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**Towards Sustainable Border Regions**  
**Analyses, Strategies and Approaches**  
**for Transboundary Spatial Development**

**Abstracts**

**Markus Leibenath**

## **Sustainability revisited: Implications for border research**

It is exactly 20 years now that the Brundtland report has in 1986 brought the concept of sustainability on the global political agenda. Its main principles, though simple, still pose challenges for politics and research. This is reflected by an ever increasing number of sustainability strategies and studies at different levels. Sustainability has become a key principle of all EU policies and actions. The EU's recent Draft Declaration on Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development includes some demanding objectives which are also relevant for border regions, for instances the integration of economic, social and environmental considerations or the involvement of citizens.

The second part of the paper highlights the changing nature of national borders in Europe due to influences like globalisation, Europeanization and economic transition, and the different types of borders and border regions that can be distinguished. There are various ways of systematizing border regions like the typology of Martinez which is based on the degree of transboundary cooperation and integration or other classifications which rely rather on structural parameters.

The final section of the paper gives a brief overview on some main strands of research on transboundary development and planning. Key terms in this regard are identities, institutions, governance, visions and strategies. Further research needs are identified by relating the state of art of border research to the sustainability principles mentioned above. The paper concludes with an outlook on the objectives and the structure of the workshop.

**Manfred Miosga**

## **The shift in the German and European spatial development policy and the effect on border regions (working title)**

Spatial development politics in Germany are currently facing a paradigm shift. The principle of equivalent living conditions in all regions and the idea of an even development of spatial structures are more and more explicitly replaced by the concept of competitiveness and the stimulation of growth centers. The spatial development policy is commissioned to contribute to the growth target of the German government and the European Union, which is defined in the Lisbon Strategy. A limited number of metropolitan growth areas are supposed to be the engines of the economic development and to contribute hereby to the growth target.

Confronted with an ongoing budget crisis of public authorities, low growth rates and a declining population in peripheral and economically underdeveloped regions the spatial development policy focuses more and more on the steering of the shrinkage in those areas. Comprehensive funding programmes to promote investments in peripheral regions belong more or less to the past.

The new strategic orientation of the German spatial planning policy is closely linked to the European discussion about spatial development concepts and the adjustment of the regional aid programmes. It is most probable, that the stimulation of metropolitan growth areas could be part of the new generation of Structural Funds programmes of the EU. A redistribution of funds will take place.

The impact of these developments on the border regions must be differentiated: border regions in the core area of the main European growth areas will most probably benefit from economic reconcentration processes and the promotion of metropolitan areas as they are strongly linked with these. For peripheral and economically underdeveloped border regions of the EU – especially at the outer borders – the precarious situation could deteriorate. This will highly depend on how the possibilities for regional aid from the future INTERREG programme will be shaped and how the funds will be distributed.

The paper intends to show the linkages among the discussions on a new strategic orientation of the spatial development policy and the regional aid programmes and to draw critical conclusions from the point of view of border regions.

**Marek Degórski**

## **Environmental dimension of transboundary spatial development - driving forces in the ecological regionalism**

In the 1990s the obligation to assess transboundary environmental impact became a part of the international law. The Convention on environmental impact assessment (EIA) is one of the key documents in environmental transboundary context regulation. EIA is defined as the analysis and evaluation of possible environmental impacts of proposed decisions or activities likely to cause significant effects on the environment. The assessment will help to arrive at informed decisions, set development conditions and serve as a basis for follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of decisions.

Transboundary regions are playing the specific role in spatial planning and management, what is connected with spatial conflicts and very often different law systems. One of the most outstanding examples of such controversies that occur in environment is incompatibility of spatial distribution of areas that are natural resources with running of state boundaries. Additionally there are many regulations concerning the protection of transboundary area e.g.: Basel, or Helsinki Conventions.

In opinion of some researchers the areas across the state borders creates a transboundary regionalism, which can be defined as a spatially integrated form of political, cultural and social co-operation. It has a sense of cohesiveness, involves interdependence and common interests across national boundaries.

One of the most important factors in the processes of transboundary regionalism is the impact of environmental resources on local and regional development of areas located on the both sides of the state borders. The aim of the presentation is to assess the potential of natural resources as driving forces of the regional development of Polish-German borderland.

**Birgit Nolte**

## **Sustainable tourism development in biosphere reserves of Central and Eastern Europe**

Peripheral areas have beside a structural weakness the advantage of an often undisturbed landscape. Cross-border region provide a special situation: due to their peripheral location they could preserve the natural richness. In many cases this potential is preserved as protected areas under national law. Biosphere reserve are a special type of large protected areas. They were internationally dedicated in the framework of the 'man and biosphere' programme by the UNESCO. They are supposed to promote solutions to reconcile the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use while preserving cultural values. Since the Seville strategy from 1995 they aim at being model region for sustainable development.

Cross-border cooperation are crucial to reach this goal. If a natural area continues over borders, international cooperation in nature protection became primarily important. Plants and animals do not accept borders. This kind of cooperation, which is a typical task for large protected area in a border region, is able to provide additional opportunities for cooperation in fields beyond nature conservation and with aspects of regional development. If you have cross border cooperation, the opportunities to request financing in the European Union will be much more promising.

This paper focuses on two cross-border region. The first case study is situated at the former iron curtain between West and East Europe (biosphere reserves Bavarian Forest, Germany and Sumava, Czech Republic) and the second case study examines a region between two former socialist countries (biosphere reserves Slovensky Kras, Slovakia and Aggtelek, Hungary). The main focus lies on the general conditions which lead to a successful cooperation beyond borders with sustainable development goals. The following issues will be analysed closer: the role of the accession to the EU, the importance of the transformation processes and their influence to sustainable regional development, and the motivation of local inhabitants as well as the role of the administrations.

These questions will be examined mainly in the context of the tourism development, due to its great importance for regional development in the regions.

**Michał Dolata**

## **The role of special economic zones in the socio-economic development of border regions**

The aim of the paper is to analyse the effect of economically privileged areas in the form of special economic zones (SEZs) on the socio-economic situation of border regions. Since 1995 (in an advanced stage of the systemic transformation), 14 such zones have been established in Poland, of which nine in the close proximity of a state border. In the light of the economic and spatial policies of states, special economic zones should be set up in two kinds of areas: (1) those of special comparative advantage (e.g. in border areas) which have a chance of accelerated development and maximisation of economic effects, and (2) those especially depressed by an economic crisis, where the main goal in setting up a special economic zone is to reduce unemployment and restructure old industrial districts.

The paper consists of two parts. The first offers an analysis of the socio-economic effects brought by the special economic zones established in Poland, and of their unique role in the development of border regions. Special attention is paid to the role of SEZ enterprises in the economy as a whole and their effect on the labour market. Part two is an empirical study of the Kostrzyn-Słubice Special Economic Zone in the years 1997-2005 and its impact on the socio-economic development of the German-Polish borderland embracing three districts of eastern Brandenburg (Germany) and the Gorzów subregion (Poland), i.e. an area coincident with the Euroregion Pro Europa Viadrina.

**Tomasz Komornicki**

## **Transborder transport infrastructure - the case of present and future Schengen area boundary**

The term transborder transport is used in reference to transport infrastructure crossing political boundaries and in description of cross-border passenger and goods traffic. Along the strongly formalised and poorly permeable borders the barrier effect is firstly expressed through low intensity of cross-border interactions (low demand for international transport). Liberalisation of border regime, associated with economic opening of neighbouring countries makes this demand grow. The transborder infrastructure turns out insufficient then. The transborder routes become the bottlenecks of the supra-national transport system (like after 1990 on borders between the European Union and Central European countries). The phenomenon of border congestion appears, having (especially in commodity transport) a direct economic aspect. The solution consists in further regime liberalisation (until most border functions are abolished – like within the Schengen area)

The measure of availability of the direct transport infrastructure is constituted by the length of the border (in km's) per one hard surface road and per one railroad line crossing the border. In case of Poland one hard surface road crosses the state border every 23 kms on the average. The densest network of transboundary roads occurs along the boundary with the Kaliningrad District of the Russian Federation. The situation along the border with the Czech Republic is also good (one road per 14 kms of the boundary), and is not so bad along the border with Germany (24 kms). The poorest border accessibility by road is observed along the border with Slovakia and Ukraine (one road per 47 kms). The degree of use of the infrastructure described above is measured by the percentages of roads on which there exist border crossings. In contradistinction to the level of equipment of the boundaries with transport infrastructure the degree of use of this infrastructure increased in the period 1989-2002 considerably. For all the land boundaries of Poland the percentage of transboundary hard surface roads passing through the generally accessible border crossings increased from 24% to 52% in the period 1990-2001 alone. The decidedly highest level of use of the transboundary road network is observed on the Polish-German border. Border crossings are found there on 90% of the existing relevant hard surface roads (only 68% yet in 1993).

The enlargement of the Schengen area means that new significance has to be attached to the eastern border of the EU. This has a direct influence on the development of transport and on the general economic situation of the future "European border regions". In the paper the transport development in Central European border regions will be described, with special attention to the cases of Polish-German (new internal boundary with relatively good transborder transport infrastructure) and Polish-Ukrainian border (new external one with relatively low level of infrastructural permeability).

**Ewa Korcelli-Olejniczak**

## **Functional complementarity as basis for intermetropolitan collaboration and networking (case study: Berlin and Warsaw)**

Transboundary co-operation often takes place at an inter-urban level. This form of spatial relations is typically interpreted as an opposite to inter-urban competition, though the two in fact tend to be intertwined. In the contemporary regional studies, including policy-oriented analyses, inter-urban collaboration tends to be identified with city networking. In this respect, the countries situated around the Baltic Sea constitute a model region, characterized by a both intense and intricate web of urban networks.

This paper focuses on potential collaboration between two major cities – members of the Baltic Sea Region urban network, i.e. Berlin and Warsaw, in the sphere of cultural activities. The function of culture, in its highly specialized form of a long-range interaction, belongs to soft metropolitan functions. At the same time cultural activities constitute one of the planes of the gate-way city function – a field of action for each of the two cities in question, situated across the borders of Eastern and Western Europe. Recent studies of Berlin's and Warsaw's metropolitan activities (Krätke 2004; Kujath, 2005; Grochowki 2005), including comparative research carried out by the author (Korcelli-Olejniczak 2004) point to culture as one of the most significant components of development potential of the two cities, next to knowledge-related and political advantages. At the same time some studies show that non-economic factors such as culture are considered predominant in their role as supporters of metropolitan development.

The present case study is based on a contents analysis of five planning, as well as strategic policy documents. While seeking potential complementarity and networking, the analysis points to two projects carried out in Warsaw and Berlin, which aim at maintaining the cultural heritage and, at the same time, enhancing the attractiveness and competitiveness of the cities as centers of international tourism and other gate-way city functions. The reciprocity of culture and other development functions, also those of non-economic character is proved by many examples (i.e. Paris or New York), where cultural activities are a strong asset, qualifying the overall potential of the cities. In contrast to economic activities which are threatened by negative, destructive competition, cultural functions can even expand as a consequence of inter-metropolitan complementarity and collaboration, for example being the basis of city-tourism. Inter-urban co-operation networking in the sphere of culture is also one of the activities, which is intensely supported by policies of the European Union. since its foundation This finds reflection in crucial documents (ESDP, 1999) and programs (Ex. Kaleidoskop 1991).

**Matej Jaššo**

## **Cross-border Cooperation Challenges: Vienna-Bratislava Region**

Transformation and restructuring of European cities and regions has been confirmed as one of the key topics of social and economic discourse of the recent years. Integration on the European level is an important process which yields to a common market. Accordingly, the pressure of competition does not only increase for private enterprises but even for cities and regions as a whole. Struggling for competitive advantages of the particular city or region has been getting more and more significant in their developmental strategies and policies. Regions and cities are successively forced to compete for foreign investments in economic, cultural or touristic fields in which all the relevant actors are highly mobile and sensitive to the standards of location factors on the urban-regional level.

Vienna-Bratislava region is situated in one of the principal cross-points in Europe and is an integral part of numerous sectoral networks. It is a place, where both the problems as well as the opportunities after the removal of iron curtain had been appeared in utmost visible way, representing two interlinked trends and their beneficial effects on the development and growth in unified Europe: the lowering of the importance of national barriers with the forthcoming integration of national, regional and local economies, and on the other hand the emergence of new development poles in the form of functional regions that cut across administrative borders.

Having already adopted a wide scope of strategic efforts (CENTROPE, CCC), the Vienna-Bratislava region is still facing future strategic challenges. If the region succeeds in managing the balanced collaborative and at the same time competitive complex interaction between both parts, it might become a model of successful cross-border areas and a growth engine in Central and Eastern Europe and to enjoy its heydays in near future.

**Robert Knippschild**

## **How to manage transboundary planning processes? Theoretical deduction of factors of success for cooperation across the new EU internal border**

After enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004 cities and regions in borderlands along the new EU internal border are getting increasingly involved in cross-border cooperation projects. Transboundary activities concerned urban and regional development and planning are subsidised not only by different EU funds but also by national support programmes.

Unfortunately initiated cooperation is often not continuous but limited to the period of project duration. The expected outcome is unclear due to lacking experiences with transboundary cooperation. A lack of common purpose and achievable aims make it hard to justify these kinds of activities and to estimate if processes are successful or not. Furthermore transboundary communication processes are lengthy and costly while the achieved results in particular in early phases of cooperation and along "hard" cultural and language borders are limited to "soft results" like getting to know each other, trust-building and agenda-setting. Since transboundary projects meet this kind of criticism the responsible policy-makers and stakeholders tend to overstrain the cooperation processes by formulating too ambitious aims and expected results. All these can cause frustration among the participating actors, failure in achieving these aims and finally comprise the cooperation.

The question raised in this paper is therefore: What are the factors of success when designing and managing transboundary planning processes in dependence to the spatial dimension of cooperation? The author relates to at least three strands of theories in order to deduct these factors: cooperation theories, approaches of planning theories, network and communication theories. These different approaches will be discussed with regard to their content for explaining transboundary planning processes across the new EU internal border.

The results are eight preliminary factors of success that can be deducted from different theoretical approaches:

1. Size of the cooperation space and experience in cooperation among the cooperating cities and regions
2. Seed for cooperation in cities and regions
3. Transformation process, different administrative structures and the relation between politics and administration in cooperating cities and regions
4. Languages, reservations and cultural differences
5. Transaction costs, financial resources and subsidies
6. Aims, expectations and issues of the project
7. Participated actors, their context, competences and resources
8. Designing, managing and moderating the communication process

These factors have to be regarded as hypotheses that have to be confronted with empirical reality. This step will follow later within the authors' dissertation on the basis of three case studies on transboundary planning processes in the German-Polish-Czech borderland within different spatial dimension (border town dimension, local dimension, regional dimension).

**Stanisław Ciok  
Andrzej Raczyk**

## **An evaluation of the implementation of Polish-German cross-border cooperation within Interreg IIIA**

Polish-German cross-border cooperation has the richest history of any at the national scale and it is, therefore, often used as the case study for developing models which are adapted to the realities of other near-border regions in Poland.

The accession of Poland to the EU and the inclusion of near-border regions into the Community Initiative Interreg IIIA has resulted in fundamental changes, not only in terms of scale, but also the institutionalised form, of cooperation.

In this paper, analysis was carried out on the influence these changes had on the scale and character of cooperation. The paper describes the major characteristics of the forms of initiative and the institutional structure of the beneficiaries of the projects. Particular attention was focused on the links between the spatial localisation of projects and level of economic development, quality of social capital and social exclusion phenomena of specific areas.

From the analyses one can determine the influence these cross-border initiatives have on the increasing cohesion between near-border regions and on improving their socio-economic situation.

**Jochem de Vries**

## **Cross-border co-operation in Rhine Scheldt Delta: many initiatives but lacking coherence**

The Rhine Scheldt Delta consists of the area bordered by the North-Sea coast and a semi-circle formed by the Dutch cities of Rotterdam, Breda and the Belgian cities of Antwerp, Ghent and Bruges. The area is the home of two of the major ports of Europe Rotterdam and Antwerp and as a result, cross-border competition is fierce. As a Delta with several estuaries, it is of exceptional ecological value. Furthermore, seen from a transnational perspective they area is a relatively open between the two large conurbations: the Belgian 'Flemish Diamond' and the Dutch Randstad or Rim City'. Pressures for development in the Rhine Scheldt Delta are high as a consequence of this geographical factors.

This paper examines the extent of cross-border governmental integration in this cross-border region. The analysis uses the perspective of institutional capacity building (Healey, 1997) and focuses on those initiatives which have a clear spatial development orientation. After having provided an overview of initiatives, one case – the preparation of a Spatial Development Perspective for Rhine Scheldt Delta - is analyzed in more depth.

The paper concludes that a number of initiatives are implemented in relative isolation. Remarkable is the quite strict separation of EU (Interreg) driven co-operation and the strictly bottom-up (local and regional governments) initiatives. Suggestions are made for better integration of different projects and the creation of cross-border institutional capacity.

Markus Leibenath

## **EU-Enlargement as Catalyst of Cross-border Governance: Theoretical Considerations and Empirical Evidence from the Czech-German Border**

Cross-border governance can be defined as a mode of decision-making which involves public and private actors from different political-administrative levels and different countries. It refers to the procedural dimension of sustainability. The particularities of cross-border governance as compared to governance in general are constituted by the institutional asymmetries and relatively high transaction costs.

The process of EU-Enlargement and Europeanization has diminished the importance of national borders because it implies the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital all across the EU. What is more important with regard to cross-border governance is the adoption of the entire *acquis communautaire* by the new Member states which provides a common legal framework and in some cases even creates legal requirements for cross-border coordination.

The guiding question is how the EU-enlargement of 1 May 2004 has influenced cross-border governance patterns along the Czech-German border. To answer this question, some theoretic findings about institutions and regimes of transboundary governance are summarized and a brief characterization of the study area is given.

The overall case study includes four empirical lenses on:

- Cross-border coordination of Natura 2000,
- transboundary consultations in the frame of strategic environmental assessments (SEA) for regional planning documents,
- the regional network project ENLARGE-NET, and
- the bilateral intergovernmental Czech-German working group for spatial development.

Eventually the paper draws conclusions on the influences of EU-enlargement on cross-border governance patterns in the Czech-German border area and identifies further research needs.