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**The Europeanization of Cross-border Cooperation in the
European Union**

Diploma Thesis

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I hereby declare that this diploma thesis is my own work and effort. Where other sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged and noted in the list of literature.

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Introduction

Regions play an increasingly important role in the European Union (EU) as the successful development of their resources and their competences helps to meet the targets set in the Europe 2020 Strategy.¹ Cross-border cooperation (CBC) aims at traditionally challenged territories and contributes to implement the Europe 2020 Strategy by forming networks across borders, exchange of best practices and experiences and joint research and innovation projects. The cross-border regions (CBR) play an important role from the Single Market perspective, as the regions became territories full of potential and one of the important areas of the European integration”.² The emerging macro-regional strategies within the EU are a new form of large scale CBC that has potential to restructure the whole concept of the regional development of Europe.

This thesis primary deals with the Europeanization of the phenomenon of CBC in the EU. An important time for CBCs were the 1990s where a large and significant increase of CBC initiatives all over the EU were observable (both within and external to EU borders). Up to mid 2012, the number of CBR in Europe has grown to 185 and the number of large-scale CBC has grown to 16.³ Therefore, it is interesting but also necessary to analyze the extent to which the EU affected this strong surge in the number of CBCs in Europe. Some authors, investigating CBC in Europe, claim that the introduction of the INTERREG program⁴ caused the recent boom in the number of CBC

¹ Europe 2020 is the EU's growth strategy for the current decade. The aim is that EU becomes a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. These priorities should help the EU and the Member States to deliver high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. The European Union has set five ambitious objectives - on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy - to be reached by 2020. *Europe 2020*. European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm (14.11. 2011)

² BOUWENS, Sophie: *Over de streep: Grensarbeid vanuit Zuid-Limburg naar Duitsland, 1958-2001*. Hilversum, Verloren, 2008, p. 16.

³ *List of the Regions*. AEBR http://www.aebr.eu/en/members/list_of_regions.php (14.03. 2012)

⁴ The pilot program INTERREG was launched in the programming period 1989–1993. The further details are subject to later parts of the thesis.

initiatives.⁵ It is also observable that the involvement of EU authorities in CBC is increasing. An indication pointing out the large importance the European Commission (Commission) attaches to CBCs is the transformation of the INTERREG into the full Structural Fund Objective 3 (the European Territorial Co-operation) in 2007.

In this thesis the Europeanization concept⁶ is applied on the study of CBC and found to be able to provide a suitable theoretical framework. The theoretical framework can be extended by a concept called Multi-level governance (MLG), which, when doing research on Europeanization of Regional policy, can provide some added value and insights. I found it therefore important to include that latter concept in my thesis as well. Please note, that it should only complement the main theoretical framework of the thesis and not substitute it.

The thesis contributes through its empirical findings to the verification of the concept of Europeanization and explains the effects EU policies have on the development of CBCs in the EU. In the academic literature on dynamics and processes in connection with the EU, increasing attention is given to the concept of Europeanization of the nation states policy areas. It is also interesting to see that the academic attention given to CBC is steadily increasing, although a comprehensive analysis of the phenomena in form of a monograph has not been produced yet. Moreover, although there has been academic research carried out on the Europeanization of the Regional policy, no publication exclusively dealing with the Europeanization of CBC is known to me. I think that this area deserves more attention as I see CBC as a successful model passing European added values to the regional development processes and, therefore, as being a key stone for the European Regional policy. I believe that the study on processes and strategies that affect and encourage CBC is important as the

⁵ Markus Perkmann, Arthur Benz, Burkard Eberlein, Fiona Wishalde, Douglas Yuill, Carlos Mendez.

⁶ I use the term concept for describing the nature of Europeanization although up to now there is no consensus on the essence of Europeanization within the academic community. First chapter of the thesis is dedicated to theorizing on Europeanization.

mechanisms and good practices can not only be used in other policy areas but at other places in the world as well.⁷ Moreover, CBC in Europe is an area which went through significant changes in the last twenty years. As it, in addition, exists for a long period of time, it is possible to carry out a quality case study. This was one of the reasons, why I chose this topic for my thesis.

I will in this thesis investigate the origins of CBC, the characteristics of CBRs, the influence of the EU in forming CBC initiatives and the role and activities of the CBR within the public governance. I explain the different contexts in which CBR are being formed, their different dimensions and causal foundations.

The study of the Europeanization of CBCs requires the involvement of various disciplines. Besides political science an acquaintance with international law and international relations is needed.

The methodology is directly determined by the nature of the thesis itself. The thesis is a case study covering CBC in the EU. I apply descriptive and analytical methods and synthesis. For accomplishing the aim of the work, an assessment of the hypothesis and its verification, I use an empirical-analytical approach.

Although CBC initiatives of the local and regional administrative units can be dated back to the 1950s, its importance increased only after in 1990 after the EU Regional policy program INTERREG was introduced to support it. Accordingly, the time period my research covers is mainly from 1990 to 2010 with some sporadic references to the 1950s to which some of the CBC projects date back to. In order to put the topic into context, there are also several remarks about the 1960s and 1970s. In those years various governmental commissions were established in order to deal with issues to which access to the

⁷ See for example: *Cross-border cooperation in Latin America Contribution to the regional integration process*. AEBR, http://www.aebr.eu/files/publications/Final_Report_CBC_LA_EN_full_version.pdf (14.03.2012)

local authorities was not granted, such as spatial planning and transportation policy.⁸ I refer to the 1990s for an important reason as it indicates the point at which the number of CBC initiatives in Europe started to increase. The year 2011 is important in itself for the official EU Member States' due to the endorsement of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.⁹ This embodies the latest large CBC and coordination initiative, namely the one of a macro-region. The ratification of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region also gives us a significant milestone to look back to and to see that the small scale CBC initiatives launched twenty years ago within the INTERREG actually started the process of 'cross-borderization'¹⁰ in Europe. This was setting the foundations to large scale CBCs which would not only include the regions but also the nation states.

Aims and research questions

Many reasons are suggested as to why CBC is created. There are several forms of CBC with a wide variety of formations. Because of that, a broader framework should be adopted, which helps to analyze and understand them. The main aim of my thesis is to analyze the scope to what as well as how the EU with its policies influenced CBC in Europe. I will review the motives that lead to the creation of the CBC initiatives and explain the role of regions and CBR in Europe in the context of MLG. The influence of the EU's policies on CBCs is shown with the analysis of the motives that, on the one hand, lead to the establishment of the CBC programmes and, on the other hand,

⁸ AYKAÇ, Aygen: *Transborder regionalization: an analysis of transborder cooperation structures in Western Europe within the context of European Integration and decentralization towards regional and local governments*. Sindelfingen, Libertas-Europäisches Institut 1994. Cited in PERKMANN, Markus: *The rise of the Euroregion. A bird's eye perspective on European cross-border co-operation*. University Lancaster 2002, p. 3. <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/sociology/papers/perkmann-rise-of-euroregion.pdf> (10.11. 2011)

⁹ *Council conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region*. The Council of the European Union, 13 April 2011. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/121511.pdf (14.11. 2011)

¹⁰ PERKMANN, Markus: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 10, 2003, no. 2, p. 168.

contributed to the administrative and institutional changes which occurred in terms of EU Regional policy implementations. The thesis is not going to evaluate individual CBC programmes or to deal with questions, such as whether or not certain projects responded well to the challenges they were established for.

In order to reach the above mentioned goals the following research questions are posed and answered.

How does Europeanization affect CBC in Europe?

What caused the increasing number of CBC initiatives in the 1990s?

What instruments were used by the EU to ensure enhanced CBC?

What changes in the administration and the institutional settings occurred as a result of the implementation of the EU's CBC policy?

Europeanization of CBCs in Europe led to an enormous increase in the amount of new cross-border initiatives. Europeanization of this area also led to institutional changes. In creating CBRs, the European Commission gains a legitimate partner in implementing Regional policies in border areas and consequently limits thereby the powers of the national authorities. The extent to which the dominance of central government's power is affected differs from one state to another. Because of the limited scope of this thesis, the conditions in the individual countries are not going to be discussed. As the CBRs happened to play gradually an increasing role as local EU Regional policy implementation agents, they become a part of the MLG structure of EU policy making and therefore contribute to the process of decentralization.

I will argue in this thesis that Europeanization of the Regional policy led, amongst others, to the recent boom on CBCs. It can

therefore be stated that the impact of Europeanization on the CBC is very high and significant.

Thesis structure

To begin with I focus on the concept of Europeanization. I do this, first, from a general perspective and later applied on the European Regional policy. Subsequently, I turn my attention to the evolution of CBCs. I will extend the previously mentioned points by presenting various forms of CBCs. As the final step, I will deal with the macro-regional strategies in general and introduce the Strategies for the Baltic Sea Region and the Danube Region in particular.

The thesis is divided into four main chapters and several subchapters. A brief introduction of the content of the main chapters is given in the subsequent paragraphs.

The first chapter presents the theoretical framework of the thesis on which subsequent chapters' analyses are based on. In this chapter the introduction of the study on Europeanization is going to be discussed as well as various definitions of Europeanization are being offered. The conditionality and social learning approaches are going to be discussed as well as top down and bottom up approaches are presented. I am aware of the fact that CBC cannot be taken out of its context. Therefore, a whole subchapter is dedicated to the brief introduction of the relation of Europeanization with European Regional policy.

Also the concept of MLG will be introduced. As stated by Ian Bache in his book chapter on Cohesion Policy: "In research on Europeanization and cohesion policy, the concept of multi-level governance remains prominent."¹¹ The system of MLG in the EU is generally considered to be a result of the Europeanization of the public

¹¹ BACHE, Ian: *Cohesion Policy*. In GRAZIANO, Paolo – VINK, Marteen: *Europeanization, New Research Agendas*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2007, p. 241.

policy.¹² Nevertheless, this introduction cannot be considered to be a full analysis of the concept of MLG. The concept of MLG is not the subject of this thesis and is only used to complement the picture on Europeanization of the EU Regional policy. Therefore, I will provide a brief introduction to MLG in the framework of one subchapter only. I would like to point out that the emphasis is going to be put on the institutional setting of the implementation of EU Regional policy as well as on the changes in the domestic arena.

The second chapter is dedicated to the description of the development process of CBC in Europe. I introduce and provide some insights into the nature and motives of CBC. An important aspect of this introduction describes how they change and differ through time. I decided to distinguish between four periods of CBC based on analyzing the growth of individual CBC initiatives, the expansion of the territorial scope of CBCs and the development of the instruments of institutional support for the CBCs.¹³ I draw on Durà-Guimerà and Oliveras González identification of the three historical periods of the evolution of CBC in Europe since 1950. I, however, broaden their third period of evolution and identify a fourth period that corresponds to the time of emerging macro-regional cooperation. The third and fourth periods partly overlap because although macro-regional strategies are considered to be a form of CBC, it is still necessary to distinguish between the traditional CBC embodied currently by European Territorial Cooperation and the macro-regional strategies. It is not possible to separate in time the macro-regional strategies and the European Territorial Cooperation as from 2009 on are happening simultaneously.

The first period covers the beginnings of CBC from 1950 to 1979. CBCs started with partnerships being established most prominently

¹² PARASKEVOPOULOS, Christos – LEONARDI, Robert: *Introduction: Adaptation Pressures and Social Learning in European Regional Policy – Cohesion (Greece, Ireland and Portugal) vs. CEE (Hungary, Poland) Countries*. *Regional and Federal Studies*, 14, 2004, no. 3, p. 316.

¹³ DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, Xavier - OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, Antoni: *Recent dynamics in European cross-border cooperation: towards a new period?* *Regional Studies Association Annual International Conference 2010*. p. 3.

between German and French cities, which went through good will based cross border projects. Good will based cross border projects were mainly located around Germany and in Scandinavia. The first period of the evolution of CBCs culminates in the eve of the introduction of the first instrument of legal support for the CBC, the Madrid Outline Convention. The second period covers the decade between the 1980 until 1990. This interval is characterized by growing supranational interest in CBC and the forming of institutional support for the CBCs. The third period started in 1990 and continues from then onwards. It is characterized by a rapid expansion of CBC initiatives and a steadily increasing institutional and financial support from the EU. In this period CBCs are gradually moving into a more and more prominent position in the EU Regional policy. The last and fourth period takes place from 2009 and onwards. It covers the emergence of the macro-regional strategies. In the framework of the macro-regional strategies a CBC of large scale takes place and the actors involved are multileveled. A deeper and more thorough description of macro-regional strategies is going to be included in the fourth chapter.

The third chapter presents definitions on the CBR and CBC and, furthermore, introduces the various forms of CBCs. In regards to definitions of concepts, I adopted Markus Perkmann's three dimensional conceptual pattern for its clear and compact character.¹⁴ The third chapter also presents information on the legal status of CBCs. This is an important aspect as the regions involved in such an initiative become de facto actors of international relations.

The fourth chapter introduces the newly emerged macro-regional strategies. It presents the aims, which underlie the creation of a strategy targeted at macro-region, the characteristics of the strategy and the expectations for bringing added value and better territorial cohesion to the regions. I also present each of the current EU strategies of the macro-regions, firstly, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and,

¹⁴ PERKMANN, M.: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*, p. 159.

secondly, the EU Strategy for the Danube Region. I conclude with prospects on the future macro regions in Europe. In the concluding chapter the aims of the thesis and also the research questions will be reevaluated.

Literature Review

The literature used can be divided into two groups. The first group covers the literature concerning Europeanization and the effects of Europeanization on EU Regional policy and MLG. The second group of literature is formed by publications and articles with mostly practical information about the CBC and macro-regional strategies. The sections of the literature used in this thesis that are written in Spanish or Dutch I have translated into English.

The concept of Europeanization which is the theoretical basis of this thesis is introduced and explained with the help of some of the core books and complemented by several academic papers. Because the concept of Europeanization has become a very attractive topic to academic research, the amount of literature and academic papers has accordingly grown large. The publications and academic papers differ in many aspects, ranging from basic conceptualizations to different empirical applications. I decided to use the publication edited by Claudio Radaelli and Kevin Featherstone titled *The Politics of Europeanization*¹⁵, as the core source of information for the theoretical part of the thesis. It is a publication of extensive size aiming to explain the 'power of Europe'. The authors provide a theoretical perspective on Europeanization as well as empirical applications on public policies, institutions, governments and the administration. The publication *Europeanization, New Research Agendas*¹⁶ edited by authors Paolo Graziano and Marteen Vink was another valuable source of information. In comparison with *The Politics of Europeanization*, this book focuses

¹⁵ RADAELLI, Claudio - FEATHERSTONE, Kevin: *The Politics of Europeanization*. Oxford, Oxford University Press 2003.

¹⁶ GRAZIANO, Paolo – VINK, Marteen: *Europeanization, New Research Agendas*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2007.

on sharing valuable insights into the Europeanization process of different policies. Author Ian Bache, a specialist in Europeanization of regional policies, territorial policies, and MLG contributed to this book with his chapter on Cohesion Policy. He shows the interrelation of Europeanization of regional policies and MLG.

Another article on Europeanization and regional policies, *The Europeanization of regional policies: patterns of multilevel governance*¹⁷, written by Arthur Benz and Burkard Eberlein, I found the crucial for this thesis. As it offers a comprehensive analysis on the way how Europeanization affects regional governance. Moreover, it also clarifies the nature and degree of adaptation pressures which are observable on particular member states. In the book *Europeanization and National Politics* written by Robert Ladrech the author presents how the EU affects a variety of policies of the EU member states. The sections on the dimensions of the domestic change and the chapter on Centre-Regional Relations were valuable for my thesis as they clearly explain the changing nature of territorial relations in Western Europe from the beginning together with the connection of the European integration.

Claudio M. Radaelli and Theofanis Exadaktylos the authors of the book chapter *New Directions in Europeanization Research*¹⁸, is the latest work introducing a ways how to approach the research on Europeanization. I value their contribution highly because they present a comprehensive analysis of the current situation in this research field. They also outline new applications of Europeanization as an auxiliary tool to integrate major theories connected with EU integration.

In researching CBC, Markus Perkmann is an important figure to mention, who has a long lasting interest in the CBC and regional innovation and competitiveness. Most of the authors focus on

¹⁷ BENZ, Arthur – EBERLAIN, Burkard: *The Europeanization of regional policies: patterns of multilevel governance*. Journal of European Public Policy, 6, 1999, no. 2.

¹⁸ EXADAKTYLOS, Theofanis – RADAELLI, Claudio: *New Directions in Europeanization Research*. In: EGAN, Michelle - NUGENT, Neil - PATERSON, William: *Research Agendas in EU Studies*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2010.

description of individual initiatives of CBC. Perkmann is working on comprehensive analysis of the CBC phenomena. In his article *Cross-border regions in Europe*¹⁹, he gives a solid overview of the evolution and analysis of the main types of CBC in Europe. His article includes the three dimensional conceptual pattern applied to the CBR, which will use in this thesis.

Perkmann furthermore cooperates with Catalan authors Xavier Durà-Guimerà and Antoni Oliveras González. In their article *Las regiones transfronterizas: balance de la regionalización de la cooperación transfronteriza en Europa (1958-2007)*²⁰ they together elaborated a comprehensive evolution of CBC in Europe. I draw on their research and complement it with the application of the Europeanization concept. Furthermore I add the newest development in the area of CBC and the emergence of macro-regional strategies.

The author Chiara Guglielmetti with her book chapter *Local Development in an EU Perspective: Cohesion and Regional Policies in Central and Eastern Europe*²¹ summarizes the evolution observed on the level of local development of EU Regional policies. Her contribution is generally considered to have given a descriptive analysis by pointing out the effects of Community initiatives.²² There are two important remarks, which are worth to be mentioned. Firstly, the Community initiatives substantially increase the power of the Commission in Regional policy. Secondly, the interest in the regional dimension and transregional cooperation reinforces the regional level of government fostering new approaches to local development. The author also claims that EU Regional policy is going through a renationalization process. They claim this despite the fact that regions are being highlighted as the

¹⁹ PERKMANN, M.: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation.*

²⁰ DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, Xavier- OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, Antoni - PERKMANN, Markus: *Las regiones transfronterizas: balance de la regionalización de la cooperación transfronteriza en Europa (1958-2007).* Documents d'Anàlisi Geogràfica, 56, 2010, no. 1.

²¹ BLOKKER, Paul – DALLAGO, Bruno: *Regional Diversity and Local Development in the New Member States.* Palgrave Macmillan, London 2009.

²² Community initiatives are programmes complementing the structural funds.

major partners of the Commission as they carry out the EU Regional policy efforts reducing their dependency on the national government.

In regards to research on the macro-regional strategies in Europe, I have met some difficulties finding suitable and usable sources. Only a little amount of academic texts on the topic can be found. This could be explained by the concept's relatively short time of existence. A paper written by Stefanie Dühr with title *Baltic Sea, Danube and macro-regional strategies: a model for transnational cooperation in Europe*²³ is one of the early works on the topic. The author reviews her experiences with EU macro-regional strategies for the Baltic Sea Region and the Danube Region and includes a discussion on the differences of existing forms of transitional cooperation in Europe.

The website of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) was a source of empirical data and gave up to date data. The AEBR through direct communication and by using the Structured Dialogue²⁴ tries to contribute to the development of the major EU policies, which affect border areas.²⁵ The archive of AEBR offers many studies on the CBC and firsthand experience of the regions involved in CBC. Furthermore AEBR issues a number of statements, reports and publications on CBC.

Czech research on the topic of Europeanization focuses on the empirical effects of Europeanization on politics and various policies within the Czech Republic. This is mostly done in the light of the

²³ DÜHR, Stefanie: *Baltic Sea, Danube and Macro- Regional Strategies: A Model for Transnational Cooperation in the EU?* Notre Europe, September 2011.

²⁴ The SD is an initiative launched by the EC to discuss the involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) & Local Authorities (LAs) in EC development cooperation. Conceived as a confidence and consensus-building mechanism - and not a negotiation process- the initiative aims at increasing the effectiveness of all stakeholders involved in EC development cooperation, by building on the momentum gained by international and European debates. *Structured Dialogue*. European Commission, Background document, March 2010, p.2. http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/who/partners/civil-society/documents/final_structured_dialogue_background_document_en.pdf (1.02.2012)

²⁵ *Contributions of AEBR to the debates on the European Cohesion Policy: the Future of Cross-Border Cooperation 2007-2011*. AEBR, February 2011, p. 6.

accession and the membership of the Czech Republic in the EU. Another studied area targets the Structural funds and the Regional policy of the EU after the enlargement. I have not found any academic paper or publication on the topic of transnational and CBC written by any Czech author. The publication that is the most relevant to my thesis is the *EU Cohesion after Enlargement*²⁶ edited by Dan Marek and Michael Baun. This book offers a compact comparative study of the cohesion policy covering the time before and after the enlargement of 2004 while including the 2006 Cohesion Policy reform.

During searching several databases for relevant literature I had to realize that there are many interesting publications in the field from various European authors. The aim of this introduction was to collect the most important and to my thesis the most relevant publications in order to give an overview over the field.

²⁶ MAREK, Dan – BAUN, Michael: *EU Cohesion after Enlargement*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2009.

1. The Europeanization

This chapter establishes the theoretical framework of my research. On the basis of the publications of leading authors on the topic of Europeanization, I intend to explain the concept from a theoretical perspective and present the main ways it is currently being conceptualized. The chapter presents four basic approaches to study the Europeanization of policies. First two are the top down and the bottom up approaches. The third and the fourth approach is conditionality which is discussed together with social learning.

This chapter furthermore aims to identify the extent to which this theory explains the processes of change found, generally, in contemporary European policies or, specific, in the EU Regional policy. In order to do so, the concept of MLG and its relation with Europeanization and EU Regional policy is presented.

1.1. The evolution and the current state of the research on Europeanization

Since the inception of the European integration process in the 1950s, political scientists are trying to explain the influence of the EU on the member states, candidate states, neighboring countries and the world in general. This is done in terms of public policy, representation and governance which is together broadly identified as the research area of Europeanization.

Europeanization is a well-established term in the academic community and became popularly used to encompass an array of changes in EU's institutional dynamics and its impact on national policies and international relations. "It is not a simple synonym for European regional integration or even convergence, though it does overlap with aspects of both."²⁷

The evolution of Europeanization is ongoing and complex. Although Europeanization has its origins in the integration theories, it does not form a part of them. Integration theories generally try to

²⁷ RADAELLI, C. - FEATHERSTONE, K.: c.d., p. 3.

explain the reasons why countries decided to form the European Communities or, for that matter, join the European Communities or the EU. Opposed to this, the term Europeanization does not explain the ontology of integration but explores how the activities of the EU affect the national state itself, its politics and public policies.

Early theorization on integration was examined through the theory on international relations and privileged the role of the national state. The grand theories of integration are the neo-functionalism advocated by Haas and Schmitter and the liberal institutionalism advanced by Moravcsik. They were, however, shown to have shortcomings in explaining the recent intensive integration dynamics occurring after the integration revival of the 1990s. This highlighted the need for a new theory on integration, which would better grasp its underlying dynamics. As Caporaso points out, the scholars lost interest in the categorization of the EU and rather focus on processes and outcomes of the EU policies.²⁸

The term Europeanization became widely used from the 1980s on. A survey on the term appearing in the social science literature and carried out by Radaelli showed a great diversity of applications attached to it.²⁹ Radaelli identifies four broad categories in which the term Europeanization is applied to. Two of the four categories, the process of institutional adaptation and the adaptation of policy and policy processes, are connected to the actions of the EU.

Most researchers see Europeanization as a process and still many researchers are currently engaged in explaining how the process of Europeanization affects policy, politics, and identities. Moreover they explain the consequences of EU activities, which affect the nature of governance on the national and the subnational level.

²⁸ CAPORASO, James: *The European Union and Forms of State: Westphalian, regulatory or Post-Modern*. JCMS, 34, 1996, no. 1, p 30.

²⁹ The survey is available in RADAELLI, C. - FEATHERSTONE, K.: c.d., p. 5-12.

1.2. Theorizing Europeanization

The classification of Europeanization as to whether it is a concept, theory or a framework is among the scholars actively debated and controversial. The smallest common denominator is that Europeanization is a process that was triggered by the European regional integration.³⁰ Featherstone and Radaelli dedicated three chapters of one of their publications³¹ on an attempt to theorize Europeanization. They assert that Europeanization is in a process of theory building. Moreover, they conclude that “Europeanization is not so much a theory as a distinct set of processes in need of explanation.”³² Nevertheless, Radaelli points out that Europeanization can be identified as a background concept.³³ Essentially because Europeanization lacks an explicit definition, it is used by a variety of academics and is applied in range of research fields. Radaelli suggests that the best starting point on classifying Europeanization is to identify the things that Europeanization is not. Radaelli is distinguishing Europeanization from other concepts of convergence, harmonization, integration and policy formation.

Similarly, authors such as Ladrech, Graziano and Vink identify Europeanization as a concept.³⁴ Klaus H. Goetz understands Europeanization as a heuristic concept that has a variable character and is still in the process of the definition establishment.³⁵ Simon Blumer argues that Europeanization, rather than a theory, is a

³⁰ GRAZIANO, P. – VINK, M.: c.d., p 7.

³¹ RADAELLI, C. - FEATHERSTONE, K.: c.d., 3-82.

³² Ibidem, p. 333.

³³ A background concept represents the constellation of potentially diverse meanings associated with a given concept. On the other hand systematized concept is formulated in terms of an explicit definition. ADCOCK, Robert - COLLIER, David: *Connecting Ideas With Facts: The Validity of Measurement*. American Political Science Review, 95, 2001, no. 3. Cited in RADAELLI, C. - FEATHERSTONE, K.: c.d., p. 31.

³⁴ LADRECH, Robert: *Europeanization and national politics*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2010, p. 6., GRAZIANO, P. – VINK, M.: c.d., p 3.

³⁵ DYSON, Kenneth – GOETZ, Klaus: *Germany, Europe, and the Politics of Constraint*. New York, Oxford University Press 2003, p. 14.

phenomenon which was, by a variety of theoretical approaches, tried to be explained.³⁶

Radaelli and Exadaktylos presented a new view on Europeanization. They suggest using Europeanization as an auxiliary instrument in making the field of European studies more integrated with the major theories. This helps researchers to organize concepts, such as the mainstream theories of political science, political economy and international relations.³⁷

1.2.1. Definitions

As the amount of academic research on Europeanization is growing, several definitions of Europeanization have emerged. The majority of the researchers consider Europeanization as a process of adapting to the changes connected to European integration.

Marteen Vink and Paolo Graziano chose to adopt a very broad definition. They understand Europeanization as the domestic adaptation to the European regional integration.³⁸ That is seen as a formation of closer political and economic cooperation among countries that are located in proximity of each other but are not necessarily part of the EU.

Risse, Cowles and Caporaso came up with another comparatively broad definition on Europeanization, which emphasizes the adjustment of the domestic policy to the activity of the EU. They define Europeanization “as an emergence and development happening at the European level at distinct structures of governance that is of political legal and social institutions associated with political problem solving that formalizes interactions among the actors, and policy networks specializing in the creation of authoritative European rules”³⁹

³⁶ BLUMER, Simon: *Theorizing Europeanization*. In: GRAZIANO, P. – VINK, M.: c.d., p 47.

³⁷ EXADAKTYLOS, T. – RADAELLI, C.: c.d. 208.

³⁸ GRAZIANO, P. – VINK, M.: c.d., p 7.

³⁹ CAPORASO, James – COWLES, Maria – RISSE, Thomas: *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and Domestic Change*. New York, Cornell University Press 2001, p.3.

Risse et al. set up the connection between Europeanization and MLG. They define Europeanization as the emergence and the development at the European level of distinct structures of governance.⁴⁰ Borzel's definition sees Europeanization as a process where domestic policy areas become gradually more subject to policy making on the European level.⁴¹

Robert Ladrech is another scientist who understands Europeanization as the process of adapting to changes connected with the process of European integration. He sees Europeanization as a process of reorienting the direction and the shape of politics to the degree that the political and the economic dynamics of the European Communities become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy making.⁴²

Contrary, Claudio M. Radaelli does not see Europeanization as purely adaptive process. Instead, drawing on Robert Ladrech's view of Europeanization as a process, he defines three types of process models. He describes Europeanization as the processes of construction, diffusion and institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things', shared beliefs and norms. The processes are first defined and consolidated in EU public policy making and politics and are then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies.⁴³

Radaelli's definition suits this research well as it defines Europeanization as a process of structural change, diversely affecting actors, institutions, ideas and interests. His definition also encompasses the individuals as well as changes in political behavior and structures that can be related to the process of social learning. This is in the case

⁴⁰ Ibidem.

⁴¹ BÖRZEL, Tanja: *Towards Convergence in Europe? Institutional Adaptation to Europeanization in Germany and Spain*. JCMS, 37, 1999, no. 4, p. 574.

⁴² LADRECH, Robert: *Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France*. JCMS. 32, 1994, no. 1, p. 69.

⁴³ RADAELLI, Claudio: *The Europeanization of Public Policy*. In: RADAELLI, C. - FEATHERSTONE, K.: c.d., p. 30.

of CBC very important. Nevertheless, Radaelli's definition cannot entirely be applied on CBC as CBC was not initially defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy. CBC existed before it was institutionalized on an EU level. In other words, the institutionalization of CBC only enhanced its diffusion as it incorporated it into the domestic discourse, the political structures and public policies.

1.3. Europeanization: dimensions and approaches

It is important to realize that the formation of EU policies and Europeanization are interconnected. The European policy is formed in an arena where bargaining, conflict and interaction of national, European and often the sub-national level of governance take place. According to Börzel, Blumer and Burch, Europeanization works as a two way process, namely, top-down and bottom-up⁴⁴

In the bottom-up approach, the member states upload their preferences to the EU level through their activity in the arena or when the EU policy is being reformulated. Radaelli and Pasquier favor the bottom-up approach to analyzing Europeanization. They argue that the 'bottom-uppers' have less temptation to presuppose and prejudge EU effects on the domestic political system.⁴⁵

The top-down approach encompasses the domestic reaction to the impact of EU activity at the national or local level. Analyzing Europeanization through the top-down approach, researchers compare the domestic compliance with the particular EU policy and identify the 'goodness of fit' or 'misfit' with the domestic level.⁴⁶ When a misfit was found between the domestic and the EU policy, it pressures to adjust on the domestic level. The adjustment pressures vary in form from state to state and policy to policy.

⁴⁴ BLUMER, Simon – BURCH, Martin: *The Europeanisation of Central Government: The UK and Germany in Historical Institutional Perspective*. Cited in: FEATHERSTONE, K.: c.d., p. 34.

⁴⁵ RADAELLI, Claudio – PASQUIER, Romain: *Conceptual Issues*. In GRAZIANO, P. – VINK, M.: c.d., p. 44.

⁴⁶ BLUMER, S.: c.d., p.51.

Important to mention is Goetz's argument, that Europeanization as a process is more circular than unidirectional and cyclical rather than one-off.⁴⁷ Accordingly, Europeanization is an interconnected process both accepting and creating EU policy.

When using the 'goodness of fit' or 'misfit' as the variable in identifying the changes occurring in domestic policy and institution in response to Europeanization, there are two approaches that explain the mechanisms of those changes. The first is conditionality, whereas the second is social learning. Both mechanisms gained wide academic attention, mainly in connection to research focusing on the effects of Europeanization in the accession countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Conditionality is widely seen to constitute the core of the EU's policy toward its neighboring non-member.⁴⁸ It is important to mention that CBC does not only take place within the EU but also between border regions of EU member and non-member states, i.e., outside of EU territory. The conditionality approach is based on neo-liberal arguments of rational choice. In the case of EU public policy, the effects of conditionality depend on the redistribution of power between the EU, national and subnational levels of the government and the level of decentralization and administrative restructuring of the state. The state or region in question must fulfill the requirements of the EU and obey the rules. This way, they ensure to receive specific support, help, funding, trade agreements or accession to the EU. The power of conditionality is potentially stronger in the presence of large asymmetry between the empowerment of the actors. This was the case, for example, between the EU and the countries of the former Eastern Bloc. Although, many studies claim that conditionality is highly effective, Heather Grabbe suggests looking at a detailed analysis of the practical

⁴⁷ GOETZ, Klaus: *Four worlds of Europeanisation*. Paper prepared for the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops. Turin, Italy, 22-7 March 2002 Cited in FEATHERSTONE, K.: c.d., p. 34.

⁴⁸ SCHIMMELFENNING, Frank – SEDELMEIER, Ulrich: *Candidate Countries and Conditionality*. In: GRAZIANO, P. – VINK, M.: c.d., p 89.

application of EU conditionality. She argues that the reality of Europeanization in terms of norm transfer demonstrates ambiguities, inconsistencies and contradictions.⁴⁹

Another mechanism of domestic change is social learning. Blumer argues that 'misfit' constitutes the starting condition of a socialization process.⁵⁰ The social learning approach identifies networks and informal institutions as the main actors to have impact on the domestic institutional change. Actors that are subjects to the domestic institutional change are through activities of networks and informal institutions especially in their political and organizational cultures socialized. The new norms and rules of appropriateness are adapted through processes of arguing, negotiation and persuasion.⁵¹ This, accordingly, leads to redefining their interests and identities and results in the internationalization of rules and norms.

Social learning is a long lasting process. In terms of EU public policy, social learning requires a continuous interaction between the players in order to achieve compliance with the EU policy norms and regulations. Accordingly, the changes in domestic institutions and policies can be achieved through the transformation of the actor's identities and interests.⁵² As the environment and rules are evolving and going through changes, social learning can be regarded as an ongoing process of adaptation.

Social learning takes place at all levels of public policy: the EU, national, subnational, local and individual level. The capacity of social learning in public policy making depends on the organizational structure of the domestic political system. It requires that the involved actors are flexible to make the appropriate structural adjustments and thereby are

⁴⁹ GRABBE, Heather: *The EU's Transformative Power*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2006, p. 64.

⁵⁰ BLUMER, S.: c.d., p. 66.

⁵¹ PARASKEVOPOULOS, Ch. – LEONARDI, R.: c.d., p. 318. Compare with CHECKEL, Jeffrey: *Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change*. *International Organization*, 55, 2001, no. 3, p. 554.

⁵² PARASKEVOPOULOS, Ch. – LEONARDI, R.: c.d., p. 320

able to exploit the benefits of learning.⁵³ Paraskevopoulos argues that the level of decentralization and capacities for collective action and coalition building are identified as the most important prerequisite for the social learning of the subnational and local systems of governance. This determines the degree of their mobilization at the European level.

1.4. The extent of the research

If Europeanization is characterized as a change in a member state's domestic policy in a response to EU policy making or legislative action, then the core of the research on Europeanization is to identify and confirm the linkage between a change and an EU action. According to Ladrech, in general, three fundamental questions can be posed when doing research on Europeanization. In what dimensions is the EU affecting the member state? How does it occur, i.e., by what mechanisms? And finally, what type of change does actually occur and what are their outcomes.⁵⁴

Furthermore, Ladrech identifies three dimensions at which Europeanization affects a member state, polity, policy and politics.⁵⁵ Polity covers changes in institutions and in center-regional relations. The changes at the policy dimension are embodied in the creation of new domestic instruments to meet EU policy standards. Europeanization in the politics sphere covers the changes in programs of political parties, their organization and their design in the political party competition.

According to Radaelli, the research on Europeanization should be organized in a way that the outcome answers the two following questions. Firstly, what is Europeanized in terms of the changes in domestic political structures and public policy. Secondly, what is the direction of those changes.⁵⁶ In comparison with Ladrech, Radaelli does not take the study of mechanisms in respect to Europeanization into his

⁵³ Ibidem, p. 319.

⁵⁴ LADRECH, R.: c.d., p. 22.

⁵⁵ Ibidem p. 3.

⁵⁶ RADAELLI, C: *The Europeanization of Public Policy* p. 40.

primary research. Radaelli focuses more comprehensively on the areas of change in domestic political structures. Accordingly, he identifies the following six areas of change: institutions, public administration, inter-governmental relations, the legal structure, structures of representation and cognitive and normative structures.⁵⁷ Drawing on upon leading scientists on the study of Europeanization, Radaelli also consolidates four types of possible changes caused by Europeanization.⁵⁸ The first type called inertia happens, which is when a domestic political architecture and the models are too different from the ones of the EU. Inertia causes delays in the transpositions of directives and the implementation of policies. On the long term, inertia might cause a crisis that leads to change. The second type is absorption, which is when the domestic structures adopt some changes required from the EU but also preserve some of their old order. The third type of change is the transformation in the sense of accommodation happening when the essential logic of political behavior changes. This change can happen, for example, in format and mechanics of the party system.⁵⁹ The fourth and last type of change is the retrenchment labeled as an example of 'negative' Europeanization. In this case domestic policy turns, ironically, to be less in accordance with the one of the EU.

The research on Europeanization of CBC, will examine how the EU mattered in the establishment and development of CBC in Europe.

1.4.1 Pitfalls of the research on Europeanization

This section is discussing the major of several pitfalls concerning research on Europeanization. The first pitfall is connected to the underexplored relation of Globalization and Europeanization. The second is related to the fact that the changes in domestic policy are often directly linked to the actions of the EU and therefore every action of the EU is seen as a sign of Europeanization. The third one is called

⁵⁷ RADAELLI, Claudio: *Whither Europeanization? Concept stretching and substantive change*. European Integration online Papers, 4, 2000, no. 8, p.6

<http://eiop.or.at/eiop/pdf/2000-008.pdf>

⁵⁸ Adrienne Héritier, Christoph Knill, Tanja Börzel, Maria Green Cowles, James Caporaso, Thomas Risse. Ibidem, p. 11. <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/pdf/2000-008.pdf>

⁵⁹ Ibidem p. 15.

conceptual stretching. In the following paragraphs I discuss the three pitfalls in more detail.

The first pitfall has its roots in the fact that the concept of Globalization predates the concept of Europeanization. Therefore, it is often difficult to distinguish between a domestic change that was an adaptation to Europeanization and one that happened because of pressures related to Globalization.⁶⁰ Moreover, changes in domestic policy are often directly linked to the actions of the EU and therefore every action of the EU is seen as a sign of Europeanization.

The second pitfall lies in seeing a manifestation of Europeanization in every change of domestic policy. This view is connected with the top-down approach of Europeanization. For example, the top-down approach is short in explaining the emergence of cross national policy networks that in fact developed earlier than any type of CBC had been institutionalized on the EU level.

The third pitfall, and also by the literature the most heavily discussed one, is conceptual stretching⁶¹, i.e., broadening of the definition of a concept. In order to understand the term, we have to look at the term 'concept' first. In order to define a concept you need, on the one hand, to know the properties the concept should call its own and, on the other hand, know the class of entities belonging to a concept. From this it follows that if a concept requires many properties to be true, then it will not apply to many entities. The same is true vice versa, i.e., if a concept covers many entities, it will not require a broad range of properties to be true. If we require a concept to cover many entities, we in that sense stretch that concept. Translated to the concept of Europeanization, it can be regarded to be a stretched concept as it is

⁶⁰ On the topic of Europeanization and Globalization in case of Common Agricultural Policy see HENNIS, Marjoleine: *Europeanization and Globalization: The Missing Link*. JCMS, 39, 2001, no. 5.

⁶¹ RADAELLI, Claudio: *Whither Europeanization?*, p. 4. Compare OLSEN, Johan: *The many faces of Europeanization*. ARENA, University of Oslo, and RADAELLI, C.: *The Europeanization of Public Policy*. In: RADAELLI, C. - FEATHERSTONE, K.: c.d.,.

supposed to explain a large body of processes such as cultural and administrative changes or, for example, modernization.

1.5. Multi-level Governance

Over the last decades significant changes occurred in EU in the relationship between the central government and the sub-national authorities. Several studies relate Europeanization to the strengthening of the position of the subnational governance.⁶² The rise in the regionalization in the EU and empowerment of the regional authorities is often attributed to the influence of the Regional policy and the associated funding. In the framework of Regional policy, the sub-national actors gained importance due to the partnership, programming, concentration and additionality principle.⁶³ Especially the partnership principle strengthened the position of the regional governments. This is the case as funding was required to be administrated through regional partnerships that consisted of representatives of the national and the regional government as well as the European Commission.⁶⁴ For the first time, the regional governments got a formal role within EU policy. Before that, the process of negotiation and implementation was dominated by the national governments. Consequently, the empowerment of the subnational governments to this level can be seen as a challenge to the national government.

In the 1990's, an approach was developed through a new understanding of the relationship between the central state and its regions. The new approach undoubtedly linked the two levels of the central state and the regions to the expansion of EU competences. This approach became known as MLG, which conceptualized the local, national and European levels as interrelated fields of politics and policy

⁶² FEATHERSTONE, Kevin.: *Introduction: In the name of 'Europe'*. In: RADAELLI, C. - FEATHERSTONE, K.: c.d., p. 8.

⁶³ BACHE, Ian: *Multi level governance and EU Regional Policy*. In BACHE, Ian – FLINDERS, Matthew: *Multi-level Governance*. Oxford, New York, University Press 2004, p. 166.

⁶⁴ BACHE, I.: *Cohesion Policy*. s. 239.

making, with the boundaries separating functions and lines of authority portrayed as much more permeable.⁶⁵

Since the 1980's, the development of the MLG is impartible from the reforms on Regional policy. Garry Marks, as the first, defined the term MLG in 1993 as a system of continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial tiers.⁶⁶ Later he described how "supranational, national, regional and local governments are enmeshed in territorially overreaching policy networks."⁶⁷

The concept of MLG was introduced more comprehensively by Lisebeth Hooghe and Garry Marks. They characterize MLG as a proto model which subsumes regional integration and regional or subnational empowerment as a part of a single, more general phenomenon, namely, the (re)articulation of authority away from central states.⁶⁸ Although the concept of MLG became widely used to explain the policy making processes of the EU, it is still widely discussed and, to the certain point, controversial topic.⁶⁹

In the research on Europeanization and Regional policy, the concept of Multi-level governance remains prominent⁷⁰. Risse sets up the connection between Europeanization and MLG. Together with his fellow researches, they define Europeanization as the emergence and the development at the European level of distinct structures of governance.⁷¹ This definition is in accordance with the view that the EU is encouraging the emergence of MLG. Nevertheless, the system of MLG in the EU is generally considered to be a result of the Europeanization of the public policy.

⁶⁵ LADRECH, R.: c.d., p. 95.

⁶⁶ MARKS, Garry: *Structural Policy and Multi-Level Governance in the EC*. In CAFRUNY, Alan - ROSENTHAL, Glenda: *The State of the European Community: The Maastricht Debate and Beyond*. Boulder, Lynne Rienner 1993, p. 392.

⁶⁷ Ibidem, 402-3.

⁶⁸ HOOGHE, Liesbet – MARKS, Gary: *A Postfunctional theory of European integration*. British Journal of Political Science, 39, 2008, p. 2.

⁶⁹ BACHE, Ian: *Europeanization and Multilevel Governance: Cohesion Policy in the European Union and Britain*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham 2007, p. 29.

⁷⁰ BACHE, I.: *Cohesion Policy*. 241.

⁷¹ CAPORASO, James – COWLES, Maria – RISSE, Thomas, c.d. Cited in: RADAELLI, Claudio – PASQUIER, Romain: c.d., 36.

1.6. Europeanization of the EU Regional Policy

The aim of the EU Regional policy is to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU through the reduction of disparities among EU regions. The tools to achieve this are financial instruments called European Structural Funds (European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund) and Cohesion Funds. They primarily aimed at the development of the most disadvantaged regions. The spending on the EU Regional policy accounts for approximately 35% of the common EU budget.⁷²

There is a broad acknowledgment that the Europeanization of the EU Regional policy lies in territorial restructuring and the changing of patterns of governance. This can be particularly seen in the empowerment of subnational levels of governance and the involvement of non-state actors. The pattern of change is uneven given the differences in the conditions at the domestic arena.

Misfit between EU requirements and the domestic arena is the starting point for tracing domestic change and identifying Europeanization.

Multi-level partnerships were one of the most important conditions for obtaining funding from the Structural Funds. An EU wide study founded by the Commission found out that in the member states that lack experience with Multi-level partnerships, the EC requirements for establishing them, often started the very process of creating subsequent Multi-level partnerships. In the states where multilevel partnerships were already part of the public policy, the Commission's requirement often promoted innovation and strengthen its current activities.⁷³ Nevertheless, the Member States keep on dominating the

⁷² Funding for regional and cohesion policy in 2007-13 amounts to €347bn - 35.7% of the total EU budget. *The Funds*. European Commission.

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/funding/index_en.cfm (23.3.2012)

⁷³ KELLEHER, John – BATTERBURY, Sarah – STERN, Elliot: *The Thematic Evaluation of the Partnership Principle: Final Synthesis Report*. London, The Tavistock Institute Evaluation Development and Review Unit, 1999. Cited in BACHE, I.: *Cohesion Policy*. p. 244.

partnerships as they play a role in setting the content of the program to be negotiated and the selection of the horizontal partners.⁷⁴

The degree of Europeanization of Regional policy varies across member states, depends on a range of variables, political systems, governing arrangements, administrative traditions, political culture (rather consensual or adversarial), relationship to the EU of the governing elite, (de)centralization, degree of subnational empowerment and so on. The Europeanization of the Regional policy is furthermore connected to the sub-national mobilization. The subnational actors are not anymore only receivers of EU policy and being its implementation agents but they start to be active partners of the European Commission in shaping the Regional policy itself.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Ibidem p. 243.

⁷⁵ JEFFERY, Charlie: *Sub-National Mobilization and European Integration: Does it Make Any Difference?*. JCMS, 38, 2000, no. 1, p. 2.

2. The Cross-border cooperation in Europe

The Territorial cooperation in general and the CBC in particular are gaining an increasingly prominent position within EU Regional policy. The success of CBC is widely seen as the way how to achieve a well-balanced and a harmonious development of all EU regions.⁷⁶ One such organization emphasizing the significance and added value of CBC is the AEBR, which identifies the CBC as “the essential cement of the European House”.⁷⁷

Discussing CBC in the EU is impossible without mentioning the European Territorial Co-operation objective, which is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The main task of the ERDF is to support cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation programmes. The budget of the European Territorial Co-operation objective is €8,7 billion, which accounts for 2.5% of the total funds allocated to the 2007-13 cohesion policy.⁷⁸ The CBC along internal borders itself accounts for €5,6 billion which accounts for 1,6% of the total funds allocated to the 2007-13 cohesion policy. The area of border regions in the EU accounts for roughly 60% of the entire area of the EU and it is home to 204 million of Europeans.⁷⁹ (Figure 1)

In the following subchapters I present the evolution of CBC in Europe. Moreover, I discuss the role of the CoE and the role of the European Communities complemented by describing the role of the EU. I argue that the role of the supranational bodies in building CBC was crucial.

⁷⁶ MEDEIROS, Eduardo: *Cross-Border Cooperation in EU Regional Policy: a fair deal?* Centro de Estudos Geográficos da Universidade de Lisboa, p. 4.
http://ww3.fl.ul.pt/pessoais/Eduardo_Medeiros/docs/PUB_PAP_EM_CBC_EU_Regional_Policy.pdf (9. 2. 2012)

⁷⁷ *Cross-border Cooperation – European priority and political objective of the EU beyond 2013*. AEBR. March 2008, p. 2.
<http://www.aebr.eu/files/publications/CBCnach2013ENMarchclean.pdf> (14.03. 2012)

⁷⁸ *European Territorial Cooperation*. European Commission.
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/cooperation/index_en.cfm (17. 2. 2012)

⁷⁹ MEDEIROS, E.: c.d., p. 4.

2.1. The evolution of CBC in Europe

Historically, CBC is an element of a broader territorial cooperation that has developed in Europe after the Second World War. Therefore, an introduction on territorial cooperation will be given, for which I use the five categories identified by Oliveras and Durà (Table 1). Firstly, territorial cooperation is regarded to differ according to the level of government being involved as the authority to enter the territorial cooperation. The authority could be, for example, a nation state, region or a local authority. Secondly, the territorial cooperation differs according to the territorial scale of cooperation, for example, supranational, interstate (still between states of a certain region), interregional and thirdly according to the nature of actors, for example, public authorities, universities, chamber of commerce.

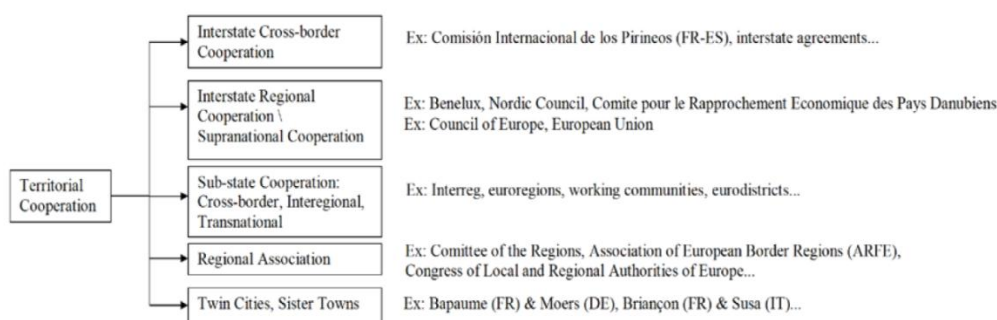


Table 1: Territorial cooperation in Europe⁸⁰

It is important to understand that the evolution of the CBC in Europe was affected by many factors. According to Oliveras, Durà and Perkmann there are exactly three main factors that affect the CBC in Europe. The first factor incorporates different structures, such as the authority and the level of the administration units at the each of the side of border. The second factor regards the autonomy and finances granted to the regional administration in the matters of CBC. The third and final factor deals with the legal and financial support from the supranational institutions such as the EU or the CoE.⁸¹ Variables followed in the evolution of CBC are: the number of CBC initiatives, the

⁸⁰ DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, X. - OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, A: c.d., p. 2.

⁸¹ DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, X.- OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, A. - PERKMANN, M.: c.d., p. 26.

location of the CBC activity and the level institutionalization of the cooperation.

In following paragraphs, for the purpose of this thesis, I identify four historical periods of the evolution of CBC. Meanwhile dealing with the historical evolution of CBC I cannot restrict myself to cover CBC only but in order to keep CBC in context; I include Territorial cooperation in Europe. I draw on Durà-Guimerà and Oliveras González identification of three historical periods of the evolution of CBC in Europe since 1950. I broaden their third period as I identified a fourth period corresponding to the emerging macro-regional cooperation.

Before dealing with the four periods in detail, I'll present a quick summary. The first and initial period covers the beginnings of CBC ranging in the time period from 1950 to 1979. The concept of CBC basically started with partnerships being established. Those partnerships could be observed especially between German and French cities which went through good will based cross border projects. Those were located mostly, as already mentioned, around Germany but also in Scandinavian region. Because of the high engagement of the German border regions in the CBC, in academia, a "German factor" is identified. The second period covers the decade between the 1980 until 1990. This interval is characterized by growing supranational interest in CBC and emerging attempts of the international organizations such as the CoE to institutionalize the CBC and establish an institutional and financial support. The third period started in 1990 with the actual institutionalization of CBC in the framework of the EU's Community initiative INTERREG I. From that time onwards the institutional and financial support of CBC is steadily increasing. (Figure 3)The fourth period is marked by the emergence of macro regional strategies. This fourth and last period is in the current chapter only going to be very briefly touched on as a preceding, complete chapter will be dedicated to the topic. Before starting to introduce the 4 periods, I would like to stress the importance of distinguishing between macro regional strategies and CBC. This has to be done despite the fact that they both

are happening from 2009 on simultaneously and therefore it is difficult to separate them in time. Macro regional strategies even though considered to be a form of CBC, it is of much larger scale engaging whole nations states.

2.1.1. First period – The beginnings of CBC in Europe (1950-1979)

The various forms of CBC appeared right after the end of the Second World War. On the level of states, the Benelux customs union was founded in 1948⁸² and one year later in 1949 the CoE was. Regional cooperation was not limited to the western part of Europe as also in the north the Scandinavian countries founded the Nordic Council in 1953.⁸³ Partnerships both on the regional level and local level were shortly to be followed afterwards. Good examples are partnerships of towns which in 1958 were accompanied by first grouping of local authorities. The grouping was formed on the German-Dutch border and called EUREGIO Gronau-Enschede.⁸⁴

The CBC initiatives developed during this period are located in Scandinavia as well as, almost exclusively, around Germany at the borders with France, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland. The German local authorities got massively involved into CBC with their neighboring countries as they found it to be a suitable tool for solving problems involving traffic, tourism, the labor market and environmental issues.⁸⁵ As a consequence of the German involvement in CBC, it later became seen as the driver of CBC in Europe. This is articulated by Perkmann's reference to the "German factor" in CBC.⁸⁶

The early CBC initiatives were based on formal agreements and were varying according to the legal systems the actors were subject to.

⁸² *Geschiedenis*. Benelux. http://www.benelux.int/nl/bnl/bnl_geschiedenis.asp (9. 2. 2012)

⁸³ *The history of Nordic Co-operation*. Norden. <http://www.norden.org/en/about-nordic-co-operation/the-history-of-nordic-co-operation> (9. 2. 2012)

⁸⁴ PERKMANN, M.: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*, p. 154.

⁸⁵ LOUGHLIN, John: *Subnational democracy in the EU*. New York, Oxford University Press 2001, p. 105.

⁸⁶ PERKMANN, M: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*, p. 162.

It is interesting to see that they were mostly based on the goodwill of the actors choosing to cooperate.⁸⁷ In forming cross border partnerships, regional and local authorities entered a sphere of policy that is traditionally reserved to the nation state. Following this, Keating calls these new forms of cross border relations “para- diplomacy”.⁸⁸ CBC was also driven from the state level of governance, which was embodied by intergovernmental committees that dealt with spatial planning and infrastructure issues. Noteworthy is the fact that not the regions and neither the local authorities were present in these committees.⁸⁹

2.1.2. Second period – The beginnings of the initialization period of CBC (1980-1989)

This period is characterized by increasing supranational interest of doing CBC and by various efforts to support CBC in terms of creating the related jurisdiction. This is the period when the Council of Europe (CoE), as a pioneer, established the first legal regulation on CBC. Following, in 1980, the CoE initiated the first international treaty regulating the CBC, which was called the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities or the Madrid Convention.⁹⁰ The Madrid Convention arranges for a legal framework for concluding bi- and multinational agreements of the public law of CBC among NCGs.⁹¹ Noteworthy is the fact that the Madrid Convention does not impose legal obligations on the signing nation states, but binds them “to facilitate and foster transfrontier co-operation between territorial communities or authorities

⁸⁷ PERKMANN, M: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*, p. 155.

⁸⁸ KEATING, Michael: (2002) *Paradiplomatie und regionale Netzwerke*. 2002. Cited in Markus LEIBENATH, Markus: *Exploring the gaps*. In: LEIBENATH, Markus - KORCELLI-OLEJNICZAK, Ewa --KNIPPSCHILD, Robert: *Cross border governance and Sustainable Spatial Development*. Springer 2008 p. 4.

⁸⁹ AYKAÇ, A. c.d. Cited in PERKMANN, M.: *The rise of the Euroregion. A bird's eye perspective on European cross-border co-operation*, p.3.

⁹⁰ *European Outline Convention on transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities*. CoE

<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/106.htm#FN2>

⁹¹ PERKMANN, M: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*, p. 155.

within its jurisdiction and territorial communities or authorities within the jurisdiction of other Contracting Parties”.⁹² Another legal regulation issued by the CoE gives local authorities the right to associate. According to the article 10 of the European Charter of Local-Self Government, concluded in Strasbourg in 1985, “Local authorities shall be entitled, under such conditions as may be provided for by the law, to co-operate with their counterparts in other States.”⁹³

Another important happening was in 1985, when through launching the plan to introduce the Single Market program the Commission aimed at eliminating, within seven years, all physical, technical and tax-related barriers in order to free the movement within the Community. It provided the opportunity for the Commission to develop new initiatives applicable to border regions. Furthermore, the Commission aimed at expanding the wider objective of economic integration by building links not only between countries but also between regions.

Although the regulations issued by the CoE on CBC had no strong legal power, they confirmed the larger interest and believe in the potential of CBC. This foreshadowed bigger changes in support of CBC. Jean Baptiste Harguindéguy claims that the fear of an economic crisis in the border areas forced the commissioners to listen to the advocates of the border territories. This as a result played a role in the reform on the Regional policy in support of CBC.⁹⁴

2.1.3. Third period – Rise of CBC initiatives and establishing of European Communities/EU policy for CBC (1990-onwards)

It is an exciting period for CBC as the number of CBC initiatives has been steadily increasing over the years. The development of the EU Regional policy, which created the “Community Initiatives” under the

⁹² *European Outline Convention on transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities*. Article 1.

⁹³ *European Outline Convention on transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities*. Article 10.

⁹⁴ HARGUINDÉGUY, Jean-Baptiste: *Cross-border Policy in Europe: Implementing INTERREG III-A, France–Spain*. *Regional & Federal Studies*, 17, 2007, no. 3 p. 322.

Structural Funds, was the factor determining further CBC.⁹⁵ For over three decades since the foundation of the first CBC EUREGIO Gronau-Enschede in 1958, 25 other CBC initiatives were founded. This goes on as in ten years after the introduction of the EU Community Initiative INTERREG bringing funding to CBC initiatives, in 1989 another 48 CBC initiatives were founded thereby effectively tripling the amount of CBC initiatives in only one third of the time.

Until INTERREG was transformed into the Regional policy objective of European Territorial Co-operation in 2007, three programmes (1989-1993, 1994-1999, and 2000-2006) were developed. Each of the programs was associated with a funding of increasing size. It is noteworthy that despite the fact that CBC was supported by the EU it was not limited to within its inner borders. This effectively means that on the outer borders with non-EU countries understand the Mediterranean basin and in Eastern Europe the post-socialist countries CBC could develop. The programs enabling this are Phare, Tacis, Cards and Medea.⁹⁶

In this 3rd period it comes to no surprise that the countries of the former Eastern Bloc, which were to enter the EU in 2004, dominated the scenery of newly established CBC's. This shift of the focus of CBC from the West to the East is described by Perkmann as being the end of the German factor and the beginning to the Eastern European factor.⁹⁷ It is important to mention that it was not restricted to the EU who supported the development of CBC. In 1995 the CoE developed their own program to support CBC in Eastern Europe. The budget for the funds was although smaller than the one of EU programs.

In the further development of the European Regional policy, in the present programming period (2007-2013), the CBC process was

⁹⁵ DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, X. - OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, A: c.d., p. 5.

⁹⁶ *European Perspective on Specific Types of Territories*. Inception report, ESPON 2011, p.19.

http://www.espon.eu/export/sites/default/Documents/Projects/AppliedResearch/GEOSPECS/2013-1-12_-_Inception_Report_xGEOSPECSx.pdf

⁹⁷ DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, X.- OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, A. - PERKMANN, M.: c.d., p. 30.

contemplated with its own Cohesion Objective: European Territorial Cooperation.⁹⁸ The Territorial Co-operation objective encompasses CBC, transnational and interregional cooperation. Within the framework of the Territorial Co-operation new legal instrument was designed and created to facilitate and promote cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation, the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC).⁹⁹ Although the EGTC is a legal entity and as such, will enable regional and local authorities as well as other public bodies from different member states to set up cooperation groupings with legal personality, it should be noted that the Member States must agree to the participation of potential members.¹⁰⁰

Oliveras, Durà identify the transformation of the INTERREG into the European Territorial Cooperation as the beginning of a new historical period in the evolution of CBC.¹⁰¹ Although there is a change in mechanisms of legal and financial support, I do not share their view. I do this as, in my opinion, in order to call it a new historical period, the dynamics such as the increasing funding, legal support or West-East direction of the CBC should change. It however remains the same.

2.1.4. Fourth period – the macro-regional strategies (2009-onwards)

As the fourth period in the development of European CBC, I identify the foundation of the macro-regions. A macro-region is “an area including territory from a number of different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges.”¹⁰² Although macro-regional strategy does not formally belong to CBC under the Territorial Co-operation objective, it shows similar characteristics to it. As a consequence, it can be regarded as a form CBC on a large scale with the involvement of multileveled actors.

⁹⁸ MEDEIROS, E.: c.d., p. 2.

⁹⁹ *European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)*. European Commission. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/cooperation/egtc/index_en.cfm (14.3.2012)

¹⁰⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰¹ DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, X.- OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, A: p. 6.

¹⁰² *EU Macro-Regional Strategies*. INTERact, http://www.interact-eu.net/macro_regional_strategies/macro_regional_strategies/283/3921 (14.3.2012)

Cooperation within the macro-regional strategies enables the adoption of a more holistic approach to the challenges common in the macro-regions.

2.2. Role of the supranational organizations in the development of CBC in Europe

Cooperation between nation states led to the foundation of international organizations such as the CoE and the European Communities. Both of the organizations played an important role in developing CBC's. The CoE focused on providing legal tools enabling CBC between administrative units situated lower than the national level. The European Communities, respectively the EU, supported CBC through a substantial amount of funding.

It is important to see that CBC is rarely a priority to national governments, and if it is, it is usually the case for small states.¹⁰³ Therefore I think that the role of the supranational organizations is vital in order to promote CBC. This argument I try to emphasize in the following sections.

The following sections advocate that the political development of the European Union, especially through the reformed Regional policy empowered the sub state authorities. This, as a consequence, changed the relationships between the regions, their national governments and the EU.

2.2.1. Role of the CoE in CBC

If we look at the CoE and CBC, we see that it is basically active in two major areas. The first area could be called promotional activity, which includes acts to encourage CBC. This includes its effort to clear the way of barriers, which could hinder the realization of a fruitful partnership. In order to do that, it creates tools to facilitate CBC and, additionally, drives the legalization process of CBC. Besides its promotional activity, it is also active in a second area, namely, funding.

¹⁰³ *Cross-border Cooperation – European priority and political objective of the EU beyond 2013.* p. 2.

The funding it provides is relatively small in comparison to the one provided by the EU.¹⁰⁴

The Madrid Convention was accompanied by 3 protocols of 1995, 1998 and 2009. In the protocols, it was steadily increasing the legal support for those border regions, which were belonging to the signing states to conclude cross border agreements.¹⁰⁵ The newest protocol dating back to 2009 provides for the legal status, establishment and the operation of 'European Co-operation Groupings' (hereinafter ECG), composed of local authorities and other public bodies.

For EU member states, which sign the 3rd protocol, besides the EGTC, an additional instrument is given by the ECG. For non-EU member states, which are however member of the CoE and signed the 3rd protocol, another new instrument is provided by the ECG. The instrument is very close the EGTC one and consequently used to support matches between programs as well as support the working relationship between project partners across EU member states and third countries.

It has to be mentioned that there has been criticisms blaming the CoE, that it has not been supporting the position of the sub-state actors concluding CBC enough. It is important to keep in mind that the regulations¹⁰⁶ issued by the CoE were meant to provide minimal legal framework that would not bother the national governments and possibly endanger their sovereignty in field of foreign policy. I therefore would argue that the supportive actions of the CoE towards supporting and promoting the CBC in Europe, both in terms of funding and providing

¹⁰⁴ DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, X.- OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, A. - PERKMANN, M.: c.d., p. 28.

¹⁰⁵ The 1995 protocol recognized the right of territorial communities to conclude cross border agreements, the validity in domestic law of their acts and decisions, and the legal personality of any co-operation body set up under such an agreement. The second protocol of 1998 recognized the right of authorities to set up twinning agreements and set out the necessary legal framework. *Introduction by Ulrich BOHNER, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the CoE, 19.6.2009* (transcript). In: Intranet of the CoE, <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1460605&Site=Congress> (17.3.2012)

¹⁰⁶ European Outline Convention on transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities. CoE, and Protocols from 1995, 1998, 2009.

basic legal framework, are proportional to the powers the supranational organization, such as the CoE, has at its disposal.

2.2.2. The role of the EU in CBC

As stated in the theoretical chapter, the EU Regional policy is generally considered to strengthen the role of the regions and enhance the MLG. The adoption of the INTERREG program in 1989 is considered to be the beginning of EU interventions in the field of CBC. As mentioned earlier, the INTERREG was launched as a Community initiative, a program design where the Commission enjoys powers to designate the area of implementation and funding as well as to apply the rules and procedures. Despite the fact that the main partners to implement the projects targeted by INTERREG were local and regional authorities, the states had the access to participate in the programs. The Commission guidelines for the implementation required establishment of joint cross-border committees where partners coming from regional, local and national authorities are present together with the relevant non-governmental actors.¹⁰⁷ This partnership principle together with the programming, concentration and additionality principles have been operating the Regional policy programmes since the reform of Regional policy in 1988. In the framework of CBC, the partnership principle, on the one hand, enabled the national governments to keep an eye on CBC. This is important as any action involving a foreign state forms a part of foreign policy and therefore is reserved for the state. On the other hand, the partnership principle strengthened the position of the regional governments against the central government, as they gained a word in implementing Regional policy. This is important as earlier the implementation of the Regional policy was in the exclusive hands of the central government. Moreover, in empowering the regions through the partnership principle, the Commission gained many important local agents to implement EU Regional policy.

¹⁰⁷ *INTERREG III (2000-2006)*. Summaries of EU legislation, European Commission. http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/regional_policy/provisions_and_instruments/g2_4204_en.htm (17.3.2012)

In 2006, the INTERREG including its three dimensions: CBC, interregional and transnational was transformed into the new objective of the Regional policy, the Territorial Co-operation and kept the three original dimensions. Within the Territorial Co-operation objective the EGTC tool was established to allow the creation of cooperative groups in Community territory that take on the management of EU Structural Funds.¹⁰⁸ The EGTC were invested with a legal personality and capacity recognized by EU law in order to overcome the obstacles hindering territorial cooperation. The EGTC can acquire or dispose of movable and immovable property and employ staff and may be a party to legal proceedings.¹⁰⁹ The possible members are not only the sub-state authorities and relevant non-governmental actors but also national states themselves. This again grants access to the central government delegates to the previously mentioned activities. The involvement of the state in CBC will also in the future grow in importance. This is the case as there are CBC projects of a large scale developing across Europe, dealing with important complex issues that are require to be handled by the state itself.

Nowadays every border region of the EU is engaged in some kind of CBC.¹¹⁰ (Figure 2) This becomes eminent when we look at the number of CBC regions, which from the inception of the INTERREG Community Initiative in 1989 up to today grew from 25 to 185. It could be concluded that the steadily increasing legal and especially financial support to the CBC activities from the supranational bodies of CoE but

¹⁰⁸ Different functions can be envisaged for an EGTC such as: to be in charge of the implementation of a Territorial Cooperation programme (upon delegation by the Member State to the EGTC); lead partner or partner in an Territorial Cooperation project; other cooperation actions with EU-funding; other cooperation actions without EU-funding (NB: actions outside EU funding can be restricted by Member States (Art.7(3)). *The EGTC Regulation*. INTERAct. http://www.interact-eu.net/the_egtc_regulation/the_egtc_regulation/68/42 (19.3.2012)

¹⁰⁹ *Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC)*, Art 1. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:210:0019:0024:EN:PDF> (19.3.2012)

¹¹⁰ *Cross-border programmes under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective*. European Commission. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/eu/crossborder/index_en.htm (19.3.2012)

especially the European Union caused this immense surge in number of CBC initiatives.

There is no unity of opinion about the role of supranational bodies in the rapid spread of CBC activities. Opposing opinions are formulated by authors such as Liam O'Dowd who suggest not to overestimate the role of the supranational bodies, especially the one of the EU. Him and author James Anderson argue that early CBC initiatives emerged as a response to growing cross-border functional interdependencies.¹¹¹ On one hand, I understand their point and agree with many of the considerations of the authors. On the other hand, I would like to stress some other facts which are connected to the geographical location of the first CBC initiatives. The early CBC activities are almost exclusively located along the borders of Western Germany (Benelux, France and Switzerland) and in Scandinavia. Both areas have at least three features in common, which are a democratic regime, language proximity and an alike administrative system. Those features together build up an environment where functional interdependencies have a large potential for growth and for local authorities to establish fruitful CBCs. Taking a look at the numbers, it can be determined that there were 25 CBC initiatives established from the founding of the first EUROREGIO in 1958 until the inception of INTERREG. It is fair to say that those 25 CBC initiatives were established as a consequence of cross-border functional interdependencies. I am not trying to claim that the rest of 160 CBC were established sole and exclusively as a result of the supranational support present for the CBC. I merely try to stress the point that the Community funding available through INTERREG has provided a strong incentive to cooperate in areas where the conditions were not as favorable as around Germany or the cooperation would had not been

¹¹¹ ANDERSON, M.: *Transfrontier Co-operation –History and Theory*. Cited in PERKMANN, M: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*, p. 166. Compare O'DOWD, Liam: *The Changing Significance of European Borders*. In: ANDERSON, James - O'DOWD, Liam – WILSON, Thomas: *New Borders for a Changing Europe*. London, Taylor & Francis e-Library 2005, p. 19.

perceived as natural, e.g., Eastern Europe. Furthermore it is important to stress, that there are qualitative difference present between CBC activities.¹¹²

¹¹² DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, X.- OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, A. - PERKMANN, M.: c.d., p. 28.

3. Features of CBC

Over the many years, while many various forms of CBCs appeared all over Europe, it is interesting to note that not a single definition prevailed. In this chapter I will try to convey a general understanding of CBC. By doing this, I will present both the basic (shared) as well as the diverse features of CBC. This chapter also introduces the motives and reasons behind the establishment of CBC in Europe. Furthermore, several definitions of CBC are going to be discussed and the basic characteristics of the Cross-border region (CBR) will be described. Various forms of the CBC are also introduced using Perkmann's three dimensional conceptual grid.¹¹³

3.1. CBC and CBR

Since there are several definitions on the concept of the CBC, as a first approximation, I present the definition on transfrontier co-operation issued by the CoE at the Madrid Convention. "The Transfrontier co-operation shall mean any concerted action designed to reinforce and foster neighborly relations between territorial communities or authorities within the jurisdiction of two or more Contracting Parties and the conclusion of any agreement and arrangement necessary for this purpose."¹¹⁴ This is a rather general definition and lacks the sub-national dimension typical to CBC.

Oliveras, Durà and Perkmann issued a definition which is more compact in nature. They define CBC as a "more or less institutionalized form of collaboration that develops between sub-state authorities and/or subjects from two or more states and aims at constructing cooperation that is oriented at vertical and horizontal coordination of politics and actions."¹¹⁵ For practical and research purposes Perkmann recommends to define CBC according to the following four criteria: the actors of the cooperation must be public authorities, the actors must be

¹¹³ PERKMANN, M: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*, p. 159.

¹¹⁴ *European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities*. Art. 2.

¹¹⁵ DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, X.- OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, A. - PERKMANN, M.: c.d., p. 24.

situated at a lower than national level, the corporation needs to be aimed at practical problem solving and involve the stabilization of cross border contacts, i.e., build an institution.¹¹⁶

A related term to a CBR is the definition of a transfrontier region and thus, the two can be regarded as synonyms. The CoE defines a transfrontier region using the definition of Denis de Rougemont: "A transfrontier region is a potential region, inherent in geography, history, ecology, ethnic groups, economic possibilities and so on, but disrupted by the sovereignty of the governments ruling on each side of the frontier."¹¹⁷ This definition suggests that CBC occurs as a consequence of the existence of such a region, i.e., if there is a region with those characteristics, CBC is supposed to occur as a natural consequence. This conclusion, however, seems not to be in line with the empirical data. The data shows that much fewer CBC instances came into existence because of the prerequisites of Denis the Rougemont's definition than did as a result of a collective purpose, for example, funding. O'Dowd and Anderson explain the establishment of CBC in a pragmatic way. They claim that the CBR is a result of different players using the border region to exploit funding opportunities, differential in wages, prices or institutional norms on either side of the border.¹¹⁸ Following this logic, it is possible to present Perkmann's definition of a CBR as "a bounded territorial unit composed of the territories of authorities participating in a CBC initiative."¹¹⁹ It is important to note that while forming a CBR the presence of shared characteristics as defined in Rougemont/CoE definitions does not exclude the presence of a collective purpose, for example, funding. Therefore, it is possible to state that the CBR is usually built on the basis of a collective purpose and that the territory shares some common characteristics.

¹¹⁶ PERKMANN, M: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*, p. 156.

¹¹⁷ RICQ, Charles: *CoE Handbook on Transfrontier Co-Operation for Local and Regional Authorities in Europe*. Strasbourg, CoE Publishing 2000, p. 9.

¹¹⁸ ANDERSON, James - O'DOWD, Liam: *Borders, Border Regions and Territoriality: Contradictory Meanings, Changing Significance*. *Regional Studies*, 33, 1999, 7, p. 595.

¹¹⁹ PERKMANN, M: *Cross-border regions in Europe. Significance and drivers of regional cross-border cooperation*, p. 157.

Following this line of thought, I introduce various forms of the CBRs using Perkmann's three dimensional conceptual grid. I do this in order to be able to deliver a better explanation of the different forms of CBR. The classification of CBRs is based on the three following dimensions: Firstly, the geographical scope of a CBC is to be considered, small scale initiatives are considered to be those with less than five regions. Secondly, the cooperation intensity is considered. In other words, what is the strategic capacity of the cross border body at its disposal and what is the degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the central state or other authorities. Thirdly, the type of actors has to be considered, i.e., whether they are local or regional authorities. On the basis of this conceptual grid, Perkmann attempts to classify the CBR under the names of a working community and the euroregion. He describes a working community as a CBR that counts five to more regions with a cooperation intensity that is low and it is composed out of regional authorities. The euroregion is described as small scale CBR, under 5 local authorities, characterized by a high intensity of cooperation. In the EU, there are several CBRs working under the names of euroregions and working communities that fit this typology. In general, this typology is not precise enough as often the CBR takes the name of the euroregion but the characteristics of the CBC correspond to those of a working community. Therefore Perkmann suggests using the term: micro CBR that would correspond with his characteristics of a euroregion. Those resemble the organization of historical euroregions of Germany-Belgium, the Netherlands and the Luxembourg border.¹²⁰

Although the euroregion is not legally recognized, theoretically defined in the literature nor is the term consistently used in reality, it is important to introduce the historical euroregion. This is so, as it is considered by the AEBR the most important instrument for a

¹²⁰ PERKMANN, Markus: *Construction of New Territorial Scales: A Framework and Case Study of the EUREGIO Cross-border Region*. *Regional Studies*, 41, 2007 no. 2, p. 257. Compare TURNOCK, David: *Cross-border Cooperation: A Major Element in Regional Policy in East Central Europe*. *Scottish Geographical Journal*, 118, 2002, no. 1. p. 29.

sustainable and a successful CBC.¹²¹ The size of the historical euroregion/micro CBR ranges between 50-100 km in width and is populated by a few millions of inhabitants. The desired cooperation is of a more permanent character rather than an ad hoc phenomenon. The participants are regional or local authorities together with interested stakeholders, such as the chamber of commerce or the regional development agencies. The organizational structure comprises usually of a council, presidium, executive board, secretariats and thematic working groups, where the number of thematic working groups differs with every CBR.

On the basis of Perkmann's conceptual grid, Oliveras and Durà elaborated on a comprehensive typology on CBR. They leave out the terms euroregion and working community but focus on the three dimensions identified by Perkmann (the geographical scope, the cooperation intensity and the strategic capacity) and present four types of CBRs.

		Scale	
		<i>Micro</i>	<i>Macro</i>
Intensity of cooperation	<i>High</i>	Integrated micro cooperation	Integrated macro cooperation
	<i>Low</i>	Emerging micro cooperation	Emerging macro cooperation

Table 2: Four types of CBR¹²²

When classifying the CBR Oliveras and Durà divide the CBR in terms of geographical scale to *macro* and *micro*, in terms of cooperation intensity to *integrated* cooperation or *emerging* cooperation. The last

¹²¹ *Statement on the questionnaire on removing obstacles and promoting good practices on cross-border cooperation of the CoE*. AEBR, 13.4. 2011, p. 6 http://www.aebr.eu/files/publications/AEBR_statement_questionnaire_Council_of_Europe_EN.pdf (14.3. 2012)

¹²² DURÀ-GUIMERÀ, X.- OLIVERAS GONZÁLEZ, A. - PERKMANN, M.: c.d., p. 25.

dimension, the level of actors, the *local (L)* and *regional (R)* is identified and added separately.

The first type of CBR is the *integrated micro cooperation*. This kind of cooperation is characterized by a high level of autonomy based on interstate treaties. It forms a legal personality and an area that corresponds to a NUTS 2 unit. Typical actors are local authorities on the level of a NUTS 3 unit.

The second type is the *integrated macro cooperation*, which shares the same intensity of cooperation as the previous type. However, the geographical area is bigger as previously, i.e., corresponds to the level of NUTS 2 or NUTS 1. The typical actors are regional authorities and agents on the regional dimension.

The third type is the *emerging micro cooperation*, which is based on arrangements agreed on between sub state actors. As a consequence and contrary to the previous types, they do not have a legal personality. The area covered by this type of cooperation is smaller than the regional level and the actors are usually local authorities.

The fourth type is the *emerging macro cooperation*; which is also characterized by a low intensity of cooperation. It is based on agreements of cooperation between regional actors. The area covered by this kind of CBR corresponds with NUTS 2 or NUTS 1 units.

3.2. The construction of a CBC

The construction of a CBC is affected by several factors. The basic division is based, firstly, on the general character, e.g., the overall environment and conditions in the world and Europe. Secondly, it is based on the matters of individual motives of the actors entering the respective CBC.

What is the overall environment and condition of the world that calls CBCs into existence? It could be seen as a necessary construct in times with continuous confrontations between, on the one hand, the

nation states and, on the other hand, both EU level and regional level governmental bodies. Therefore, we could see it as one more result of the continuously expanding phenomenon of multilevel governance.

On the level of the general character, the CBC is conceived as of a response to the challenges posed by globalization, and especially by the crisis of the nation state, which loses competences both from above to the supranational body and from below to the regional and local levels of government.¹²³ The existence of this type of cooperation is placed in this sense within the global process of multilevel governance.

If we go with the premise that one of the factors forcing CBCs into existence is the increasing influence of the regions, we have to understand why regionalization is happening in the EU. According to Eberlain, regionalization constitutes of a dynamic three fold process of structuration that is essential for the functioning and successful cooperation and problem solving.¹²⁴ The three fold process of structuration creates independent areas of negotiation, e.g., it reduces the problem of complexity and offers the actors sufficient flexibility to find agreements. Furthermore, it intensifies communication making agreements agreed on at the intergovernmental level acceptable to the regional level of government and the public or interested associations. Finally, it stimulates a learning process of the actors that leads to openness to innovation and flexibility to continuously adjust the existing structures accordingly.

Besides the general character, also the individual characters of CBCs provide motives to the different actors to enter a CBC. In general, a CBC is constituted because of existing or growing functional interdependencies between the regions or because of the funding available from the subnational bodies.

The CBCs established during the first and second historical period, as described in the previous chapter, were established on the

¹²³ LEIBENATH, Markus: c.d., p.3.

¹²⁴ BENZ, A. – EBERLEIN, B.: c.d., p. 333.

basis of socioeconomic and environmental relationships shared across the administrative boundaries. The rationale for CBC follows the logic of matching spatial planning processes and the spatial reality.¹²⁵ The CBCs in Scandinavia and alongside the border of West Germany, with Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, France and Switzerland, arose from the need to solve concrete problems in areas of traffic, tourism, labor market and the environment.¹²⁶ Those CBCs were enhanced by the fact that the actors' administrative systems are alike in the sense that they are all similarly decentralized.

For the CBCs established in the third historical period, the identification of the motives that drove them into existence must be analyzed from a broader perspective. The biggest driver of the CBCs in that period was by no doubt the funding provided to CBCs in the framework of the INTERREG program. The EU funding provided a strong incentive to cooperate and offered a way how to develop the border areas. This was important as those territories were often perceived to be less important for the respective central governments and therefore were often left out from central government and national funding. Interesting to note is that the AEBR claims that because of the additionality principle of the Regional policy, the central government is obliged to co-finance the development of the border areas. As a consequence, "the withdrawal of European funds would mean for nearly all border regions in Europe automatically the withdrawal of national co-financing with comparable special purpose funding in long-term programmes."¹²⁷

3.3. Constraints on CBC

Despite the fact, that the CBC is generally perceived as a successful policy, it has several limitations and constraints. The

¹²⁵ DÜHR, Stefanie – NADIN, Vincent *Europeanization through transnational territorial cooperation? The case of INTERREG IIIB North-West Europe*. Planning, Practice & Research, 22, 2007, no. 3, p. 374.

¹²⁶ BULLMANN, Udo: *Germany: Federalism under Strain*. In: LOUGHLIN, J.: c.d., p. 105.

¹²⁷ *Cross-border Cooperation - European priority and political objective of the EU - Beyond 2013*. AEBR, 2008, p. 3. (14. 11. 2011)
<http://www.aebr.eu/files/publications/CBCnach2013ENMarchclean.pdf>

constraints on CBCs are two folded. Firstly, there are constraints at the beginning of the establishment of a CBC. Those constraints are embodied by the differences in competences of sub national authorities entering the CBC. The establishment of a CBC can be hindered by the fear of competition arising from the cooperation of different profiles and interests of the Chambers of Commerce and the Industry. Cultural and language differences also pose significant constraints. Moreover, the insufficient number of crossing points hinders the proper functioning of any kind of CBC. Furthermore, when a CBC is established on the outer border, it is difficult to harmonize manufacturing and quality standards.

Secondly, there are constraints that are limiting the capabilities of the CBC for further progress. The second group of constraints is connected with the delays that are caused by border formalities imposed on the truck transport. The constraints are even more troublesome in the case of a CBC on the outer border areas, where the tighter controls around the Schengen areas pose an especially large hinder.

4. Macro-region models of cooperation

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the newly emerged dimension of the EU Regional policy, namely the strategy for the macro-regions. Moreover, I will discuss the aims, which underlie the creation of a strategy targeted at macro-region, the characteristics of the strategy and the expectations for bringing added value and better territorial cohesion to the regions. Furthermore, the position of the macro-regional strategy in between the EU Regional policy is explained. I also present each of the current EU strategies of the macro-regions, firstly, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and, secondly, the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

Macro-regional strategy enjoys considerable attention in the policy debates in the EU. It is being discussed as a new model of territorial governance and dealt with connection with the objective of territorial cohesion that has been endorsed with the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009.¹²⁸ Further reasons why the macro regions are central to the EU policy debates is the ongoing implementation and first evaluation of the Strategy for the Baltic Sea and Danube Region. And other reason is related to the ongoing discussion whether or not the new strategies for macro regions should be established for other territorial areas. The strategy for the macro regions is characterized by a holistic approach to regional development as it includes the integration of sector policies and the coordination of actors at different levels of governance across several nation states, EU member states as well as non-member states.

4.1. The evolution of macro-regional strategy

The concept of creating and integrated approach in order to face shared challenges in a certain area whose parts belong to different nation states is not completely new. It has its origins in the intergovernmental transnational cooperation groupings, which were

¹²⁸ DÜHR, S.: c.d. p. 5.

founded as an official cooperation in order to face shared challenges.¹²⁹ Joint development across nation boundaries also partly originates from transnational cooperation, interregional cooperation and CBC that was endorsed by the EU from the 1990s on.

The concept of a macro-regional strategy was developed on the basis of an initiative of the countries littoral to the Baltic Sea.¹³⁰ The governments of the involved states and the Europe Baltic Intergroup, which is an informal group of the Baltic States within the European Parliament, lobbied together for an elaboration of a new development strategy for their region. Jointly, they approached the European Council and the Commission with their proposal for a new transnational development strategy.¹³¹ The Commission was invited by the European Council to present in June 2009 on the development of the Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.¹³² From the beginnings, the Commission emphasized the MLG dimension of the strategy which was strengthened during the process of setting the strategic objectives. Moreover, the Commission launched a wide consultation process in order to set up the priorities that would solve the challenges faced by the macro regions. Every relevant stakeholder at any level had an opportunity to take part in the public consultation process. Setting the priorities on the basis of the result of a wide consultation process and the identification of the biggest 'pains' shared by the regions involved was supposed to ensure wide support and the self-identification of the actors with the Strategy. This was important as the Commission acknowledged the fact that a successful implementation of the strategy

¹²⁹ The Council of the Baltic Sea States.

¹³⁰ *EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region at a glance*. Panorama, special edition, p.4. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/baltic/pdf/panorama/minipano_en.pdf (20.3. 2012) Compare *The EU Strategy for the Danube Region*. Panorama, 37, p.4. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/panorama/pdf/mag37/mag37_en.pdf (20.3. 2012)

¹³¹ STOCHIERO, Andrea: *Macro-Regions of Europe: Old Wine in a New Bottle?* Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale, Background paper, April 2010, p. 3. http://cespi.academia.edu/andreastocchiero/Papers/1399097/Macro-Regions_of_Europe_Old_Wine_in_a_New_Bottle (8.10. 2011)

¹³² DÜHR, S.: c.d. p. 8.

would depend on the regions' identification with the objectives and support.

In terms of promoting the macro-regional strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and ensuring its political support, The Swedish Presidency has to be named as the key player. In general, the political support for the establishment of the macro-regional strategy was reached in the realm of the countries participating in the strategy but endangered by the countries that were not involved in the macro region. In order to avoid a political deadlock caused by countries that did not take part in the macro region, it was emphasized that no new funding, institution or legislation will be needed from the EU.¹³³ This engagement became known as the "Three No's". Applying this principle, the countries participating in the strategy will not get any advantage over other countries in terms of developmental support.

Pawel Samecki, the Polish Commissioner for Regional policy in that time, presented a position paper named: Macro-Regional Strategies in the European Union. In this paper, he introduces the definition and visions of the macro regions in Europe. The paper presents a definition on the macro-region in the EU sense, pointing out that there is no standard definition on macro regions as there are various groupings with different characteristics operating under this very same name. A macro region is "an area including territory from a number of different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges."¹³⁴ In regards to the scale of a macro-region, the Commissioner said that "a macro-region will involve several regions in several countries but the number of Member States should be significantly fewer than in the Union as a whole."¹³⁵

¹³³ STOCHIERO, A: c.d. p.3.

¹³⁴ *Discussion Paper presented by Commissioner Pawel Samecki in Stockholm on 18. 7. 2009* (transcript).

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/baltic/pdf/macoregional_strategies_2009.pdf (8.10. 2011)

¹³⁵ Ibidem.

After the elaboration of the Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the Commission recommended to implement the strategy for a macro-region in the area of the Danube. As a consequence, the governments of the countries that belong to the Danube macro-region asked the Commission to develop a strategy.¹³⁶ It is still early to evaluate the impact of macro-regional strategies on the entire structure of the Regional policy- Nevertheless, it can be stated that the endorsement of the Strategy for Danube Region meant a shift from a pilot experimental project towards establishing an instrument of the EU Regional policy.

4.2. The characteristics of macro-regions

From an administration point of view, the macro-region is defined in the Commissions Communication as "an area covering a number of administrative regions but with sufficient issues in common to justify a single strategic approach."¹³⁷ This is the official EU definition of macro-region that was born with the Communication from the Commission to the other EU institutions¹³⁸ in connection with the Strategy of the Baltic Sea Region. Interesting to note is that the administrative regions do not exclusively mean nation states, but the overall process of establishing macro-regions implies that the nation states is meant as it form parts of the strategy.

From the functional point of view, the macro-region can be described as the CBR of a larger scale where cooperation is based on functional interdependence and happens in between local, regional, national and the EU level The local level is represented by the local authorities and cities whereas the regional level is represented by the regional authorities as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations operating at that level. The national level is represented by the nation states, EU members as well as non-EU members while

¹³⁶ *The EU Strategy for the Danube Region*. Panorama, 37, p.4.

¹³⁷ *Opinion of the Committee of the Regions — European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (2010/C 232/04)* <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/Notice.do?mode=dbl&lang=en&ihmlang=en&lng1=en,nl&lng2=bg,cs,da,de,el,en,es,et,fi,fr,hu,it,lt,lv,mt,nl,pl,pt,ro,sk,sl,sv,&val=521612:cs&page> (20.3. 2012)

¹³⁸ the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions

the European level is represented by the Commission which plays the role of the initiator and the monitoring body of the macro-regional strategy. The functional interdependence concerns an existence of sufficient issues in common that form the basis for establishing common action. As in the case of the Baltic Sea Region and the Danube Region, an existence of large natural and landscape systems forms all kind of connections between multilevel and multi sector actors and territories.

In regards to the governance of the macro-region, the Committee of the Region stresses that: "Macro-regions should not evolve into a new institutional level between the EU and Member States, but should be an instrument of cooperation between regions, Member States and the Union."¹³⁹ The given structure of involvement of the multilevel actors enables not only bottom-up and top-down dimension of cooperation through the levels but also horizontal cooperation through different the sectors. Thus, in accordance with the "no new institution" directive, the macro-region is governed through the cooperation of the involved subjects according to the principles set by the macro-regional strategy.

4.3. The characteristics of the macro-regional strategy

A macro-regional strategy is characterized by a holistic approach towards the concept of regional development. The strategy has a flexible design and it is not tied to the national level. Therefore, it provides new opportunities for the transnational cooperation of subnational governments and non-state actors. The strategy was established to ensure coherence of policy actions at different levels and through different sectors, such as the EU, the nation states, regions, local authorities, relevant regional organizations, financial institutions and relevant non-governmental organizations. This was done in order to promote a more balanced development of the macro-region as a whole. Macro-regional strategy aims at the efficient use of resources allocated to individual initiatives that should in combination with each other bring more effective outcomes.

¹³⁹ *Opinion of the Committee of the Regions — European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (2010/C 232/04)*

The macro-regional strategy encompasses all the three dimensions of the current Territorial Co-operation objective of the EU Regional policy, transnational cooperation, interregional cooperation and CBC. It was designed to deal with the challenges that cut across administrative boundaries and which can be effectively faced only through collective joint actions of multilevel and multinational actors. The role of the EU is to coordinate the actions and to provide, firstly, a coordinated and a comprehensive framework in response to the key challenges facing the macro region and, secondly, concrete solutions to these challenges. The instruments of the macro-regional strategy are Flagship projects that are listed in an Action Plan and updated regularly.¹⁴⁰

4.3.1. The mechanism: macro-region

I present various parts of the mechanisms driving the macro-regional strategy of the EU in order to show the way how macro-regional strategy operates.¹⁴¹ The first part involves the consultation process, which is realized through the set up of an Annual Forum. Participating states, intergovernmental bodies, regional authorities and local authorities as well as delegates from private sector and civil societies are invited to participate in the annual forum where they discuss and revise the work that has been done so far in order to develop new approaches.

The second part is the Policy Coordination which is being carried out by the Commission together with the High Level Group consisting of representatives of the countries belonging to the macro-region. The Commission is entitled to organize a constructive dialogue if disagreements are present in the policy coordinating issues.

The third part is the implementation of the Strategy both with its Objectives, to be reached through concrete projects, and its Action Plan. The projects have defined leaders, timeframes and financing.

¹⁴⁰ *EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region*. European Commission. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/baltic/index_en.cfm (8.10. 2011)

¹⁴¹ *The EU Strategy for the Danube Region*. Panorama, 37, p.18-19.

Each Priority Area has its coordinator either a country or a region responsible for carrying out the Action Plan. The role of the Priority Area Coordinators is versatile and consists of several tasks. A task can be simple such as giving technical assistance / advice or more complex, such as ensuring that everything works smoothly between the funding sources and the project promoters. Effectively, a Priority Area coordinator needs to make sure that the implementation of the Action Plan succeeds. Its work is helped by the consultation with the Commission and regions.

The succeeding part is the Facilitation process. The main player at this stage is the Commission, which as the facilitator is assisted by the national Contact Points. Their task is to make sure that the work set in the Action plans is in progress. The national Points role is important as they are responsible for both coordination at the country level and advancing practical aspects of the work.

The last and final part is the Reporting and Evaluation. This stage is carried out by the Commission together with the Priority Area Coordinators and other relevant stakeholders. The task of the Priority Area Coordinators is to monitor the progress and tell if the targets of the actions and projects are reached. The Commission is then finalizing the Report of the recommendations that is to be evaluated at the Annual Forum.

It is interesting to note that the EU level, embodied by the Commission, was originally supposed to play a rather remote role. Naturally, the Commission is in charge of designing the strategy for the macro-regions but lately it seems that the Commission is not going to be only the agenda setter and the facilitator of the process but, if it is to be successful, it also be the implementer of the strategy.¹⁴²

¹⁴² SCHYMIK, Carsten: *Modellversuch Makroregion: Die EU Strategien für den Ostsee- und Donaauraum*. SWP Studie S1. Berlin, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Deutsches Institut für Internationale Politik und Sicherheit, 2011. Cited in DÜHR, S.: c.d. p. 34.

4.4. The strategy for the Baltic Sea and the Danube Region

The two strategies are important for many aspects and a showcase for the EU on territorial cohesion and the coordination of both the sector policies and the actors of different governance levels.

I present the Strategy for the Baltic Sea region first as it was the first macro-regional strategy that took place. The strategy for the Baltic Sea region started in the December of 2007 when the Commission together with the DG for Regional policy was asked to begin its preparation. The areas to cover include common ways to face environmental challenges, foster economic development, coordinate infrastructure and soft security. The instruments to reach its goals include Action plans, flagship projects as well as horizontal actions.¹⁴³ In order to ensure a success it was decided to avoid a selective and implement instead a structured approach. Therefore, a framework was created containing the actions and priorities with set deadlines.

The succeeding macro-regional strategy involved the Danube Region. Similarly to the Baltic Sea Region, the regions member countries asked for the involvement of the Commission in the strategy development process.¹⁴⁴ In order to make sure that the points addressed by the strategy really reflect the needs of the people of the region, an online public consultation process started. At the end, the four pillars were defined, which addressed the connection of the Danube Region, the protection of the regions environment, creating prosperity and strengthening the region. The pillars can also be collected into the following three areas. Firstly, the improvement of mobility, on land, by road and air links, in the air, by air links and, on the water, by improved waterways. Secondly, supporting sustainable energy and, thirdly, promoting culture as well as tourism.

¹⁴³ *EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.*

¹⁴⁴ *The EU Strategy for the Danube Region. Panorama, 37, p.4.*

4.5. Potentials and challenges

The macro-regional strategy has the potential to enhance the regional development directly by developing the region itself and indirectly the whole EU. This is the case as the positive performance of one macro-region, due to mutual interconnections, affects the whole EU. The successful development within the macro-regional strategy can strengthen the added value of the Regional policy of the EU itself. It can strengthen the position of the operational units on the national, regional and local level, presuming they succeed to effectively manage their tasks. One of the most important points, which has to be mentioned, is that it has the potential to effectively use the, in the framework of the Regional policy, allocated funding that has been already assigned to actors of the macro-region.¹⁴⁵ The effective use of the allocated funding can only be accomplished by an integrated approach to the development of the area through the cooperation of all relevant actors. Another important aspect is that the macro-regional strategy, due to involvement of multileveled actors in the implementation of the strategy, has the potential to assure an environment of stability free of change caused by alternating political priorities of national or regional governments.¹⁴⁶

Naturally, there are also a number of policy dilemmas and challenges that are faced by the macro-regional strategy. Two of the more prominent dilemmas are the following, the first stems from the functional character of the macro-regional strategy, i.e., the macro-regional strategies are based on functional relationships that do not match to the administrative territories; therefore a challenge in political commitment comes up. As Stocchiero points out “even if the macro region is elaborated on functionalities political conditions continue to be relevant.”¹⁴⁷ The second dilemma involves the general features of the EU integration dynamics, i.e., you need to find a consensus between

¹⁴⁵ *The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region*, Panorama, 30, p. 5.
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/panorama/pdf/mag30/mag30_en.pdf (21.3. 2012)

¹⁴⁶ DÜHR, S.: c.d. p. 24.

¹⁴⁷ STOCHIERO, A.: c.d. p.11.

the involved parties. This occurs as during the elaboration of the strategy not everyone's wish was accommodated to the same extent. This leads to well-known package deal results. Those can result in a situation when one actor profits from the strategy more than others. In this situation the overall long-term support of the Strategy is difficult to acquire.

Nevertheless, the fact that the multileveled and multi-sector actors are involved in setting the priorities of the macro-regional strategy ensures that variety of interests is being taken into consideration. A new problem arising during the implementation of the strategy is the problem of 'who is entitled to implement what'. The same case applies for the coordination process where, additionally, some of the actors might have been entitled to coordinate more important areas than others. The challenge lies in the behavior of the coordinators of the areas, i.e., whether they are going to cherish the common strategy or use the framework of the strategy to reach their particular goals.

Another challenge is connected with the funding of the macro-regional activities, namely, that there is no new funding allocated exclusively to the macro-regional activities and most likely there will be not one¹⁴⁸. Therefore, in order to finance them, already allocated funding from the Structural funds and other sources has to be brought together and used on the macro-regional activities. As a result it might be difficult to determine who is going to pay what. Moreover, it might not be clear whether it is possible to coordinate funding coming from different sources in the framework of the different policies.

4.1. Macro-regionalization

Stefan Gänzle and Kristine Kern argue that the EU has launched a process of 'macro-regionalization'. The process of macro-regionalization aims at the building of functional and transnational regions, including subnational authorities of EU member and partner

¹⁴⁸ POP, Valentina: *Cross-border 'macro-regions' unlikely to get own funding*. Euobserver, 13. 4. 2010. (<http://euobserver.com/886/29852>)

countries.¹⁴⁹ The macro-regions are supposed to be built on a sufficient number of issues in common. Furthermore Gänzle and Kern argue that there is a need for macro-regionalization as the EU of 27 has grown big with the heterogeneity of the member states increasing. Beneficial would therefore be a closer regional cooperation in macro-regions, defined as functional large scale areas, within the EU and on its borders, i.e. integration within the integration. Areas eligible for establishing a macro-region are selected by a common pool resource, for example, the sea, the river basin, or mountain areas. The areas might also be chosen according their common history and culture as is the case of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Moreover, they can be identified on the basis of earlier territorial cooperation, for example, the old CBC affected by the German factor. Macro-regionalization therefore involves reorienting from nation states to macro-regional clusters that are based on common features. Furthermore, it involves also the reorienting from the administrative units to functional units. Following this line of thought, macro-regionalization is likely to lead to a new mode of European governance that is going to increasingly abolish administrative boundaries and work on the basis of functional territories rather than administrative.

Currently there is discussion about other potential areas where a macro-regional strategy could be beneficial. DG Region in their statement emphasizes the necessary bottom-up nature of any future macro-region and clearly identifies the shared challenges of the region.¹⁵⁰ The creating of the North Sea Region, the Black Sea Region, the Adriatic Ionian Region and Alpine Region are under discussion. (Figure 4)

To sum up, the macro-regional strategies became a new tool used to purse EU objectives. Applying the mechanisms of

¹⁴⁹ GÄNZLE, Stefan – KERN, Kristine: *EU Macro-regional Strategies: A New Mode of European Governance?* Social Science Group, Wageningen UR (University & Research centre), p. 2.

<http://www.sciencespo.fr/coesionet/sites/default/files/ppt%20Ganzle%20%26%20Kern%20MRS.pdf> (25.3. 2012)

¹⁵⁰ DÜHR, S.: c.d. p 10.

Europeanization, a bottom-up approach can be identified in the development of the macro-regional strategy. Bottom-up in terms of the direction, which leads from the bottom, the national governments, up to the highest EU level. This is the case as the strategies were developed by the Commission on the basis of the request of the states involved in the macro-region. Furthermore, the macro-regional strategies provide a framework that enables increased involvement of local stakeholders in the design and implementation of EU policies. Moreover, it provides a forum which serves as a channel for uploading their preferences up to the EU level. The Annual Forum provides a place for social learning activities as it is a place to discuss and revise the work that has been done so far, exchange best practices and to develop new approaches. The top-down direction is represented by the plans and overall conditions set in the Action plans. The mechanism in establishing and adjusting the macro-regional strategy involve transnational interactions across different levels of governance, stretching from the European to the local level and cutting across policy sectors. Therefore, it is difficult to follow the exact directions of Europeanization in the case of macro-regions, i.e., match the changes with the governing level (European, national, regional or local).

Conclusion

In the current chapter I rearticulate the answers given to the research questions set in the introduction. The main research questions were:

How does Europeanization affect CBC in Europe?

What caused the increasing number of CBC initiatives in the 1990s?

What instruments were used by the EU to ensure enhanced CBC?

What changes in the administration and the institutional settings occurred as a result of the implementation of the EU's CBC policy?

The evolution of CBCs in the EU has gone through four important historical periods. The first and second historical period (1958-1979 and 1980-1990) corresponds to the time before funding from the subnational bodies, such as the CoE and the EU, was available. In those two periods, CBCs were established on the basis of natural functional interdependencies and the good will of the local actors. From the beginning of 1990, which marks the beginning of the third historical period, CBCs experienced a surge in the numbers of new initiatives. As the causes that led to this immense surge I identified the steadily increasing legal and especially financial support to the CBC activities provided by the EU and to a lesser extent by the CoE. More explicitly, the Community funding available through INTERREG since 1990 can be named to have provided a strong incentive to establish CBCs. The research has shown that the pre-INTERREG CBCs were established on the basis of natural functional interdependencies between regions that were located on each side of a national state border. Important is that the regions administration systems allowed the local or regional authorities to establish such a cooperation. The post-INTERREG CBCs were based on the funding provided by the EU but established functional interdependencies later on.

Ten years after the inception of INTERREG, the number of the CBCs tripled. The fast rise in the quantity of CBCs led in some cases to

CBCs that did work only on the basis of the given funding, but the functional interdependencies and, therefore, a qualitatively advanced cooperation was not established.

The EU funding provided a strong incentive for the border regions to set up a CBC. In order to do so, several EU conditions had to be fulfilled, among them: Administrative restructuring of the territory and granting the authority to the regions to take part in the EU Regional policy and enter the regional partnerships that administrate and implement the EU Regional policy. In the countries with a centralized state administration system fulfilling of the EU Regional policy conditions, taking part in CBCs lead to decentralization and empowerment of the regions against the central government. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Europeanization through conditionality connected to funding led to the establishment of CBCs as well as to the decentralization and empowerment of the EU regions.

It is possible to verify through a case study on EU CBCs that the introduction of funding to CBC initiatives effectively increased the number of cooperating local and regional authorities. This makes a contribution to a more balanced development of the EU. The development of CBCs was enhanced by the EU through significant legal and financial support, firstly, through the three generations of Community Initiative INTERREG and lately through the Territorial Cooperation objective of the Regional policy. A significant instrument enhancing European CBCs came into existence in 2007 with the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). EGTC is an instrument for the creation of cooperative groups across national borders within the EU territory. Moreover, it has a legal personality which helps to overcome obstacles caused by the differences in the administrative setting of the countries participating in a given CBC project.

As already mentioned in the theoretical chapter, the Europeanization of the Regional policy and the occurrence of CBCs

resulted in the emergence of MLG. The changes in the administration and in the institutional setting of the member states that occurred as a result of the implementation of the EU's CBC policy are inherently related to the empowerment of the regions, i.e., the regions gain powers from the central government due to the introduction of the stronger EU Regional policy.

Within the Regional policy, the sub-national actors gained importance thanks to the partnership, the programming, the concentration and the additionality principle. Especially the partnership principle strengthened the position of the regional governments as, in order to get funding, they were required to have their own representatives (besides the representatives of the national government and the European Commission). Nevertheless, it has to be noted that the Member States still keep on dominating the partnerships as they are setting the content of the program to be negotiated and perform the selection of the horizontal partners. The degree of the Member State's domination in the partnerships vary depending on a range of variables, such as the political system, governing arrangements, administrative traditions, political culture (rather consensual or adversarial), relationship to the EU of the governing elite, (de)centralization.

Despite the dominance of the state in the regional partnerships, the role of the regions is becoming more important. This is the case as the regions are not only implementation agents but they start to be active partners of the European Commission in shaping the Regional policy itself, i.e., entering the regional partnerships, the regions became actors of European politics. Moreover, entering a CBC, the regions became actors of international policy as well. Both led to territorial restructuring and to the change of the patterns of EU governance.

A second area where the effects of Europeanization were analyzed was the case of the macro-regional strategies. Studying macro-regional strategies is important, because of the increasing

attention given to them in EU policy debates and exemplified as a new model of territorial development.

Applying the mechanisms of Europeanization in the development of the macro-regional strategy, a bottom-up approach can be identified. Bottom-up in terms of the direction, which leads from the bottom, the national governments, up to the top, namely, the EU level. This is the case as the strategies were developed by the Commission on the basis of the request of the states involved in the macro-region. Moreover, because of the bottom-up nature of macro regions, a framework is provided that enables increased involvement of local stakeholders in the design and implementation of EU policies. Furthermore, it offers a forum as well, which serves as a channel allowing them to upload their preferences to the EU level. The Annual Forum provides a place for social learning activities where the work that has been done so far is discussed and revised and the exchange of best practices and the development of new approaches happens.

The top-down direction is represented by the plans and overall conditions set in the Action plans. The mechanism in establishing and adjusting the macro-regional strategy involves transnational interactions across the different levels of governance, stretching from the European to the local level while cutting across policy sectors. Therefore, for the case of macro-regions, it is difficult to follow the exact directions of Europeanization, i.e., match the changes with the governing level (European, national, regional or local). The Europeanization of the macro-regional strategies corresponds best with Goetz vision that Europeanization as a process is more circular than unidirectional and cyclical rather than one-off. Europeanization of macro-regional strategies is an interconnected process both accepting and creating EU policy.

On the basis of this thesis it can be verified that Europeanization significantly affects CBC in Europe. The degree of Europeanization of CBCs as a part of the Regional policy varies across the member states,

depending on a range of variables, such as: Political systems, governing arrangements, administrative traditions, political culture (rather consensual or adversarial), relationship to the EU of the governing elite, (de)centralization, degree of subnational empowerment etc. Europeanization affects macro-regions on the same dimensions as it did general CBCs. This means that, for example, applying the conditionality approach, the Member States have to accept certain conditions in order to take part in the activities within the macro-regional strategies. Furthermore, the social learning processes take place in the framework of the implementation activities and within the Annual forum. The bottom-up dimension is represented by the architecture of the macro-regional strategy, which provides a forum that serves as a channel for uploading preferences of local, regional and national stakeholders to the EU level. Last but not least, the top-down dimension represents the Commissions power in designing the character of the macro-regional strategies.

On the basis of my research it can be stated that Europeanization in general can happen simultaneously through conditionality, social learning and be driven top-down as well as bottom-up. We see that the same is true for the Europeanization of CBC in particular. Because of the complex structure of transnational, multileveled and sector cutting actors and their interactions it is difficult to identify exactly what dimension or approach prevailed in the Europeanization of the EU CBCs. Europeanization of CBC in Europe is an interconnected process both accepting and creating EU policy.

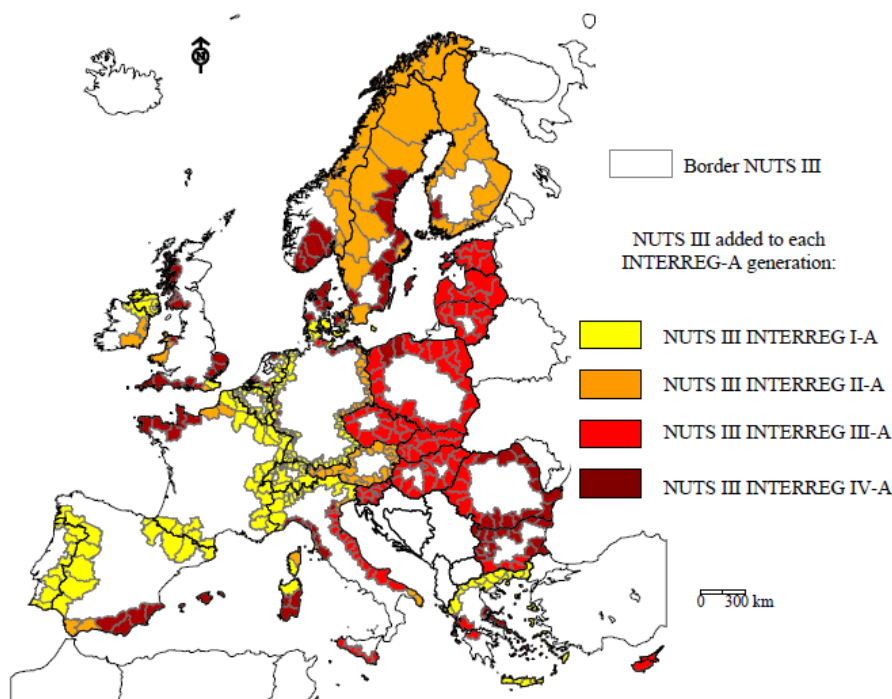
It seems safe to state that EU CBCs would also have been formed without the effect of Europeanization. It is however certain that, without the massive EU funds, the number of successfully created CBCs would be much lower.

Annex

INTERREG-A	1989-1993	1994-1999	2000-2006	2007-2013	EU-27
Area (1000 km ²)	559	1.283	1.925	2.495	4.234
Area (% EU 27)	13.2	30.3	45.5	58.9	100
GNP - (€ per capita) - 2006	24.400	25.038	20.764	20.581	25.900
Population (millions) - 2006	64	95	156	204	493
Population (% EU 27) - 2006	13.0	19.3	31.6	41.4	100
Pop. Density (inhab/km ²) - 2003	260	235	230	276	113
Crude Death Rate (%) - 2003	10.8	10.4	10.4	10.5	9.6
Crude Birth Rate (%) - 2003	10.1	9.6	9.2	9.3	10.3
Allocation funds (million €)	1034	2617	3998	8723	
Allocation funds (% EU Structural Funds)	0.7	1.3	1.8	1.8	
Programmes	31	59	64	52	

Source: Data - EC reports + Eurostat - Author compilation

Figure 1: INTERREG-A NUTS III data – EU¹⁵¹



Source: Data - Several EC reports - Author

Figure 2: Four INTERREG-A generations in ESPON Space¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ MEDEIROS, E.: c.d., 4.

¹⁵² Ibidem, p. 5.

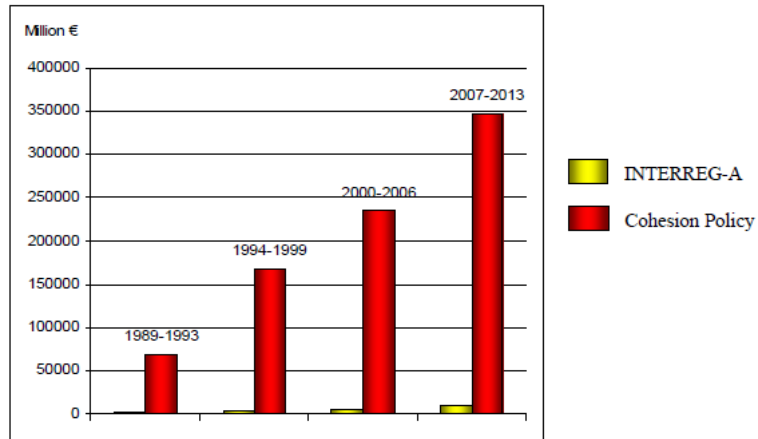


Figure 3: Cohesion Funds and INTERREG-A allocation funds evolution (1989-2013)¹⁵³



Figure 4: Macro-regional strategy areas¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Ibidem, p. 3.

PILLAR/PRIORITY AREA	COORDINATING COUNTRY/-IES	NUMBER OF ACTIONS	NUMBER OF PROJECTS
PILLAR I: To make the Baltic Sea and environmentally sustainable place			
1. To reduce nutrient inputs to the sea to acceptable levels	POLAND/FINLAND	6	5
2. To preserve natural zones and biodiversity, including fisheries	GERMANY	2	3
3. To reduce the use and impact of hazardous substances	SWEDEN	4	8
4. To become a model region for clean shipping	DENMARK	1	6
5. To mitigate and adapt to climate change	DENMARK	3	3
PILLAR II: To make the Baltic Sea region a prosperous place			
6. To remove hindrances to the internal market in the Baltic Sea	ESTONIA	6	7
7. To exploit the full potential of the region in research and innovation	SWEDEN/POLAND	2	5
8. Implementing the Small Business Act: to promote entrepreneurship, strengthen SMEs and increase the efficient use of human resources	DENMARK/GERMANY	8	8
9. To reinforce sustainability of agriculture, forestry and fisheries	FINLAND; LITHUANIA FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT; SWEDEN FOR FISHERIES	7	10
PILLAR III: To make the Baltic Sea region and accessible and attractive place			
10. To improve the access to, and efficiency and security of, the energy markets	LATVIA/DENMARK	3	4
11. To improve internal and external transport links	LITHUANIA/SWEDEN	5	5
12. To maintain and reinforce attractiveness of the Baltic Sea region in particular through education, tourism and health	TOURISM: GERMANY (MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN) HEALTH: NORTHERN DIMENSION PARTNERSHIP ON PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION: GERMANY	8	13
PILLAR IV: To make the Baltic Sea region a safe and secure place			
13. To become a leading region in maritime safety and security	FINLAND/DENMARK	4	7
14. To reinforce maritime accident response capacity protection from major emergencies	DENMARK	2	3
15. To decrease the volume of, and harm done by, cross border crime	FINLAND/LITHUANIA	1	5
HORIZONTAL ACTIONS	EUROPEAN COMMISSION	13	

Figure 5: Pillars and Priority Areas of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ DÜHR, S.: c.d. p 30.

¹⁵⁵ Ibidem, p. 29.

PILLAR/PRIORITY AREA	COORDINATING COUNTRY/-IES	NUMBER OF ACTIONS	NUMBER OF PROJECTS
PILLAR A: CONNECTING THE DANUBE REGION			
1. TO IMPROVE MOBILITY AND MULTIMODALITY	INLAND WATERWAYS TRANSPORT: AUSTRIA, ROMANIA	10	9
	RAIL, ROAD AND AIR TRANSPORT: SLOVENIA, SERBIA, (INTEREST: UKRAINE)	7	6
2. TO ENCOURAGE MORE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY	HUNGARY, CZECH REPUBLIC	17	10
3. TO PROMOTE CULTURE AND TOURISM, PEOPLE TO PEOPLE CONTACTS	BULGARIA, ROMANIA	14	20
PILLAR B: PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE DANUBE REGION			
4. TO RESTORE AND MAINTAIN THE QUALITY OF WATERS	HUNGARY, SLOVAKIA	14	7
5. TO MANAGE ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS	HUNGARY, ROMANIA	8	11
6. TO PRESERVE BIODIVERSITY, LANDSCAPES AND THE QUALITY OF AIR AND SOILS	GERMANY (BAVARIA), CROATIA	16	13
PILLAR C: BUILDING PROSPERITY IN THE DANUBE REGION			
7. TO DEVELOP THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY THROUGH RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES	SLOVAKIA, SERBIA	8	12
8. TO SUPPORT THE COMPETITIVENESS OF ENTERPRISES, INCLUDING CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT	GERMANY (BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG), CROATIA	7	10
9. TO INVEST IN PEOPLE AND SKILLS	AUSTRIA, MOLDOVA	8	7
PILLAR D: STRENGTHENING THE DANUBE REGION			
10. TO STEP UP INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND COOPERATION	AUSTRIA (VIENNA), SLOVENIA	9	8
11. TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROMOTE SECURITY AND TACKLE ORGANISED AND SERIOUS CRIME	GERMANY, BULGARIA	11	10

Figure 6: Pillars and Priority Areas of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁶ Ibidem, p 30.

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Abstract

My thesis deals, firstly with the Europeanization of cross-border cooperation and, secondly, with the emerging macro-regional strategies in the EU. The main aim of my thesis is to analyze the scope and the way the EU with its policies has been influencing European cross-border cooperation and macro-regional strategies.

In order to reach the goals of the thesis, I investigate the origins of cross-border cooperation, its motives leading to their establishment, the role of supranational bodies, such as the CoE and the EU (with development program for the border areas: INTERREG). Furthermore, I explain the different contexts, in which cross-border regions are being formed and the different features and dimensions of cross-border cooperation. In the case of macro-regional strategies, I investigate their origins, motives that lead to their working mechanisms and the role of the EU.

After having examined the cross-border cooperation and macro-regional strategies in the EU, I found that Europeanization has a significant effect. Whereby, Europeanization of the cross-border cooperation, including macro-regional strategies, works as a two direction process both accepting and creating EU policy. The degree of the Europeanization of a cross-border cooperation as a part of the Regional policy varies across the member states. The variation depends on a range of variables, such as: political systems, governing arrangements, administrative traditions, political culture (rather consensual or adversarial), relationship of the governing elite to the EU, (de)centralization, degree of subnational empowerment etc. Noteworthy is, that Europeanization affects macro-regions on the same dimensions as it does cross-border cooperation in general.

Abstrakt

V mé práci se zabývám vlivem europeizace na přeshraniční spolupráci a na nově vznikající makroregionální strategie v Evropské unii.

Hlavním cílem mé práce je analyzovat rozsah a způsob, jakým Evropská unie a její politiky ovlivňují přeshraniční spolupráci a makroregionální strategie v Evropě.

Zkoumám počátky přeshraniční spolupráce, motivy, které vedou k jejich vzniku, a role nadnárodních aktérů, Rady Evropy a Evropské unie, zejména program Evropské Unie, INTERREG. Dále se zabývám různými kontexty a souvislostmi, na jejichž pozadí se formují přeshraniční regiony. Kromě toho zkoumám různé podoby přeshraniční spolupráce.

V případě makroregionálních strategií se rovněž zabývám jejich původem, motivy, které vedou k jejich zřízení, mechanismům, na jejichž principu fungují, a roli Evropské unie ve vytváření a fungování makroregionálních strategií.

Po posouzení přeshraniční spolupráce a makro-regionálních strategií v Evropské unii jsem zjistila, že obě tyto oblasti jsou europeizací významně ovlivňovány. Europeizace přeshraniční spolupráce, včetně makroregionálních strategií, funguje jako dvousměrný proces přijímání i vytváření politiky Evropské unie. Míra europeizace přeshraniční spolupráce jako součásti Evropské regionální politiky se v členských zemích liší, v závislosti na řadě proměnných, jako jsou politické systémy, administrativní zřízení a tradice, politická kultura (spíše konsensuální nebo oponentní), vztah vládnoucí elity k Evropské unii, (de)centralizace, nezávislost regionálních samospráv etc. Europeizace makroregionálních strategií probíhá obdobně jako u přeshraniční spolupráce.