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Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)
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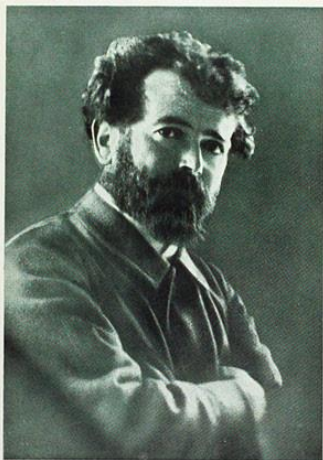
Our Future in Place, The Role of People, Policy and Process in Place-Making and Place-Shaping
10th Anniversary of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD)
Sligo, 9th February 2017

Cross-Border Place-Making...and Un-doing: An International Perspective (Overview of Cross-border Cooperation)

The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR – AGEG – ARFE)



Emil Gött (1864-1908) Sayings, Aphorisms



Emil Gött.

DE: Gefühl von Grenze darf nicht heißen: hier bist du zu Ende, sondern: hier hast du noch zu wachsen.

ES: Las fronteras no pueden generar una sensación de que hemos llegado al final, sino que son donde aún podemos crecer.

EN: Borders must not create the feeling that this is where you come to an end, but rather that this is where you still need to grow.

Piero Gobetti (1901-1926) Conferenza de Gorizia, 1922



Piero Gobetti

Le terre di confine sono il campo più irrequieto e incontrastato della lotta di idee e dell'elaborazione della civiltà.

Las tierras de frontera son el campo más inquieto e indiscutible de la lucha de las ideas y de la elaboración de la civilización.

Borderlands are the most restless and unquestionable field to struggle for ideas and to elaborate civilization.

A tutti voi senza distinzione (...), si presenta un grande compito di studio e di creazione.

A todos vosotros, sin distinción (...), se os presenta una gran responsabilidad de estudio y creación.

To all of you, without distinction (...): a great responsibility of study and creation arises.

*(Suggested by Nahuel Oddone,
San Salvador, May 2013)*

Border Regions and Cross-Border Regions: CBC and place-based approaches



Border regions are usually considered peripheral, away from decision-making centres, with less infrastructures, low populated, rural, with less access to public services, worst mobility possibilities/conditions, ...

If they are considered in their cross-border reality, together with their neighbouring regions, they become central (within supranational integration processes, or not).

CBC: Cross-Border Cooperation



- CB regions are a small-scale Europe
- Many obstacles to overcome, but also many little daily stories in positive (**CBC belongs to Europe's Positive Agenda, like the Erasmus Programme**)
- Main challenges:
 - **Effects of "re-nationalization" and scepticism (Brexit, anti-European movements)**
 - **Unemployment and lack of opportunities**
 - **Brain-drain and demographic change**
 - **Access to ICTs, (CB) Smart Specialization Strategies (3S) and Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS3), innovation practices, etc.**
 - **Response to the exigence of welfare and prosperity for all territories of the EU**



CBC in Europe is a story of Multi-Level Governance and asymmetries



- 60 years of “**formal**” CBC in the EU; centuries of “**informal**” and “**abnormal**” CBC
- **Laboratories** for European Integration
- Central Europe (Rhine basin), Northern Europe, Mediterranean regions, **Eastern Europe up to the Caucasus**, ...
- **Global CBC for Global Challenges**: Latin America, Africa, Near East and Asia

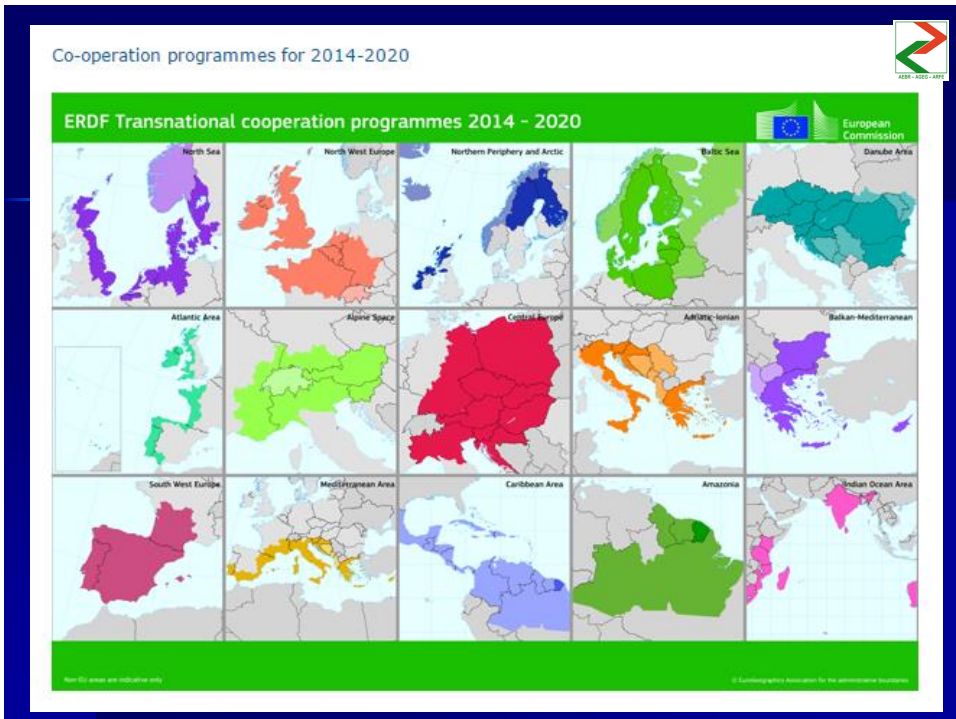
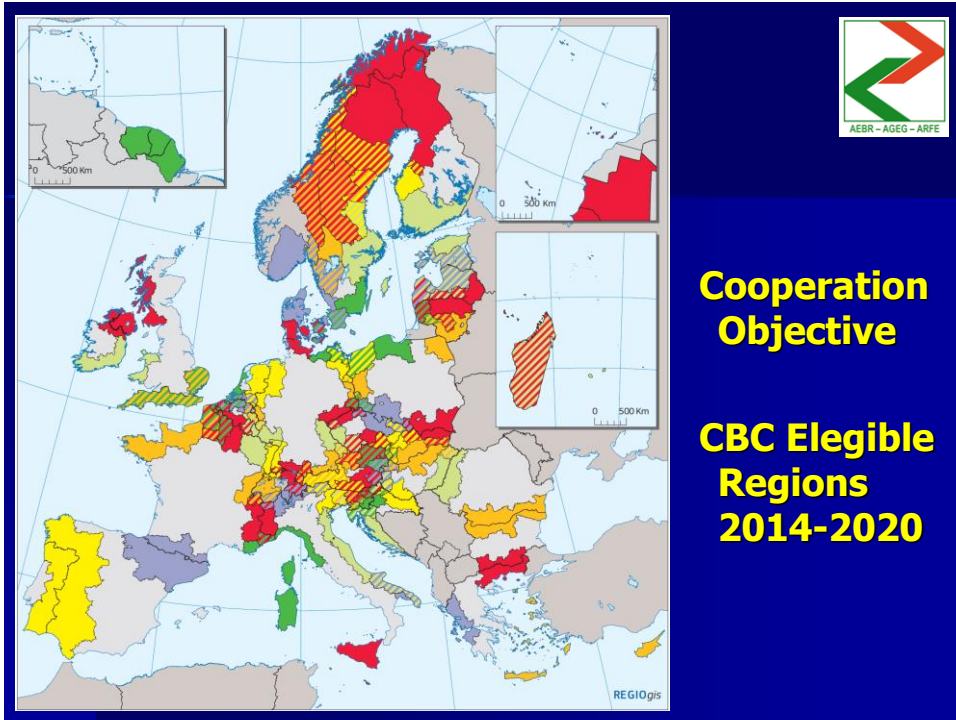


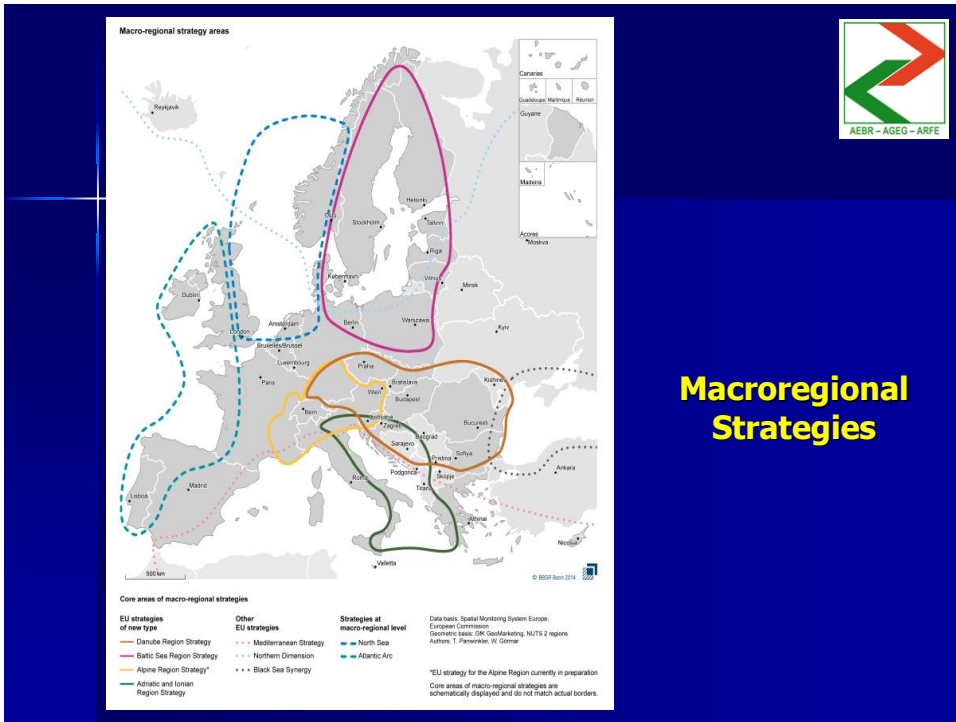
CBC, EU and Globalisation: Globalisation has placed everyone in its place: **Economy vs. Politics**



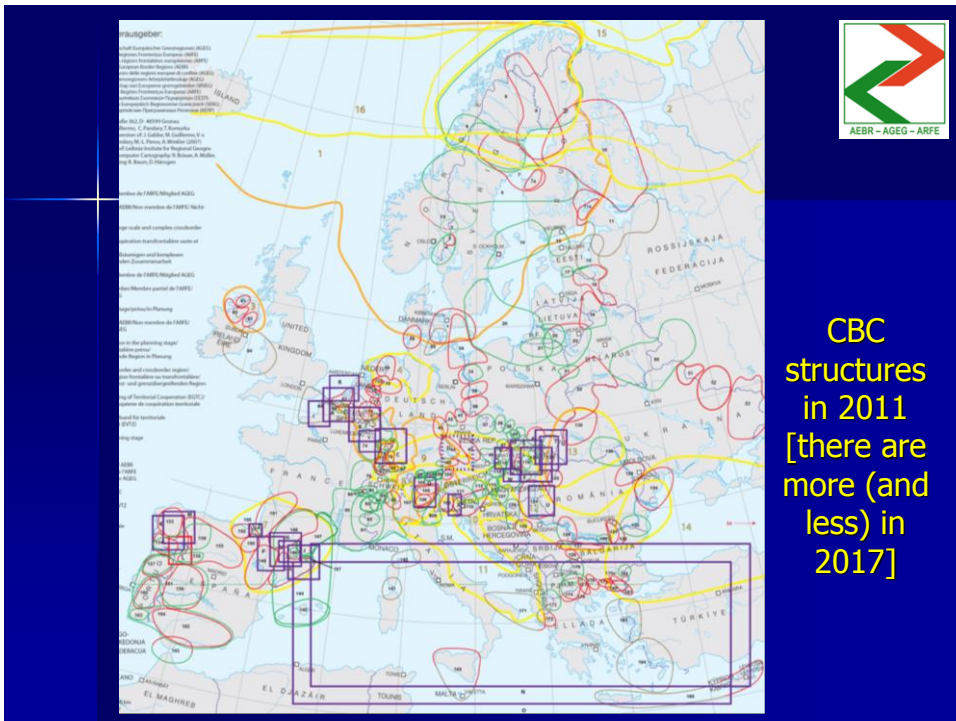
- Europe: long institutional, intellectual history, etc., but very few raw materials, energy sources, ... (**we risk to be a huge thematic park**)
- Only strengthening integration we can save the current situation (**upwards and downwards**): **Territorial Cohesion**
- **Knowledge Triangle**: EDUC, RESEARCH, INNOV
- **Triple Helix**: Academia-Private Sector- Gov't
- **Bet for TALENT**: “give a bonus to risk”

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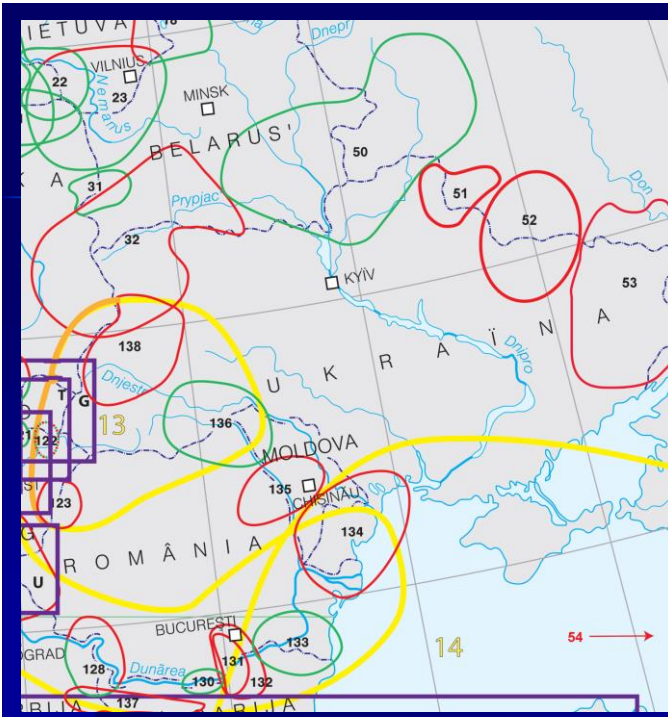
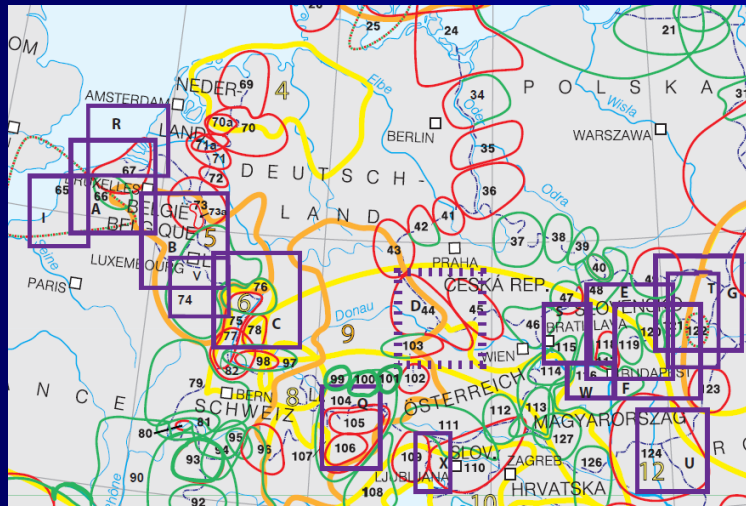




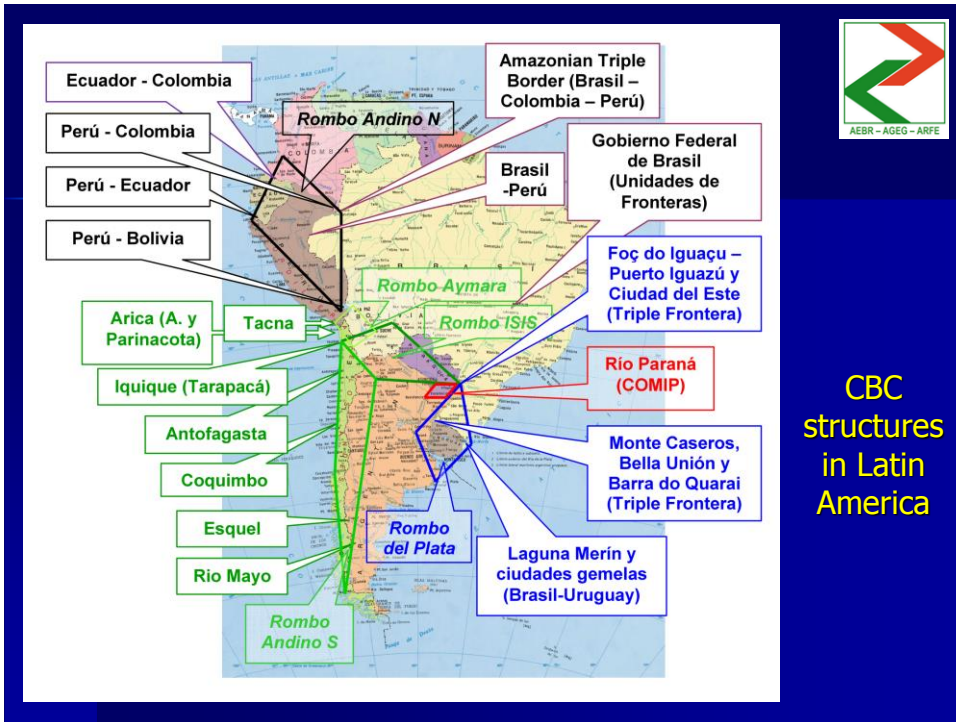
Macroregional Strategies



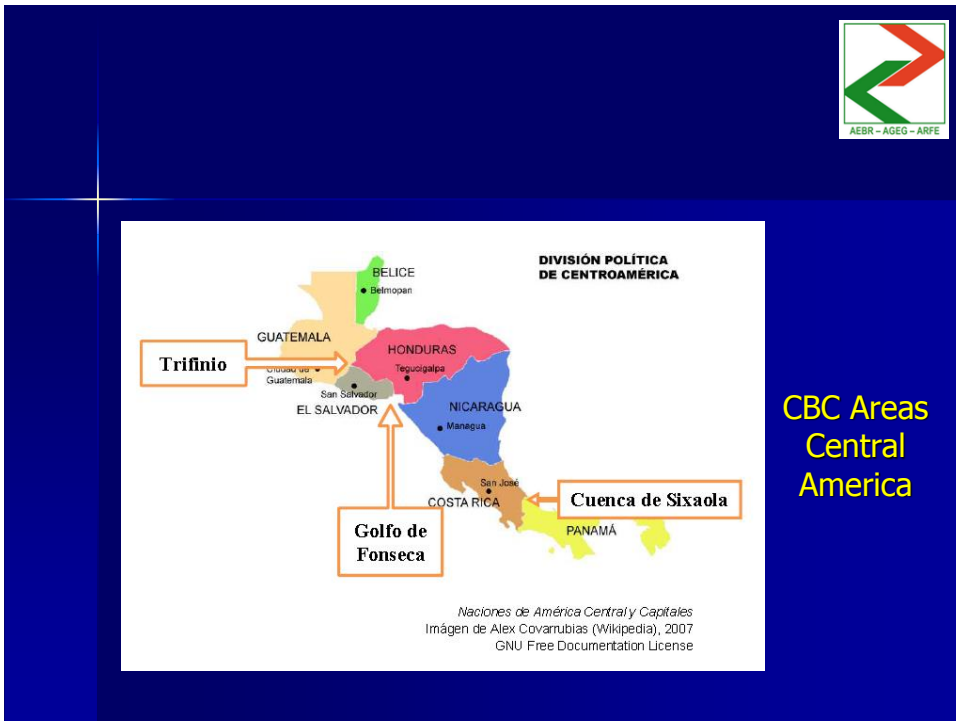
Regions and CBC structures in Central Europe



Huge development of CBC structures at the borders of Ukraine, despite of many difficulties, conflicts (local, regional, international) and the jam around the Black Sea



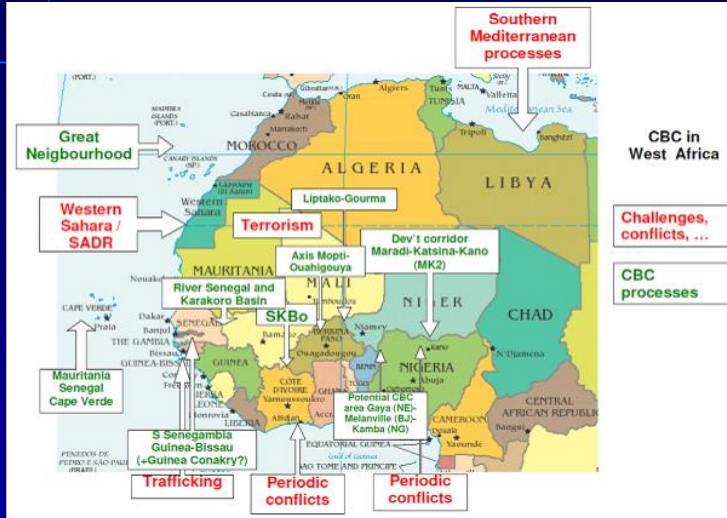
CBC structures in Latin America



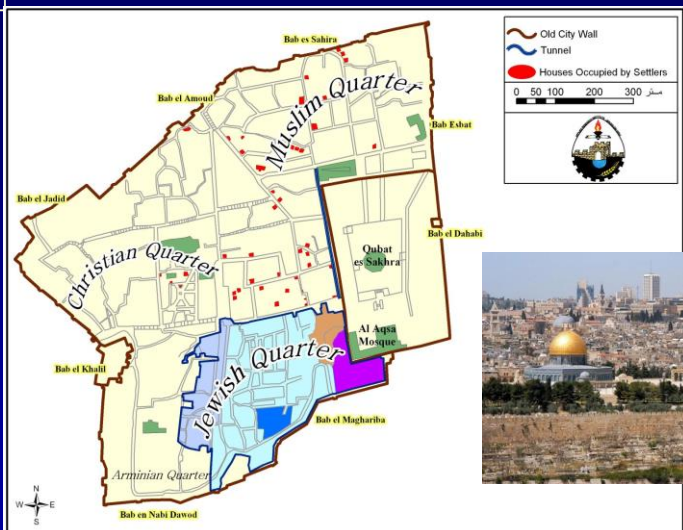
CBC Areas Central America

Naciones de América Central y Capitales
 Imágen de Alex Covarubias (Wikipedia), 2007
 GNU Free Documentation License

Processes and challenges for CBC in West Africa



Next challenge: Jerusalem



European experience shows:



- Supranational integration processes does not guarantee cohesion in very diverse territories. Their own dynamics strengthen more developed areas (*territorial dumping*).
- There is a need of a “positive discrimination”: territorial cooperation programmes and projects (Interreg) to enhance economic, social and territorial cohesion.

Challenges for Integration Across Borders

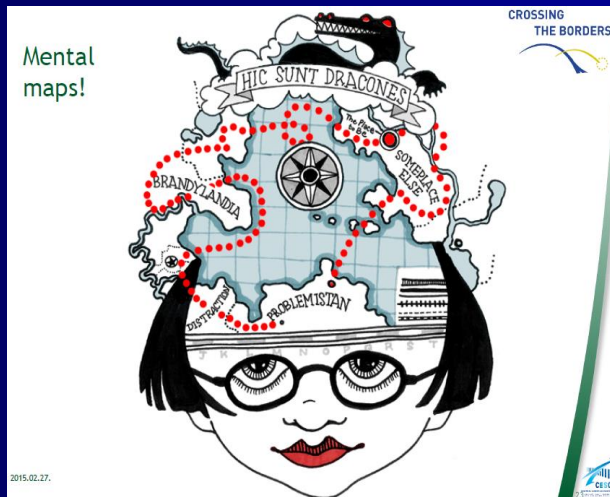


- **Different identities, feelings, systems, etc...** will collide at the borders in the years to come (diversity)
 - **Difficulties to normalize relationship across borders:** mental borders
 - **Economic, management, administrative differences**
- OPPORTUNITIES**
- **Common objective of the EU (and far beyond):** from an economical alliance to a political entity
 - **CBC closes gaps in integration processes:** there is no way back

Psychological Borders and Mental Maps



Mental maps!



(Source: CIESI, Crossing the Borders Project, 2015)

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Day-to-day at border areas: Preliminary conclusions



- The work made by CB structures can only be successful if supported by citizens and regional/local politicians from both sides of the border, generating **trust**
- At the borders, the citizens deal with practical aspects of Europe every day (Laboratories for European Integration)
- There will be no regulation compatible with all countries (except EGTC / ECG)



CBC:



- It is **not a new administrative level**
- There are **no exclusive competences** in CBC structures (delegation)
- It is a good example of **Multi-level Governance**

The trick of Subsidiarity, Decentralization and Integration lies not in giving up national sovereignty, but in sharing it (up- and downwards) towards a Common Objective

Diversity

from being an obstacle to create opportunities



Various:

- Cultures and social systems
 - Administrative structures and powers
 - Fiscal and social legislations
 - Many other political activities
- ... meet at the borders**
- Citizens have grown up in very different environments
 - They will not sacrifice aspects of everyday lives for the European ideal
 - No State will alter its tried and trusted structures

Objective: Critical Mass



- CB regions cover half of their potential areas of influence
- CBC makes easier to achieve a critical mass: synergies, efficiency, joint planning and managing
- Creation of CB influence areas
- Creation of alliances for joint sustainable benefits



CBC Added Value



- (Pan-) European (Continental)
- Political
- Institutional
- Socio-economic
- Socio-cultural



European Added Value



- Promotion of peace
- Freedom
- Security
- Observance of Human Rights



Political Added Value



- European integration
- Getting to know each other
- Subsidiarity and partnership
- Economic and social cohesion and cooperation
- Accession of new members
- Securing CBC via EU funding

Institutional Added Value



- Active involvement of citizens
- Knowledge about neighbours
- Long-term CBC
- Joint drafting, implementation and financing of CB programmes and projects



Socio-economic added value of CBC



- **Mobilisation of endogenous potential**, strengthening regional and local level as partners and initiators of CBC
- **Participation of economic and social actors** (chambers, associations, companies, trade unions, cultural and social institutions, environmental orgs and tourism agencies)
- **Opening up of labour markets** and harmonisation of professional qualifications
- **Additional developments**: infrastructures, transport, tourism, environment, education, research & cooperation between SMEs, and the creation of employment
- **Lasting improvements in Spatial Development** and regional policy (including environment)
- **Improvement of cross-border transport infrastructure**

Socio-cultural added value



- Dissemination of knowledge
- Overview of CB region in maps, publications, teaching material, ...
- Circle of committed experts
- Equal opportunities and extensive knowledge of the languages

Conclusions: 1st step: REMOVAL of OBSTACLES



- **Stronger participation of the sub-national level and civil society**
- **CB solutions to handle main problems**
- **Potential for integration still underestimated**
- Examples of **fields in need of a CB approach**: natural resources, trade networks, control of illegal activities, business development, emergency teams, touristic routes, etc.
- But also **huge transnational projects** remain infra-supported: delimitation and demarcation of borders, transport networks, normalize and extend CBC
- Stronger participation of this approach within the **EU Neighbourhood Policy**, other EU and bilateral policies, the **European Development Fund, etc.**

Recommendations



- **The following steps and frame conditions are needed:**
 - **Political will** of affected countries
 - **Bottom-up approach**, where local/regional players have the main role in collaboration with national governments (external partnerships, avoiding conflicts of competence)
 - **Involvement of politicians** at all levels in both sides of the border, to build up a lobby in favour of CBC
 - **Participation of all players** in both sides of the border (public/private and equivalents, NGOs, etc.) to create a solid basement for CBC using existing knowledge in both sides of the border
 - **Conscience of socio-cultural cooperation:** so important as economic cooperation (and often a pre-condition for successful CBC)
- **First phase: informal cooperation based in private law**
- **Afterwards: creation of permanent CB structures based in public law**

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Importance of Cohesion Policy for the future of the EU and CBC



- ❖ **European Cohesion is the cornerstone for a community of political values, bringing the Union closer to the citizens**
- ❖ **It should involve all regions and citizens**
- ❖ **Fighting disparities between and within MSs**
- ❖ **Balanced, harmonious and sustainable development of the territory**
- ❖ **Polycentric development balancing urban and rural areas**
- ❖ **CBC as cement of this European House**

Cohesion and Regional Policy as European Strategy



- ❖ **After 2020 all regions should be involved in these policies, and all essential EU policies should be taken into account (well coordinated and polycentric)**
 - ...promoting and anticipating regional change
 - ...responding to territorial characteristics
- ❖ **Concentrating only on grow is dangerous:**
 - **Political consensus would be uncertain**
 - **Nationalism would grow**

Cohesion, Regional Policy and CBC



- ❖ **Growing together across borders through CBC is a pre-condition for European integration**
 - ...taking into account geographical diversity (they are not handicaps but potentials)
 - ...increasing CB "critical mass" through CB projects
- ❖ **The regional/local level is the most appropriate to implement many EU policies:**
 - **Subsidiarity and partnership remain indispensable**
 - **CBC always add value to integration (1+1=4), therefore it should be a European priority and a political objective of the EU**

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THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ATTENTION



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