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**International Workshop to be held in Warsaw, 24-25 April 2006**

## **Towards Sustainable Border Regions**

### **Analyses, Strategies and Approaches for Transboundary Spatial Development**

Many spatial features and structures stretch across the boundaries of nation states. This applies for instances to large scale ecosystems or to transport infrastructure and settlement patterns. There are also increasing transboundary interdependencies at economic and social levels.

However, borders and border regions in Central and Eastern Europe are changing their spatial character due to processes of globalisation, transition and European integration. Especially the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 has brought about a lot of changes for border regions. Many regions along the new inner borders of the European Union are economically weak and seek for alternative development perspectives. Globalisation and the growing interregional competition can accumulate economic disparities between central and peripheral regions although the definitions of centre and periphery are in flux due to the improvement of communication and transport systems.

There are also new challenges for transboundary cooperation in environmental policy. The implementation of the environmental *acquis communautaire* requires high levels of cross-border coordination, e.g. the integrated management of coastal zones and river basins or cross-border coordination of environmental assessments. Furthermore there are new transboundary environmental problems which arise from climate change or from the re-introduction of species in need of large habitats.

All this has spurred a growing number of cross-border governance and spatial development schemes. The European Union and particularly the Community initiative INTERREG III plays a facilitating role in many of these efforts. As a consequence, new arenas of transboundary cooperation with new types of institutions, actors and ways to interact can be observed in Central and Eastern Europe. Most of them represent in one way or another forms of transboundary governance because they involve a broad range of actors from European or supra-national, national as well as subnational or regional levels. However, it has to be questioned how sustainable these approaches are as such and to what extent they are contributing to a sustainable development of border regions.

The intention of the international workshop is to bring together young researchers from different European countries – in particular from Poland, Germany and other Central and Eastern European countries – who are involved in border research. The subject refers to various disciplines, e.g. to geographers, spatial planners, landscape planners, town planners, economists, sociologists and political scientists. It is envisaged to invite a group of 15 speakers which would allow in-depth discussions. You are invited to address either one or both of the following issues and questions in your papers:

**1. Spatial analysis of border regions (transport, conservation, housing, business, services / infrastructure, etc.; effects of EU enlargement)**

How can problems and perspectives of sustainable development of border regions be analysed, given the heterogeneity of spatial information from different sides of a border? What are typical issues or problems of sustainable development of border regions? Are there syndromes, i.e. typical constellations of problems? If so: Which are these and how can they be classified? What are the main driving forces behind opportunities and threats of border regions?

**2. Analysis of transboundary planning processes; institutional and strategic approaches at different levels**

What are the success factors of sustainable development of border regions? Which strategies, methods and instruments are suited under conditions of institutional asymmetries? What forms of transboundary governance and transboundary institutions for sustainable development can be observed? How are (a) transboundary spatial issues and challenges, (b) institutional settings and external framework conditions and (c) specific forms of transboundary cooperation and governance related to each other?

Both case studies and more abstract theoretic reflections are welcome. It is expected that even the more empirical, case-related papers are rooted in theories of transboundary spatial development and embed the individual case into a broader context. Furthermore each paper shall be related to the issue of sustainable development of border regions and focus on the interrelations between social, economic and environmental concerns.

Each participant of the workshop is invited to submit a paper with a length of approximately 5,000 words (maximum 8,000 words). It is planned to publish all papers as a book volume, e.g. in the [Central and Eastern European Development Studies \(CEEDES\)](#) series, edited by Bernhard Müller and Wilfried Erbguth for Springer Verlag, or in a similar series. Abstracts of 300 words have to be submitted to the organizers by **24 February 2006**.

The workshop is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research in the frame of the German-Polish Year 2005/2006 in Poland. The event is organised in cooperation with the Network of Spatial Research Institutes in Central and Eastern Europe ([SPINET](#)).

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With kind regards,

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