the start of the 21st century. The contents of spatial development topic in the curriculum of the study branch “Architecture and Urbanism” tended to be reduced and focused towards urban design. This led to the creation of self-standing study branch “Spatial Planning” in Slovakia and to accreditation of the first study programmes “Spatial Planning and Management” in this field by the Faculty of Architecture of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava in 2003. After the reorganisation in 2008 the issues of complex spatial development with the emphasis on its sustainable utilisation for the development of the Slovak society are covered by the university Institute of Management of the Slovak University of Technology and its Department of Spatial Planning as well as by the SPECTRA Centre of Excellence of EU that integrates the capacities within the STU and within the cooperating home and foreign and institutions. Since 2008 the Institute of Management guarantees professional education and research and development activities in the sphere of spatial planning integrating landscape planning, land use planning and

socio-economic strategic planning of territorial units in close linkage with the Central European Research and Training Centre in Spatial Planning SPECTRA, established in 1998, that was awarded by the EC Brussels as the Centre of Excellence of EU (in 2003) for the contribution in the European R&D 5FP. The effort of the SPECTRA Centre is to contribute towards sustainable development and the processes of economic, social and cultural integration in Europe as well as towards its territorial cohesion with the interdisciplinary research and education emphasizing the integration of landscape-ecological, economic, social and technological aspects. Research and the proposals, focused on optimising of spatial structures contribute to the fulfilling of the criteria of sustainable spatial development, to balancing the regional disparities and at the same time to preserving cultural and ecological diversity, to improving the quality of life and to strengthening of social cohesion in Europe.

Interdisciplinarity and broad international cooperation, reflected by the personal capacities of these university units with stabilised institutional position, guarantee the conditions for research work on the issues of complex planning of sustainable spatial development with the focus on optimising the functional use of territory, including economic and other activities, mobility, relations and functioning of urban and rural structures, creation of sound environment for living, preservation of cultural heritage and ecological balance, based on cooperation with the population and other stakeholders of spatial development.

One of the milestones in the transformation process of spatial planning education and research at the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava is the change in the editorial work in this field. The tradition of the Central European Journal of Architecture and Planning ALFA SPECTRA, its Planning Studies continues with this issue in a new form. Under the modified name “Central European Journal of Spatial and Landscape Planning - TERRA SPECTRA” expressing the focus of the journal on spatial and territorial development and planning will publish two issues – Planning and Landscape Studies and Real Estate Studies. We believe this new form and orientation will contribute to the new quality of the journal and to your satisfaction with new information, useful and interesting for your work.

Maroš Finka



Rudolf Giffinger
Alexander Hamedinger

METROPOLITAN COMPETITIVENESS RECONSIDERED: THE ROLE OF TERRITORIAL CAPITAL AND METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE

Introduction

Along with the EU integration process national barriers decreased and the conditions and factors influencing urban-regional development increased in their importance. In particular, the process of integration changed the conditions for urban development for cities in Central Europe in a decisive way (Hamilton, et al., 2005): new opportunities and perspectives for urban development arose at the turn of the century, providing new market potentials and new patterns of mobility of labour forces and capital. For instance, these changing conditions are providing a more competitive situation for capital cities like Prague, Budapest, Bratislava or Vienna or even for medium sized cities in order to attract corresponding economic functions.

Two consequences of this changed situation are obvious: Firstly, the recent position of every city is endangered due to its ability to compete with other cities on the corresponding level (interregional, national, European, global). Secondly, cities which are ranked on highest level, are challenged to become a metropolis competing with other metropolises on – at least - the European level. This means, urban agglomerations should provide not only general economic functions on the interregional and national level but more specific functions like decision centres of multinational firms, international strategic and controlling institutions (private or public) in the political, economic and cultural sphere (Krätke, 1995).

All in all, due to these trends the pressure of competition has increased demanding an improved competitiveness of every metropolis. In the scientific literature addressing questions of metropolitan development (e.g. Camagni 2007, Faludi 2007) as well as in a row of EU documents (e.g. EC 2007), the terms 'territorial capital' and 'territorial and metropolitan governance' are increasingly discussed concerning their importance for improving metropolises' competitiveness, and, simultaneously, their territorial cohesion. What is missing is an integrative theoretical consideration of both conceptions and approaches to operationalize them for the sake of empirical analysis.

In this contribution we will concentrate on the question why we regard territorial capital as the key element of metropolitan competitiveness and for territorial cohesion. Doing this, we focus on the definition and explanation of urban and metropolitan competitiveness and relevant influencing factors. Particularly, we concentrate on the concept of territorial capital which brings attention to supply sided factors of influence and most of all to

challenges of governance (chapter 2). In chapter 3, we integrate both conceptions via discussing and identifying dimensions and challenges of territory-based good governance. The developed dimensions of good governance will be used as a kind of yardstick for assessing the CENTROPE-project presented in chapter 4. To conclude (chapter 5), we elaborate some recommendations regarding the usefulness of the territorial-capital-concept for theoretical analysis, but also for analysing and for improving forms of governance in order to translate territorial potentials into assets for the region (with a focus on CENTROPE).

Redefining metropolitan competitiveness: the mobilisation of potentials

In front of technological progress and socioeconomic changes urban research focuses on the emergence of new forms of urban agglomerations and on the shifts in the urban hierarchy since about two decades. It started with some basic hypothesis which Friedman (1986: 69 ff) put into discussion regarding metropolitan development and new policy issues. Of course, topics of discussion changed over time reflecting new challenges which occurred increasingly. (Healey, et al., 1995) In particular, academic discussion shifted from the understanding of fragmented metropolitan development (Fainstein, et al., 1992) to more policy related issues in the European context (Salet, et al., 2003).

At the same time metropolitan competitiveness was discussed increasingly due to the reasons mentioned above. At the end of the 90ies of the 20th century Begg (1999: 802) pointed out different arguments and corresponding factors of influence: top-down sectoral trends, characteristics and structure of the stock of forms and companies, the business environment and the capacity for innovation and learning. The understanding of urban (and later on metropolitan) competitiveness changed from simple definitions focussing on predominantly economic growth to a more complex definition considering metropolitan development not only in economic terms but also in terms of living quality and socio-spatial cohesion on the urban-regional level (Begg, 1999, Giffinger, et al., 2003). Accordingly, metropolitan development (economic and demographic growth) is seen as the outcome of specific and globally high ranked economic activities under competition of cities which enhance and stimulate other (less basic) economic activities on the local and regional level. But there is no explicit explanation why specific activities are allocated to specific places, why such



activities are able to enhance metropolitan competitiveness and what role does policy resp. urban governance have explicitly.

During last years it became evident that increasing demand in a specific sector or even growing market potentials across Europe does not affect all regions in the same positive way. Disparities are increasing. (Europäische Kommission, 2007: 10 ff; Kramar, 2008: 7 ff) Two different conclusions can be made: Firstly, distinct regions or urban agglomerations are not able to activate corresponding potentials because of its missing ability. Secondly, same investments/activities do not have the same impact on returns across different urban agglomerations and regions. In front of this empirical evidence regarding urban-regional development in the European Union, more recently, a clear supply sided approach is discussed intensively under the term of 'territorial capital. Camagni (2007: 4ff) elaborated a simple taxonomy of components of territorial capital defined by two dimensions: one dimension represents the materiality, the other dimension represents the degree of rivalry. Every dimension is divided into three categories of materiality resp. rivalry: Materiality distinguishes tangible, mixed and intangible goods and rivalry private goods, club goods (inpure public goods) and public goods. Accordingly territorial capital is characterized by the respective combinations of materiality and rivalry resulting in nine components. Elaborating these components Camagni identifies the 'traditional square' and the 'innovative cross' – the latter emphasizing the importance of cooperative initiatives for the increased competitiveness. (see also Giffinger, et al., 2005: 9 ff; and Otgaar, 2008: 3 ff)

This 'innovative cross' indicates that the cooperative capacity in a metropolis is crucial in importance because it is the base to translate virtual and intangible elements and potentials into initiatives aiming at the enhancement of the territorial capital in form of specific intangible assets. This means from a strategic point of view that the creation of assets – in particular of intangible assets - becomes the most important driving force of urban-regional competitiveness because they provide absolute and relative advantages for economic activities. Relative advantages are mostly seen in the set of conditions which may change due to market dynamics (costs of labour force, real estate prices, etc.); absolute advantages are regarded as the most important forces for development so far they result from intangible and immovable assets. Its most important impact for more competitive economic activities can be seen for instance in the reduction of transaction costs and in the enhancement of agglomeration economies.

From an action based point of view territorial capital will change over time due to the following cumulative process: the group of endowment factors define the attractiveness of an urban region and corresponding potentials; specific cooperative initiatives between different actors are combined as relational elements. Such combinations of cooperative initiatives create specific tangible and

intangible assets in identifying and using the potentials. Thus, they should then provide advantages for certain economic activities which makes every city, every urban region or even metropolis more competitive. As a consequence, distinct investments may have higher returns than others, as they are better suited to the area and use existing assets and potentials more effectively. Finally, territorial capital will be enhanced if the net flow between costs and returns for cooperative initiatives or the use of endowment factors keeps positive. Over time a process of accumulation or depreciation will take place strengthening or weakening the competitiveness of the metropolis.

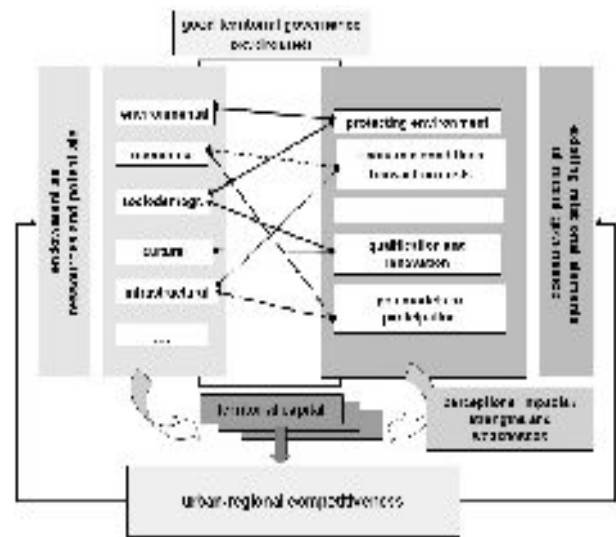


Fig. 1: systemic understanding and meaning of assets
source: Giffinger, 2008, p.10

Within this conception the issue of governance lies at the heart of the territorial capital approach emphasizing its primary function of identifying, producing and enhancing tangible and intangible assets. It is described as the capacity to translate the vague potentials of relational and social capital into real assets for the territory (Camagni 2007). The basis for making full use of these potentials is cooperation agreements (public-public and public-private), networks, partnerships, action strategies and participation processes across borders of municipalities and between sectors with corresponding actors (Otgaar et al., 2008). Furthermore, Camagni (2007) points to a necessary strong role of local authorities concerning the use of certain collective goods, which usually show a high degree of conflict of interest. Particularly, for avoiding free-rider-effects local authorities should focus on strict control mechanisms and on setting incentives for adequate behaviour. As urban and rural landscapes are collective goods of this kind, he consequently argues for spatial planning policies, which are based on an intelligent mix of direct instruments (e.g. regulations, laws) and more cooperative and communicative instruments (e.g. regional cooperation). Public policy should mainly concentrate on supporting projects, which contribute to improve the



relational and social capital of the territory: "More generally, the approach suggests a new role for local or regional policy-makers as the 'facilitators' of linkages and cooperation among actors, both at the regional and the inter-regional/inter-national scale (Camagni 2007: 14).

This argumentation is in line with the broad literature on urban and metropolitan governance, which mainly argues for a more participatory and inclusive kind of governance (e.g. Healey 1997, 2002; see chapter 3). This approach to governance is also mirrored in the political priorities of the EU's Territorial Agenda (2007). (<http://www.bmvbs.de/Raumentwicklung-1501.963052/Territoriale-Agenda-der-Europa.htm>, 30.6.2008)

Promoting Metropolitan Governance: dimensions and challenges concerning asset building

For analysing the CENTROPE-project with regard to its efforts to build governance-arrangements, the theoretical remarks made in the territorial capital-concept on governance and the ongoing discussions about metropolitan governance are linked. This should lead to dimensions of good governance, which will be used as a kind of 'yardstick' for the empirical analysis.

Broadly speaking, governance encompasses a set of processes, structures, rules, norms and values, which facilitate the coordination and steering of collective actions. The coordination and steering of (inter)actions is mainly based on the use of different rule systems (e.g. market, hierarchy, networks, etc.) (cf. Astleithner & Hamedinger 2003: 54). Governance is an ongoing process (and not a product) involving a variety of actors and institutions on different spatial scales and using different rule systems for coordinating their interactions and relationships.

New forms of governance are increasingly characterising the way of governing and coordinating carried out on the national, regional, metropolitan and local level. In comparison to traditional hierarchic government based on central authority ('command and control' governing), governance mainly relies on 'soft' forms of policy-making (e.g. voluntary commitment, inducing learning processes through transfer of best practice, etc.) and on the inclusion of non-state actors – like business enterprises, non-governmental organisations or particular citizen groups – in the formulation, decision and implementation of public policies. In contrast to 'government', the idea of governance involves working across boundaries within the public sector or between the public sector and the private or voluntary sectors. Of key concern are processes of networking and partnership building, that is, attempts to supplement the formal dimension of politics by informal rules and non-institutional forms of governing.

For the sake of analysing the CENTROPE-project it is important to specify this broad conception with regard to territorial aspects. Territorial or metropolitan governance refers to the ways of managing territorial capital at the metropolitan level more focussing on 'trans-scalar' dimensions as the given geographical demarcations for the activities of political-administrative systems are getting ineffective. In a context, which is characterised by an increasing incongruence between spatial developments and administrative boundaries, more collaborative and negotiating approaches to the formulation of strategic policies on the metropolitan level are called for. Consequently, 'territory' is not seen as a simple container consisting of processes and structures; instead, 'territory' is socially and politically constructed within proliferating horizontal (and even vertical) systems of negotiation (Healey 1997; 2002).

The yardstick for depicting developments regarding governance is derived from the literature about urban and metropolitan governance. What most studies on metropolitan development point out is that traditional governments slowly loose the absolute power over the policy-making process, and that formulation of policy goals, decision-making and the implementation of policies are dispersed among a various range of actors on the metropolitan level (see Marshall 2003: 34). This argumentation, which is basically rooted in new institutionalist reasoning, is in line with the above mentioned elements of territorial capital ('the mixed category'). Institutionalism is useful for analyzing governance changes as it highlights processes of change while leaving room for the analysis of continuity and its determinants. Essentially, institutionalist analysis provides an explanatory base for government (or governance) as process, rather than government as organisation, and is thus ideally suited for research on the still evolving and expanding system of metropolitan governance.

Although it is not possible to formulate general recipes for 'good' governance, which is mainly due to different historical path dependencies of cities and metropolises and institutional settings, some dimensions and accompanied challenges of good governance, which support the translation of potentials into actual assets, can be identified (see also Antalovsky et al. 2006; Bagnasco & Le Galés 2000; Hamedinger 2005; Heinelt & Kübler 2005; Pierre 2000; Rhodes 1997; Salet et al. 2003; Stoker 2000):

- **definition of strategies and strategic actions:** to cope with the different functional relationships in the metropolitan region but also between regional and international actors the elaboration of clear and precise strategies to enhance the position of the metropolitan region is highly relevant. In the process of formulating strategic priorities the involvement of the private sector and of segments of the civil society is very important. The extent of involving these actors influences the process of priority setting.



- **existence of strategic alliances for R & D, business-university-networks:** these kinds of networks are essential for building up and stabilizing social capital in the metropolitan region and for bringing together different kinds of knowledge. Metropolitan governance should support these networks, particularly because they are very fragile and because the connections between the members of these networks are considerably weak. Fostering connectivity and, hence, strengthening relation capital is one important task of governance.
- **cooperation agreements:** particularly cooperation between local authorities and between private and public actors (e.g. through establishing public-private-partnerships) are important for improving social and relational capital. Challenges concerning public-public-cooperation arise out of the tension between competitive behaviour of local actors (e.g. with regard to financial resources) and the need to cooperate in the metropolitan region in order to improve its competitive position. Under these circumstances (which also embrace different, unequal institutional frameworks) cooperation means cooperation between rivals.
- **existence of an organisational core:** a clear organisational structure with clearly defined competencies and tasks as well as an equal inclusion of all relevant stakeholders is a precondition for successful governance. Managing knowledge, distributing information, securing transparency and preparing meetings and workshops are elementary administrative tasks of the organisation.
- **inclusion of non-state actors** (horizontal governance) in the formulation, decision-making and implementation of development policies: new institutional arrangements of governing focus on a greater role of private business and civil society in the different phases of policy making. The main question is, to which extent decision-making powers have shifted away from formal governments to public-private organisations. Challenges concerning the inclusion of non-state actors are fears of local authorities to give away governing capacities, the emergence of interest conflicts, which cannot be resolved, a lack of clear strategies or of information on existing strategic goals (“hidden agenda”), weak willingness of non-state actors to participate in decision-making, a paternalistic political culture characterised by top-down-decision making.
- **Balancing ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’:** in order to avoid conflicts, de-motivation and resulting blockades within the cooperation process, a careful balance of top-down and bottom-up

procedures in all phases of the cooperation process (agenda setting, formulation, decision-making, implementation) has to be taken into account. Strict top-down-agenda setting or top-down-strategy-formulation by one governmental authority could lead to a lack of commitment by other policy actors to the cooperation process, to mistrust concerning policy goals and participation efforts, and to an unequal distribution of positions within the cooperation.

- **integration of different institutional layers** (‘vertical governance’ or ‘multi-level-governance’): the involvement of supra-regional actors in governance efforts (e.g. from the national level, or – in the case of Germany and Austria – from the federal states) seems to be a further precondition for reaching common policy goals as these levels are responsible for setting the institutional framework and for carrying out sectoral policies, which should not pervert metropolitan policies. So the integration of different institutional layers in metropolitan governance should contribute to reach one of the central principles of ‘good governance’ defined by the EU (EC 2001), namely ‘coherence’. Additionally, European regional policy is strongly advocating multilevel methods of governance, hence, fostering vertical integration of governmental tiers. Efforts to strengthen vertical integration can be endangered because of a lack of trust between the actors representing different tiers of government, because of fears to lose further competencies, because of the existence of different political and institutional structures, and, most relevantly, because of a constellation, in which partners from different governmental levels possessing different power resources are forced to cooperate. So, tensions could emerge due to unequal preconditions for cooperation (e.g. size, financial resources, political commitment, administrative capacity). Particularly, relationships between federal states and their strong metropolitan regions are highly contested. Good examples of vertical integration show that a good distribution of competencies regarding the conduction of certain policies can reduce conflicts on the metropolitan level.

These general dimensions of territory-based good governance are used for assessing the CENTROPE-project in the following chapter.



Mobilising territorial capital in CENTROPE

Characteristics and some potential assets of CENTROPE

In the year 2003 a significant initiative was launched in form of the INTERREG III A / PHARE project CENTROPE. This cooperative approach was based on the idea that ".....all efforts should be taken to create a prospering high quality European Region, where the available competences in economics, society and politics as well as the diversity of languages and culture are turned to a good account and help to support a dynamic development." (Giffinger, et al., 2005: 103). In the meantime the area of CENTROPE includes territories of Slovakia, Czech Republik, Hungary and Austria.



Fig. 2: CENTROPE – a new region in Central Europe
source: Giffinger, et al., 2005: 94; own modifications

The partners participating in this initiatives are 8 partner regions and 9 partner cities. In total the area of CENTROPE is characterized as follows: (Europaforum, 2007: 2 ff)

- about 6,5 million inhabitants live in an area of about 44.000 km² with substantial differences in densities between the cities and rural areas
- largest cities and most densest places are Vienna with about 1,6 million inhabitants and the respective largest cities Bratislava and Trnava (in Slovakia), Brno (in Bohemia), Sopron and Győr (in Western Hungary)

Economic development shows the following characteristics:

- the CENTROPE average value of GDP per capita in 2004 is more or less at the same level as the EU-25 average value
- strong centres (Vienna and Bratislava) show a GDP per capita value remarkably higher than the EU27-average

- disparities between regions in different countries resp. between cities and peripheral regions are strong
- GDP growth rates are highest in the regions of the accession countries between 1995 and 2004
- Besides Trnava and Vienna unemployment rates for all regions are lower than in the EU-25 average in 2005
- basically, there is a lack of high skilled work forces; medium education level is dominating across all regions

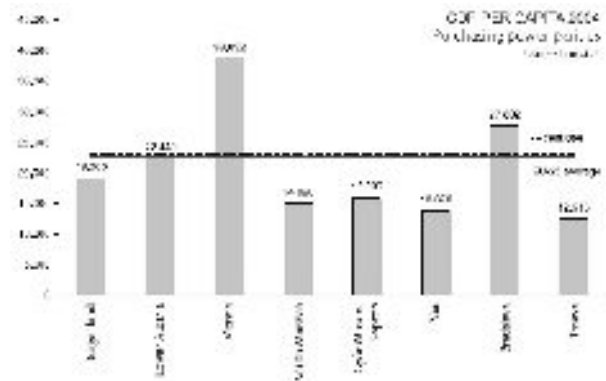


Fig. 3: Economic wealth in CENTROPE
source: Europaforum Wien, 2007: 3

Most important endowment characteristics and potentials are: (see Europaforum, 2007; Giffinger, et al., 2005: 92 ff)

- the Twin-City situation of Vienna and Bratislava in the core of the CENTROPE territory
- the urban net of Vienna – Sopron – Győr – Bratislava – Brno for a more polycentric development
- the position between Western European centres and the rapidly growing regions in the accession countries of 2004 and 2008
- high living quality in Vienna region and good access to different regions
- relative good interconnectivity and accessibility of the main cities resp. comprehensive and large infrastructural improvements based on the TEN-corridors
- existence of two/three international and several regional airports relative well known potentials in common history and culture
- economic specialisation in different branches and first attempts of cross-border cluster building (automotive sector, renewable energy, bio-chemical sector)

However most of the economic characteristics are regarded as such (tangible) assets which primarily provide relative advantages; others probably remain vague potentials and will never be activated into real assets for the territory



Asset making through CENTROPE initiative

Vienna's aspirations to position itself as an East-West-hub or a 'gateway to the East' and to develop cooperation in the so-called Vienna region go back to the 1990ies. The cross-border project DIANE (Direct Investment Agency Net) started by three Austrian regional business agencies in 2002 was – amongst others - an important point of departure for strengthening these ambitions. The Viennese efforts to foster supra-regional cross-border integration have resulted in the foundation of CENTROPE, a project which was prepared by a municipal department of the City of Vienna together with advisory institutions.

CENTROPE is a political project mainly initiated by the Viennese government. It currently embraces eight regions and eight cities (Austrian federal states of Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland; the Slovak regions of Bratislava and Trnava, the Czech region of South Moravia, the Hungarian regions of Győr-Moson-Sopron and Vas; the cities (not including Vienna) are: St. Pölten, Eisenstadt, Bratislava, Trnava, Brno, Győr, Szombathely). Vienna and Bratislava, the latter formerly only reluctantly taking part in cooperation efforts regarding regional marketing with Vienna, are very active in CENTROPE. The Austrian federal government is only partially involved in Centrope, the other national states are not formerly represented. Currently, Centrope is mainly financed by the Vienna Region.

Centrope was founded in 2003 at a meeting of local politicians in the village of Kittsee (Austria); as mentioned above, it was originally supported by the EU-INTERREG-programme. Its main goals are to create a location, which is attractive for international investors, and to strengthen civil societies' and private sectors' commitment to the region. Broadly speaking, all activities should contribute to improve the competitive position of the region in Europe and to build up a strong region outside the so-called 'banana' (CENTROPE Consortium 2006). Some sub-goals are "to generate long standing economic, cultural and political relations; to seize opportunities that arise from structural changes; to generate synergies for mutual benefits by working together; to support sustainable integration on the basis of diversity; to implement a professional cross-border cooperation management" (Otgaar et al. 2008: 48).

The 'Centrope Vision 2015', the actual common publication elaborated at the political conference in 2006, comprises thematic areas like economy & innovation, education, science & research, labour market & qualification, transport, infrastructure, environment & regional development, culture & cultural tourism, communication & co-operation. The vision should be implemented through a range of pilot projects (e.g. Centrope Labour, Centrope Sound, Centrope Sailing, Centrope Map).

The organisational structure of CENTROPE mainly mirrors the historical reasons for inventing it (eligibility for INTERREG-programmes). This cross-border cooperation has merely strategic and coordinative roles, while

implementation of projects is carried out by other organisations. The City of Vienna occupies a key role in all four organisation bodies:

- the political conference consisting of the sixteen local governments of CENTROPE is responsible for elaborating general strategies and policy guidelines. The advisory board is composed of two representatives of each of the 16 local and regional governments. These representatives are usually from the lower political or higher administrative level. This board has no decision-making powers.
- The steering committee consists of the three Austrian federal states, because they are co-funding the CENTROPE project within INTERREG. This body is the decision-making centre of the whole cooperation, particularly responsible for deciding about the eligibility of projects brought in by the Consortium.
- The consortium is an executive body in charge of developing, proposing and implementing projects. Most of its tasks are delegated to governmental agencies, e.g. the Vienna Business Agency (WWFF), EcoPlus from Lower Austria, WIBAG from Burgenland and the Centre for Urban Dialogue and European Policy (Europaforum Wien). The Europaforum Wien, which is a non-governmental organisation at arm length of the Socialdemocratic Party in Vienna, is in charge of the secretariat and develops communication materials (see: www.centrope.info) and planning documents.
- The working groups are also open for actors from the civil society (besides governmental and business actors), but they are lead by experts send to the working groups by local governments. These groups concentrate on discussing strategies and developing themes and project ideas. The discussed project ideas are selected by the Consortium and publicized by the Secretary. Implementation of projects, which have been approved by the Committee, lies in the hands of governments.

For broadly estimating the governance efforts of CENTROPE and for getting an idea about the extent of translating potentials into assets, the above mentioned dimensions of good governance are used:

- Inclusion of actors: the cooperation has a clearly identified bias towards fostering cooperation between governments and – to a low degree - the business sector (e.g. the Raiffeisenbank promoting its own Centrope web-site). Particularly, social movements or trade unions do not participate. Parts of the civil society can take part in the project through attending working groups, but they have no access to decision-making. Private partners are not represented in



the steering committee, the advisory board or the political conference. The cooperation seems to be technocratic and business orientated leaving no room for really incorporating other interests. "...the main actors in Centrope come from government or outsourced public bodies. These are highly educated and cosmopolitan bureaucrats who become key opinion makers and organic intellectuals of regional integration" (Coimbra de Souza & Novy 2007: 58).

- Balancing 'top-down' and 'bottom-up': Centrope can be called a public organisation and a top-down initiative of public policy. Most phases of the cooperation are dominated by top-down-procedures; hence, until now the cooperation is not using the innovative and creative potentials, which could be derived from wider bottom-up, more participatory orientated procedures.
- Definition of strategies and strategic actions: especially the cooperation between the three local development agencies is at the core of developing strategies. Social or even environmental aspects, which could probably be raised by civil society, are not at the top of the strategic priority list. Due to this limited extent of including different actors its dominant ideas are to attract firms for the region and for marketing the whole region internationally (CENTROPE as a 'one-stop-shop' for potential investors; cp. Otgaar et al. 2008). Some -economically speaking - weaker project partners are profiting from building the trademark 'Centrope'. However, the jointly developed strategies seem to be too broad and too non-specific for having practical effects concerning cooperation.
- Strategic alliances for R & D: business-university-networks for improving R & D efforts in the region are up tot now still missing, although universities have been involved in working groups (theme 'science') and in participating in a questionnaire for identifying possible fields of cooperation. The Centrope Vision 2015 tries to promote networks between universities and to found strategic alliances in different thematic areas; it also focuses on initiating business networks for building specific clusters in the region.
- Cooperation: although some cooperation agreements, which are project and issue-orientated, are in progress (e.g. FIRST, a public transport project initiated by the Transport Association of Eastern Austria (VOR); or the 'twin-liner', a fast ferry connecting Vienna and Bratislava), some problems have to be mentioned:

- the organisational structure of Centrope mirrors the dominant position of Vienna and the three Austrian federal states; this is a sub-optimal pre-condition for intensifying the cross-border cooperation as it gives unequal access to decision-making.
- as mentioned above, Centrope is dominated by public actors form the local and regional governments; in the eyes of some private actors, Centrope has a strong 'bureaucratic touch', which is a central reason for them not to be involved in it (a telling example in this respect is the 'Twin-City'-project: a cooperation project for realizing the Region Vienna-Bratislava, which was initiated by the Industrial Associations of Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland; the project leaders up to now refuse to take part in Centrope).
- a comprehensive knowledge management is still missing, although the Secretariat is managing the web-site containing a bulk of information. Developing a kind of joint knowledge is lacking in most of the thematic areas. Within the theme 'labour market', the elaboration of a supra-regional Employment Strategy Vienna-Bratislava has been initiated by the Viennese Employees Promotion Fund (WAFF) and the City of Vienna, which should also serve as a platform for exchanging information. Unfortunately, this is a bilateral approach, in which the other partners are not involved. Centrope is only a 'broker' or umbrella for all initiatives aiming the cooperation in the region and cannot be called a powerful partnership.
- Vertical integration: the cooperation embraces four nations, but funding and the powers of decision-making are mainly in the hand of Austria. Non-Austrian governmental partners often claimed that they have no decision-making powers with regard to finance. Additionally, mutual relations between the Slovak, Czech and Hungarian regions do not exist. The cooperation mainly suffers from a lack of political commitment to the project from some governmental levels. Rigid and incomparable institutional and political structures existing in the four countries are prohibiting a partnership on an equal and sound basis.



Conclusions:

What can we conclude on the theoretical level regarding the usefulness of the concept of territorial capital? Against traditional economic understanding of urban-regional development the territorial capital-approach clearly points out the following:

- It is not only the potentials of supply related factors which are relevant for urban-regional development.
- Potentials must be identified and activated through corresponding and effective cooperative initiatives.
- This identification and mobilisation of territorial capital which produces new assets are the main challenges of good governance; otherwise they are not used or at least activated in a non-effective way.
- This identification of potentials and their mobilisation as territorial capital through corresponding cooperation is crucial but very complex in cross-border situations due to differences in the pre-conditions of cooperation.
- In particular, the economic specialisation and differentiation in economic activities due to different regional conditions is still not an (intangible) asset as far as there are no governance models which activate them and which regulate cost and benefits in a fair way.
- Basically, governance models should concentrate more on cross-border assets which provide most of all absolute advantages and less relative advantages. Cooperation will take place only if its precondition, its partners and respective costs and returns are defined clearly. Thus, governance models should concentrate on specific small forms of cooperative initiatives which take up specific potentials and their development into assets.

What can we conclude for CENTROPE:

Centrope is an ambitious cross-border cooperation project, which has to face all the problems occurring in a spatial context embracing four countries, eight federal provinces or regions and nine cities. A coherent regional strategy requires joint decision-making, institutional cooperation and resource sharing. These matters are especially difficult to realize in a cross-border context as in CENTROPE. Sharp difference in socio-economic terms, differences concerning culture and language, as well as regarding the structures of the involved political-administrative systems (competencies, tasks, budgets, legal frameworks, decision-making procedures, etc.), are definitely barriers for turning potentials into assets. "The Vienna Region, aware of competition and the threat to its powerful economic position, favours a concerted, smooth transition to more integration, while the other regions do have to overcome enormous arrears in almost every aspect

of life" (Otgaar et al. 2008: 56). Further external barriers, which have to be discussed, are the strong labour market restrictions set by the Austrian government and the lack of transport and communication infrastructure. But, of course, Centrope has only limited possibilities to resolve these barriers, which are set up mainly on the national level.

One of the crucial challenges of good governance is to build forms of coordination, cooperation and communication between governmental and non-governmental actors and institutions, between different tiers of government and between actors and institutions responsible for various sectoral policies with spatial impacts that allow for developing territorial capital in a legitimate, efficient and effective manner. This seems to be problematic in the Centrope context. Up to now it has succeeded in bringing together public actors from public institutions, in internationally positioning the region as a trademark, and in slightly developing social capital between the involved actors. However, for further making full use of the mentioned potentials in the sense of building assets, some problems have to be addressed (cp. Otgaar, et al. 2008, Novy, et al., 2007):

- The unequal position of the partners raises some doubts about the future commitment of public actors to the cooperation. The Austrian partners are still in the lead concerning decision-making, financing and resource availability.
- Cooperation should be based on a common, clearly delimited and not-contested territory in order to develop common strategies successfully. This seems to be a problem in Centrope, as relevant actors being involved in Centrope are not sure about the accuracy of the current scale: some are suggesting to wide the spatial context of the cooperation (e.g. through incorporating larger cities like Budapest and Prague), others are arguing for limiting it (e.g. concentrating on the Vienna-Bratislava region). This has to be clarified by all actors in the near future.
- In this context, the Centrope-approach shows two important deficits:
 - First, it is clearly driven and dominated through a metropolitan and regional planning perspective due to different reasons. From our point of view this implies that there are still some elements and potentials which are not activated for the enhancement of the territorial capital. Most of all, cooperative initiatives on the level of Central European metropolises are missing which could be used in order to establish new assets.
 - Second, the basic governance understanding seems to be dominated by the incorporation of stakeholders' interest into the new cooperation initiative. However, this can be interpreted as rhetoric phrase, because at the same time, the incorporation of the interests of the civil society, NGOs and – to some degree – the private



business sector is neglected; local and regional governments are playing the leading role in the cooperation. The lack of coordinated public private actions and of involving universities could be detrimental for reaching the general goals of the project in the future. So, Centrope cannot be characterised as an inclusive and participatory form of governance.

- metropolitan the cooperative initiatives enforcing intangible assets should be realised not only on the regional level of CENTROPE but even on the Central European level including other metropolises like Budapest or Prague.
- The cooperation is still missing a well defined spatial and/or thematic focus. Some actors suggest focusing on labour market issues, others are arguing for supporting SMEs in the region in order to accelerate the regional integration process. The Centrope Vision 2015 could contribute to handle this challenge.

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Robert Knippschild

BENCHMARKING CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

The role of successful border regions for territorial cohesion and the need for comparison, criteria and indicators of cooperation

Introduction

The process of European integration is pacing ahead with the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007 and the extension of the Schengen Treaty on nine further member states in 2007. In an integrating Europe cross-border cooperation plays an important role since policies and strategies in spatial development, spatial functions and last but not least funding instruments do not end on national borders any longer. Cross-border cooperation is a precondition for good governance in spatial development in an integrated Europe. The European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) as a new legal instrument to facilitate cross-border cooperation that now allows public authorities to establish cross-border groupings with a legal personality.

The framework conditions for cross-border cooperation are better than ever before and cross-border cooperation is perceived to play an important role in the process towards Territorial Cohesion in Europe. Anyhow the ability and willingness for getting engaged in cross-border activities by local and regional public authorities is often limited – in particular along the borders with new member states. One reason for this might be restricted financial and human resources. Another reason is scepticism within public administrations towards projects and initiatives beyond administrative routines in general (Fürst 2001: 64). In particular in cross-border cooperation processes the benefit for the partners is not easy to estimate. Therefore it is necessary to develop tools for comparing and measuring benefit und success of cross-border cooperation initiatives.

This contribution therefore elaborates on the idea of benchmarking cross-border cooperation in Europe. It highlights that border regions and cross-border cooperation play an important role within the discussion on Territorial Cohesion. Afterwards the concept of benchmarking is introduced and its application for cross-border cooperation in spatial development discussed. First ideas on possible criteria and indicators will be elaborated before proposing first steps towards a benchmarking of cross-border cooperation. The contribution concludes with estimating the value of benchmarking for facilitating cross-border cooperation in order to support a harmonious development of border regions and Territorial Cohesion in Europe.

Border regions, cross-border cooperation and Territorial Cohesion

In particular in the new member states of the former Eastern Bloc the process of European integration is very dynamic and can be classified into at least five dimensions:

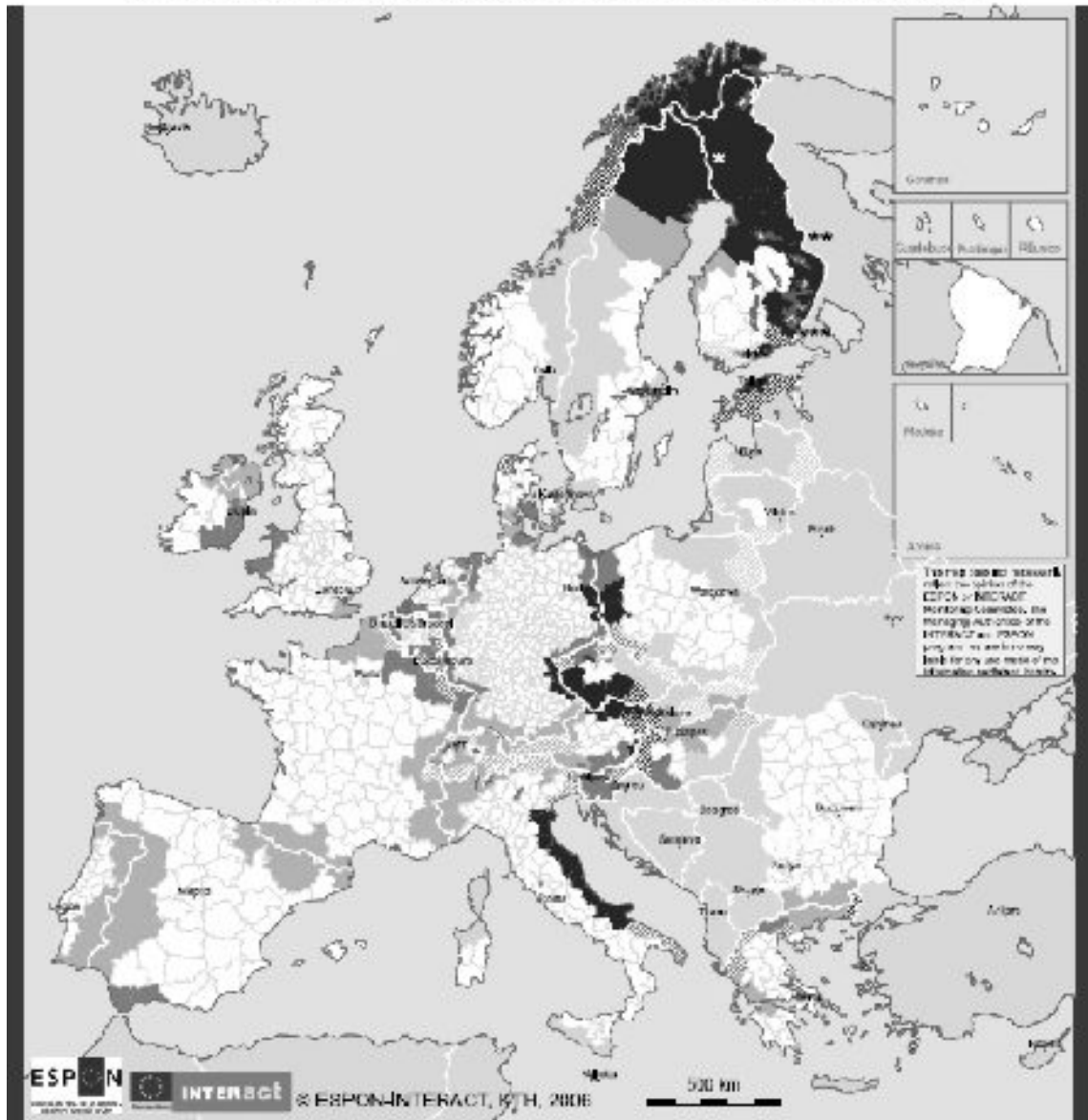
- territorial dimension (enlargements in 2004 and 2007)
- “physical” dimension (e.g. enlargement of the Schengen Agreement area)
- policy dimension (EUREK, CEMAT, Territorial Agenda)
- financial dimension (e.g. Objective 3)
- legal-institutional dimension (e.g. EGTC)

Borderlands play an increasing role within this rapid process of integrating countries of Central and Eastern Europe into the European Union. Since the EU enlargements of 2004 and 2007 the length of internal borders of the EU almost tripled with an increase of 174 per cent (ESPON 2006: 59). Regional disparities along “old” and “new” EU borders are still significant – although decreasing – as well as a lagging behind economic development and GDP per head in the “new” external border regions (see fig. 1) (CEDC 2008: 8). Furthermore the borderlands in Central and Eastern Europe are struggling with institutional asymmetries, with limited financial and human resources in public administrations, with different mentalities and cultures clashing, with severe language barriers and – simply for historic reasons - with a “backlog of cooperation” in comparison to Western European border regions, that requires catching-up (CEDC 2008: 8).

According to the Green Paper on territorial cohesion, launched by the European Commission in October 2008, “territorial cohesion is about ensuring the harmonious development of all [...] places and about making sure that their citizens are able to make the most of inherent features of these territories. As such, it is a means of transforming diversity into an asset that contributes to sustainable development of the entire EU.” (CEC 2008: 3) This comprises implications for border regions in Europe. Here, diversities of European regions are clashing and the potential of making use of them is high. The Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion furthermore asserts that “increasingly, competitiveness and prosperity depend on the capacity of the people and businesses located there to make the best use of all of territorial assets. Many of the problems faced by territories cut across sectors and effective solutions require an integrated approach and cooperation between the various authorities and stakeholders involved.” (CEC 2008: 3). For the numerous borderlands in Europe this is a request for enhanced cross-border governance, which



Map 8: Level of economic disparities between areas of INTERREG IIIA programmes approximated to NUTS3 regions



- Non border regions
- Areas without significant disparities
- Areas with Low levels of disparities
- Areas with High levels of disparities
- Areas with Very High levels of disparities
- NUTS 3 regions included in more than one INTERREG IIIA Programme

© EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries

Source: KTH, Cross Border Regions Database (2006) for identification of border regions
Economic data for EU25 and Candidate Countries from EUROSTAT, 2005, for Norway and Switzerland from National Statistics Offices, 2005

Economic disparities based on Euro-per-employee as percentage of EU25 average, 2005

* INTERREG IIIA N 4 Programme areas includes Madeira, R. Azores

Figure 1: Level of economic disparities between areas of ONTERREG III A programmes approximated to NUTS3 regions. Source: ESPON 2007



needs support in particular in border regions in Central and Eastern Europe along “new” EU internal borders. The Territorial Agenda of the EU, agreed on in May 2007, identifies need for cross-border cooperation in supporting innovative clusters in business, science communities and administrations, in transport management and in supporting cross-border rail and road connections for enhanced accessibility as well as in risk management and climate change (TAEU 2007: 6f.).

Exceeding these particular issues in border regions, cross-border cooperation is required when tackling all kinds of policy fields in border regions. Furthermore border regions are recognized as regions with specific geographical features. Therefore borderlands play an important role in supporting Territorial Cohesion and they remain an important European policy field.

Cross-border cooperation: Nothing but a waste of time and money?

Despite these requirements and chances, cross-border cooperation in particular in Central and Eastern Europe is in a dilemma. The political pressure for cross-border cooperation is high and enormous EU subsidies are available. The Objective 3 Programmes for Cross-border Cooperation, will be with 5.6 billion Euro much better equipped than its parent programmes (CEC 2007:55).

But difficulties of cross-border cooperation - like administrative asymmetries, the language barriers, lacking human resources in public administrations - persist. The EU accession of Poland, the Czech Republic and other Central and Eastern European states highlighted that many problems did not disappear with the accession. The EU external border was often put forward as an excuse for stagnating cooperation processes (Knippschild 2008). The new legal instrument EGTC has the potential to facilitate cross-border cooperation but at the moment uncertainties concerned the range of application and risks predominate.

Cross-border cooperation is furthermore suffering missing continuity and missing implementation. Many cooperation processes are dependent on external funding and are in the danger of ending when funding runs out. Missing implementation of cross-border cooperation can be observed when agreements are not considered in political decisions or public administrations feel not politically legitimized for cross-border acting and decision-making (Knippschild 2008).

These phenomena often cause disappointed expectations among the actors involved in cross-border cooperation. Unclear or too high expectations can cause disappointments when not taking into account that cross-border cooperation is a long and complex process. Therefore the benefit of cross-border cooperation remains for the involved actors too often unclear. The benefit of cooperation is hard to measure and often emerges years later, in the form of contacts, built-up trust, knowledge about organisational structures, priorities, visions,

methods etc. on the other side of the border. As a result one can observe “fatigue of cooperation” among actors in borderlands responsible for cross-border cooperation. Although the framework conditions for cooperation are better than ever before, the willingness and ability for cross-border cooperation did not rise over the last years (Knippschild 2008).

Therefore the following questions come up: How can the benefit of cross-border cooperation be measured and estimated? What are reasonable indicators for successful cross-border cooperation in spatial development (benchmarks) in consideration of the preconditions in the borderlands? What are best-practice examples in cross-border cooperation in Western as well as in Central and Eastern Europe? What can borderlands in Europe learn from each other? The opportunities of the concept of benchmarking for answering these questions will be discussed in the following.

Main principles of benchmarking

Benchmarking is used since the 1990s as a tool for improving competitiveness and performance of enterprises. In economics benchmarking attracted massive attention, although the principle of benchmarking can be applied in other sciences as well (Andersen / Petterson 1996).

Benchmarking is a continuous process to measure and match products, services and practices with competitors. Within this process benchmarks are measurable units of the best practices. Often benchmarking is understood as a process of setting objectives (Camp 1994: 13, 19). One of the clearest definitions give Anderson and Petterson: “Benchmarking is the process to continuously measuring and comparing one’s [...] processes to obtain information that will help the organisation identify and implement improvements.” (Andersen / Petterson 1996: 4)

The aim of benchmarking is basically to learn from other institutions that maybe more successful and better, preferably from the best, and to improve the own performance and results. Further aims are to motivate within the own institution and to legitimise revised aims and objectives. The aim of benchmarking is not only to evaluate, but to allow and stimulate learning processes. An important principle of benchmarking is reciprocity of benchmarked institutions. All participating partners have to benefit in a benchmarking process. (Camp 1994: 34, Andersen / Petterson 1996: 4, 9).

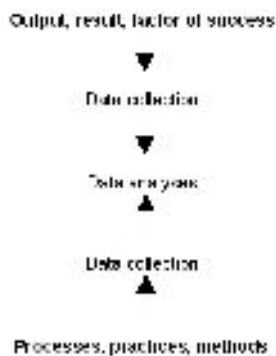


Figure 2: Benchmarking model (cp. Watson 1993: 73)

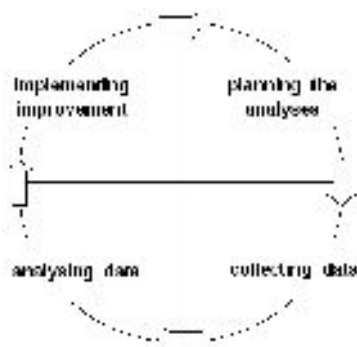


Figure 3: Benchmarking process (Watson 1993: 83)

Benchmarking and cross-border cooperation

Benchmarking seems to be an adequate approach for comparing and enhancing cross-border cooperation. It follows a performance principle and focuses not only on the results but also on the process and practices. One aim of benchmarking is to support agenda- and objective-setting. This is in particular an important process not only at the beginning of cross-border cooperation that can be supported by benchmarking. In Europe there is a need for more exchange between border regions in Europe. Benchmarking could support learning processes concerned conditions and practices of cross-border cooperation from a scientific perspective in addition to the initiatives of networks like the Association for European Border Regions (AEBR) and the Mission Opérationelle Transfrontalier (MOT) or the INTERACT Programme. In particular the exchange on best practices between border regions in Western and Central and Eastern Europe could contribute to enhanced cooperation. An intensified exchange between border regions could also contribute to stimulating the establishment of EGTC by diminishing uncertainties concerned chances and risks of this instrument.

Finally benchmarking can contribute to measuring and defining successful cross-border cooperation and the

benefit for involved actors. Therefore a clear objective of benchmarking and a set of indicators are required. Such objectives / benchmarks, indicators and criteria do not exist so far and have to be elaborated in a first conceptual phase of a benchmarking process.

Possible criteria and indicators

This chapter comprises a first draft of possible criteria and indicators for benchmarking cross-border cooperation (see figure 4). This proposal is subject to discussion and completion - in particular from the border regions' point of view. Important criteria for benchmarking cross-border cooperation are on the one hand side framework conditions, the form and state of institutionalisation and the issues tackled in the border regions. On the other hand factors allowing evaluation have to be comprised into the benchmarking like results and outputs of cooperation, project intensity, the integration of the civil society and enterprises as well as the performance of cooperation and benefit for the involved actors.

Framework conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • geographic situation • language barrier • socio-economic situation • regional disparities • demographic situation
Institutionalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contracts, agreements etc. • working groups • decision-making body, joint • decision-making and actions • institutionalisation of Euroregions • coordination office • EGTC • Euro Districts • budget • moderation
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regional and urban development • coordination of spatial planning • technical and social Infrastructure and services • environmental protection and nature conservation • flood protection • cultural landscapes tourism • ...
Results, outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "soft" results (knowledge, trust, joint agreements, objectives or strategies etc.) • "hard" results (investments, jointly utilized infrastructure etc.)
Project intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INTERREG projects • other funding
Integration of civil society and enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involvement of civil society, public etc • involvement of enterprises
Performance, benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of agreements through decision-making continuity • "good cross-border governance"

Figure 4: Criteria and indicators for benchmarking cross-border cooperation



Further steps

Before the process of benchmarking itself, a methodology for the application for cross-border cooperation has to be elaborated. The following steps towards a typology of benchmarking cross-border cooperation are supposable:

- typology of cross-border cooperation: The existing typologies of cross-border cooperation have to be specified towards spatial aspects
- identifying "cross-border territorial capital" in border regions
- elaboration of benchmark objectives (e.g. territorial cohesion, enhancing coordination of spatial development)
- elaboration of benchmark criteria and indicators call for participating border regions / cooperation projects
- selecting case study border regions / cooperation projects (representative concerning border region typology). Preliminary criteria: different legal types of borders, different natural types of borders

After these steps have been closed, the process of benchmarking itself can start. The following steps can be an indication for further elaboration:

- collecting data; inventory of strategies, instruments, networks, activities, processes and results of cross-border cooperation in spatial development
- in depth-Interviews with stakeholders
- first benchmarking (regular / annual benchmarking exceeding project duration)

Conclusions

Within the process of European integration borderlands gain importance. Regional disparities in Europe are significant, in particular after EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007. Intensive cooperation in border regions and a strong development will contribute to diminishing disparities. Therefore border regions play an important role in supporting territorial cohesion in the sense of the Green Paper of the European Commission.

Pre-conditions for cross-border territorial cooperation are better than ever before with massive European subsidies being available. At the same time restrictions persist. Many actors question the benefit of cross-border cooperation and have limited motivation to force enhanced cooperation. Success of cooperation is indeed hard to measure since the benefit may occur long time after the cooperation process ended.

Benchmarking could help here to make objectives, chances and also restrictions of cooperation as well as potential benefit for the participating actors more transparent. The aim of benchmarking cross-border

cooperation is not to evaluate or to judge but to support learning processes between them. Exchange and learning processes between border regions can contribute to an exchange of best practices and of experiences and expectations concerned the establishment of EGTC. Therefore benchmarking could help to facilitate cross-border cooperation in particular in Central and Eastern Europe, to support a harmonious development in border regions and to contribute to territorial cohesion.

This contribution provided first thoughts about benchmarking cross-border cooperation. Further research and elaboration is needed on this approach concerned the methodology, criteria and indicators.

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CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION AND GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF THE TWIN CITIES OF FRANKFURT-UPON-ODER AND SŁUBICE

1. Introduction

Cross-border cooperation and the development of border territories is subject to numerous political, economic, and social impact factors. These may be divided on the one hand into external factors, such as international political relations, including global trends and bi-national aspects. On the other hand, one may distinguish internal factors shaping cross-border territories, e.g. local innovativeness and entrepreneurship, decentralised administrative structures, openness to contact, cooperation and partnership on both sides, mutual social relationships, determination to overcome stereotypes and mental barriers, as well as the existing intellectual potential, including the level of education and knowledge of foreign languages. In an initial stage, it is primarily the external sphere that determines the development of border territories, as political decisions alter the character of borders. In the case of the Polish-German border, there are two dates that mark key advances in that respect: the abolition of visa requirements between Poland and Germany in 1991, and the access of Poland to the European Union in 2004, followed by the access to the Schengen area at the end of 2007.

When bearing in mind that cross-border contacts in the times of the communist block – in spite of all the rhetoric at official meetings about the “steadfast friendship between the socialist brother states” along this “Border of Peace” – were next to nonexistent, it appears fair to draw two conclusions: that the year 1989 may be interpreted as the ‘zero hour’ of Polish-German cross-border cooperation, and that during the following two decades external factors have in effect led to a continuous erosion of this state border. In this context an interesting question is, how this has affected the said internal factors and the cross-border cooperation at a local level, and these issues come nowhere more apparent than in the so-called twin cities situated on either side of a state border. With national borders losing their significance, those cities that lived for decades independently of each other in spite of spatial closeness may also be seen as “laboratories of integration” (Schultz 2005: 21), with agendas ranging from sectorised inter-city cooperation to the definition of economic, service or cultural targets for a joint urban cross-border organism.

The case studies chosen here are the East German city of Frankfurt-upon-Oder and the West Polish town of Słubice that are separated by the Oder river. As in numerous other cities along the Oder and Neisse rivers, the redrawing of the German-Polish borderline in 1945 due to the Yalta

and Potsdam Treaties meant the division of cities, in this case the cutting off of a former Frankfurt suburb, which became an independent Polish town. From the mental point of view, the shift of the Polish-German borderland – with its often difficult yet rich history of interaction – meant that this new border was as harsh as can be imagined: the expulsion of the German population from the territories east of the Oder and Neisse river and the resettlement with the Polish population expelled from the former eastern territories of Poland annexed by the Soviet Union meant the meeting of two groups that had no legacy of contact with the respective other side – except, unfortunately, the war experience.

Moreover, the policy of border regime aiming at limiting contacts between socialist states as well as the long questioning of the legality of this border by influential political players in West Germany did not help to create an atmosphere of trust and cooperation. After 1990, both twin cities presented different departure points and development parameters. Frankfurt has lost its function as a regional administrative capital and a centre of production that it was in the GDR times and is today – with the local economic situation weak and unemployment high – a typical example of an East-German shrinking city. Its population figure fell dramatically from 86,000 in 1990 to slightly more than 61,000 in 2007, with the downward trend expected to continue. In Słubice, however, the population grew slightly from 16,000 to more than 17,000 over the same period, and the city – while located in the economically rather weak Polish western areas – profited from small-scale trade typical of border areas with great economic disparities, notably in the form of the so-called bazaar economy (Stryjakiewicz, Kaczmarek 2000: 52).

While Frankfurt has to cope with unoccupied flats and shops on a massive scale, even in inner-city prime locations, Słubice suffers a housing shortage, yet surprises a visitor with an effervescent street life during daytime. This existence of two cities with different profiles but certain similar problems may be called a rather typical departing point of development of a cross-border city (Knippschild 2005: 176). Hence, this article will first analyse indicative examples of forms of cross-border contact and cooperation that have emerged over the last two decades, and then assess them in terms of a new challenge to create stable cross-border development structures at the local level in an age of eroding state borders. In the latter, a central focus will be the concept of governance as a means to fostering cross-border development at a European scale.



Official city cooperation projects and their acceptance by the public

Cooperation on city development has its official basis in the mutual agreements between Frankfurt and Słubice of 1991 and 1993, providing for regular meetings of the mayors and city councils and for cooperation in fields ranging from environmental protection and urban planning to education, cultural exchange, and economic development. While the Joint Spatial Development Study adopted by both municipalities in 1994 has had a rather feeble impact on their spatial development, the concept of the “European Garden 2003” as defined in the mutual document “Strategy Frankfurt-upon-Oder – Słubice 2003” has produced visible results. The said document was adopted in 2000 in the context of preparing the festivities of the 750th city jubilee of Frankfurt in 2003, in which Słubice participated as a former part of Frankfurt (nevertheless two years later Słubice also celebrated its own 60th anniversary). In spatial development terms, the central venture – summarised in the European Garden 2003 project – was the idea of bringing the two cities back to the river front and constructing a common city space, thus – as one Frankfurt official had once vividly put it – overcoming the feeling of people in Frankfurt and Słubice of “living by the ocean”, i.e. perceiving the Oder river as an impermeable barrier (Gibson, Pereira, Li 2005: 30).

This was to be achieved by creating a network of public, mostly green, spaces linking the central areas of both inner cities with each other, with the Oder banks on both sides as the Garden’s backbone, and a so-called “common city centre” (Jost 2003: 68). The target of cooperation was explicitly to create a framework for obtaining together a maximum of funding and thus minimizing municipal spending. Indeed, the European Garden projects received substantial funding from the EU (the INTERREG III programme on the German side and the PHARE programme on the Polish side), and in the case of Frankfurt also from German sources. However, the European Garden projects were realised without anything like cross-border participation of the population or the definition of common design features by cross-border competitions, exchange of ideas, or administrative cooperation; rather, each city implemented its own project (Jost 2003: 71; Scherhag, Nipper 2002: 9). Realised under the official patronage of the German and Polish state presidents, the European Garden project with its appealing spaces and various cultural events produced in the festival year 2003 may certainly be deemed a success if the turnout figures of the local people and visitors are anything to go by, but one may well have doubts about its lasting effects.

For one, the created spaces may simply have too little in common to produce the intended image of one cross-border space, with a rather weak effect on the outside marketing of the cities and the inside feeling of the local population. Yet what is more important in the context of the issue discussed here is a failure to use this major cross-

border project to build network and participation structures across the Oder river, structures that might have formed a basis for stable cross-border governance structures. Indeed, one may suspect that the broad local acceptance of the European Garden projects without much public controversy may have stemmed from the fact that they were perceived on both sides just as an improvement of central open spaces in the respective city with only limited municipal spending necessary. In a way, they achieved the same kind of acceptance as the general policy of organising common festivities (notably the annual Oder Bridge Party) in the twin cities: they do attract large crowds from both sides, certainly have a positive marketing effect on the outside, yet do not contribute much either to interaction between both city populations or to the building of lasting network structures.

The dark side of that kind of rather uncommitted public acceptance of cross-border cooperation may quickly become visible when financial or economic aspects are felt to be at stake. In our example, a case in point is the still nonexistent public transport connection between the twin cities. Initial plans to establish a bus connection were fiercely torpedoed by a lobby of some 300 taxi drivers in Słubice, whose livelihood relies largely on the service of carrying German shopping tourists the two kilometres from the border checkpoint to the main bazaar market. In December 2001, this conflict escalated when the initiative of some members of the Słubfurt Association (see below) to establish a ‘Christmas shopping bus’ connecting the shopping precincts of Frankfurt and Słubice was met by the Polish taxi drivers with the announcement that they would welcome the bus with stone-throwing. Due to this kind of lobbying – backed by the more moderate means of a petition list signed by about 500 residents – the whole project lost the support of the Słubice municipality. However, a couple of years later the issue gained a new momentum in the form of a projected tramway line running across the bridge – as it actually already did before 1945 – and connecting Frankfurt with the central areas of Słubice while going nowhere near the bazaar. This did not arouse any controversy in Słubice and thus received strong support from the municipality. So it did also from the Frankfurt side, as it meant not only a tram link across a European border unprecedented in that form, but also an anchor of hope for future profitability of the municipal tramway network in the shrinking Frankfurt by accessing some 17,000 new potential customers. With the construction cost to be covered to a significant degree by European funding as a classical cross-border structural project, the venture received support from nearly all relevant political party representatives and city officials – yet was soon to be faced by loud resistance from parts of the population.

After it turned out that the municipal decision of February 2005 to build the tramway had been based on an incomplete cost calculation, public outrage led the city parliament to take the unusual step of proclaiming a referendum on this issue. In spite of an extensive municipal



promotion campaign for the tram project, an impressive majority of 83% voted against the link to Stubice, with a turnout of 30%, unusually high for a legally non-binding local referendum. This unambiguous result left the city officials with no political choice but to cancel their decision, and also to diplomatically try to limit the damage in the relations with the city of Słubice, whose mayor had from the start suspiciously commented on the very idea of holding a referendum. The outcome of the referendum was undoubtedly a massive blow to the official cooperation between the twin cities, yet also to the concept of Frankfurt as a 'European City' or a 'Gateway to the East', and possibly also to the long-term future of the shrinking Frankfurt as a city served by a tramway system. Judging by newspaper analyses and arguments of campaigners against the project, the mood against the project was mostly based on mistrust: mistrust of the proclaimed long-term benefits of the necessary investments for the Frankfurt side, mistrust of the assurance of the Polish officials of covering all maintenance cost on the Słubice side, and mistrust of the general capability of the local political circles to successfully implement such a major project. The tale of the failed public transport connection highlights a discrepancy between the 'Europeanised', mayor-led policy and the local population milieu opposed to that policy (Tölle 2007: 63). And it is apparent that the potential intermediate level of active civil society members – in that case notably the Słubfurt Association – is simply too weak to mediate between them. The weak interaction between the local milieu on each side in that context makes it necessary for their respective local governments to get involved, as there are no other networks to resolve conflicts or to negotiate solutions. As similar problems have been identified in other twin cities (e.g. in Guben and Gubin, see Matthiesen 2005: 56), Frankfurt and Słubice appear to be anything but unique in that respect.

Everyday contacts and their social implications for cross-border cooperation

Social interactions underlie any form of cooperation, and in cross-border regions business contacts may be seen to underlie social interaction. Cross-border regions offer different price levels as well as different kinds, standards and quality of goods and services on each side. In the conditions of great socio-economic disparities – as those existing between eastern Germany and western Poland in the 1990s – this leads unavoidably to massive business activities exploiting this advantage. This manifested itself notably in the so-called bazaar economy in Słubice, which in its heyday contributed about 40% to the municipal budget and was one of the principal sources of income for the local population (Stryjakiewicz, Kaczmarek 2000: 52). This kind of activity, however, has been declining steadily since the end of the 1990s. While Poland's accession to the EU in 2004 and the concomitant abolishment of customs control has undoubtedly given a new impulse to shopping

tourism to Słubice, it now tends to focus – apart from the still-important tobacco trade – on special goods not available on the other side, notably in the food sector. At the same time one may observe an increasing reciprocity between retail and service firms in Frankfurt and Słubice, as both cities are increasingly profiting from clients from the other side. While retail and service units on the Słubice side have long been catering for German clients (as seen in a high proportion of facilities with sale offers written in German, German-speaking personnel, and acceptance of Euro currency; see Table 1), their offers are becoming increasingly less competitive in comparison with shopping precincts in Frankfurt. Due to higher quality standards and sometimes even lower prices in certain market sectors (e.g. electronic equipment and clothing), these offers are attractive for Polish clients, and they are accountable for an estimated 20% of turnover of the Frankfurt shopping centres. This may still not be represented by targeted catering for Polish clients (see Table 2), but the number of retail and service units doing so is modestly but steadily increasing.

Słubice Retail and service units catering for German clients					
Kind of unit	Number of units	of which			
		Sale offers in German	Personnel in G.D.M.G.	Acceptance of EURO	German-speaking personnel
Tobacco	24	21	2	12	4
Food	11	9	6	7	4
Total	35	30	8	19	8

Table 1: Retail and service units in Słubice catering for German clients (without the 'bazaars')

Source: Kaczmarek and Stryjakiewicz (2003), based on fieldwork carried out in 2003

Frankfurt am Main Retail and service units catering for Polish clients					
Kind of unit	Number of units	of which			
		Sale offers in Polish	Personnel in Polish	Acceptance of zloty	Polish-speaking personnel
Food	21	-	-	1%	1
Electronics	1	1	1	-	-
Total	22	1%	1	1%	1

Table 2: Retail and service units in Frankfurt catering for Polish clients

Source: as above.

The domination of everyday social cross-border contacts by current economic interests was apparent in a survey of inhabitants of both twin cities (n = 250 per city) that was done by spatial management students from Collegium Polonicum in Słubice in the course of a field practice in the summer of 2003 (Kaczmarek, Stryjakiewicz 2006). The main results are summarised in Table 3.



Social aspects of cross-border cooperation in Frankfurt-upon-Oder and Stubice		
Evaluation, frequency, Motivation	Frankfurt respondents	Stubice respondents
Knowledge of the other language		
Good	1 %	22 %
Bad	24 %	66 %
Not existent	75 %	12 %
Frequency of visits to the other city		
Daily	2 %	11 %
Couple of times each month	35 %	73 %
Couple of times each year	42 %	15 %
Never	-	7 %
Purpose of visit		
Shopping	83 %	95 %
Work / Business	2 %	11 %
Entertainment	27 %	12 %
Communication	9 %	77 %
Friends and relatives in the other city		
Friends	8 %	35 %
Relatives	-	4 %
Evaluation of contacts with people from the other city		
Very good	21 %	11 %
Neither good nor bad	57 %	66 %
Bad	22 %	19 %
Acceptance of bilingual information		
in Frankfurt	63 %	51 %
in Stubice	62 %	41 %
Priority concerning common activities		
Improvement in transport	43 %	15 %
Economic contacts	37 %	17 %
Improvement in security	11 %	12 %
Cultural events	5 %	35 %
Acceptance of development of Frankfurt and Stubice into one European city		
Unanimously in favour	33 %	15 %
Unanimously opposed	31 %	45 %

Table 3: Social aspects of cross-border cooperation in Frankfurt-upon-Oder and Stubice in 2003
Source: as above (n = 250 per city).

The results may be summed up by stating that economic and trade contacts – even over a time span of one and a half decades – do not necessarily lead to closer social contacts, or even a wish for such contacts. With existing impediments such as the language barrier or no private or family contacts on other side, the predominant reason for crossing the Oder bridge is shopping and business, and Polish residents do so more often than Germans. Contacts may be frequent – yet only of a formal character. Moreover, the expectations of the inhabitants of the twin cities concerning future integration and cooperation appear to be geared towards economic gains. This result is represented here by the answers to the question about the acceptance of development towards one 'European' city, which is unanimously opposed on both sides by large parts of the local population. Any conviction that economic success of the region may stem from a sophisticated use of its social potential, based on the ability to learn ways of cooperation together with the other side, seems to have rather feeble

roots. This conclusion little differs from those yielded by an earlier study carried out by Kaczmarek and Strykiewicz in 1993 (for details see Kaczmarek, Strykiewicz 1996).

Creative contacts and their implications for cross-border cooperation

Having complained about the missing power of intermediate groups, let us turn now to the interesting initiatives that nevertheless keep appearing when a vision of one borderless twin city is concerned. A very special case is the Stubfurt Association, an organisation of citizens from Frankfurt and Stubice founded in 1999 and defining the territories of the two cities as one "common space of communication" (Garand, Kowala-Stamm 2003: 362). This association initiated by the artist-activist Michael Kurzwelly has implemented numerous cultural and art projects that are always aiming at integrating as many people from both



sides as possible, and particularly people that are rather unlikely to look for contact to the other side in their everyday life. Special focus is on youth work, and the countless meetings organised have resulted, among other things, in the creation of a German-Polish youth club as a permanent institution in Frankfurt, as well as the Słubfurt Water Games as a creative city festival. However, the most remarkable art events have been launched under the Słubfurt City? project, with twelve artists from several countries – disguised as scientific experts – implementing their different projects (Kurzweily 2006: 119). They included the determination of the central point of Słubfurt and of the circle line of a Słubfurt City Wall binding the cities together. Two parts of this 'wall' in the form of long, curved brick benches have been erected in a prominent public space in each city, establishing signs of a different view on this territory. Another lasting event has been the 'cockcrow'. With a cock figuring in the coats of arms of both Frankfurt and Słubice, it may be regarded as a common symbol for Słubfurt.

This has led to the idea of sounding a loud cockcrow every full hour on the bridge between the cities – an acoustic icon that still produces irritation and controversy as well as affirmative reactions. A further project has been the promotion of the city of Słubfurt as a tourist destination – with guided tours, postcards and city guides as well as a professionally designed 'Słubfurt Tourism Van' and for some time even a tourist office in the main pedestrian precinct of Frankfurt. From the perspective of cross-border city governance, the activities of the Słubfurt Association are highly remarkable. The association includes various activists from both sides of the Oder interested in cross-border ventures and offers an institutional home and creative space for implementing projects, e.g. finding partners and funding. The respective projects have been implemented in partnership with different city administration units, national and regional institutions including the Euroregion Pro Europa Viadrina, and other foundations and partners. It is fair to say that quite a lot of these projects have achieved targets which the official cooperation between Frankfurt and Słubice has failed to reach.

Another example is the local cross-border university contacts that have developed since the foundation of the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt in 1991. Legally, Viadrina is an ordinary German university institution with three faculties (economy, law, and cultural sciences) offering study courses leading to German degrees. However, it pursues a policy of fostering academic exchange notably with Poland, most impressively documented by the fact that right from the beginning one third of its student body has always been of Polish origin. At the core of the academic cross-border cooperation of Viadrina stands Collegium Polonicum in Słubice, a joint institution with its partner university, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.

The legal basis for this German-Polish institution is an agreement between the German federal state of Brandenburg and the Polish Republic. The preparation of this document – with no precedent in Europe – required long and complicated negotiations including numerous backlashes. When it was finally signed in 2001, the institution had already long been in operation (Wojciechowski 2004: 2). So the institution of Collegium Polonicum, physically consisting of a main building situated right at the Oder bridge with lecture rooms, offices and conference facilities, an adjacent library building, and a student campus with residences for staff and students, offers room for academic life at different – and in some cases rather unrelated – levels. As one of the regional branches of Adam Mickiewicz University, Collegium Polonicum holds a broad range of study courses for Polish students, also provided at the main school, and conducted by academic staff in the majority commuting from Poznań. Those students are rather unlikely to profit from a cross-border situation or even to have any contacts with the 'other' side, apart from the fact that they live together in their student residences with Polish and a certain contingent of German students studying at Viadrina. Those students, in turn, are unlikely to have much contact with Collegium Polonicum – unless they are participants of the law course taking place on both sides, provided by German and Polish lecturing staff and offering a degree accepted in Poland and Germany. The institution also houses a couple of postgraduate courses provided either by one university or jointly, as well as numerous temporary research activities with a German-Polish or European background, such as doctoral programmes, graduate schools, language and intercultural training, and research projects.

Such ventures are initiated by staff from Poznań, from Frankfurt, or from Collegium Polonicum itself. In each case a network of actors is formed in response to the respective task. The establishment of Collegium Polonicum was supported and received funding as a Polish regional development scheme, as a European border region project, as a twin cities project, as a German-Polish venture, as a European institution, and as a partner of the German university. If research, knowledge and know-how are at the core of the restructuring process for de-industrialising regions, and if cross-border aspects are of vital significance in this context for former marginalised regions, then Collegium Polonicum may certainly be considered a successful institution responding to these needs. And it works within an agreed and supervised framework – at the university as well as regional and national levels – yet strongly relying on creative formal and informal cross-border networks at various levels. As Wojciechowski (2004: 4) has put it: "Collegium Polonicum is a proof, on the one hand, of how difficult and complicated it is to bring new structures into being (...), and on the other hand, of the fact that a common goal within a constructive political framework has very positive effects on the actors".



Conclusions – Towards cross-border governance

The issue of 'cross-border governance' in Europe has clearly emerged within the context of the European integration. With the creation of the Single Market in 1992 – the year that for some “symbolizes the anticipated death of the nation-states of Europe” (Veggeland 2004: 158) – the 'Europe of regions' based on a combination of sub-national, national, and supranational government forms has become a looming reality. With the processes of globalisation in general and the shift of competences to the European level in particular increasingly limiting the power of national governments to actually rule their territories, the implementation of policies relies more and more on negotiating and forming governance structures across the three said levels. With the sub-national level gaining new powers and responsibilities, a new territorial structuring process has emerged which includes the emergence of new trans-boundary regions. The institutionalisation of the latter has taken place in the form of 'Euroregions', which comprise some territories of two or more countries and are offered special funding opportunities as perceived 'laboratories of European integration, yet more often than not they face multiple governance dilemmas (cf. Stryjakiewicz 1996; Eckhart, Kowalke 1997; Ciok 2004; Kramsch, Hooper 2004). Just as the example of the twin cities highlights, the problems are not limited to technical issues of cross-border partnership building, economic cooperation, or adaptation of national planning tools and documents – even though these are of course major topics, yet they encompass questions of local cross-border identity and democratic legitimacy of acting bodies and the very decisions they take. These are issues not unfamiliar to those involved in the general discourse about governance of space, in which regional as well as urban governance may, after Fürst (2007: 6), be summarised as standing for new, soft forms of networking beyond traditional 'government' structures; notably new networks between the political and administrative sector, the private business sector, and civil society.

Decisions are taken within an arrangement of formal structures and informal relationships, and their effectiveness relies on the putting together of different sources in order to solve specific problems. By various forms of deregulation and privatisation, such constellations may overcome local political blockades to act, yet with the immanent danger of bypassing and thus weakening traditional democratic procedures. As Veggeland (2004: 163) argues, trans-boundary governance in Europe founded on agreement-based partnerships is generally characterised by a democratic deficit problem, as policy making takes place in “rather technocratic arenas in which agreements, internal rational arguments, professional knowledge and legality matter more than democratic discourse and public opinion”. The creation of structures for the implementation of joint

projects may be seen as lying at the heart of the creation of government structures, even though, as Fürst (2007: 6) rightly points out, a network created for a single project may not in itself be interpreted as a governance structure. However, it becomes one when the network survives the life span of the project and turns into a permanent structure. This catalyst function is of particular importance in the case of East-Central European cities, where such structures are still weak as their formation only started after 1989. In a cross-border context, the building of partnership structures will require, first and foremost, “trust, continuity and a shared view of problems” (Knippschild 2005: 179). Democratic government has traditionally been linked to territorial sovereignty and to forms of socio-political identification (Gualini 2003: 45; see also Veggeland 2004: 158); here lies perhaps the biggest challenge to the legitimacy of cross-border governance.

The case of the twin cities of Frankfurt-upon-Oder and Słubice offers some positive examples of how creative projects are designed and realised, either within the government structures existing on each side, linked by an officially agreed cross-border framework allowing the use of available funding (yet without contributing much to the creation of stable partnership structures), or by a cross-border network of actors (also with experience in dealing with funds) from local groups or the universities, where stable partnership structures have actually emerged. Yet there appears to be a sharp gap between these groups and significant parts of the local population in Frankfurt as well as in Słubice – parts that are indifferent or opposed to closer ties of cross-border cooperation. The local élites – be they from the city halls or the university institutions – may effectively implement projects that are in accordance with European principles and funding requirements, yet the local population accepts them as 'our' projects evidently only to a limited degree.

The involvement of the local population in the projects in order to strengthen the local identification and thus to stimulate the emergence of a local cross-border identity on the territories of the twin cities may therefore be considered a major necessity. And for this way of proceeding Frankfurt and Słubice offer two cases worth noting – on the one hand, the Słubfurt Association, which is sincerely committed to engaging the local milieus and notably the youth in cross-border partnerships, and on the other hand, the cross-border university microcosmos. The latter may be seen as characterised by a three-level structure. On top are the official cooperation agreements between the university administrations and their presidents. Underneath it is an intermediate level with the research and teaching staff partly ignoring the special border situation, partly, however, trying to make the most of it by implementing common projects within cross-border partnership networks. At the bottom level one finds the student body, in which some are involved in Polish-German relation-building and creating their own projects, while others are rather indifferent. Here again we have the problem of the missing link between the university microcosmos and the world around it. While the



initiatives, sometimes more, sometimes less successful, to involve local people on both sides in university activities are certainly to be strongly approved, one cannot help noticing that the networks formed to implement the activities usually do not include the local people. One may question whether anything like a borderland or twin-city identity is ever going to emerge, or whether identity should not be rather built around a 'constitutional identity' (referring to Habermasian prospects, see Veggeland 2004: 164). Yet if cross-border governance structures are to be not only effective (which they are not anyway if perturbed by local milieus in the first place) but also democratic, then the issue of creating a local identity is of supreme importance. The example of Frankfurt-upon-Oder and Słubice undoubtedly offers some remarkable schemes in that respect.

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CULTURAL CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION AMONG BALKAN'S COUNTRIES WITH THE CASE OF SERBIA AND BULGARIA

Introduction

Since the foundation of the European Union, a lot of attention has been dedicated to cross-border cooperation. Reason for that is recognition that sustainability of the European Union depends on good cooperation among neighbouring countries at the regional and local level in the established Euro regions.

Today, cross-border cooperation remains crucial in achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion in Europe, particularly with regard to the borders between new and old EU Member States, between new EU Member States and between the new EU Member States and the Neighbouring Countries (15).

According to the "European Charter for Border and Cross-border Regions", overcoming previous mistrusts, developing mutual confidence and grass-roots connections are the key elements in any cross-border cooperation (8). Cross-border cooperation can be defined as an action on building respectable neighbouring relations, connections and interactions in every field of cooperation.

Cultural cross-border cooperation constitutes every field of cooperation and gives groundwork for main connections and interactions. Without strengthening cultural cross-border cooperation, it is impossible to build significant relations between neighbours. Culture, as a foundation, an activator and a purpose of development in cross-border regions, is being deemed as the cardinal and conditional factor of cross-border cooperation.

The question is whether the culture is of real importance for cross-border development and planning? The next question is whether it implies positive or possible some negative effects to economic or social development, one to some past experiences in Balkan's countries in particular? And finally how should culture be treated in cross-border areas over Balkan's border area in the transitional period nowadays?

Culture and its reality in Balkan's countries

Today's situation in the Balkans reveals ethnic diversity of this region and territorial dispersion of ethnic groups. This implies at the same time great cultural diversity as well as dispersal of various national cultures over the Balkan's states. The spreading of influences, emerging as cultural frameworks in territories along the Danube is so immense that it is sometimes accepted only with disbelief (20). Romanian ethnos and Romanian culture can be found in Hungary, Serbia and Bulgaria; population of the cross-

border regions in these countries marks their affiliation to the Romanian culture and nation by cultural affirmation and identification. In similar manner Serbian ethnos and culture are found in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania and Hungary, confirming their culture through written documents, folklore art, spiritual life, festivals, etc. Just as well Bulgarian and Macedonian ethnos have their enclaves in neighboring countries, and even mixing with Turkish ethnos and cultures from the southeast. Albanian ethnos is deeply infiltrated within Serbia in Kosovo and Metohija and dominant in the space with profound and vast traces of Serbian culture (20).

Cultural patterns of these nations are developing on three levels:

- elite culture level,
- mass culture level,
- level of traditional folkloric, more or less autochthonous culture.

Elite culture is generated in urban centers, mainly those with the highest rank in the urban centers hierarchy. Hence, today, although under difficult financial and economic conditions, Belgrade, Bucharest, Sofia, Ohrid, Sarajevo and other big cities, organize art festivals (film, music, theater), they launch artists in various arts (design, architecture, painting, music) they revive tradition of cultural manifestations at the European level and thus they try to keep in touch with the European centers of greater tradition and greater economic potentials.

But, urban centers are also generators of mass culture, as a mean of spreading their wider influence and consequently empowering material basis for other forms of culture through tax policies, there where this policy is adequately oriented. In the era of the fast commercialization various types of mass culture supported by the money of the "nouveau riche elite" are aggressively spreading, and they correspond to their cultural pattern (21).

Numerous festivals of national, regional or local character gather a huge number of people, idols of the popular music dominate the mass media and in public and so they crack some but very fixed regional and national barriers (connection through the clan affiliation, religion or mentality).

Urban physical structure, as a manifestation of the cultural and style pattern in every society, nowadays in Balkan countries shows a lack of defined and articulated style. Today, cities are developing without form and clear inner structure and identity, abandoned under the attacks of building entrepreneurs and with no clear housing policy; they directly reflect the social and economic situation. Elite



architectural models are taken from the West, without national style recognition, with mass housing without any order submitted to individual tastes and interests. The domination of the illegal construction in Albania, Macedonia, Serbia or Montenegro represents at the same time the decline of the regional tradition and endangers the regional interaction because of the housing and employment irregularities.

A village as an important element of the settlement structure is mostly a consumer of the mass culture and it is a creator of the regional or local in some cases even autochthonous folk culture, especially in the regions with dominant and deeply traditional rural structure. To the opposite, architecture is suffering the primitive tendency and attitude to pompous, highly tasteless creations under poor economic conditions, just for the reason of prestige thus directing funds (emigrant working population from abroad!) to the "dead capital"?

Analysis of the situation in the Balkans today indicates a serious economic, social and ecological crisis in rural settlements, i.e. a lack of adequate policies, for cultural protection, which could help them gain a higher quality of living in a more proficient economic and social context.

To cherish native culture, folklore and to connect it with other cultures on the regional or even cross border grounds, therefore can be assumed as a good receipt for regional development as well as a mean of achieving integration at the wider Balkans' framework. Similar folklore roots in Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro or Albania, familiar ethnographical features (costumes, folklore tradition, food) and the traditional hospitality are all important factors that could be employed through special programs, whether for tourism, or economic development and cultural exchange.

Binding patterns of rural cultural belts have their own natural, geographical links and paths and often stretch regardless of administrative borders. This is the case between Northern Albania, Montenegro, Macedonia, South Serbia with Kosovo and Greece, or the case of the rural culture of Vlachian, border regions between Bulgaria, Romania and East Serbia, culture of specific Islamic origin in the three-border zone between Bosnia, Montenegro and Serbia rural culture of Banat between Romania and Serbia, or rural culture of Bunjevac between Croatia, Serbia and Hungary. It is evident that Serbia, due to its central position in this constellation, surrounded by seven states draws most influences and interconnections with its neighbors

Cultural cross-border cooperation

Cultural cross-border cooperation acts in all the areas of life: in economic, environmental and social issues. It involves an ongoing process to break down mistrusts and prejudices, and to build up confidence in neighbouring border regions (11). It helps to increase apprehension and tolerance between neighbouring countries, fortifies regional identity and improves the business environment. It plays an essential role in national and international development, tolerance and harmonious interactions between cultures (4). Therefore cultural cross-border cooperation has a decisive effect on the quality of life of the population on both sides of the border.

The actual cultural cross-border cooperation takes place at regional and local level in established Euro-regions. The first Euro-region, named EUREGIO, was formed in 1958th on Dutch-German border. Today there are approximately 190 established Euro-regions on internal and external EU borders (19). On one hand, cross-border regions are contributing to tolerance and understanding between different nations. On the other hand, they are laying the foundations which will enable them to tackle their other important task: to cater for the sustained economic and infrastructure growth of the cross-border area (11). With extension of EU on 1 May 2004 (Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia) and 1 January 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania) the EU extended its cultural identity as well. Increasing EU cultural differences cause rising problems in mutual understanding and tolerance between different nations. Cultural cross-border cooperation at the EU's external borders not only differs greatly, but is also highly divergent and complex. In addition, these border regions are often confronted with rapid changes in border regions next to them (16), like in the case of cultural cross-border cooperation between Serbia and Bulgaria.

Cultural cross-border cooperation between Serbia and Bulgaria

During the 20th century Serbia and Bulgaria have highly complex political and intrastate relations. The geopolitical framework and the dominating ideology were both a reason and a pretext for the troubled relations between Bulgaria and Serbia. Even after the end of the Cold War these trends, in bilateral relations, have not been overcome because of the crisis in former Yugoslavia in the 90s. The changes in Serbia since the end of 2000 have set a new political opportunity for commencing a dialogue between both states (1). In the last 10 years there have been significant improvements in the cross-border cooperation between Serbia and Bulgaria. The results of these improvements are established Euro-regions (Stara planina, Middle Danube Iron Gates, Morava-Pčinja-Struma, Eurobalkan, Nišava) and implemented cross-border projects between these two countries through CARDS and IPA programmes.



Map No 1. Cross-border area between Serbia and Bulgaria (Source: Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme)

Existing Euro-regions between Serbia and Bulgaria created links between various local authorities and make excellent groundwork for cross-border initiatives and joint projects to promote common interests across the border and cooperation for the common good of the border areas population. Spheres of cooperation in these Euro-regions are cross-border activities aiming economic development, infrastructure development, cultural development, tourism development, protection of the environment, exchange of information and networking, transfer of know-how, education, media (18), etc. Realizing the cross-border cooperation established Euro-regions deals with many constraints which lag the development of cross-border cooperation.

The main constraints of cultural cross-border cooperation between Serbia and Bulgaria are: the long historical memory, which is directly interrelated with the internal resistance to get closer; psychological barriers and stereotypes (1); weak infrastructure - small numbers of border crossings, poor quality of road connections; low level of economic integration (9); high depopulation rate and unsatisfactory age structure; no established practice in every day communication between different social, professional, territorial and civil communities; dependence on visas create difficulties in the interactions (7); limited financial possibilities for participation in the realization of common projects (9); different status in the European Union which requires, on one side different regimes of interaction with the structures of the EU, and access to different funds (7); lack of knowledge about the high cultural achievements of neighbours, which additionally distorts mutual recognition (1); etc.

Cultural cross-border cooperation constitutes every field of cross-border cooperation enabling groundwork for the main connections and interactions, so all the mentioned constraints slowdown the development of cross-border

cooperation in general. To improve cross-border cooperation in general the cultural cross-border cooperation has to be raised on higher level in the first place. That can be achieved by using the cultural strengths and potentials to overcome main constraints.

The cross-border area between Serbia and Bulgaria has rich traditional and cultural inheritance manifesting through various customs, ceremonies, costumes, specific architecture, religious elements, traditional use of the resources (7), etc. Tradition and culture, building regional identity over the centuries, certainly represent one of the most integrative components for the cross-border area and could easily be utilized as a driving engine for regional development, regeneration and prosperity (18).

The people in border area are very close, with similar languages, folklore, history and national mentality (1). Language, more than any other cultural trait, reflects culture. Languages of Serbia and Bulgaria belong to the group of Slavic languages. Because of that, they share similarities in vocabulary and linguistic heritage and it is a reason why they see the world in a similar way and have similar habits creating common regional identity (17). In-depth knowledge of the language of the neighbouring countries is a prerequisite for lively communication, cooperation and interaction in cross-border area which in this border area have high-quality base to be materialized through the cross-border language education and literature presentation projects.



Picture No. 2. Minster Poganovo

Overcoming the barriers made by historic developments in the last three centuries, causing serious disadvantages for the people in the border area, is one of the most important objectives of the cultural cross-border cooperation (16). The mistrust, psychological barriers and stereotypes accumulated for centuries could not be overcome in days, but certainly, informing and attracting of local people and institutions to associate in cultural cross-border projects and getting to know their neighbours are a real way to fulfil that objective.



Picture No.3. Kamenica village

Different social and cultural policies concerning legal regulations, administration, taxation, economics, culture and social affairs, on both side of the border, will never be totally prevailed because no state is able to draft its laws in such a way that they harmonise with all the neighbouring states on its borders (8). Anyhow, political problems and jurisdictional difficulties between Serbia and Bulgaria can be reduced by creating equal strategic framework for sustainable and long-term cooperation. The Strategy have to identify main constrains and provide ways to overrun or reduce problems that has been made by different administrative structures and powers, fiscal and social legislation, and many other different areas of political activity (e.g. spatial planning, economic support, media landscapes, etc.) (8). During centuries border area between Serbia and Bulgaria has been developed into peripheral, structurally weak areas with limited transport links. Natural borders (rivers and mountains) even reinforced frontier barriers. The lack of infrastructure slows down the development in this border area, and because of that economic activity has been moving away from the borders and population emigrated towards centers of the national states. Developing infrastructure will create conditions for intensifying direct contacts between people, communication and deepening of the cultural co-operation and will give a real physical dimension to cross-border cooperation (1).



Map No 2. Infrastructure connection in cross-border area between Serbia and Bulgaria (Source: Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme)

The relation towards environmental protection and cultural heritage is the reflection of the cultural level of population in border area. The main characteristic of border area is the existence of the rich natural and cultural resources that have to be preserved and protected. Air, water and natural development do not stop at borders and effective environmental protection and nature conservation is needed in border area (8). Serbian-Bulgarian border region have wide biological diversity with great variety of plant and animal life where numerous plant species are endemic. The natural resources of border area are: diverse relief with numerous geomorphologic phenomenon (caves, natural bridges, gorges and canyons), rich forests, thermal springs, exit to the Danube river and huge number of natural parks (Djerdap National Park, Rila National Park, Vitosha National Park, "Belogradchishki Skali, etc.), protected areas (Kučaj, Suva Planina, Jerma river, Seven Lakes of Rila, Stob Pyramids, etc.) and natural reserves (Nature Park Stara Planina, Nature Park Sićevačka gorge, Chuprene, etc.). These natural beauties combined with the rich historical and cultural heritage of the region are unique regional assets. The cultural heritage of the border area includes monuments and sites related to churches, old towns and old rural areas, archaeological sites, as well as monuments devoted to commemoration of historical events or figures. Using the potentials of rich natural resources and cultural heritage for improving the region's activities in field of cultural cross-border cooperation and making border area a place for living with good quality of life can be achieved by planning and implementation of numerous activities for the development of joint tourism routes, joint studies, promotion and advertising, joint actions for preservation, intercultural education, etc (18).



Picture No. 4. Traditional Balkan's food

The cross border cooperation success or failure depends greatly on the involvement and active participation of its citizens. Promotion of the border area and sharing the information about cultural cross-border activities on the historical, socio-cultural, geographical, structural and economic conditions of the cross-border region is necessary to achieve day-to-day cooperation (11). The setting up of a cross-border press association and creating media network for improving information systems about cultural events in border area is one of the ways to achieve that goal (10). Projects that could also contribute to fulfil that goal are: developing a web site for cultural exchange between the two countries; building a circle of committed experts and promoting educational and academic exchange (2); providing an overview of cross-border regions in maps, publications and educational material (10); networking the tourist information centres established in all municipalities that are functional; promotion of partnerships, youth encounters, family gatherings, sports events, exchanges of civil servants, seminars, study conferences, ecumenical meetings, subject-related events on cross-border regional issues (11); etc. The existences of international organizations representing the Euro-regions, are a good basis for exchange of experience and information with similar structures in Europe. The membership of the Euro-regions in border area between Serbia and Bulgaria in the "Association of European Border Regions" increases the chance for these regions to be promoted on an international level (7).

Conclusions

In the guidelines and principles for the future the Strategies define a series of positions with regard to the cultural heritage emphasizing importance of equally treating the past and present as corner stones of the regional and national identity has been identified. For the purpose it is suggested that countries from this region protect their cultural heritage on cultural but also on economic basis that understands carefully defined normative instruments as well as a treatment at all spatial planning levels. Beside the protection of the cultural heritage a special attention is recommended to the so-

called transnational paths of Roman, Byzantine, Venetian and Ottoman cultures, which would provide protection of the special character of various social communities and their features. Furthermore, the establishment of strong scientific and administrative criteria for identification of the structures that represent historical or art heritage is recommended. It is also recommended that legal regulations be moved from the protection of the buildings towards the protection of cultural complexes and areas (in an integrative way).

It is assessed as necessary to establish legal and professionals arrangements for preserving the collective memory of all nations and nationalities, ethnical and religious groups who created cultural specific heritage in countries such as Balkan ones. The legal protection is important and necessary but it cannot be applied to all assets because of practical and financial reasons. Therefore, very important is the education and enlightenment of the population which could result in a change of individual attitudes toward cultural and natural assets. Particularly important is the protection of the rural architecture, folklore art and traditional handcrafts, which can help improving the economic basis of rural communities and local/regional identity (22). The local and regional identity is thus becoming the prerequisite for achieving European spatial development objectives such as attractiveness, but also cohesion as precondition for better common development and common understanding in Europe. In this the private capital and public private partnership ought to take a special position in the restructuring, maintenance and utilization of the cultural heritage. Ways of utilization should be carefully defined within the privatization with improved systematic control and supervision. Finally, the nationalistic attitudes on both national and regional levels, are not to be forgotten for historic reasons and enormous troubles, conflicts and tragedies but, to the opposite, have to be avoided by common interregional, cross-border or transnational actions and open exchange of ideas, projects and realization.

It is obvious that contemporary European strategies give a paramount role of culture and cultural heritage to the future regional development and to possible ways of cooperation and integration so necessary for Balkans in particular. This also considers the cultural diversity as an important factor in the integration processes between countries (23) but with some critical issues or fallacies in practical actions in the region. For the beginning of the cross-border cooperation between Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria, and other Danubian countries, and for the reason of the present situation in the whole region of the Southeast Europe, the most convenient starting point seems to be culture, i.e. cultural paths, values and activities. The soft cultural issue and its international orientation might be the initial trigger for other significant projects in the future (economy, transport, infrastructure, environment) in the IRON GATE area, with an open hope that Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia expert initiative will get



stronger support from various economic and political powers, international, national, regional and local.

Tradition and culture, that have built regional identity over the centuries, certainly represent one of the most integrative components for the cross-border area. The well managed cultural cross-border cooperation providing a clear view of common features and convergences contributes to a common identity for the region, tolerance and understanding between people in this area and enable them to overcome the peripheral status of the border region in their country, to a sustainable development of the cross-border region and improvement of the living conditions for the population.

Summary

Cross-border cooperation can be defined as an action on building respectable neighbouring relations, connections and interactions in every field of cooperation. Today, cross-border cooperation remains crucial in achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion in Europe, particularly with regard to the borders between new and old EU Member States, between new EU Member States and between the new EU Member States and the Neighbouring Countries. Cultural cross-border cooperation constitutes every field of cross-border cooperation enabling groundwork for the main connections and interactions of cross-border cooperation in general. To improve cross-border cooperation in general the cultural cross-border cooperation has to be raised on higher level in the first place. That can be achieved by using the cultural strengths and potentials to overcome main constraints.

Cultural cross-border cooperation involves an ongoing process to break down mistrusts and prejudices, and to build up confidence in neighbouring border regions. It helps to increase apprehension and tolerance between neighbouring countries, fortifies regional identity and improves the business environment. It plays an essential role in national and international development, tolerance and harmonious interactions between cultures. Therefore cultural cross-border cooperation has a decisive effect on the quality of life of the population on both sides of the border. Today's situation in the Balkans reveals ethnic diversity of this region and territorial dispersion of ethnic groups. This implies at the same time great cultural diversity as well as dispersal of various national cultures over the Balkan's states. For the beginning of the cross-border cooperation between Balkan's countries, and for the reason of the present situation in the whole region of the Southeast Europe, the most convenient starting point seems to be culture, i.e. cultural paths, values and activities. Overcoming the barriers made by historic developments in the last three centuries, causing serious disadvantages for the people in the Balkan's border area, is one of the most important objectives of the cultural cross-border cooperation. The mistrust, psychological barriers and stereotypes accumulated for centuries could not be

overcome in days, but certainly, informing and attracting of local people and institutions to associate in cultural cross-border projects and getting to know their neighbours are a real way to fulfil that objective. The well managed cultural cross-border cooperation providing a clear view of common features and convergences contributes to a common identity for the region, tolerance and understanding between people in this area and enable them to overcome the peripheral status of the border region in their country, to a sustainable development of the cross-border region and improvement of the living conditions for the population.

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CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION ALONG THE EASTERN BORDER OF EUROPEAN UNION: A REVIEW AND APPROACH TO LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABLE

Introduction

The regional diversity in Europe is well documented and rich (Davies 1997, Jönsson et al. 2000). European regions hold valuable natural and cultural heritage that are often located across state borders, especially if linked to topography or other features that hampered economic development (e.g., Mikusinski and Angelstam 1998, Angelstam 2006, Edman 2008). Currently European landscapes are affected by the rapidly changing dynamics in territorial development of the European Union (EU). In the process of accession to the EU, countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe urgently need to develop their policies, local management practices and regional spatial planning to satisfy ecological, economic and socio-cultural dimensions of sustainable development. While ecological considerations are promoted by EU policies, the recent enlargement with 12 new countries from 2004 to 2007 also encourages the development of transport infrastructure, settlements and other economic activities, particularly in border regions (Rakowski, Sienkiewicz 2004). Judging from past developments of advancing frontiers of economic development (e.g., Gunst 1989, Angelstam et al. 2004), this is likely to result in an unbalanced ecological, economic and socio-cultural development.

For example, in Poland conflicts between existing ecological habitat networks and improved road networks (Keshkamat et al. 2009) and intensified forestry (Wesołowski 2005) is currently occurring. At the same time, the economic and social development has improved in border areas.

Thus, at present, regions located along the eastern border of EU thus stand at a crossroad between on the one hand going towards a gradual erosion of their biological and cultural wealth, and on the other hand to develop new approaches to governance and management of landscapes and regions. In general, Eastern European countries have a more intact biodiversity, including species, habitat networks and natural processes, and cultural values (Mikusinski, Angelstam, 2004; Elbakidze, Angelstam 2007). The challenge is to satisfy the different dimensions of sustainable development (Rakowski, Sienkiewicz, 2004).

This urgent challenge calls for the identification of platforms for cooperation and implementation of cross-border management mechanisms at local, regional, national and transnational levels, as well as efforts supporting communication, education and public awareness about the state and trends of all dimensions of sustainability. Cross-border cooperation (CBC) is thus an

essential part of the European integration process as an effective tool for overcoming historic divisions, eliminating stereotypes in mutual perception, strengthening good-neighbourly relations between nations, ensuring stability, peace and socio-economic development (Anon. 2004, 2000b,). The need to consider political, institutional and organisational dimensions of such initiatives and what they achieve on the ground in actual landscapes is a major task for policy and decision makers and for research (Angelstam et al. 1995; Axelsson, Angelstam 2006; Elbakidze et al, in press). Cross-border cooperation initiatives, which have increased considerably recently (Anon. 2004, Perkmann 2003), often have the goal to accommodate different landscape values that contribute to regional sustainable development.

This requires spatial planning to avoid conflicts, changes in the type and intensity of land use, as well as new adaptive and communicative systems of governance for cross-border regions. There is an urgent need for CBC initiatives to build on the positive experiences of genuine cooperation within on-going programs and progressively develop institutions, organisations and practices for such cooperation across the EU and with neighbouring countries. The key challenge for people and communities, the conservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage as well as sustainable use of natural resources of cross-border regions is to find a path of adaptive governance (Anon. 2000a, 2004), which secures improved quality of life while protecting, maintaining and restoring natural, cultural and social values.

Based on a review of institutions (rules and policies), organisations and practices promoting cross-border cooperation in Europe the aim of this paper is to outline a systematic transdisciplinary approach to knowledge production and learning based on holistic evaluation and synthesis of cross-border initiatives. Focused on sustainable development and sustainability along the eastern border of the EU we propose a multiple case study approach applied to a suite of selected cross border cooperation initiatives along the eastern border of the EU. Gaining experiences can be scaled up, disseminated and contribute to the development knowledge production and learning towards sustainable landscapes along the internal and external borders of the EU. Finally, we discuss challenges in cross-border cooperation and application of transdisciplinary knowledge production towards sustainable landscapes



Cross-border institutions, organisations and practices

Europe has a long history of land use, and is one of the most densely populated regions in the world. It is crossed by a multitude of borders ranging from the local parish level to national and European Union borders (Terry et al. 2006). Mirroring the views of geographers, political scientists and historians Europe is about the division of territory, organisation of space and collective identity, respectively (Jönsson et al. 2000). Traditionally, these tangible and intangible frontiers, often coinciding with state borders meant to protect national interests, have been barriers for the free movement of people and goods. A main idea behind the creation of the European Union was to remove these barriers. At present borders also give reason for people to come together, to exchange goods, to learn each other's languages and cultures, which further create mutual trust and understanding. This makes cooperation across national borders an important mechanism for European integration (Jorgensen 2002). In the following we review the development of institutions (i.e. the informal rules of action and formal policies), organisations and practices aimed at supporting cross-border cooperation in Europe.

Institutions and organisations promoting cross-border cooperation

One of the first legal frameworks for CBC in Europe is European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, the so-called Madrid Convention from 1980 (Perkmann 2003). According to the 'Madrid Convention', cross-border cooperation (CBC) is 'any concerted action design to reinforce and foster neighbourly relations between territorial communities and authorities within the jurisdiction of other Contracting parties and the conclusion of any agreement and arrangement necessary for this purpose' (<http://conventions.coe.int>). Following Schmitt-Egner (1983) in (Perkmann, 2003), we accept that the cross-border cooperation is 'cross-border interaction between neighbouring regions for the preservation, governance and development of their common living space, without the involvement of their central authorities'. This means local and operational, regional/collective, national/constitutional and international levels need be integrated (cf. Gabbe 2005, Malchus 1998). This in turn requires a coordinated and concerted action among levels, as otherwise conflicts with regard to competence are unavoidable (Gabbe 2005). According to Gabbe (2005) there are two different forms of cross-border cooperation. The first is national-regional, primarily through government and regional development commissions (mostly recommendations and proposals, but no binding decisions). The second is regional-local through Euroregions and similar structures, which work very precisely with decision mechanisms that are binding for their members, but not for outsiders.

The EU Water Framework Directive, which came into force in 2000, advocates a watershed approach to secure ecological integrity of rivers and lakes and to protect the water resource, and stakeholder participation (Anon. 2004a). This emphasizes the issue of cross-border cooperation not only within and across the European Union (EU) member state borders, but also beyond them. Cooperation on the management of cross-border watersheds along EU borders faces many obstacles, as the European legislation is binding only on a part of the areas (Anon. 2004a). Similarly, a transboundary Biosphere Reserve initiative was initiated by UNESCO in the 1990s with the main aim to cooperate in the fields of conservation and sustainable development through common management of a shared land area. It also represents a commitment of two or more countries to cooperate in applying and satisfying the objectives of the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves (Anon. 2000c).

To conclude, the main goals of cross-border cooperation are wide, and include mitigation of disparities between regions and within regions through economic growth; generation of strong cultural, political and economic relations; maintenance and protection of biodiversity and cultural heritage. Thus, the strategic long-term objective of CBC is sustainable regional development as a process and sustainable cross-border regions as a goal.

Organisations for cross-border cooperation started to develop in Europe after the Second World War. This was motivated by the desire to remove barriers separating regions and communities on either side of the borders and to overcome everyday problems affecting the inhabitants of border regions (Anon. 1997, Smith 2005). The pioneers of cross border cooperation were people living in the German-French and German-Dutch border areas, and between the Scandinavian countries. In these regions a large number of cross border arrangements emerged in the 1950s, aiming at fostering general European integration, improving economic development and solving environmental problems (Anon. 1997, Smith 2005). The first 'official' cross-border region (CBR), the EUROREGIO, was established in 1958 on the Dutch-German border (Perkmann 2003).

Many cross-border initiatives appeared after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1991, which divided Europe into West and East for almost 40 years from the Barents Sea at the border between Russia, Norway and Finland, all way to the border between Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey (Terry et al. 2006). The Iron Curtain represents one of the most iconic barriers to have existed within Europe, separating people along political and ideological lines and having a huge impact on their cultural, social and economical lives (Terry et al 2006). Since 1991 enormous changes also took place in people minds and mentalities. Borders were no longer considered as separating lines, but rather as contact areas, and bridges to new markets and cultures. The border issues, security and stability of new border regions became a top priority for many politicians, scholars and also for the



citizens of those regions. The eastern enlargement of the EU has given a major incentive to the development of cross border cooperation (Anon. 2004).

There are several supranational bodies, which develop the legal framework and provide the financial support for the cross-border cooperation in Europe. The Council of Europe, a European intergovernmental organization headquartered in Strasbourg, was founded in 1949 to improve the legal framework for cross-border cooperation of local and regional authorities (Perkmann 2003). The European Commission, the executive branch of the European Union, which provides substantial financial support for cross-border initiatives within the European Union and between the EU and neighbouring countries (Perkmann 2003). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), founded in 1945 with the aim to develop education, social and natural sciences, culture and communication towards sustainable development. There are also regional and sub-regional actors such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) or Central European Initiative (CEI), which are contributing to cross-border, interregional and local democracy development.

In 1990 the European Commission launched the InterReg Community Initiatives, which are an umbrella for many CBC initiatives. The overall aim of the InterReg initiatives has been, and remains, that national border should not be a barrier to the balanced development and integration of the European territory (Anon. 2004). The objective of the new phase of InterReg, which started in 2000, has been to (a) promote integrated regional development between neighbouring border regions, including external borders (neighbourhood programs) and certain maritime borders; (b) contribute to harmonious territorial integration across the Community; (c) improve regional development and cohesion policies and techniques through transnational/interregional cooperation (Anon. 2004b, Martinos 1998). In 1994, the EU established the Phare Cross-Border Cooperation program, which operates within the framework of Phare - EU's aid program. The objectives of Phare CBC are mainly to promote cooperation of EU border regions with adjacent border regions in Central and Eastern Europe to overcome their specific development problems, to promote the creation and the development of cooperation networks on either side of the border, and the establishment of links between these networks and wider Community networks (<http://www.crr.cz>). In 1996 at the initiative of the European Parliament, Tacis – the EU's aid program began to support cross-border cooperation on the land borders of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, with Finland and the Central European countries. The Tacis CBC program has similar objectives as InterReg and Phare CBC (Malchus 1998, Martinos 1998).

Practices for cross-border cooperation

Long term cross-border initiatives generate cross-border regions (CBRs). According to the definition of the Council of Europe, cross-border regions are 'characterized by homogenous features and functional interdependencies because otherwise there is no need for cross-border cooperation' (CoE, 1972). A cross-border region acts consistently and long-term (Gabbe 2005). They are most commonly constituted through cooperation among border municipalities, districts or regions. The work is based on long-term joint strategies including analysis of the strengths and weaknesses (Gabbe 2005). Most of these CBRs receive financial support from the European Commission via its InterReg program. The CBRs are not 'regions' in an administrative-constitutional sense. Many cross-border regions are based on some sort of civil-law agreements among the participating authorities (Perkmann 2003, Gabbe 2005).

European CBRs vary in their legal and administrative set-up. Some of them are often referred to as a Euroregion, although this is a concept that is used for a number of different arrangements (Perkmann 2003). A Euroregion as a specific type of CBR is a form of transnational cooperation structure between two (or more) territories located in different European countries. Euroregions represent a specific type of cross-border region (<http://www.aebr.net>). Euroregions usually do not correspond to any legislative or governmental institution, do not have direct political power, and their work is limited to the competencies of the local and regional authorities which constitute them. They are usually arranged to promote common interests across the border and cooperate for the common good of the border populations (<http://www.aebr.net>).

The Association of European Border Regions sets the following criteria for the identification of Euroregions: (i) an association of local and regional authorities on either side of the national border, sometimes with a parliamentary assembly; (ii) a transfrontier association with a permanent secretariat and a technical and administrative team with own resources; (iii) of private law nature, based on non-profit-making associations or foundations on either side of the border in accordance with the respective national law in force; (iiii) of public law nature, based on inter-state agreements, dealing among other things, with the participation of territorial authorities (www.coe.int).

Another specific type of CBR is a transboundary biosphere reserve (BR). The debates on transboundary BRs began in the early 1990s at the 'Man and Biosphere' (MAB) meeting in Ukraine in 1990 and during the EUROMAB-IV meeting in Poland in 1993. In 1992, the Czech-Polish Krkonosze BR and the Polish-Slovakian Tatry BR were created (Brey Meyer 2000). The Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve that includes land in Poland, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine has played a pioneer role, setting a precedent for trilateral cooperation in European biosphere reserves (Fall 1999). A transboundary



biosphere reserve is an official recognition at the international level and by a United Nation institution of a political will to cooperate in the fields of conservation and sustainable development through common management of a shared land area. It also represents a commitment of two or more countries to cooperate in applying and satisfying the objectives of the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves (Anon. 2000c). Transboundary BRs provide an arena and a tool for landscape management based on both ecological and socio-economic premises. It corresponds to the increasing recognition of the appropriateness of the ecosystem approach of the Convention of Biological Diversity as a means of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. The features of a transboundary BR include the following dimensions: favouring cooperation and co-management; creating a regional management body mandated to protect and manage the common resources; recognizing the effort at the international level; and instituting the political will for actors to cooperate and commit in order to meet the common regional need (Breymeyer 2000, Fall 1999, Anon. 2000c).

There are many regional attempts to develop of CBRs, which have been successful during many years. Green Belt is one of such regions. In 1989, BUND (Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland), one of Germany's environmental organisations, was engaged in the protection of the valuable habitats along the former border between West and East Germany – the so-called Green Belt. Originating from the Green Belt in Germany, the vision of a Green Belt throughout Europe has been developed (www.bund.net/green-belt-europe). The Green Belt is the biggest transboundary conservation network in Europe, which contributes to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Natura 2000, EU's network of conservation areas. At the same time the Green Belt idea focuses on using landscapes' goods and services for sustainable development. The European Green Belt runs through 22 countries, mostly along eastern European Union border. Currently there are three distinct areas of activity: (1) the Fennoscandia Green Belt, with Norway, Finland and the Russian Federation; (2) the Central European Green Belt, running through the Baltic States, Poland, Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia and Italy; (3) the Balkan Green Belt going along the barrier that separated Balkan countries (Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Greece, Turkey), ending at the Black Sea. Along the European Green Belt new transboundary water landscape conservation management areas have been developed. One example is the Drava-Mura-Danube Corridor that extends 600 km through the five countries Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary and Serbia and Montenegro. For years much of the corridor was part of the Iron Curtain between Western Europe and the former Eastern Europe. Another example is the Danube tributary river Morava between Austria and Slovakia (www.bund.net/green-belt-europe).

Seven steps to learning from cross-border cooperation initiatives

The development and implementation of CBC initiatives with the aim of supporting ways to develop sustainable regions demand considerable efforts and investments of non-academic and academic actors at multiple levels. The situation in the border regions will need to be analysed in a systematic way in order to define the priorities of the intervention (Anon. 2000b). To secure quality in development by evaluation and participation there is a need to evaluate the "hard" and "soft" outcomes of policies and management practices at multiple scales within and among regions in CBRs.

Knowledge production and learning for sustainable landscapes requires a transdisciplinary approach were human sciences (i.e. humanities and social sciences) and natural sciences on the one hand, and relevant non-academic actors are involved (e.g., Tress et al. 2006). As theoretical and methodological frameworks to deal with this complexity we use the concepts policy cycle, including the interactions among policy, governance, management and assessment (e.g., Mayers and Bass 2004), and landscape, including its biophysical, anthropogenic and perceived dimensions (e.g., Grodzinski 2005). We propose a systematic transdisciplinary approach described below. Use of CBRs as multiple landscape laboratories representing gradients in biophysical conditions, history and governance legacies between Europe's East and West is a valuable resource for production of knowledge and learning needed to reach current policy visions of sustainable landscapes (Angelstam, Törnblom 2004, 2005).

We thus suggest a natural experiment design (*sensu* Diamond 1986). Natural experiments differ from field experiments and laboratory experiments in that the experimenter does not establish the perturbation but instead selects sites where the perturbation is already running or has run. The perturbation may have been initiated naturally or by humans other than an experimental researcher. Along with the experimental sites, the investigation selects control sites so that the two types of sites differ in presence and absence of the perturbation but are as similar as possible in other respects. Ideally, this approach should be repeated for each case study as to define the situation before the cross-border cooperation, and ultimately understand the long-term impact achieved by the CBR cooperation.

To support scaling-up from the local to a general level, we propose to carry out, together with relevant landscape actors and stakeholders, a systematic sequence of applied research themes, divided into seven steps. A wisely designed suite of cross-border regions as landscape laboratories should cover large parts of the development gradients for economic, ecological and socio-cultural dimensions, as well as different systems of governance.



- **Step 1.** To identify case study CBR along the EU borders. To cover the bulk of the variation of CBRs in Europe and along the border of EU the location of case studies is stratified according to the following groups of factors: (a) geographical scope of CBRs (see table 1 with the explanation); (b) ecological, economic and socio-cultural conditions; (c) the administrative-institutional structure, system of governance and planning, for example the gradient from regions with legacies from the planned socialistic system to market economies in Europe's West; (d) type of a border in a CBR (for example, 'open borders' between EU members and 'partly opened borders' between EU-members and non-EU members).
- **Step 2.** To study the environmental history of a CBR. Landscapes have been shaped by different natural, political and cultural disturbance regimes, with different intensities and over time. To understand the prerequisites for cross-border sustainable development, the political, ecological, economic and socio-cultural history of chosen CBR should be analysed in order to understand the consequences of past human influence on the landscape, to identify common cultural and historical values and other legacies providing both bridges and barriers for a cross-border region. Inspired by Worster (1993) we focus on three aspects: (1) Natural history, or landscapes of the past. How did the ecosystem develop in terms of composition, structure and function? (2) Modes of production. These include socio-economic, production and power issues. How did the social and ecological systems interact? (3) Ideas, ideology, perception, and values. This means to understand the role of the human being in a landscape.
- **Step 3.** To map CBR's actors, products and land use. To understand ecological, economic and socio-cultural dimensions and the governance system, it is important to consider all actors involved in the land use and management of a CBR, in different development and planning processes. This must be made at multiple levels from local and regional to national and transnational. Several sub-steps should be taken, such as to: (a) describe the wood and non-wood goods, ecosystem services and values in a CBR; (b) map all landscape actors and describe the products they deliver using quantitative data and to estimate the total economic value, (c) analyse property right structure, including land use-rights to understand what kind of interests that are connected with the particular landscape and cross-border cooperation; (d) identify the types of land use related to the production of the desired goods and services; (e) evaluate the present and potential impact of cross-border cooperation on land users and land cover in the future, using different scenarios for the forecast.
- **Step 4.** To analyse institutions, policies, policy visions and the system of governance in a CBR. Implementation of CBC policies requires understanding of the institutions, i.e. rules and norms in use, policy visions, and collaboration among many actors at multiple levels with different interests and agendas within a CBR. A critical issue is to define the policy visions for cooperation in neighbouring countries. Actors implementing policies in a CBR and affected actors and organizations should be studied to evaluate their understanding of CBC policies, ability to act and attitudes. Special attention should be paid to an analysis of partnership among actors and stakeholders in neighbouring regions, which create a CBR. To analyse the multi-stakeholder collaboration stakeholders involved in CBC should be subdivided to: (1) local, regional, national and international stakeholders representing the organizational level of governance; (2) stakeholders of the civil, private and the public sector; (3) stakeholders with different role in cooperation (from formal partners who played a significant role with equal voting capacity in the decision-making and implementation processes to stakeholders that participate through continuous information sharing and networking) (Arnstein, 1969; Elbakidze et al, in press). Combining 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches in a decision-making process in a CBR governance is particular important.
- **Step 5.** To measure the ecological, economic and socio-cultural situation in a chosen CBR. The aim of this step is to measure ecological, economic, social and cultural state of the selected CBR, and compare the situation in regions, which create a CBR. Changes occurring in the case studies, including the resulting changes in biodiversity, land use, economic, social and cultural situation are studied, which should be explained as benefits and losses, opportunities and threats of a CBC initiative. Equally significant for evaluations are modifications in the governance system at multiple levels that affects both the investigated CBR and its surroundings. A SWOT analysis is a comprehensive tool to assess and investigate the context of CBC, the present and future development in a CBR.
- **Step 6.** To assess sustainability dimensions and governance in a CBR by comparing policy targets with measurements of sustainability dimensions, and make scenarios for the future. It is necessary to compare the state and trends of indicators with performance targets representing the sustainable



and preferred states as defined in step 4. Defining the acceptable habitat loss for biodiversity maintenance is one example. Knowledge about the critical habitat loss allows evaluation of the past and present impact of land use in a CBR. Examples of appropriate tools for evaluation of ecological sustainability are gap-analysis and habitat suitability modelling. Using the information on current land cover trends and the future actors' interests, landscape structure can be modelled based on scenarios for future development of governance, including uncertainties such as climate change. The results of assessments and scenarios should be communicated in the decision-making process at strategic, tactical and operational levels and across the political borders. The assessment should clearly define the common potential of the border regions, i.e. the potential which can be exploited through cross-border cooperation.

- **Step 7.** Synthesis and development of integrated tools for accounting and adaptive governance of a CBR. Once the six previous steps have been replicated in a sample of case studies, best practices can be identified and scaled up. Ultimately, accounting systems for sustainability initiatives and arena concepts for adaptive governance can be developed. Data on indicators for different criteria and knowledge of associated performance targets allow assessing the level of different dimensions of sustainability in a CBR. This information forms the base for transparent communication of the state and trends of sustainability dimensions among decision-makers and actors at multiple levels, and to the general public through different media. The integrated indicators should be used as tools in the step by step national and international policy refinement process, in regional planning processes and in land management. To understand and develop the adaptive capacity of social-ecological systems is crucial.

Discussion

Transdisciplinary knowledge production and learning

Working with a complex concept such as sustainable development requires special emphasis on finding a common platform for the inclusion of ecological, economic, socio-cultural values, as well as approaches towards a system of good governance. To achieve this, a transdisciplinary approach should be applied (Angelstam et al, 2007; Daly, Farley 2004). This means that both human and natural science disciplines need to be included, as well as actors using natural resources with the aim to balance landscape values from policy to practice, and back again (Tress et al. 2006).

To develop sustainable cross-border regions there is a need to use a landscape approach. A cross-border region is a specific socio-ecological system, or simply landscape. Landscape is an important concept within humanities, social sciences as well as natural sciences (Forman 1995, Angelstam 1997, Grodzinski 2005). The landscape concept can be used as an interface for improved communication between human and natural sciences, as well as between policy and practise to increase the understanding of dependencies between social and ecological systems in a landscape.

The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as "an area perceived by local people or visitors where the visual features and characteristics of the landscape are a result of natural and/or cultural factors" (Anon 2000). A landscape can thus be viewed as a geographical unit that offers a sense of place to actors and represents a wide range of dimensions including biophysical, socio-cultural and perceived dimensions (e.g., Antrop 2006, Dyakonov et al. 2007). The landscape as a social-ecological system reflects the need to expand the spatial scale of management, moving from smaller units or objects to the magnitude of landscapes and regions, embracing the micro, meso and macro levels. Additionally, all social organisational scales must be considered, from individual, household/family, community, region, nation and global levels (Elbakidze and Angelstam 2007). Thus, both social and ecological sub-systems, as well as their interactions, must be studied (e.g., Angelstam et al. 2004, Lazdinis and Angelstam 2004).

To study the process of implementing sustainable development policies, actors at multiple levels must view natural and socio-cultural components at several temporal and spatial scales, and not be restricted by political boundaries. Thus, a landscape forms a whole entity, where natural and cultural components are intermingled, and cannot be viewed as separate entities or processes (Andersson et al. 2005).

We define a sustainable region as an integrated socio-ecological system encompassing diverse cultural, natural and social functions through balanced governance empowering the involvement of all actors with in and between countries (e.g. Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2004). To steer complex systems like landscapes towards sustainability, different dimensions of sustainability need to be measured and the level of sustainability be assessed, and there must be sufficient understanding of the links between the different parts of the system. This act of balance requires platforms for adaptive governance and an overriding strategy that co-ordinates management activities in relevant space-time domains as enacted by owners and tenants of land, by authorities and other actors involved. Such co-ordination can be facilitated by policy instruments such as laws and regulations, subsidies and other economic instruments, but also through the development of social learning that includes transfer of knowledge and new approaches in collaboration with



managers and other actors at different levels (Mayers, Bass 1999, Krott et al. 2000). To achieve this, a more holistic approach is needed, i.e. an approach that is relevant to local and regional conditions, as well as takes the national and international context into account (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).

Towards a suite of cross-border regions as landscape laboratories

The eastern external border of the EU is a transition zone between Europe's East and West (e.g., Davies 1997), and provides clear examples of how different political and economic histories as well as governance systems have created large contrasts between adjacent regions (Jönsson et al. 2000). Replicated transdisciplinary studies in multiple CBRs that capture these differences along gradients, and that combine assessment of ecological, economic, socio-cultural dimensions and the system of governance will provide important insights that can be scaled up and disseminated.

As an illustration of how to apply a multiple case study approach we give example of transdisciplinary knowledge production using landscape-based initiatives as laboratories for learning. To cover the bulk of the variation of CBRs in Europe and along the border of EU the location of case studies should be stratified according to the following groups of factors: (a) geographical scope of CBRs; (b) ecological, economic and socio-cultural conditions; (c) the administrative-institutional structure, system of governance and planning; (d) type of a border in a CBR (step 1 in our "seven-step" transdisciplinary approach).

The geographical scopes of CBRs are different (Perkmann 2003, Gabbe 2005). We distinguish the following scopes of CBRs based on levels of governance in a CBR. The first is the local level or micro-CBR level (Perkmann 2003), which are results of 'small-scale cooperation arrangements among contiguous border authorities belonging to different nation states' (p.159, Perkmann, 2003). The second is a CBR of interregional level as a result of long-term cooperation between regional and national actors and stakeholders, and regional authorities. Finally, the third level is transnational, which is generated by the cooperation between nation states (e.g., the Carpathian Euroregion). To capture differences in ecological, economic and socio-cultural development we give examples from old, new and non-members of EU, as well as types of borders, including a closed type (EU/Finland and EU/Poland – Russia, EU/Poland – Belarus) and 'partly closed' type (EU/Poland and Ukraine) (Table 1).

Geographical scope of CBR	Ecological, economic and socio-cultural conditions	Administrative-institutional structure, system of governance and planning	Type of a border in a CBR
Local level (micro-CBR)	Highly diverse	Highly diverse	Highly diverse
Interregional level	Highly diverse	Highly diverse	Highly diverse
Transnational level	Highly diverse	Highly diverse	Highly diverse

Table 1. Cross-border regions as case studies suitable for evaluation of cross-border cooperation and arenas along the eastern external border of European Union

Challenges in cross-border cooperation and integration toward sustainable landscapes

All users want more of, and an increased range of desired landscape products that are based on goods, ecosystem services as well as the natural and cultural heritage. How can these increasing demands on landscapes be satisfied? The solution is to balance multiple uses of landscape resources. However, this solution needs to be delivered in different ways depending on local, regional, national and international factors. Is the land ownership coarse-grained or fine-grained? Should all goods, services and other values be produced in one site, or should a triad approach with segregation of different functions at the scale of landscapes and regions be used? What are the desired products, today and in the future? How can conflicts be solved now and in the future? To what extent can local adaptation take place?

Informed and educated users and actors at multiple levels are necessary for efficient and effective landscape management in a range of sectors managing different parts of regions, including forestry, agriculture, transport infrastructure etc. This should be made practically applicable within national and international policies and legal frameworks, and be understandable by the public. Science and practice need to be developed in collaboration to provide the landscape managers from different countries with tools appropriate to adjust to a changing world subject to globalisation and climate change. All this requires that all users are well informed about the state and trends of the landscape's goods, services and other values in cross-border regions, which requires continuous capacity building for social learning and adaptive governance (Angelstam, Elbakidze, 2006; Elbakidze et al, in press).

To realise the vision of sustainable regions based on the contents of a wide range of policies at multiple levels promoting sustainable development requires both new knowledge and dissemination of experiences representing development successes and failures. Our review of a range of cross-border cooperation initiatives and cross-border regions show that there is a rich pool of experiences that can be used to gain the necessary knowledge, and to develop arenas for adaptive governance and management. However, by and large this knowledge is localised, and exchange of experiences among regions and countries is limited.



Academic actors		Non-academic actors	
Basis research	Applied research	Education	Dissemination
Disciplinary	Transdisciplinary knowledge production		Implementation
			Management

Table 2. Transdisciplinary knowledge production is located at the interface between research and management and requires close collaboration between different types of actors

To extract and disseminate useful traditional and new knowledge from a suite of cross-border case studies, a transdisciplinary approach is needed where researchers from different disciplines work together with representative local and national actors. The approach we propose to reach the aim of sustainable landscapes brings a diversity of new challenges for people, partnerships in different regions, and networks in different cross-border regions and with other arena initiatives, as well as for donors and funding agencies. One important goal is to boost public awareness on cross-border sustainability issues. Hence people-to-people projects and exchange programs for field-workers, scientist, political actors and devoted citizens are not only desirable but required (Smith 2005).

Adaptation and learning requires an iterated procedure involving multi-level cooperation among disciplines, sectors and actors (e.g., Gibbons et al. 1994). How can this be achieved? Below we outline how we believe this challenge of bridging could be met by reforming research and development so that the gap between science and practice at different levels, as well as between different spatial scales, can be bridged. To realise the vision of sustainability a “societal learning process” needs to be developed by exploring different existing approaches to integration and communication, as well as testing new ideas. To be successful this requires (1) scientific methods, (2) successful dissemination of information, and (3) action. We argue for the need to use and develop (i) an accounting system as a “map and a compass” that tells natural resource managers, policy-makers, media, authorities exercising governance, students and the general public where we are going, and (ii) ways of establishing societal arenas for local and regional governance as a “gyroscope” to steer the development (Lee 1993). This would contribute to make informed decisions based on knowledge. Societal systems would thus both get information from and inform social stakeholders, and should have a role in a wide range of arenas, regardless of scale and ecosystem context. According to this transdisciplinary approach (Table 2), research has four features that separate it from disciplinary sciences (Gibbons et al. 1994): (1) It develops an evolving framework to guide problem solving efforts, which focuses on achieving holistic understanding. (2) It develops its own theoretical structure, research methods and modes of practice, based on the input from different disciplines. (3) Unlike the disciplinary sciences where results are communicated through institutional, the knowledge production are communicated by those (practitioners and scientists) who have participated in the work. (4) It is about problem solving on the move. Thus, communication in ever

new configurations is crucial. For long-term success it is considered indispensable to integrate the local population and the regional economy in cross-border-environmental-cooperation. This is a crucial point, as sustained cross-border-cooperation in our case needs wide acceptance by those being concerned of according measures and projects in their daily live (Smith 2005).

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Figure 1. Location of case studies suitable for evaluation of cross-border initiatives and cross-border regions along the eastern border of European Union: red polygons show location of case studies (A,B,C), green dashed lines show borders of forest zones, and a colour of countries' polygons indicates the status of country's membership in the EU.



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IDENTITY OF THE RIVER LANDSCAPES' INHABITANTS – RESULTS OF A QUESTIONNAIRE WITHIN THE SCOPE OF AN INTERNATIONAL PROJECT – CONCLUSIONS AND REFERENCES (TOPIC: RIVER LANDSCAPE)

Summary of the project's existing results

The course of the project "Cross-border management of attendance, use and development of the selected central European river landscapes", about which was informed also at the last year's annual conference has this year stepped into its final phase. Here are, in brief, summarized the main aims and existing, so far incomplete results of the project.

The project's participants

On the project, the warrantor of which is the Academy for spatial and regional planning in Hanover, participates:

- Institute for ecological spatial development in Dresden

The overall coordination of the project. It deals with the Elbe valley between Hrensko and Dresden

- **Jan Evangelista Purkyně University, Usti nad Labem**

The Czech lower Elbe – the Ústí region

- **Institute for spatial development**

The Morava and Dyje river floodplain in the Břeclav district up to their junction

- **SPECTRA Centre of Excellence of the EU, Slovak University of Technology**

The Slovak basin of Morava – Záhorie

- **Hungarian Academy of Science**

A part of Tizsa lowland in north-eastern Hungary in the region of Szatmár – Bereg

Aim of the project

The main, initially declared aim of the project was to create a pilot document, which would complex assign an optimal care, utilization and development of these chosen sections of river landscapes, different in their natural and also social-economic conditions. At the same time, it was important to verify this broadly conceived and at the beginning maybe a bit laborious interdisciplinary and transdepartmental instrument, and compose it according to need so, that also in the conditions of Central Europe it can become a quality non-statutory planning material – as it is often beginning to be applied in western countries. And because the river and its landscape does not know of any borders, however various departmental legal regulations and standards have their borders; the aspiration of this project as well is to find these differences in the regulations and suggest their solving.

In every country the investigated area does include the floodplain itself, but also somewhat broader areas, that is, municipalities connected in some way with a river (fishery, recreation, irrigations). By delineation of investigated areas in every state the stress was laid also on the fact that, if possible, it should - according to the relief (valley cross-section) – encompass the following 3 basic types of river landscapes (the original German titles are listed in brackets for more precise specification):

Wide flat floodplain (lowland, Tiefland)

Wide, completely flat river floodplain (with the exception of one-sided right-banked terrace) of Morava and Kyjovka covers a larger part of the ethnographical area of Podluží that means the area between Moravská Nová Ves and the junction of the rivers Dyje and Morava

Wider, only slightly rising river valley (Flusstalweitung)

It covers the whole northern part of the Lednice-Valtice area

Narrower river valley (canyon, Durchbruchgebiet)

A section and the surroundings of the stream under Dunajovské vrchy and Pálava, Drnholec and Milovice

The resulting document lays down the regulators and principles for landscape management of the listed types of river landscape, in consideration of the area's natural and cultural values, while assuring a sustainable economic utilization of the floodplain. Appointed regulators concern especially the agricultural and forest management, water management, including flood protection, restoration of the country including development of production and services, but also recreation and tourist trade which, in this area, gain more and more in economic importance.

Questionnaire on identity with river landscape – found pieces of knowledge and conclusions

A part of this project is also a questionnaire assessing the identity of the inhabitants of the chosen municipalities with an adjoining river and its landscape. The aim of this survey is the discovery how markedly does the river and



problems surrounding it interfere in the inhabitant's lives. Taking into account, that with the exception of Podluží (wide floodplain) and a few municipalities of the wider valley (Podivín, Ladná), we are dealing with an area that was resettled after World War II., where the sense of belonging, pride and bearing on tradition is lower than there, where the population practically hasn't changed.

A positive identity with the river landscape in the investigated area has risen after the year 1989, and it can be expected that in connection with the extent of minor boating (which will affect tourist trade and subsequently cause a rise of new working positions in restaurant and tourist services) it will still grow.

Characteristics of the place where you live:

- most of the respondents are connected with the place they live in by their family. Among other important aspects belong especially their friends and the surrounding landscape, incl. vineyards.
- the respondents named among the most common reasons why people live in a specific place the fact, that they have been born in that given place, they like it there, they have their family and friends there, they have a house or a flat there,
- most of the respondents (regardless of whether they have been living in their current place of residence since their birth or whether they have moved to it from a different place) would – if given the chance – not move from their place of residence,
- the respondents who stated that they would move, if given the chance said the reason for that would be a profitable working opportunity, e.g. young people gave the act of becoming independent as their reason,

Bearing on the place where you live:

- under the concept "a place, where I live" most of the respondents imagine a municipality,
- for most of the respondents the river represents a landscape feature and a possibility of recreation,
- according to a part of the respondents the river affects people in the vicinity – they are more active during their leisure time (strolls by the river, riding the bike, fishing, gardening etc.), they have a stronger bearing on nature as well as the river itself.

Actual situation in the place where you live:

- the respondents perceive the economic situation in the place where they live and the possibilities of a future development rather positively,

- as the main advantage of the place where they live the respondents regard the natural and cultural richness,
- according to most of the respondents, the social climate is friendly,
- the respondents think that the place, where they live has a better effect on beholders from outside than it has on the insiders, as the beholders from outside have the tendency to idealize the area of southern Moravia.

Entry of CR into EU:

- The respondents are awaiting a favourable impact of the entry of CR into EU (the improvement of the relations with the neighbours at the other side of the border and better expectations for the future), but at the same time fear the consequences of the entry into EU (they fear that many problems will be hard to solve),
- The influence of border rivers after entering the EU in comparison with the era prior to the year 1989 – the informants do not notice any effect after entering into the EU, according to them crucial changes occurred already after the year 1989, in addition the influence of the EU was noticeable already in the pre-entry period (establishing of sewage clarification plants, unifying the legislative, programs of cross-border cooperation and so on), according to the informants, the influence of the border river demonstrates itself in:
 - common protection of the environment, especially the purity of water in the river,
 - development of tourist trade and cycle tourism by the river and water surfaces,
 - building up of canalization and sewage clarification plants,
 - grouping of municipalities along the river Dyje and cooperation on flood protection on both sides of the border,
 - rivers stopped being a barrier,
 - undisturbed nature has been preserved in the borderland,
 - the respondents recommend to solve the following problems and questions on a transnational or international level:
 - landscape preservation, water purity and air purity,
 - unemployment,
 - problems with refugees, smuggling of drugs and so on,
 - organizing of collective meetings for citizens from both sides of the border, that would help to improve human relations,
 - consolidation of fishery rules and of river navigation,



- flood protection,
- common promotion of regions on both sides of the border regarding the boost of tourist trade, promotion of vine products being as a local particularity,
- reconstruction of former bridges or footbridges on a border river,
- road transport

General conclusions and particularity of some areas:

- inhabitants of smaller municipalities take more notice of single positive changes in the place, where they live (for example the building up of a canalization and a sewerage plant, mending of roads and pavements, regular maintenance of public spaces), this probably bears a relation to a more optimistic evaluation of the economic situation and also to the possibility of a future development of the place where they live,
- by contrast, inhabitants of bigger municipalities take more notice of the changes of a regional and cross border measure,
- inhabitants of municipalities in the surroundings of Nové Mlýny reservoirs feel much less threatened by a flood than other inhabitants,
- inhabitants of smaller municipalities are discontented above all with the lack of work vacancies and transport services, on the contrary, the inhabitants of Břeclav perceive negatively especially the building up of motor traffic in the town, incl. the town centre,
- inhabitants of smaller municipalities for example evaluate the image of the place where they live more positively than the inhabitants of Břeclav,
- inhabitants of smaller municipalities were more often able to name some kind of a slogan or a symbol of the place, where they live (e.g. municipal heraldry, UNESCO logo of a monument or of a recreational area, a memory coin, a short title of a municipality or a “nickname” of the municipality’s title, and so on),
- in Podluží region the up keeping of folklore traditions and the activities of local clubs and associations is very positively perceived,
- Mušov – according to the survey results, the inhabitants of the abandoned Mušov, now living in family houses at the housing estate Pasohlávky, have got used to the new environment and feel relationship to this place as their domicile. However, some of them have objections against the confined free space between the houses in the housing estate and against the lack of privacy. One respondent even expressed the opinion that common life of original inhabitants of Pasohlávky with former inhabitants of Mušov speeds badly. Remark: These findings are rather unreliable,

since the sample of respondents arising out of Mušov was small.

- The Danube-Oder-Labe Channel: Some of the respondents expressed their opinion on the intention to build the D-O-L Chanel. Most of them are against the realisation of this intention because it would bring along a large intervention into the landscape with consequences that are difficult to assess in advance.

As far as the relation between the inhabitants and the river is concerned, the following observations and requirements resulting from the talks with local experts have been identified:

- Fishing:

Whereas the pot fishing in the rivers of the CR is forbidden, this fishing method is commonly used in Austria, with a much higher amount of caught fish as a consequence.

Therefore, it is necessary to achieve the unification of fishery rules, or to guarantee a higher Austria share in fish stocking of border water bodies.

- Spreading of beavers and cormorants:

Due to a systematic eradication, beavers have not been living on the territory of today’s CR for more than 200 years. However, they have been stocked again successfully in the Litovel and Břeclav regions in the nineties, and now, being a protected species, they are continuing in their untroubled process of multiplication. Nonetheless, their new and so far not very numerous occurrence implicates some serious problems: on the one hand, damages to the nature protected and listed vegetations within the Lednice park, and on the other hand, the damming of water in beaver dams which brings about the decline of water level in pools with the resulting perish of the rare and critically endangered species, especially the invertebrates – crustacean animals, mollusc and insects.

The cormorants seem to be in a similar situation. They multiplied abundantly due to a considerable augmentation of fish stock in the Thaya river as well as due to the creation of an optimal biotope especially in the middle water basin of the Nové Mlýny water work during the eighties. In addition, their ingenious and collective way of catching fish became a nightmare for the fishermen so that they enforced the controlled shooting of cormorants. As to the extent and necessity of this precaution, the expert opinions differ considerably.

- Different opinions on the controlled flooding of floodplain forests

Though a system of controlled inundation of floodplain forests was established in the section of the Thaya river under the commune Bulhary, the exploitation of this system is very low because of different priorities of fishermen (ichthyologists) and ornithologists. Whereas the fishermen require the forest flooding to be made during the period of spawning of certain fish species in shallow, open and warm pools, the ornithologists reject that the flooding would be



made during this time by reason of the protection of bird species nesting on the ground, in lower parts of shrubs and in the reeds.

- The Danube – Oder – Labe channel

The majority of respondents is against the development of the Danube – Oder – Labe channel with regard to landscape disturbance as well as to a questionable economic effectiveness and a still more indefinite rate of return.

- The overall attitude to identity

Though it was not always easy for the respondents to understand the essence of the inhabitants' identity with their river landscape, the majority of them expressed - in contrast to inhabitants living in communes situated in a longer distance from the river - their special liking for fishing and for occasionally walks along the river. They appreciate positively the development of the small-scale river navigation in the park area (from minaret to Janohrad) together with the development of tourism services (restaurants, snack-bars etc.). Generally, it can be concluded, that the inhabitants' identity has a rising tendency, however at lower intensity levels in comparison to the inhabitants of lower Elbe or Tisza.

There is another interesting difference between the often idyllic way of perceiving the area of South Moravia from outside (as an area bearing vines, with lively folklore and with plenty of good-natured uncles and aunts, young wine and bacon) and the way it is perceived from inside by local inhabitants themselves.

- Comparison and short characteristics of further pilot areas abroad

The comparison concerning the inhabitant's relationship to their domicile, namely the comparison between inhabitants of the Pálava protected landscape area (Podpálaví) and the Podluží area on the one hand and inhabitants of the Záhorie lowland area, Tisza basin area or the Czech and Saxony Switzerland on the other hand, is supposed to be interesting and probably surprising, too. In spite of the fact that the evaluation of foreign partners' checklists is not fully available at the moment of this paper elaboration, it is possible, on the basis of existing survey, to lay down the following basic characteristics and expectations:

North Bohemian Labe (section Ústí n. L. – Děčín – Hřensko)

- the canyon (also denominated as the river breakthrough area, or narrow valley with steep slopes), with major international railway and high-road as well as further technical infrastructure,
- a higher ratio of forest land in comparison with southern Moravia, the importance of agriculture is rather marginal, farmland is exploited primarily as grassland,

- numerous, often deteriorating production plants (especially chemical factories) are holding down the employment within agrarian sector and causing air pollution and damage to forest stand,
- today's population/area has a very high migration saldo, which is a result of complete expatriation of original inhabitants from the territory in the year 1945,
- the charming landscape of Central Bohemian Highland and Elbe Sandstones – Czech Switzerland attracts the visitors and enables the tourism and travel movement,
- the local inhabitants attention towards the river is supposed to grow due to a relatively intensive shipping which, in connection with its expected increase, will necessitate the Labe river regulation as well as with the purification of the industry-polluted river water and, last but not least, due to recent extensive floods.

Saxon Elbe: state boundary - Dresden

- the narrow valley behind the state boundary is gradually widening into a broader valley ahead of Dresden city,
- with exception of Dresden, the area is not so heavily loaded by the (declining) industry with its all accompanying environmental and social consequences,
- intensive transportation utilisation of the valley of similar importance as in North Bohemia,
- tourism movement in attractive Saxony Switzerland, unique cultural values of Dresden and Meissen and traditional viticulture (a rarity in natural conditions of this region) are positive factors which together with the above mentioned transportation utilisation and recent extensive floods are forming the relationship of the population towards the Elbe river floodplain.

Slovak part of the Morava river flood plain - Záhorie lowland

- a relatively sparsely populated area with a higher share of woodland than southern Moravia and therefore with a lower intensity of agricultural use. An outstanding part of the territory is being used as military area,
- a quite flat area limited only to the east by an outstanding ridge of Small Carpathians,
- the Morava river was here, due to its localisation on the state border with Austria, practically inaccessible for a period of 40 years (with exception of the section Skalica - Kúty as the Moravian – Slovakian border). For this reason, the Morava river flood plain preserved its numerous natural values and is registered as the Protected Landscape Area Záhorie. Its tourist use is relatively low so far,
- due to the protection, this floodplain is a paradise for fishermen, natural scientists and bicyclists



who use to come here via the former border-line signalization communication,

- due to a minimum extent of Morava river regulation, as well as longer distances of most settlements from the river, the impact of floods in recent years was not so remarkable. The river does not seem to be a major factor of identification of Záhorie lowland inhabitants with their landscape.

Middle part of the Tisza river floodplain – surroundings of the Vasárosnamény city, district Szatmár - Bereg

- a rural, sparsely settled, quite plane territory, recently heavy damaged through floods,
- the flood problems are especially ticklish because the flood waves are generated in near-by mountain areas of neighbouring Slovakia, Romania a Ukraine. The course of flood wave is usually very speedy, causing dam breakthroughs in unexpected places. In addition, the cross-border information system does not function as it ought to,
- agricultural use of the area is extensive, the part of it are especially protected wetland biotopes. The tourism (camps, holidays settlement do exist) however not in a large scale, the inhabitants' relation towards the Tisza river is dominated by flood fear and influenced also by tourism and fishing. In spite of the devastating flood in the year 2001, which caused heavy damages to local municipalities, the majority of inhabitants insisted on the renewal of family houses in original places, which was made possible, among others, through the 100 percent government grant conditional on strict building regulative relevant not only to the flood resistance of buildings, but also to their architectonic pattern in relation to traditional popular architecture and housing habits in the region.
- The investigation results are going to manifest themselves in recommendations for the determination of optimal area management, which is the major objective of the project.

Conclusions

The paper describes the international project "Cross border management of river landscapes" prepared as a pilot development document for floodplain areas and adjacent land. In view of the considerably complicated problems coherent with optimal use of various character floodplains, the advantage of this informal planning instrument is its

supradepartmental and multicriterial approach. The various areas were selected in every participating country selected so as to preferably include all three river valley

width types. Based on field surveys as well as study of available source materials concerning the relevant area, the optimal use strategies for individual area subtypes were elaborated, however in such a way that a consistent concept according to the sustainable development principles for the whole examined area would be developed. An important basic material is also the survey of the inhabitants' identification with the area they are living in, their desires and needs as compared with how the area is being perceived from outside. It is necessary to note that - due to the augmentation of fish stock and activation of tourist trade services - the intensity of perceiving the river as well as the positive relation to it are growing, however apparently not to such an extent as it is in case of water courses which fulfil also an significant transportation function.

The expected result will be the comparison of planning approaches of central European countries including their position in national legislative and the possibility of the enforcement and implementation of individual proposed measures.

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LIVING CONDITIONS IN NORTHWEST BOHEMIA – OBJECTIVE REALITY AND SUBJECTIVE PERCEPTION IN HARMONY OR CONTRADICTION?

Introduction

Geography, being a science that reflects on and respects both a holistic approach and a hierarchical system of classification, takes up a specific position in studies of local and regional developments. Besides standard approaches, so-called soft methods, usually used in sociology, have been gaining more importance. Not only do they enable scientists to verify data obtained through more traditional methods, but such soft methods also complement our objective knowledge with subjective data and self-reflection.

The development of a region or a locality is based, among other things, upon how active approaches the permanent population of the area has adopted. Kollár (2000) says that “approaches, beliefs, values and the importance attached to the environment affect the emotional state of an individual as well as their ideas, which both modify their complex behaviour“. It is exactly the perception of what is currently going on, no matter whether gained through personal experience or by media that constitutes a significant factor in the development of a community and society in general. When designing suitable empirical enquiries, geographers can focus their questionnaires on the following groups of questions (Jurczek, Günter 1994): What are effects of changes in general conditions? Which areas (in regional development, of society or community) are affected the most and the least? What development opportunities or threats have to be taken into account in a particular locality or region? How do various target groups perceive the ongoing changes?

The Ústí Region, or more specifically its coal mining core area, is well known to the public as a territory which is industrially used in an intensive way, suffering from pollution and to a large also from considerable social problems. This state of affairs has stimulated, among other things, a profound scientific interest of various researchers and institutions. Naturally, the local university is no exception and, due to unhampered cooperation between its departments, the university has been able to adopt a complex (interdisciplinary) approach. Several completed projects, such as (Velímský 1999-2003) with a historical focus, (Jeřábek ed. 2006) dealing with spatial aspects, (Zich 2006) with an emphasis on social matters or environmentally oriented (Vráblíková 2001), are documenting the wide scope of the approach. It is not the intention either to present in this paper profound theoretical analysis or to describe the methodology of our empirical enquiries. The research rather concentrates on some selected data that mainly concern the general perception and evaluation of complex living conditions.

Given range of the contribution does not enable deeper contemplation or familiarization with theoretical bases, both of the project itself and of the very empiric inquiries. Therefore, we will be limited to the presentation on fundamental findings sorted on the first level basis, concerning spheres, which can also be compared to the information of statistic character (so-called hard data).

Data resources, methodology, thematic focus

The analysis of so-called hard data stems from Czech Statistic Office database available, namely from the census in 2001 and from results of continuous record from municipal and local statistics. The comparison is performed for all 8 model areas – these are understood as a whole, i.e. without internal differentiation observation. We tend to point out identical or diverse traits of model areas, their mutual status and specificities. In this contribution, we manage with an ascertainment of the situation, searching for causes of this very state or development is a task of other work or publication concerning the project. In terms of content, the focal point is situated to the population, extended by the sphere of living, business activities are also included.

There is a method which enables to analyze reality quite well and which has been gaining more and more in importance: the SWOT analysis. This method describes current situations through indications of strengths and weaknesses both at a general level and in a broader context with specific focuses on either particular regions or particular aspects. The situation “inside” (i.e. endogenous potential) is complemented by external factors (agents) which are or will be affecting the development of the territory in question either positively (opportunities) or negatively (threats). In this particular case, the author has used results of several students’ diploma theses which dealt with selected territories and which can be considered as case studies.

In each empirical enquiry, it is absolutely vital to follow an order of logical steps (for more detail see Jeřábek, Anděl 2005), namely the selection of a focus, the formulation of suitable questions, the definition of a target group, the fieldwork and finally the evaluation and interpretation of results.

The Geoscape Project in itself, supported by the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, is quite broadly based upon results concerned with a relatively wide range of aspects for sociological surveys of population in the following spheres:



Population stability and working conditions; Usage of extra-work / spare time and the lifetime; Public administration activity; Area evaluation: living conditions, environment, condition for business; Social and economic development; Czech Republic's joining of the European Union. The research was focused on recording of changes after 1989 and on the description of current situation (static view). In the questionnaire, there prevailed closed questions, offering respondents a possibility to choose the answer, opened questions were enlisted only rarely. Question batteries were used quite often, enabling relatively easy comparing of chosen aspects, subsequently. For comparison, there were asked 12 questions at the national level and 21 questions at the regional level. In this paper, only selected data indicating living conditions and socio-economic development will be presented.

At the national level, a professional agency was collecting the questionnaires (September 2005; 1045 respondents), and the regional survey was carried out in NUTS 3 Ústí Region, NUTS 3 Karlovy Vary Region (forming a NUTS 2 region North-West) and NUTS 3 Liberec Region (hereafter KV-UL-LB) with total of 153 respondents. In addition, students of our university carried out enquiries in the Ústí Region in their optional courses and diploma theses (from 2005 till 2007, total number of 918 respondents in 8 different areas).

In principle, the respondents structure corresponds to the population composition, thus the results may be considered representative – within the national population, there, regarding the gender, slightly prevail women (51.5 %), the people of 15-19 and 20-29 years of age (28.0 and 27.3 %) make the strongest group according to age or, according to the education attained, skilled workers and graduates from high schools without leaving exam are the most numerous (36.6 %). As for model areas from Ústecký kraj (district), we have 5 files with more than 100 respondents (maximum for Klášterecko is 166); to the contrary, Bílinsko is the least represented (69 respondents only). Regarding the relative formulation – after the reduction to the population of the age of more than 15 – Petrovicko holds the supremacy (129 ‰), the last one is Bílinsko (5 ‰), due to relatively significant population number.

Besides the surveys among the population, there are also made expert interviews with local mayors (in 2006), results of which are also used in this paper, but selected aspects has been considering Successes and failures of the settlement in question since 1989 and Current and future priorities and problems; Decision-making and administration (municipal council, civilians participation, ground plan, etc.); Public administration reform (region, district, municipality with extended scope of authority, cooperation between municipalities, etc.); Social life, clubs, association in a municipality (micro-region); Regional policy (European, national and regional resources, project, preparation, utilization).

Intentions of regional authorities were evaluated on the basis of their publication called Strategie udržitelného rozvoje Ústeckého kraje 2006 - 2020 [The Sustainable Growth Strategy for the Ústí Region] (Hřebík et al. 2006), which listed measures and investments intended to made in next 15 years.

Reality, reflection, comparing and perspective of living conditions

Objective reality regional differentiation via basic socio-economic signs

In the light of population number, we work with three regional categories. The first and strongest includes Klášterecko and Bílinsko (17 and 16 thousand inhabitants, respectively). The second group is made by areas of 4-6 thousand inhabitants (3 regions), the third one then includes smaller areas of approximately one thousand inhabitants (3 regions, as well). Natural population growth shows that the most of areas loses its inhabitants. The highest absolute and relative values were attained at Vejprtsko, on the other hand, population of Petrovicko increased naturally. With some exceptions (Vejprtsko and Klášterecko), the population number is rising, mostly in Petrovicko, due to the migration movement, on the contrary. The overall population development can be characterised as stabilization in a half of model areas (Třebeňicko, Verneřicko, Klášterecko, Bílinsko). In the rest – with the exception of Vejprtsko – the positive development is prevailing, completely outstanding position belongs to Petrovicko, in which the both population development compounds are positive. The situation is demonstrated by the figure/map of demographic instability, including the comparison within Ústecký kraj.

For the model area - Ústecký kraj, in broader conception – a low religiosity is characteristic along with, thanks to the historical development and fuel-energetic preference until 1989, higher representation of national minorities. Regarding the amount of believers, the most varying from the average number of believers are inhabitants of Vejprtsko and Třebeňicko: each fifth inhabitant is enlisted in a religion, which is twice more than in the least religious area of Petrovicko. On the basis of census from 2001 Vejprtsko also surpasses the analysis of nationalities, having the highest number of non-Czech (including Moravian and Silesian) ethnic. At all other areas, majority nation have of at least 90%.

If we observe facilities of flat households, we can identify quite considerable differences. The most cars own inhabitants of Třebeňicko and Libčevsko. By contrast, values of both Chomutov district areas (Vejprtsko and Klášterecko) are below average. Households' endowment with phones (both telephones and cell phones) and PC (regardless of the connection to internet) is highest in Petrovicko: the first case is 23% and the second is 14%. The second place holds Klášterecko in both evaluations. On



the contrary, people in Verneřicko have the lowest number of phones, less than every tenth household in Verneřicko, Benešovsko, Libčevsko and Vejprtsko has PC.

In the structure of inhabited houses (house as unit, regardless of the number of flats), family houses are prevailing in all areas: more than 90% in Třebenicko and Libčevsko, approximately only 3/4 belong to areas with minimal amount (Vejprtsko a Klášterecko). Virtually correspondent areas, and values, are applied to another sign – number of houses in private property.

If descend a degree lower, i.e. to the differentiation evaluation via flats among the areas, the basic layout remains the same. While in Třebenicko and Libčevsko, where only 4th – 5th flat is not in family house, it is the very 5th flat in Klášterecko. Percentage of inhabitants living in flats out of all inhabitants is close to 100% in all areas, except of Vejprtsko. Significant differences can be found at the amount of rental flats, out of the overall number of flats inhabited permanently. Třebenicko shows exceptionally low value (7.2 %), the opposite is then represented by Vejprtsko (58.7 %). The difference in average flat tract exceeds 10 m²: smallest flats are in Klášterecko, while the largest are in Třebenicko. As for Klášterecko, the flat quality is highest there: flats of III and IV category make only a tiny amount, while elsewhere – in Verneřicko and Libčevsko – this amount makes approximately 10%.

Flats age according to the time of construction, divided into five periods, shows development phases (or prosperity) of given area. Most of the oldest houses (built before and including 1919) are recorded in Benešovsko and Libčevsko (about one third out of the overall number), significantly low number of these old flats has Klášterecko (only 5.8 %). The highest amount of flats from interwar period is situated Petrovicko, which applies not only to the comparison between areas, but also to the comparison of particular periods. The most of the flats in all other

observed areas were finished between 1946 and 1980: more than half of all existing flats in Klášterecko, followed by Vejprtsko and Třebenicko. The next decade took only a little effect in Klášterecko (almost 1/3 of the habitat), on the other hand, there almost were no buildings constructed in Petrovicko and Vejprtsko. The last inter-census period is generally the weakest. There has been positive development in Petrovicko and Třebenicko, Klášterecko is the last one. Inhabited flats, whose amount differs in the overall flats number, are (may be) used for recreation. Relative most of them, with the amount of 86.2%, is used in this way in Verneřicko (the area of České středohoří). Lower values are then attained in Klášterecko and Petrovicko (approximately 10% and 20%, respectively).

Regarding successful regional and local development, it appears appropriate to consider business activities, allocated in actual area. Their structure will give us a primary view of “distribution of power”, e.g. in sector division. Primary sector organizations hold supremacy in Libčevsko (one third of the overall number), however, they are significantly represented in Verneřicko and Vejprtsko. Secondary sector amount is more balanced – nevertheless, it ranges from one third in Benešovsko and Třebenicko and one sixth in Petrovicko. There the Tertiary is above average, contrasting with underdeveloped one – measured by the number of subject – in Libčevsko.

The number of businessmen per 1000 inhabitants is usually showed as a sign of adaptability, creativity and successfulness of a locality or region. So what is the status of the observed areas? Based on concrete values, three groups can be outlined. The first one is Petrovicko with the number of 157 businessmen and further Třebenicko and Benešovsko with slightly lower values. The middle group is formed by “average” Verneřicko, Libčevsko and Klášterecko. Finally, unsatisfactory situation can be observed in Vejprtsko and Bílinsko.

Indicator	Benešovsko n = 11	Verneřicko n = 11	Petrovicko n = 11	Třebenicko n = 11	Bílinsko n = 11	Libčevsko n = 11	Klášterecko n = 11	Vejprtsko n = 11	Average NMA n = 11	Čai Region n = 11
Area [km ²]	44	55	51	46	16	1	11	75	49	52.35
Pop. Inhab. (10 ⁴)	4.1	1.7	1.1	1.8	15.9	1.1	16.8	4.1	6.4	8.3
Pop. Inhab. density (per km ²)	100	65	50	105	315	25	575	65	130	254
Share of women (%)	90.2	98.5	99.2	95.3	91.1	90.3	90.6	95	90.3	95
Share of native (%)	43	38	36	45	51	37	39	37	43	45
Population 0 – 14 years (%)	16.5	19.5	20	17.4	17.3	19	18.9	17.2	18.1	16.9
Population 65+ years (%)	16.5	11.6	13.8	15.3	15	15	13.4	11.7	15.1	16.7
Temporarily native population (%)	41.3	50.9	53.1	40.3	45.9	50.7	41.3	45.6	47.8	45
Working outside of region (%)	5	34	45	65	46	65	44	30	45	48
Working in agriculture (%)	2	10	5	9	1	11	1	5	3	4
Working in industry (%)	46	49	20	25	15	20	11	32	39	29
Persons per firm	2.4	2.1	2	2.1	2.3	1.9	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.4
Uninhabited houses (%)	10	15	14	21	7	29	3	20	15.5	10.2

Table 2 Characteristics of model areas
Source: Czech Statistical Office (ČSÚ)



Map 1 Location of model areas

Source: Anděl, Balej eds. 2005

Benešovsko / BE, Bílinsko / BÍ, Klášterecko / KL, Libčevecko / LI, Petrovicko / PE, Třebenicko / TR, Vejprtsko / VY, Verneřicko / VE (for SWOT Analysis)

Population stability and satisfaction with living in the place of residence

Concerning northwest Bohemia (or area reduced to Ústecký kraj) or at least the basin region, it is said that local population is not too connected to the land. Via hard characteristics, proving that there is intense migration and negative migration balance, it can be said that there is low regional identity. However, Czech Statistic Office data shows that the situation has improved, recently, and the population stability is comparable to that of other parts of the Czech Republic.

How are our model areas, then? To the question “Have you ever moved in you life?” most respondents replied positively, almost 60% in the national inquiry and by more than 4% more for the area from Cheb to Semily (districts Karlovarský, Ústecký and Liberecký, further also KV-UL-LB). Out of 8 model areas, the half fell within these values (Bílinsko, Klášterecko, Libčevecko and Verneřicko). The best situation, i.e. the most stable population, was noted in Benešovsko (only 55% of respondents changed the place of residence¹), the least stable is, on the contrary, the population of Petrovicko (77 %).

Inclination or readiness to moving (eviction) might be subject to (dis)satisfaction with living in the place of residence (migration movement push-factor). Therefore we asked whether and to what extent are the inhabitants (represented by respondents) satisfied in overall with living in their place of residence. In the answering scale (definitely yes, rather yes, rather not, definitely not), we deliberately omitted middle value and calculated the weighted average, subsequently.

Perception of Living Conditions and Comparisons

Current Conditions of Living

It can be expected that the development after 1989 influenced daily life of all inhabitants. Nevertheless, the individual evaluation arises from actual circumstances of complex conditions (e.g. place of residence, inhabitants' or respondents readiness, outer conditions, etc.). A certain role has also respondent's “position” in society (population), expressed e.g. by age, education, political orientation.

In each of the observed territorial units (with a few exceptions) the respondents expressed a satisfaction with their living conditions: the figures are 2.17 in the CR and 2.25 in KV-UL-LB (on a 4-grade scale). It is interesting that none of the surveyed areas in the Ústí Region showed the same trend. Generally speaking, respondents in peripheral territories (both in the borderland and the inland) were more satisfied than those living in the industrial, ecologically strained microregion, where the evaluation was as bad as 2.78. Despite the obvious differences between particular surveyed areas, it was possible to indicate several common characteristics in the SWOT analyses (strengths or weaknesses):

Table 3 SWOT Analysis

Source: own proposal

A. Geographic location

STRENGTHS

Frontier with Germany (BE, PE)
Good location by the Labe river and industrial companies (TR)
Good location - north-Bohemian developmental axis (BÍ)
Good location by the Ohře river and frontier with Germany (KL)
Good location for international cooperation (Bärenstein) (VY)

OPPORTUNITIES

Borderland location, cross-border cooperation (PE)

WEAKNESSES

Location outside of main national and international transportation routes (VE)
Disadvantageous location in relation to industrial centre at the foot of Krušné hory mts. (VY)

THREATS



B. Landscape and environment

STRENGTHS

Well-preserved face of a landscape (BE)

Strong representation of stable ecotopes (PLA); Good preconditions for development of ecologic and non-productive forms of agriculture (VE)

Unique natural potential; Capacity of unbuilt-up areas for another use (forests, meadows) (PE)

High aesthetic potential of a landscape, position inside or by the PLA České středohoří (TŘ, LI)

Valuable natural environ in peripheral localities of the town (Kyselka, Bořeň, Žižkovo údolí) (BÍ)

High potential of a landscape, location in the frontier between Krušné hory and Doupovské hory mountains (KL)

Establishment of PLA Střední Poohří (KL)

OPPORTUNITIES

Development of ecologically oriented agriculture and family farms producing traditional products (BE) Change of activities in a landscape focusing on preservation of its face (VE, LI)

Completing the works on lake Maxim and Radovesice dump (after the coal mining in the Bílina) for recreational use (BÍ)

WEAKNESSES

Unsolved ecological issues (sewage, gas, waste, BE)

Disturbed water regime in a landscape, neglected water courses and surfaces (TŘ)

Coal power plant Ledvice and another sources of air pollution, open cast mining of brown coal near to the town (BÍ)

Air pollution caused by industrial companies and surrounding power plants (KL)

THREATS

Damage of natural resources by tourism (BE)

Highway D8 may bring ecological problems (natural park Východní Krušné hory mts.) (PE)

Degradation or devastation of a landscape by mining industry (TŘ)

C. Population, human resources, quantity/quality, employment

STRENGTHS

Good age structure, potential offer of free and cheap labour force (VE)

Stable population, rise of population by natural increase (PE)

private farmers, high number of young people (up to 15 years), low presence of socio-pathologic phenomena, low criminality (TŘ, LI)

Human potential - high share of population up to 14 years (VY)

WEAKNESSES

The decrease of population, low level of education, insufficient number of working opportunities (BE)

Insufficient number of working opportunities, high population with work outside of region (PE)

High share of economically inactive inhabitants (TŘ)

High unemployment, population structure (high share of socially weak population) (BÍ)

Fluctuation of population in 90s, low patriotism (KL)

OPPORTUNITIES

Increase in employment in relation to tourism improvement (BE)

Better educational structure of population and professional preparation (VE)

Improvement of patriotism and renaissance of local traditions (VY)

D. Economics

STRENGTHS

Tradition of industry (BE, VE)

Good conditions for livestock production (VE)

Using the wind energy (PE)

Good conditions for agriculture, diverse biota, raw materials: Czech garnet, limestone (TŘ)

Strong economic basement (esp. industrial) (BÍ)

Industrial tradition - porcelain factory, industrial zone Verne (KL)

OPPORTUNITIES

Development and support of activities of enterprisers, opportunities for foreign investment (BE)

Exploitation of local renewable resources, wind power plants, special fast-growing plants, wood waste (VE)

Agricultural farms with historical tradition (TŘ, LI)

Suitable areas for new enterprisers - area of barracks, Brewery, montage facility (BÍ)

High unemployment and displeasure to work, bad educational structure (VY)

THREATS

Continuous emigration of qualified labour force (BE)

Increasing unemployment (PE)

Continuous negative perception of the town and region from „outside“, the issue of Romany population and low level of education, criminality of youth (BÍ)

Lack of interest in public issues (KL)

Increasing Romany community and lack of solution of the consecutive problems (VY)

WEAKNESSES

Lack of working opportunities for absolvent - low will to stay in the region (VE)

Higher expenses for enterprising in the mountainous area, decaying industrial objects, low number of enterprisers (VY)

THREATS

Loss of competitiveness of formerly successful companies (BE)

Decrease of purchase power and life standards (VE, LI)

Decrease of agricultural production (PE)

Decay of orchards and gardens (TŘ, LI)

Decay of enterprisers and loss of working opportunities (VY)



E. Public and technical facilities, services, tertiary branches

STRENGTHS

Present primary and secondary education (KL)
Cultural and social facilities (VE)

WEAKNESSES

Insufficient level of technical infrastructure (gas, sewage) a tertiary branch (VE)
Insufficient opportunities for shopping and services for local inhabitants, Insufficient offer of products in shops, high prices (PE)
Lack of hospital (KL)
Lacking facilities with quality accommodation and boarding services (VY)
Lack of water in the area (LI)

OPPORTUNITIES

Restructuring of social services (VY)

THREATS

Lack of financial sources for reproduction and development of communal infrastructure (BE, BÍ, KL)

F. Transportation, accessibility, infrastructure

STRENGTHS

Good transportation accessibility of county town (BE)
Highway D 8, better accessibility of the region (PE, TŘ)

WEAKNESSES

Low quality of transportation infrastructure (VE)
Bad transportation services (public transport) in peripheral parts (PE)
Negative influence and high intensity of transit transport (I/13), absence of alternative for the bypass of the town (BÍ)
Bad state of transportation infrastructure, high intensity of cargo transport (KL)

OPPORTUNITIES

Construction of new transport route I/13, bettering the transportation connection (BE)
Construction of bypass of the town (KL)

THREATS

G. Tourism

STRENGTHS

High potential of cultural values (BE)
Attractive natural environ (PLA) for tourism (VE, PE)
Dense network of local roads with low traffic, potential for cycling (TŘ, LI)
Spa, source of mineral water (BÍ)
High number of destinations for tourists, rich history, conservation of historical town (KL)

WEAKNESSES

Insufficient level of facilities and supporting services (BE)
Insufficient public relation regarding the tourism in the region (VE)
Insufficient public relation and information about tourist routes and destinations; low quality of infrastructure for tourism, small accommodation capacity, low knowledge about opportunities for ecotourism etc. (TŘ)

OPPORTUNITIES

Increase of incomes from tourism (BE)
Development of tourism; exploitation of the increasing popularity of new forms of family recreation in countryside (agro tourism, „summer dwellings“, etc.) (VE)
Development of international tourism (PE)
Event „Bílina – centre of tourism and spa industry“ incl. support to traditional cultural, sporting and social events (BÍ)
Entrance into the association of spa towns of Czechia, development of tourism - „jewel of the Poohří region“ (KL)
Ski facility at Klínovec and natural potential for tourism development (VY)
Development of tourism for industrial area of north-Bohemian brown-coal basin (LI)

Low attendance by tourists, lack of accommodation and boarding facilities (VY)

THREATS

Neglecting the tourism and free-time activities as an important capacity of work opportunities (VE)

H. Settlement

STRENGTHS

Process of suburbanization, immigration of economically active inhabitants from large agglomerations to neighbourhood seats (TŘ)

WEAKNESSES

Stagnating construction of residential houses, resp. flats (BE)
Neglected cultural monuments and other historical buildings, neglected both public grounds and private objects (TŘ)

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunity to improve the settlement structures as satellites of Děčín and Česká Lípa cities (BE)

THREATS

Devastation of preserved cultural monuments and traditional architecture, lack of limits in building the „business baroque“ houses (BE)



I. Regional policy

STRENGTHS

Membership in the Euroregion Elbe/Labe (BE)

Opportunities for use of Structural funds of the European Union (PE)

Higher income of investments to the environment (Bí)

OPPORTUNITIES

Development of cooperation in the region and with partner foreign municipalities (BE)

Establishment of the microregion Integro, will of

WEAKNESSES

Low use of support from structural fund of EU (PE)

THREATS

Decrease of interest of investors (BE)

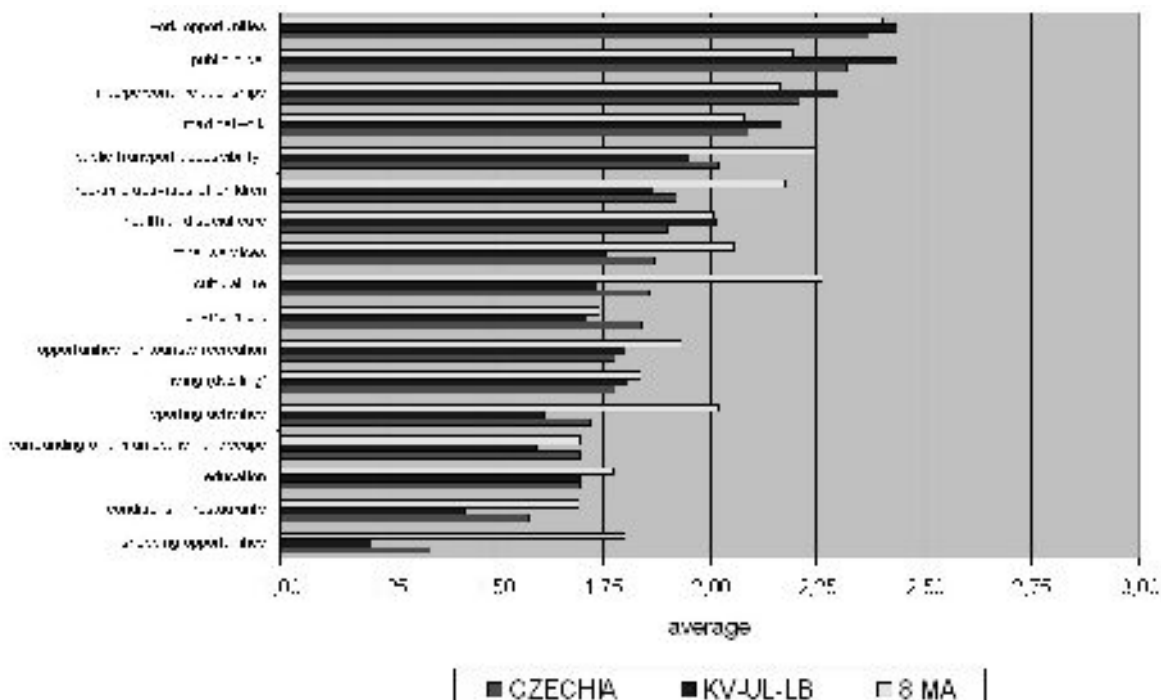
Loss of ability to reach the support from national and international sources (VE)

Fragmentation of municipalities in their will for solution of local problems (LI)

Table 3 gives a detailed overview of the respondents' evaluation of living conditions. It offers 17 different aspects of life in various spheres. The respondents living in the mountains near the border, in the areas with traditional industrial manufacture and in the areas with a developing economic base expressed the most satisfaction. On the other hand, the most criticism has been heard in the inland periphery areas that are mainly orientated on agriculture. Among the various aspects, the surroundings of the settlement and the landscape received the most approval from the respondents, being followed by housing, conditions in restaurants, education/school system and environment. Subjectively, the worst situation concerned job opportunities and cultural life.

Perception of Future Development

The subjective perception of development prospects follows tendencies of past and current advancements. While the figures at higher level units are almost identical (average value in the entire Czech Republic being 1.87 and in KV-JUL-LB 1.84 on a 3-grade scale), the surveyed areas display dramatically more variability. The region that has been successful in a later development stage, i.e. a progressively oriented area, a borderland mountainous area and an agricultural area seem to have a follower: an industrial area that is environmentally strained. On the other hand, unfavourable developments are being expected in the inland periphery as well as in the peripheral borderland zone micro-region with difficult accessibility. When evaluating the regional plans, the author considered the public's opinion of 20 specific priority intents in four different fields. Each of the priorities was marked on a school scale, i.e. 1 – 5. It is significant that the respondents give emphasis to environment, as the increase in investments into environment protection measures won in the competition of 19 other plans. Moreover, improvement in air quality (reduction in air pollutant emissions) took up the fourth place. The second most approved priority is concerned with local economy, namely the support for current enterprises and environment-friendly technologies as well as support for small and middle-sized businesses oriented towards innovations (second respectively fifth place).



Chapter 1 Assessment after the year 1989
Source: own survey



Among the other supported intentions there are also improvements in education/qualification structure (i.e. social sphere) and more environment friendly attitudes of local authorities (i.e. public administration). Surprisingly, the reduction in abortion and crime rates as socially undesired phenomena appears among the least supported priorities. There are also following other issues: the reduction in transportation/traffic in economic sphere, revitalization programs for unused land and buildings as well as for the sanitation of old environmental damage, and reduction of debts of local authorities in public administration sphere. Also the following question, chosen for this contribution, was of similar character. Approved ground plan documentation of Ústecký kraj or North Bohemian Lignite Basin appoints, among other, actual intentions to improve communication network. We wondered if local residents know about these actions and if they do, of what importance they attach to them. Thus, their task was to align 10 chosen examples of road and railroad transport and cyclotourism, which resulted in an average value.

Findings discovered prove that model areas of the GeoScape project are seen as rather insignificant from the regional point of view, or in other words, "bitter" areas lie beyond them. According to respondents, the urgent solution is necessary especially in case of the road I/27 Teplice – Litvínov – Most – (Žatec), with by-pass roads at Duchcov, Lom and connection to Triangle zone, eventually fast highway R7 (Praha) – Panenský Týnec – Chomutov (with average values of 3.87 and 4.34). Concerning model areas, there were asserted only the modification of I/13 road extension through Bílina (7th place with the value of 5.78) and cycling tracks: Labská, Most – Doksy, Ohře and Krušnohorská magistrála (8th place - 6.07).

Conclusions

The contribution presents possibilities to sociological approaches involvement in the observation and evaluation of changes in region, including co-ordination of regional and local socio-economic development activities. Questionnaire solution has already become a part of socio-economic development, thanks to which it is possible to considerably supplement and extend the findings from so-called hard data (approaches). Out of widely conceived issue, three spheres are presented in the contribution, namely population stability, current situation development evaluation in the perspective. Regarding the importance of conceptual documents, we also submitted chosen examples to respondents for consideration – development priorities and investment intentions.

The analysis presents only a part of the author's own empirical survey results. Despite this, it is possible to draw some conclusions concerning the survey areas. First of all, there is the wide variety of conditions on the territory of the Ústí Region in all aspects. The variety is represented by the survey areas having different endogenous (internal) potentials, their historic developments and geographical

positions. In those areas, one can identify both common features and unique manifestations and problems. Naturally, exogenous (external) factors, such as general conditions set nation-wide, related legislation, effects of foreign capital inflow and, last but not least, regional policies of the European Union, play a significant role. It is possible to draw the following theses:

Population stability in model areas (Ústecký kraj) is comparable to the other parts of the Czech Republic. In a positive sense, Benešovsko is exceeding, the negative deviation is highest at Petrovicko. These empiric findings confirm the results of 2001 census to significant extent. There prevails a satisfaction with life in the place of residence – it is considerable higher in Petrovicko and Třebenicko, lower in Bílinsko, on the contrary. The original hypothesis that more stable population is also more content was not proved. While it is valid in some model areas (Libčevesko, Klášterecko, Vejprtsko), it is in conflict in others: high stability vs. low satisfaction (Benešovsko, Verneřicko), or vice versa – low stability vs. high satisfaction (Petrovicko, Třebenicko).

Satisfaction with quality of life in locality of permanent address prevails. Basically, it has been confirmed that general satisfaction with conditions of living corresponds with specific satisfaction which was indicated through 17 aspects in Table 1. The respondents in the survey areas (8 areas in the Ústí Region) tend to be more critical about their living conditions than the respondents in higher level (comparative) units – both the combination of 3 regions (Karlovy Vary, Ústí, Liberec = KV-UL-LB) and the entire Czech Republic. At the regional level, there is considerable satisfaction with the exception of shopping opportunities and the school system and education. The results at the national level are closer to those at the local level, and this is particularly true considering critical perceptions of job opportunities, safety, law and order, and road networks. Similarly, there is also close association of positive perceptions of surroundings and landscapes, conditions in restaurants, housing, and the school system and education.

The results of the empirical enquiry clearly show that there is a significant correlation between the perceptions of current situation and development prospects. Quite a few survey areas belong to more successful ones, but looking at the aspects considered, one can say none of them is characterised in clear terms. Among the more successful areas there are representatives of traditional crafts areas, a representative with a significant centre situated on the edge of the Ústí Region, a representative of a borderline mountainous area drawing on cross-border activities and a representative of an agricultural area in the periphery. On the other hand, problems are only typically perceived in the mountainous area in the inland periphery. According to the sequence, they vary by two grades in two cases only – Benešovsko (2nd and 4th) and Klášterecko (3rd and 1st). During the comparison according to spheres, more model areas fall within "more successful" regions, however, none



of them is clean-cut. Thus, there appears Benešovsko, Klášterecko, Petrovicko or Třebenicko. Troubles are typical for Verneřicko with multiple representations; participation of other model areas is sporadic. Consideration of region development intentions confirmed that socio-economic development of Ústecký kraj takes place in other localities/regions then the model areas.

Acknowledgements

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Matej Jaško

2008 – 5 YEARS AFTER. CENTROPE RECONSIDERED

Background

CENTROPE, a Central European Region consisting from areas within the quadrangle formed by the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Austria has been launched in September 2003 in Austrian small municipality Kittsee. The participating territorial subjects (counties and cities) decided to prolong and advance their cross-border cooperation activities by forming newly established Central European Region (CENTROPE). Area of CENTROPE has been tied by plethora of mutual ties and divided by many barriers during the previous history. After initial Kittsee declaration ("Building an European Region"), a series of political memoranda followed. These milestones (St. Pölten 2005 Political memorandum „We grow together, Together we grow“, Vienna 2006 Political memorandum „We shape the future“, and Bratislava 2007 Memorandum „Ready for take-off“) predestined the direction of the development of this region. The years 2003-06 were predominantly dedicated to the building of sectoral networks and political structures (more in e.g. Fertner 2006, p. 76-77). Having entered into the rapidly accelerating competition of European regions, CENTROPE has to find and live its vision in order to mobilize and utilise all the extraordinary sources and potentials (more in Krajčatis et al. 2003). However, despite the significant success and achievement of this concept in the recent years, many questions still remain open and unanswered:

- What is the positioning of CENTROPE in the process of competition of European regions?
- Is CENTROPE a naturally shaped European region or is it a mere political/scientific concept?
- Is CENTROPE rather strong vision binding the common interests of the all influential regional stakeholders and key players?
- Is CENTROPE a common brand for various activities?
- What is the perception of CENTROPE among the public and is there any „feeling of togetherness“ when referring to this concept?

This paper strives to find plausible answers.

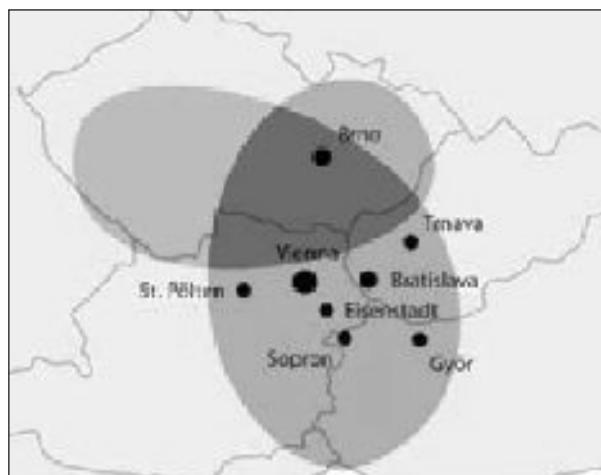


Image 1: Centrope region

Strategic vision

Strategic vision of any territorial subject should be approached as a conceptual driver force, set of imageries based on the wished future shape. It is the developmental direction taking into account the goals, aims, values and underlying assumptions of all the relevant actors. A proper vision with significant emotional depth enables to mobilize stakeholders, brings authenticity of the message and secures commitment. These are more important pre-conditions than the exact time-schedules or milestones. Vision should be elaborated, communicated and lived in every day practice by its creators and target audience.

CENTROPE Vision 2015 is a result of more than 2 years of work of experts from various fields. It has been elaborated in 2005-06, involving experience and knowledge of more than 200 experts. It should be perceived as interim result of professional debate, an open document reflecting imagery going behind every day political frameworks and current burdens. This platform should generate further suggestions, alternatives, impulses and reflection to previous and current development of CENTROPE.

"The Vision CENTROPE 2015 is to function as a kind of snapshot to inform about findings and possible perspectives proposed so far; it wants to provide suggestions, trigger reflections, generate new impulses and offer a framework for the creative and productive evolution of CENTROPE, in keeping with the motto We grow together - together we grow" (CENTROPE 2015 Vision, p.15).



CENTROPE Vision 2015 (outlined in 2005):

6 and half millions people will have strong ties toward the CENTROPE region and they will have clear understanding of what is linking them together and what potential lies inside this region. Citizens of CENTROPE use the same currency, move freely across the borders and last restriction of the labour market have expired. They exploit Central European Space and all its utilities. CENTROPE serves as a model region of integration of “old” and “new” EU member states. CENTROPE became a heart of one of the most rapidly developing areas in Europe and serves as a top selection for the companies operating in Central and Eastern Europe. Feeling of togetherness and cohesion has been significantly promoted by various interdisciplinary networks of knowledge, research projects and exchanges of students and researchers. Key infrastructure projects helped to strengthen the mutual accessibility of various stakeholders within the region and fostered the economic growth which retain its dynamics from the early years of the century. CENTROPE is continuously building its sustainable strategy, being depicted as a dynamic “biosphere growth region”. High quality of life becomes the characteristic trait of CENTROPE and one of the most significant location asset. CENTROPE concept is backed by strong regional identification of citizens and has been favourably accepted by large portion of inhabitants. They fully utilise newly emerged networks and contacts without having abolished their particular national specifics. Cohesive and highly profiled appearance of CENTROPE enables the Central European Region to play a significant role on the European scale. Management model of CENTROPE combines and integrates the cooperation, competition and independent acting of all the actors. Multilateral overall steering network (CENTROPE Conference) is adding the necessary strategic level of coordination and cooperation respecting all the individual needs. Smooth and genuine coordination of various interest without generating a necessity to constitute an additional political body is one of the main achievement of CENTROPE during 2005-2015.

CENTROPE Vision 2015 (reconsidered in 2008):

2008: All the requirements for the free movement of the citizens have been fulfilled. The economic growth of the CENTROPE is still going on, the region seems to be affected by global economic setbacks only in minor scale. Intensification of cooperation between “old” and “new” EU member countries continues. Research and development networking are operating and searching for new challenges. Demographic changes, processes of suburbanization and ageing of population continues in the anticipated direction. Communication and cooperation among the actors and bodies of CENTROPE goes on.

On the other hand, the feeling of common regional identity, social cohesion within the region, feeling of

togetherness is still rather weak and vague. Despite of the media coverage of all the main CENTROPE events, the public remained rather unattached and the feedback is scarce. Decision-making processes are still not fully harmonised (e.g Clark 2007, p.17). Business forces prefer to be related rather to the TWIN-City Brand than to CENTROPE. Main concern is that CENTROPE is still perceived as rather more scientific or in best case political concept and necessary business-driven attention is lacking. Initial dynamics of development is in some areas decreased and we are waiting for new impulses.

Identity and Branding

Spatial planning as a strategic management of the territory has beside the classic, countable and hard factors to take into the consideration soft factors reluctant to traditional classification. Regional identity is one of these factors. It is a holistic concept integrating landscape and architectural variables with social contents: norms, rules, beliefs and values of the community. In rather aggravating competition of cities and regions, it is not the mere factor of positive distinction, but provides an existential value toward the members of the community. Identity of region, town or area has its origin in Latin word *genius loci*. It means the original qualities of place giving an existential value (Norberg-Schulz 1994). Many other economic, social or cultural issues complete the identity of territorial subjects. The phenomena of identity is neither exclusively an spatial planning/architectural nor a cultural/social issue and must be researched and treated through a highly balanced interdisciplinary approach. The tools of its management – Place Branding and Corporate Identity – are shifting the regional identity from the casually shaped phenomena to target oriented tools of strategic regional development.

CENTROPE name and brand was a result of schoolchildren competition back in 2002 organised within the project CERNET, a cross-border cooperation educational project. More than 100 schools took a part in this proceeding and the winning proposal has been brought by the students of secondary school “KMS Josef Enslein-Platz” in Vienna. The name CENTROPE is sticking the both basic semantic characteristic of region – CENTRAL and EUROPE together (more e.g. CENTROPE – Central European Region, Platform Meeting 1, Vienna 18.2.2004). Under this name the first cross-border Interreg III A project has been launched. The name CENTROPE has been widely used in scientific, research circles as well as in media. However, the business reflection is rather weak and the knowledge among the inhabitants is not so deep as intended. One of the few exceptions is Raiffeisenlandesbank Niederoesterreich Wien referring to CENTROPE as the main area of its activities.

If we were to analyse so called Brand Personality of CENTROPE, we might include the following traits:



Well-mannered, slow and friendly

CENTROPE is a product of Central European planning culture, with all the moderate pace and sometimes slow action.

Manifold and versatile

CENTROPE is consisting from the actors and areas being located in 4 different countries. However, there is a long portion of inertia when harmonising national contexts, different language and cultural codes as well as previous historical common heritage.

Academic and sophisticated

CENTROPE is clearly a top-down process, having been born in the political regional structures and still struggling for its acceptance and attractiveness among the inhabitants and local actors.

Diffuse, vague and artificial

CENTROPE was always rather more a concept than a physical unit with clear borders and shape. The interim precision of its borders (some initial partners e.g. České Budějovice were refrained and left behind) has clearly shown that the reflection of the regional development in planning practice might be different than the initial conceptual frameworks. Insufficient maturity of the CENTROPE Brand has been widely admitted (e.g. Finance and Economics Councillor and Deputy Mayor of City of Vienna Mag. R. Brauner in interview for Business Location Austria, Annual 2008).

Vital and (over)ambitious

CENTROPE is aiming to play a „Champions League“ within the process of interregional competition. (see e.g. the statement „...the formation of Centrope is an attempt by Central Europe to stand up to the major economic regions in booming countries like India or China“ – Business Location Austria, Annual 2006, CENTROPE Vision 2015, p.31).

Brand Extension	Brand Extension	Brand Extension	Brand Extension
Brand Extension	Brand Extension	Brand Extension	Brand Extension
Brand Extension	Brand Extension	Brand Extension	Brand Extension
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Fig. 1: CENTROPE Brand Asset Valuation (methodology developed by Young and Rubicam, in Aaker 1998):

Marketing Communication

Common marketing of the region has been covered by DIANE (Direct Investment Agency Net – more in e.g. Lettner 2007). However, the marketing strategy brought by DIANE has been directed rather to the external audience. According to www.centrope.info, the main target groups are considered to be:

- Active and expanding national and international enterprises
- Multipliers (lawyers, banks, business consultants, etc.)
- Regional development agencies and authorities
- National and international decision makers (politicians, transnational organisations)
- Operators of the relevant infrastructure, e.g. managers of business and technology parks, incubators and regional innovation centres
- Foreign journalists and media

This focus clearly shows the one-sided preference of international audience with predominant economic background. Main marketing activities of CENTROPE have been externalised within the project Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Centrope and with close cooperation with project BAER (Building An European Region).

4 x 100.000 Readers, Add-In
Der Standard Special Centrope (4 x Enclosure as download in Czech, Slovak, Hungarian)
21.000 x Centrope in Internet
7 Video clips (1.000 DVDs)
3 Kino spots (starting Mid December)
8 Music groups Centrope-sound (2.000 CDs)
1.400 Youth, 6 Concerts
200 Yachtsman + Audience
3.000 Centrope-Folder
4 political events
1 website (www.centrope.info): Info-Platform

Fig. 2: Marketing communication – outcomes (according to Woeran, Vyskovsky 2008):

Image of CENTROPE

Image is an abstract mental construction representing the subject in minds of auditorium. Positive image of a region or city means its goodwill, its good reputation or positive emotion appearing when thinking about the subject. It is very hard to win and especially to keep a positive image. Such effort needs a research of external surrounding, strategic planning, but most of all it needs a perfect teamwork.

Regional image is a reflection of regional identity and an essential issue of the developmental strategy. Image making and image keeping should be an integral part of the marketing strategy of each region competing in highly



competitive environment. Positive image of city or region has significant impact on real economic variables such as unemployment and urban growth (Wood 2001, p.184).

Desirable image should be derived from strategic vision and all the undertaken measures should be in concordance with this concept. Regional image is an abstract, often diffuse and sometimes misunderstood concept. It is not something vague, superficial or suddenly appearing. Regional image is an reflection of regional identity and the efficiency of tools of its management and communication.

It is necessary to take into the consideration the following premises:

1. Image making is a long-term process – it is hardly possible to create positive image of the region within short period and by few particular steps and measures. Persistence of the regional image is even deeper than images of the commercial brands and corporations. CENTROPE as a relatively newly emerged concept which cannot lean on proven, deeply anchored connotations in the mindsets of target audience. There are few positive expectations which should be transformed into the stabile set of imageries and attitudes. This process takes and will take certain time. On the other hand, positive association related to aforementioned cities (mainly Vienna and Bratislava) might help to stabilise positive image of the whole region within longer time periods.
2. There is no monolithic image – prevailing image is an intersection of many images and beliefs (sometimes contradictory). Image of the region differs from group to group and is heavily influenced by several core factors from point of view of the particular group. Architectural forms, culture and natural landscapes might be the most distinctive image traits for the visitors of CENTROPE, high economic growth in recent years and successful transformation might stand for CENTROPE in the view of investors and Central European planning culture used in all 4 respective countries might represent this region for spatial planners. Manifoldness and variability of CENTROPE might find its echo even in the image making and image keeping. Image of CENTROPE is versatile and manifold – this might be utilised as one of the principal competitive advantages of the region.
3. Every regional image is continuously changing, though the changes are sometimes hard to detect and to directly observe. It means, that creating the positive image is not the final stage in the process of image making. In some cases, it is much more difficult to keep positive image than to create it. Initial positive and highly profiled image might be distorted, transformed, split apart or slowly burnt out. This is always the danger of concepts met by early success. Nevertheless, the systematic, long-term, conceptual and sophisticated work regarding keeping positive and stable image during years must be appreciated. CENTROPE is still in initial stages of this process and cannot be evaluated within these terms.

Building and keeping the image of the region is a very delicate process, beginning with diagnostic of current image. The survey may be realized in different ways, from the screening exploration of various groups' opinions and preferences to deep analytical research mapping out the mind maps, symbolical connotations of landmarks, shifts and development of opinions, their stability in time and their depth in perceivers minds. As far as known, there is no such effort made in recent years and deep and profound image analysis remains one of the most important challenges in terms of Brand management of CENTROPE.

The most essential channel for the transmission of regional image is the external communication – advertising, marketing, sponsoring, regional events and public relations. All these activities have been covered in recent years by DIANE agency. Austrian daily Der Standard issued 4 times yearly Special CENTROPE enclosure with German, Slovak, Cech and Hungarian language mutations. Web-site platform www.centrope.info has been widely recognized as an unique and valuable source of information of CENTROPE. There have been elaborated 7 video-clips and 3 movie-spots. Several festivals, music performances and yacht races have been externalised for the support of CENTROPE Brand. However, image making and image keeping activities of CENTROPE focus more on international audience with predominant economic background.

Conclusions.

It is still too early to assess the overall success of the CENTROPE concept. However, the region had its 5th anniversary and it is a vital opportunity to reflect its recent and previous development with regard to proclaimed vision statement. Recent disputes and researches indicate that CENTROPE concept has been successful rather more in the outer dimension (marketing and promotion, image making and image keeping) than inside the region (identification with region, feeling of togetherness, common policy and effective cooperation). CENTROPE Brand is still too young, academic and is not lived in every day practice. Marketing and communication is oriented toward foreign business structure and is neglecting other target groups (especially domestic SMEs and the public in general). Corporate Identity of CENTROPE is reduced to visual style, other elements (communication patterns, behaviour, values) are lacking. There are lacking instruments and methods to measure Brand Positioning and Brand Image. Accelerating processes of competition of European regions will require more precise Brand Management of CENTROPE and the internal focus of communication activities towards the inhabitants and domestic stakeholders is highly advisable. CENTROPE is a concept with immense potential and perspectives but must be lived in everyday practice. "Brand Building through acting" instead "Brand Building by Statements" might be the desirable approach.



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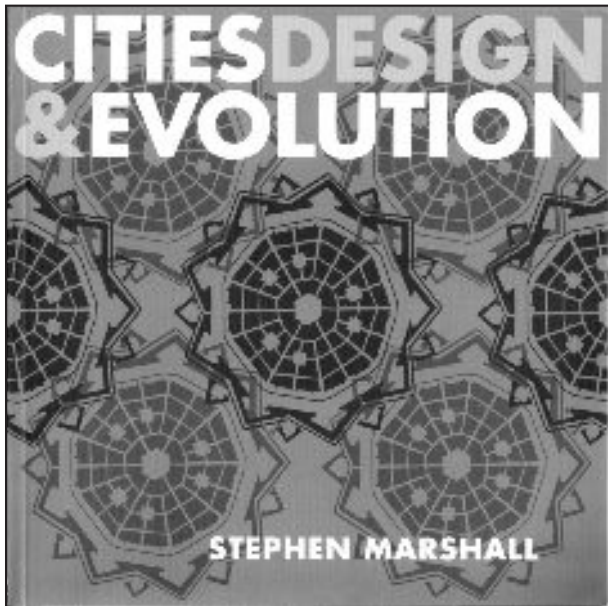


Education and Culture UČ





**CITIES, DESIGN AND EVOLUTION, NEW YORK
AND LONDON: ROUTLEDGE**



**Marshall, Stephen(2009)
Cities, Design and Evolution,
New York and London: Routledge
342 pages**

ISBN 0-415-42329-5

The book **Cities, Design and Evolution** published by Routledge addresses the theories around the “organic” urbanism investigating the processes of evolution in the cities. The author of this book - Stephen Marshall takes up the challenge of the question, why the planning interventions are sometimes less successful in creating the colourful attractive functioning urban environments in comparison with urban environment in traditional cities. He interprets different theories and theoretical approaches in planning and natural sciences, starting with Patric Geddes, Le Corbusier and ending with Richard Dawkins and Charles Darwin.

The book is divided into 10 chapters. The Introduction opens the questions on planning dilemmas in the 21st century and explains basic positions of the book.

The Chapter 2 “Cities, planning and modernism” unpacks the meaning of planning and Modernism and investigates manifestations of Modernist city planning stressing the four key elements in city planning: planning intention, city design, urban ordering and planning instruments.

The Chapter 3 “Articulating urban order” brings the picture about how urban order follows the logics of interrelations between different dimensions and how the urban elements relate to each other in urban structure following the set of rules, which can be referred to as “urban syntax”.

The Chapter 4 “The social logic of urban order” explores the social dimension of physical urban order, in particular how social considerations give rise to different units of the human built environment at different hierarchical levels starting with the interior, continuing with the architectural up to urban and higher levels of human settlement structures.

The Chapter 5 “The kind of thing a city is” explores various ways in which the cities have been conceptualized as the objects of city design stressing their complexity, synergy of subordinate parts in complex, dynamic and collective character.

The Chapter 6 “Emergence and evolution” analyses the concepts of emergence and evolution as the basis for arising certain functional orders in the absence of planning interventions. The chapter shows, how the ordered patterns can arise from the interactions between simple local rules and possibility of creating order by a rule-set, programme or recipe, rather than a blueprint or preconceived plan. The author displays how urban evolution can be regarded as the long-term adaptive transformation through successive iterative changes similar to biological systems.



The Chapter 7 “Emergent urban order” shows broad variety of urban patterns arising spontaneously in the absence of overall design or planning following the simple rules, relating to individual independent locational decisions giving rise to the characteristic complex order of street patterns and concentric urban forms.

In the Chapter 8 “Cities in evolution” author interprets the evolution as a useful paradigm for interpreting the complex, dynamic, collective entity – city even those developed with the planning interventions. This chapter shows, that the evolution seems to be a natural way, how to explain different urban development processes like adaptation, competition, selection, transformation and planning.

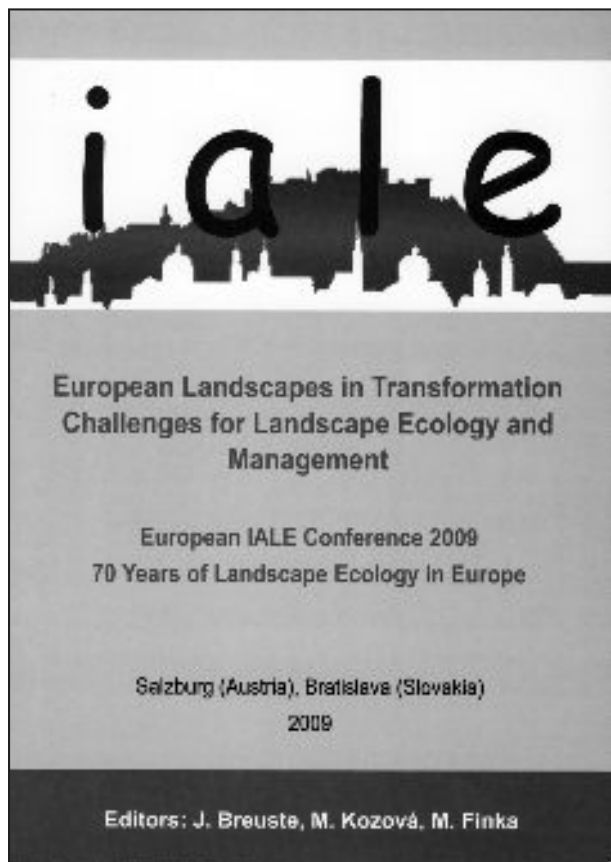
The Chapter 9 “Planning, design and evolution” focuses on new understanding of the position of evolutionary paradigm among current planning theories at the crossroads as any approach learning from evolutionary thinking could embrace both innovation and tradition, and also more or less planning. The author underlines, that the evolutionary paradigm can be a useful way for understanding urban change and hence informing planning and design, which is in contrast to a “creationist “ or “developmental” paradigm.

The book contributes to better understanding of cities, their design and their evolution and of the role of planning interventions into the evolutionary development processes in urban environment. The book significantly applies modern evolutionary thinking to substantial and planning theories, stimulating the debate on nature of cities and planning development.

Maroš Finka



EUROPEAN LANDSCAPES IN TRANSFORMATION: CHALLENGES FOR LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY



**European Landscapes in Transformation:
Challenges for Landscape Ecology**
edited by J. Breuste, M. Kozová, M. Finka
Publishing House of the Slovak University of
Technology in Bratislava
608 pages

ISBN 978-80-227-3100-3

The book „European Landscapes in Transformation: Challenges for Landscape Ecology“, edited by J. Breuste, M. Kozová, M. Finka (608 pages) and published by the Publishing House of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava in 2009 has been written with the aim to understand the transformation process in the past and the present, along with its current drivers in order to be able to steer the further development of landscapes in Europe.

European landscapes are a result of long-term transformation serving economic needs and reflecting natural conditions. Part of them are now seen as ideal landscapes, representing nature in harmony with its urban environments. They also represent historical continuity and are often part of cultural heritage. On the other hand these landscapes have often contributed to functioning in modern economic processes. They are under constant transformation pressure to adapt to the societal needs. The linking of socio-economic and ecological aspects in European landscapes is essential for a sustainable landscape development. The planning process should moderate these needs together with ecological services of these landscapes which is a complicated task.

To assist the fulfilment of this task there is the European Landscape Convention that emphasizes the cultural, ecological and social importance of landscapes and approves a sustainable development in harmony between economic, ecological and social requirements.

The book „European Landscapes in Transformation: Challenges for Landscape Ecology“ also wants to contribute to this task by focusing on the main subjects and current issues in landscape transformation. The book is based on the papers presented during the European Conference of the International Association of Landscape Ecology 2009 that discussed the challenges of the 20th century and emerging fields of landscape ecology in the 21st century. The papers are presented in the following chapters:

1. Transformation of Rural-Urban Cultural Landscapes in Europe.
2. Landscape Multi-Functionality in the Eye of the Stakeholders.
3. Landscape Functions in a Changing Environment.
4. Planning-Based Approaches for Supporting Transition towards Sustainable Landscape Development.
5. Integrating Landscape History in Landscape Planning.
6. The Third and Fourth Dimension of Landscapes.
7. Ecosystem Services at the Landscape Scale.

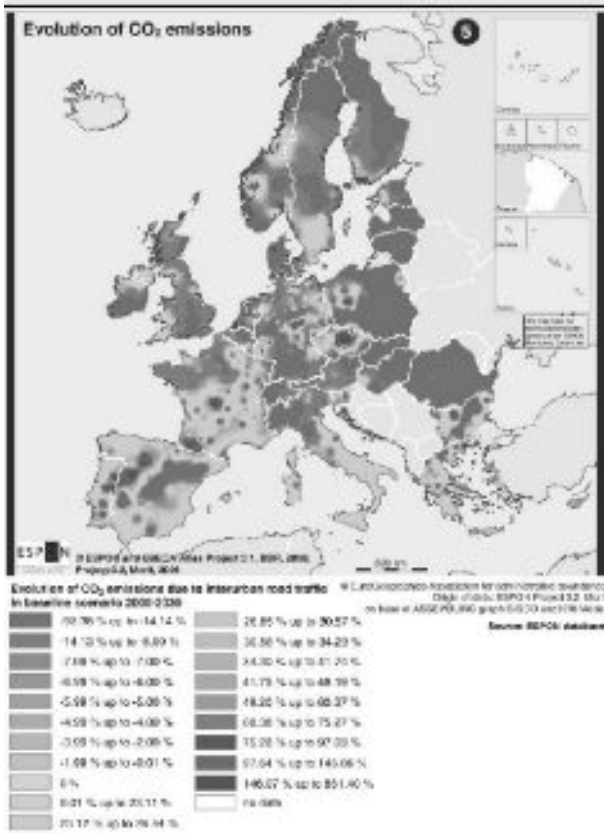
With the broad attitude towards the different fields of research, design, planning, practice and decision-making in landscape ecology the book is a monograph of an integrated, multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary landscape ecology worth to read it.

Dagmar Petříková



Juraj Berdis

ESPON PUBLICATIONS, ESPON ATLAS



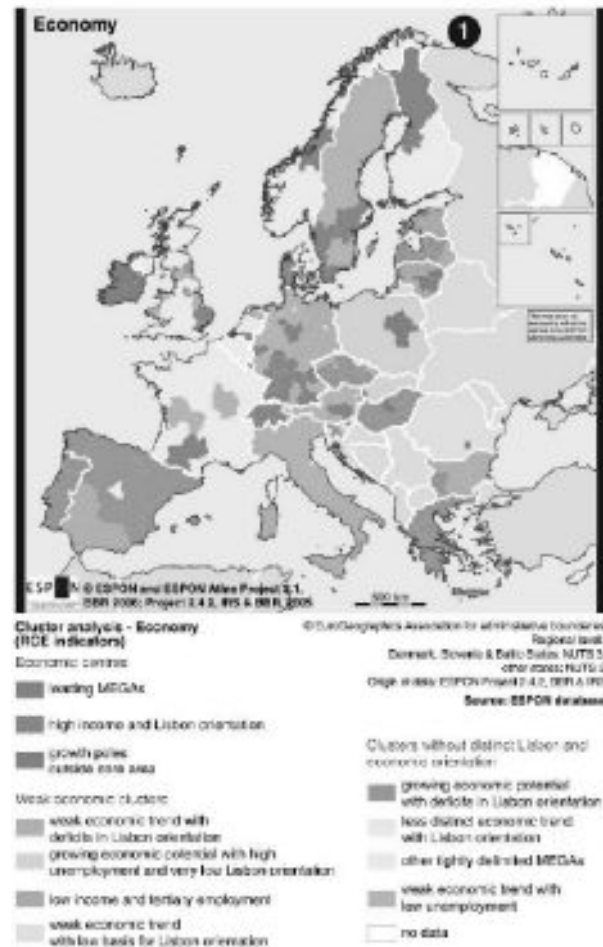
ESPON, the European Spatial Planning Observation Network, has been set up to support policy development and to build European scientific community in the field of European territorial development. ESPON Territorial observations aim at giving policymakers and practitioners brief summary information on important new evidence related to various dynamics of the European territory, its regions and cities. By publishing several issues of territorial Observations per year, ESPON will promote its role as provider of comparable facts and evidence on territorial dynamics in support of EU Cohesion Policy. Global challenges such as the current financial crisis and climate change, underline the need to take a wider geographical perspective on issues particularly when looking for development and capital in a region or city. 1

The main goal of ESPON is to increase the knowledge about territorial structures, trends, perspectives and policy impacts in an enlarging European union. All of the applied research undertaken within the ESPON 2006 and ESPON 2013 Programme addresses the territory of 29 European countries including 27 Member States of the EU and Norway and Switzerland.

The ESPON Atlas is one publication in a series of ESPON documents. Together they provide new insights into European spatial development, trends and possible policy interventions. In particular the Atlas has been designed to accompany the final ESPON synthesis by deepening the thematic and project related information provided there and giving more space to visual presentation of project results. It is based on information provided by the ESPON projects.2

The ESPON Atlas is divided in to nine chapters separately mapping for instance: metropolitan regions, urban areas and the diversity of rural areas, European accessibility context, cultural and natural assets and much more in a very clear and understandable overview.

Pictures: ESPON Atlas





Matej Jaššo

SPA.CE-NET



Spa.ce_net is recently established Central European network of the research institutes in the field of spatial development and planning. Initial meeting was held in December 2006 in Dresden at IOeR and was a result of various cooperation and collaboration activities of the educational and research institutions focusing on spatial planning and regional development in Central Europe. The network accented unique values related to spatial development and focused on an integrated (horizontally and vertically) socio-cultural-economic-ecological courses of action that overlap the focus on traditional land use planning.

The joint research projects and scientific events were used for the strengthening of the close interlinkages among the research institutions in the EU and in the frame of the network of central and eastern European spatial research institutes in accordance with the prepared strategy and the

detailed programme of the network for the years 2006–09. Further meetings and conferences were held in September 2007 in Budapest and in September 2008 in Brno.

Next SPA.CE-net working meeting will take place September 14-15, 2009 in Bratislava, at the Spectra, Centre of Excellence. Main thematic focus of this meeting is "Regional Diversity and Territorial Cohesion - from eliminating disparities towards using the diversity".

SPA.CE-net network will develop its transnational, transregional and crossborder dimensions by forming partnerships between spatial research and planning institutes. Sharing of common vision, the development of trust and an interest in cooperation, the motivation and mobilisation of relevant people and the encouragement of research activities are the primary long-term targets.

www.spa-ce.net



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**will be devoted to the results of European IALE
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